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Beyond Consensus

Social Learning in Urban Planning
ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the aims and assumptions of deliberative urban planning. It addresses the need for more vigorous debate between planning theorists interested in uncoerced communication and democratic theorists concerned with promoting greater deliberation in politics. Two models of deliberative planning theory are identified in the analysis: a model of consensus building and a model of social learning. It is argued that the model of social learning is both more persuasive as a normative theory of planning and more useful as a description of the experiences of deliberation in planning, as described in this study. Analysis of the theory of deliberative planning is supported by empirical research. Three cases of urban planning in Christchurch, New Zealand are examined. A new institutionalist research methodology is adopted to analyse the case studies. The research techniques included: participant observation, focus group discussion and key informant interviews.

Empirical research identifies conditions for enhancing inclusive deliberation and social learning in urban planning. These are summarised as five conditions of social transformation in planning. Under these '5 Ts' attention is not simply paid to ways that enable new voices to speak, but also to the conditions under which those voices are heard and heeded. The conditions of social transformation include a treaty (or constitutional protections), talk plus (supplementing free and frank face to face discussion with other ways of encouraging social learning), the presence of third parties (informal and formal facilitators who encourage listening across difference), opportunities for transmission of the outcomes of deliberation and mechanisms to ensure transparency enhancing accountability in deliberation and subsequent
decision-making. In conclusion discussion strengthens the theory of deliberative planning by qualification, identifying the limits of its application and considering the implications of research and theoretical discussion for urban planning practice in New Zealand.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A British Council Travel Scholarship first sparked my interest in deliberative planning. Time spent at the University of East Anglia and the Museum of the Moving Image and the BBC enabled me to work on creative public communication projects. Financial assistance from Lincoln and Otago Universities helped me to begin this thesis in 1995. Supervisors Ali Memon and Paul Harris continued to maintain interest in this project despite demanding new roles. Text production benefited from the graphic design skills of Greg Dodds, Bill Mooney's cartography and Glenys Lamb's typing. A special thank you to Tracey Stoks for layout design.

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Working and studying with two small pre-schoolers would not have been possible without the practical support of Jan Hayward, John and Martha Ashby and past mentoring from the late John Hayward. Special thanks to Rachel Hayward, the rest of the Ashby family and our friends, particularly Dave and Julia Malcolm for the use of their tranquil garden retreat.

Finally and most importantly my husband Andrew and our children Rachel and Ben. Andrew’s love and tremendous practical support made it possible to work on the project and our children inspired its completion.
‘...Well, good-bye. I have enjoyed our conversation.’

‘Conversation, indeed!’ said the Rocket. ‘You have talked the whole time yourself. That is not conversation.’

‘Somebody must listen,’ answered the Frog, ‘and I like to do all the talking myself. It saves time, and prevents arguments.’

‘But I like arguments,’ said the Rocket crossly as the little Frog swam away...

‘...It is no good talking to him,’ said a Dragonfly, who was sitting on top of a large brown bulrush. ‘No good at all, for he has gone away and can’t hear you.’

‘Well, that is his loss, not mine,’ answered the Rocket. I’m not going to stop talking to him merely because he pays no attention. I like hearing myself talk. It is one of my greatest pleasures...’

“Humph!” said the Dragonfly, and he spread a pair of lovely gauze wings and soared away.

An extract from: The Remarkable Rocket by Oscar Wilde.
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<tr>
<td>Hapu</td>
<td>section of a large tribe, clan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hui</td>
<td>congregate, come together, meet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iwi</td>
<td>nation, people (also commonly translated as 'tribe')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaitiakitanga</td>
<td>'stewardship/guardianship' over resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karakia</td>
<td>charm, spell, incantation, prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaumatua</td>
<td>respected elder, adult, old man or woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kawanatanga</td>
<td>commonly translated as 'governance'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kohanga reo</td>
<td>language nests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahinga kai</td>
<td>traditional food gathering places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mana</td>
<td>authority, control, influence, prestige, power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marae</td>
<td>'meeting house', place where Maori Protocol prevails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mihi</td>
<td>greet, acknowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngai Tahu</td>
<td>South Island iwi or tribe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otautahi</td>
<td>Christchurch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakeha</td>
<td>a person of predominantly European descent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papatipu</td>
<td>Maori land without European title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powhiri</td>
<td>beckon, welcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangatiratanga</td>
<td>evidence of breeding and greatness, 'Chieftainship', full authority over resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reo</td>
<td>the Maori language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runanga</td>
<td>commonly translated as 'council'</td>
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</table>
Tangata Whenua: people belonging to any particular place, The Maori

Taonga: property, tangible and intangible resources, anything highly prized

Tangata o te Tiriti: 'People of the Treaty'

Tino rangatiratanga: absolute chieftainship/authority

Tapu: under restriction, sacred, beyond one’s power, inaccessible

Wahi (waahi): tapu place or locality under restriction, sacred site

Waiata: song(s)
CHAPTER ONE
THE CHALLENGE OF URBANISATION:
ENHANCING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING

1.1. Introduction

This study examines the opportunities for, and limits to, a deliberative approach to urban planning using case studies from Christchurch, New Zealand. In this chapter I argue that the problems that will dominate the new millennium will be urban problems. These problems will be characterised by their complexity, intensity and diversity. I examine the contentious political debate over how best to deal with the problems accompanying urbanisation. In particular I explore the implications of this debate for urban planning and the role that the citizen should play. I highlight the emergence of a deliberative approach to planning, and review the claims that such an approach enhances public participation and improves our ability to address contemporary urban problems.

First, I consider the characteristics of contemporary urban problems and the way in which urbanisation raises contentious political as well as technical questions for communities. These political concerns include issues about how decisions should be made, who should make them, what role planning should play and how the inequities of urban life are best addressed. I consider how these concerns challenge politicians, planners and the community alike. In examining political and planning responses to urbanisation, I will argue that the absence of a vigorous debate between planners and political theorists has contributed to the ambiguity and uncertainty that surrounds the role of planning in society. There is little
recognition of the potential contribution that new theories of planning could make to strengthen urban democracy. Therefore in the broad context of this study, I have set out to contribute to redressing the relative scarcity of explicitly political analyses of planning theory.

The chapter also gives an overview of the study as a whole, providing the reader with definitions of key terms and an outline of the organisation of the thesis.

1.2. The Challenges of Urbanisation

Globally, including New Zealand, cities are facing serious challenges which communities, planners and urban leaders are struggling to deal effectively with. The severities of urban problems are measured by a variety of indicators, many of which can be broadly termed environmental. The indicators reflect a declining resource base, rising rates of consumption and waste production, and declining standards of living. These indicators measure the incidence of air pollution, traffic congestion, and equitable access to open space, adequate housing, and health care (Habitat II 1996 and Sustainable Cities Trust 1999). However the problems associated with urbanisation extend far beyond the common indicators.

Urbanisation is a complex concept. It can be considered as both a structural and a behavioural process, in that above a certain population density, urban places reflect in a spatial context, the complex interaction of economic functions, socio-cultural structures and life styles (Johnston et al 1994).

Seen in this light, urbanisation is more than a growth phenomenon, although the growth associated with urbanisation has been tremendous. Urbanisation can be understood as ‘...a set of changes which generally occur with the appearance and expansion of large-scale co-ordinated activities in
society' (De Vries 1995, p.44). Historically a number of phenomena constitute urbanisation including new forms of social and political administration to manage concentrated populations. These political or administrative forms are characterised by the rise of social positions devoted to co-ordination, the development of new lines of co-ordination and the proliferation of cross-cutting social arrangements (De Vries 1995). These administrative forms are reflected in a variety of local and regional government structures, all of which struggle to deal with processes we have come to associate with contemporary urbanisation, such as the rapid restructuring and the globalisation of urban economies. For example economic restructuring has influenced speculative booms and busts in office space, the location and nature of work, the incidence and nature of poverty in urban areas (Troy 1999), and the lifestyles of residents. In turn, inequities in access to jobs compound other socio-cultural and spatial processes associated with urbanisation including changes to household composition, patterns of housing intensification and the polarisation and segregation of communities (King 1996). These socio-cultural processes also magnify inequitable citizen access to a variety of services including health and cultural services, and impact on questions of personal safety, traffic congestion, sanitation and perceptions of well-being and mental health (Knox 1995 and Law and Gleeson 1998).

The impact of urbanisation and associated urban problems is not felt uniformly. There are spatial variations within and between urban areas. For example poorer socio-economic suburbs tend to experience more environmental hazards, as do areas characterised by greater concentrations of ethnic minorities.\(^1\) Similarly the impact of environmental degradation varies both within cities and between urban regions and nation states.\(^2\) These variations raise questions about how decisions are made. The diversity and scale of urban problems suggests traditional planning methods and
government interventions may be inadequate and there is debate about appropriate methods of decision-making and the role of planning.

Addressing problems of urbanisation is also complicated by the growing recognition of the variety of forms of city or urban area. Traditionally this variety is described in terms of varying population size or density, the number of services or the employment profile of an area (Hall 1998, p.16). But these descriptions fail to capture the marked differences in the look, feel and function of many cities or urban areas, and the different lifestyle and cultural communities that give these areas their character (Knox 1995). The diversity amongst cities and urban areas is not limited to form and function. There is a great deal of variation in the social, economic and political organisation of urban communities, their ethnic mix and the way individuals and groups within a community experience urbanisation (King 1996). The term urban area also reflects the way overlapping jurisdictions have resulted in a loss of autonomy experienced by many local body governments (McLevy 1991). For example the processes of urbanisation create a strong interdependence between cities that tests traditional notions of autonomy and authority. A local government may find itself just one of many actors seeking to influence urban processes and problems that do not respect administrative boundaries (Allen, et al 1999). Economic restructuring affects both the process of planning a particular urban area and the political realities of opportunities and limitations on unilateral or city-wide action.

The divergence of experience of what is a city has prompted one commentator to argue that it is impossible to reach a single definition of 'a city'. Anthony King concludes that:

To put it polemically, there is no such thing as a city. Rather the city designates the space produced by the interaction of historically and geographically specific relations of production and reproduction, practices of government, forms and media of communication and so
forth. By calling this diversity “the city”, we ascribe to it a coherence or integrity (King 1996; citing James Donald p.1).

While I take King’s point for the purpose of this research a boundary needs to be placed around the scope of the terms city and urban area in order to consider political and planning responses to urban problems. In this study I have used the discussion by Davoudi (1995, pp.225-230) to define a city as a political-administrative unit where politicians and administrators have authority to articulate and implement policies to effect change, and manage social, economic and environmental processes associated with urbanisation within a physically defined space. I reflect on the work of Memon, et al (1998, pp.616-621) when I use the broader term urban area to refer to the locus of socio-cultural, economic and environmental processes and interactions associated with urbanisation which concentrate in a physical space. The broader term ‘urban area’ recognises cities as interdependent and often operating as systems at regional and international levels. The term urban area also allows for the development of unofficial urban communities such as edge cities (Spoonley 1997) or informal communities of urban residents who span administrative borders but share a strong sense of community or place.

1.3. Urbanisation in New Zealand

New Zealand is a highly urbanised society. Over 70% of New Zealanders live in fifteen urban areas (Statistics New Zealand 2000; and Le Heron and Pawson 1996) (Figure One). New Zealand’s urban areas are rapidly diversifying. Smaller settlements, like Invercargill, have experienced a recent net migration loss as a result of the general population drift north. Distinctions are emerging between prosperous metropolitan areas and some provincial centres. Christchurch has benefited from a strengthening labour
Over 70% of New Zealand's resident population live in fifteen urban areas (Statistics New Zealand 2000).
market in the surrounding Canterbury region. In the early 1990s, a 'modest growth in employment' was ahead of the growth of the working age cohort and consequently unemployment 'fell below the national figure' (Le Heron and Pawson 1996, p.284). In contrast Auckland experienced substantial growth in the working age population and employment. However the relative effect of the increase in employment was not sufficient to prevent a 'substantial rise in unemployment' (Le Heron and Pawson 1996, p.283).

Urban areas are diversifying culturally with ethnic populations increasingly concentrating in particular suburbs (Le Heron and Pawson 1996). Le Heron and Pawson also speculate that differences in age structure associated with cultural differences between the populations of cities will contribute to further urban differentiation in the future (Le Heron and Pawson 1996, p.282). New Zealand's experience of cultural diversification reflects growing recognition internationally that city populations are non homogenous. Urban populations are characterised by socio-cultural and ethnic diversity (Johnston 1997 and Sandercock 1998 a and c). These diverse urban communities have challenged traditional local government structures which reflect the needs, aspirations and values of dominant cultures, but fail to meet the needs of ethnic minorities, including minorities defined in terms of sexual orientation or gender (Johnston 1997; Sandercock 1998 c; hooks 1990 and Hayden 1981).

By international standards New Zealand cities are relatively small. Auckland, the largest metropolis, has a greater population of 1,090,400 or 28.6% of New Zealand's resident population (Statistics New Zealand 2000). Auckland can be described as an international regional service centre performing the functions of airline hub and financial service network. To a lesser extent Christchurch, the largest city in the South Island, with a greater population of 341,000 or 9% of New Zealand's resident population, performs
a role as a major regional service centre, providing some national finance services and an international airport (Statistics New Zealand 2000).

However in comparison to developing countries, the New Zealand experience of urbanisation has placed less pressure on infrastructure and arguably resulted in less extreme experiences of poverty (Hazeldine 1998). Nevertheless the experience of rapid urbanisation has tested New Zealand planners, communities and political leaders. The pace of urbanisation has concentrated in particular on four cities, Auckland, Manukau City, Wellington and Christchurch, with the main thrust of this growth evident in the greater Auckland urban area. The population of Auckland City is projected to grow by 36% in the next twenty-five year period. The neighbouring Manukau City’s population is projected to rise by 42%, overtaking Christchurch (up 13%) to become the second largest city by 2016 (Statistics New Zealand 1997).

New Zealand’s traditional economic base has been agricultural. Urbanisation has brought associated problems, but increasing urbanisation has meant expansion of the urban periphery onto productive farmland (Goh 1996). The social impacts of urbanisation vary within the ethnic communities of New Zealand with Maori and Pacific Island communities experiencing the greatest difficulties accessing urban services, particularly health services, and bearing the burden of poverty and poor housing (Ravuvu 1992). Housing problems were exacerbated by radical changes in state housing policy during the 1990s, from the direct provision of housing benefits to supplementary income allowances, resulting in decreasing housing choices for low income groups (Thorns 2000). Concern has also been expressed about managing the development of fringe or edge cities in rapidly growing urban regions, particularly Auckland (Spoonley 1997), and about the
impacts of low-density suburban development at the expense of the inner city (Memon and Perkins 1993, p.22).

Many planners and commentators express unease about the problems of urbanisation (Perkins and Thorns 1999 a and b). For example the New Zealand Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment articulated these concerns:

With a few notable exceptions at the city level, the concept of sustainable urban development is largely being ignored in New Zealand, with a lack of leadership and vision. Sustainable urban development involves improving the efficiency of resource use, reducing waste and addressing environmental, economic and social issues in an integrated way (Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment 1998, p.iv).

In New Zealand the problems of managing urbanisation have been exacerbated in the past by the plethora of district and local land-use agencies and social planning agencies. These developed on an ad hoc regional basis in the post-war years and resulted in poorly co-ordinated urban planning efforts (Bush 1995). In examining the debate over political and planning responses to the problems of urbanisation, I want to consider how political and planning responses to urbanisation have prompted debate about the inclusiveness and social justice of decision-making in urban communities.

1.4. Responding to the Problems of Urbanisation

There is uncertainty about how best to address the problems of urbanisation. Planners, politicians and the public rarely agree on what constitute significant problems, let alone what action to take and by whom. As previously noted, the scale and pace of urbanisation have been breathtaking. Our ability to address the problems associated with urbanisation is less impressive. In the face of complexity and diversity, the question often asked is, who should have how much say about what and why? This political
question underlies the uneasy debates that continue to arise, albeit in different guises, in liberal democratic states about what role the public should play in urban government and planning. For example how much say should the lay community have versus the elected politician or expert planner? Whose voices should be heard and heeded in planning and who benefits from contemporary planning practices?

Some commentators argue that the processes of urbanisation have reduced the influence of citizens and urban governments. For example Troy argues that the privatisation of urban services and utilities and the restructuring of bureaucracies have profoundly affected opportunities for citizen influence in urban politics and planning. Consequently Troy concludes 'communities have had their power to decide on the nature and amenity of their areas reduced while simultaneously policies have been adopted to reshape and change the form of our cities with little debate and buttressed by little research and analysis' (Troy 1999, p.168).

Murray Bookchin (1995) has articulated even more forthright concerns. Bookchin argues:

The citizen, such as he or she is defined at the turn of the Twenty First Century, is losing any sense of identity or power over everyday life. A vast corporate economic and political system—imbued almost with a life of its own—threatens to supplant the already diminishing control ordinary people have over their lives and their future (Bookchin 1995, p.1).

Bookchin’s arguments echo the manipulated city hypothesis. This suggests major private interests have worked in coalition to shape the distributive system and institutional and legal frameworks of urban areas to obtain favourable resource allocations at the expense of ordinary citizens (Knox 1995, p.3). We do not need to accept this perspective to acknowledge that the economic, socio-political and cultural processes associated with urbanisation...
have challenged traditional notions of local government and citizenship. These challenges have produced a great deal of rethinking about what we mean by urban politics, what approaches to urban planning are possible and effective, and what effect urbanisation has had on the residents in urban communities (Healey et al 1995).

In the latter debate there has been a considerable resurgence of interest in questions of social justice in urbanisation. The concept of social justice refers to the way society’s benefits and burdens are distributed and how this process comes about (Johnston et al 1994, p.563). The theme of social justice underlies much contemporary debate about urbanisation (Harvey 1973 and 1992; Young 1990 and Kymlicka 1992). Harvey’s (1973) ground breaking study of social justice in the city argued for redistribution of resources to advantage the most marginalised groups. Harvey (1992) later revised his argument to reflect criticisms made by Young (1990), who argued that attention to distributive issues tends to preclude discussion about ‘what people are doing’ and the effect of ‘institutionalised rules’ on social justice (Young 1990, p.25). Young argues that justice also requires that ‘all persons should have the right and opportunity to participate in the deliberation and decision making of the institutions to which their actions contribute or which directly affect their actions’ (Young 1990, p.91).

There have been other international calls for rethinking urban political structures and for greater public participation in urban decision-making to encourage wider distribution of benefits in urban communities. In 1996, an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report called for a review of procedures by which urban plans and policies are made to ensure greater participation by the community. In its report, the OECD called for new planning techniques which move beyond ‘traditional dealings with interest groups and provide more discursive, open structures
and processes for policy development' (OECD 1996, p.96). Similarly, the Agenda 21 document produced by the 1992 United Nations Convention on Environment and Development (UNCED) promoted greater public participation in planning by groups under-represented in decision-making, particularly women, ethnic minorities and young people (Shand 1994 and Sitarz 1993). The New Zealand Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment went further, implying that one of the causes of our urban environmental crisis could be attributed to past political and planning arrangements and claiming strongly that urban problem-solving should be opened up to new voices:

Critical to future urban sustainability will be greatly enhancing the role of the community and participatory democracy. A major challenge exists at all levels of government to find new and creative ways to inform and empower communities, to involve them in decision-making, and to enable them to make choices in an efficient and effective way. (Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment 1998, p.v)

Concerns about the lack of citizen participation in urban political structures and planning processes are not new and many have been well rehearsed. A number of commentators have discussed the way public input can be manipulated or marginalised in decision-making (Arnstein 1969). In order to discuss contrasting responses in urban planning, I wish to define two key terms as they are used in this study.

First I define politics as a process of making authoritative decisions for a community or as Iris Young puts it: '...the critical activity of raising issues and deciding how institutional and social relations should be organised' (Young 1990, p.240). The study of politics concerns questions of power and how people experience power in decision-making and who has access to decision-making processes (Young 1990). Lukes brings these questions of power and access to the fore when he argues that a political
analysis should examine the way power is distributed, what it is, how it is used, by whom and with what effect (Lukes 1974). While questions of power are essential to politics, Young's work (1990) reminds us that they are not the only issues to be addressed from this perspective. Political analysis also involves examining complex processes of communication in agenda setting or policy implementation as resources are allocated within a community (Hayward 1993 a).

For the purpose of this study I define urban planning as a future-oriented process of public decision-making directed at goal attainment. It involves both the management of land use and the attainment of social and economic objectives within a city or urban area. Urban planning is undertaken primarily by public agencies although the private sector and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have considerable influence in the process. This definition of planning draws on work by Fainstein and Fainstein (1998). This broad definition enables the goals of a range of schools of planning, particularly adherents to neo-liberal and deliberative planning to be considered within this study.

The processes of urban politics and planning are closely interwoven and yet there have been few explicitly political analyses of the urban planning theory. The most notable and recent overtly political contributions include those from Murray Bookchin (1995), Susan Fainstein and Norman Fainstein (1998), John Forester (1993 a and 1999), John Friedmann (1987), David Harvey (1973 and 1992), Leonie Sandercock (1998 c) and Iris Young (1990).

The relative shortage of explicitly political analyses of planning is surprising given that virtually all planners accept that what they do is political. Nearly everyone agrees that planning involves the allocation of collective resources and that governmental institutions frequently, but by no
means exclusively, undertake that allocation. It is therefore somewhat disturbing given this political bent, that planning theorists like Fainstein and Fainstein have found it necessary to note that while analyses of planning are increasingly grounded in contemporary social thought, planners have largely ignored the classical literature of political theory (Fainstein and Fainstein 1998, pp.265-287). By the same token, political theorists have largely been isolated from the realities of practical local political contexts. In this thesis I examine planning responses to urban problems, highlighting the political implications of these responses.

1.5. Alternative Planning Responses to Urbanisation

The challenges of urbanisation have been addressed by a variety of political arrangements and planning approaches with varying claims to success. One contemporary political response has drawn on the theories of neo-liberal economics. This response focuses attention on the supply side of the economy and the reduction of constraints on adaptation and innovation (Healey 1997, p.14). Neo-liberal political strategies have pursued a number of measures to reform urban government, including deregulation through the contracting out of functions and the privatisation of urban utilities and services (Healey et al 1995). Neo-liberal theory has produced a distinctive approach to planning which I will briefly discuss because of its current dominance—a dominance that is questioned by deliberative planning theorists.

1.6. Neo-Liberal Planning: The Dominant Approach to Practice

Neo-liberal planning is inspired by theories of political economy known collectively as neo-liberalism (Held 1987). These theories focus attention on the supply side of the economy, encouraging capital growth and investment and the reduction of constraints on adaptation and innovation (Gleeson and
Political strategies associated with neo-liberalism promote values of private property, capital development and personal freedom within a minimal framework of rules and regulations that protect fundamental freedoms (Gleeson and Low 1998 and Held 1987).

The irony of the influence of neo-liberalism in planning is that neo-liberal theory has diminished the role of planning. Gleeson and Low argue:

There has always been political and intellectual opposition to planning from conservative political-economic interests that regard it as an unwarranted intervention in the land economy...The intellectual case against urban planning rests essentially on the propositions that planning both distorts land markets and raises the transaction costs of development through bureaucratisation of the urban economy. It is argued that these "diseconomies" reduce employment growth and stifle the ability of the land market to satisfy consumers' needs for housing and transport (Gleeson and Low 1998, pp.249, 254).

Neo-liberalism encourages a variety of market-led responses and local level initiatives aimed at meeting the needs of consumers and encouraging capital accumulation. These initiatives include the privatisation of urban utilities and the deregulation or contracting out of many urban services (Healey et al 1995, pp. 1-20). Neo-liberal theorists Sorensen and Auster argue that planning should be limited to five main problem or issue areas concerning the management of 'major' negative externalities, providing public infrastructure, preserving historic buildings, co-ordinating sympathetic development and providing a 'second opinion' on private development. In summary, planners should act 'at the margins of a basically market system of resource allocation' (Sorensen and Auster, 1998, p.862). From this neo-liberal perspective within a deregulated economy there should be little state-led intervention in social and economic life. Sorenson and Auster typify the position:
Much as many of us might be concerned with poverty, gender inequality and discrimination against racial or sexual minorities, it seems bizarre to think that those constitute a significant agenda for professional urban planners employed in the local or state government arena (Sorenson and Auster 1998, p.862).

The neo-liberal planning approach appears to facilitate flexibility and rapid market responses to problems associated with urbanisation. But there are growing criticisms of the approach. Critics point out that in capitalist economies such minimal restraint in urban planning advantages property owning citizens (Memon 1993; Dryzek 1990 and Healey 1997). Common techniques in neo-liberal planning such as pricing mechanisms and covenants fail to adequately account for power disparities between groups. These techniques are criticised for exacerbating rather than ameliorating the urban inequalities experienced by those who lack the resources to adequately compete in a global economy (Troy 1999). Some of the vocal opponents to neo-liberal planning have advocated an alternative deliberative approach to planning.

1.7. Deliberative Planning: An Alternative Response

Neo-liberal planning can be contrasted to an alternative approach to planning known as deliberative planning which is rapidly gaining ground in planning theory. In chapters two and eight, I discuss the concept in greater depth. Here I define the term deliberative planning which I use to describe a broad school of planners who are interested in promoting inclusive, democratic discussion about a variety of planning issues and urban problems. These planners seek to develop plans through a process of uncoerced public debate. I include within this umbrella term work by Fischer and Forester (1987 and 1993); Forester (1989; 1993 a and 1999); Healey (1992 a and b, 1996 and 1997); Hillier (1993); Hoch (1992); Innes (1995); Sager (1994); Susskind and Cruickshank (1987) and Throgmorten
(1996). I have used the term deliberative planning rather than the term ‘communicative planning’ (Healey 1992 a and b; Innes 1995 and Sager 1994), ‘participatory’ or ‘critical’ planning (Forester 1989 and 1993 a) or the more recent term ‘collaborative planning’ (Healey 1997) in order to highlight the common thread of public deliberation that connects these theorists. I have also used the term deliberative planning to explicitly link the work of these planners with the writings of those political theorists who are interested in deliberative democracy and political processes that encourage inclusive public debate (Barber 1984; Benhabib 1996; Bohman 1996; Bohman and Rehg 1997; Budge 1996; Cohen 1996; Dryzek 1997 a; Young 1997 a and b; and Hunold and Young 1998).7

There is some significant variation over the aims, visions and applications of deliberative planning amongst its advocates, but there is sufficient agreement for the approach to be described as ‘an emerging paradigm for planning theory’ (Innes 1995, p.183). Innes elaborates on this discussion:

...[a] long bemoaned gap between theory and practice in planning is closing as a new type of planning theorist is beginning to dominate the field...these planners:...see planning as an interactive, communicative activity and depict planners as deeply embedded in the fabric of community, politics and public decision making (Innes 1995, p.183).

Advocates of deliberative planning reason that their approach to planning signals an ‘argumentative turn’ (Fischer and Forester 1993) in planning theory. This argumentative turn envisions citizens engaged in collective reasoning about common urban problems. It differs markedly from the assumptions and aspirations of neo-liberal planners. While both neo-liberal and deliberative planning theorists advocate flexible, local-level or deregulated planning approaches, the deliberative vision inspires a collaborative approach to decision-making in which citizens come together

Deliberative planning echoes the practice of 'co-management' in natural resources where attempts are made to bring stake-holders and agencies who have responsibility for managing a natural resource into collaborative decision-making about the uses of that resource. This approach aims to develop new methods for delegating management of the resource to stakeholders (Ostrom 1992; Ostrom et al 1992; Pinkerton 1993; and Memon and Selsky 1998). Closely related work has also been developed in the field of mediation (Susskind. and Cruickshank 1987).8

Unlike their neo-liberal counterparts deliberative planning theorists have argued that the role and scope of planning activity should be extended not curtailed in order to address the problems associated with urbanisation. Planning theorists of the deliberative persuasion argue that social and economic concerns constitute a significant agenda for urban planners and that the public should be involved in defining what constitutes a significant issue (Sandercock 1998 b and c). For example theorist Patsy Healey states that the aim of planning is to 'promote social justice and environmental sustainability' (Healey 1992 a, p.143).

In deliberative planning, the planner assists the community to reach some understanding about what actions to take to address concerns which have been raised in discussion. However the planner acts as more than a mediator, facilitator, or referee in community debate. In deliberative planning the planner is an agent for resistance and change seeking to emancipate the powerless. As Hillier puts it, ideally the deliberative planner is:

...constantly assessing the way power and powerlessness are distributed in a community with the intention of challenging
illegitimately powerful interests who act to suppress citizen's access to scientific and political discourses through strategies of deceit and manipulation and focus attention on more substantively democratic policy alternatives and concrete programmes for social betterment (Hilier 1994, pp.135-136).

In summary, deliberative planning as introduced in this chapter represents an alternative response to the problems of urbanisation, one that emphasises the importance of public argument and collaboration in planning to address common problems rather than the pursuit of aggregated individual self-interests. This study researches the potential of deliberative planning to effect change and achieve its ambitions.

1.8. The Research Problem

In developing the focus for this research I was initially attracted to and surprised by the claims of advocates of deliberative planning. A deliberative approach to planning also appealed because its emphasis on inclusive debate appears to offer a way forward for multicultural cities or communities with diverse views about city planning.

Nonetheless I was more than a little sceptical. I had concerns about the application of the theory to planning practice in New Zealand. New Zealand's planning practice shows little outward sign of a paradigm shift towards a deliberative approach. Despite a great deal of consultation with the public, New Zealand's planning legislation, particularly the Resource Management Act 1991 is narrowly defined and other legislation governing local body planning reflects the dominant neo-liberal or market-led schools of planning (Perkins and Thorns 1999 a). Moreover deliberative planning has been criticised as time consuming and ineffectual (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998).
Finally, I had reservations about the theory of deliberative planning. In particular, I was surprised at the level of confusion revealed in my initial reading of planning literature about the aims and objectives of deliberative planning. Moreover while I was drawn to inclusive styles of public debate, I found that there was comparatively little cross reference between the theories of deliberative democracy that I was familiar with in the discipline of political science and the work of deliberative planning theorists.\(^9\)

In my reading I also noted that deliberative planning theorists drew on the study of practice to develop their theories, with their focus on documenting what planners do, rather than on detailed case studies reporting on deliberation in planning as experienced by citizens (Healey 1997; Hillier 1993; Hoch 1992 and Forester 1999). Few studies explore the implementation and outcomes of deliberative planning processes or the perceptions of participants (Innes 1995 and Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998). As John Forester has noted we need 'practically sensitive, politically realistic and theoretically insightful accounts of democracy and advocacy practices' (Forester 1999, p.9). Although conceived without discussion with John Forester, in a sense this study responds to the direct challenge Forester (1999) has issued to students:

...precisely because of the pervasive influences of power,...let us stop rediscovering that power corrupts, and let us start figuring out what to do about the corruption. Let us not just presume as unshakeable truth that disciplinary power is total...that we can do nothing to address inequality, poverty, environmental destruction and needless human suffering...let us stop rediscovering power and instead assess practically, comparatively, and prescriptively what different actors can do about it (Forester 1999, p.9).

Forester argues that we need to clarify 'the nature and possibilities (if not the probabilities) of effective democratic deliberative practices' (Forester 1999, p.252 footnote 5). Forester's study set out to explore deliberative planning
from 'the inside' through practitioners' voices (Forester 1999, p.10). My own research takes another perspective. While I agree with Forester that there is a real and urgent need to evaluate the practical and potential and possibilities of deliberative practice, this study examines the experiences from the perspectives of both planners and citizens. The irony of Forester's research perspective is that he sidelines the perspectives of citizens, the very people he intends to empower through greater participation in planning. The citizens in deliberation in planning are referred to in passing as the:

...parties [which] threaten to disrupt processes, as parties [which] voice suspicions and distrust, as parties [which] vent anger and resentment at the history of government action or inaction in their neighbourhoods, towards their interests, rolling over their communities (Forester 1999, p.10).

This study explores the possibilities and potential for a deliberative approach to planning. It does this through a review of literature and empirical analysis of the experiences of planners, politicians and citizens in Christchurch, New Zealand. I posed the following research questions to guide my enquiry:

1. What are the aims of deliberative planning theory?
2. Can these aims be achieved through greater public deliberation in urban planning practice? If not, why not? If so, under what conditions?
3. What are the implications of these empirical observations for deliberative planning theory?
4. What are the implications of the research findings for urban planning practice in New Zealand?

The rest of this chapter outlines how the study is organised.
1.9. Thesis Overview

This chapter has introduced the pressing problems facing cities in the next millennium and the political challenge of responding to them. The problems of urbanisation are characterised by intensity, diversity and complexity. I have noted claims that deliberative planning provides an effective means to address these problems. To assess the potential of a deliberative approach to planning in practice, this thesis is structured in the following way.

Chapter two explores the evolution of deliberative planning, comparing it with other schools of planning and clarifying its links with the theories of deliberative democracy. The chapter addresses research question one by identifying the aims of deliberative planning theory and its underlying assumptions.

Chapter three introduces the empirical aspect of the study. It details the research questions addressed and outlines the research design and methodology.

Chapter four outlines the New Zealand research context. It reviews planning practice, the legislative, social, economic and physical environment, and traditions of public participation in New Zealand.

Chapters five, six and seven describe and analyse the results of three cases of extensive deliberation in urban planning in Christchurch. The case studies address research question two. I consider whether the aims of deliberative planning theory can be achieved through greater public deliberation in planning, and under what conditions. The first case study involved a public working party to consider wastewater treatment. The second is an example of a residents' concept planning exercise in the suburb of Sumner. The third case is an example of a local Agenda 21 group promoting public discussion to encourage sustainable development in
Christchurch. Chapter eight reflects on the results of the case study analyses to address research question three. I discuss how the results challenge or support existing theories of deliberative planning. Chapter nine discusses the implications of the case study findings for urban planning practice in New Zealand and addresses research question four. I conclude by considering some of the wider implications of this research for a complex and increasingly urban world.

1 See research into environmental racism by Adeola (1994); Bullard and Beverley 1990; Cutter (1995); Leke (1987).

2 For example, newly democratised cities of Eastern Europe and developing countries struggle with the extremes of rapid population growth or the pressures on basic infrastructure or both. These regions face tremendous challenges to provide basic public sanitation, adequate transport, health services, and housing (Hall 1998, p.16).

3 There has been variation in the pace and timing of urbanisation. By the year 2025, it is estimated that three-fifths of the world’s population will live in cities (Badshah 1996). Many regions have experienced something of the intensity of urbanisation although the timing of growth has varied. For example, older industrialised cities experienced their rapid urban growth over the last century, while many cities in developing countries and cities in the Asia-Pacific region have experienced their phenomenal and ongoing growth in the last fifty years (Aplin et al 1999; Badshah 1996).

4 Between 1986 and 1996 more people moved from urban centres to rural areas. While these population losses were compensated for by births over deaths and foreign immigration, this trend has caused a ‘dramatic slow down’ to the urbanisation of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s (Statistics New Zealand 2000).

5 Here I note a debt to Harold Lasswell (1951) and his classic political treatise, Politics: Who Gets What, When, How? New York: Peter Smith.

6 Notable exceptions include Fischer 1993; Dryzek 1997; Young 1990.

7 Note that Iris Young prefers to use the term ‘communicative democracy’ rather than ‘deliberative democracy’ to distinguish her critique of Habermasian principles of critical argument from the critique of her deliberative democratic colleagues; see Chapter Two.

8 In the fields of mediation and negotiation. However this work tends to be limited to discovering win-win strategies or strategies for advancing the interests of individuals. Deliberative approaches do not accept stakeholder positions as is the tendency in co-management and negotiation literature; see Chapter Two.

9 Leading deliberative planning theorists John Forester (1999) and Paty Healey (1997), note the work of deliberative democratic theory, but authors who seek to critique or apply the ideals of Forester and Healey frequently seem less familiar with this democratic literature. See Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger (1998) and Sager (1994).
CHAPTER TWO

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF DELIBERATIVE PLANNING: EVOLUTION, AIMS AND ASSUMPTIONS

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a critical review of the evolution, aims and assumptions of deliberative planning theory. I analyse three streams of thought which have influenced this approach: theories of urban planning, deliberative democratic theory and communicative philosophy. First, I examine the legacy of modernist ideas in urban planning, discussing how these ideas both inspired and frustrated advocates of deliberative planning. Second, I bring the literatures of deliberative democracy and deliberative planning together. I note the way the evolution of these literatures is closely related and note that there has been surprisingly little direct debate between the two streams of thought to date. Third, I discuss the way Habermasian concepts of communicative rationality inform both deliberative planning and deliberative democracy.

Discussion then provides a critical review of the aims and assumptions of deliberative planning. Recent critics of deliberative planning have described it as 'another form of participatory planning' (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998) or an 'offshoot of advocacy planning' (Hall 1988). However I argue that deliberative planning is distinctively different from these earlier schools, in that it has an implicitly political vision which is democratic as well as deliberative. In this discussion I identify two models of deliberative planning I term consensus building and social learning. I compare these models and identify questions raised in this critical review of deliberative planning theory that need empirical study.
2.2. Deliberative Planning: Roots in Urban Planning

In understanding deliberative planning theory, it is helpful to trace how it has been influenced by earlier theories of urban planning. Urban planning has a relatively recent history although attempts to plan for city growth have a long legacy (Bookchin 1995). As Leonie Sandercock has noted, histories of urban planning have tended to focus on the works of 'great men' at the expense of insurgent planning practice by the wider community including efforts by women, community-based social reformers and ethnic communities (Sandercock 1998a, pp.777-780). Some of these insurgent planning practices, as well as some of the social concerns and modernist aspirations of the 'great men' of planning, have influenced deliberative planning. I begin this review with the early urban planners whose concerns are shared in part by contemporary deliberative planning theorists.

2.2.1. Garden cities and urban planning

The rapid urbanisation experienced in older industrial cities provoked Victorian concerns about poverty, sanitation, health and housing standards. Early European and North American planners developed great plans to address their concerns. Ebenezer Howard and later, Le Corbusier were intensely worried by the problems associated with urbanisation and the deteriorating standard of living of cities at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹ For these individuals, planning was a task which included both regulation of built environments and economic and social reform.²

We can see parallels with the concerns of contemporary deliberative planning when we look at the early plans of Howard for his English 'garden cities' and regional planners, Patrick Geddes, Lewis Mumford and the Regional Planning Association of America. These gentlemen together with the Regional Planning Association attempted to combat urban sprawl and
squalor by planning for alternative societies based on 'voluntary co-operation among men and women, working and living in small self-governing co-operatives' (Hall 1988, p.3). Mumford, in particular was keen to encourage social education, or greater community understanding about the causes and impacts of urban degradation (Friedmann 1987, pp.198-200).

The early urban planners were surprisingly unfamiliar with socialist or communitarian theories of Charles Fourier and Robert Owen, or social reformers like Henri de Saint-Simon³ (Fishman 1996, p.27). However these planners did demonstrate a similar keen interest in social justice and co-operation. Howard was familiar with the concerns of the nineteenth century anarchist Kropotkin; both being worried by urbanisation, particularly overcrowded slums. Howard’s solution was low-density central urban renewal and garden cities; that is cities built on green fields by public agencies, or given our interests in citizen participation, by voluntary citizens’ groups based on the principle of co-operation (Fishman 1996 and Hall 1998).⁴

Victorian and early twentieth-century concern for social justice resonates with the aspirations of contemporary deliberative planning. However not all these early planners would have appreciated the emphasis on citizens and their needs which underpins contemporary deliberative planning. There were deep-seated disputes about the legitimate scope and purpose of urban planning. For example the Swiss-born Parisian architect, Le Corbusier, was moved by the urban squalor confronting Paris, but his infamous high-rise apartment solutions were authoritarian and centralist in inspiration. For Le Corbusier and planners of the City Beautiful movement,⁵ urban planning was a task undertaken by an elite, not a co-operative socialist project. ‘The design of cities was too important to be left to the citizens’ (Hall quoting Fishman 1988, p.207).
What Le Corbusier did share with his contemporaries was a faith and an exuberant optimism in the ability of ideas of the ‘Enlightenment’ and ‘modernity’ to address the organisational, social and economic needs of new urban communities (Harvey 1995). This is a significant point of contention for deliberative planning theorists of today. To understand how contemporary planning theories like deliberative planning have challenged early planning ideals while drawing inspiration from them, it is useful to consider what was meant by the concepts of Enlightenment and modernity which underpin early planning.

2.2.2. The Enlightenment: Inspiration for early urban planners

The modernist ideas of the Enlightenment inspired early planning efforts and have continued to influence planning practice as it has evolved from the ideas of enthusiastic amateurs to a state-sponsored professional task during the twentieth century. The term modernity has a relatively long history, but it became associated in contemporary usage with the intellectual ideas of the eighteenth century Age of Enlightenment. Modernism and the Enlightenment have become umbrella concepts, capturing an ‘extraordinary intellectual effort’ on the part of philosophers and scientists, entrepreneurs and other thinkers to break with traditional teachings, particularly those of the church (Harvey 1995). Harvey argues that the aim of the Enlightenment’s modernisation project was:

...to develop objective science, universal morality and law, and autonomous art according to their inner logic. The idea was to use the accumulation of knowledge generated by many individuals working freely and creatively for the pursuit of human emancipation and the enrichment of daily life. The scientific domination of nature promised freedom from scarcity, want and the arbitrariness of natural calamity (Harvey 1995, p.12).

The optimism of the Enlightenment period helps us to understand the inspiration its ideas provided for early planners. The development of a sense
of professionalism in planning was encouraged as planners began to look for objective solutions to predetermined problems, rather than encouraging citizens to develop their own responses to the problems of urbanisation that troubled them.6

2.2.3. Urban planning: Post-war approaches to urbanisation

The inspiration of the Enlightenment has had a pervasive and ongoing influence in planning.7 It was particularly significant after World War Two as governments faced the enormous task of rebuilding cities. Planners, buoyed by the optimism of modernist ideas and confident of the value of scientific method, boldly took on the enormous task of repairing war-torn Europe. The ‘rational comprehensive’ school of planning dominated the post-war period. The rational comprehensive (or synoptic or blueprint) school conceived planning as a project that was objective, free from bias and aimed at the efficient and orderly administration of land use (Faludi 1973 and Friedmann 1987). Rational comprehensive approaches to planning involve selecting ends or goal setting, identifying criteria consistent with these goals and selecting alternative courses of action through objective and careful research in order to achieve desired ends (Thomas and Healey 1991, p.20). Under this approach planning goals were:

...derived from standards that supposedly measure desirable physical arrangements. Thus, for example, the amount of land to be devoted to parks is calculated on the basis of a fixed ratio between green space and population density. The use of general standards permits the designation of planning objectives without consulting groups within the general population (Fainstein and Fainstein 1998, p.267).

A number of commentators have noted the extraordinary achievements of planners inspired by scientific endeavour and rational approaches to problem solving. The success of their efforts shows in the post-war cities which they created (Hall 1988). The seeds for deliberative planning were also
sown in this period. The direction which urban planning was taking after the war, increasingly disturbed many planners and social commentators. In writing her influential text *The Death And Life Of Great American Cities* Jane Jacobs (1961), signalled the beginning of a major period of questioning and experimentation in planning with her criticism of traditional rational approaches to planning and its support of mass production and mass consumption (Harvey 1995, p.2). Criticisms also arose within the rational planning camp itself. For example planning theorists like Lindblom (1959) began to argue that grand-scale planning was more apparent than real, and that incremental or piecemeal mutual adjustment between stakeholders in negotiation with others was not only more realistic, but a more desirable way to plan for pluralistic communities (Friedmann 1987, p.136).

### 2.2.4. 'Bottom-up' planning: Rediscovering the citizen in planning

The 1960s and 1970s reflected a great deal of questioning about the assumptions of rational comprehensive planning, particularly the modernist assumptions about planning as an objective or value free exercise in which there was broad consensus about ‘ends criteria’. These assumptions were increasingly seen as problematic, particularly in the United States, where inspired by the ideas of Marx and the work of critical theorists, planners on the left of the political spectrum began to argue that not everyone had benefited equally from urban renewal efforts (Thomas and Healey 1991, p.11). In the United Kingdom, David Harvey also argued that the ‘claims of scientific analysis supposedly embodied in planning...[and]...the vocabulary of planners primarily functioned to deflect opposition, masking the interests served by the urban system’ (Fainstein and Fainstein 1998, p.268).

It was during this period of questioning that the direct forebears of deliberative planning emerged. The 1960s and early 1970s in Europe, North America and Australasia were marked by widespread political debate about
the Vietnam War, university riots, race relation tension and the growth of the feminist movement. Amid this turmoil, advocacy planners emerged. Scathingly described by planning historian Peter Hall as ‘barefoot doctors’, advocacy planners aimed to represent previously marginalised voices in planning. Hall caricatures advocacy planning as ‘...helping the poor down on the streets of the inner city, working either for a politically acceptable local authority, or failing that, for community organisations battling against a politically objectionable one’ (Hall 1988, p.334).

Advocacy planners called for the transformation of planning from a top-down process to a participatory process. In discussing planning for a public library, Gans demonstrates this bottom-up approach to planning. He argued that ‘the planning of its facilities ought to be determined by whatever goal or goals the community considers important’ (Fainstein and Fainstein 1998, p.268: citing Gans 1968). Davidoff (1965) is generally credited with the most direct influence in advocacy planning. Influenced by this American lawyer, ‘young idealistic planners went out in search of groups with similar values to theirs and sought to advance the interests of these groups’ (Thomas and Healey 1991, p.24). While advocacy planning is closely related to the ideas of deliberative planning, the role of the planner as advocate is more limited than the subsequent role of the planner as facilitator and change agent initiating direct community participation, a role central to the ideas of deliberative planning theory.

During the 1960s and 1970s there were other experiments with citizen participation. John Friedmann (1987) points to the tension amongst planners during this period. Some planners sought to respond to the public demands of the 1960s through improved listening and state-led social reform.9 Other planners were more radical in their ambitions. They expressed concern with the way that public participation could be manipulated in the planning
process (Arnstein 1969). The term radical planning is applied to planning approaches seeking far-reaching political change through social mobilisation (Sandercock 1998, pp.91-93). Radical thinkers drew strength from alliances with new social movements (NSMs), particularly those based on labour, oppressed races or women. Young has categorised NSMs into three broad types: ‘(1) those that challenge decisionmaking structures and the right of the powerful to exert their will; (2) those organizing autonomous services; and (3) movements of cultural identity’ (Young 1990, p.83). These NSMs include environmental and women’s movements and indigenous groups. They are examples of the insurgent planning movements that Sandercock (1998 c) notes have been barely acknowledged in traditional histories of planning. Friedmann also notes that this period represented a challenge to race dominated and patriarchal economic political structures (Friedmann 1987). Friedmann argued that a radical agenda for planning should:

...lead to the self-empowerment of households, local communities, and regions, encourage thinking without frontiers, help to devise practical visions of the future; assist in building political coalitions to advance the aims of the counterforce; inform the strategic choices of activists; and encourage the practice of dialogue and mutual learning (Friedmann 1987, p.14).

While Friedmann’s aims may sound idealistic today, they were influential at the time of publication. His work captures the collectivist spirit of urban planning work of the 1960s and 1970s in Australasia, Europe and North America. This collectivist spirit continues to inspire contemporary deliberative planning and a revival of radical planning or post-modern responses to difference (Sandercock 1998 c, pp.100-107).

2.2.5. 1980s: Questioning collectivism in urban planning

During the 1980s, the collectivist-planning ambitions articulated by radical planners were tested in ways that have left a lasting legacy. In the first
instance, the focus of the ‘radical left’ began to implode, turning its attentions inward. For advocacy planners and leaders of NSMs alike, it became apparent that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to maintain a successful, collective challenge to power, or to realise a collective vision of ‘community’, given the diversity of life experiences and the heterogeneity of the community (Harvey 1995, p.38). There was growing recognition that not all women, indigenous groups or economically marginalised peoples experienced oppression and powerlessness in the same ways. These different life experiences challenged the idea that tertiary-educated, middle-class, white male planners with very specific life experiences, could advocate for others. It also challenged the notion that a community could develop a shared collective vision for its future.

Challenges to the collectivist vision of advocacy and radical planning came from other sources too. The boom of the sharemarket and rapid urban growth of many industrial cities in the early 1980s, fuelled private development, regenerated urban central areas and was associated with a rise in disposable incomes which supported individual expression of taste in consumer goods and urban living (Harvey 1995). The 1980s witnessed the growth of the city as a finance centre and arena for the display of new wealth and individualism. In turn, these influences advanced innovative trends in architecture and urban planning. As David Harvey notes, the relative affluence of this period fuelled a ‘subjective individualism’ which had been ‘forced underground’ by the ‘collectivist rhetoric’ of the new social movements of the 1960s and 70s. This trend represented a reaction to modernism in planning, but one based upon individualist rather than collectivist aspirations—the trend to post modernism (Harvey 1995, pp.39-65).
2.2.6. Post-modern influences in urban planning

Post-modernism has had an ambiguous influence on planning theory. For deliberative planning, the ideas of post-modernity inspire efforts to include new, previously marginalised voices in planning, but the political implications of post-modern thought are also conservative, undermining attempts to emancipate previously marginalised groups. But what is post-modernism? David Harvey’s influential text *The Condition of Post-modernity* (1995, p.7), notes that there are many definitions of post-modernism:

No one exactly agrees as to what is meant by the term except perhaps, that “post-modernism” represents some kind of reaction or departure from “modernism”.

Harvey goes on to define post-modernism in the negative, drawing on definitions in the journal *Precis*, for it was in architecture that the term post-modern first emerged and directly influenced urban planning, particularly urban design. In *Precis*, post-modernity was defined as a:

...reaction to the “monotony” of universal modernism’s vision of the world. Generally perceived as positivistic, technocentric, and rationalistic, universal modernism has been identified with the belief in linear progress, absolute truths, the rational planning of ideal social orders and the standardisation of knowledge and production (Harvey 1995, pp.8-9 citing *Precis* 6 1987, p.24).

To some extent post-modernity can be likened to the huge intellectual project of the Enlightenment, in that a vast array of thinkers from diverse areas such as architecture and urban design to economics, science, mathematics, philosophy and anthropology’ began to explore related theories. However these thinkers reject ‘grand theorising’ or metanarratives, ‘large-scale theoretical interpretations’ of events and actions with ‘universal application’, aiming instead to recognise and celebrate heterogeneity and difference as ‘liberative forces in the redefinition of cultural discourse’ (Harvey 1995, p.9). Post-modern writers such as Foucault
(1980) argue that power is understood at the micro-political level in different local contexts and social situations while Derrida (1978) argued that there can be diverse understandings in the analysis of language. Post-modern theorists have highlighted differences in the way we understand or come to know the world.

Celebrating heterogeneity and difference has potentially radicalising and paralysing implications for deliberative planning (Harvey 1995, p.117 and Johnson et al. 1998). For example David Harvey eloquently summarises the potentially conservative, or paralysing impact of post-modernity when he argues that celebrating difference and turning away from meta-narratives reduces the ability of advocates of social change to combat large-scale political, economic and social forces such as global investment pressures:

Post-modernism has us accepting the reifications and partitionings, actually celebrating the activity of masking and cover-up, all the fetishisms of locality, place or social grouping, while denying that kind of meta-theory which can grasp the political economic processes (money flows, international divisions of labour, financial markets and the like) that are coming ever more universalizing in their depth, intensity, reach and power...Worst of all, while it opens up a radical prospect by acknowledging the authenticity of other voices, post-modern thinking immediately shuts off those other voices from access to more universal sources of power by ghettoizing them within an opaque otherness, the specificity of this or that language game. It thereby disempowers those voices (of women, ethnic and racial minorities, colonized peoples, the unemployed, youth, etc.) in a world of lop-sided power relations (Harvey 1995, pp.116-117).

The influence of post-modern theory in urban planning has also radically challenged the modernist optimism and faith in the ability of the planner to know what is best for an ‘undifferentiated public’ (Sandercock 1998 c). bell hooks (1990) also calls for urban planning to recognise difference. Sandercock argues for new ways of knowing which incorporate storytelling, rap music, poetry, quilting and many other forms of visual representation in planning practice (Sandercock 1998, pp.120-122).
While the new perspectives of post-modernism celebrate the diversity of urbanisation, critics of post-modernism suggest that the search to understand difference in planning has been at the expense of analysis of large-scale power structures, leaving a meta-theory vacuum. This vacuum has been filled by the neo-liberal school of economics which has come to dominate mainstream theorising in such diverse fields as economics, social policy and urban planning (Harvey 1995 and Johnson et al 1998).

2.2.7. The demise of planning?: Toward neo-liberal planning

As noted in chapter one, the irony of the influence of neo-liberal theories in planning is that these theories seek to diminish the role of planning. In this study, I began by defining urban planning concerns as those concerns that include both the management of land use and the attainment of social and economic objectives within an urban environment. However planners working within the neo-liberal tradition argue strongly against state-led intervention in social and economic life.

The general argument of neo-liberal planning is that ‘private coordinating mechanisms’ such as covenants, will produce more efficient resource allocations than mandatory public regulations such as land use zoning (Gleeson and Low 1998, p.254). Advocates of a neo-liberal approach to planning have examined the way liberal values of private property and personal freedom can be explored within a framework of rules to protect fundamental freedoms while encouraging capital growth and investment (Gleeson and Low 1998).

Neo-liberalism can be contrasted with deliberative planning in its assumptions about citizens and participation. Neo-liberalism assumes that self-interest is a ‘powerful motivator in ordinary citizens’ political thinking’ (Sears and Funk 1990, p.148). Neo-liberal inspired political research seeks to
explain how citizens behave in terms of their self-interest. Self-interest is usually defined as the short to medium term impact of an issue on the material well-being of the individual, or that of his or her immediate family (Sears and Funk 1990). From this perspective individuals are assumed to act rationally when they pursue ends which further their own interests. Variants of the self-interested, instrumental approach to reasoning are also used to explain the behaviour of groups (Olson 1971). Citizens are equated with clients, customers or stakeholders in a market. It then follows that the interests of citizens are best served through markets that can respond quickly to the needs of customers with minimal government intervention.

From a neo-liberal perspective, the role of government should be restrained in order to protect and maximise the value of personal freedom. The characteristics of liberalism (competitive elections, representative government and individual rights against government) generally ‘reflect an interpretation of politics and associated activities of planning or policy making...in terms of the pursuit of essentially private interests by voters, entrepreneurial politicians and other public actors’ (Dryzek 1990, p.119). In short, the neo-liberal approach to planning assumes an interest-based, or aggregate model of society that takes the individual preferences of stakeholders as given. These private interests are not assumed to be ‘other regarding’ and there is little or no attempt to transform private preferences in response to the needs of others as in deliberative planning (Young 1995 and Sandercock 1998 c).

As noted earlier, critics of neo-liberal planning argue that minimal restraint advantages property-owning citizens and fails to account adequately for power disparities between groups. Advocates of deliberative planning argue that the neo-liberal model of planning does not reflect an adequate understanding of what motivates citizens and the vision of
individuals pursuing private interests does not capture the collaborative and
democratic potential of planning (Healey 1997, pp.234-235).

2.2.8. Summary: The influence of urban planning

This review of the history of urban planning highlights the antecedents of
deliberative planning. Deliberative planning echoes the social justice
concerns of early urban planners. But the deliberative planning concern for
citizen empowerment is much closer to advocacy and radical planning
aspirations than the paternalistic responses of early planners like Ebenezer
Howard. Deliberative planning theorists share the aspirations of the radical
planners who tried to place community struggles at the centre of planning.
Deliberative planning theory also responds to the concerns of multi-cultural
communities, as these concerns are highlighted in post-modern theories of
the city. Finally, like neo-liberal planning, deliberative planning theory
envisages citizens directly determining their own affairs. However while
they share these similarities, the theories of deliberative planning also differ
quite markedly from these other schools of planning thought. The
differences lie in the vision of deliberative planning, a vision which is
distinctly deliberative and democratic. To understand this vision I now
review a second stream of thought that has shaped deliberative planning;
the theory of deliberative democracy.

2.3. Deliberative Planning: Roots in Deliberative Democracy

Deliberative planning is closely related to the school of deliberative
democracy, but to date there has been surprisingly little direct debate
between planners and political theorists (for exceptions see Forester 1999;
Fischer and Forester 1993; Dryzek 1990 and Young 1990). In assessing
deliberative planning, I draw explicit connections between theories of urban
planning and theories of deliberative democracy. I argue that in the absence
of vigorous debate between planning and political theorists, planning risks being isolated and bypassed by potentially useful political allies and critics.

Like deliberative planning theorists, deliberative democracy advocates greater public debate about policy issues. Bohman and Rehg provide a useful definition of deliberative democracy as the ‘idea that legitimate lawmaking issues from the public deliberation of citizens’ (Bohman and Rehg 1997, p.1). Deliberative democracy aims to foster public space for citizens to come together to reason about collective concerns (Pateman 1970; Barber 1984; Dryzek 1990; Fishkin 1991; Mansbridge 1990; Young 1995; Bessette 1994; Bohman 1996; Cohen 1997; Bohman and Rehg 1997 and Uhr 1998). In an obvious parallel to deliberative planning, deliberative democracy advocates practical reasoning, that is the giving of good reasons, in a process of critical argument as an alternative to expert-led technocratic domination of decision-making (Fischer 1993 a, p.167; Fischer and Forester 1993 and Dryzek 1990). Inspired by the Habermasian ideal speech situation, proponents conceive of a situation in which communicatively competent citizens test good reasons through a process of critical arguments reaching a conclusion only when compelled by the force of the better argument. Citizens ‘transform their preferences’ by reasoning together about public minded ends or a common good’ rather than competing for ‘the promotion of the private good of each’ (Young 1995, p.135).

Deliberative democratic theorists disagree about the way citizens’ preferences can be transformed through deliberation. This difference has significance for deliberative planning theory. For example Joshua Cohen has argued that ‘...ideal deliberation aims to arrive at rationally motivated consensus and decisions are legitimated on the grounds that they are persuasive to all free and equal citizens, (Cohen 1997, p.75). Other
deliberative democratic theorists disagree with Cohen. Bohman (1996 and 1997) for example argues that consensus is not necessary to legitimate decisions. Rather decisions can be said to be legitimate simply when they have been made through a deliberative process in which all citizens have equal ‘capacity’ to make effective use of deliberative resources and opportunities and believe their concerns have been considered, even when their views do not ultimately ‘carry the day’ (Bohman 1996, p.107).

While deliberative democratic theorists disagree on the importance of consensus, all agree on a normative vision of citizens engaged in debate about common problems and collective goals. This vision differs markedly from the assumptions and aspirations of neo-liberalism. Deliberative democrats argue that in the ‘interest based’ models of neo-liberalism, individuals are encouraged to express their self-interested preferences or demands through the market, or to register them through a vote in an election. Deliberative democrats complain that in this process ‘people need not leave their own subjective point of view to take a more objective or general view of political issues’ (Young 1995, p.135). As a result, the outcomes of interest-based decision-making may not be arrived at through a process of public reasoning. By contrast, deliberative democracy assumes that the opportunity to hear the views of others will help transform individual preferences and improve as well as legitimate planning outcomes through knowledge gained from listening to the perspectives of others.

The ideals of deliberative democracy are intimately related to the aims of ‘strong’ or ‘participatory’ democrats who foster direct community participation in decision-making (Barber 1984 and Pateman 1970). This is done in particular at the level of local government, in the workplace and through decentralising national institutions of government by using a variety of mechanisms including referenda, citizen juries, tele-voting and the
internet (Pateman 1970; Macpherson 1977; Barber 1984; Bookchin 1995; Budge 1996; Pepper 1993, Fishkin 1991, and Hayward 1995 b). However not all deliberative democratic theorists advocate direct or face-to-face citizen participation in decision-making. Theorists such as Iris Young, have been careful to argue they want renewed public debate, particularly through public media and new social movements, but citizens do not need and can not all be directly involved in decision-making themselves (Young 1990 and 1995).

It is useful to note the criticisms levelled at both direct and deliberative democracy. Serious concerns have been raised about the time-consuming nature of participatory political processes. Dealing with a number of viewpoints takes time, this is a limitation if some problems are urgent or where delay will advantage particular groups (Hayward 1995 and 1996). Second, it can be difficult to co-ordinate local action to combat transboundary problems like air pollution. Third, these theories tend to privilege face-to-face discussion while paying insufficient attention to the inequalities inherent in those situations (Young 1995). Direct democracy advocates decentralisation or new forms of regional government, with inadequate consideration of the context in which decentralisation might occur. These criticisms are directly relevant for planning in that these theories of democracy have been criticised for the mechanistic assumption that an understanding of complex, global environmental problems like urbanisation will build from direct experience in decision-making at a local level (Beetham 1993; Hayward 1995 b; Held 1987; and Young 1990).

Moreover critics of direct democracy point out that while Athens of the fifth century BC is frequently cited as the quintessential example of participatory deliberation, Athenian citizens were carefully vetted—slaves, immigrants, men under twenty and women were not accorded the privileges
of citizenship (Beethham 1993). Disquiet about the ideals of this form of democracy has even arisen from within the participatory school. Pateman (1988 and 1989) has revisited the writings of Rousseau who is often described as the ‘exemplar’ of direct or participatory democracy. Pateman now argues that Rousseau’s democracy was a masculine preserve in which the political right of self-government was exercised only by men—women according to Rousseau, lacked the natural restraint, order and reason necessary for citizenship (Pateman 1989 and Hayward 1993).

Despite these criticisms, particularly the criticisms of direct models of participation, the significant influence of deliberative democracy for planning is its vision of democracy. Jane Mansbridge has spoken of a ‘mini-revolt’ which she argues took place as a growing number of political theorists rejected the assumptions of neo-liberalism, particularly assumptions about the adversarial nature of political processes which are required to manage ‘irreconcilable’ and self-regarding interests (Mansbridge 1990, p.14). In contrast, deliberative democratic theory suggests deliberative arenas could help citizens ‘discover and create their common interest, often transforming self interested preferences...’ (Mansbridge 1990, p.14). A similar mini-revolution has occurred in deliberative planning theory (Innes 1995). Before I examine deliberative planning in detail, it is helpful to review the philosophical ideas that have inspired both deliberative democracy and planning. These ideas are closely associated with the work of Jurgen Habermas and his theory of communicative rationality.

2.4. Deliberative Planning: Roots in Communicative Philosophy

Deliberative planning and deliberative democracy has been inspired by the writing of Habermas (1984, 1990 and 1996) and his ideas of communicative rationality, critical argument and uncoerced debate. While other
philosophers have also influenced deliberative planning, it is the influence of Habermas and his suggestion that truth is socially constructed which has focused the attention of deliberative planning theorists' attention on communication processes.

Deliberative theories in planning and democracy have been particularly inspired by Jurgen Habermas's theory of communicative action (1984). This critical theorist sought to complete 'the project of modernity' in so far as this is 'taken to be a matter of rationalisation' (McCarthy 1984, p.VIII in Habermas 1984). Habermas sought to expand the concept of rationality, freeing it from the undue instrumental emphasis that he argued had been placed on the concept during the Enlightenment. He sought to develop a concept of rationality '...that is no longer tied to and limited by, the subjectivistic and individualistic premises of modern philosophy and social theory...' (McCarthy 1984, p.VI; in Habermas 1984). Habermas developed a form of rationality based on an approach to settling disputes through a process of critical argument or 'the giving of reasons-for and reasons-against'. 'And it is in fact, to the experience of achieving mutual understanding in communication that is free from coercion that Habermas looks in developing his idea of rationality' (McCarthy 1984, p.X).

Jurgen Habermas contrasts his ideas of communicative action with instrumental strategic action which he argues has limited our vision when it comes to judging what is rational. Habermas argues:

We call an action oriented to success instrumental when we consider it under the aspect of following technical rules of action and assess the efficiency of an intervention into a complex of circumstances and events. We call an action oriented to success strategic when we consider it under the aspect of following rules of rational choice and assess the efficacy of influencing the decisions of a rational opponent...By contrast, I shall speak of communicative action whenever the actions of the agents involved are co-ordinated not
through egocentric calculations of success but through acts of reaching understanding. In communicative action participants are not primarily oriented to their own individual successes; they pursue their individual goals under the condition that they can harmonize their plans of action on the basis of common situation definitions. In this respect the negotiation of definitions of the situation is an essential element of the interpretative accomplishments required for communicative action (Habermas 1984, pp.285-286).

Habermas envisages a community in which rational outcomes are arrived at through a process of debate. Communicative rationality relates to the extent to which public debate and interaction is free from domination by the actors involved or self-deception (Dryzek 1990, p.15). Habermas develops an ideal speech situation as a 'counterfactual' ideal in which we might imagine people with training and the skills to make arguments, coming together to talk under conditions of free and open discourse and reaching decisions only through the force of the better argument. While Habermas does not intend this as a description of reality, his ethic of communication inspires a vision of a public sphere free from economic and social coercion. In this public sphere speakers appeal to their listeners with arguments which they try to make comprehensible and where speakers aspire to be 'effective', 'sincere', 'legitimate' or appropriate to the context and 'truthful' (Forester 1989, p.36; see Habermas 1984, p.329 Figure 6). In Habermasian critical argument for example statutes are legitimated when they have been met with the assent of all citizens (Bohman and Rehg 1996, p.xv).10

Habermasian theories of communication are not the only influence on deliberative planning. Forester has been influenced by the participatory action research theories associated with John Dewey (1930), Don Schön (1983) and Freire (1970). These theorists suggest we learn as we reflect through action (Schön 1983) and dialogue, reflecting together on our actions and experiences (Friere 1970). Healey is influenced by the ideas of Giddens (1984), when she argues that we are shaped by structures including planning
institutions, but in turn our human agency enables us to shape these structures and their associated power relations (Healey 1995, p.255).

In summary, it is the ideas of communicative rationality as espoused by Habermas that have defined deliberative planning, shaping the general emphasis the theory gives to communication processes in planning (Hoch 1992). I now examine the assumptions and aspirations of deliberative planning theorists in detail, highlighting questions for research.

2.5. A Critical Review: Aims and Assumptions of Deliberative Planning Theory

2.5.1. Introduction

Having discussed the way three streams of thought, urban planning, deliberative democracy and communicative philosophy have influenced the evolution of deliberative planning, I now revisit the theory of deliberative planning in detail. I identify the aims of deliberative planning theory (DPT) as promoting inclusive democratic deliberation, social transformation (toward consensus or enhanced social understanding) and social justice (defined in procedural as well as distributive terms). These aims and their associated assumptions are summarised in Figure Two. In the following discussion, I also consider significant but implicit differences between the leading advocates of deliberative planning theory, Patsy Healey and John Forester and raise questions for further research. These differences can be summarised as models of consensus building and social learning in deliberative planning.

All research is guided by theory. A theory of planning can assist us in several ways since ‘it may bring together essential aspects of what planners actually think, care about and do’ (Reiner 1990, p.66). Seen in this light, deliberative planning is a highly normative theory assisting us in the task of
Inclusive Deliberation
- communicative rationality
- critical argument
- participatory democracy

Social Transformation
Consensus Building
- active citizenship
- collaborative planning builds common interests
- decisions legitimated by consensus

Social Learning
- active citizenship
- deliberation and participatory action enhances understanding
- decisions legitimated by effective voice and uncoerced co-operation

Social Justice
- inclusive deliberation enhances procedural justice
- inclusive deliberation fosters distributive justice

Deliberative Planning Theory
determining a vision or as Reiner notes, 'a belief system' to guide 'what planners should do, how their activities must be structured and what their values ought to be' (Reiner 1990, p.65). It is the aims, aspirations and underlying assumptions of deliberative planning which distinguish deliberative planning from other approaches.

2.5.2. Deliberative planning aims for inclusive deliberation

A primary aim of deliberative planning theory is to provide opportunities for citizens to come together to discuss their environment, identify common or significant concerns and consider options for addressing these concerns. Patsy Healey has summarised this aim as a 'communicative turn' in planning theory (Healey 1992a; Innes 1995 and Sager 1994). Emphasis is placed on debating matters of collective concern through respectful discussion (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998).

Deliberative planning aspires to include the views and concerns of groups like women, ethnic minorities, indigenous people, children and the elderly who have previously not been well represented, or actively marginalised by traditional planning practice (Healey 1996, p.219). To understand why deliberative planning aims for inclusive deliberation we need to examine the assumptions deliberative planning theory makes about the value of communicative rationality, critical argument and democracy. These assumptions are discussed the next section and are also summarised in Figure Two.

Assumptions about rationality

The desire to achieve inclusive public argument can be more clearly understood in light of the assumptions deliberative theorists make about the way citizens learn. The first assumption is that we form our understandings of the world through social interaction with others (Healey 1997, p.50 and
Innes 1994). Deliberative planning rejects the dominance of instrumental rationality in planning. Deliberative planning theorists maintain, like Habermas, that instrumental reasoning has crowded out other opportunities for knowing. Therefore the intent of inclusive deliberation is not simply to provide individuals with equal access to decision-making, but to improve the ability of citizens to reason and understand the world. It is assumed that a more inclusive approach to debate will introduce a broader range of practical, moral and emotional concerns rather than simply privileging science and technical reasoning in planning debate (Healey 1997 and Forester 1999). This view of rationality reflects the Habermasian concepts of communicative rationality. For example it is assumed that a more inclusive approach to the planning debate will broaden the focus of that debate beyond scientific and technical considerations (Sager 1994).

**Assumptions about critical argument**

Second, aiming for inclusive deliberation also involves assumptions about the value of critical argument as a process of debate. Deliberative planning theory assumes that the process of critical argument is inclusive. Once all participants are trained with skills of debate, it is assumed that the process of critical argument will enable a range of voices and concerns to be aired. While Habermas did not intend his theory to be a blueprint for practice, in reality deliberative planning theorists have assumed that deliberation should follow the lines of a critical argument. This immediately raises the question does critical argument, when used in public deliberation, facilitate the opportunity for previously marginalised voices to be heard?

Questioning the value of critical argument is not simply idle speculation. The value of critical argument has been questioned by a number of theorists outside the discipline of planning (Benhabib 1994; Young 1995 and 1997 a and b). Iris Young has pointed out that critical argument is a
western adversarial concept. In the process of critical argument, participants debate issues and concede only to the ‘force of the better argument’. Young argues that this style of discussion privileges the voices of a few citizens, particularly those who can assemble their life experiences into logical debate (Young 1995). This privileging effect is at the expense of those whose speech is halting, or emotional, or whose life experiences may be conveyed better through other communication practices such as story telling, rhetoric, or song.

Young rejects the exclusive use of critical argument. Instead she seeks to foster more inclusive public deliberation by broadening the notion of speaking beyond a liberal and western concept of critical argument. Young argues attention should be paid to a variety of ways of communicating (Young 1995). In his most recent work, deliberative planner John Forester (1999) considers communication methods like storytelling with other participatory rituals like communal meals. He notes these methods are beneficial in fostering an inclusive approach to public deliberation. However Forester’s work does not explicitly consider the limitations of deliberation based solely on critical argument. In New Zealand Maori communities use other rituals in deliberation such as waiata and karakia (Hayward 1995 b and 1996). Can critical argument create new opportunities for voices previously marginalised in debate to contribute to urban planning? Democratic theorist, Iris Young and post-modern writers have challenged assumptions about critical argument arguing we need to develop inclusive ‘ways of knowing and speaking’ to inform planning process and outcomes (hooks 1994; Young 1995 and Sandercock 1998 c).

**Inclusive deliberation: Assumptions about democracy**

Third, in striving for inclusive deliberation, deliberative planning theorists make assumptions about democracy. Planning is conceived of as a
democratic project and deliberative planning theory makes quite specific assumptions about desirable forms of democracy. A desirable form of democracy is assumed to be 'direct or participatory', that is a form of 'decision-making about public affairs in which citizens are directly involved' rather than a liberal or representative model of democracy. Deliberative planning criticises this latter model. It is assumed that democratic deliberation should pursue public interests through reasoned argument, rather than arriving at decisions through a competitive struggle for self interested votes (Young 1995, p.135). Implicit in this argument is the assumption that decisions arrived at through an inclusive process of argument will be 'rational', that is arrived at by a process of reasoning in public, rather than simply reflect an aggregation of private interests (Young 1995, p.135 and Hoch 1992, pp.206-215).

2.5.3. Aiming for social justice in urban planning

In addition to the aims of inclusive deliberation and associated assumptions about critical arguments, deliberative planning theory aims to address issues of social justice. Deliberative planning discusses social justice in terms of both the procedures by which decisions to allocate resources are made and the way benefits and burdens are distributed within an urban area. Therefore in their aim to enhance social justice, deliberative planning theorists make two essential assumptions about the nature of justice:

Assumptions about the procedural nature of justice

First, deliberative theory of planning assumes that just decision-making is decision-making which involves inclusive procedures and practices. It is assumed that providing opportunity for those affected by a decision to have a say in that decision, will be fairer than a process that makes a decision without the direct input of the those affected. It is argued that minority groups who have had little influence in the past, should have an opportunity
to have their perspectives heard in planning debate (Innes 1994; and Hunold and Young 1998).

**Assumptions about distributive justice**

Second, deliberative planning theory assumes that just outcomes will result from a more inclusive deliberative process. In distributive terms, it is assumed that an inclusive deliberative process will result in a more just and accountable distribution of planning outcomes, reducing for example inequalities in the distribution of benefits and burdens (Hunold and Young 1998). However critics of deliberative planning have attempted to broaden the focus of discussions about justice from narrow conceptions of distributive rights to institutional procedures of decision-making. These critics argue that not enough attention has been paid to the outcomes of deliberative processes (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998).

**2.5.4. Transformative aims: Consensus building or social learning?**

Deliberative planning not only aims to include citizens in deliberation and enhance social justice, it also aims to transform the attitudes of citizens, their social relations and the political, economic and social institutions which influence their lives (Forester 1999). John Forester elaborates on this ambitious agenda when he argues that 'the transformations at stake are those not only of knowledge or class structure, but of people more or less able to act practically together to better their lives, people we might call citizens' (Forester 1999, p.116). The transformative ambition of deliberative planning is clear. What is less clear however is the nature of those transformations. There are some significant divergences in this regard between the two leading advocates of deliberative planning, Patsy Healey and John Forester. Both planners argue that they wish to transform planning, but in reality, their visions are significantly different (Healey 1997 and Forester 1999). Figure Two summarises the differences in these two
approaches, describing a consensus building and a social learning model of deliberative planning.

**Consensus building model of deliberative planning**

Healey (1997) typifies the consensus building model of deliberative planning at the micro and macro policy level. Healey’s writing is representative of other deliberative planning theorists who also strive for consensus (Innes 1994 and 1995; Bryson and Crosby 1993; Hillier 1993 and Susskind and Cruickshank 1987). Healey argues deliberative planning can transform both micro and macro level planning practice towards consensus building outcomes. She defines the micro-level of planning as the day-to-day practice of planning, involving the stakes, arenas, routines and style of discourse (Healey 1997, pp.312-313; see also Innes 1994 and 1995; and Sager 1994). The macro-level of planning by contrast, is defined as the ‘hard’ institutional ‘infrastructure’, the ‘formal systems and constitution of government’ (Healey 1997, pp.313-314). Healey aims for transformation of the macro institutions of planning, but she gives little specific indication of which institutional practices or constitutional arrangements should change and in what way (Healey et al 1995 and Healey 1997). However she provides a more detailed discussion of the nature of transformations she intends for micro-level planning practices.

Healey is keen to encourage new, collective ways of thinking and acting, where stakeholders have opportunities to re-frame and re-structure their ways of proceeding in an interactive process. She uses the term ‘collaborative’ planning (Healey 1997, p.312), to emphasise a transformation in public debate towards consensus and co-operation, or to ‘collectively make sense together while living differently’ (Healey 1992 a, p.143). She argues that we need to develop skills in ‘translation, in constructive critique and respectful action’ in order to realise the potential of planning which is
'understood as collectively and intersubjectively addressing and working out how to act in respect of common concerns about urban and regional environments' (Healey 1992a, p.159).

The implication in Healey's writing and others who argue in a similar vein (Innes 1994 and Sager 1994), is that broad, consensual outcomes can be reached although participants have different lifestyles and hold different value systems. This assumes however that consensus is possible and desirable in planning. Before providing a critical review of the assumptions of consensual transformation, I wish to examine another vision of transformation as espoused by Forester (1999).

**Social learning model of deliberative planning**

In Forester's view the transformative potential of deliberative planning lies not in its ability to promote consensus, but in its potential to enhance social learning. Forester argues that the division of planning settings into adversarial or consensual is 'too simplistic' (Forester 1999, p.84). He argues that the challenge of democratic deliberation is not to transcend or avoid conflict, but to deal with differences, encouraging learning and relationship building which he argues is a process far beyond consensus building or deal-making. Like Healey, he calls for transformation of macro-level institutions. Like Healey, Forester does not specify what these are. His research does however focus on micro-level transformations toward more effective social learning and listening by planners and citizens (Forester 1993 b, pp.186-209 and 1999, pp.134-136). From this perspective, the aim of deliberative planning should be to broaden the world-view and understanding of all participants, but in particular planners (Forester 1999, p.1). Forester echoes some of the arguments of democratic theorist, Iris Young. Young argues that understanding one another does not mean finding the same or consensual
meanings in each other’s words, but rather that speakers learn to appreciate each other’s differences or alternative viewpoints (Young 1995 and 1997 b).

Forester (1999) does not reject consensus. However building consensus is not the significant end point in deliberative planning as is implicitly assumed in consensus building models (Healey 1997 pp. 33-36 and pp. 263-8 and Innes 1995). Rather Forester is interested in the way planners can ‘...encourage public learning about social significance as well as about positive fact, about historical identity and difference as well as shared common ground’ (Forester 1999, p. 61). In this light, Forester suggests that the transformative achievements of deliberative planning have not been sufficiently recognised to date. He claims that:

...many analyses of dialogue and democratic argument do not go nearly far enough to do justice to the learning that dialogical and argumentative processes can really promote. Inspired by liberal models of voice and empowerment, many analyses unwittingly reduce empowerment to “being heard” and learning to considering seriously local as well as expert knowledge. Participation is thus reduced to speaking, and learning is reduced to knowing- and the transformations of done-to into doers, spectators and victims into activists, fragmented groups into renewed bodies, old resignation into new beginnings, are lost from our view (Forester 1999, p.115).

Forester does not clearly specify what social learning might entail, but his writing echoes the early urban planner Mumford and Friedmann’s later work (Friedmann 1987). Friedmann challenged the planner to engage in ‘social learning’ through radical, ‘transactive planning’ in which planners and the community acquire knowledge through planning action (Friedmann 1987, pp.181-223). Sandercock also speaks of social learning, although for Sandercock, the learning that occurs through participatory action is directed at the community, rather than the planner and is intended to empower and be informed by those marginalised in the community: ‘the voices of the borderlands’ (Sandercock 1998 c, pp.107-126).
In Forester’s vision, social learning is an ambiguous process that can be interpreted either as a reformist project encouraging greater self-awareness or in more radical terms as a programme for active resistance of state power. Certainly, Forester concentrates on micro-level communication processes between the planner and the citizen. This leaves Forester’s work open to the criticism that, like the early planner Mumford, he is keen to encourage self-education, but his plans are essentially utopian ‘with no program for overturning the existing structures of power’ (Friedmann 1987, p.200).

Forester’s analysis of social learning concentrates on planners, the ‘deliberative practitioner’ and the learning that occurs primarily from the perspective of the planner (Forester 1993 and 1999). Forester’s work is also vulnerable to criticism made of democratic theorists who seek self-transformation (Warren 1992). Warren notes that when people are engaged in participatory action they are bound to learn something, but they may become more enlightened without becoming more tolerant or public spirited. Warren argues theories of social transformation need to specify the values of democracy which are sought through social learning and explicitly encourage greater reciprocity and increased respect for difference and tolerance (Warren 1992).

Forester’s interest in social learning can be interpreted in a more radical light however. Like Friedmann (1987) and Sandercock (1998 b and c), Forester argues that planners need to engage with new social movements in a process of social learning (Forester 1989, p.102). Here Forester leaves open the possibility which is more fully articulated by Friedmann (1987) and Sandercock (1998), of planners and new social movements helping marginalised groups within the community by raising public awareness and understanding in ways which encourage marginalised citizens to mobilise
and strategize against the state (Friedmann 1987, pp.302-305 and Sandercock 1998 c, pp.129-160).

Overall, the transformative aims of deliberative planning, whether they are intended to achieve consensual outcomes as Healey suggests, or enhanced social learning as Forester concludes, are predicated on a number of assumptions that need closer investigation. The first are assumptions about what motivates citizen participation.

**Assumptions about citizenship**

In its transformative intent, deliberative planning theory makes a number of assumptions about citizens that distinguish it from other models of planning. First, deliberative planning theory in both consensus building and social learning models assumes that citizens are motivated by more than self-interest. It is assumed that citizens want communion, that they seek to understand the views of others and are capable of empathising with others. Deliberative planning theory assumes that given the opportunity to hear about the needs of others, citizens are capable of putting aside their own narrowly defined range of material interests to achieve a collective goal. Implicit within this assumption is a belief that participation in public affairs is part of the good life, in that active citizenship it is a morally valuable activity.

**Assumptions about consensus**

As noted earlier, deliberative planning theorists who specifically aim for transformation toward consensual planning outcomes also assume that consensus is both achievable and desirable. These theorists argue inclusive discussion may facilitate collective agreement on strategies to address issues like environmental degradation (Healey 1997 and Innes 1994). However Iris Young has criticised theory that tends to inappropriately 'assume that
discussion processes which aim to reach understanding must either begin with shared understandings or take a common good as their goal' (Young 1995, p.134).\(^{14}\) Young is concerned that these assumptions minimise cultural diversity.\(^{15}\) She argues that assumptions of unity can undermine democratic potential because the ‘common good’ is inevitably defined by dominant groups (Young, 1995, pp.138-139).

Debate about the value of consensus raises interesting questions for empirical research, particularly the possibility that generalisable interests may silence dissenting voices. In New Zealand for example the environmental movement is chiefly directed towards preservation of wilderness and at times peak environmental interest groups have been very intolerant of Maori claims of ownership or use of natural resources. Environmentalists complain that management ‘mistakes’ by Maori could jeopardise the ‘common goal’ of saving wilderness (Hay and Haward 1988). In New Zealand, the environment often holds meaning for the Maori community which are not shared by the Pakeha community.\(^{16}\) However Young does not rule out the possibility of establishing shared understandings during public deliberation. Young’s emphasis on finding ways to understand difference in the absence of a prior generalisable interest leaves open the possibility that citizens’ preferences could be transformed through discussion (Young 1995, p.142).

**Assumptions about learning**

In aiming for transformation, deliberative planning theory makes assumptions about the way that citizens learn. Deliberative planning tends to assume that people learn through discussion. There is an implicit expectation that providing citizens with more opportunities to speak will mechanistically improve understanding. However while the assumption that citizens learn through deliberation lies at the heart of deliberative
planning theory, some deliberative planning theorists have been influenced by the ideas of radical planning and participatory action research. These schools of thought suggest we also learn through "doing". For example John Forester notes:

> We learn from more than arguments and voice in particular settings, but how we do so is far from clear. In negotiations, in participatory groups, and in ordinary meetings too, we learn not just with our ears but with our eyes, not just with our heads but our hearts. We come not only to hear new information we find relevant, but we come to see new issues that need our attention. We come not only to revise our sense of strategies, but to develop new relationships with others too (Forester 1999, p129)

Forester's comments, assume that providing more opportunities to speak will improve our ability to listen, but he also assumes that social learning is enhanced by participation in planning.

**Assumptions about change-agents**

The transformative aims of deliberative planning, both consensual and social learning, are based on assumptions about how change can be brought about. Deliberative planning theory makes assumptions about the role of the planner and new social movements as agents of change. First, the **planner** is assumed to be a key agent of change, capable of facilitating communication and reflecting critically on the ways citizens' beliefs, comments, trust and attention may be influenced or manipulated in discussion (Forester 1993 a, p.160). The planner can assist the community to reach some understandings about what action to take to address their concerns. The planner is more than a mediator, facilitator, or referee. In deliberative planning, the planner is an agent for resistance, seeking to emancipate the powerless. As noted in chapter one ideally the deliberative planner is: "...constantly assessing the way power and powerlessness is distributed in a community with the intention of challenging 'illegitimately powerful interests who act to
suppress citizen’s access to scientific and political discourses through strategies of deceit and manipulation…’ (Hillier 1994, pp.135-136).

Are the expectations that deliberative planning theory places on planners too great? Can planners reflect critically on their own practice and that of their institutions in ways that help to empower marginalised communities?

Second, in its transformative vision, deliberative planning theory assumes that citizens can act collectively and deliberately through NSMs to effect change. Forester suggests that new social movements can direct public attention and in the process, improve our ability to listen as a community (Forester 1989). He defines listening as ‘an action of being attentive, a way of being in a moral world’ (Forester 1989, p.108). Forester argues ‘...power structures involve collective relationships and require collective strategies (e.g. social movements) if they are to be challenged’ (Forester 1989, p.102).

In his comments, Forester anticipates recent research by John Dryzek (1997 b). Dryzek concludes that the state can not be the site of emancipatory planning, because the capitalist state must ultimately support the demands of business and capital accumulation. Dryzek looks instead to the efforts of new social movements and non-governmental organisations to facilitate democratic deliberative planning. Sandercock (1998 c) too, suggests that community reformers and NSMs are important agents of resistance promoting inclusive deliberation.

Deliberative planning has also raised questions about what role the state can play in sponsoring inclusive deliberation (Healey et al 1995; Sager 1994 and Innes 1995). The liberal democratic state has a tradition of institutionalised and constitutional mechanisms to protect free speech, freedom of association, ensure accountability and provide legitimacy for
democratic deliberation (Hayward 1994 and 1995 a). There have been attempts to consider the way local and regional government might be structured to facilitate inclusive deliberation in planning and resist anti-democratic pressures of market liberalism (Healey et al 1995). However Held (1987) and Warren (1992) caution us from any simplistic assumption that through participation people will become respectful of the rights of others. If NSMs are to be a site of collective deliberation and resistance to illegitimate exercise of power, we need to consider how these movements relate to the existing ‘legal framework that protects and nurtures the enactment of the principle of autonomy’ (Held 1987, p.281).

2.6. Summary

This chapter has traced the evolution of a deliberative planning. I have identified the antecedents of deliberative planning in urban theory, deliberative democracy and communicative philosophy, summarised in Figure Two. Discussion then turned to examine the aims of deliberative planning. At the beginning of this study I posed four research questions. Question one asked, ‘What are the aims of deliberative planning theory?’

In answer to question one I identified the following aims of deliberative planning and in the process identified two models of deliberative planning theory. The aims of deliberative planning are:

- To foster inclusive, democratic deliberation;
- To effect social transformation in ways which encourage consensus building or social learning;
- To enhance social justice by ensuring planning procedures are open and inclusive and that the benefits and burdens are
I analysed the assumptions which underpin these aims, looking particularly at rationality, critical argument, participatory democracy, citizen motivation, assumptions about justice, the value of consensus, ways of learning and agents of transformation. In the remainder of this study, I examine the aims of deliberative planning through empirical research. In the following chapter I outline the methods that will be used for research into three case studies of public deliberation in urban planning in Christchurch, New Zealand.

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1 Howard's *Garden Cities of To-morrow* (1902) envisaged self-sufficient towns of a maximum population size, located in the country. In contrast, Le Corbusier's radiant city of *La Ville Radieuse* (1935) was elitist in conception, looking to technology and the skyscraper to address urban problems (Fishman 1998).

2 Haarhoff (1998) argues these ideas have roots in modernism of the Enlightenment.

3 Fourier (1772-1837) was a utopian socialist who developed visions of ideal institutions of equal citizens, while the industrialist Robert Owen (1771-1858) aimed to provide workers with decent living standards and moral guidance. In contrast, Saint Simon (1760-1825) was concerned with social justice but his utopia was based on a vision of an industrial hierarchy (Fishman 1998).

4 The garden city concept was to influence Christchurch to a limited extent. In reality, the Christchurch version of leafy suburbs was far removed from the self-sufficient towns of Howard's vision (Haarhoff 1998).

5 City Beautiful was an urban design movement which focused on expert led civic rejuvenation.

6 Habermas speaks of the Enlightenment influence as the 'colonization' of the 'life world' of culture and society as administrators with control of technical expertise began to 'invade' processes once 'constructed and conducted' by ordinary people (Habermas cited in Dryzek 1990, p.5).

7 Sandercock notes that much contemporary planning continues to be influenced by the ideas of rational comprehensive planning (Sandercock 1998 c).


9 Illustrated by Etzioni (1968). It is in this period the influential British planning report, the Skeffington Report (1969), reviewed planning processes in the United Kingdom, an innovative but ultimately 'cautious document' aimed at increasing participation in planning (Skeffington Report cited in Ward 1994). Leonie Sandercock (1998 a)
has noted that ‘equity planners’ were inspired by the advocacy movement. They were planners who aimed to ‘make alliances with and work for progressive politicians, aiming to redistribute resources from local elites to the poor’ (Sandercock 1998 a).

10 Other philosophers echo this emphasis on commonality through public reasoning. John Rawls argues that the ‘ultimate form of practical rationality is deliberative’ (Bohman 1996, p.xviii), but Rawls acknowledges however that the ideal of public reasoning does not often lead to agreement (Rawls 1997, p.138).

11 That is use of objective, scientific reasoning to ‘devise, select and effect good means to clarified ends’ (Dryzek 1990,p.4).

12 There is some difference of opinion between Healey (1997) and Forester (1993 a) over the importance of the Habermasian ‘ideal speech situation’ as a counter factual for critical argument. John Forester argues that an ideal speech setting in which deliberation is unconstrained by power and social pressure it has almost no bearing on his model of deliberative planning. Forester argues his own vision does not require the impossibility of a ‘neutral stage’ or ‘ideally literal setting’. He draws instead on the communicative ethics of Habermas, aspiring to create sincere, appropriate, understandable and accurate planning debate (Forester, 1993 a). Nevertheless it is the Habermasian concept of unconstrained critical argument which is central to both Healey’s vision of planning and Forester’s view of ‘genuinely democratic politics’ (Forester 1993 a, p.36).

13 Liberal democracy is defined here as a system of rule ‘embracing elected ‘officers’ who undertake to ‘represent’ the interests and/or views of citizens within the framework of ‘the rule of law’ (Held 1987,p.4).

14 While achieving consensus has troubled those interested in deliberative democracy, it has not been seen as an impossible obstacle. For example in developing his theory of discursive democracy, John Dryzek has acknowledged that policy discussions are ‘pervaded by conflicting values’ (Dryzek 1990, p.53). Dryzek aims to establish understanding across different frames of reference but he recognises that over-arching consensus may be unattainable (Dryzek 1990, p.54). However if agreement is not reached, Dryzek argues that ‘a generalisable interest’ may still exist beneath the surface misconceptions of actors’ (Dryzek 1990, p.54). For example Dryzek argues that environmental integrity is one such generalisable interest because large numbers of people have a stake in the environment and because we depend on the limited capacity of the environment to support human life (Dryzek 1987).

15 Young also argues that assuming a general interest obviates the need for self-transformation (an outcome valued by deliberative democrats) Why seek self-transformation if we already agree? (Young 1995).

16 Young stresses that it is important that theorists acknowledge ‘unshared meanings’ in public deliberation (Young 1995, p.148). She gives the example of the way the Black Hills of South Dakota have a particular meaning for the local Lakota Indian community.
Chapter Three

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

I argued in chapter two that deliberative planning theorists have a normative democratic vision of collective reasoning in which citizens come together to address planning problems. Deliberative planning theory assumes that an inclusive deliberative process of critical argument will promote social justice and encourage consensus or social learning. A critical review of deliberative planning theory in the previous chapter identified a number of unresolved questions that need to be explored in a specific local context. One such context exists in New Zealand, where planning and local government institutions have been restructured providing the potential for greater public deliberation in planning.

This study was guided by the following research questions which I initially posed in chapter one:

1. What are the aims of deliberative planning theory?
2. Can these aims be achieved through greater public deliberation in urban planning practice? If not, why not? If so, under what conditions?
3. What are the implications of these empirical observations for deliberative planning theory?
4. What are the implications of the research findings for urban planning practice in New Zealand?
The research in this study proceeded in an iterative manner. As a result of the aims and assumptions of deliberative planning identified in chapter two, I was able to tighten the focus of the empirical research question number two by adding the following sub questions:

2. Can the aims of deliberative planning theory be achieved through greater public deliberation in urban planning practice? If not, why not? If so, under what conditions?

2.1. Was the planning process inclusive?
   2.1(a). Who got involved?
   2.1(b). Were there attempts to facilitate participation across differences of gender, culture, social or economic status, or educational and technical skills? How?

2.2. Did the process facilitate consensus or social learning?
   2.2(a). Were shared norms or values identified in the process?
   2.2(b). Was trust, empathy or respectful co-operation encouraged? How?
   2.2(c). Were new understandings facilitated? If so, for whom and about what?
   2.2(d). Did participants feel listened to or misunderstood?

2.3. Did the deliberative process address issues of social justice? If not, why not? If so:
   2.3(a). How were issues of distributive justice addressed?
      2.3(a)i. Whose interests or values were identified with planning outcomes?
   2.3(b). How were issues of procedural justice addressed?
      2.3(b)i. What were the agendas, rules and rituals of deliberation and who set these?
      2.3(b)ii. How were procedural disputes addressed?

2.4. In what ways and to what extent did the facilitator and/or sponsor of debate influence the process of public deliberation in planning?
3.2. Review of Empirical Research

There have been few empirical evaluations of deliberative planning practice. In New Zealand, notable exceptions include research by Simon Kerr (1995), Christine Cheyne (1997), Cushla Barfoot (forthcoming), Forgie et al (1999) and Bostwick (1998). Kerr assessed the way communication is distorted in the public policy process after interviews with key participants in a Christchurch solid and hazardous waste management taskforce (Kerr 1995). Cheyne evaluated the annual planning process for Palmerston North’s local authority through observation, document analysis and interviews with key actors. Cheyne’s work identified the potential for a more deliberative approach to urban planning, but her attention focused on a critique of the prevailing neo-liberal conditions in which mainstream planning occurs rather than an assessment of the outcomes of deliberative practice (Cheyne 1997). Cushla Barfoot assessed the strengths and weaknesses of deliberative planning from the perspective of improving iwi consultation under the Resource Management Act 1991. Barfoot interviewed a very limited number of participants in wastewater treatment in the cities of Mangere and Christchurch (Barfoot forthcoming). The study by Forgie et al (1999) reviewed current planning practice and assessed the need for a deliberative approach to urban planning in New Zealand. However this comprehensive review of secondary sources does not evaluate the practice of deliberation in planning. Bostwick’s 1998 study assessed the potential of citizen juries as a tool for deliberative planning. Like the Forgie et al study (1999), this research drew on secondary sources to discuss the potential for deliberative planning in Wellington, New Zealand.

The relative shortage of first-hand empirical assessments of deliberative planning practice is not confined to New Zealand (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998). A deficiency of empirical research reinforces
the perception that theory and practice in planning are 'further apart than ever' (Sorensen and Auster 1998). As noted in chapter two, one of the criticisms of deliberative planning is that it is too idealistic and impractical and that deliberative theory focuses attention on the process of planning at the expense of investigating the outcomes of planning practice (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998).

Most international research to date focuses on the potential of deliberative planning rather than the practice of deliberation in planning. And few studies assess deliberation planning from the perspective of participants. A notable exception is Leonie Sandercock's recent work *Towards Cosmopolis* (1998). Sandercock weaves together experiences of people normally marginalised in planning, or 'voices from the borderlands' and 'the folks who wear suits' who ground their approach to inclusive planning in the ideas of Jurgen Habermas (Sandercock 1998 c). Sandercock's work is the exception in reporting on the perspectives of citizens. Other deliberative planning research tends to focus attention on the micro-politics of planning practice and evaluates deliberative planning as perceived by planners (Forester 1999, 1993 a, and 1989; Healey 1992 b, and 1996 and Hillier 1993). This latter approach to research examines planners engaged in daily deliberative interactions, using observation and interview.

Other studies have attempted a wider analysis of deliberative planning practice. Tewdwr-Jones and Thomas (1998) assess the institutional and political constraints on public deliberation in planning in a case study of Brecon Beacons National Park and Davoudi and Healey (1995) examine a range of factors which shape city planning initiatives in the United Kingdom. However neither study examines the process from the perspective of citizens. Despite recent interest in evaluation of deliberative planning,
there are few empirical assessments of citizens' perceptions of practice (Tuler and Webler 1999 and Lauber and Knuln 1999).

John Dryzek acknowledges the limitation of current research noting that critics correctly point to the way advocates of deliberative planning tend to draw on the same case studies, particularly the Berger Inquiry of 1977 (Dryzek 1997a, p.199). This enquiry used a participatory approach to assess the impact of a proposed oil pipeline in the Canadian North. Dryzek argues that a careful search can reveal other similar cases. Further to Dryzek, I argue that the failure to assess outcomes of public deliberation in planning from the perspective of citizens or to relate these assessments to democratic theory, is a weakness of contemporary research that I address in this study.

3.3. Research Methods: A New Institutional Approach

To answer the research questions I posed at the beginning of this chapter requires analysis of the planning process at both micro and macro levels (Davoudi and Healey 1995 and Healey 1996). The micro-analysis approach entails investigation of the day-to-day implementation of deliberative strategies, including the 'discourses, language forms, organisation of arenas of social interaction' (Davoudi and Healey 1995; Bryson and Crosby 1993; Forester 1989 and 1993b; Healey 1996 and Hillier 1993). One common method for conducting detailed micro-analysis is an empirical research approach known as naturalistic enquiry or field study (Lofland and Lofland 1995). The proponents of naturalistic enquiry argue that 'only through direct experience' can one learn about social life (Lofland and Lofland 1995, p.3). Naturalistic researchers advocate the use of techniques such as participant observation and intensive interviewing (Tollich and Davidson 1999). The naturalistic approach to enquiry suggests that through direct observation of the social world we can gather particularly rich data about the meanings
individuals ascribe to their environment, their perceptions, feelings and actions of others (Lofland and Lofland 1995, p.3).

Some of the limitations of direct observation as a method of conducting detailed micro-analysis will be noted presently, but one major limitation needs to be discussed immediately. Detailed empirical enquiry can preclude analysis of how external forces in the local community might shape both the researcher and the researched (Kincheloe and McLaren 1994, p.144). Lofland and Lofland comment that there may be matters related to political or economic systems that can not be ‘reached’ through direct observation (Lofland and Lofland 1995, p.17).

In order to gain a macro-level insight into influences and processes that can constrain, structure or interact with specific local processes, researchers need to inquire into the political economy and socio-cultural setting. This *macro-analysis* can be achieved by asking questions about ‘interests, stakes, strategies, networks and who gains and loses’ (Davoudi and Healey 1995) and about social relationships and institutions (Tollich and Davidson 1999).

Macro-analysis also involves asking questions about the political and economic institutions that structure planning practice and the cultural, social or economic influences that influence these practices. This is not, as Sandercock puts it:

...[to] fall into an analysis in which the economic forces of globalisation are seen to be shaping everything (Harvey 1989; Jameson 1991 and Castells 1996). To paraphrase Calvino, it leads us to accept as necessary that which is not so. It turns us into theoretical couch potatoes in a nihilistic post-modern scenario—death by paralysis (Sandercock 1998 c, pp.2-3).

A research focus that is orientated entirely toward determining the influence of political, economic or socio-cultural forces us, as Sandercock indicates, to
minimise the importance of individual autonomy and the critical micro-level initiatives which occur in communities everywhere.

In this study a macro research focus is complemented by asking questions of the micro-level of social interaction. This dual focus is characteristic of a general approach to research known as 'new institutionalist' (Davoudi 1995, pp.225-230 and Healey et al 1995, pp.10-15). Central to this research approach is the recognition that individuals exist in a world 'structured by power relations deriving from economic, political and cultural organisation' (Healey 1996). However following Giddens (1984), the new institutionalist research assumes that 'people are not at the mercy of this structure' since individual agency is capable of re-enacting, or reforming power structures, through 'deliberately acknowledging them or seeking to change them' (Healey et al 1995, pp.14-15). New institutional research echoes the arguments of critical theory which suggests that to date, we have poorly understood the way external forces can interact at a local level. Critical theorists argue there is a need for a more sensitive insight into the complex and sometimes contradictory ways that the forces of political economy may operate at a local level (Kincheloe and McLaren 1994).

I considered alternative research methods while developing the research strategy for this study. In particular I assessed methods of research known as 'grounded theory'. The term grounded theory was coined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and subsequently developed in slightly different ways by them (Glaser 1992; and Strauss and Corbin 1990). Grounded theories are inductively derived from the systematic collection and analysis of data gathered from the study of the phenomena that the theory purports to represent. Grounded theory represents an attempt to develop theory from systematic procedures similar to the inductive research methods of some physical scientists (Tollich and Davidson 1999). This research approach
has been praised for its attempt to link theory and empirical research, but the approach developed particularly by Glaser, focuses on micro-level social interactions.\(^3\)

When assessing the potential of grounded theory as a research approach, I concluded that the grounded theorists’ approach to ‘coding’ statements and observations can result in a micro-social focus that encourages the researcher to interpret the comments of interviewed participants without sufficient reference to socio-economic, political or environmental contexts (Annells 1996 and Glaser 1992).\(^4\) Moreover, grounded theory seeks to test theory generated within an inductive framework where theory ‘emerges out of and is then organised around an emerging theoretical explanation of the data’ (Tollich and Davidson 1999). However in the research reported in this study, I was particularly interested in exploring the assumptions of deliberative planning theory.

Although grounded theory was initially considered as a research method, new institutionalist research approaches appeared to provide an opportunity for researchers to reflect upon existing theory through empirical observation. The new institutionalist approach develops theoretical explanations from data without restricting the focus to micro or macro level empirical interactions. Like grounded theory, the new institutionalist approach allows the researcher to consider other sources of information such as historical interpretations of events, but it weaves analysis of dominant moral structures or accounts of political struggle around coded comments of participants, to build conclusions on the basis of all information.

In the next section, I outline how data collection proceeded and discuss how cases were selected and what field techniques were used.
3.4. Research Strategy

The data collection for this research was undertaken in several stages between 1995 and 1999 (Table One and Appendix One). Data collection involved unstructured information gleaning, case study selection, participant observation, focus groups and intensive interviewing. These stages were closely inter-connected with several data collection techniques often occurring at the same time. In what follows, I provide a summary and critical reflection of these research methods.

3.4.1. Information ‘gleaning’

The first stage of research comprised unstructured information gleaning about deliberative planning theory and local practice. I was encouraged by Lofland and Lofland’s (1995) suggestion of ‘starting where you are’ through building on experiences with which you have familiarity. First, I undertook a scoping exercise that involved approaching twenty-five key informants from the Canterbury region and Christchurch to help identify potential case studies. I attended three workshops for professional planners interested in participatory approaches in planning and used these networking opportunities to identify more case study examples. I also spoke to planners and councillors known to me in Wellington, Auckland and Palmerston North in order to elicit case comparisons before confirming my choice of local sites.

The informants I interviewed included planners, community leaders and environmental activists who were recommended using a snowballing technique of referral. These scoping interviews involved a telephone call or face-to-face meeting lasting between fifteen minutes and two hours. I asked open, probing questions about the informants’ experience of public consultation and their knowledge of current or recent participatory planning initiatives at the urban or regional level. The interviews continued until I
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<td><strong>Unstructured Information</strong></td>
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<td>• “gleaning” (newspapers etc.)</td>
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<td><strong>Case Study Selection</strong></td>
<td>• Gather background information</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Determine theoretical sampling</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Gain access to the field through introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Informal scoping interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Literature review</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Key informant interviews (n=14)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participant Observation</strong></td>
<td>• Data collection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 300 hours:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Waste Water:</td>
<td>• Preliminary analysis of data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended workshop meetings and special public meetings, hui and council committee meetings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sumner:</td>
<td>• Develop and reflect on the questions for interviews and focus groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended public meetings and planning hearings, resident association meetings and a concept plan meeting.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Agenda 21</td>
<td>• Maintain a watching brief on process and outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended (and facilitated on one occasion) public forums, seminars and committee management meetings.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Group Interviews</strong></td>
<td>• Reflect on theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Focus Group Interviews</td>
<td>• Develop a conceptual framework for analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Waste Water (2) n=16</td>
<td>• Integrate data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sumner (3) n=22</td>
<td>• Discuss my initial observation with participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Agenda 21 (1) n=8</td>
<td>• Reflect on theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intensive Interviews</strong></td>
<td>• Develop a conceptual framework for analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wastewater n=12</td>
<td>• Reflect on focus group results and participant observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sumner n=7</td>
<td>• Reflect on theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Agenda 21 n=4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Results Presentation and Feedback</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Presentations of analyses to Christchurch City Council staff and Councillors (n=3).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dissemination of analysis to participants, Community Presentations (n=3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Code responses to analysis</td>
<td>• Integration of responses into final analysis</td>
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was satisfied that there were no new cases of public deliberation in urban planning in the local region.

During the first stage of research, I asked key informants to identify relevant files, archives, minutes, tapes and other resources that highlighted local planning experiences and outcomes. For a period of three weeks, I employed a research assistant who was briefed on case study protocol and proposed broad coding techniques (Yin 1994), to search for relevant documents in the Christchurch City Council and The Press archives. I reviewed and analysed the content of the documents in the manner of a literature review rather than a 'content analysis' (Neuman 1994, p.29). There was some information held on file which was not available to Pakeha researchers because it involved information about sites that were tapu. 'Silent files' is a technique council staff use to alert colleagues to culturally sensitive cases.5

3.4.2. Case study selection

The second stage of my research involved the selection of case studies of public deliberation in planning. Case study research usually involves an in-depth, intensive examination of people; organisations or groups over time (Neuman 1994, p.27). In selecting case study sites, Neuman advocates taking time to ensure that the case will yield a richness of data in particular, cases should reflect a 'web of relations, variety of activities' and 'diverse events' (Neuman 1994, p.338). Similarly Lofland and Lofland (1995, pp.13-16) advocate evaluating data sites for the richest possible data which will be ideally collected through 'face-to-face contact' and 'prolonged immersion' in the field (Lofland and Lofland 1995, p.16).

When conducting case study research the researcher inevitably chooses between a single case approach and a multiple case study design. Yin advocates selecting a single case only when the case obviously meets a
clearly articulated set of theoretical propositions or conditions, or where the case is unique or reveals previously inaccessible material (Yin 1994, p.38). With multiple cases, Yin notes that every case should serve a specific purpose. Yin suggests cases are selected because they are predicted to reveal similar results; a 'literal replication' study, or contrasting results for predictable reasons: a 'theoretical replication' study. Yin (1994, p.9) acknowledges case study research is frequently criticised for providing little basis for scientific generalisation and argues such criticism misinterprets the way case study findings can be generalised. He suggests that case studies are generalisable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes (Yin 1994, p.10). Yin goes on to argue that theoretical replication is a valid way of selecting case studies and that:

...in this sense the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a 'sample', and the investigator's goal is to expand and generalise theories (analytic generalisation), and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalisation) (Yin 1994, p.10).

In the process of selecting cases for the study, I made a particular effort to interview key informants from cases that appeared, from initial discussion, to use intensive community deliberation as a self-conscious planning technique. The interviews were conducted by telephone or in person. I told informants of my research interest and the nature of the preliminary interview. They were asked if they were available to be interviewed again if the case was selected for study. The interviews were not tape-recorded, but I made extensive notes and reviewed them after each interview. My intent was to gain an overview history of the case and an impression of the nature and extent of public consultation involved.

Yin (1994) argues that in selecting exemplary case studies the researcher must focus on identifying significant cases which are unusual or of great public significance and/or illustrate underlying issues of national
importance in theoretical, policy or practical terms (Yin 1994, p.147). For a researcher studying grass roots public participation, Yin’s criteria pose something of a dilemma. The majority of cases of public deliberation in planning focus on cases of small or regional scale planning. None of the cases identified in the scoping study fitted Yin’s criteria of national public policy significance.

Eventually three cases were chosen. Each case aimed to engage a diverse range of participants in genuine and extensive dialogue about urban planning. I used Yin’s principle of ‘theoretical replication’ as a guide to help me make my final choice. Each case was predicted to reveal contrasting results in theory. Deliberative planning and democratic theory assumes that planning cases will have different outcomes depending on whether they are sponsored by the state or new social movements. Deliberative planning theory assumes exercises promoted by NSMs will be more successful and more likely to resist the power of state and capital than public forums sponsored by a liberal, capitalist state (Healey 1997 and Dryzek 1996 a).

The cases I selected were practical examples of public deliberation in planning. The motivation of these real-life cases was political rather than theoretical. They were not designed to test deliberative theory, they were examples of public deliberation in planning to achieve certain political objectives. However the cases provided an opportunity to examine the assumptions of deliberative planning theory in practice.

The first case concerned the Bromley Liquid Waste Treatment Working Party (Wastewater case). It was selected using theoretical replication as an example of a public deliberation exercise initiated by the local council for the city of Christchurch. The development of a Sumner Concept Plan was selected as an example of a public deliberation about urban planning which was sponsored jointly by a residents association and
the local council. The third case was the local Otautahi-Christchurch Agenda 21 Forum (Agenda 21), which was selected following the principal of theoretical replication, as a new social movement that organises public forums to debate urban and resource planning options in Christchurch.

3.4.3. Participation observation

Having selected the cases for study, my research involved data collection as a participant observer in each case. In total I spent over 100 hours observing deliberative planning processes in the three case studies. Participant observation is sometimes termed ‘field’ or ‘qualitative observation’ (Lofland and Lofland 1995). It involves direct observation of a process where by an investigator ‘establishes and sustains a many-sided and relatively long-term relationship with a human association in its natural setting’ (Lofland and Lofland 1995, p.18). Participant observation was used in all of the case studies although some of the public deliberation for the Sumner case had been conducted before the research began. I knew the facilitators of all the cases prior to commencing my research. This contact proved invaluable in gaining access to the field and establishing a base level of trust with participants. I approached the facilitators initially by telephone and then by fax in October 1996. I outlined my research interests and requested permission to attend meetings and tape proceedings or take inconspicuous notes.

I then wrote to participants (Appendix Two). I reassured them that all records would be treated confidentially and only used for the purpose of research. The facilitators forwarded my letters of introduction to participants in order to secure permission for me to attend regular meetings and subsequently interview them. I asked participants to reply to the facilitator or me if they wished to withdraw from the study (which they were free to do at any time). In all cases permission was granted on the grounds that I
would be prepared to cease recording or leave the meeting at any time if so requested. At the first meeting I attended for each case, the facilitator introduced me and suggested that I elaborate on my letter of introduction. I verbally confirmed that comments would not be attributed to particular individuals without their consent, that they would all be given the opportunity to read and comment on a draft results chapter and that anyone could withdraw comments from the study at any time. Individuals with concerns were invited to address them to the researcher or to be facilitator if they preferred.

3.4.4. Focus groups

My research techniques also involved the use of focus groups which were conducted while participant observation continued. Focus groups were used to gauge citizens’ reflections and reactions to, or interpretations of, deliberative processes in planning. I used this as an opportunity to gain insight and gather group reflection on some of my initial impressions of deliberative processes. Lofland and Lofland (1995, p.21) recommend group interviewing on topics that are ‘reasonably public’ and are not matters of any particular embarrassment. As Lofland and Lofland note, group interviews have a number of advantages in that they enable people to reflect and recall experience, spurring memories, allowing moments of reflection, rethinking, amendment and amplification which can be more difficult to achieve in a one-on-one interview (Lofland and Lofland 1995, p.21). Lofland and Lofland note that people may not always agree with each other, but these disagreements amongst informants can provide interpretative insights which can enrich data collection. Heather Devere (1993) used group interviews or peer conversations extensively in her research into women’s political attitudes. In order to elicit information from people who are shy or hesitant participants, Devere recommends a variation to the traditional focus
group approach. In her ‘peer group conversations’ a small number of participants were gathered together through the snowballing of friends with similar backgrounds (for example Tongan woman with adult children). Devere found that small groups (four to six) of friends provided an environment of trust which encouraged respondents to contribute to the discussion (Devere 1993).

In this study small focus group interviews were used to elicit the experiences of citizens who had participated in public planning deliberation (Appendix Three). Groups were limited to six to eight participants and all the informants were acquainted with each other. In cases where deliberative processes have revealed some animosity or tension, key informants were invited to nominate associates with whom they would feel comfortable talking. This was particularly important in the cases of the Sumner Concept Plan, where the community was acrimoniously divided on some planning issues and in the Wastewater case, where there had been hesitancy on the part of some lay community representatives to speak. In the wastewater case, Maori had requested separate consultation in planning debates. I spoke with Maori representatives individually at their request (n=4).

I facilitated six focus groups in total. In the Wastewater case I held two focus groups (Two focus groups, n=16). In the Sumner Concept Plan, I asked three key informants to invite others to join three focus group discussions (Three focus groups, n=22). In the Agenda 21 case a key informant forwarded my invitation to a group of eight other members to a focus group in my home. The interview prompts for discussion are detailed in Appendix Four.

As Devere notes it can be desirable to have the discussion in a home or marae or in a pleasant neutral space. I found the groups I worked with enjoyed the use of a variety of venues, including cafes, my home,
community halls and council committee rooms. In all cases I turned the choice over to the participants. I provided refreshments to create a more hospitable and relaxed environment for the discussion (Devere 1993). Drawing on Devere’s experience and Neuman’s (1994) recommendations, I audio taped the group conversations with participant permission, transcribed the tape and then reviewed the tape and transcription for coding and provided the edited transcript for participant comment and their permission for use in the study.

3.4.5. Intensive interviewing

During unstructured information gleaning, case study selection, participant observation and focus group research, I also conducted a total of twenty-four intensive interviews (Appendix Four). This involved open questioning, theme prompting about issues and direct questions to elicit specialist information about particular details (Tollich and Davidson 1999). The interviews were used to gain the insights of key informants into the process and outcomes of deliberative planning and to reflect on themes emerging in focus groups and participant observation. Intensive interviews, also known as open interviews or guided conversations, seek to obtain rich detailed material for qualitative analysis by discovering the informant’s experience of a particular topic or situation rather than eliciting informants’ choices to preformed questions (Lofland and Lofland 1995, p.18). Neuman has described open interviews as a ‘mutual sharing’ or a ‘speech event’ which involves the researcher in questioning, listening, expressing interest as well as recording information (Neuman 1994, p.358). A number of qualitative researchers (Neuman 1994; Lofland and Lofland 1995 and Yin 1994) recommend that open interviews be guided by an interview protocol. A list of broad questions written prior to the interview was used to prompt informants and remind the researcher of key themes (Appendix Two).
Key informants were interviewed using guided conversation to obtain an overview of cases and ‘insider understanding’ of the deliberative experience (Neuman 1994, p.358). Key informants were selected from an initial snowballing, or non-probability sampling exercise (Tollich and Davidson 1999). After interviewing key informants in each case, it was possible to identify those informants who fitted the description of ‘helpful informant’—‘articulate, wise, knowledgeable’ individuals who by reason of experience or position are able to reflect on the planning process and its outcomes (Neuman 1994). These people were contacted by telephone and in writing (Appendix Two) and at the end of each interview were asked to refer other individuals whom they felt I should speak with. The insights of these informants were compared with the information gathered from focus group interviews. Interviews were taped and partially transcribed using initial codes already established during my literature search and the documenting of locations. Coding was refined to reflect the insights gained in the field and focus group (Neuman 1994, p.407).

3.4.6. Research analysis

Throughout data collation research proceeded concurrently and in an iterative fashion with data integration, coding and assumptions being tested as work continued. Broad theoretical propositions developed prior to fieldwork were used to inform the data collection, particularly the drafting of initial interview protocol and coding. As insights were gained in the field and focus groups, and through transcribing interviews, I began to refine my propositions and reconsider them, developing more detailed classification codes which were later used to build, expand and challenge theory. I also revisited my findings in each case study, comparing theoretical statements and codes developed in an initial case with subsequent research, revising the
theoretical statements and presentation of material where necessary and comparing the details of the second and third cases (Yin 1994, p.111).

One of the difficulties of conducting social science research is working with unwieldy data. In this case data consisted of hours of taped interviews, field notes and observations and group discussions. I considered using the social science computer program Nudist, to classify coded notes. However I found it preferable with a relatively small data set to display material graphically, to map themes or ideas in hard copy and use a manual filing system for data retrieval (Tollich and Davidson 1999).

### 3.5. Establishing Criteria to Assess ‘Good’ Research

Social analysis is made more challenging by a lack of agreement amongst researchers on what constitutes ‘good’ research. As Denzin and Lincoln (1994, pp.10-11) noted in a review of social science methods, that a ‘profound rupture’ occurred in qualitative social sciences in the mid-1980s which still continues today. They labelled this rupture a ‘crisis of representation’ arguing theoretical challenges from critical theory, post-positivist research and feminist studies forced researchers to revisit traditional notions of validity, reliability and objectivity (Denzin and Lincoln 1994). It is also increasingly recognised that the criteria for judging the ‘goodness or quality’ of an inquiry is influenced by the researcher’s ontological assumptions; that is assumptions about the form and nature of reality and beliefs about what is reality (Guba and Lincoln 1994, p.108).

The confidence that can be placed in the analysis of data as accurately representing the ‘social world of the field’ is traditionally known as validity (Neuman 1994, p.357). The related notions of external validity (the degree to which findings can be generalised to other settings) and the concept of internal validity, the degree to which findings correctly map the phenomena
in question, have been challenged (Neuman 1994). Critics have questioned whether any single research method can grasp the subtle range of human experiences or capture lived experience (Neuman 1994, p.12). Doubts have been raised about whether subjects or individuals 'can give full explanations of their actions or intentions: all they can offer are accounts or stories about what they did and why' (Stake 1994, pp.237-247). Furthermore, researchers in critical theory and feminist research have reminded us that there is 'no clear window into the inner life of an individual, any gaze is always filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race and ethnicity (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, p.12).

In discussion of criteria for assessing the quality of research it is useful to mention a common positivist and post-positivist research method known as triangulation. Triangulation involves the use of a range of research methods to validate data such as group interviews, participant observation and document searching. Triangulation is used in an attempt to establish truth or a 'fix' on reality (Richardson 1994, p.517 and Tollich and Davidson 1999). The development of critical theory and the wider post-modern research movement has also raised doubts about this research approach, pointing out that the concept of triangulation assumes there is one universal truth which can be apprehended or that it is possible to distil a single consensus in research. Richardson prefers to use the concept of crystallisation to emphasise that there are more than three 'sides to a story' (Richardson 1995, p.517). In response to Richardson's arguments, a variety of research methods are used here to gather information in the course of research and the material is presented as a rich but inevitably partial interpretation of events. Data was not triangulated.

Given wide-ranging debate about the criteria for assessing research, researchers working in the field of critical theory have also posed new tests
for research quality. They replace the criteria of validity with the concept of trustworthiness, that is, the credibility of portrayals of constructed realities (Kincheloe and McLaren 1994). The ideas of critical theory, particularly the belief that social, political, cultural and gender forces have shaped and been shaped by micro-social processes, has clearly influenced the ideas of new institutionalists who seek to understand what is going on in urban areas (Healey et al 1995, p.18). Some critical theorists suggest that the criterion of trustworthiness should only be awarded when constructions are plausible to those who constructed them (Kincheloe and McLaren 1994, p.151). I have interpreted this to mean that those who are observed and/or interviewed in the course of research should be given the opportunity to read and comment on the subsequent analysis. Critical theorists acknowledge that even then there may be doubt. (Kincheloe and McLaren 1994, p.151). For instance a researcher may claim to see the effects of oppression, but there may be disagreement between his or her perception and that of people who are researched. It is my position that in these cases of disagreement, the researcher can only put forward a perception and discuss the contrasting views of others, making the reader aware of other perspectives or interpretations.

A second criterion that has been put forward by critical theorists in the assessment of the quality of research is the notion of anticipatory accommodation or the discussion of comparable contexts through the identification of similarities and differences between cases. Research that advances comparative research by explicitly comparing the conditions of particular cases can be said to achieve anticipatory accommodation (Kin cheloe and McLaren 1994, p.152). I adopted a form of this approach in assessing the comparative results of the case studies, but this method ultimately requires peer review. In line with University of Otago protocols, some of this research has been published and/or presented at conferences.
(Hayward 1995 a, 1996, 1997 and 1999) and the remainder will be tested in subsequent publications.

A third research criterion suggested by critical theorists that is relevant to new institutionalist research methods is the concept of catalytic validity. Patti Laher coined the term ‘catalytic validity’ to refer to the degree to which research moves those it studies to an understanding of the world and the way it is shaped in order to transform. This occurs as those under study gain self-understanding and self-direction (Lather cited in Kincheloe and McLaren 1994, p.152). However I question the extent to which a researcher can claim to see things others cannot know about themselves. I chose a more limited criterion for assessing effective research, the criterion of advancing ‘useful social knowledge’ (Kincheloe and McLaren 1994). That is, research that resonates with, and proves useful to, those being studied. For this reason the findings of each case study were presented to and reviewed by the participants in each case. Research was also presented at two Council forums and in a 1999 submission to a government review of the RMA.

3.6. Summary: Reflections on Research Methods

The empirical component of this research examined three cases of public deliberation in planning in Christchurch, New Zealand, during the years 1996 to 1999. These cases provide a vehicle to analyse some of the assumptions of deliberative theory. However limited generalisation is warranted. The cases were not conceived as examples of deliberative planning theory rather that they were devised as practical examples of public consultation conducted to meet particular political objectives. As such, the cases were inevitably driven by and constrained by political realities, including time pressures and cost limitations.
Overall, the field technique of participant observation enriched the focus group research. I had observed deliberation processes in action so was able to develop initial propositions and discuss them with participants, seeking their response. However participant observation has significant limitations in small group behaviour studies, particularly in a relatively small country like New Zealand. Tollich and Davidson (1999) have noted the difficulty of providing anonymity in New Zealand research situations given the size of the country. My experience supports their concerns. I found participant observation gave me opportunities for insight into some of the ‘transformative’ effects of deliberation Forester describes which go far beyond argument or agreement. For example, through the experience of extended deliberation, friendships blossomed and planning staff and citizens gained confidence and experience. However given the small community being researched, it proved difficult to record these observations in ways that preserved anonymity and did not cause embarrassment for the individuals involved. As a result my research, while informed by observation, inevitably draws more heavily from the focus group discussions, where individuals were happy to make comments ‘on the record’.

Other research techniques beyond the scope of this study could address the difficulties of research in a small country which were experienced here. For example a greater number of case studies would have provided more opportunity to preserve anonymity enabling the researcher to report results in ways that changed locations and even titles of processes (Tollich and Davidson 1999). Furthermore other research techniques could be used to record citizen attitudes and experiences in multiple cases through methods that preserve anonymity (such as panel preference sorting or Q-sort methodology) rather than focus group discussion (Dryzek 1990; and Swaffield and Fairweather 1996). These alternative techniques might assist
the researcher to record citizens' experiences in ways that encourage public deliberation in while preserving anonymity.

Finally, I was aware that my presence as a participant observer affected the process. In the Wastewater case some Council staff and participants commented that they felt my research lent legitimacy to the process by increasing its exposure to scrutiny. Similarly my research focus encouraged Agenda 21 members to reflect on the strategic nature of their work. I gave presentations to the community and Council at the end of the research and circulated relevant sections of the study for community comment, integrating the feedback into the final analysis (Table One). Within the limitations noted in this chapter, what follows is an analysis of the real experiences of citizens and planners as they engage in deliberation about urban planning issues in Christchurch, New Zealand.

1 Discourses are defined as 'systems of meaning' (Davoudi and Healey 1995, p.89). Davoudi and Healey suggest researchers consider the way agendas are shaped by the rules, discourses and modes of expression used and what impact this has in terms of filtering the potential range of issues amongst stakeholders.


3 More recently, Strauss and Corbin (1990) have attempted to apply grounded theory to analysis of macro-social factors that might influence the interactions of society. However criticism has been levelled at both Strauss and Glaser for minimising the possible influences of important factors such as institutions, moral structures and class struggles and thus producing a distortion of social phenomena (Annells 1996).


5 In the case of sensitive archives—particularly 'silent files' affecting Maori taonga, I initially sought guidance from my Kaumatua about how to gain access to the file and in what way the file might be significant to my research. Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s recent work, Decolonizing Methodologies: Auckland, OUP, aptly sums up the tension for Pakeha researchers ‘doing’ research about information of indigenous communities which may be extractive, exploitative or simply rude. Amongst the many strategies Smith suggests for Maori and non-Maori is use of a mentor to guide research. However in my case this simplistic approach overlooks the political difficulty where a researcher is affiliated to a Kaumatua who may not be the appropriate person to approach a particular hapu. Given that potential situation and conscious that local Maori feel over consulted and that given the exact
content of silent files (i.e. tapu sites) was not central to my research. I reverted to discussing general issues affecting Tangata Whenua with official iwi representatives including iwi resource committee officers and chair people, legal advisers and their consultants. I did not pursue opening silent files.

I did not invite the facilitator, council staff, councillors, or Maori representatives to the focus groups. I interviewed them separately at their request or the request of lay participants (Table One).
4.1. Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the macro-empirical context for examining public deliberation in urban planning. The study is set in Christchurch, New Zealand. New Zealand provides an excellent opportunity to assess the prospects and problems for deliberative planning. In the following discussion I consider the way New Zealand’s macro-level cultural, economic, political and social policy reforms present major constraints for deliberative planning practice. I also consider the way simultaneous restructuring of environmental legislation and planning institutions during the last decade has created opportunities for new and more deliberative approaches to planning.

4.2. New Zealand’s Bi-Cultural Policy

New Zealand is a small nation with a population of 3.7 million. The largest ethnic group is European/Pakeha making up 79.6% of the population while Maori, the second largest ethnic community account for only 14.5% (Robinson et al 2000, p.172). In the city of Christchurch, only 5.3% of the 309,028 residents are Maori while over 90% describe their ethnic origins as European/Pakeha (CCC 1999 a).

At the national level contemporary political institutions including planning institutions, have been influenced by a state policy of biculturalism which conveys official status to Pakeha and Maori. To
understand how this policy developed and its limitations and implications for planning, it is necessary to place the policy in a longer-term historical context.

Maori arrived over 1000 years ago from east Polynesia, settling the country between the tenth and fourteenth centuries as hunter-gatherers, sea traders and cultivators (Robinson et al 2000). European settlers and whalers followed after the ‘discovery’ of New Zealand by James Cook in 1769. The planned European settlement of New Zealand occurred in the mid-nineteenth century. British sovereignty was secured in 1840 under the Treaty of Waitangi. The Treaty was promulgated by the British Crown and signed by over 500 Maori Chiefs. Although the significance and interpretation of the Treaty has varied through time, it has a number of profound policy implications. A knowledge and understanding of the Treaty’s terms and conditions helps us to appreciate the subsequent ethnic tension which can underscore contemporary planning practice.

Drafted in both English and Maori, competing interpretations of the Treaty have fuelled tensions between Maori and Pakeha. Disputes have arisen over the failure to implement Treaty articles. Contemporary debates about the justice of planning processes reflect these disputes. For example in Article I, of the Treaty, Maori ceded the authority to govern to the British Crown. In the English text this is stated as ceding ‘without reservation all the rights and powers of sovereignty’. However in the Maori interpretation of Article I this cessation was less explicit. Maori were to cede ‘kawanatanga’ a term translated as meaning governorship, a term less absolute than sovereignty and implying a more limited right to rule (Orange 1987 and Hayward 1999). In Article II, the English version of the Treaty guaranteed to Maori the ‘full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their lands, estates, forests and fisheries and other properties which they may collectively or
individually possess so long as it is their wish and desire to retain the same in their possession'. In contrast the text of Article II in Maori referred to ‘te tino rangatiratanga’, or ‘full authority’. Gray et al note the significance of this argument:

The Maori text thus conveyed an intention that they (Maori) would retain full authority over their lands, homes and things important to them, or in a phrase, that they would retain their mana Maori. That of course is wider than the English text. The Maori text gave that and more’ (Gray et al 1988, p.3).³

The Treaty of Waitangi is significant in the context of this study for three reasons. First, debates about the Treaty illustrate difficulties in achieving shared understanding across cultural difference in oral debate. These difficulties are significant for those who seek to promote public deliberation and consensus in planning. Second, disputes surrounding the interpretation and implementation of the Treaty have pervaded natural resource and social planning in New Zealand ever since the 1840s. It has affected who should determine plans for managing taonga such as lands, fisheries and waterways and what status groups should have in this process. In the Canterbury region, Ngai Tahu has claimed Tangata Whenua status with mahinga kai or food gathering rights. Over the last century Ngai Tahu has made numerous representations to the Crown about the way these and other Treaty rights had been violated.⁴ In 1998, these claims and claims about inadequate land reservations and insufficient compensation were recognised under the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 (Robinson et al 2000). ⁵

Third, recognition of the legal status of Maori as Tangata Whenua under the Treaty has provided the grounds for a contemporary public sector policy of bi-culturalism. This policy has accorded official status to two peoples, Maori and Pakeha within public sector institutions (Cheyne et al 1997; Sharp 1997 and Robinson et al 2000). However the policy of bi-
culturalism has been disputed in ways which are significant for planning practice. Maori have argued that bi-culturalism should mean more than a recognition of two cultures and two value systems, it should also indicate a sharing of power, resources and responsibility which extends to separate or parallel administrative, legal and political institutions (Robinson et al 2000). Several commentators have noted that while government policies promote a bi-cultural ethos, economic policy reforms have had ‘...profoundly negative impacts on Maori (much more than on non- Maori)’ (Cheyne et al 1997 and Robinson et al 2000, p.191). Some Pakeha have vigorously contested the idea of a co-operative partnership, while other minority groups believe that bi-cultural policies further marginalise their voices (Mohanram 1998).

The policy of bi-culturalism has also influenced the country’s principal planning statute: the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). The RMA falls short of acknowledging separate Maori ownership or authority over resources (Memon 1993). However it does provide Maori with special status. Section 6 (e) of the RMA lists matters of national importance in resource management and includes ‘[the] relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wahi tapu and other taonga’. Section 7 calls for all recognition of kaitiakitanga or the Maori ethic of stewardship or guardianship in the management of natural resources. Section 8 requires all persons exercising powers under the Act to take into account principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (Ministry for the Environment 1991).

Despite the special status accorded Maori in the RMA, a critical review of bi-cultural planning practice concluded that Maori:

...will tell you that they are sick to death of being consulted, when at the end of the day local authorities still will not acknowledge the special status of Maoridom in a practical sense, do not respect their waihi tapu, still don’t understand what Maoridom is actually talking
about and, worst of all, have no comprehension of the meaning of the Maori words and hence Maori values and concepts which are specifically provided for in the RMA (Mutu 1994).

Local planning authorities have also expressed a great deal of confusion over the bi-cultural implications of the Act in terms of who to consult with in planning (Barfoot forthcoming). The policy of bi-culturalism assumes two partners, but in reality there is often a great deal of difficulty establishing who the two partners are and ascertaining just who speaks for whom. For example local councils frequently claim they do not speak for, or represent the Crown and there is often uncertainty over who represents this Treaty partner at the local level (Hayward 1995 a). The policy also assumes one clearly identifiable Maori partner in planning practice, but this is not always the case. For example in Christchurch, under the Te Rungana Ngai Tahu Act 1996 Ngai Tahu has Tangata Whenua status. However at times Ngai Tuahuriri, a papatipu runanga of Ngai Tahu, has recognised status as Tangata Whenua on resource issues within the City limits (CCC1999a, v1 p.3/16).

In summary, the policy of bi-culturalism immediately raises practical questions for planners interested in deliberation. These planners are forced to consider deliberation by tribal groups rather than simply individuals and to be mindful of who speaks for whom. Bi-culturalism is not the only policy to influence planning practice. Other contemporary policies also influence the empirical context for the research reported in this thesis particularly economic and social policy.

4.3. Features of Contemporary Economic Policy

Since 1984 New Zealand has experienced a period of far-reaching and radical economic and political reforms that has had profound implications for planning. A number of authors have documented the course of New
Zealand’s social and economic reforms over the last fifteen years, in particular: Kelsey (1997); Boston and Levine et al (1996), Boston and Martin et al (1991); Rudd and Roper (1997); and Dalziel et al (1999). This section reviews these accounts which record the pervasive influence of neol­
oliberalism in New Zealand.

The election of the Fourth Labour Government in 1984 introduced a series of economic reforms with the intention of creating a ‘more open economy with less involvement of central government, fewer regulations and fewer protectionist measures’ (OECD 1986, p.173). As Allan Bollard, then Director of the New Zealand’s Institute of Economic Research described it:

The programme of economic reform in New Zealand has been built on a number of recent micro-economic theoretical developments suggesting the pre-eminence of markets and private regulatory systems, and the minimisation of state control in the provision, funding and regulation of economic activity (Bollard 1991, p.9).

While Bollard’s summary of the nature of economic reformation between 1984—1990 is technically accurate, it fails to grasp the breadth or impact of the wholesale economic reform which saw the transformation of a once highly protected economy based on primary production. New Zealand was exposed to external trade and deregulated market forces through a series of initiatives that included removal of tariffs and subsidies, restructuring of virtually all government institutions into separate policy and service delivery institutions, the sale of government assets and the corporatisation of the few that were retained. The move to introduce these reforms was swift and rapid with no public consultation. The then Minister of Finance, Roger Douglas, defended the implementation of the reforms arguing they needed to be implemented with an element of surprise (McLeay 1995).6
In part the choice of the ‘blitzkrieg’ approach to economic reform in New Zealand was based on the rationale that given the enormity of the task, incremental reforms would not have achieved their goals (McLeay 1995). Moreover, there was also no assurance the public would agree to the reforms if they were consulted because the reforms represented an attack on the traditional assumptions underpinning New Zealand politics since the election of the First Labour Government and the establishment of the welfare state in 1938. It was commonly assumed that a fundamental task for the state was regulating and stabilising the economy, providing the social and economic infrastructure to enhance development and undertaking income redistribution to promote social cohesion’ (Dalziel et al 1999, p.75). Many New Zealanders had highly valued the ‘cradle to grave’ social and economic security established in 1938. Being the ‘world’s first’ welfare state had been a source of national pride. In this light, the consequences of these far-reaching economic reforms would have been electorally unpalatable.

The introduction of economic reforms also set the macro-political scene for an ongoing aversion to public consultation in economic and later social policy reforms. A lack of consultation by government was legitimised and encouraged by public choice theory which has come to dominate contemporary approaches to policy-making in New Zealand. Under public choice theory, interest groups are thought to act inevitably in their own self-interest and thus governments should be wary of their advice (McLeay 1995). Public choice theorists assume that all agents within the public sphere ‘act out of narrow self-interest, maximising their own individual welfare through Rational Choice’ (Johnston et al 1994, pp.486-487). Critics and advocates of this approach argue it results in a view of the political system as ‘an economic process’ whereby politicians ‘buy’ votes through their spending decisions (Bollard 1991; and Sears and Funk 1990). As noted in chapter two, planning approaches inspired by the ideas of deliberative
democracy implicitly and explicitly reject a view of the political system as an economic process where citizens are equated with consumers whose preferences can be aggregated and votes bought and traded.

The influence of public choice theory on governments and bureaucrats in key public agencies, particularly Treasury and the Prime Minister’s Department, explains why consecutive governments have moved to disestablish many permanent advisory committees and producer boards and to distance themselves from interest groups between 1984 and 1999 (McLeay 1995). These moves make deliberation in planning a relatively rare opportunity for consultation. The ideas of public choice theory and neoliberal economics took a firm hold quickly in New Zealand political institutions. The scale and breath-taking speed of economic liberalisation within New Zealand was made possible by characteristics of the New Zealand political environment prior to 1990. These characteristics have highlight significant issues for those who wish to advocate deliberative planning. As Alan Bollard notes in a revealing presentation in 1991, the ‘path of liberalisation’ was facilitated in New Zealand by the return to power of a new (Labour) government relatively ‘free of producer group lobbying links’ and a ‘thin political system’ consisting of a single chamber, two majority parties, no important state or local government economic policies and no written constitution or proportional representation (Bollard 1991, p.9). These political factors worked together to facilitate the rapid dissemination of ideas of public choice theory to key sectors of the New Zealand bureaucracy, and local government.

Against this background it appears deliberative planning would have struggled to find much support in the ‘thin democracy’ which characterised New Zealand between 1984 and 1993 (Barber 1984). There was strong institutional support and little criticism of the neo-liberal agenda. The
absence of alternative voices in debate in political and economic institutions can be explained in part by the rapid politicisation of the newly restructured public service and the dominance of the Executive in New Zealand politics under the ‘first-past-the-post’ electoral system. With no constitutional restraint and virtually unlimited political power in this period, New Zealand’s central government was characterised as ‘the fastest law in the West’ (Palmer 1987) and an ‘Elected Dictatorship’ (Mulgan 1993).

In summary the economic policy reforms of the 1980s and 1990s have raised some practical challenges for those interested in citizen participation and deliberative possibilities in planning. For example given the persuasiveness of neo-liberal assumptions about citizenship, participation and the limited role of government, we might anticipate significant bureaucratic resistance to deliberative planning approaches. However there have been other reforms more conducive to deliberative planning. In the next section I outline some political responses to neo-liberalism in New Zealand which also influence planning processes in practice.

4.4. Features of Contemporary Political Reform

Disillusionment and widespread voter dissatisfaction with the speed and scale and of economic reforms have been identified as factors that promoted an electoral backlash in 1992 and 1993. The country voted in two national referenda to introduce a form of proportional representation known as Mixed Member Proportionality (MMP).8 These political reforms ‘strengthened’ New Zealand’s democracy in ways that have the potential to provide a more supportive environment for deliberative planning practice.

Prior to the 1993 electoral referendum, voter responses to the economic reforms of the preceding decade made depressing reading, particularly for those keen to introduce any new form of planning or policy-
making based on greater public participation. Historically New Zealand had an enviable record of citizen participation in public policy if not planning per se, because during general elections New Zealanders turned out to vote in their multitudes. They had also taken an active part in the life of the community by joining a comparatively large number of social clubs and community organisations (Cushman and Laidler 1991). However by 1990, New Zealand’s record of public participation was less robust. Voter turnout was still comparatively high by international standards, but by 1990 the ‘real participation rate’ in general elections had fallen to a ‘50 year low’ with 22% of estimated eligible New Zealanders failing either to register or to vote (Vowles and Aimer 1993, p.43).

While New Zealand was once aptly described as a nation of ‘joiners’ (Mitchell 1969), recent research has revealed an increasingly domesticated and privatised pattern of social interaction (Cushman and Laidler 1991). Only 3% of the population volunteer their services to political interest groups or parties (Cushman and Laidler 1991). In fact New Zealanders have developed something of an aversion to politics in the 1990s. In 1989, 4% of the population reported ‘full trust and confidence’ in politicians. By 1999, this had climbed to 16%, but still a sharp drop from the 48% who expressed confidence in government when surveyed in 1985 (Laugersen 1999). But more disturbing are the results of a 1999 survey which reveals widespread feelings of cynicism and powerlessness in the electorate (Perry and Webster 1999).

Some political theorists have claimed that low rates of political participation indicate public satisfaction with government. A few even argue that public involvement in politics should be restricted. The public should do little more than vote for competing parties in periodic elections (Schumpeter 1942). Reports of public cynicism and powerlessness hardly
lend support to this argument; rather, they suggest an emerging pattern of political alienation which is disturbing for those who seek greater citizen involvement in public life and urban planning.

In the New Zealand context, research on public participation through voting suggests their socio-economic background affects people's participation. While disbelief in the value of voting is the factor 'most powerfully associated with non-voting, those most likely to feel politically marginalised appear to be those already economically or socially disadvantaged (Vowles and Aimer 1993, p.60). Vowles and Aimer conclude that '...the evidence is clear that relatively powerless people are significantly less likely to exercise their citizenship through voting' (Vowles and Aimer 1993, p.60).9

However public participation in politics is not restricted to voting and we cannot presume that people would not be interested in taking part in planning debates simply on the basis of poor voter turnout. People take part in politics in a variety of ways, from attempting to influence the attitude of others in conversations with friends, to writing letters to the press or preparing a submission for the local council. A 1999 survey asked people about local community action. Of the respondents, 59% indicated they do take the initiative in reporting community matters such as uncollected rubbish or overgrown paths (Perry and Webster 1999). However New Zealanders appear to prefer traditional forms of political participation such as voting or following political events through the media (Vowles and Aimer 1993). Most play a more active role (attending a public meeting or signing a petition) only when an issue affects them directly or adversely or when it is organised by others (Gray 1988). Perry and Webster supported this finding in 1999. They noted that beyond action on immediate community issues reported above, most New Zealanders have 'not engaged
in any political action more potent than signing a petition’ (Perry and Webster 1999). Of the respondents 89% had signed a petition, but few had done any other political activity (for example only 19% had ever attended a demonstration). It is also worth noting that in another study a year earlier, people who were likely to express a lower than average interest in politics included residents of Christchurch (56% of the population in comparison with an average interest level of 72% for the country) (New Zealand Electoral Commission 1998).

Declining participation in established political institutions has a serious implication for the health of the democracy. For example voter enrolment and turnout in Maori electorates has declined at the very time when wider Maori political consciousness has experienced a resurgence with the growth of Kohanga Reo, the resurgence of Te Reo Maori and a variety of economic and social initiatives at local runanga level. In 1990, the Maori Council of Churches encouraged Maori not to vote in the general election. Instead they asked Maori to register their protest about injustices over the way that government had dealt with Treaty of Waitangi grievances by signing a protest register.

A democracy that experiences a significant sense of alienation amongst its indigenous community and widespread feelings of powerlessness and cynicism in the electorate as a whole, is not a healthy democracy. Rather than declining political participation being a symptom of a satisfied electorate, they could equally be signs of democratic malaise or political marginalisation (Hayward 1997). In 1999, 61.6% of respondents to a study on New Zealand values agreed that ‘the average person can get nowhere by talking to public officials (for central government)’ although they were more optimistic about local government officials (Perry and Webster 1999, pp.92-93). Only 45% agreed with this statement in the context
of local government, but this is still a significant minority (Perry and Webster 1999, p.93) However since the referendum of 1993 and the introduction of MMP, some research suggests some of the indicators of public disillusionment and political apathy have been moving in a positive direction.

Research commissioned by the New Zealand Electoral Commission (1998) suggests that there was an overall increase of interest in politics with the first MMP election. The proportion of people ‘extremely’ or ‘very interested’ in politics grew from 14% in 1994 to 25% in 1997. The people most likely to have lower than average interest in politics include young people 18-24 years, Pacific Island people, single people and those on low incomes (New Zealand Electoral Commission 1998, p.23). Those who report little knowledge of politics include women, those in part-time employment and those with relatively low levels of education (no higher than School Certificate or Sixth Form Certificate). These figures paint a bleak empirical challenge for those who aim to encourage greater involvement in planning of previously excluded groups. However there has been an increase in the general level of participation in informal political discussion with 85% of the population interviewed reporting they had discussed political issues with family, friends or neighbours (declining to 71% for Maori and falling to 37% for Pacific Island community members) (Electoral Commission 1998, pp.28-30).

Despite the MMP reforms the political climate in New Zealand does not appear to be conducive to planning initiatives requiring large-scale public participation. The effects of recent social reforms compounds lack of interest and feelings of powerlessness in politics among already marginalised groups. In the next section, I briefly explain the thrust of these
reforms and their possible implications for a more deliberative approach to planning

4.5. Features of Contemporary Social Policy Reforms

The recent economic and political reforms discussed above have been accompanied by a series of parallel and complementary reforms to social policy which have affected the conditions of the community and their willingness to participate in public life. These social reforms include changes to the social welfare state, health and education. Hazeldine (1998) argues these social reforms have significant macro-level impacts on participation. He argues that commercialisation and individualised, or privatised patterns of poverty or suffering which have accompanied social reform, erode 'social capital', defined as 'the empathy and sympathy found in relationships between people (including relationships within geographically defined communities such as countries, towns and neighbourhoods and the cultural communities of kinship, class, hapu and iwi)' (Hazeldine 1998, p.15). This research supports international research by Robert Putman (1995) who suggests that social and economic policies affect 'social capital' which he defines as networks of repeated social interaction that reinforce social norms like trust and enable people to act together to meet shared objectives (Robinson 1997, p.2).

The 1990 general election produced a landslide victory for the National Party and gave the new government, it claimed, a 'mandate' for introducing important reforms to the welfare state (Boston and Dalziel et al 1999, p.v). The first initiatives were cuts to the social welfare benefit from April 1991, the introduction of voluntary unionism with the Employment Contracts Act 1991 and the creation of a series of review teams to report on social assistance, accident compensation regimes, housing, health and
education (Boston and Dalziel et al 1999, p.v). The overall thrust of cutting back social spending continued through to 1999, with sickness benefits cut in 1998, work testing for domestic purposes beneficiaries, private sector competition with accident compensation, greater targeting of social assistance (for example cash supplements for housing), restructuring health services (cutting some local services and splitting the roles of purchaser and provider to introduce competition and efficiency) and substantial fee charging for tertiary education and training.

The social impact of these changes is of concern for theorists interested in increasing citizen participation in public life. The number of people living in poverty is estimated to have increased from 159,000 in 1984 to 393,000 in 1993, with many beneficiaries using church-based food banks. The effect of these social changes is summarised by Boston and Dalziel et al argue:

...New Zealanders find they do not have access to the same level of quality of income support, health care, education, housing assistance and accident compensation as in the past. Food banks, virtually unknown before 1984, continue to face high demand from desperate individuals and families, and many schools are now providing free food to some of their students. A number of publications by community groups and academics have highlighted the problems being experienced by the children of low to middle income households. Greater targeting is producing very high effective marginal tax rates for large numbers of low-income New Zealanders, creating sizeable poverty traps (Boston and Dalziel et al 1999, p.vii).

In Christchurch the hardship of social policy reforms has been felt extensively by particular groups. Christchurch for example has experienced a sustained and growing demand for foodbanks by sole parent and low-income families (Le Heron and Pawson 1996, p.242). Researcher Tim Hazeldine, suggests deteriorating social conditions erode the community's willingness, desire or ability to participate in community life (Hazeldine 1998).
If Hazeldine’s assessment is correct the prospects for a deliberative approach to planning that seeks to build on a sense of community and encourage participation in community life seem bleak. However it is against this comparatively bleak assessment of the economic, political and social reforms in New Zealand that the new legislative framework for planning was created. And it is planning, particularly resource-use planning that has been hailed as the exception to these trends by providing potential opportunities for greater public involvement in decision-making.

4.6. Features of Contemporary Planning Reforms

The economic and political reforms dating from 1984 have shaped New Zealand’s social and political context. These reforms have also influenced New Zealand’s planning environment. This section reviews the legislative reforms which have created new or potential opportunity for greater public deliberation in planning. Surprisingly New Zealand has no explicit urban planning legislation; rather, urban planning issues are subsumed within general biophysical and land-use management legislation known as the RMA and the Local Government Act 1974 and Amendments 1988 and 1989.

The RMA was passed as part of the wave of reformism zeal that started with the Fourth Labour Government and continued with subsequent National Governments during the 1990s. The Act was conceived under the Labour Government’s term and enacted and implemented after the National Government. The fact that two liberal economic parties with differing social and environmental agendas, shaped the legislation helps to explain the difficult tensions within the Act. On the one hand the Act is neo-liberal, seeking a restrained role for the State in the management of natural resources, but on the other hand the Act reflects demands by the
environmental movement for greater consultation in planning. To understand this tension it is necessary to review how the Act was conceived.

There was great fanfare at the time the RMA was introduced. It replaced a whole range of environmental and town planning legislation including the Town and Country Planning Act 1977, Water and Soil Conservation Act 1967, Rivers Control and Soil Erosion Act 1941 and over fifty other planning statutes (Buhrs and Bartlett 1993 and Hayward 1996). The intent of the Act was to streamline and integrate the policy and planning process around a central concept of 'sustainable management'. The use of the term 'sustainable management' rather than the concept 'sustainable development' in the Act was quite deliberate and reflected the neo-liberal tendency to take the state out of intervention in the economy where possible and to distance the state from any social engineering role (Memon et al 1998).12

In the RMA, sustainable management was defined as:

Managing the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural well-being and for their health and safety while

a) Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and

b) safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems; and

c) avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment (Resource Management Act 1991, section 5).

Since its enactment in 1991, the latent neo-liberal tendencies of the RMA have emerged through interpretation. The RMA has been seen as an embodiment of an effects-based approach to environmental management.
Councils attempt to anticipate the likely effects of development by establishing environmental bottom lines\(^{13}\) to assist in managing negative human impacts on the built or biophysical environment (Memon et al 1999; Perkins and Thorns 1999 a and b; and McDermott 1998).

As several researchers have recently pointed out, the impact of an ‘effects based’ approach to urban planning has been such that inadequate attention is paid to socio-economic environmental issues or the health and well-being of people (Perkins and Thorns 1999 a and Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment 1998). Effects based resource management is of debatable value in determining many quantifiable environmental parameters, let alone as a management tool for managing urban areas for the intangible concepts of visual amenity, aesthetic coherence or spiritual and historical value (Perkins and Thorns 1999 a and b).

The neo-liberal assumptions within the RMA were less obvious at the time the Act was introduced. The Act was received with acclaim by environmental groups who praised the Act for its emphasis on public consultation and the new opportunities it provided for public consultation (Bührs and Bartlett 1993). Set against the speed and stealth of other government reforms to the economy, public reaction to the introduction of the RMA was almost euphoric.

The public had reason to believe the Act would facilitate new more inclusive planning. The RMA itself, was notable for the degree of public deliberation that had been involved in its development, as well as the opportunities for consultation provided in the eventual legislation. Formulating the Act began with a fanfare of consultation. A national ‘Environmental Forum’ was held in 1984 at which a large variety of community groups and organisations were canvassed about environmental
issues (Bührs and Bartlett 1993, p.122). A working party was then appointed by Government to tour the country, holding numerous public meetings about options for future environmental administration (Hayward 1996). Following this process, two notable agencies were created, one for conservation management (Department of Conservation) and one to provide policy advice (Ministry for the Environment).

Once passed, the RMA was heralded for introducing greater opportunity for citizen participation by providing rigorous pre-hearing meetings—to be called by developers or local government early in the development process, a requirement for all levels of government to consult extensively with Maori as the indigenous community, requirements to consult affected publics more rigorously when preparing or modifying plans and policy documents and new opportunities for environmental mediation in local government decision-making (Bührs and Bartlett 1993 and Hayward 1996).

Other significant provisions for public participation in planning under the RMA included a wider definition of who could make a submission to include people with an interest in a planning issue as well as those directly affected, (see First and Fourth Schedules), requirements for consultation with affected iwi (s 8 and First Schedule 3(d), new opportunities for ‘pre-hearing’ meetings between the public, developers and local government (s 99). In general, these opportunities for public participation in the RMA are poorly defined and potentially wide-ranging, particularly opportunities for ‘pre-hearing meetings’ and mediation.

Under the RMA, the term ‘public consultation’ has been interpreted to mean lay community involvement in the policy process, where the responsibility for decision-making ultimately remains with elected representatives or their officials. In a landmark ruling in 1992, Chief Justice
Mr McGechan defined public consultation as, 'The statement of a proposal not yet finally decided upon, listening to what others have to say, considering their responses and then deciding what will be done'.15

Justice McGechan went on to state that consultation is not 'merely telling or presenting information', nor he argued, does it necessarily involve '...the negotiation towards an agreement although the latter not uncommonly can follow...consultation is an intermediate situation involving meaningful discussion'. McGechan's ruling highlights the essential elements of public consultation which include providing sufficient information to consulted parties, ensuring sufficient time for public consultation and subsequent deliberation on advice, genuine consideration of the advice given and an open mind and willingness to change.

The complete restructuring of local government complemented the changes in the RMA. In the next section, I briefly describe the changes to the structure and process of local government which shape the macro-political context for planning.

4.7. Features of Local Government Reform

The implementation of the RMA was facilitated by the introduction of three tiers of local government: regional, district or city councils and local community wards.16 The restructuring of local government has also provided new opportunities for public deliberation in planning at the local level. The aim of local government restructuring was to separate policy functions in line with neo-liberal theory and to increase efficiency in local planning. Trading functions, for example, were either put at arms length from local government or privatised (Memon 1993). Other functions, particularly local roading, sewerage, cultural and recreation services,
libraries and parks and reserves were managed by newly amalgamated city or district councils (Bush 1996).\textsuperscript{17}

Once new city and district councils were in place, their principal function was to administer specified aspects of the RMA and other functions specified in s 37K of the Local Government Amendment Act 1989.\textsuperscript{18} These functions included public consultation. For example, the new opportunities for public participation under the RMA were complemented by the 'Special Consultative Procedures' which were introduced under the Local Government Amendment Act 1989. These local government procedures require councils to consult the public whenever they prepare an annual or strategic plan, or whenever they approve major projects such as landfills or new bridges.\textsuperscript{19} A number of city planners have commented that taken together the RMA and the Local Government Amendment Act 1989 have significantly influenced the way they now work, encouraging councils and their staff to consult the community widely before embarking on new proposals (K. Johnston and C. Kerr pers.comm.).

However the public participation opportunities under the Local Government Amendment Act 1989, like those under the RMA, have significant limitations. The opportunities are largely reactive—that is, officials put up proposals to which the community responds through public submissions. Decision-making authority ultimately remains with the elected councils. Emphasis is often given to written submissions although some councils attempt more innovative methods of consultation such as phone-ins, open offices or planning workshops. People often feel their contribution will be taken more seriously if it is written down (Gray 1988). However those who participate through written submission are overwhelmingly tertiary educated, professionally employed, non-Maori and male (James 1991). Moreover the submission process itself is not sufficient to encourage
the collective public reasoning which is so highly prized by many participatory planners.

Under the Local Government Amendment Act 1989 and RMA, effective participation in planning is limited by citizens’ access to resources. Preparing submissions or attending planning hearings and appeals is a costly, time-consuming and complex process. Those citizens, iwi and community groups who lack access to legal advisors, expert witnesses, photocopiers and telecommunications are heavily disadvantaged. At present there is no form of legal aid that might assist impoverished groups to prepare cases. In contrast, citizens and organisations who stand to make tangible financial gains from planning decisions, such as business interests and developers, are often highly motivated, comparatively well funded and consequently advantaged in the planning process (Hayward 1991 and 1996).

In terms of public participation, local government attracts less political controversy and its politics tend to be non-partisan. Christchurch, for example, is one of the few local councils in which the Labour Party makes a significant effort to field candidates (Bush 1995). Labour’s absence in local body electoral competition is explained in large part by the ‘non-partisan consensual’ style of local government politics that tends to reinforce the political dominance of interests that are associated with the ownership of landed property (Mulgan 1994, pp.176-192).

4.8. Summary

This chapter has traced the conflicting pressures of macro-level reform which inform the empirical study of the prospects and problems for deliberative planning in New Zealand. Policies of bi-culturalism highlight the complexities of trying to establish an inclusive political process in a diverse community. The economic and social reforms appear to have
constrained the opportunity for a more inclusive approach to citizen participation in planning. However political reforms and the restructuring of planning and local government legislation have offered the possibility of new and potentially more deliberative approaches to urban planning.

Local politics, despite its understated nature, can experience quite heated political controversies. Research suggests that people are motivated to be involved when they understand the issue well at a local level (Perry and Webster 1999). In spite of low voter turnout for local elections, citizen interest in local politics can be much higher for specific single issues or projects. In Christchurch recently, environmental interests have led to a number of ‘green’ candidates contesting local elections, including a successful bid for the mayorality. This campaign together with the development of a ten-year City Plan and the development of indicators to measure urban sustainability in the city (Sustainable Cities Trust 1999) has directed greater attention to issues of urbanisation facing Christchurch.

In the following chapters, I assess the practice of public deliberation in urban planning, through a critical review of three cases of public deliberation in Christchurch. The first case concerns a working party of citizens established to consider wastewater treatment options for the city over the next thirty years. In this critical review, I reflect on the conditions under which the aims of deliberative planning might be realised.

1 Other significant groups include those who identify their ethnic group as Pacific Island (5.6%) and Asian (4.8%). Some people identified with more than one group (Robinson et al 2000, p.172). In Christchurch 2% described themselves of Pacific Island origin and 1% as Chinese (CCC 1999a).

2 There is some dispute over the arrival of Maori. Debate continues over whether the first people were Moriori, arriving as early as the eighth century or as waves of migrants in great canoes (for an introduction see Robinson et al 2000).
3 A groundbreaking study by Orange (1987, pp 6-7) supports this argument. She notes evidence of missionaries and the oral debate that accompanied the signing of the Treaty which confirmed the Maori Chiefs’ authority and seemed to direct the intent of the Treaty at better control of British settlers.

4 Maori have repeatedly taken grievances about land and taonga confiscation, under the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi, to legal courts for over a century. However it was not until 1975 with the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal (and its subsequent extension of powers of investigation in 1985 to enable it to investigate grievances dating back to the signing of the Treaty) that these grievances were given an effective hearing. The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975 upheld the significance of the Treaty of Waitangi and paved the way for recognition of Maori rights under the Treaty and in other legislation, particularly subsequent resource planning legislation.

5 The tribe was paid $56.6 million by the Crown in compensation (Robinson et al 2000).

6 At the time, the lack of prior electoral warning as to the scale and extent of economic reform was also justified on the grounds that the 1984 election had been called as a snap election with little time for traditional campaigning and a fully-developed manifesto (McLeod 1995).

7 Barber coined the term ‘thin democracy’ to refer to liberal democratic models of participation in democracy which emphasised voting and the protection of freedoms rather than encouraging active citizen involvement in planning, a deliberative or ‘strong’ democracy (Barber 1984).

8 The electoral backlash hypothesis does not fully explain the electoral result of 1987 which returned Labour to power for a second term. Labour campaigned vigorously on the grounds that the benefits reforms would take time and they should be given time to ‘complete the task’—this campaign message appears to have been persuasive.

9 The social profile of non-voters locates the social source of non-voting in three interrelated groups of characteristics:

1. Those associated with relative economic deprivation (low incomes, working class occupations and beneficiary status);
2. Those associated with lower integration into the community (younger age, renters and never married, not church attendees); and

The choice of indicators of community integration could be debated. For example rates of heterosexual marriage, or church attendance may not be universally accepted as valid indicators of an individual’s sense of integration into the community, but Vowles and Aimer argue that taken together, their results are ‘consistent with international evidence about non-voting’.

10 Recent Electoral Commission research (1998) suggests however that Maori participation may be increasing.

11 However Perry and Webster’s 1999 research could find little evidence that a willingness to take community action varied across social class, but just over half of all their respondents disagreed with the statement ‘people like me have much to say about government’ (Perry and Webster 1999, p.92).

12 The Ministry for the Environment has stressed there is a difference between sustainable management (as defined in s 5 of the Act) and the generally used term sustainable development as conceived by the World Commission on Environment and Development (Ministry for the Environment 1998).
Bottom lines can be defined as 'the boundary of limit beyond which there is a high risk that the quality of the environment will be unacceptably degraded' (Memon et al. 1998:619).


Ruling on Air New Zealand Ltd v. Wellington International Airport Ltd, High Court Registry, CPNO 403/91.

The Local Government Amendment Act 1989 (No. 3) amalgamated over 800 local authorities into a much smaller number of territorial local authorities. These included thirteen regional councils which were charged with the task of managing natural resources, particularly water and soil management, flood control, regional planning, pest control and land transport (Memon 1993). The boundaries of these regional governments were established on an ecological basis—following watersheds as well as human communities of interest.

City councils were urban areas with 50,000 or more residents (Mulgan 1994) while district councils had a minimum population of 10,000 (Bush 1995). Beneath this level, 159 community boards were established (Bush 1995). Unlike the territorial local authorities, these boards have no power to raise revenue through rates. They exist only to advise council on the concerns of neighbourhoods within cities. These boards have been used to a varying extent, with Christchurch one of the few councils to make extensive use of consultation through community boards (Bush 1995).

In the latter Act, the functions most relevant to urban planning include their duty to provide recognition of the existence of different communities in New Zealand including their values and rights, to provide scope for communities to make choices between different kinds of local public facilities and services and to provide for the effective participation of local persons in local government (Local Government Amendment Act 1989 s 37K, a-i).

Local governments must publicly advertise any proposal; anyone has the right to make a written submission on that proposal and councils must ensure that one to three months are set aside for the preparation of submissions. Those making submissions are given the chance to be heard orally and council deliberation on the content of submissions must be made public.
5.1. Introduction

In this chapter I present the results of my investigation of a deliberative working party process adopted by the Christchurch City Council in the course of public consultation about wastewater treatment. This chapter is the first of three case studies which examine public deliberation in planning from the perspective of both citizens and planners. Analysis focuses on research question two and sub-questions 2.1—2.4. I report on the extent to which a working party of citizens was able to achieve the aims of deliberative planning particularly inclusive discussion consensus or social learning and social justice. I review the role of the facilitator and the Christchurch City Council in sponsoring public deliberation.

In January 1997, the Christchurch City Council established a working party of twelve citizens to discuss issues related to wastewater treatment and to make recommendations about possible treatment options. The working party met monthly until June 1998 and then on an ad hoc basis up to the present day. During this time, a series of events rendered the community-based working party superfluous to the Council’s decision-making process. These events included a Council sub-committee decision to select a preferred treatment option without reference to the working party, the influence in waste treatment debate by technical experts and the Council’s limitations on the working party’s agenda. The Wastewater Working Party experience illustrates the problem of ensuring public deliberation remains inclusive over time.
However the case also demonstrates some of the significant micro-level benefits of public deliberation. I argue that the efforts of the working party had some significant, if limited benefits. The working party process, despite considerable problems, brought together interested parties at a local level who would not normally have formed an alliance or listened to each other. Consequently the working party has the potential to act as an agent of social learning for a wider community in the future.

5.2. Issues in Contention

The way liquid waste is treated in Christchurch is currently under review. At present, effluent is passed through a series of oxidation ponds at the Bromley sewage treatment plant (Figure Three). It is then discharged into an estuary fed by the Avon and Heathcote Rivers. A review of wastewater treatment had been prompted by a number of factors. The first was legislative. The Council had obtained permission to discharge liquid waste into the estuary from the North Canterbury Catchment Board under the Water and Soil Conservation Act 1967. This Act set no expiry date for the permit to discharge liquid waste, but with the introduction of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) a ten-year cap, or ‘sunset’ clause, was placed on all discharge permits. Therefore the Council now needs a new permit and resource consent by the year 2001 to continue discharging. The permit may require a different method of treatment and disposal, but is certain to require ‘more stringent conditions on water quality’ (Robinson 1999).

The other factor to prompt a review of wastewater is logistical. The existing treatment plant is nearing capacity, with about 5% space for additional treatment and sustained higher containment mass loading (Beca Steven 1996, p.2). It is estimated that the domestic population will increase to around 423,000 by the year 2026 (CCC 1996). Population growth and the
Figure Three
Location of the Christchurch Wastewater Treatment Plant and Bromley Oxidation Ponds
possibility of satellite settlements surrounding Christchurch eventually joining the city wastewater treatment process, prompted the review. Wastewater treatment is a contentious issue in Christchurch for a number of reasons. The issues at the heart of the debate include:

- ecological concerns,
- cross-cultural debates,
- social impact questions, and
- waste treatment alternatives and associated costs.

5.2.1. Ecological concerns

Wastewater is currently treated at the Bromley Sewerage works and discharged into the Avon/Heathcote estuary. The Council has recognised the estuary as ‘unparalleled among New Zealand’s estuaries in supporting ...a large and varied wildlife population within ...a heavily urbanised area’\(^1\) (Figure Four). The estuary meets the IUCN criteria for significant wetlands, supporting 1% of the world’s population of South Island Pied Oyster Catchers and 5% of the world’s population of South Island Shoveler (Briggs and Keller 1991, p.7.1.5). The estuary also supports 32,000 migratory birds (Briggs and Keller 1991, p. 7.1.5).

A major debate surrounds the ecological impacts of wastewater discharge into this large estuarine area (Knox 1992 and Owen 1992). Part of the concern is that the discharge has caused a loss of fish habitat, increased water pollution and the growth of undesirable aquatic weeds. However at the same time increased nutrients also brings some benefits to wildlife. Higher nutrient levels encourage bird numbers and up to 32,000 migratory birds are estimated to feed in the area. (Briggs and Keller 1991, p. 7.1.5). The precise contribution of the waste treatment plant to present estuarine pollution is uncertain as some contaminants come from river and storm water discharge. However estuary advocacy groups argue that wastewater is the major source of pollution and should be curtailed. Moreover present
Higher nutrient levels associated with the oxidation ponds encourage migratory birds, up to 32,000 migratory birds are estimated to feed in the Avon/Heathcote Estuary area (Briggs and Keller 1991)
water quality for the estuary does not meet Department of Health Guidelines for shellfish gathering and consumption (Beca Steven 1996, p.3). This latter point relates to debates between the indigenous Maori population and the Christchurch City Council.

5.2.2. Cultural debates

The cultural debates about Christchurch’s wastewater treatment illustrate how an urban planning issue can have profound cultural implications, not widely appreciated by a majority group. The Avon/Heathcote estuary, known as Ihu Tai to Maori, has been a traditional and regulated mahinga kai for Ngai Tahu families (Te Wero 1992, p.39) (Figure Five). In 1992, the concerns of Ngai Tahu and Ngai Tuahuriri were recorded in a submission to the Council (Te Wero 1992). The significance of the estuary was described in the following way:

This area was unique because of the relationship of the waters, where salt meets fresh water, the various springs and their relationship to underground aquifers and the food chain within this area. Although the landscape has been changed, the whereabouts of these sites, and their uses, are still known by the Kai Tiaki of this region (Te Wero 1992, p.39).

In 1956, a fishing reserve in the estuary area (previously granted to Maori) was compulsorily taken under the Public Works Act 1928 and the site designated as part of a new sewage scheme. ‘The taking of Ihu Tai has long been a sore point with the owners’ (Te Wero 1992, p.39). This reserve was ‘...considered so valuable that the owners would not accept the money offered as compensation to them’ (Te Wero 1992, p.39).

Council files interpret the compulsory acquisition of land differently, but the serious implications of the acquisition are apparent:

The reserve was considered so valuable, the owners would not accept the money offered as compensation to them. The only acceptable form
The Avon/Heathcote Estuary or Ihu Tai has been a traditional and regulated mahinga kai for Ngāi Tahu families (Te Wero 1992)
of compensation was land having similar characteristics to that taken from them. The taking of land has been a contentious issue for the Ngai Tahu, as the compensation was minimal and the money still lies unused with the Ngai Tahu Maori Trust Board (Briggs and Keller 1991, p.11).

Debate about the ownership of the estuary area takes place within a long running dispute under the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi. Ngai Tahu has sought the transfer of land, mahinga kai, seawater fish and shell fish resources, managed public access to the estuary and coastline and guidelines for uses of the estuarine area to their Tribal Authority (Te Wero, 1992, p.40).

In 1992, the Christchurch City Council agreed to a protocol of consultation under which they recognised the authority of Maori with Tangata Whenua status, for the purposes of the RMA. The Council acknowledged Ngai Tahu iwi, hapu, their papatipu marae, including Tuahiwi Marae and their runanga, particularly Te Ngai Tuahuriri. This recognition was important because as Te Wero consultants noted in 1992:

...other Maori groups are not accorded the status as Tangata Whenua. Local Authorities need not consult with other Maori groups in terms of Section 3 (d), part 1 of schedule 1 of the Act. This is an important distinction that recognises the intent of the Treaty of Waitangi to the various hapu within Maoridom.’ (Te Wero 1992, p.16).

In practice, consultants to Ngai Tahu have argued that ‘Ngai Tahu owners have been denied the protection of their rights to their wahi taonga and their mahinga kai’ (Te Wero 1992, p.39).

5.2.3. Social impacts

In addition to environmental and cultural debates about wastewater, there have been other questions about social impacts on residents and recreational activities such as fishing, boating and other water sports. The estuary is a popular location for water sports. Faecal coliform counts in the estuary do not comply with nationally accepted recreation guidelines, but there is
debate about what water quality standard is required for contact recreation or what public health monitoring should be undertaken. There is also debate about the best way to address the problems of nutrient enrichment. For example scum, froth, boat fouling, decaying sea lettuce and mucky water frustrate sailors and high bacteria levels may endanger swimmers.

The odour from the existing treatment plant also impacts on local residents. Technically, an application for ‘air discharge’ requires separate permission under an ‘Odour Monitoring Standard’ which is to be developed in accordance with a ‘Regional Air Plan’ under the terms of the RMA. The severity and duration of the odour problem have been an ongoing source of complaint for neighbours. The greatest impact is experienced in residential subdivisions north-east of the land-based treatment plant (WP Field Notes 2:1997). The extent to which mitigation of odour should be part of a general debate about waste treatment has been of some contention (Beca Steven 1996, p.10 and Woodward-Clyde 1998). Odour treatment options are being looked at in conjunction with the review of liquid discharge.

5.2.4. Treatment alternatives and associated costs

Debate about wastewater also focuses on the range of possible treatment alternatives that include smaller satellite plants, discharge to land such as sports fields, forests and farmland, an ocean outfall discharging directly into Pegasus Bay (Figure Six), upgrading wastewater treatment to drinking water standard and ‘at source options’ such as greywater re-use; industrial pre-treatment, user-pay discharge or greater polluter responsibility (Woodward-Clyde 1997, pp.16-19). Alternatively, Christchurch could consider ecological engineering options such as reed bed treatments (Robinson 1999). Within this wide range of alternative treatments are a significant number of technical questions relating to appropriate disinfection and nutrient treatments (Beca Steven 1996 and Woodward-Clyde 1998).
In June 1998 the Wastewater Working Party expressed a preference for wastewater discharge via a two kilometre pipeline with an extensively upgraded treatment process at an estimated cost of $44.7 million.
In reality the choice of treatment alternatives is constrained by past investment in infrastructure at the Bromley Treatment plant and cost. The past investment, in particular treatment technologies and infrastructure was reinforced in 1996, when the Council decided to allocate a further $30 million toward ongoing maintenance and improved discharge (Beca Stevens 1996). This decision was a controversial one. There is still considerable confusion over its implications. Some councillors have indicated they estimate $30 million as the total budget required for wastewater treatment, while others argue that it is a bottom-line and that considerably more spending will be required in the future to improve wastewater treatment. In addition, the Council’s current practice of mixing heavy metals from industrial discharge with sewerage from domestic effluent, affects the range of affordable and safe land recycling or ecological engineering options available (Robinson 1999).

All the treatment options so far listed, involve vastly differing cost structures. There is a great deal of debate between domestic users and industry about who should pay what proportion of the costs of any treatment and who should bear the greatest proportion of the costs (Woodward-Clyde 1997, p.13). For example heavy polluting industries, like tanneries, contribute uneven trade waste loading and it has been suggested cost recovery in trade wastes should be higher and more extensively monitored for those industries (Beca Stevens 1996).

In summary, ecological issues, cultural debates, social impacts and debate about treatment alternatives and costs, complicate the process of deciding how wastewater should be treated in Christchurch. Because of the contentious nature of the issue, the staff of the Council elected to adopt a working party process to encourage in-depth public deliberation. They hoped that a working party of community representatives might reach a
consensus about a particular treatment option and make a recommendation to the Council.

5.3. Chronology of the Working Party Deliberation

A chronology of events effecting the working party is summarised in Table Two. The key features of the consultation process were:

- **August 1996**: Council staff contracted Pam Henderson, as the facilitator, to guide a community discussion process.
- **October 1996**: Council staff identified Ngai Tuahuriri as the relevant Runanga. Council staff, the facilitator and representatives of the Resource Management Committee of Ngai Tuahuriri met to discuss wastewater issues and appropriate consultation methods.
- **November 1996**: The Council launched its wider public consultation process at a public meeting. The Council announced its intention to establish a working party of citizens to deliberate about wastewater. The Council also undertook a number of other consultation exercises. These additional consultation exercises included: public meetings with various special interest groups; a separate consultation process with Tangata Whenua; two teams of lay people who were asked to monitor local environmental conditions; and a (projected) process of public submissions under the requirements of the RMA.
- **January 1997**: The working party met for the first time. Twelve citizens represented environmental, residents, recreational and government groups and agencies. The working party met monthly between 1996 and June 1998 and then less regularly up to the present time.
- **February 1997**: Specialist interest group forums including neighbours, recreationists, ecologists and manufacturers, met with Council and working party.
- **April 1997**: The Council working party facilitator and the resource management committee of Te Ngati Tuahuriri agreed that consultation with Maori would occur in a separate
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| 1997                     |                          | Specialists meetings:  
• Estuary users  
• Ecological interests  
• Manufacturers  
• Neighbours  
• (Feb and Dec) | • Hui with Ngai Tuahurir (April) | • Council engages consultants to prepare issues and options document. (August) |
| 1998                     | • Monthly Working Party Meetings  
• Recommends ocean outfall subject to research (June) | South Shore Residents Association (July)  
• Ocean recreation groups (July) | • Te Ngai Tuahurir agreement in principle to 3 km outfall. (June)  
• Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu (TRONT) formalise consultation (Sept.) |                   |
| 1999                     | • Working Party meets less regularly  
• Special meeting called to meet Council sub committee on City Services (November) | • Youth Forum (May)  
• Public Meetings with Pegasus Bay Recreation and Residents' Associations. (March) | | • Consultants research options and prepare environmental report  
• Local residents' monitoring group meets  
• City Service committee presents Green Edge option for estuary discharge (November) |
and parallel process at the request of Te Ngati Tuahuriri. Three meetings in 1998 followed this.

August 1997
The Council engaged a team of consultants to prepare and research options for wastewater treatment and issues identified by the working party.

May 1998
A hui was held between the Council and other Canterbury Runanga.

June 1998
The working party selected a waste treatment option to recommend to the Council. The working party considered a range of treatment options identified by the Council’s engineering consultants. The working party resolved that:

1. The Working Party prefers an ocean outfall, provided shellfish standards can be achieved at the beach.

2. Both ocean and estuary outfalls need more investigation to increase confidence about:
   - standards that will be achieved from the present upgrade and future proposals; and
   - details of the impacts of currents in Pegasus Bay and the estuary.

3. The Working Party strongly recommends the Christchurch City Council does not make a final decision on the consent application until it receives the information above.

4. The Christchurch City Council could work towards the ocean outfall in stages, as long as:
   - a timeline is included in the consent for reviewing the outcome of staged improvements;
   - proposed conditions on the consent are checked with the working party prior to the application being lodged; and
   - the end target of an ocean outfall is clearly stated so there is certainty about the end of the process.

August 1998
The Council resolved to give ‘favourable consideration’ to the ocean outfall option as recommended by the working party. The Council contracted consultants to
undertake the research for a consent. The working party met less regularly.

November 1998  Between November 1998 and March 1999 two teams of community representatives with extensive local environmental knowledge were appointed by Council to assist the consulting engineers to model likely ocean and estuary discharge impacts.

March 1999  The results of initial research into the impacts of an ocean outfall were less conclusive than hoped. There was vocal opposition to an ocean outfall from surf clubs, fishing interests and coastal residents groups.

November 1999  Councillors from the Council’s City Services Sub-committee told the working party they had contracted consultants to simultaneously research a third treatment option or Green Edge which had not been previously discussed and they now favoured—discharge into the estuary with an upgrade of treatment ponds and some UV disinfection. Estimated cost $23 million, compared with the estimated cost of $44.7 million for the ocean outfall option (Woodward-Clyde 1998).

After three years of deliberation, the working party’s response to the councillors’ sudden announcement of a new option was one of anger and frustration at not having been consulted earlier. The future status of the working party is now unclear. The following discussion attempts to evaluate the effectiveness of the working party deliberation.

5.4. Results and Analysis

In this section I consider the extent to which public deliberation through the Wastewater Working Party achieved the aims of deliberative planning theory as identified in chapter two. I present the results of my investigation into research question two and sub-questions 2.1-2.4. These results are summarised in Figure Seven.
Partially inclusive deliberation

- instrumental rationality
- critical argument
- participatory democracy

Social Transformation

Consensus Building
- unable to achieve consensus

Social Learning
- achieved some limited social learning
- partially effective voice

Social Justice
- enhanced procedural justice within political limits
- failed to fully address distributive justice issues
2 Can the aims of deliberative planning theory be achieved through greater public deliberation in urban planning practice? And if not, why not and if so, under what conditions?

The analysis of this case study demonstrates that the aims of deliberative planning theory were only partially achieved through deliberation in a working party process. In particular, I argue that the working party process was able to facilitate partially inclusive deliberation and some social learning. Deliberation by the working party has the potential to enhance the social justice of future Council decision-making. The working party was not able to achieve consensus on a preferred treatment option nor was it able to effectively address questions on the environmental sustainability of various forms of wastewater treatment. In the rest of this section, I address sub-questions 2.1-2.4.

2.1. Was the planning process inclusive?

2.1.(a) Who got involved?

2.1.(b) Were there attempts to facilitate participation across differences of gender, culture, social or economic status, or educational and technical skills? How?

At the outset the working party process appeared to offer an opportunity to include a wide a range of interests in detailed deliberation. However in practice a number of constraints limited participation. The constraints stemmed from the requirements of face-to-face deliberation, cultural differences and Council political process. I examine the constraints in research question 2.1.(a) and consider the attempts that were made to facilitate wider participation in research question 2.1.(b).

Who got involved?

Twelve citizens were initially invited to join the working party in 1997. In 1998, four more members were included for reasons I will shortly discuss.
The original twelve members included two private individuals with experience in ecology and sewerage treatment, two representatives from contributing industries, two representatives from residents groups or community boards, one environmental advocacy group representative and three representatives from regulatory organisations and government agencies. The working party members initially agreed to two observers, the researcher and a representative of the relevant consenting authority, the Canterbury Regional Council.

Initially Council staff hoped a working party would facilitate inclusive and detailed public deliberation. John, a member of the Water Services Unit expressed these hopes:

John We wanted an inclusive group representative of all parties with expertise and/or interest in the estuary to get a comprehensive background and to build up expertise over a period of time as they got their teeth into a subject so they’d be able to give us solid, well-considered, informed advice...so we’d get) a breadth of advice but we saw this type of group as giving us in-depth advice as well’ (WP Interview 1:1998). (Emphasis in original)

However in reality it proved too difficult to achieve both a breadth of representation and an in-depth deliberation within the face-to-face format of the working party deliberation. Limits on the size of the group, together with the time commitment involved, proved to be significant barriers to participation. The working party required a relatively small group for effective face-to-face deliberation in order to encourage inclusive debate which would be able to inform subsequent Council decision-making. However this requirement for a small discussion group imposed specific constraints on participation which were evident from the start of the process.

The working party was launched in November 1996 at a public meeting held in Council premises. Approximately forty people responded to
newspaper advertising, flyers posted to all Treatment Station neighbours and invitations to potential stakeholders identified by Council staff. That evening, I spoke with several people who were disappointed by the relatively small turnout. They commented that the public was ‘apathetic’ and ‘did not understand the significance of wastewater issues’. An extract from my field notes records how the working party was established at this first meeting:

After a brief overview of sewerage problems and the need for a consent Pam, the facilitator, is introduced by John. She jokes that she is ‘neutral’, living outside the city and using a septic tank system. Pam invites people to talk to the Council if they are not happy to have her as the facilitator—she explains that she hopes a small working party of twelve will be established. She invites people to put their names up on newsprint sheets around the wall. The newsprint is divided in sections marked ‘ecology, neighbours, industry, recreation, Tangata Whenua and other’. Pam comments that to get a good spread of interests she’ll ‘do the choosing’ of representatives from the lists of names, but if people are unhappy with the subsequent working party membership they can talk to Council staff. Pam hopes to get a balance of gender, age and background experiences and that those not involved in the working party (e.g. recreational users of the estuary, people with environmental or ecology interests, industry representatives and neighbours etc) will be invited to attend specialist meetings (WP Field Notes 1:1996).

Pam commented that at the start of a working party process there was an inevitable trade off between establishing a group that is small enough to encourage in-depth discussion and one that represents all relevant interests (Figure Eight). Pam also commented that it was a difficult job to select just twelve representatives. Pam did not know the participants and was guided
The Wastewater Working Party illustrates the trade off between establishing a group small enough to encourage in-depth discussion and one that represents all relevant interests.
by Council staff on who had relevant experiences or a history of concerns about discharge issues. Pam endeavoured to ensure there was a balance of men and women on the working party, but this was difficult as considerably fewer women were nominated. Pam also found it ‘virtually impossible to get a balance of ages on the working party as everyone was roughly the same age’ (WP Interview 2:1998). The method of selecting a small group of working party members was not transparent and allowed others to question the representation within the group. For example in June 1998, Pegasus Bay residents and recreation interests (surf clubs and board riders) demanded to be included on the working party. These groups expressed anger that they were not included at the outset. Furthermore, a large team of consultants had been hired by the Council to conduct research aspects on wastewater and they regularly attended working party meetings. By 1999, it was common to have up to thirty people, including Council consultants, at a working party meeting. This created an impression of a fluid group with many new faces.

The time commitment involved in face-to-face deliberation presented a considerable barrier to participation. Even those who chose to participate commented on the ‘hours and hours of voluntary time’ they put into the process. As several participants were involved in other consultation processes, a decision was made to meet between 5pm and 7pm. However the new time made participation difficult for some, as one of the few female members commented, dinner hour meetings are ‘not very child friendly, folks!’ (WP Field Notes 2:1997).

In this case study inclusive working party process proved unsuitable as a vehicle for representing the interests of Maori minorities. Pam and Council staff had been concerned about ensuring consultation happened with Tangata Whenua from the start. Council staff initially envisaged that
Maori representatives would join the working party. However some Maori expressed concern that their ‘Tangata Whenua status would be diminished if they were simply included as stakeholders around a table’. Speaking with reference to Tangata Whenua representation, one person commented, ‘We need to take the opportunity to keep on saying that we are not just another interest group.’ (WP Interview 3:1998) In April 1997, Ngai Tuahuriri requested that discussion between its Resource Management Committee and the Council proceeds separately from the working party process (WP Field Notes 4:1997). However this separate consultation was at a cost. There was inadequate communication between the working party and Tangata Whenua, as born out by the comments of participants I interviewed:

James Consultation with Tangata Whenua was woefully light early on, essentially there was none; well there was some with Tuahiwi [Marae]. There was no understanding among Tangata Whenua about the process and no regular contact, mind you it was not helped by the Ngai Tahu resource management set up. Tangata Whenua is such an elusive concept who do you actually talk to? First it’s the (Upoku), now it’s the resource committee that’s Tangata Whenua. Our latest meeting at the Marae has been the first reasonably firm statement of what is wanted, until now it has been all wish-washy with no clear statement and while Tuahiwi and Rapaki (Marae) are there there’s been no tribal representation...[at May 1998] (WP Interview 5:1998).

Rachel [I’ve] just been at the Eco Conference when Ngai Tahu were talking about the importance of eye-to-eye talking. We haven’t had any of that apart from on paper.

Jan I thought that was part of the cultural sensitivity, that we could discuss and nut things out and they could be informed of where we were without having to listen to the milling about which could be confusing?

Rachel I just feel like it’s been an ‘us and them’ exclusion problem I’ve got no idea how Ngai Tahu feel.’ (WP Focus Group 1:1997)
The difficulty of including Tangata Whenua in public deliberation was exacerbated by confusion over who should speak for whom. Council staff seemed particularly uncertain about whom to consult. For example as the focus of deliberation shifted beyond the city limits to the possibility of discharging effluent into Pegasus Bay, there was some uncertainty over the implications of Tangata Whenua status and whether Ngai Tuahuriri was speaking for the wider tribal authority, Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu. Julia, from one Maori community organisation commented:

Julia ...someone from the [Water Services] Unit needed to get on the phone to find out who is the runanga and ask, is there a tribal interest? Sending information and newsletters to Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu about the progress of the working party is not consultation (WP Interview 4:1998).

At a macro-level Council political processes significantly constrained the way the working party was able to secure extensive public involvement in deliberation. The councillors within the key City Services Sub-committee chose not to consult the members of the working party when developing an alternative treatment option. In November 1999, the new treatment option was presented as the one favoured by the Council’s City Services Sub-committee. My field notes, taken at the November 1999 working party meeting, record some of the reactions of working party members:

Rachel This third way’s been developed behind closed doors!
Lance It’s a key issue for us, we could sit here for hours but if you go your own way then why spend the time talking?
Geoff This is a hit out of the blue! I thought we had an agreed process. Three weeks ago we had someone talking about land options, Ngai Tahu thinks the marine discharge option is the best option, this seems like a very expensive holding pattern
If this third way meets the principles of the RMA and its biological bottom lines OK but if not, then—meet you in court! (WP Field Notes 11:1999).

Councillors justified their decision not to involve the working party from the beginning of their deliberation on the grounds that an ocean outfall was an extremely costly undertaking and as elected representatives, they would be held accountable for major financial expenditure. The councillors also implied the working party was not as accountable to the wider community as the Council. For example Councillor O’Toole argued that, ‘The role of the Council was to consider the public acceptability [of a discharge option], not just for the working party, but for the whole community and to provide leadership and accountability and to be able to explain to the public what we’re doing and why’ (WP Field Notes 3:1999). Councillor O’Toole asked the working party to ‘look at the positive things in this option and don’t underestimate the need to pull the community together’ (WP Field Notes 11:1999)

Were there attempts to facilitate participation across differences of gender, cultural, social and economic status, or educational and technical skills? How?

Despite significant constraints imposed by the demands of face-to-face discussion, cultural differences and political process, many significant steps were undertaken at the micro-level to make deliberation more inclusive within the working party. The steps addressed gender inequity, cultural and social differences and differences in technical education within the working party.

Relatively few women participated in the working party. However a number of working party members felt that women’s participation and that of all members was actively encouraged by the facilitator. Martha, a working party member, summed up Pam’s efforts as a facilitator, ‘The first discussions were managed in a way that gave everyone a voice, with
considerable tolerance for extended exposition...’ (WP Correspondence 1997)

Some working party members felt women preferred a less confrontational style of discussion. All the women interviewed volunteered a preference for a consensus style of decision-making and two expressed concern that confrontational debate inhibited them from speaking. For example votes were rarely taken at meetings and members were asked not to interrupt each other. However Dave felt this ‘consensus’ approach masked conflict:

Ben I felt the meetings were a bit tight. At times over controlled.

Dave It’s an interesting perception. It’s interesting, the ladies have uniformly said they liked the consensus approach. Now to me it was a pain in the butt. What is observed was a difference of opinion (WP Focus Group 1:1998).

Limited attempts were made to encourage deliberation across social or economic differences. The facilitator was a key agent in eliciting contributions from all participants, but no attempt was made to overcome differences in social or economic status. Consequently I observed articulate business leaders and members of the working party with technical skills tended to dominate deliberation although this contribution was often welcomed as effective leadership.

Cultural differences were seen as a barrier to communication by Council staff. Council staff recognised they lacked knowledge about Maori protocol. In my observation however the staff of the Water Services Unit tried a great deal harder to learn about these protocols than other Council staff. For example when I enquired about whether the Council had regular powhiri, two staff members from other units replied, ‘We don’t do any of that in Christchurch and Canterbury!’ while one politician told me that in
his experience the attitudes of Christchurch City Councillors were ‘on the whole pretty much white and ignorant, really pretty resistant to things Maori’ (WP Interview 5:1998, 1:1999).

While the Council’s initial proposal to create a forum for all groups did not meet the needs of Tangata Whenua, in 1997, a cultural audit was mooted by Ngai Tuahuriri as one way of incorporating Maori perspectives in working party and other public deliberative processes. A cultural audit involves reviewing the status of the information in terms of its quality from a tikanga perspective who should be consulted and where their mandate to speak came from (WP Interview 4:1998 and WP Field Notes 2:1997). At the time of writing, a cultural audit had not been implemented, but consultants had been employed to prepare a report on issues of concern to Ngai Tahu.

From the beginning Council staff endeavoured to overcome technical barriers by providing the working party with ‘easy-to-read’ information and field site visits to help overcome some of the technical barriers to discussion (WP Field Notes 1996). The strategy was of limited success. Several participants in the working party, especially the community representatives, continued to feel they lacked technical expertise:

Jan We’re all coming from different levels of understanding about things so whereas (another group member) comes from a very highly technical background, I don’t. I have found those things more difficult and whereas (the other member) would love to read all those stats and things they didn’t have the same meaning for me and were highly academic in many ways and it wasn’t an easy thing to take everybody along at the same pace. (WP Focus Group 1997)

Steve compared the working party to one he had been involved with concerning the hydropower development of Lake Coleridge. He concluded that:
Lake Coleridge was probably a little bit better. And I think what made it better was the fact that there were professional consultants along there. Not directly anyway, to lobby for work, but to give some guidance when what was a bunch of, in many cases, enthusiasts, oh enthusiastic amateurs, but who didn’t always have the science down and might have been going off in slightly the wrong tangent. I guess it provided a sort of base, I think that was, that was sort of lacking here and that’s not to bring discredit on the other members here but I know personally I don’t know a lot about biological things (WP Focus Group 1:1997).

In my observation as participation by consultants increased community input was inhibited rather than encouraged. For example Council staff and the facilitator, Pam, put a great deal of initial effort into helping the working party devise a brief for employing consultants, but once the consultants began attending working party meetings discussion became increasingly technical. The problem was illustrated in the June 1998 meeting. The working party was asked to make a recommendation on which treatment option it preferred:

Meeting in the Cashmere Working Men’s—a sense of occasion and anticipation surrounding the meeting. This is ‘the’ meeting to gain agreement on the favoured wastewater option/s to recommend to Council, issues and options are presented by the consultants. People become tense, restless, seem confused by the range of options. David, a peer reviewer criticises one of the options, his comments seem lost on the working party and people are frustrated, more information is presented about staggering the costs, people are now very restless and confused, there are lots of interjections and some discussion between members. I am struggling to understand the implications of the options presented; someone asks, ‘What’s the better option in your view?’ Jim [a consultant] replies, ‘That’s your job, folks, you have to make the value judgements,’—trouble is the group doesn’t seem sure of the value implications (WP Field Notes 6:1998).

A positive step which helped resist the tendency of professionals to dominate discussion, was to have the facilitator ask questions. Nevertheless after June 1998, the working party deliberations tended to become briefing
sessions with technical experts setting the agenda as they reported on their research findings.

In summary there were some attempts to ensure deliberation was inclusive. The attempts were most successful at the micro-level within the working party deliberative forum. It is significant that Maori resisted inclusion in a general working party, wishing to preserve their status under the Treaty as Tangata Whenua rather than another interest group. This, and the constraints of face to face deliberation, limited the inclusiveness of the working party.

2.2. Did the process facilitate consensus or social learning?

2.2.(a) Were shared norms or values identified in the process?
2.2.(b) Was trust, empathy, or respectful co-operation encouraged? How?
2.2.(c) Were new understandings facilitated? If so, for whom and about what?
2.2.(d) Did participants feel listened to or misunderstood?

Overall, there were periods during the working party process when most participants felt it would be possible to reach a consensus or shared understanding. The best example of this was about eighteen months into the working party’s deliberation, on June 28 1998, when the group met to develop a recommendation for the Council about waste treatment. Up until that meeting it appeared as if working party participants would reach some agreement. As the meeting progressed it became obvious that consensus had been more apparent than real. New interests, ocean recreation groups in particular, had joined the working party and had expressed a great deal of frustration at the apparent speed with which a decision was made to recommend discharging treated effluent into the ocean. My field notes record the way the meeting arrived at a resolution at the June 1998:

...after all the new funding information and nine possible options for treatment are presented the meeting seems about to fall apart. Pam senses that the members are struggling to make a choice and she asks
if the group wants more time. Ryan senses the working party’s frustrations too, ‘Come on people, you are so close, don’t lose it now’. Bill adds, ‘We should grasp the nettle!’ Ryan, ‘The ocean outfall gives us the best result, let’s see what happens if we don’t commit too strongly’. Suddenly it seems a resolution is possible. Pam, together with Ryan and Bill, word a motion...favouring an ocean outfall in principle. Despite the misgivings of the ocean recreation interests, this motion is put to the vote and it is carried... the meeting breaks up quickly, exhausted, relieved or frustrated we all head home (WP Field Notes 6:1998).

On later reflection, most people interviewed seemed pleased that one main option was recommended for further research, but this option could not be described as a shared norm or a consensus outcome.

**Were shared norms or values identified in the process?**

There were occasions when it appeared shared norms or values had been identified in the working party process. However in my observation these impressions were created by the eloquence of particular speakers who were able to appeal to their listeners with collective rhetoric—Ryan’s contribution to the working party was particularly significant in this regard. For example at the June 1998 meeting, Ryan’s appeal of, ‘Come on people, you are so close, don’t lose it now’, helped create a sense of consensus and shared purpose. The timing of Ryan’s contribution magnified the influence of his leadership language and others seized upon his persuasive argument style when they were tired or frustrated.

Martha described the way Ryan created a sense of shared purpose by encouraging the working party members to word a motion seeking clarification of their role. The clarification was sought following comments from Councillor Smith in February 1997, when he had argued that any wastewater treatment alternatives the working party considered would have to be constrained because the Council had already allocated a budget of $30 million towards upgrading the existing treatment plant.
Martha

High drama!...but we could proceed no further until we had an assurance from Council that our brief was still as we were initially advised...[To consider a range of options] The effect of this was that at our next meeting two of our designated councillors...appeared and assured us of our correctness in our belief in our independent brief and [Councillor Wong] sent wine, glasses and warm wishes. We were invited to draw up a vote of no confidence in us motion for the Council to consider at its next (imminent) meeting. Ryan produced the appropriate wording with Rachel instantly and the motion was passed unanimously at the Council meeting so we were back on course. I believe that little brouhaha cemented friendships within the working party and with ‘our’ councillors (WP Correspondence 1997).

In this case, the perception of shared norms was more apparent than real as evidenced later in the councillors’ subsequent action in not consulting the working party on a third treatment option.

The working party also failed to reach agreement on environmental values or strategies for environmental management. The consultants employed by the Council suggested that a useful environmental indicator might be ‘that shellfish was safe to consume at the beach’. This indicator was accepted by the working party, but during deliberation there was little opportunity for members to express other values in regard to the environment within which wastewater is discharged. This situation is likely to change quite rapidly because the Council’s expressed preference for an estuary discharge is likely to encourage estuary advocacy groups to speak out in protest. As the date for a consent application comes closer, those who desire to protect the estuary may have to express their concerns more forcefully. For example Hamish, a participant, noted in discussion that he felt that councillors had not yet appreciated that a ‘third way’ is controversial.
Hamish I am not sure the councillors fully appreciate that the Green Edge is a much more tortuous route from a consent point of view. Overall the ocean appears a much more straightforward option.

However Hamish suggests that groups may reach agreement in the future under certain conditions. He argues:

Hamish If they [the Council] apply with a clear determination to plan for an ocean outfall and there is a timeline that clearly shows how this will be staggered over ten to fifteen years, it may be more acceptable (WP Interview 2:2000).

The socio-cultural aspects of environmental values of working party members and Maori, particularly the value of the estuary have not been adequately debated to date.

Phil The debate is straightforward if you stand back from it. There’s quite a good case probably to say that the estuary can’t really continue to handle large volumes of water pumped into it, without some long-term effects which are not sustainable’ (WP Field Notes 3:1997)

The failure of the working party to address a wide range of environmental values surrounding the estuary, ocean and waste treatment can be partially explained by a macro-level policy constraint, the absence of strategic or holistic overview of waste treatment for the city. The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment has commented that in the absence of such strategies, the issues surrounding sewage treatment ‘...tend to degenerate too quickly into technical solutions without first adequately considering the contribution to New Zealand’s total waste stream and how that overall stream can be reduced, or waste reused’ (Parliamentary Commissioner of the Environment: RNZ 1998)

In this case the working party deliberation became dominated by technical discussion in which members attempted to identify indicators of
sustainability in the absence of explicit debate about the community's values and concerns.

Was trust, empathy, or respectful co-operation encouraged? How?

It proved difficult to build trust in a dynamic and fluid deliberation process. Long-serving members of the working party grew closer and friendships were formed as the group bonded. My notes support this attitude with comments like, 'I've grown very fond of everyone' (WP Field Notes 7:1998) and, 'I never expected to work so well with business representatives and I really enjoyed the chance to get to know and work with those individuals' (WP Focus Group 1:1998). However this small group bonding was at the expense of new comers. The ocean interests representatives who faced some defensiveness from the original working party members, responded angrily at the June and August 1998 meetings, concerned that their interests had been overlooked.

It also proved difficult to get consistently respectful co-operation in deliberation within the working party. Face-to-face deliberation advantaged those who are good at thinking and speaking in a public debate. Some participants, especially women members, felt intimidated at times by the actions and body language of others.

Jan

So I found that all their facial expressions and (a few people) making it obvious that it wasn't an open sort of thing and that (they) had (their) ideas made it very clear what (they) disagreed with (WP Focus Group 1:1997).

At times body language had the effect of silencing or undermining some speakers, particularly those presenting unpopular or minority perspectives. This was a powerful way of undermining the arguments of women in the group:

Jan asks for assurances that all alternative treatment options would be discussed and researched. In making this request, she is apologetic—
perhaps anticipating irritation from (…) who is sighing and turning in seat. Martha comes to her aid commenting, 'I've looked into this, won't we make the point that the cost of fresh water is so important…'. Geoff says dismissively, 'This has all been covered'. At this point the issue is dropped. Later Maurice asks the same question in different (not apologetic) language, 'I'd like to know what is the state of the art microbiologically, what blue sky research is out there?' When asked in this way from a male speaker with a technical background the issue is now addressed by all at the table (WP Field Notes 27:1997).

This exchange highlights the intangible barriers a face-to-face forum presents for participants who lack confidence or who present their arguments in halting or emotional ways. This was particularly true for the women members and one male participant who quietly withdrew and did not regularly attend meetings.

Meeting rooms and food emerged as factors that conveyed respect. There were complaints about both:

Ben
The venues leave something to be desired, if the bloody burglar alarm wasn't going off. It was freezing cold and I think they can do better than that. I think this Council has got huge resources available in terms of appropriate venues and that was a bit like we were a bit of an also ran in that regard—we needed to be better looked after.

Ryan
I think that was fair comment and I think the food left something to be desired but that’s beside the point. But it probably isn’t actually because …in the context of the voluntary commitment the working party was making …if you add it all up there was a huge hourly input into the process and I would have thought if the City Council was serious about this they could have treated the working party with a little more respect in terms of the accommodation and I'd like to see the Councillors go through those series of meetings in that sort of environment, I don’t think you’d get them lasting too long (WP Focus Group 2:1998).
Were new understandings facilitated? If so, for whom and about what?

In my observation social learning in the working party was enhanced with the opportunity to ask questions although this required knowledge about what questions were worth asking. For example the working party members were provided with a great deal of technical information, but it was an analysis of the social and political implications of this information which appeared to be missing. As a result, members struggled to ask questions that would take their deliberation ‘out of the square’ or provide them with useful insights. Jan and Ryan summed up this problem:

Jan
I can’t help wondering if there are other ways of looking at this whole topic, I would just really like to know what the blue sky technologies are, but also what other ways we could have looked at these problems (WP Field Notes 3:1998).

Ryan
If I was going through this again I’d want more up-front information in terms of the breadth of the issue as opposed to being confined. I think we got into a tunnel quite early in the process. I think we got into that tunnel too early (WP Focus Group 2:1998).

Working party members also expressed frustration at their lack of understanding of Tangata Whenua concerns. Tangata Whenua appeared to have traded off the opportunity to increase social understanding among the working party members in favour of expending their limited resources targeting key decision-makers, council staff and councillors.

Jan
I just don’t feel I know what Ngai Tahu’s thinking is.

Martha
Well you do because in that folder [a resource folder of given to the working party by council staff in January 1997] we’ve had a full statement of Ngai Tahu shopping wishes. You know the statement with protection of maringa kai, the abhorrence of pollution of the estuaries and a lot more. But I’m not Tangata Whenua, I’m Tangata O’Tiriti but I can at least be aware of it (WP Focus Group 1:1997).
The importance of conserving limited resources does not appear to have been recognised by theorists of deliberative planning who assume minority groups will value an opportunity to take part in a community forum.

Did participants feel listened to or misunderstood?
In general most participants felt that they received a fair hearing within the working party. However participants expressed concern over the extent to which the Council would listen to the working party. People wanted their input to be valued, not simply heard or registered. Aroha summed up this view for Maori and in doing so captured the sentiment expressed by other members of the working party:

Aroha

Maori scientific evidence is not used enough. (Some tribes) are taking a tougher line because the Councils are not identifying with Tangata Whenua environmental rights and the rights of people to have input. Technical expertise is not enough. The Runanga’s response might be; show us the courtesy that you recognise this input has Mana (WP Interview 4:1998).

Overall the working party process did not facilitate consensus, but it did encourage some social learning among members of the working party. However one significant exception to this was that working party members felt they were not given the opportunity to learn about the concerns of Tangata Whenua.

2.3 Did the deliberative process address issues of social justice? If not, why not? If so,
2.3.(a) How were issues of distributive justice addressed?
2.3.(a).i Whose interests or values were identified with planning outcomes?
2.3.(b) How were issues of procedural justice addressed?
2.3.(b).i What were the agendas, rules and rituals of deliberation and who set these?
2.3.(b).ii How were procedural disputes addressed?
In addressing sub-question 2.3, I argue that the deliberations of the working party failed to effectively address questions of distributional justice although the process had the potential to enhance the procedural justice of future Council decision-making.

How were issues of distributive justice addressed?
The working party failed to address in economic, environmental and cultural terms who should pay for or bear the burden of the treatment of wastewater. Throughout the working party deliberation, debate focused more and more on finding solutions to the problem of treating and disposing of waste. The technical discussion, while important, did not include consideration of the values, costs and burdens of discharge. For example the working party agenda focused on waste outputs and accepted inputs as given. The Council held a separate discussion process for trade waste among manufacturing and industry interests (WP Field Notes 7:1997). A breakdown of estimated costs per individual ratepayer for various treatment options was presented for discussion to a special interest meeting of manufacturers only. These estimates were not made available to the wider working party. Therefore who should pay for discharge, who should discharge and what should be discharged, were not considered by the working party.

Whose interests or values were identified with planning outcomes?
At present the most outspoken critics of the process are ocean recreation interests who feel that they will unfairly bear the burden if discharge is shifted from the estuary to an ocean outfall. These groups argue that having an advocacy group for the estuary on the working party from the beginning unfairly advantaged the interests of local residents and environmentalists keen to enhance the estuary. This argument tests the extent to which social learning and empathy have been generated among newer and long-serving
members of the working party. In the absence of empathy for the interests of others, deliberation about wastewater could degenerate into a debate about siting a locally unwanted land use (LULU) between groups with entrenched opinions. Questions about what costs will be borne by the community, as opposed to industry or future generations, are still to be debated. Community groups are most likely to raise these questions after the Council confirms its choice of treatment options.

*How were issues of procedural justice addressed?*

At the macro-level the working party was marginalised in the Council’s decision-making process. However the working party was able to enhance the procedural justice of the situation. The Council’s decision-making process was subject to much greater scrutiny because of the deliberation of working party members. Councillors attended a special working party meeting in November 1999, where they were asked to present their ‘new option’. Any future scrutiny the working party can bring to bear on this new option has the potential to further increase procedural justice. As a result, working party members could direct a highly informed public deliberation into the Council’s decision-making process. Furthermore, at a micro-level, the working party was able to enhance, to a limited extent, procedural justice in its internal deliberations by challenging the Council’s agenda and assumptions about wastewater, calling for a wastewater strategy for the city.

*What were the agendas, rules and rituals of deliberation and who set these?*

The agendas (priorities for plans, polices and action), the rules and the rituals (recurrent practices) of public deliberation were the subject of some debate and challenge by members of the working party. The agenda of the Council and its staff was a subject of concern for several members of the working party. Dave and Ryan commented in focus group discussions:
I actually felt right through that there was a very close degree of collaboration between the Council staff and the facilitator. (John) didn’t want to appear to be guiding the committee but by God he guided it by avoiding issues—the one of the south-west treatment station, we have never heard of it yet (WP Focus Group: 1:1998).

I got the impression, rightly or wrongly, that we were there because we had to be there and not because we were going to offer some real value in the process. And there’s a fine line between democratic requirement and democratic input. And I got the impression that certain phases of this process were to deal with the requirement and not real input...The terms of the consent sought by the Council were such that the issue was essentially a technical question about waste disposal (WP Focus Group 2:1997).

Ryan’s argument that the working party agenda was narrowly defined in technical terms was supported by comment from John, a Council staff member. John believed that the task of the working party was to focus on wastewater treatment rather than on a strategy for city waste minimisation.

The Beca Steven report was addressing how to upgrade the treatment that we have now and the working party and Council process is looking at what we do with the product. OK, Beca Steven is saying, ‘how do we make a product’ and the consent is saying, ‘what do we do with the product?’ And I’ve tried hard to keep those separate. And what I suppose I was hoping was that the Working Party would have a somewhat more conceptual approach rather than a nuts and bolts approach to the treatment. They’d be saying this is the kind of outcome we’d like to have. This is the sort of estuary, the sort of functions of the estuary we’d like to happen. Or if it happened to be land disposal of some sort, re-use on land, looking at the issues involved in re-use on land and they would leave it to the experts on treatment to work out how to produce an effluent to fulfil that function. So the group I was hoping would concentrate on end uses.
The members of the working party were able to challenge this focus on end uses to some extent, raising issues that might not otherwise have been expressed at this time. For example Ryan noted:

Ryan  My real concern is that this is part of an overall waste management strategy for the city and we were dealing with a little mechanical part that needed, that required, a solution as one part of that management. And unless we were aware in some way of the overall strategic handling of waste in the city, it is very difficult to necessarily get the correct answer to that one little problem (WP Focus Group 2:1997).

In July 1998, the working party members took the opportunity to challenge the agenda of the Council by requesting that it develop a city-wide management plan for waste. Councillors and staff agreed to the request.

Other issues of procedural justice which were explored in focus group discussions, were questions related to the rules and rituals of deliberation. Pam, as the facilitator, set ground rules of deliberation within the working party, for example, no one could interrupt a speaker. Votes were rarely taken, instead at the end of a debate Pam would ask 'Can we all live with that?' This consensual style of deliberation was generally welcomed although there was a significant minority who did not appreciate these rules and rituals.

Martha  And I was also very pleased to see they were going to use a facilitator and why I was interested in that was that I have had a gutsful and a lifetimes worth of confrontational discussion where the strongest arguers carry the point because in a group like this that would not be fair expression of all the different origins of people because everybody has a view, everybody has feelings, but if they feel they are excluded from speaking because others have got more expertise that means the most important word is not said and that word is modulation. (WP Focus Group 1:1997)
In contrast, a few felt the consensual style of debate and its rituals masked significant differences of opinion.

Dave The standard phrase that terminated discussion on every topic was ‘can we all live with that?’ And those who felt they were in the minority just kept their mouths shut. There was no indication of just how many people agreed or disagreed with it (WP Focus Group 1:1998).

How were procedural disputes addressed?
The most significant macro-level procedural dispute for the working party was over the Council’s sub-committee decision to introduce a ‘Green Edge’ option without prior consultation with working party members. This procedural dispute has not been resolved at the time of writing. However the facilitator was able to address this perceived procedural injustice by requesting councillors to present their preferred option to a full working party meeting. The experience and confidence members have gained from participation in the working party should strengthen their arguments about this option as individuals or in alliance as members of the wastewater working party.

The working party failed to address issues of distributive justice, because there was no opportunity to debate the relative benefits or burdens of any particular approach to waste issues. Some members of the working party commented that they believed it was too soon to assess costs or impacts, but it proved difficult to select treatment options in the absence of this debate. In the absence of information about trade waste, it is not possible to assess how or whether polluter industries have benefited from the lack of public scrutiny into their contribution to the overall waste stream.

2.4 In what ways and to what extent did the facilitator and/or sponsor of deliberation influence the process of public deliberation in planning?
The facilitator played a significant, but limited role as an agent for change in the working party deliberations. Many participants stated that they were
very pleased to have a 'neutral' facilitator and were very satisfied with Pam's work. However being contracted by the Council raised some difficulties for the facilitator. I perceived that it was difficult for her to be too outspoken in criticism of her employers while fulfilling the important role of critic and advocate for the community and as a mediator between the working party, Council staff and Council politicians.

For example in November 1999 the facilitator played a key role in ensuring that the community had an opportunity to hear and debate the new treatment option. The facilitator's persistent questioning exposed procedural injustice. Pam's questioning highlighted the lack of full and honest disclosure of information.

Cyril (To Councillors) Are you asking the working party to forward our comments on the Christchurch City Council recommendations?

Pam I think the other question was, have the Consultants given you any information that the working party doesn't have?

Councillor Smith Well, we're sort of informing you of the recommendations that have come forward and our feedback from the public meetings....one of our reasons for setting up the working party was to smooth the resource consent process but we could see lots of objections...

Councillor O'Toole There is no conspiracy theory about this!

Pam What have you heard that no one else has heard?

Councillors then responded that they had had consultants undertake research into the 'Green Edge' treatment option.

As noted earlier the facilitator has played a key role in helping improve procedural justice by negotiating to ensure councillors kept the working party fully informed in any future deliberation. In contrast, the Council and its staff, as sponsor of the working party process, were unable
to ensure deliberation was open and inclusive. Councillors perceived that limited budgets significantly constrained treatment alternatives. They implied that there was tension between decision-making by elected representatives and the process of community deliberation (WP Interview 1997 and WP Field Notes 11:1999). The result was that councillors on the City Services Sub-committee elected to develop the Green Edge option without reference to the Wastewater working party.

Like Dryzek (1996), my observation of this working party deliberation suggests that state-sponsored deliberation tends to be constrained by the imperatives of a market economy in that cost implications limit the range of possible choices. Many working party members felt constrained in their deliberation because of the Council:

Ben: I felt as though we were, we were being fenced in a little
Jan: But who set the fences, ourselves or?
Ryan: No I don’t think the Working Party set the fences. I think if you wanted to be cynical about it there was a preferred outcome that would be appreciated if the Working Party got to it.

Bronwyn: Do others agree?
Ben: No not-its an over-emphasis
Jan: But we were certainly steered.
Phil: I found what was frustrating was trying to get to the nitty gritty but time constraints seemed to really come in on us there, some last minute things...there was certain amounts of resistance from Council staff at that stage—one more than another.
Ryan: I’ll never forget the body language when (some one) brought up the wider strategic issues ‘Oh No!’
5.5. Summary

In this chapter, I have shown that a well-intentioned deliberative process became derailed by the constraints of a face-to-face deliberative forum, the capture of the deliberative process by engineering-driven solutions to political problems and local government political processes. However some significant gains were made. A range of community groups had the opportunity to learn about the concerns of others and they could become agents for social change for social learning in a wider community. They have an information base which will advantage them in future political debate and may improve the procedural justice of that debate by providing informed and close scrutiny of future Council decision-making.

1 The area regularly supports over 1% of New Zealand’s population of at least fifteen bird species and in the winter, up to 20% of species such as the Royal Spoonbill (Briggs and Keller 1991)

2 Not everyone agrees on the relevant parameters which can be chosen to measure estuary water quality. For example does Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) sampling provide relevant insights into water quality for human contact recreation and which pathogens should be monitored? (Woodward-Clyde 1997)

3 In an initial cost benefit appraisal prepared for the Council, consulting engineers Beca Steven (1996), suggested that a $430 million upgrade of the existing Bromley plant would mean that the plant would be capable of handling projected sewerage loads until the year 2026. The Beca Stevens’ report estimated an alternative land-based option for treating effluent (as part of an irrigation scheme) would have a comparative capital cost of $350 million (Beca Stevens 1996:7). However the Beca Stevens’ $30 million option did not include a requirement to reduce nutrient levels. If that was required, the upgrade would cost an additional $30 million with pond areas converted for tidal discharge, storage and wildlife habitat.

4 As deliberation progressed, the working party narrowed its choice to a decision between continuing to discharge to the estuary at an estimated cost of $22.9 million (Woodward-Clyde 1998, pp 7-16) and discharging into the ocean via a two kilometre pipeline, with an extensively upgraded treatment process at an estimated capital cost of $44.7 million (Woodward Clyde 1998, pp 7-9).

5 Gender representation was also traded off for representation of other interests. For example a woman initially nominated from a local industry was asked to step down in order to include another male participant who represented a ‘peak’ business association.

6 Ages ranged from mid 30s to mid 60s.
CHAPTER SIX

CASE TWO: SUMNER CONCEPT PLAN: DELIBERATION SPONSORED BY A RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION AND THE CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

6.1. Introduction

In this chapter I present the results of my investigation into a deliberative planning forum jointly sponsored by the Sumner Residents Association (Residents Association) and the Christchurch City Council (Council). The results address research question two and sub-questions 2.1-2.4. I examine the way a Concept Plan for the suburb of Sumner was prepared and presented as a submission to the City Plan. I analyse the public deliberation that occurred in the development of the Concept Plan and the outcomes. I discuss the extent to which this process achieved the aims of deliberative planning: facilitating inclusive discussion, consensus, or social learning and enhanced social justice. Finally I examine the role of both the facilitator and sponsors of the concept planning exercise in public deliberation.

In July 1995, a public forum was held over one weekend to discuss broad concepts or plans to guide the future development of the Sumner community. The first forum was followed up in November 1996, when participants came together to confirm their ideas and respond to comments from Council planners. In what follows, I argue that the outcomes of a well-intentioned deliberative exercise were disappointing. I consider whether wider planning processes marginalised the Concept Plan and the extent to which the Concept Plan process exacerbated inter-generational tensions in the community.
6.2. Issues in Contention: Sumner Housing Intensification

Christchurch, like other Australasian cities, is characterised by relatively low-density detached suburban development (Robinson et al 2000). Urban development in Christchurch has generally followed a pattern of outward radiation from the central city, except in certain areas which were originally local nodes of development (CCC 1999a, Vol 1 p.3/18). For example, in the suburb known as Sumner, patterns of housing have concentrated on the seaside community of Sumner and more recently the surrounding hillsides of Scarborough and Richmond (Figure Nine).

The relatively low density of housing in Christchurch has raised concern that increasing urban sprawl will impinge on surrounding highly fertile agricultural land (Goh 1996). Since the 1970s the Christchurch City Council has pursued a policy of 'residential intensification' (CCC 1999a) in an attempt to control urban sprawl. The aim of the policy has been to 'encourage design compatible with existing development for infill and redevelopment throughout living areas' (CCC a 1999, Vol 2 pp.11-16). Housing intensification involves an increase of both housing and population densities (Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment 1997, p.v). There has been a great deal of debate in Christchurch about the impacts of housing intensification, with much of the debate focusing on the inner city and desirable residential suburbs like Sumner.

To put this debate in a national context, the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (1998) noted that there has been very little developed research or information to assist Councils in planning future urban forms to achieve sustainable management of their cities. 'There is also inadequate understanding and appreciation of the role of urban design' (Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment 1997).
Residential development became the subject of heated debate in Sumner in the 1990s with the proposal to build high rise apartments in the retail district.
In 1999, the Christchurch City Council acknowledged that the degree of infill in the city has had ‘an adverse effect on many peoples’ perceptions of amenity’ (CCC 1999, Vol 1 p.3/18). The Council concluded that containing growth within a ‘green belt’ has been successful to the point where ‘there is little undeveloped land left within the urban fence’ (CCC 1999, Vol 1 p.3/18). Housing intensification has been a contentious issue in Christchurch for a number of reasons. The concerns which are of particular relevance to the community of Sumner, include:

- debates about amenity values;
- debates about social diversification; and
- debates about urban sustainability.

6.2.1. Debates about amenity values

In 1997, a study by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment raised concerns about the impacts of housing intensification policies on urban communities and particularly on amenity values. These values were defined under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) as ‘those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people’s appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence and cultural and recreational attributes’ (Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment 1997, citing Resource Management Act 1991, s 2: p.v). The Commissioner argued that there can be significant detrimental effects associated with housing intensification including changes in streetscape, significant loss of vegetation, natural or built urban features and traffic congestion (Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment 1997). The Commissioner concluded that greater care should be taken to consider the impacts of housing intensification, particularly the design of buildings and their relationship to adjacent buildings, design characteristics of the area;
reduction of private open space, significance of public open space and loss of urban vegetation (Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment 1997).

In Sumner there has been heated local debate about the impact of housing intensification policies on amenity values. In 1996, the pressure to build in Sumner was recognised in a local newspaper article headline: 'Development poised to change the face of Sumner' (The Press 1996, p.45). The article detailed several residential development proposals including forty-nine apartments planned for the beachfront at Cave Rock and a nine-story apartment building (Figure Nine). The Press articles at the time captured some of the contrasting views about these proposals, with one developer arguing that 'Sumner is in need of improvement' and describing the beach as a 'mess' (The Press 1996, p.45). The developer interviewed concluded, 'Anything that is going to give it a lift is bound to be beneficial and in particular any enhancement to the foreshore, by comparison to the twig and dog pooped area it is today' (The Press 1996, p.45). Other residents argued that the 'suburb has become a trendy place to live', but the area 'should retain its present village character', in the face of proposals for high-rise development (Taylor 1997, p.13). A lawyer acting for opponents of one high-rise development asked planning commissioners adjudicating at one development hearing: '...will the granting of this [development] open the floodgates for Sumner to become the new high-rise beach resort of Christchurch City?' (The Press 1997, p.5) Several letters to The Press expressed residents' concern. The following extract is representative of the arguments:

The recent spate of proposed building developments...for Sumner's 'progress' show how easily the character of a place can be lost. Seaside Sumner has a quaint town appeal, framed by its heritage of hills and dramatic volcanic rock faces. This is the very charm that draws people to live there and visitors to view. High-rises and slab-built tenement-style apartments have no place in that environment. Rather, they are tacky monuments to quick fix, pocket-lining ventures (The Press 1997, p.11).
Views such as these, touch on concerns beyond those of amenity value described by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment. Housing intensification has exacerbated concerns about the social impacts of this housing.

6.2.2. Debates about social impacts

Housing intensification has been associated with perceptions of social change and diversification not readily captured in discussion about amenity values. Sumner has experienced considerable social change. Sumner developed from a popular seaside holiday destination accessible by train from Christchurch at the turn of the twentieth century. By 1996, the population of Sumner stood at 3,225. Most residents of Sumner who are in paid employment, commute into Christchurch, but the suburb also has a large proportion of retired residents. In 1991, 23% of the population were sixty-five and over, however by 1996 this figure had fallen to 16% (Environmental Policy and Design Unit 1999). There has also been considerable economic change. In 1991, only 20% Sumner population had an income of $30,000 and over and 46% were receiving some form of income support. By 1996, 45% of adults in Sumner had a personal income of less than $20,000, but 13% had an income of over $70,000 (Environmental Policy and Design Unit:1999). The growing socio-economic polarisation of the Sumner community is reflected in its urban form. Its supporters and detractors alike have described the suburban form of the valley of Sumner as '1940s and 1950s workingmen’s cottages’ and ‘detached bungalows’ (Sumner Concept Plan 1995). In contrast, the more recently developed hillsides of reflect the affluence and architectural boom of the 1980s and 1990s with larger homes of post-modern styling.

Increasing unease about the socio-economic changes in Sumner is captured in local newspaper reports which have focused extensively on the
relatively high cost of new apartments in the suburb (*The Press* 1996 and Taylor 1997) and the mixed reactions of residents. For example *The Press* published an iterative column called, 'have your say', which featured a number of development proposals and asked residents for feedback. A number of local residents expressed concerns. One resident commented, 'A lot of older people live here and they are pretty anti any type of development'. Other people commented on the beauty of the natural environment and the lifestyle; 'Sumner has the beach life which is a step back from the fast lane...high-rise is definitely not appropriate for this area' (Taylor 1997, p.13) (Figure Ten).

However social polarisation and change are not the only issues raised by housing intensification in Sumner. The process also raised debate about environmental impacts.

6.2.3. Debates about environmental impacts

There has been considerable debate about the appropriateness of housing intensification policy from the perspective of environmental sustainability. As noted in chapter three, critics of the RMA have expressed concern that the bio-physical principles which inform the notion of sustainable management in the Act, have privileged natural science and technical responses to environmental problems at the expense of addressing issues of social and cultural environments in urban areas. For example Perkins and Thorns argue:

In the concern to embrace the bio-physical environment, New Zealanders have embraced a politically conservative stance toward collective modes of policy making and downplayed the importance of urban and social planning...One of the drawbacks here is that the collective good—difficult though it is to define—represented by the long-term needs of both human communities and the bio-physical environment, has been sidelined or at best seen as a 'management issue' rather than one of overall development. The prescriptions
Residents and developers commented on the beauty of the 'natural amphitheatre' created by the hills, volcanic spurs and coastline which both encloses the suburb of Sumner, and restricts the amount of flat land available for development.
contained in the Resource Management Act 1991 and the new crop of city plans which are emerging as a result of the change to an effects-based planning system are evidence of this (Perkins and Thorns 1999a, pp.3-4).

The concerns raised by Perkins and Thorns are similar to those raised by the Sumner Residents Association. In 1995, the Residents Association asked Christchurch City Council to support a ‘concept planning’ exercise for Sumner. The Residents Association wanted a chance to debate urban planning at a conceptual level, through talking about a wide-range of ideas relating to ‘social, economic and natural features’ which they hoped would guide development in Sumner rather than simply ‘responding to the effects of particular proposals’ (SCP Interview 2:1996).

6.3. Chronology of Sumner Concept Plan Deliberations

In 1995, an application was made to the Christchurch City Council for planning permission to erect a seven-storey commercial and residential complex on Marriner Street in Sumner. The proposal was eventually granted for a four-storey building in recognition of several protest meetings involving ‘hundreds’ of residents and a petition signed by 1,100 residents (Taylor 1997). The idea for a concept plan arose in reaction to the number of intensive housing developments proposed for Sumner between 1995 and 1998 (Figure Nine). The concept planning exercise was a comparatively short one, consisting of a two-day workshop, a public meeting and a follow up half-day workshop. The key features of the Concept Plan process are outlined in Table Three.

May 1995 The Sumner Residents Association approached the Council for funding to run a weekend planning charrette or discussion forum about planning options for the suburb.

June 21 1995 Funding was granted and a landscape architectural firm (Rebecca Hamilton and Associates) was contracted by
## Table Three

**Sumner Concept Plan: Public Deliberation in Planning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliberation in Planning</th>
<th>Concept Planning Process</th>
<th>City Council</th>
<th>Residents Association</th>
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</table>
| **1995**                 | • Concept Plan two day Charrette 64 individuals attend (July)  
                          • Drop boxes and Supermarket displays (July)          | • 24 July 1995 City Council notify draft city plan  
                          • Council grants application for 4 storey Mariner St. application (Sept) | • Public meetings and 1000 residents sign petition against a seven story building on Mariner St. (Jan – June 1998)  
                          • Concept Plan forwarded as submission to City Plan (Sept) |
| **1996**                 | • Concept plan charrette responds to City Council (November) | • September: City Planners meet with residents to comment on the Concept Plan (Sept) | • New Residents Association committee elected, distances itself from concept plan and supports local development (July)  
                          • Public meeting objects to Marine Tavern site 9 storey proposal (Dec) |
| **1997**                 | • Residents speak to City Plan hearings regarding amenity, design, open space, transport issues (Jan – Nov) | • Cave Rock apartment proposed  
                          • 45 apartments approved after public hearing (January)  
                          • Marine tavern 9 storey apartments. Declined after public hearing (February) | • New Residents Association committee reflects a range of residents and local business interests (July) |
| **1998**                 | • City Plan hearings continue. Residents speak to Concept Plan (May) | • Hearings finish for City Plan | |
the Council, at the request of the Sumner Residents Association, to run a concept-planning workshop in which residents could discuss future development for Sumner.

24 June 1995

The Christchurch City Council notified its draft ten-year City Plan and called for public submissions.

15–16 July 1995

A Concept Plan ‘charrette’, or public forum, was held in the community hall to discuss broad concepts which might guide the future development of the Sumner. The workshop was attended by sixty-four individuals and a further twenty people made written submissions. The participants in the Concept Plan exercise produced a document with drawings and maps illustrating features of Sumner’s built heritage and natural environment. The document highlighted issues of concern for the residents. The Concept Plan promoted a ‘Sumner Protocol’ by which:

Participants sought that the identity of Sumner as a distinctive, relaxed and older seaside village be retained and enhanced through controlled and directed development, sensitive to its social, built and natural heritage. The community wishes to have a greater involvement in shaping Sumner’s future. They sought an improved mechanism for being informed of proposed or possible changes, other than merely through the newspapers Public Notices. They also sought a role in decision-making. Thus, recognition of a Sumner Protocol is sought to define the essential, appropriate and sustainable Sumner character and to ensure change is directed and managed to achieve this character...(Sumner Concept Plan 1995, p.5).

The Concept Plan also produced visual building guidelines favouring detached bungalows and argued that ‘the population of Sumner be stabilised to allow retention of the Sumner Village character’. The Concept Plan concluded that city planning should seek to retain the socio-economic diversity of Sumner and rejected four-storey buildings anywhere in Sumner (Sumner Concept Plan 1995, p.8).
November 1995 The Chairman of the Sumner Residents Association forwarded the Concept Plan as a submission to the City Plan.

June 1996 The Council's Environmental Policy and Planning Manager responded to the Residents Association expressing concern at 'the potential for community expectations to escalate as a result of the Concept Plan' (CCC 1995, File: PP/SU/20/11)

July 1996 A new Residents Association committee was elected (including development and business interests). The new committee moved to distance itself from the Concept Plan.

September 24 1996 City planners met with the Sumner residents to comment on the Concept Plan.

September 1996 The City Planning hearing began on submissions to the City Plan. A planning officer's report noted the absence of detail in the Concept Plan and said as a result 'it would be difficult to recommend appropriate text change or other amendment to the Proposed Plan' (CCC 1999 a).

November 1996 A one-day follow-up Concept Plan public charrette was held. Approximately forty participants confirmed their ideas and responded to comments from Council planners.

December 1996 Over 300 people attend a meeting of the Residents Association to discuss a proposal for a new nine-storey, 32 metre high apartment block on the Marine Tavern Site, on Nayland Street (Figure Nine). A large majority voted against the proposal.

January 1997 The Council held planning hearings to consider the Marine Tavern nine-story high-rise and a new forty-nine-unit apartment block on the Esplanade at Cave Rock (Figure Nine).

February 1997 The Council declined consent for the Marine Tavern high-rise considering that 'at 32 m tall, [the proposal] was completely out of character and incompatible with the existing...height restriction of 11 metres'. Planning consent was granted for forty-nine apartments on the Cave Rock Hotel site in March 1997.
The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment published a report commending Christchurch City Council for management of suburban amenity values and identifying the concept planning process as an initiative which enhanced public participation in planning.

A Council planner reported to the City Plan review hearing on amenity and design, the officer concluded that the concept planning process was a:

...process whereby residents brainstormed and recorded their ideas on how they viewed their area...it was intended that from this would develop a range of techniques appropriate for implementation, not just in the City Plan. It was therefore not intended as a submission on the City Plan. Because of the lack of focus of comments and relief sought for the City Plan it is unfortunate much has been rejected...(CCC 1997)

The City Plan was released, under which retail zones in Sumner were raised by one metre, but were not raised to the maximum permitted in similar zones elsewhere in the City.

It is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of public deliberation through the Concept Plan given the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment’s praise for the process and the Council’s admission that much of the detail of the Concept Plan was rejected in its City Plan process. I argue that the concept planning process illustrates both the strengths and significant limitations of deliberation in planning.

6.4. Results and Analysis

In the rest of this chapter, I consider the extent to which public deliberation through the Concept Plan process was able to achieve the aims of deliberative planning theory as identified in chapter two and present the results of my analysis of research question two and sub-questions 2.1-2.4.
2. Can the aims of deliberative planning theory be achieved through greater public deliberation in urban planning practice? If not, why not? If so, under what conditions?

In the case of the Sumner Concept Plan, I argue that the concept planning process was unable to achieve the aims of deliberative planning theory through a face-to-face discussion process. In a divided community the Concept Plan process appears to have done little to enhance the inclusiveness of deliberation, consensus, social learning, social justice or environmental sustainability. Participation in this forum diverted community attention from the more significant City Plan process. Participants assumed incorrectly that their views as expressed in the Concept Plan, would be considered in the City Plan hearings. In reality, the City Plan process took little account of the Concept Plan. The concept planning exercise also failed to address inter-generational tension and distrust within the community. I consider why a deliberative planning process turned out so unsatisfactorily. The results are summarised in Figure Eleven.

2.1. Was the planning process inclusive?

2.1.(a) Who got involved?

2.1.(b) Were there attempts to facilitate participation across differences of gender, culture, social or economic status, or educational and technical skills? How?

At the outset the Concept Plan process was envisaged as an inclusive grassroots deliberative process. However in practice the process was boycotted by local development interests and as a result the legitimacy of the process as an inclusive exercise in public deliberation was undermined in subsequent planning hearings.

Who got involved?

The Concept Plan process was a relatively short deliberative exercise consisting of three public meetings. The first was a charrette that took place
Partially inclusive deliberation

- communicative rationality
- inclusive discussion
- participatory democracy

Social Transformation

**Consensus Building**
- failed to establish consensus
- exacerbated intergenerational tensions

**Social Learning**
- limited social learning
- ineffective voice

**Social Justice**
- unable to enhance procedural justice of City Plan process
- failed to fully address distributive justice issues
over a weekend in July 1995. This was followed-up by a public meeting
called by the Sumner Residents Association in September 1996 and a one-
day forum in November 1996.

A total of sixty-four individuals attended the first Concept Plan
charrette. Invitations were published in the local newspaper, *The Shoreline*
and the Residents Association distributed posters to local shops and leaflets
to all residences. Pre-workshop comments were also collected from ‘drop
boxes’ in the supermarket and local library. A further twenty people made
written submissions using the ‘drop boxes’. The first concept planning
session was held in the Sumner Community Centre, chaired by local
landscape architect Rebecca Hamilton and attended by thirty-four people on
day one and forty-five on day two. In September 1996, approximately sixty
people attended a Residents Association meeting to hear the Council
response to the Concept Plan (SCP Field Notes 4:1996).

There has been much local debate about how inclusive this process
was. Supporters of the process argue that the concept planning exercise was
open to all and that a turn out of approximately sixty-five people to the first
charrette was very good given the very cold, wet weather conditions. These
focus group comments capture this assessment:

Jess    I think it was wonderful that the community got
together and made an effort to explore ideas and talk as
a group about what the group thought. Talked on issues
of substance and as a group made decisions about what
the group wanted and that went forward as a Concept
Plan (SCP Focus Group 2:1997).

Kathleen There was much more satisfaction with not necessarily
one-to-one but you were a group conversing. It was a
very satisfying thing even though as (a person)...said
there is a cynicism that you know, I’m just wasting my
time. It was something that you were asked to come
along (SCP Focus Group 2:1997).
Jock

...they had the opportunity to participate and I think that was a very important thing—so and it was the first time you felt as though you had a bit of power as an individual, that you might have a bit of power for the future. And I think that people feel they are part of a process is a very important aspect of the Concept Plan (SCP Focus Group 1:1997).

The Concept Plan charrettes were not able to facilitate inclusive deliberation in Sumner because a number of key participants chose not to attend. Critics, particularly local developers and business interests argued that the process was always going to be simply another debate and for that reason they did not attend. Fraser, a local developer, made the following point:

Fraser

I didn’t go to the Concept Plan... I didn’t go personally because I knew it would end up as a debate amongst the people of Sumner as in the over 60’s and there’s a group in the middle too busy to go and then perhaps some young people who are really those to go surfing.

Jillian

I object to the over 60 bit because there are a lot of people over 60 who don’t who are not against these places

Fraser

Yes there is! (SCP Focus Group 3:1997).

Critics of the Concept Plan process also argued that the composition of the charrettes reflected that of the Residents Association too closely. Tim, another developer put forward this argument:

Tim

Well I used to follow it [Sumner Residents Association], in the local paper, even though I rarely went along to meetings and I got increasingly frustrated at the single-minded point of view and attitude that was taken the whole time. They absolutely opposed everything... Well you go to the meetings, well its not so much now, I haven’t got grey hair, but every time you went to the meetings they were all old, yeah, they were people, old, semi-retired, yeah that’s exactly it, the older generation. The older, oh it’s probably not right to say but you could call it the average family, the average New Zealand generation. There were none of the older wealthy people
that live out there and there were none on the very low incomes if you know what I mean, they were all of a certain set (SCP Interview 3:1997).

Field observations in November 1996 noted a number of older people were involved in both the Residents Association and the Concept Plan charrette. Most of the approximately forty participants at the November 1996 Concept Plan charrette were over thirty and the majority was of retirement age. Similarly the majority of people who attended regular Residents Association committee meetings during 1996–1999 were retired people. However during this period, people of a broad range of ages attended four large public forums organised by the Residents Association to debate the specific high-rise proposals.

_Were there attempts to facilitate participation across differences of gender, culture social or economic status, or educational and technical skills? How?_

This case illustrates the way a face-to-face deliberative process can exacerbate division in a community. Widespread participation in the discussion process was inhibited because of continuing disputes within the community. The division took on a generational character. ‘Pro business’ and ‘development’ interests tend to view themselves as younger, or at least with a youthful outlook, as opposed to older, retired people who had traditionally dominated the Residents Association. This dispute became so marked that committee positions on the Residents Association became the subject of an intense campaign during the course of this study, with a group of younger people and local business interests taking up key positions for a term.

The Council funded the Concept Plan, but the Residents Association hosted it. As a result, it proved very difficult to shake off the perception, among its critics, that this was a discussion session for retired people or people who were ‘anti-development’. The facilitator of the Concept Plan
process was conscious of this problem. During an interview, Rebecca expressed the problem in the following way:

Rebecca  
A two-day process can be captured by those residents who can afford to be there for two days, there is always the question: who are these people? These processes are open to criticism that isn't it the same people who write submissions anyway? Is it proper? But this process sets frameworks for planning as opposed to tweaking someone else’s plan through a submission...you could say that capture is the downside of ownership and that this plan was owned by residents (SCP Interview 1:1996).

The facilitator attempted to encourage broader participation, dividing a large group into discussion circles of eight people to encourage shy people to contribute. In my observation however, the participation of older people was hampered in the community hall situation by the inability of many to effectively hear proceedings when the meeting broke into small sub-groups (SCP Field Notes 4:1996). The facilitator also provided ‘drop boxes’ and displayed information in public community meeting places, particularly local supermarkets and libraries to encourage the expression of dissenting minority viewpoints and increase participation by women. Childcare was mooted, but none was made available at the time of the charrette. This disappointed Rebecca who felt solo parents could have been disadvantaged. The final document was drafted in a casual calendar style with big text to help people feel less intimidated about reading the report. The Concept Plan was reported in *The Press* in a series of full-page articles which examined housing intensification in Sumner. Called ‘Pin-Point’ discussion, these articles photographed Sumner and interviewed residents in an iterative manner, asking their opinion and revisiting the community a few weeks later (*The Press* 1996; Taylor 1997; and Taylor and Oakley 1997). Overall these initiatives failed to dispel the perception that this was a document prepared by older members of the community. Phoebe, a participant in all the Concept
Plan charrettes, summed up the way perceptions of inter-generational tension pervaded the concept planning process:

Phoebe That’s been stated quite clearly. The fuddy-duddies. Anyone with grey hair. There are a lot of young people who attended that Concept Plan and lots of young people have come to the public meetings and some of them are quite recent residents to Sumner who have come to live here because they want to bring up their families in Sumner. Some are as young as thirty and very much against it and very vocal and very intelligently vocal (SCP Focus Group 1:1997).

2.2. Did the process facilitate consensus or social learning?

2.2.(a) Were shared norms or values identified in the process?
2.2.(b) Was trust, empathy, or respectful co-operation encouraged? How?
2.2.(c) Were new understandings facilitated? If so, for whom and about what?
2.2.(d) Did participants feel listened to or misunderstood?

The Concept Plan process failed to facilitate consensus or social learning within a wider community because groups refused to participate or hear the viewpoints of others. Moreover, the wider Council planning process appears to have been unable to deal with the issues raised in the Concept Plan process within its City Plan.

Were shared norms or values identified in the process?

Because some interests, particularly development and business interests, withdrew or boycotted the process, shared norms were only identified amongst those who attended. Focus group and individual interviews suggested people who took part in the planning process were quite pleased with the outcome and felt that it captured their concerns and issues. Although not everyone agreed on everything:

Suzanne ...and in fact everyone was not unanimous in agreement. There was quite a lot of discussion. I know someone was there who is developing a site I remember
having quite a heated discussion with this person (SCP Focus Group 1:1997).

Those who participated appreciated the use of visuals. Participants commented that it was ‘marvellous’ to have support staff who could draw up the images that the group had talked about and that this visualisation enhanced and helped focus debate and encouraged shared visions (SCP Focus Group 3:1997). However the housing images selected as favourites at the workshop were later criticised by some who did not attend, as glorifying old ‘working men’s cottages’ (SCP Focus Group 3:1997 and SCP Interview 3:1996). Reports in The Press argued the visuals reflected the values of ‘Sumner’s traditionalists (who) know exactly what they are wanting any new residential building in the village: low rise, with plenty of surrounding greenery’ (Taylor 1997).

While the groups of residents and the development interests I interviewed were adamant that they had few shared values, I found a surprising degree of similarity between them over their sense of historical attachment to Sumner. Local residents, business interests and developers all shared a strong emotional attachment to Sumner:

David       My father before me, he joined the Residents Association about the time of the end of the Second World War (SCP Focus Group 1:1997).

June        I wasn’t born here as Stacey was, but I used to help down at the Sumner dances, Mum and Dad used to help there, bringing money into the RSA. I’ve always loved Sumner and marrying—and coming back and doing things in Sumner. When we moved here I felt when I came down the first time to the stores, the wonderful atmosphere—that you were greeted by name...

Jack        I can remember the sand hills because we used to come for holidays when I was little (SCP Focus Group 3:1997).

Bill        My mother—she was working in Sumner. She came down the other day and said, look at this, this is a huge
development for Sumner and it will obscure Cave Rock. And I said, 'No Mum, you just whoa back and have a think. You know you were here in the '40s at school, what happened then? They built the school for the deaf. That was just an enormous thing for the area. In its day, it was bigger (SCP Focus Group 3:1997).

Focus group discussion also revealed a strong sense of physical place, expressed by residents and developers alike. Many people immediately volunteered comments about the natural amphitheatre created by sea, cliff-face and hills:

Cyril with the volcanic spurs and the sea we are an entity, we are isolated because we have our clear, defined boundaries and that gives a character to the area, so when you go to other parts of the City on the flat it is very hard to define a boundary because there it merges into everything else so Sumner is unique in this respect (SCP Focus Group 3:1997).

Greg Sumner is geographically different, it has the seafront and it's bounded by hills on either side...

Karen It's an amphitheatre. It faces the right way, it's got the sea and it's just outside a big city (SCP Focus Group 3:1997).

Although some shared values could be identified these were tested by the competition for scarce land resources. Sally, summed this up:

Sally There's a lot of development potential however, you see it, residential, when you ask if there's a lot of scope for development in Sumner Bronwyn—there isn't really a lot of land. One of the things we're really short of is land on the flat.

Henry There's no more! (laughter)

Sally No, there's no more. They have extended right out to the head of the valleys. So there just isn't apart from all the sections that are being done over around the hills... (SCP Focus Group 3:1997).
The Concept Plan process raised a number of issues, but failed to reach a consensus on environmental management strategies. Overall elements of the bio-physical or natural environment were central to Sumner in the Concept Plan. These features were identified through questions posed by the facilitator to small groups at the start of the discussion process. The questions focused on the built and physical environment and people's values and responses to the sites rather than on issues of social cohesion or the relationships between individuals in the community. This focus was partly because it was envisaged that the Concept Plan would be considered as a submission to the City Plan as developed under the RMA. In effect, the legislative framework of the RMA reinforced the discussion of the physical elements of Sumner and the process of identifying indigenous vegetation valued by the residents such as systems of tussock, manuka and kanuka, rock herb scrubland and swamp forest. The Concept Plan also lists heritage buildings of significance to the participants.

Was trust, empathy, or respectful co-operation encouraged? How?

In the context of a quite antagonistic debate within the community, the concept planning process failed to increase trust amongst residents, instead it exacerbated inter-generational tension. Everyone expressed frustration and there was little respect for opposing points of view:

Isabella
I think you need to find out the aims and philosophies of these people, what is behind these people by calling us oldies against progress?

Grace
It's very easy to dismiss people by putting a label on people, calling us the old ones or ones who've lived here a long time but that in fact is not true...(SCP Focus Group 1:1997).

Toby
I see it slightly differently really. I see it that the city officers have recognised the whinging of a few in this particular community and the ordinances have in fact
been curtailed to suit that whinging (SCP Focus Group 3:1997).

The case illustrated the limits of trust building through deliberation. Development critics of the process identified the Concept Plan as a plan prepared by a number of older residents and members of the Residents Association and as such was dismissed as not representative of the community.

The Concept Plan’s face-to-face deliberation also failed to improve trust between the Residents Association and the Council. I observed Council staff at public meetings and at the charrette in November 1996. On each occasion Council planners appeared anxious to please residents or at least improve relations with the community. However in private, all the planners I interviewed commented that they were concerned the Concept Plan process would heighten public expectations: expectations that would inevitably be disappointed at a later date. Planning staff also commented that the community’s expectations of Council’s efforts for Sumner had been ‘inflated’ by ‘outside professionals’ involved as facilitators in such exercises. However in my observation it was the comments of planners to residents that contributed to rising expectations. In public presentations, planners were supportive of the Concept Plan process, despite private reservations. These confused messages may have been fuelled by a desire to support and encourage the community mixed with professional scepticism about the likelihood of success. For example the field notes record Andy, a planner and his interaction with residents during the Concept Plan process, at a meeting in November 1996:

Andy stands up to address the residents, he has very flash blue and yellow overheads which sum up the Council’s position on the Concept Plan—he opens by commenting that he was ‘just representing the collective view of planners, not the elected representatives’. The significance of Andy’s comments seems to be
lost on the residents, as he seems anxious to those present that ‘the Council is supportive of the process’. I’m surprised—Andy seems much more supportive of the process tonight and the visuals make it seem the Council takes it all much more seriously than he conveyed to me in an interview just prior to this meeting. Then the City Plan had seemed a more important process. Andy says the Concept Plan is a means to influence the City Plan process (SCP Field Notes 11:1996).

Prior to the meeting I had interviewed Andy in his office. Andy commented that the Council was in a difficult position because it ‘could not be seen to be sponsoring a submission on its own plan’ (SCP Interview 2:1996). He also noted that the Council was ‘concerned that public expectations have soared [over outcomes of the Concept Plan]’. Andy commented that residents were represented strongly in the Concept Plan in Sumner and in a similar inner-city exercise a year earlier. He remarked that there was ‘not a strong business interest’ and that ‘the Council wished to see more of that presence’ (SCP Interview 2:1996).

Alternatively the private attitudes of planners can be understood as professional frustration at a lack of understanding of the expertise of planning process. Fiona put this argument to a Council staff member:

Fiona These Concept Plans have caused nightmares as submissions. The issues are considered under all different topics. A lot is not practical or does not relate to planning matters at all for example collecting rubbish or traffic issues.

There was some confusion over planning processes and lines of accountability in the minds of participants. The presence of a planner at each of the charrettes lent credibility and legitimacy to the exercise in the eyes of the Residents Association which was not unreasonable as the Council had also funded the workshop. However the planners’ attempts to stem rising expectations were not understood by the community. Comments such as ‘our response [Council response to the plan] is that of an officer’s view and
not that of elected members' did not clearly convey that there was little political support or knowledge of the process on the part of councillors. In my observation the community was under the impression that senior staff and councillors supported the Concept Plan. They did not fully appreciate the way junior planning staff might be more enthusiastic about the process than their senior staff and senior staff may in turn hold different views from councillors.

Were new understandings facilitated? If so, for whom and about what?

There was little evidence that new understandings were facilitated. Some of the participants in the Concept Plan commented that they enjoyed finding out more about the history and ecological features of Sumner. They commented in particular on the value of working in small groups and having a chance to tell their stories and hear about the views of others. They also appreciated the chance to look at visual images and see their stories reflected in pictures by the landscape architects (Figure Twelve). However there was a great deal of confusion surrounding the city planning process and the relationship between that process and the Concept Plan. There was also no opportunity to learn about the views of groups with strong differences of opinion.

The concept planning exercise occurred as a discrete process outside of the Council's initiative in drafting its City Plan. The Concept Plan was then presented as a submission to the City Plan. On reflection, several planners commented that it would have been helpful to undertake a Concept Plan before drafting the City Plan. A few attempts were made to incorporate the Concept Plan within the effects-based framework of the City Plan in terms of environmental sustainability, but overall planning staff wanted the exercise referred back to locally elected community boards (CCC 1996). These boards have limited delegated decision-making powers and the move
Sumner Concept Plan process (1995 and 1996) broke large groups into small groups to encourage residents to look at visual images of the area and tell their own stories about what they valued in the suburb.
disappointed residents who wished to have more influence over the main Council.

Did participants feel listened to or misunderstood?

In general the participants I interviewed in the concept planning charrettes felt that their views had been listened to by others present on the day, but their views had not been heeded by development interests, planning staff or councillors and they expressed frustration to make themselves heard. At the end of the November 1996 charrette, as exhausted participants headed home, two people stopped and asked, ‘Does anyone ever listen to any of these things Bronwyn?’ (SCP Field Notes 11:1996).

Some of the frustration of the participants resulted from the difficulty of marrying the concept planning process with the Council’s wider City Plan process. The Concept Plan was forwarded by participants to the Council planners as a submission on the City Plan. Kate, a senior urban planner, commented that it was very difficult to integrate the issues raised in the concept planning process within the city planning process because the Concept Plan did not specify which rules or what type of amelioration was required (SCP Interview 2:1998). Planners went through the Concept Plan and attempted to take issues out of it that could be incorporated into the City Plan, but many of the recommendations were ignored in the final City Plan document:

The wording of...[the Concept Plan] was taken from the findings of a ‘Charrette’. This was a process whereby residents brainstormed and recorded their ideas on how they viewed their area...It was intended that from this would develop a range of techniques appropriate for implementation, not just in the City Plan. It was therefore not intended as a submission on the City Plan. Because of the lack of focus of comments and relief sought for the City Plan, it is unfortunate much has been rejected. The methods of implementation are currently being worked through between the interest groups, Community Board members and Council staff. (CCC July 1997, p.69)
Council planners were interviewed about the Concept Plan process and all commented about the difficulties of applying the Concept Plan within the city planning framework. However all planners I interviewed also expressed dissatisfaction with the ‘unwieldy City Plan process’. For example Chris, a senior staff member, commented on the large number of public submissions. Chris commented, he would have preferred to hear submissions on a suburb by suburb basis. He thought this would have meant residents groups would have to attend fewer hearings. He argued the subsequent two-year hearing process placed a great deal of strain on Sumner residents who were required to attend numerous hearings on a variety of issues in order to speak to the Concept Plan for the Sumner area. The only participant from the Concept Plan process who was able to attend most of the City Plan hearings reinforced Chris’ view:

Cyril

Few people had time or turned up to speak to the hearings. I was often the only one supporting the Concept Plan and I took every chance to show the councillors what the residents thought. Quite often they didn’t seem to have heard of it (SCP Interview 1998).

Residents who took part in the Concept Plan process anticipated difficulties over how the City Plan would deal with the Concept Plan as a submission:

Chrissey

I think it [concept planning] is great. I’ve got one concern, are they going to listen to it? Things are happening right now that are not in our plan, high rises, four-storey buildings. So I have a worry, is it going to come to fruition? (SCP Focus Group 2:1997).

Greg

I am afraid I get very cynical at times about process especially when you get lecturers like Paul Whiting who came and gave us a very forthright run-down on the process...he gave us a very cynical look at it, dampened my enthusiasm. For all our concept plans, the developers through knowledge of the system, they are able to pay professionals and swamp any planning system with their muscle (SCP Focus Group 2:1997).
As an urban planner, Fiona laid some of the blame for the communication breakdown between the Concept Plan participants and the Council planners, on the Council planning staff and in particular the lack of staff trained in urban design:

Fiona: They [New Zealand urban planners] are trained in the RMA so they are not looking at the relationship of buildings to each other. Their training is part of the problem: they are thinking as resource managers and about ecology and those kinds of issues, they know very little often about urban design (SCP Interview 4:1998).

Many participants in the charrettes commented that they had learnt about urban planning issues through the process, but a number of business people and developers outside the charrette questioned its value as a means of transforming people’s attitudes or encouraging social understanding:

Neil: I don’t think this whole public consultation thing, I don’t think it’s necessarily a good idea for the simple reason the public is never right because the public is, what’s this we’re saying ‘poorly educated and ill-informed’! (laughter). It sounds harsh but it’s true.

Paul: It’s true.

Graeme: I drove home that night, the day the tilt slab went up and as for a consultation process, I don’t know if any of those public meetings had any effect, people didn’t change their views and the people who are opposed to it are outspoken in their opposition and motivated—some of them don’t have a lot of other interests, they thrive on it, it’s a sport isn’t it?

Nina: That last exercise [a legal challenge to an apartment proposal] was a very costly one, the last exercise cost us about $60,000.00 with all the professional advisers, barristers, legal advice, reports we had to provide to make sure an investment of that size would get through. Even though we nearly complied...you see the costs we had with that project ultimately rested with two people turning up to voice their opposition, two people out of this community. One person wanted it to be purchased
as a park and one person wanted to voice her opinion about the looks. I'd have rather given the money, my partner and I would have rather given the money to the local community centre, to the local kindergarten, to a whole range of activities so we could have actually seen it in action in the community, in the Sumner Trust (SCP Focus Group 3:1997).

The desire to be free from constraint to exercise decision-making power was a theme expressed by both developers and residents alike. All expressed frustration at their voice not being heard in Council planning processes. Council staff expressed frustration that they could not get on with the job they were trained to do: to make planning decisions (SCP Interview 3:1998). Overall the Concept Plan process appeared to have little concrete effect on the subsequent City Plan process. Building heights were modified and all heights were raised by a metre in the retail district, but they were not raised to the heights permitted in other suburban areas (SCP Interview 1:2000). However most other comments for example building on the hills, were not upheld in the City Plan.

2.3 Did the deliberative process address issues of social justice? If not, why not? If so

2.3.(a) How were issues of distributive justice addressed?

2.3.(a).i Whose interests or values were identified with planning outcomes?

2.3.(b) How were issues of procedural justice addressed?

2.3.(b).i What were the agendas, rules and rituals of deliberation and who set these?

2.3.(b).ii How were procedural disputes addressed?

Developers and business interests critical of the Concept Plan argue that it reflected a 'Not-In-My Back Yard' or 'Nimby' attitude to development. Furthermore, the Concept Plan was unable to improve the procedural justice of the wider City planning process. Planners took little account of the Concept Plan when developing the City Plan and lawyers representing
developers at City Plan hearings challenged its validity, arguing it did not express a range of community views (SCP Interviews 1-3:1999).

**How were issues of distributive justice addressed?**

The Concept Plan was a conceptual rather than authoritative plan. Residents and the facilitator were concerned to involve a wide cross-section of the community in discussion from the start, but this proved very difficult to achieve on a voluntary basis. Only one developer attended the Concept Plan forum. Critics of the Concept Plan subsequently argued very strongly that only a few interests were associated with the outcomes of the process as the following opinions reported from one focus group reflect:

Fraser  Have you seen the Concept Plan?
Richard  It's totally unrealistic and selfish!
Karen  I think it is, it was the aspiration of a few, a few people who took time to come and tick off their opinions.
Fraser  ...and its very, very selfish.
Richard  ...by and large the matters of urban planning (in the Concept Plan) are very selfish.
Karen  Yes.
Fraser  ...and individualistic and impossible!
Bronwyn  In what way?
Fraser  Well they try to dictate the type of house, the type of fence, the type of hedge, the type of window.
Richard  There's a bit in there with a picture of a new house with a big cross beside it and a picture of an old house with a big tick beside it
Karen  Yeah. They just wanted to have this single-minded attitude about older style houses.
Fraser  Tunnel vision of the '40s.
Richard  The reason I say it's selfish is because they're willing to take advantage of past development which chopped up
what was a beautiful beach into sections, put the esplanade in and they’re ready to take advantage of past development for their own place to live and then say OK we’ve decided that’s enough now, no-one else can come here now, there’s been enough development, that’s it, let’s stop right here, right now.

Fraser That’s it, that’s what’s so very selfish (SCP Focus Group 3:1997).

Participants, business people and developers critical of the Concept Plan charrettes all debated whether the plan and Residents Association meetings could be described as reflecting a NIMBY syndrome over questions of housing intensification.

Fraser At the last Residents Association meeting we had a lively debate—which means an argument—about where are your children going to live? Do you know what their answer was?

Karen Tell them to go live somewhere else?

Pete Yeah—I don’t know, I don’t care and when it really got down to it, it took me about 15-20 minutes to (get them) to admit that, I said to them—every single community in Christchurch says they can go and live somewhere else—where are these people going to live? Which leads me to the point that the solution doesn’t work because each community only sees it in their own limited views and the Council has to take the whole but the public doesn’t know or they can’t see (SCP Focus Group 3:1997).

Whose interests or values were identified with planning outcomes?

Overall, the question of whose values should determine the Concept Plan and the wider City Plan proved highly contentious. The concerns of non-human nature were expressed quite extensively. Environmental issues such as protection of fur seals and white flippered penguins and banning dogs on the beach were also mentioned by individuals in focus groups (dog soiling was also a common issue in focus group discussion). Overall while the
Concept Plan was criticised for representing the views of older residents, the City Plan process in regard to Sumner was dominated by development perspectives who were able to present their concerns articulately in wider planning hearings. The concerns expressed in the Concept Plan were largely ruled as outside the City Plan process (CCC 1997).

Critics of the Concept Plan process (business people and developers) whom I interviewed also argued that the Concept Plan was inaccurately described as reflecting community consensus. The aim of establishing consensus may have given the critics considerable influence in later City Plan hearings. Some developers for example objected to the Concept Plan and questioned its legitimacy on the grounds it did not represent all views and so could not claim to reflect consensus. This view was also expressed in focus group discussion:

Paul The Concept Plan, it is just the views of a few people who promoted it and so it doesn’t have any standing?

Sally No but it’s promoted as views of the whole community by those...by those people (SCP Focus Group 3:1997).

Not everyone agreed with criticism that the Concept Plan represented the interests of a few. Nearly all participants argued that dismissing the plan as the views of a selfish minority was simply an excuse not to listen to people in the community:

Phoebe They say, as soon as you give your opinion you’re selfish. It’s ridiculous. They ask you your opinion, how you want to live not how you want them to live. If they ask your opinion that’s what we’ve done, then they tell you, you are selfish.

Kerry Most people don’t mind change as long as it’s not change for change’s sake, but for something better—but what’s ‘better’?

Michael I think why they say we’re selfish is they want to get more people living here.
But you'll never get everybody who wants to live in Sumner accommodated down here anyway (SCP Focus Group 2:1997).

Those involved in the Concept Plan charrettes argued that they were 'not simply representing the interests of people who already owned land and wanted to tie up Sumner for themselves'. The residents who took part in the Concept Plan and who were interviewed by focus groups for this research, were also concerned for the social 'mix' of Sumner. In focus groups the participants commented that they wanted to encourage the settlement of young families and lower income groups despite rising land prices in the community:

Social and economic issues were discussed at some length Bronwyn in the fact that people wanted a mix of socio-economic groups and some opportunities given that the properties in Sumner are more expensive, given the point they wanted to make sure it was affordable so there was a good socio-economic mix of people because it makes for a complete community, whereas if you have all well-off people you’re eliminating a lot of other people so you don’t get that contact, so people don’t learn to communicate with one another and that’s been the tradition in Sumner. When, if you want to talk in terms of Sumner, you’ve had everything from working class up to whatever, the moneyed class and that’s always been the case in Sumner. (Murmurs of agreement).

And the other aspect of that was the types of property that were available, that there was a mix of properties and it was stressed quite strongly that with the infill housing and the bylaws that relate to that—the cross lease sections—that they were cutting down the size of sections, preventing family-type housing and space for children to play (SCP Focus Group 2:1997).

**How were issues of procedural justice addressed?**

Overall procedural justice was dealt with unsatisfactorily. Internal procedures were fair, with all participants encouraged to contribute, but
subsequent Council hearing processes to debate the admissibility of the Concept Plan, advantaged those business interests with access to legal advocates.

**What were the agendas, rules and rituals of deliberation and who set these?**

The agenda and procedures for the Concept Plan workshop were established by the facilitator in consultation with the chairperson of the Residents Association and those present expressed their appreciation of the way these meetings were handled, particularly the opportunities the facilitator provided for everyone to speak and to be heard. The large group of approximately thirty to forty participants was divided into small discussion cells which considered each issue in turn. They reported back to the wider group and then the facilitator and her team of landscape architects and consultants, drafted plans and notes to reflect the comments of participants. The plans were displayed in the hall the following week. Participants were invited to edit or correct the notes. The results of the planning workshop was compiled into an A3 sized calendar-style document.

Phoebe

So when the opportunity came to participate in the Concept Plan workshop ... it seemed a very democratic process to me because everyone, no matter what their views, they were for the development, high rise or low rise, or going back 500 years or whatever, they had the opportunity to participate and I think that was a very important thing so...(SCP Focus Group 1:1997).

**How were procedural disputes addressed?**

There were procedural disputes over whose interests were represented in the charrettes which were aired at subsequent Council planning hearings. One council staff member expressed concern that development interests put a great deal of legal effort into challenging the legitimacy of the Concept Plan as a submission (SCP Interview 1996). Business and development interests who objected to the process argued the Concept Plan only reflected
approximately sixty people's views and could not be described as a consensus. While the planning hearings accepted the Concept Plan as a submission, Council planners argued it was too vague a document to inform the City Plan. The residents lacked resources legally to challenge this stance.

Some participants in the Concept Plan process also expressed frustration at the procedures of the subsequent City Plan process. They argued this process treated the Concept Plan and residents unfairly. Residents who wanted to speak to the ideas presented in the Concept Plan as a holistic vision for Sumner had to attend a number of separate planning hearings on issues such as amenity value, building heights and urban growth.

At one planning hearing for a high-rise development, some residents who were participants in the Concept Plan had raised money for a legal advocate, but faced a barrage of thirteen expert witnesses for the applicant who subsequently challenged their evidence. Given the differing resources available to developers and residents, planning hearings unfairly advantaged development interests as a process for settling disputes about the Concept Plan (SCP Field Notes 1997).

I asked one planner, Belinda to reflect on the impact of the Concept Plan two years after it had been presented as a submission to the City Plan. Her reply was illuminating:

Belinda

I think it's fair enough to say that the Concept Plan hasn't had much effect at all. It's made people a little more aware of the physical elements of Sumner, it's certainly reinforced the physical features which I think planners have recognised are important, the cliffs and volcanic spurs for example, but as for the whole Concept Plan as a submission it's difficult to interpret, a whole lot of it got lost...you need to remember we have a system of sub-division here in New Zealand where a sub-
divider sells individual sections to individual builders, there's not one company doing the whole lot so you can't get consistency as every one is doing their own thing...and I think it's very hard to take into regard the kind of comments made by the community in the Concept Plan (SCP Interview 1:2000).

Discussion now turns to consider how the Concept Plan was facilitated.

2.4 In what ways and to what extent did the facilitator and/or sponsor of debate influence the process of public deliberation in planning?

The facilitator was widely appreciated by the participants I interviewed. They commented on her ability to draw out contributions, encourage people to air their views on Sumner and the visual images she used to describe their contribution. However I could find no evidence to suggest that having the Council sponsor the Concept Plan helped foster more inclusive debate. In a situation where the community was intensely divided, a deliberative process hosted by one faction of the debate with no coercive power to compel or encourage opposing groups to attend, simply exacerbated tension. The absence of development or investment interests meant that critics of the Concept Plan could subsequently dismiss the exercise as reflecting the views of a few. These criticisms were well known by Council staff. Despite Council funding, Council planners moved to distance themselves from the outcomes. Andy, a Council planner, indicated councillors and staff had been concerned at the absence of developers or business interests. Kate, an independent planner, expressed 'some sympathy' for developers who are frustrated by community objections 'when the developers are the ones who have the ability to get things done in the community'. Andy noted that a younger group of residents with development interests took leading positions in the Residents Association at one stage. He recognised they moved to distance themselves from the Concept Plan exercise. The resistance of business and development interests to getting involved became a way of undermining the credibility of the concept planning exercise. The participants in this process
seemed at a loss to know how the process could have been made more inclusive:

Isabel  ...a lot of people didn’t take the opportunity to attend and I think that’s mainly the business people. I think they looked at this as being a ridiculous thing but they’ve really fallen down on it because the Concept Plan was so good, so much put into it, so much thought... (SCP Focus Group 1:1997)

Council sponsorship of the Concept Plan also proved to be problematic in a wider City planning process. The Council argued that it could not be seen to be sponsoring a submission on its own City Plan. As a result, the Concept Plan suffered from lack of leadership or accountability over implementing its initiatives. In the Council’s response to the various issues raised in the Concept Plan, some community concerns were referred to the annual plan process and priorities assigned for projects at Community Board level. However the responsibility for ensuring that these steps were implemented was not assigned to any particular staff member. The facilitator was employed on a short-term contract and with the resignation of a junior Council planner involved in the process, there was no one left to champion the plan through the City Plan hearing process.

The consultant facilitator helped social learning within the group, but was limited in her ability to assist the process of the Concept Plan in the wider City Plan. Rebecca’s involvement appeared to have been resisted by some Council staff who were concerned that ‘outside consultants’ can raise public expectation in developing plans in ways that do not fit in with Council procedures, in particular the City Plan process. In this case, it proved very difficult for an individual facilitator to combat this type of institutional resistance to her contribution or the Concept Plan process.
6.5. Summary

In summary deliberative Concept Plan charrettes conducted in a divided community appear to have done little to assist the planning process to achieve inclusive, democratic planning. Despite the intentions of the facilitator and Residents Association, the process failed to achieve consensus or extensive social learning. From a wider perspective, macro institutional factors, particularly the structure of the RMA and the institutional position of City planning staff, constrained the ability of the Concept Plan to address issues of social justice. Modifications were eventually imposed on building heights in the City Plan, but the facilitator, Residents Association and Council staff were unable to effect change on other significant issues raised in the Concept Plan. However, residents who took part in the Concept Plan process commented that they found the experience interesting and valuable and learnt more about the history of their area, but did not have the opportunity to learn about Council political process. In the next case study, I examine a local Agenda 21 group, where social learning did appear to increase political awareness.

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1 Christchurch has an average of sixteen people per hectare (CCC Environmental Design Unit 1999, pers com).

2 The term charrette was used by the facilitator to describe a small, inclusive community discussion process.
CHAPTER SEVEN

CASE THREE: OTAUTAHI-CHRISTCHURCH AGENDA 21 FORUM: DELIBERATION PROMOTED BY AN NGO

7.1. Introduction

In this chapter I present the results of my investigation into deliberative forums organised by a local non-governmental organisation (NGO), Otautahi-Christchurch Agenda 21 Forum (Agenda 21). My analysis focuses on research question two and sub-questions 2.1-2.4. I report on the extent to which the efforts of Agenda 21 were able to achieve the aims of deliberative planning theory: fostering inclusive deliberation, consensus, or social learning and social justice.

Agenda 21 was formed in 1991. As an NGO this group is an example of a new social movement struggling to address environmental injustice. This small voluntary group has approximately fifty members (Agenda 21 1997). The membership consists of individuals, academics and representatives of NGOs and includes local representatives of the United Nations Association, the Royal Forest and Bird Society, the National Council of Women, the New Zealand Rain Forests Coalition, the Environment Centre and CORSO1 (Agenda 21 1997). The organisation takes its name from the Agenda 21 document produced by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 (Sitarz 1993). Agenda 21 can also be described as an ‘insurgent social movement’ which broadly focuses on questioning decision-making power and aims to increase opportunities for public participation in environmental decision-making (Young 1990, p.83).
Between 1996 and 1999 Agenda 21 organised a series of public forums, community activities (e.g. planting days and field tours), educational seminars and networking meetings (Table Four). Agenda 21 aimed to promote '...the outcomes of UNCED and the NGO Global Forum, particularly ecologically sustainable development...the closer liaison of community groups in Christchurch/Canterbury' (Agenda 21 1997).

While Agenda 21 activities cannot be defined as planning in the sense of a future-orientated process of public decision-making directed at goal attainment decision, the aims of the organisation are to influence the direction of public decision-making through public debate. It was in this context that I examined Agenda 21 efforts as an example of public deliberation in planning. In this chapter I briefly review some of the contentious issues surrounding the concept of sustainable development that troubled members of Agenda 21 during 1996-1999, before analysing the effect of its deliberation efforts in planning.

7.2. Issues in Contention

Environmental sustainability is a contentious issue in Christchurch, as it is globally, for a number of reasons. Two broad concerns in particular, have been raised in the context of Christchurch:

- The ambiguity of sustainable development discourses.
- The uncertain role of councils and community groups in sustainable development.

7.2.1. The ambiguity of sustainable development discourses

In 1992, UNCED endorsed the concept of sustainable development as articulated by the Brundtland Commission of 1987 (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). In its lengthy document, entitled
Agenda 21, UNCED delegates concluded that global environmental problems have arisen mainly 'as a result of the profligate consumption and production of the richer countries' (Shand 1994 and Dryzek 1997 a, p.127).

The Agenda 21 document listed a large number of environmental issues and projects needing urgent attention. Agenda 21 promoted a 'global civil society' encouraging countries to work in partnership with previously marginalised groups (women, youth, indigenous peoples), local councils and businesses to identify environmental problems and develop strategies to promote 'sustainable development' (Dryzek 1997 a, p.127).

A number of commentators have noted the ambiguities inherent in the concept of sustainable development as promoted in the Agenda 21 document and in the Brundtland report (Dobson 1990 and 1991; Dryzek 1997 and Torgerson 1995). Some commentators argue that sustainable development is best regarded as a discourse or goal to be asserted rather than a scientific rule or principle to be measured (Torgerson 1995, pp.3-20). Dryzek defines a discourse as 'a shared way of apprehending the world. Embedded in language, it enables those who subscribe to it to interpret bits of information and put them together into coherent stories or accounts' (Dryzek 1997 a, p.8). There is a great deal of divergence within the discourses of sustainable development over what should be sustained and why. The discourse of sustainable development as promoted by UNCED is characterised by a 'rhetoric of progress and reassurance' and UNCED's Agenda 21 document is anthropocentric in its emphasis (Dryzek 1997 a).3

In New Zealand the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) has adopted the term sustainable management (a concept which emphasises management of bio-physical and built environmental features) rather than sustainable development. Moreover, New Zealand's major environmental movements which represent a number of smaller environmental groups,
have traditionally focused on conservation of wilderness rather than social justice issues such as peace and disarmament or environmental racism, in their campaigns (Hay and Haward 1988). Consequently environmental organisations like Agenda 21 which seek to promote an anthropocentric discourse of sustainable development struggle to create allies among both the major environmental movements and new social movements concerned with social justice in New Zealand. Agenda 21 engages in continuous debate both internally among its own members and externally with other NGOs, over what should be sustained, why it should be sustained and what actions are likely to promote sustainability. Such debates also relate to questions about who should be responsible for implementing sustainable development.

7.2.2. The role of councils and community groups in sustainable development

There has been considerable debate over who should take the initiative in promoting sustainable development. In New Zealand, the task has fallen by default to community organisations rather than local government. Local authorities in New Zealand have taken relatively little leadership in the discourse of sustainable development or promoting local Agenda 21 initiatives. A few cities, notably Waitakere City and Hamilton, have attempted to implement some of the UNCED recommendations (Shand 1994). However most cities largely ignore the concept in planning processes. For example the Christchurch City Council noted in its City Plan (CCC 1999 a) that the RMA refers to sustainable management rather than sustainable development. Therefore, the Council concluded, it has limited opportunities to implement the social and economic equity objectives of sustainable development as promoted at UNCED (CCC 1999 a, Vol 1).
The Christchurch City Council may overstate its constraints. In reality councils may use mechanisms other than the RMA planning legislation to implement social and economic initiatives (Perkins and Thorns 1999 b). New Zealand lags behind many other countries concerning urban sustainability (Hughes 1999). Hughes argues that in ‘Europe and Australia there are comprehensive Agenda 21 initiatives at national and local levels’ (Hughes 1999, p.11).

In Christchurch the Agenda 21 organisation is a community initiative without funding or support from local or national Government. Members of Agenda 21 note with concern that ‘relatively few New Zealand authorities have so far taken it [UNCED Agenda 21] as far, or considered it as seriously as... many other countries such as Canada and the UK’ (Agenda 21 1999). The Christchurch Agenda 21 organisation aims to encourage governments to take greater consideration of the principles of sustainable development espoused in the Agenda 21 document. Concern about the lack of co-ordinated, official government response to UNCED, prompted the organisers of Christchurch’s Agenda 21 to establish an NGO to promote the outcomes of UNCED and the NGO Global Forum:

- ecologically sustainable development awareness, understanding and action;
- the implementation of Agenda 21 at all levels;
- the closer liaison of community groups in Christchurch and Canterbury;
- greater co-operation and understanding between NGOs and government and other sectors; and
- focus on key issues: e.g. population, bio-diversity, trade and environment (Agenda 21 1999).
Chapter Seven

7.3. Chronology of Agenda 21 Deliberation

What follows is a chronology of deliberative events sponsored by Agenda 21 in the pursuit of their goals. This chronology is summarised in Table Four.

May–Dec 1996 From May, weekly lunchtime network meetings for NGOs were held in a private home. Agenda 21 employed a community worker to give talks to schools, organise planting days and a ‘Moa’s Ark’ field trip looking at enhancing biodiversity. Agenda 21 also developed planting guides which identified indigenous plant species, with a local landscape architect and distributed them through garden shops.

November 1996 A public seminar on ecology and theology was held.

May 1997 Five seminars on ‘Toward Sustainability’ were held by the WEA and focused on UNCED, biodiversity, poverty in the city, marine environments, forest and transport issues.

June 1997 Agenda 21 hosted the Eco Conference which was for New Zealand environmental organisations and activists.

September 1997 Agenda 21 hosted a public forum providing responses to the Ministry of the Environment on ‘Public Attitudes to UNCED–Five Years On’.

January 1998 The regular lunchtime network meeting shifted to the Environment Centre, attracting between eight to fifteen regular representatives of environmental organisations in Christchurch.

April 1998 A Waste New Zealand series of five seminars designed to enhance Christchurch residents’ understanding of recycling began. It was timed to coincide with the start of kerb-side recycling.

May 1998 A review of the RMA (McShane Review) prompted a public forum and a series of three seminars held in conjunction with the Community Law Centre.

September 1998 A biodiversity conference sponsored by Agenda 21 brought local academics together to discuss biodiversity issues at Lincoln University.
Table Four

Agenda 21: Public Deliberation in Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>NGO Network Meetings</th>
<th>Public Meetings</th>
<th>Public Education Workshops</th>
<th>Community Action</th>
<th>Formal Submissions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Weekly network meetings (private home)</td>
<td>Canterbury Sustainable Land Transport Forum</td>
<td>Film showing (women and environment)</td>
<td>Treaty of Waitangi weekend (March)</td>
<td>City Plan (Soils Garden City, June)</td>
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<td>Field trip “Moas Arc” (May)</td>
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<td>Community Planting days (Nov)</td>
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<td>Biodiversity field trip (Dec)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Weekly network meetings private home</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ecological Theology</td>
<td>Create a bird and lizard friendly garden</td>
<td>City Plan (amenity issues)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hosted Eco conference (National NGOs June) meeting</td>
<td></td>
<td>WEA toward sustainability seminar series</td>
<td>Employed a community worker</td>
<td>UNCED 5 years on (M of E)</td>
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<td>(six evening classes)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>RMA reforms (May, June and July)</td>
<td>Biodiversity conference</td>
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<td>RMA reforms (Nov.)</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>Weekly network meetings in the Environment Centre Newsletters</td>
<td>RMA forums with Community Law Centre and Forest and Bird (May and June)</td>
<td>Sustainable cities quality indicators (July)</td>
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<td>State of Environment reporting conference M of E, CRC.</td>
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Government moves to reform the RMA provoked two large public forums and several submission writing and discussion seminars run by Agenda 21 in conjunction with WEA.

Agenda 21 make two formal submissions to government on biodiversity policy (April) and the RMA (September).

7.4. Results and Analyses

Between 1996 and 1999 Agenda 21 organised a series of public deliberative events designed to promote awareness about the principles of UNCED Agenda 21. I analyse the extent to which these efforts achieved the aims of deliberative planning theory addressing research question two and sub-questions 2.1-2.4. The results are summarised in Figure Thirteen.

2. Can the aims of deliberative planning theory be achieved through greater public deliberation in urban planning practice? If not, why not? If so, under what conditions?

The results of observations and interviews reported in this case study demonstrate the strengths and limitations of local NGOs as mechanisms for promoting inclusive public deliberation. Agenda 21 was unable to build consensus about issues of environmental sustainability, but I argue it was able to promote considerable social learning within constraints imposed by resource limitations and political and economic conditions. Agenda 21 also struggled, within these constraints, to enhance social justice in decision-making.

2.1. Was the planning process inclusive?

2.1.(a) Who got involved?

2.1.(b) Were there attempts to facilitate participation across differences of gender, culture, social or economic status, or educational and technical skills? How?

Overall Agenda 21 members worked energetically to recruit members and to facilitate open inclusive public deliberation about issues related to
Social Learning
- achieved social learning within political and socio-economic constraints
- effective voice

Consensus Building
- unable to achieve consensus on environmental values

Social Transformation

Consensus Building
- unable to achieve consensus on environmental values

Social Learning
- achieved social learning within political and socio-economic constraints
- effective voice

Social Justice
- enhanced procedural justice
- some attention to distributive justice issues

Partially inclusive deliberation
- communicative and instrumental rationality
- inclusive discussion
- participatory democracy
sustainable development. A variety of methods were used to encourage public participation in planning.

Who got involved?
In my observation the group was small, but surprisingly varied. At most meetings attendance was between six and fifteen people, but at larger forums, attendance could grow to as many as one hundred people (Figure Fourteen). There was a rough gender balance at all meetings and a diversity of ages ranging from tertiary students to middle-aged and retired people. An obvious characteristic of Agenda 21 membership however, was the experience or education of its members. All members were tertiary-trained in environmental sciences or had extensive life experience in the management of non-profit organisations, community groups and environmental organisations. Agenda 21 had an active approach to building membership. As an NGO, the group strenuously networks with other NGOs to recruit new members or form working partnerships. Agenda 21 hosts weekly lunchtime network meetings where the public, NGO and government staff come to hear speakers talk about issues related to sustainable development. These meetings are held in the Christchurch Environment Centre, located in the central business district (Figure Fifteen).

This strategic approach to membership was apparent from the beginning of the organisation. Three women founded the local Agenda 21. They were Kim, a local body politician with a strong interest in environmental issues, Adrienne, a member of the local chapter of the United Nations with extensive international NGO experience and Katherine, a member of the trade equity lobby, Trade Aid. Through the connections of these women, funding was obtained to enable Adrienne and Katherine to attend the 1992 UNECD and NGO Global Forum. Using other NGOs to help lobby government intensively on their behalf, Kim was eventually included
Public forum at the Workers Educational Association to discuss proposals for reform of the Resource Management Act (1991), May, 1999
Agenda 21 networked weekly with other NGOs to share information and develop more coordinated responses to Government initiatives.
as part of the ‘Official New Zealand Government Delegation to the UNCED Conference’ while Katherine attended the Global Forum held at the same time. Kim became the founding chairwoman of the ‘Otautahi-Christchurch Agenda 21 Forum’ on her return home. From contacts built up at UNCED and supplied by other NGOs she identified a variety of groups and individuals interested in sustainable development and invited them to attend a regular discussion forum.

*Were there attempts to facilitate participation across differences of gender, culture, social or economic status or educational and technical skills? How?*

In order to encourage a wider cross-section of the community, Agenda 21 worked with the local Workers Education Association (WEA) to run evening classes in environmental issues and the Community Law Centre to co-host forums on socio-economic aspects of the environment. Agenda 21 also adopted the common environmental strategy of encouraging participation in environmental issues through local action and in this instance gardening based project as Kim explains:

Kim I thought Agenda 21 could be a forum for bringing together all the key local organisations. Mariua, Forest and Bird, Catholic, Justice and Peace and we could all talk about how we might actually achieve a joint strategy. People didn’t have time for that. Also the people who were interested in the issues of Agenda 21 were the leaders of those organisations. So I had to listen to what people were saying. And what they needed was a local environment group. So you take what you’ve got, the material locally and I said okay if it wants to be a local environment group we’ll still make it Agenda 21 but we’ll do an environment project first and then we’ll broaden it out as we do the next project...When we decided to do a bio-diversity project we decided we wouldn’t do things in international bio-diversity, we wouldn’t do things in national parks, we’d do things that people could do in their own backyards and we thought ‘what are people enthusiastic about? They love
gardening in Christchurch, it’s a city full of gardens, let’s get them aware of bio-diversity by going through their affinity for gardens’ (A21 Focus Group 1998).

Agenda 21 struggles to maintain its membership. In my interviews, several members commented ruefully on the way in which student participation fluctuates. Another difficulty lies in encouraging participation on social issues as the following comment from founder member Adrienne reveals:

Adrienne  In my experience, younger people especially, are more attracted to the topic, something specific within the environmental field if they can see something being achieved and perhaps do it in a short space of time and they’ve studied on that subject. But it is not so easy to find younger people interested in social development or who can see what can be done or even want to do something. There are either the protesters and the activists but they are few really and then, I find ...broad organisations which have to deal with a range of issues that cover the whole world, they can’t attract people who have got as wide interests. I always say ‘people are willing to save the whales but they don’t want to be a member of the UNA’ or whatever it might be. They want something they can see and it is very difficult to get onto the social side.

Macro-economic conditions also inhibited participation. Several members commented they felt people were less enthusiastic about volunteering to work on broad issues affecting the community during the ‘selfish 80s...a period in which people volunteered little of their time except to activities which were of direct benefit to them’ (A21 Field Notes 5:1998). James, a university student and Agenda 21 worker summed up these concerns:

James  There is a growing debate in New Zealand over the state of New Zealand’s social structures and about what should be done...Offering a personal view: it seems to me that when individuals are encouraged to look to their own interests (‘utility maximising behaviour’ as economists would say) then it is obvious that the voluntary sector suffers. I have seen the effect that
promoting this form of extreme individualism has had on my generation. Many young people of my age and younger, think it weird that anyone should have responsibility for others—for them it is natural to look only to their own interests and wants. This cult of individualism poses real problems for the future. How are we to maintain the voluntary structures on which civil society is based when individuals are encouraged to be so selfish? How are we to rein in consumption when individuals are encouraged by industry and the state to consume as much as possible?...(Agenda 21 News Alert 1997).

People I interviewed also commented on the difficulty of co-ordinating the activities of diverse social movements. Members of Agenda 21 explained this, arguing that social movements which are concerned with issues of human welfare (for example, peace groups) were reluctant to work with an organisation like Agenda 21 which they see as ‘Green’. They also attribute these difficulties to personality differences within organisations. Janine, a past chairwoman commented on these difficulties:

Janine

...I wanted to...bring environment and social development organisations closer together so that we could, at least at the NGO or grassroots level, talk together, but there was quite a division at grassroots level. Personalities play a huge amount at grassroots level, individuals drive NGOs, individual energies drive NGOs, unless you can find good young leaders—I’m very interested in the survival of NGOs and I’ve come to the conclusion that unless you can identify and capture, draw in and nurture people, then NGOs die because everyone else swims along on their coat tails (A21 Focus Group 1998).

The difficulty of facilitating wide-spread community debate is compounded by the under resourcing of NGOs, as Adrienne explains:

Adrienne

The very small population in New Zealand doesn’t produce enough people in New Zealand for its NGOs to have a really strong structure. It would be very difficult
for New Zealand for example to put in place a support structure for its NGOs like I worked on in the UK because there aren’t enough NGOs with enough NGO people to have support (A21 Focus Group 1998).

Despite the constraints on Agenda 21, the organisation worked actively to promote social learning. Discussion now turns to examine social learning and consensus building.

2.2. Did the process facilitate consensus or social learning?

2.2.(a) Were shared norms or values identified in the process?

2.2.(b) Was trust, empathy, or respectful co-operation encouraged? How?

2.2.(c) Were new understandings facilitated? If so, for whom and about what?

2.2.(d) Did participants feel listened to or misunderstood?

It was difficult to assess the extent to which shared norms or values were developed through Agenda 21 forums because members with dissenting views may have simply voted with their feet, while like-minded people were drawn to the group. However Agenda 21 was able to promote considerable social learning about sustainable development despite institutional resistance.

Were shared norms or values identified in the process?

The membership policy of the group encouraged a perception of shared perspectives. The Agenda 21 brochure identified NGOs it hoped would support the forum: these were to be like-minded groups who subscribed to the Agenda 21 philosophy:

Grassroots organisations, private, non-profit, voluntary organisations, independent of public and partisan bodies and business interests, not compromised by partisan politics and part of, or serving social movements, with a particular commitment to a vision of an ecologically sustainable planet and dignified human existence for all (Agenda 21 Brochure 1997).
The Agenda 21 participants I interviewed commented that they felt some consensus on environmental sustainability was possible, but that this was constrained by economic policies of the period. Jane, a member of Agenda 21 expands on this argument:

Jane There has been interest in looking at environmental things and I think that’s largely driven because our economic base is based on that. I mean we do have tremendous pushes on, for example, pests, but it tends to be on what affects productivity, not on what affects the environment per se. We can get, we can say goodbye tomorrow to our indigenous bio-diversity until we can raise an argument to say that it is worth a lot economically to save it or that it’s worth a lot to some international organisation for absorbing CO₂ (A21 Focus Group 1998).

It was not only economic conditions which members felt constrained shared understandings. Johnny, a senior environmental policy analyst and member of Agenda 21, describes the institutional resistance to the ideas of sustainable development as promoted by UNCED in 1992:

Johnny I don’t think the Ministry was actually pushing very hard [in 1992] apart from a senior bureaucrat in Wellington who was quite enthusiastic, but in a sense was a one-person band, I think for a couple of months wouldn’t it have been? No one else really knew much about it and then this huge bloody book, Agenda 21, came out and no one had time to read it (A21 Focus Group 1998).

The inertia of key environmental ministries on the Agenda 21 document did not deter Agenda 21 members from trying to encourage widespread social learning through public deliberation and respectful listening.

The stated anthropocentric aims of Agenda 21 appeared to be constrained by the environmental science training of many committee members. Committee members commented with concern on the way in
which their activities from 1996 until 1998 had to focus on ecological issues. In an AGM discussion in 1998, one member expressed concern that this focus may appear as if Agenda 21 defined environment in ‘deep green ecological’ terms (A21 Field Notes 6:1998). The same person argued that members should be concerned with the relationship between *people* and their environment.

Overall it was not possible to say that anthropocentric values were widely shared. From observation, minutes, meetings and focus group discussion, members did appear to reflect concern for non-human nature more readily than they expressed concerns for the socio-economic environment. This may stem from the training many members had in environmental sciences and reflects resource constraints. For example Kim and Peter commented that, given their lack of resources and the enormity of the tasks facing this NGO, it was not always possible to encourage wide discussion about socio-economic concerns as well as non-human nature. Kim expressed the problem this way:

> But in the end as a group within the community what do you do? I had felt a great responsibility—I’d had this trip, I came back, I got stuck in working with the committee and all the wonderful people who helped me get over there and we really spent a lot of time, didn’t we, discussing ‘what do we do next, how do we get this going?’ We had a number of public meetings and there was great enthusiasm and a number of public meetings laying out what was said at UNCED. But in the end after a lot of discussion the strategy was to take on a bite-sized piece that we could work on and try to do something that made sense to people at a local level (A21 Focus Group 1998).

In the end the ‘bite-sized’ project that Agenda 21 first cut its teeth on was a bio-diversity project and this may have reinforced the image of the group as one concerned with non-human nature. Over time however, Agenda 21 has
tackled other projects that reflect the group’s concern for human values in the environment. Agenda 21 has used personal contacts within the WEA and Community Law Centre to augment its resources and enhance the socio-economic perspective in its deliberation. Peter summarises these strategies:

Peter

It might pay to gallop through the range of things we’ve worked on because they do contain strong elements of the social influence as well as environmental ...(these)...include public forums and neighbourhood planting events and projects promoting bio-diversity through the City Council, (employing a public education worker and) devising planting guides and working with other groups like WEA and the Law Centre to promote these, forums, like one on habitat restoration and a forum on ‘Why are we so wasteful in New Zealand?’ questionnaires of local body candidates on environmental policies and attitudes, transport submissions and contributions to a Canterbury Regional Council Transport Vision and Canterbury Elite Dialogue forum called Canterbury Dialogues Forum and Submission Planning, (and related discussion) events focusing on the reform of the RMA...on the RMA reforms effort we worked with the Law Centre and Forest and Bird (A21 Focus Group 1998).

Overall, while Agenda 21 aspires to reflect anthropocentric environmental values, it has been hard for them to shake off their image as a group representing non-human values and this has constrained networking opportunities with NGOs with broader social and economic concerns. Despite this problem, Agenda 21 has acted as an effective facilitator encouraging community deliberation about sustainability.

Was trust empathy or respectful co-operation encouraged? How?

All meetings of Agenda 21 were facilitated by a chairperson and in larger meetings attempts were made to encourage participation by breaking into small discussion groups. One of the real values of Agenda 21 was the way it encouraged public agencies and the public to talk together and listen
respectfully to the views of others. My field notes from a Resource Management Forum in May 1999, illustrate this process:

The meeting room in the WEA is crowded—(50–70 people already) and we are running out of seats. A panel of speakers is here to talk about proposed changes to the RMA including a Ministry for the Environment representative, someone from Forest and Bird and someone from Agenda 21—all up the front. Peter, (Agenda 21 chairperson) introduces the speakers and breaks some of the tension in the room by thanking the Ministry for the Environment staff member for coming and adding—'remember he’s only the messenger-don’t shoot him!’ Peter adds the speakers will have a set time to talk followed by questions from the floor. Peter adds—he aims to provide everyone with a chance to speak (A21 Field Notes 5:1999).

However encouraging respectful listening was not all that Agenda 21 members aimed to achieve. Agenda 21 was strategic in its attempts to facilitate new understandings by encouraging widespread public participation.

Were new understandings facilitated? If so, for whom and about what?

In the Agenda 21 case extensive efforts were made to encourage community learning. On several occasions short courses or series of evening classes were organised around a topic before a community debate or discussion on that topic was held. Courses covered a wide range of topics (e.g. waste consumption patterns, transportation, or bio-diversity). The courses also anticipated reviews of government policy or local council planning initiatives. Agenda 21 also used other activities to enhance understanding. For example in their attempt to influence the ‘attitudes, lifestyle and behaviour’ of people, Agenda 21 organised a series of eight weekly discussions on bio-diversity through the WEA and followed this up with community tree planting and gardening activities.

This formula of community education classes and community action to supplement public forums was felt to be very successful and was repeated
on several occasions. Agenda 21 also employed a community worker for two years who worked with community boards, residents’ groups, the Christchurch City Council and garden centres facilitating discussion workshops about bio-diversity, running planting days and distributing plant lists and maps to urban residents.

To encourage widespread community learning, Agenda 21 also became quite project driven as Kim explains:

**Kim** These projects we were going to do had an assumption...I was deeply, deeply aware that we needed to make that link between environment and social and economic foci I wanted to do that, I wanted to get the next project on, to do that...I mean it was all a strategy to do with raising our profile, making ourselves a recognised NGO, bringing our membership forward and then getting onto the next stage, onto that next project, did we tackle property? Did we tackle consumption?—Whatever it was—we did tackle consumption (A21 Focus Group 1998).

The Agenda 21 group also drew on the international experiences and contacts of its members to develop strategies to mobilise public participation and encourage social learning. For example one member, Peter, drew on his extensive experience in adult education for sustainable development in the United Kingdom:

**Peter** I learned [from UK experience with Agenda 21 groups] that it is possible to engage very large numbers of people as long as it affected where they lived. As long as it was local and they could engage with the issue, if it was tangible they connected in a quite sophisticated way and they used expertise differently. They used expertise to enable rather than be directed by it...The starting point had to be specific but then people made connections to the global. They were talking about cutting down CO₂ emissions to the atmosphere. They were talking about mineral resources, substituting for fossil fuels, alternative energy and so on. This was a
commitment to a much broader scale of thinking (A21 Focus Group 1998).

Another member, Paul, also drew on his international experience of NGOs. He commented on the value of local action on specific projects as a way of transforming attitudes:

Paul Indirectly I had been involved in environmental NGOs, (in Canterbury England, by coincidence!) and in Africa, particularly Botswana where I'd been living. I arrived in Christchurch...and I was keen to get involved with local environmental issues and I very much hold the philosophy 'think globally act locally' and I just happened to see in the Press that there was a forum on public transport that (a member of Agenda 21) was actually chairing (A21 Focus Group 1998).

Johnny validated the impact of Agenda 21’s efforts at encouraging social learning through community action, when reflecting on the work of Agenda 21 from his perspective as an environmental policy analyst:

Johnny It seems to me the empowering of the community you’re doing on all these issues is something my department and Head Office has no conception of. It believes it is not built into the Minister’s programmes. We’re so focused on what he wants we had to sign for the certain number of hours on each output that he wants nationally, that unless someone who works at the detailed programmes with those output streams is actually thinking about empowering the community and I think, except for a very few of them, it’s just a different language. That's why I have come to the Agenda 21 Forum to pick up that connection with issues and people (A21 Focus Group 1998).

Given Johnny’s arguments that local Agenda 21 efforts were significant did the participants in Agenda 21 feel their voice was heard?

*Did the participants feel listened to or misunderstood?*

The Agenda 21 committee all expressed some frustration that the outcomes of their forums were not often heeded by key government decision-makers.
However in comparison to the other case studies, Agenda 21 was quite strategic in its attempts to make the powerful listen and as a small group they were surprisingly professional lobbyists. The committee members tried to use personal contacts and networks to ensure key planners or elected decision-makers attended Agenda 21’s forums. However one of the difficulties identified by Agenda 21 committee members was that the political institutions, the legislation and the activities of key planning or policy agencies were not framed in such a way as to be responsive to the issue of urban sustainability. Agenda 21 committee members felt there was little political will between 1996 and 1999 to reform environmental and planning institutions in ways that would encourage sustainable development. Johnny put the bureaucrats’ perspective in the following way reinforcing this perception:

Johnny

...anyone who tried to link social issues and environmental issues with the present government was sort of shutting the door on themselves basically. The present government does not want to know or hasn’t until very recently, doesn’t want to know or hear from anybody who raised any social issues whatever, particularly if they were linked to environmental issues. It’s just not on the ideological agenda, you know. Ask any environmentalist who worked to raise the economic impacts of environmental things. I know you go to Treasury and they are just not interested to hear about that (A21 Focus Group 1998).

Overall Agenda 21 did not achieve consensus, but its members did work strategically to facilitate social learning despite significant economic and institutional resistance to questions of environmental sustainability. Agenda 21 also struggled to improve the social justice of planning and policy-making processes in the face of constraints.
2.3 Did the deliberative process address issues of social justice? If not, why not? If so

2.3.(a) How were issues of distributive justice addressed?

2.3.(a).i Whose interests or values were identified with planning outcomes?

2.3.(b) How were issues of procedural justice addressed?

2.3.(b).i What were the agendas, rules and rituals of deliberation and who set these?

2.3.(b).ii How were procedural disputes addressed?

In this study I examined the way Agenda 21 approached procedural and distributive justice issues in planning. I argue that the deliberative efforts of the organisation enhanced procedural justice of decision-making, particularly on large national planning issues, by increasing public access to information and alerting the community to decisions being made that they may not otherwise have been aware of. However Agenda 21 was less effective in scrutinising the distributive outcomes of planning processes.

How were issues of distributive justice addressed?

In newsletters and ‘alert sheets’ posted to a wide range of NGOs and individuals, attempts were made by Agenda 21 to raise questions about the impact of a number of planning and social issues related to housing, energy use and urban quality of life. For example in 1998, Agenda 21 alerted all members and allied groups to a public forum organised by the Community Law Centre about the proposed ‘Conjugal Status Bill’. In its news alert Agenda 21 described the proposed legislation as:

‘...an important and unpleasant Bill’ which ‘reduces entitlement to a benefit for women in violent situations and says that the Department of Social Welfare must not have regard to the existence or effect of violence or threats when assessing whether a person is in a relationship or benefit purpose (Agenda 21 1998).

Agenda 21’s efforts to make individuals aware of the costs and benefits of plans or policies were constrained by the difficulties the group experienced
in networking with other NGOs concerned with social justice. As noted earlier Agenda 21 felt a number of NGOs with social concerns resisted working with a group they perceived to be essentially a ‘green’ organisation. I now consider whether this was a valid perception.

*Whose interests or values were identified with deliberative outcomes?*

My field notes of 1997 record the way bio-physical values tended to dominate the arguments of Agenda 21 members in deliberation:

> An RMA review in the WEA rooms. There is standing room only—people have gathered to hear Forest and Bird talk about possible amendments to the Resource Management Act. Some one asks how the definition of the environment might change, but there is little debate about the impact of removing social and economic values from the definition—this doesn’t seem to be a major issue for those gathered here. People seem more concerned about the loss of opportunities for public consultation. One person identifies himself as a farmer and complains that the views expressed at the meeting are largely those of ‘urban greenies’ who ‘don’t understand the histories of farmers who’ve been concerned about conservation for a long time’ (A21 Field Notes 11:1997).

The field notes illustrate a problem characteristic of NGOs. NGOs are open and self-recruiting and they are accountable to their membership. Their values do not necessarily reflect a wider community. Agenda 21 aimed to promote discussion on a range of topics, but as an NGO it was not an appropriate forum for making collective decisions for a wider community, because it was not representative of the community and was not accountable to that community. These are significant limitations for all NGOs as sites for authoritative democratic community decision-making.

*How were issues of procedural justice addressed?*

While Agenda 21 struggled to promote consideration of distributive justice in its deliberation processes, the organisation was effective in improving the procedural justice of government and council decision-making. On a number
of occasions, Agenda 21 used its networks to alert a wider community to decisions that might not otherwise have attracted much public scrutiny. Agenda 21 also tried to widen community access to resources of information and technical expertise.

What were the agendas, rules and rituals of deliberation and who set these?
The internal deliberative procedures Agenda 21 followed were typical of small groups. The chairperson set a formal agenda with opportunity for all to contribute and members elected the chairperson and committee at an annual general meeting. All committee meetings were open to the public, as were all forums and community events. The real contribution of the NGO however, was in the work it did in promoting external accountability, opening authoritative decision-making processes to wider scrutiny by running public forums to debate issues, educating the public about the issue and making submissions on behalf of members.

How were procedural disputes addressed?
It proved difficult to assess how internal procedural disputes were addressed. If members had a concern about the way in which Agenda 21 operated they could have simply voted with their feet and left the organisation. In an interview, Kim commented on the difficulty of running small groups, particularly the way they can become dominated by strong personalities. For this reason she was keen to move out of the chair and to encourage others to take up the role of running meetings and setting the agenda (A21 Interview 1:1996). In situations where there were procedural disputes about the way the council or government had handled a decision, Agenda 21 worked hard to air its concerns. Peter noted that Agenda 21 was
strengthened in this process by actively networking with other NGOs to share information, pool resources and co-host national and overseas speakers who could provide the community with information and alternative perspectives.

Peter We joined with other groups, I think we’ve mentioned this principle of being strong because we work with other groups. We joined forces with the WEA, Native Habitats, the Addington Bush Society, Forest and Bird (A21 Focus Group 1998).

While Agenda 21 was able to address issues of procedural justice, it faced greater difficulty in joining with other NGOs to deliberate about the philosophy of sustainable development.

2.4 In what ways and to what extent did the facilitator and/or sponsor of debate influence the process of public deliberation in planning?

National and local-level government has taken very little action to promote discussion about sustainable development in general or urban sustainability in particular. In New Zealand, community groups and the academic community have initiated most discussion about sustainable development.

Several Agenda 21 committee members and forum participants expressed concern that too much emphasis or expectation was placed on the community to facilitate deliberation. Belinda expressed these concerns:

Belinda A group of small kids that went to visit Rob Storey (Minister of the Environment who represented New Zealand at UNCED) and they’d been all ‘gunned’ up about Agenda 21. One of them asked, ‘What is the Government going to do about Rib, the UNCED conference and Agenda 21!’ and Rob Storey turned around to them and said, ‘my question is what are you going to do about it?’ For me this was the most extraordinary summation of the Government’s position ...There they were.... (interjections and laughter and yes! yes!)...There they were turning around and saying to a group of school kids, ‘What are you going to do
about Agenda 21’ No leadership, no support, nothing. It was all back to the community.

The vacuum left by government is not confined to New Zealand as Paul notes:

Paul

There’s been a large element of that in the UK until the recent change of government. In the UK, the local authorities were encouraged, without any real guidance or funding, to take up Agenda 21 and they did so sporadically. They were encouraged—Gloucestershire and others ran with enthusiasm, they were the equivalent of the New Zealand Hamiltons and Waitakeres—and now with the change of government there’s a commitment in government and quite a lot more funding...(A21 Focus Group 1998).

Johnny reflected on the role that Agenda 21 has played facilitating debate about sustainable development in the absence of government leadership:

Johnny

Roger Blakeley (The Under Secretary for the for the Environment in 1992) was enthusiastic about Rio but Roger Blakeley was enthusiastic about everything and that was part of the problem. It thinks that the Ministry was over-stretched in all directions about wildly exciting programmes. After Rio the problem was what to do about it and how to contain this wild enthusiasm as part of the work programme and our office in Christchurch was really working solely or almost exclusively on RMA things and when I looked at it the real difficulty was the RMA ideology of sustainable management of natural resources does not fit sustainable development where the rest of the world still is in balancing economics, resources, culture, everything...

Kim


Johnny

It did predate it and it left the government structure and government ideology really as quite unsympathetic to the ideology of sustainable development because that would have been going back into the Town and Country Planning Act of ‘wise use and balance’ where the RMA had moved dramatically away from that...And so it was, there was, actually a difficulty talking about sustainable
development in our [Ministry for the Environment] work when we were busy trying to inculcate the ideas about the RMA sustainable management so there was real conflict there. So there’s that fact and the fact that the Ministry wasn’t really prepared to put that much resource into it and when I followed through the weekly minutes and this ‘cunning plan’ that there should be grassroots involvement...(laughs)...then that’s great but then I mean it also meant the government was stepping aside and saying “you guys fix it” in a sense. Unless the energy had been there at the NGOs local government wouldn’t have taken it up either (A21 Focus Group 1998).

The above conversation is revealing because Johnny is suggesting that Agenda 21 faced constraints due to government inaction on Agenda 21, but that this neglect also created opportunities for the organisation to lead deliberation. Overall Agenda 21’s role in facilitating public debate about sustainable development is significant. Given current limitations of the RMA, discussion about sustainable development is one of the few opportunities New Zealand communities have to widen public debate about planning from a narrow focus on bio-physical and built environments to broader socio-economic concerns.

7.5. Summary

This chapter has reviewed the results of research questions two and sub-questions 2.1–2.4, assessing the extent to which the aims of deliberative planning can be achieved in practice and the ways in which an NGO can influence the deliberative process. I argue that the members of Agenda 21 worked hard to facilitate inclusive public deliberation despite constraints imposed by prevailing economic and political ideology, and institutional agendas. Agenda 21 did not build consensus. Issues of non-human value were constantly raised in debate at the expense of socio-economic considerations. As a small group it tried to promote social learning through
raising awareness of sustainable development. Agenda 21 was able to promote social justice in procedural terms by exposing government decision-making processes to greater scrutiny and providing the public with resources to participate in those processes.

My discussion now turns to compare all three cases. I consider the significant factors that influence the process and outcomes of deliberation in planning and ask what are the implications of these findings for deliberative planning theory?

1 CORSO organises trade lobbying for developing countries as the Council of Organisations for Relief Services Overseas.

2 The World Commission defines sustainable development as development which ensures 'that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987, p.5).

3 Dryzek uses the term anthropocentric in that human populations and their wealth are to be and can be sustained with little emphasis on the rights of non-human nature or intrinsic values for example (Dryzek 1997 a, pp.126-130).

4 Hughes defines 'successful' Agenda 21 programmes for sustainable development as ones which involve:

1. Multi-sectoral engagement in preparing a long-term action plan based on sustainable development;
2. A commitment to long-term meaningful consultation;
3. Strengthening participatory assessment of local social, environmental and economic conditions and needs;
4. Negotiating specific target setting to achieve local visions and goals; and
5. Monitoring and reporting through the use of local indicators developed and measured by local community. (Hughes 1999, p.11).
CHAPTER EIGHT

REVISITING DELIBERATIVE PLANNING
THEORY: CONDITIONS FOR SOCIAL LEARNING

8.1. Introduction

This chapter returns to the aims and assumptions of theories of deliberative planning. The empirical research reported in chapters five, six and seven addressed research question two and sub-questions 2.1-2.4. In what follows, I first summarise and compare the case study results then address question three, discussing the implications of these results for deliberative planning theory. In particular I reconsider the transformative aims of that planning theory. I compare the *consensus building model* and the *social learning model* and argue that the social learning model provides a more persuasive normative vision and a more useful description of the process and outcomes of deliberation in planning. However, I note that neither model satisfactorily specifies the conditions under which social transformation might be effected. I identify barriers to inclusive deliberation and identify '5 Ts', *five conditions for transformation* under which inclusive deliberation and social learning can be enhanced in planning.

8.2. Comparing and Contrasting Case Study Results

In research question two, I asked:

2. *Can the aims of deliberative planning theory be achieved through greater public deliberation in urban planning practice? If not, why not? If so, under what conditions?*

I previously identified three broad aims of deliberative planning that promote inclusive democratic deliberation, social transformation (toward
consensus or enhanced social understanding) and social justice (defined in procedural as well as distributive terms). In comparing the three case studies, I argued that inclusive deliberation is constrained by critical argument and the demands of face-to-face forums. None of the cases achieved a consensus, although significant instances of social learning were facilitated under certain conditions. In each case, participants struggled to enhance social justice within legislative, institutional and social constraints. In this chapter, I briefly compare and contrast the cases, drawing on the results of sub-questions 2.1-2.4.

2.1 Was the planning process inclusive?

2.1(a) Who got involved?

2.1(b) Were there attempts to facilitate participation across differences of gender, culture, social or economic status or educational and technical skills? How?

Who got involved?

The case study results indicate that it is difficult to achieve inclusive public deliberation in a face-to-face forum. The demands of face-to-face direct participation restricted the number of people who could be involved. In the Wastewater case discussion, the requirements of facilitating small group face-to-face discussion precluded wider community involvement. A series of specialist working groups were held to address the problem and involve more interests, but as this case reminds us, the requirements of small group deliberation can be an anti-democratic pressure. In the Wastewater case, wide representation was traded off in favour of in-depth discussion in a small group. Comparing the cases revealed that three of the participants in the Wastewater case who represented estuary or ecology interests, were also involved in the Sumner case and one of them was also a member of Agenda 21.
The Wastewater case study also revealed that not all minority groups are clamouring for opportunities to speak to larger majorities. Maori fear their viewpoints and their special status, as indigenous people will be lost in the midst of other voices. Maori were also concerned that their valuable time and limited resources will be expended in talkfests which have little power to effect change. In all three cases, focus group members expressed concern that participation reflected a greater proportion of white, middle-aged or older, tertiary-educated participants.

Agenda 21 was particularly proactive in encouraging broad participation using NGO contacts to publicise its forums. However, Agenda 21 focus group participants commented that the economic climate of neoliberalism had made people ‘selfish’ and reluctant to participate in community activities. The Sumner community was deeply polarised on residential development issues and this polarisation had tended to assume a generational character. The Sumner Concept Plan was perceived by its critics to be overly representative of the elderly. Development interests and local business boycotted the process.

To combat the constraints on participation a number of strategies were used, with varying success, to encourage participation from a broader range of participants. In what follows I review these strategies.

Were there attempts to facilitate participation across differences of gender, culture, social or economic status, or education and technical skills? How?

In all cases, groups struggled with the challenge of fostering participation of minorities or interests normally marginalised in planning deliberation. Agenda 21 targeted social NGOs like the Community Law Centre and provided community education classes to build community members’ confidence and encourage lay participation in planning discussion. Sumner supplemented large public forums with small group discussion, mapping
and other visualisation techniques (photographic displays with response forms and press coverage) to encourage more lay residents to contribute to technical discussion. The Wastewater case participants were provided with an information pack and a tour of the waste treatment plant. The facilitator tried to draw out contributions from reticent speakers during meetings.

However, the process of critical argument appeared to inhibit inclusive deliberation and these problems were exacerbated in face-to-face forums. Participants felt freer to contribute to discussion in situations where facilitators allowed them to tell their stories in their own way and where they were assisted or encouraged to ask questions (Sumner Concept Plan, Agenda 21). At times the ‘cut and thrust’ of articulate, focused, critical argument inhibited participation, particularly for women and the elderly in the Wastewater case. Reflecting on the results of the Wastewater case for example, I noted the way Ryan, a prominent business leader, tended to dominate focus group discussion, emerging as a natural leader in the group at key times. This demonstrated how an articulate, confident well-educated professional could be advantaged in face-to-face argument.

2.2 Did the process facilitate consensus or social learning?

2.2.(a) Were shared norms or values identified in the process?
2.2.(b) Was trust, empathy, or respectful co-operation encouraged? How?
2.2.(c) Were new understandings facilitated? If so, for whom and about what?
2.2.(d) Did participants feel listened to or misunderstood?

Were shared norms or values identified in the process?

I have argued that deliberative planning theory has a transformative intent toward consensus or social learning. Patsy Healey, in particular embraces the possibility of consensus building (Healey 1997, pp. 263-265). This study considered whether shared norms or values were identified in the deliberation process. In both the Wastewater case and the Sumner Concept
Plan, an explicit aim of the deliberation was to achieve consensus. However, neither process built consensus and the Sumner Concept Plan may have exacerbated generational tension.

I was particularly interested in whether any shared norms or values were established with regard to the environment, given that Healey has argued that a deliberative approach to planning can build consensus about strategies for managing complex problems like environmental degradation (Healey 1997, p.279). She asserts that ‘...if the process has been rich enough and inclusive enough the strategy should have become widely shared and owned by the participants and stakeholders...it will express a robust consensus’ (Healey 1997, p.279). However, in all three cases, despite extensive efforts to include all voices and concerns, non-human environmental values were privileged in debate. This appears to be a result, in part at least, of the bio-physical parameters established by the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and the emphasis on non-human nature or wilderness preservation promoted by environmental activists in New Zealand. This privileging effect could not be described as a robust consensus.

Consensus also proved fragile over time. In a dynamic planning process, perceptions of consensus amongst participants could be shattered as new groups entered the deliberative forum. Consider for example, the case of the Wastewater case where surf clubs and ocean recreation groups joined the working party two years into deliberation. Issues and constituencies change through time as the result of discussion and new information. The dynamic nature of the wastewater planning process made it difficult to establish a lasting consensus and highlights the concerns of some deliberative democratic theorists that decisions should always be open to revision and challenge (Bohman 1996).
In the case of deliberation within the Agenda 21 Forum, participation was entirely voluntary. Consensus in this situation is also problematic. It is difficult to assess whether those with dissenting opinions had simply voted with their feet (as was obvious with the withdrawal of business and economic development interests from the Sumner Concept Plan exercise). In reality, deliberation exercises may simply confirm the views of a like-minded group.

Some of the individuals and groups who expressed opposition over a prolonged period (as in the Wastewater case) felt beleaguered at the end of the deliberation process. The frustration of dissenting minorities lends support to the criticism of consensus building through deliberation, that is, that opposition can be a positive force (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger, 1998). In the Wastewater case, the anger of surf clubs and other ocean interests brought new urgency and clarity to the discussion table.

*Were trust, empathy, intimacy and respectful cooperation encouraged? How?*

In my observation deliberative forums are not the mechanistic trust-building or empathy creating situations that some advocates imply. In the Sumner case, the concept planning process failed to address and to some extent may have exacerbated, the growing polarisation of the community, particularly between the ‘older’ and ‘younger’ generations. Those who attended valued the concept planning exercise. However, this exercise did not provide an opportunity to transform attitudes or promote collective reasoning among a wider community, nor did it encourage trust and empathy. The resulting plan was derided by its critics for being a selfish exercise and a ‘fuddy-duddy’ celebration of ‘working men’s houses’. In my analysis, all the Concept Plan achieved was a small concession in the City Plan for stricter control on building heights. The Concept Plan was effectively sidelined in the subsequent City planning process. Of the people I interviewed in the
three cases, few trusted anyone in institutions of power. This supports research into levels of mistrust of politicians generally among the New Zealand public (Perry and Webster 1999). The lack of action by the Council in the Sumner case and the length of deliberation and extensive role of consultants after consultation in the Wastewater case, actually increased public cynicism and frustration.

Were new understandings facilitated? If so for whom and about what?

New understandings were facilitated in each case, but with limitations. All participants felt they had learned about the views of others, but these insights were poorly disseminated beyond each face-to-face forum. Having time to think and reflect on attitudes was helpful in facilitating social understanding, as in the Sumner case. Participants said that having two days to talk, with an evening off to reflect at home was particularly valuable. In comparison, the three years of ongoing workshops and round-table style discussions in the Wastewater case was seen by many participants as too long. People lost sight of the point of discussion and new interests and agendas confused debate over time.

There was no evidence to suggest that the longer people talked the more they listened to each other. However, I suggest that if people are provided with a variety of opportunities to obtain and reflect on information over time, they may develop a better understanding of the issues. For example in the case of Agenda 21, the Workers Education Association (WEA) seminars and community planting activities were highly valued by Agenda 21 participants, as ways of informing people on issues before a forum or general debate was held. This finding should be qualified: participants were self-selecting and already highly motivated and interested in the topic. Nevertheless, Agenda 21 took the task of social learning before debate further than Habermas (1984) who merely envisaged that interlocutors be
trained in the skills of communication before participating in a deliberative forum.

Supplementary communication was important in enhancing social learning and maintaining accountability. The media and letters to the editor were vital in promoting discussion among a wider community in the Sumner and Wastewater cases. Comparing Agenda 21 forums with the Sumner case also demonstrates the way social understanding of participants in planning discussion can be improved when it is supplemented with information from national and international networks. This information assisted Agenda 21 participants in their critical reflection, but was not available to Sumner residents, as they grappled with housing intensification issues. Comparing the Sumner and Agenda 21 cases illustrates Bohman’s (1996) argument that new social movements can improve the political capacity of individuals to achieve transformation or effect change in desired directions. In the Sumner case, the residents lacked strategies about ways they could make the powerful, local developers listen. In the Sumner Concept case, learning was obstructed by participant resistance. Not all groups wanted to be heard by others and not all groups wanted to hear the viewpoints of others. Business interests and developers boycotted the concept planning exercise, arguing they already knew what the residents thought and did not want to listen to their views again or be ‘abused’ in a public forum.

Participant resistance highlights important limitations to the transformative intent of deliberative planning theory in the terms of both consensus building and social learning models. The Sumner case illustrates the problem of trying to build consensus. Bohman (1996) argues that aiming for consensus is a hard standard to reach in reality. Moreover, as democratic theorist Ingram (1993) has noted, aiming for consensus can give too much
power to groups to exit the process. In Sumner, the business interests were able to undermine the legitimacy of the Concept Plan as an expression of community perspectives, arguing it did not reflect consensus because they had not participated in the deliberation and did not agree with the outcomes.

Participant resistance also highlights the limitations of the social learning model of deliberative planning. The Wastewater case demonstrates a key criticism of social learning in deliberative planning. In this particular case, Maori resisted joining the working party because they were less concerned about teaching others their perspectives, than they were about achieving instrumental outcomes. Elster (1997) argues that social learning is not sufficient justification for deliberative democratic practice:

Although we may applaud democratic politics because of its educative by-products, we should advocate it only if it has inherent advantages as a method of deciding political questions (Elster cited in Bohman and Rehg 1997, p.xiii and Elster 1997, pp.21-25).

For Maori in the Wastewater case, deliberation ‘is not really the point...’ (Elster 1997, p.25). Social learning may be a valuable by-product which enhances the legitimacy of decision-making by improving citizens’ understanding of the issues and their feeling of having been included in the process (Bohman 1996), but for Maori the primary point of deliberation in this case was to enhance water quality through a Council decision and not to educate a wider community.

2.3. Did the deliberative process address issues of social justice? If not, why not? If so

2.3. (a) How were issues of distributive justice addressed?

2.3.(a.i) Whose interests or values were identified with planning outcomes?

2.3. (b) How were issues of procedural justice addressed?

2.3.(b.i) What were the agendas, rules and rituals of deliberation and who set these?
2.3.(b).ii How were procedural disputes addressed?

How were issues of distributive justice addressed?

Overall in the three cases, the deliberative processes failed to address social justice effectively in distributive terms, but extensive efforts were made to improve procedural justice. First the deliberative forums proved to be fairly useful vehicles for airing issues and helping educate participants, but they appeared to be much less effective in debating distributive justice issues. In all cases, participants spent little time considering these issues and were unsure of who would benefit and who would bear the burden of their recommendations. In the Wastewater and Sumner cases, some participants and people outside the forums accused each other of Nimbyism. The lack of debate about distributive issues was surprising, particularly as Hunold and Young argue that inclusive deliberative processes are more likely to lead to a just distribution of benefits and burdens (Hunold and Young 1998).

The task of assessing distributive justice was further complicated in the Wastewater case because Council staff had disaggregated waste treatment discussion into several deliberative processes. For example, while the working party was meeting, another group of manufacturers was looking at trade waste discharge and who should pay what proportion of the cost. The latter group did not include environmental groups or residents. Furthermore, only business interests in the working party had been given figures to help them assess the comparative costs of various treatment options on ratepayers and industry. There were some concerns about the effects of wastewater recommendations on Maori, but again, separate consultation meant there was little wider understanding about the impacts of options for Maori.
Whose interests or values were identified with planning outcomes?
A reluctance to consider distributive outcomes, particularly social impacts of planning may in part be explained by the pervasive influence of the ‘effects based’, bio-physical approach of New Zealand’s RMA. In the Sumner and Wastewater cases, these legislative parameters privileged values and interests associated with non-human nature. Participants in deliberative processes felt inhibited from talking in broad terms about their social concerns such as providing affordable family housing opportunities in Sumner. Instead discussion became focused on determining short term environmental ‘bottom lines’ such as acceptable standards of water quality or indigenous revegetation. Participants in the Sumner and Agenda 21 forums also expressed frustration that officials seemed unable, or unwilling, to listen to their broader social concerns.

How were issues of procedural justice addressed?
One of the aims of deliberative planning is to enhance procedural justice by facilitating a more inclusive deliberation process, enabling new voices to be heard in debate. In all three cases, procedural justice was improved where a neutral facilitator was used to ensure internal procedural justice (e.g. that voice, ear and respect were accorded) so that all participants had an opportunity to speak, be listened to and be heard. However, attempts to achieve external procedural justice were less effective. For example the Wastewater and Sumner cases were marginalised in subsequent Council decision-making. Agenda 21 worked strategically with other NGOs to improve the procedural justice of government decision-making, providing greater public scrutiny and enhancing existing opportunities for input through their community forums.

What were the agendas, rules and rituals of deliberation and who set these?
The agendas, rules and rituals for deliberation were a source of some contention. The agenda was contested in the Wastewater case. Agendas were
set by the Council who had sponsored the deliberation exercise. Participants were free to discuss a range of issues, but this freedom was constrained within a broader parameter: that discussion be aimed at ensuring the Council obtained a consent to discharge waste liquid from its Bromley sewage centre by the year 2001. The language and criteria, by which the application would be judged was highly technical, couched in parameters established by the Council engineers and consultants. These parameters also limited opportunities for discussion about other topics which concerned some participants such as on-site pollutants, industrial impacts or the social objectives of various groups. Nevertheless, in the Wastewater case, the working party membership included social, economic, environmental and political interests. These groups did challenge some technical assumptions, resulting in a Council agreement to provide a city-wide waste management strategy.

Comparing the case studies reveals the limitations inherent in the rituals of critical argument and consensus building. These observations support Young’s (1995) concern that the mores of critical argument are culturally bound and can silence new voices. As a deliberative process, critical argument suited some subjects, some personalities and some stories better than others. For example some members of the Wastewater case (lay people and some women) were intimidated because they felt their arguments were not as highly valued as those who could present their perspectives in a more logical and assertive argument.

Of the three cases, the Wastewater case most notably forces theorists to reconsider the rituals of consensus building through a single face-to-face forum. In this case, Tangata Whenua questioned the value of this ritual. The vulnerable position of minority groups in a collective forum is a serious challenge for those who would reduce all interests to a common or equal
deliberative footing. Tangata Whenua were concerned they would be pressured to put aside their concerns in favour of a common good as defined by a majority. This experience highlights the need for constitutional rules to protect the rights of minorities. Similarly in the Wastewater case, other individuals felt pressure not to dissent in the face of majority consensus.

How were procedural disputes addressed?

Procedural disputes were encountered in the Wastewater and Sumner cases. In the Wastewater case, the participants objected to the parameters that they believed had been unfairly imposed by Council on their discussion early in the process, particularly with regard to the cost of various treatment options. Through a facilitator, they resolved to express no confidence in the procedure to the Council, unless they could be assured that a range of waste treatment options were still on the agenda regardless of cost. This was a unifying moment for the Wastewater group. Having a facilitator and a powerful business interest backing the group was essential in helping the working party resolve this dispute with the Council to the satisfaction of the participants. However, at the time of writing, because of the Council sub-committee favouring a new option, the working party has again sought clarification of its role. This has yet to be resolved. In the Sumner case, disputes about community representation in the Concept Plan charrettes were heard in subsequent City Plan hearings. This was not a satisfactory process for dealing with disputes given the disproportionate legal resources that developers had access to, which enabled them to challenge the legitimacy of the concept plan.

2.4 In what ways and to what extent did the facilitator and/or sponsor of debate influence the process of public deliberation in planning?

In the three cases I observed, deliberative planning was assisted by third parties. Planners and people in authority were widely distrusted by participants, but the facilitators contracted by the Council were trusted.
These facilitators could challenge illegitimate uses of power by the Council, asking questions to provide more information for the community, or ensuring processes of deliberation were fair and that each person was heard. However, facilitators were constrained in their ability to speak out against their employers, and all facilitators and planners commented that they felt unable to see 'the big picture' in order to assess the impact of deliberative processes. These findings demonstrate the limits of John Forester's argument that planners are key agents in the promotion of uncoerced communication and social learning.

In comparison with Forester (1999), I noted the valuable role of informal third parties: lay participants as opposed to professional planners or paid facilitators who acted as interpreters facilitating social learning across cultural differences or differences in technical understanding. In the Wastewater and Agenda 21 cases, these participants acted as 'informal thirds'. These 'informal thirds' were invaluable in assisting parties to understand the concerns of others across differences of technical training or cultural background.

I also examined the way deliberation in planning was affected by those who sponsored the forums. The Council sponsored the Wastewater case and the Sumner case and the third was sponsored by an NGO (Agenda 21). In my assessment, the Council exercises were hampered by lack of trust on the part of the community and lack of clarity about the relationship between the deliberative processes and elected institutions for decision-making. Understandably, participants assumed that because the Council was footing the bill and its staff providing administrative support, the Council would listen to the outcomes of the process. In reality, politicians and planners appeared to resent the possibility that a deliberative forum would usurp their decision-making role. The deliberative forums sponsored by NGOs
were comparatively free from the constraints of institutional agendas; on the
other hand these forums could not make decisions and could not provide the
accountability and transparency afforded by traditional liberal democratic
institutions of government.

8.3. Summary: Comparing and contrasting cases studies

In all case studies, extensive attempts were made to facilitate opportunities
for inclusive deliberation. Nevertheless, in the Wastewater and Sumner
cases, the requirements of direct or face-to-face deliberation imposed
limitations on the inclusiveness of that deliberation. While no case achieved
consensus, some significant instances of social learning were cited by
participants. However, the findings suggest that any resulting social
learning may be (in practice) limited in terms of the number of people it
affects. The Wastewater case also highlighted another significant limitation
to social learning. In this case, deliberation improved the understandings of
some participants about the issues, but for Maori, the instrumental goal of
improving wastewater discharge was a more significant outcome. In each
case, attention to deliberative process appeared to be at the expense of
attention to outcomes. Consequently deliberation in planning improved
procedural justice in two cases, exposing government decision-making to
greater public scrutiny, although none of the cases was able to address issues
of distributive justice in any depth. When examining the role of facilitators
and sponsors, I noted the significant contribution of informal third parties,
individuals who can advance social learning across differences.

Having summarised my empirical research findings, I now consider
the theoretical implications of those findings and address research question
three.
8.4. Implications of Empirical Observations for Deliberative Planning Theory

In this section, I address research question three. I ask:

3. What are the implications of these empirical observations for deliberative planning theory?

The case study results challenge and extend the normative aims of deliberative planning theory of inclusive deliberation, social justice and social transformation. First, I argue that inclusive deliberation is more likely to be achieved by inclusive discourse and deliberative democracy than practices of critical argument and direct participatory democracy. Second, the research findings support the criticism that deliberative planning theory places too great an emphasis on procedural justice at the expense of attention to the outcomes of planning. Third, the research results have a number of implications for the transformative aims of deliberative planning.

8.4.1. Revisiting the aim of inclusive deliberation

The results of the case studies support the normative claims of deliberative planning theory that a more inclusive approach to deliberation introduces a broader range of practical, moral and emotional concerns into planning debate. All case study participants commented on the opportunity to enhance their understanding of issues through an open and uncoerced approach to debate. There were significant, if restricted, attempts to accord participants ‘voice’, ‘ear’ and ‘respect’ in public deliberation as advocated in theories of communicative rationality (Habermas 1984; Young 1995; Healey 1997; Forester 1999; and Dryzek 1987 and 1997 a). However, this finding must be tempered. Maori, as an indigenous minority, expressed concern that inclusive debate might require them to put aside their claims to special status. In the absence of constitutional measures to protect the interests of
groups who claim special status on moral grounds (Sharp 1997), an inclusive forum could be an oppressive rather than emancipatory experience.

The results of the case studies also challenge other assumptions inherent in the aim of inclusive deliberation; particularly the assumption that critical argument and participatory democracy are inclusive processes. First, the Wastewater case demonstrated the way a logical, western-style of critical argument can marginalise women and lay people. However, when the process of critical argument was modified along the lines of an inclusive dialogue fewer people were marginalised within a group discussion. For example, critical argument was supplemented with techniques of visualisation, or storytelling in the Sumner Concept Plan, or participatory action in the Agenda 21 case. These techniques helped a wider range of community members (particularly the elderly in the Sumner case) to contribute to discussion.

Second, more inclusive deliberation does not have to involve more direct participation. Direct, face-to-face deliberation is restrictive. In the Wastewater case, the need to restrict group size, in order to facilitate discussion, restricted the range of interests that could be represented. The use of alternative methods of communication to enhance deliberation such as the point approach adopted by The Press in the Sumner case, illustrated the way inclusive deliberation might be enhanced without direct participation. Advances in information technology have enabled information to be disseminated quickly, thereby making supplementary discursive survey techniques a viable option (Budge 1996). Moreover, simply enhancing dissemination of ongoing deliberation through the media, with opportunity for feedback from a wider community, can enhance public deliberation beyond the constraints of a face-to-face forum. Given the constraints of face-to-face deliberative planning for large communities, I
argue that deliberative planning would be better informed by theories of deliberative democracy and inclusive discourse, as advocated by Iris Young (1995), than through direct participatory democracy (Pateman 1970).

8.4.2. Revisiting the aims and assumptions of social justice

My research findings also support the criticism of deliberative planning theory that it focuses our attention on the process of planning at the expense of attending to the outcomes of those processes (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998). Deliberative planning tends to focus attention on the plan/policy formulation phase of planning, instead of considering how deliberation might influence all stages of a dynamic planning process, including plan implementation and evaluation. In all cases, little attention was paid to distributive outcomes. In my observation participants and planners in the Wastewater and Sumner cases became overly concerned with ensuring internal procedural justice at the expense of attention to the impacts of deliberative processes. Planning which simply enables more speaking, but fails to effect instrumental, deliberative change, can have a negative impact by disillusioning and disempowering citizens, as in the Sumner case and, to a lesser extent, the Wastewater case. Planning is a goal-orientated activity. It is a process of future-orientated, public decision-making concerned to manage land use changes and attain social and economic objectives. Outcomes matter as much as process. The Agenda 21 case was different in that members continually considered strategies to ensure that their concerns about instrumental action would also be heard by key decision-makers. The scrutiny of government processes and input by Agenda 21 helped improve the procedural justice of traditional decision-making. I now consider the outcomes of deliberation in planning and the implications for consensus building and social learning models of deliberative planning.
8.4.3. Revisiting transformative aims: Consensus and social learning

In chapter two, I argued that beyond a common vision of inclusive public deliberation and just procedures, the aims of deliberative planners are unclear. Is deliberative planning a democratising project aimed at building consensus through direct participation in decision-making as interpretation of the work of Healey (1997), Innes (1994) and Susskind and Cruikshank (1987) would suggest? Alternatively is the aim of deliberative planning to foster uncoerced communication processes in planning as a means to enhancing social learning as John Forester’s (1993a and 1999) work on the micro-politics of planning indicates? Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger argue that deliberative planning is ‘...not so much a theory rather it could be described as a life view based on a participatory perspective of democracy and a dislike—or at least a grave suspicion—of free-market economies (the basis of the demonised instrumental rationality)’ (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998, p.1978).

Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger go on to argue that a set of implicit values underlie the ideals of deliberative planning, values that view planning ‘...as an emancipatory project concerned with undistorted communication...’ (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger 1998, p.1978). However, their research fails to note significant divergences between the way leading deliberative planning theorists such as John Forester and Patsy Healey, have chosen to apply the Habermasian vision of uncoerced deliberation. These interpretations were summarised in chapter two as consensus building or social learning models.

Based on my research findings, I argue that the model of social learning is more plausible for two reasons. First, the social learning model provides a better description of the social transformations observed in the case studies. Second, the social learning model provides a more useful
normative vision of how public deliberation might legitimate planning decisions.

The consensus building model
The model of consensus building proved problematic in the context of this study in a number of ways. First, Healey's (1997) work on collaborative planning stresses the value of consensus building and suggests that unconstrained public deliberation is likely to enhance this process. However, in my case studies, I could find no evidence that the longer people talked the more they came to agree on shared norms or strategies for action. In the Wastewater case, the length of deliberations revealed the difficulty of maintaining consensus over time as issues and affected interests changed in a dynamic planning process.

Second, in chapter two I argued that the possibilities of consensus appeal to deliberative planning theorists because the prospect of achieving consensus avoids political and moral questions about how collective decisions should be made in the absence of agreement. Healey argues that deliberation should aim to build shared values. However, my research supports Young's (1995) concern that consensus is normally defined by a majority, and can require minorities to put aside their concerns for the common good. For example in the Wastewater case the assertion of consensus decision-making was perceived by dissenting minorities as a way marginalising their concerns, and those who felt they were in the minority simply remained silent. In situations where shared values or consensus was established, for example in the case of some of the Agenda 21 forums, concerns were raised that everyone agreed only because they were 'preaching to the converted'. These concerns touch on another issue raised by Young in the context of political theory, suggesting that an assumption of
consensus obviates aims of self-transformation—that is, why change our views if we all really agree anyway?

Third, my findings also support the arguments of Bohman (1996) who distinguishes between legitimacy and consensus. Bohman argues that consensus is an unrealistic goal in a democracy and furthermore, is not required. Bohman suggests that what is more significant than achieving consensus is our ability to say that a decision has legitimate authority, in that it has been arrived at through a process by which people have had effective voice. He argues the legitimacy of a decision is enhanced when people believe they have been included and have had an effective voice. In this situation, he argues people are more willing to co-operate with policies or plans without coercion (Bohman 1996 and Hunold and Young 1998). Bohman's argument is supported by my interviews with participants in the Wastewater case which revealed that none of them expected to make the final decision, or even to agree with it, but everyone expressed anger or concern when it appeared that the Council might not give serious consideration to their concerns.

Finally, the results of the case studies question the assumption which some deliberative planning theorists make that inclusive deliberation will help build consensus about environmental values (Healey 1997 and Innes 1994). In this study I could find no evidence that people had developed shared values about the environment and/or strategies for its management. The legislative nature of the RMA and the traditional focus of environmental groups in New Zealand implicitly set the parameters of discussion, privileging non-human values. However, the privileging of non-human nature could not be said to reflect shared views. Those with concerns about social, spiritual and economic aspects of the environment struggled to be heard.
Social learning model of deliberative planning

The social learning model of deliberative planning theory, when compared with the consensus building model, appears deceptively modest in its transformative ambitions. A social learning model, as articulated by John Forester, does not reject consensus building through deliberation. Indeed, Forester argues that planners ‘have to be astute bridge builders, negotiators and mediators at the same time’ (Forester 1999, p.3). Forester is interested in the way planners can ‘...encourage public learning about social significance as well as about positive fact, about historical identity and difference as well as shared common ground [emphasis mine]’ (Forester 1999, p.61). For Forester, however, consensus building is not the raison d’être of deliberation as implied by Healey (1997, p.33) and Innes (1994 and 1995). Forester argues that planning involves a process of transformative learning:

...in community planning, we can...learn about who we are—as inheritors of a distinctive history, for example, or as contemporary neighbours coming to terms with one another. We can learn about new relationships we can develop, and about who we may yet come to be together as we reshape our shared public world (Forester 1999, p. 62).

Forester concludes: ‘[that] because planning is the guidance of future action, planning with others calls for astute deliberative practice: learning about others as well as about issues, learning about what we should do as well as about what we can do’ (Forester 1999, p.1). The observations of inclusive public deliberation in practice reported in these case studies can be described as experiences of social learning rather than consensus building. Robust shared norms were not identified in any of the cases, but participants often commented on the value of learning about the history and environment in their area, or the viewpoints of others.

In light of these case studies, I argue that Forester assumes too much and at the same time underestimates the transformative task of social
learning in planning when he speaks of learning about our 'shared public world'. In the Wastewater case for example, Maori and Pakeha shared a physical space (the estuary), but attached very different cultural meanings to that place, so that it is unhelpful to imply that there is one unitary perception or shared public world. In the Wastewater case, effective social learning across cultural difference will require considerable effort on the part of both Maori and Pakeha given their differing world views. The Sumner Concept Plan charrettes used visualisation techniques and story telling to increase social learning, but developers refused to listen. Agenda 21 used networking and public mobilisation strategies to try to make the powerful listen.

**Limits of social learning**

The social learning model provides a useful description of the empirical observations recorded in this study. There are limits, however, to the application of social learning as a model for planning. Social learning provides a *description* of deliberative process in planning and a *vision* for social transformation, but it is not a *model of authoritative and accountable decision-making*. People may co-operate more willingly with decisions they understand and which they feel consider their concerns (Bohman 1996), but in all three case studies, deliberative process were not transparent and accountable processes of decision-making. A deliberative forum provides a vehicle for better informing (and scrutinising) decision-making, but social learning is not a substitute for accountable, democratic decision-making.

This latter point touches on a problem for both consensus building and social learning models. Both approaches are remarkably silent about the strategies which might be required to effect change in the face of macro-economic and social barriers. In general, deliberative planning theorists pay considerable attention to the way communicative processes can address micro-level restraints to inclusive and transformative planning, but there is
little detailed discussion of the strategies or conditions which might effect change in the face of macro-level constraints (Healey et al 1995; Innes 1994; Healey 1997 and Sager 1994). In the section, I identify influences that facilitated or constrained deliberation in planning in the case studies, before identifying conditions for effecting social transformation in planning.

8.4.4. Constraints on public deliberation

In this thesis I identified key factors which constrained or assisted deliberation in planning. These factors can be described as micro and macro level influences.

Micro-level influences on deliberative planning
I define micro-level influences as those influences that are subject to individual agency that are within the power of individuals to control or change. The micro-level influences on deliberative process which were identified, were ones experienced 'within-case', shaping deliberation and the outcomes of that case study.

Interpersonal factors: These related to the history of relationships between individuals or groups represented in process. Where there was a poor history of interpersonal relations, it was difficult to build trust, to establish intimacy, or to encourage empathic listening. There was animosity in the Sumner community between some developers and residents. This animosity was triggered by housing intensification policies, but the disputes were exacerbated by strong personalities. Individuals who understood the needs of both the community and developers and had the respect of a range of participants, could have been used more extensively to initiate discussion and respectful listening between groups.

Communication factors: Deliberation was influenced by the absence or presence of opportunities to supplement face-to-face talk with other forms
of communication including visuals (Sumner), site visits (Wastewater), or participatory action (Agenda 21). Having a variety of opportunities for participants to listen to others and reflect on their understanding of what had been said, made deliberation more inclusive. Participants valued the variety of opportunities to listen and reflect more highly than the length of the deliberative process.

**Logistical factors:** These were the third category of micro-level influences identified as inhibiting inclusive deliberation. For example the time of day/week/year for deliberation, absence of competing events and provision of childcare or child-friendly consultation contexts were perceived by participants as affecting the inclusiveness of discussion.

**Macro-level barriers to deliberative planning**

Macro-level barriers to inclusive deliberation in planning were defined as institutional or strategic factors which were beyond the direct control of participants. In all three cases, the following macro-level influences were repeatedly identified through interview and observation as significant influences.

**Economic conditions:** The factor most commonly identified by interviewees as effecting the process of deliberation and its outcomes, was the prevailing economic climate or ideology. Neo-liberal economic influences in planning which emphasise the rights of private property owners and minimal restraints in an effects-based approach to urban planning, were perceived to limit public choices. For example participants in the Sumner Concept Plan and Agenda 21 forums expressed frustration that many of the issues they raised could not be put into effect under existing legislation. Agenda 21 participants argued that broader definitions of the environment in planning legislation would facilitate more inclusive planning deliberation. Cost and previous financial investments also constrained
options in the Wastewater case. In the Sumner case, however, developers saw economic conditions as relatively liberating and perceived consultation as a restriction on their activity. Concern about international trade practices and policies constraining domestic policy options was expressed in the Agenda 21 case.

**Political factors:** The openness of the legislative environment, the receptiveness of officials and politicians and their willingness to listen to the views of participants were cited as factors influencing the outcomes of the deliberative process in all three cases. The presence or absence of mechanisms by which the outcomes of deliberative processes were communicated to democratic institutions with responsibility for decision-making also influenced deliberation, as did the institutional responsiveness or accountability of these decision-making institutions. For example in the Wastewater case and the Sumner Concept Plan, participants expressed frustration at the lack of mechanisms by which Councils could be held accountable for their actions. Paying attention to strategies for making officials listen and to ways of scrutinising decision-making was a strength of Agenda 21’s deliberative process.

**Bureaucratic factors:** The deliberative process and its outcomes were affected by the level of interest of senior planning staff in public participation processes. The support of senior bureaucrats provides valuable insider information to help advance public deliberation and strategies for subsequent implementation of outcomes. Senior planners I interviewed expressed little support for the Sumner Concept Plan. Junior planning staff acted in a liaison role for the Council, but there was no senior support to help guide the Concept Plan through the City Plan process.

**Socio-cultural factors:** These were identified as influencing the deliberative process. They included the presence or absence of past hostility
between different ethnic groups. For example the history of animosity and grievance between Maori and the Crown, and Maori and Pakeha influences many New Zealand planning cases. In the Wastewater case, this history was reflected in land confiscation for sewage treatment and disagreements over waste discharged into water. Gender also played a role; while not all women participants shared the same views, they showed reticence about contributing to male-dominated technical debates. This was particularly evident in the Wastewater case where an absence of women with technical expertise exacerbated a general tendency to devalue the contribution of women.

_Strategic factors:_ The local, regional national or international significance of the issues at stake affected the deliberative process, as did the scale, complexity and dynamism of the issue. For example the Sumner and Wastewater cases had city-wide implications (and regional ones in the latter case) making deliberation more complex because of the diversity of groups and individuals who wanted to comment.

The micro and macro level influences constrained inclusive deliberation in all three case studies. However, Forester (1999) challenges researchers to move beyond identifying how power and influence constrain deliberation to ways of addressing these constraints. I respond to this challenge by identifying the conditions under which the aims of deliberative theory, particularly inclusive deliberation and social learning might be realised.

8.4.5. '5 Ts': Conditions for social transformation: enhancing inclusive deliberation and social learning

One test that confronts theorists of deliberative planning is the challenge of addressing barriers or constraints to achieving the goals of deliberative planning. However, it is not necessary for all micro or macro level barriers to
be overcome before we begin to speak across differences in planning. In my observation it is often the reality of suffering, anger, or frustration at these barriers that gives discussion a sense of urgency. The knowledge of the way political, economic and social factors shape the life chances or experiences of other participants enhances social understanding.

Many of these identified factors confirm the micro barriers that are anticipated in the deliberative planning literature. But aside from communicative strategies aimed at enhancing the micro-level of planning (Forester 1999) and some relatively broad discussion of institutional reform (Healey et al 1995 and Sager 1994), there has been little discussion in deliberative planning literature about the conditions for social transformation. Through reflection on the practice of deliberation in the case studies, I identified five conditions which enhance inclusive deliberation and social learning. These conditions are summarised in Figure Sixteen.

1. **The use of a Treaty (or rules of conduct)**

Inclusive deliberation and social learning is more likely to occur under conditions where there are clear rules of conduct, protection of minority interests and formal clarification of the rights and responsibilities of participants in deliberative forums established at the outset. David Held (1987 and 1997) has expressed concern that in a rush to develop more participatory forms of democracy, direct democrats are too quick to overlook the importance of constitutional mechanisms to protect the rights of individuals and minorities. The same criticism can be made of deliberative planners. While the vision of collective, other-regarding citizens inspires us, the spectres of mob rule, selfish Nimbyism and group-think or the tyranny-of-a-majority must make us cautious.
'5Ts' – Conditions for Effective Social Learning through Deliberative Planning

**Treaty**
- rules about conduct, role and function of deliberation
- constitutional protection of individuals, minorities and private property

**Talk Plus**
- deliberative democracy
- inclusive argument includes story telling, participatory action and visualisation

**Transparency**
- mechanisms to ensure ongoing deliberation is accountable to a wider community and open to challenge
- mechanisms to call decision makers to account when deliberation is heard but not heeded

**Third Parties**
- formal mediators, planners and facilitators assist deliberation
- informal interpreters and NSMs build bridges across differences and mobilise public participation

**Transmission**
- disseminate deliberative outcomes to Government institutions and the community
- strategies to make the powerful listen

**Social learning through deliberation in planning**
Neo-liberal planning theory assumes a representative and interest-based model of democracy which has a number of strengths. In particular, these models have traditionally recognised the need to protect us from ourselves. Neo-liberal ideology stresses constitutional mechanisms that protect the rights of the individual, minorities and private property. Liberal representative democracy also pays close attention to issues of accountability in decision-making. A strong theory of deliberative planning needs to protect the conditions that ensure debate is uncoerced and accountable.

In all cases internal rules of conduct were established to ensure opportunities for each participant to speak and to establish how decisions would be made. Neither case sponsored by the Council established clear external rules governing the mandate of the deliberative process or procedures to clarify the function and power of the deliberative process, to ensure accountability between the elected council, the deliberation process and the planning bureaucracy. There was a great deal of confusion over how authoritative decisions would be made in the Sumner and Wastewater cases. Consequently participants anticipated they would have a greater influence on decision-making processes than they had in reality.

2. **Talk-plus**

Supplementing oral debate with other communication techniques can help overcome the micro and macro barriers to learning imposed by the logistics of large diverse communities. This strategy goes to the heart of deliberative planning. Deliberative planning tends to privilege critical argument: a discursive style which has evolved from distinctly western, modernist roots. Deliberative planning theory has a universalising tendency that seeks to elevate public discussion as the principal mechanism for land-use planning and achieving social and economic goals. Political theorists have recognised
the dangers inherent in universalising any collective decision-making arrangement (Held 1993).

Face-to-face deliberation is particularly fraught with instances of majority domination, particularly the use of body language to intimidate, or powerful logical argument to marginalise halting or emotional speech. Using a range of communication techniques in addition to talk can make deliberation more inclusive. Written and visual communication together with practical activities can improve social learning. Interviewees commented on the value of ‘seeing’ what others had to say. Providing a variety of opportunities to gather information beyond talking (evening classes and practical activities) facilitates more inclusive deliberation and social learning.

3. Third Parties
The use of facilitators as third parties to assist participants to understand each other was both a formal and informal strategy employed in all cases. Given that deliberative planning theorists are keen to democratise planning practice, deliberative planning theory currently gives a disturbingly central role to the planning professional (Forester 1999). In theory, the planner retains a gate-keeping role as facilitator, similar to the advocate role of the planner in the 1960s and 1970s. However, case study participants expressed a great deal of distrust of planners. In contrast, contracted facilitators can play an important, although limited, role in deliberative planning. Professional facilitators had a vested interest in achieving an outcome for their employer which was sometimes at the expense of considering alternative courses of action or opposing Council actions (Amy 1987). Nearly all planners and facilitators expressed frustration at their inability to see where deliberation was heading: to ‘see the big picture’. The experience of planners and professional facilitators in the three case studies, shows the
limits on the agency of planners: they are not the communicative superheroes struggling to resist the illegitimate forces of power which seek to manipulate citizens' belief, consent, trust or faith, as we might surmise from Forester's work (Forester 1993 a and 1999).

*Informal thirds* are important intermediaries since they are people with life-experiences or training, trusted by a number of groups which provides them with an understanding of two or more life worlds. These people can act as bridges, facilitating more discussion and social learning. The value of informal thirds was a surprisingly consistent finding. Most participants valued the contributions of other people, within the group who were able to act as a bridge between differing views. Informal thirds were not only individuals: Agenda 21 acted as an activist mediator (Forester 1999) or new social movement (Dryzek 1997 b) facilitating social learning between citizens with environmental concerns and bureaucrats and politicians. However, there are limits to the role of informal thirds in facilitating social learning. There was pressure, in each case study on a relatively small number of people to assume this role. There was also a tendency for planners to assume that the informal third was representing a particular group rather than considering them as an interpreter or support person for those who wished to be heard. In the Wastewater case, paid representatives from conservation and environmental agencies acted as informal thirds by mediating between non-speaking nature and the community.

4. *Transmission*

Deliberative decision-making forums can affect social learning and inclusive deliberation more readily when there is effective transmission of deliberative outcomes to institutions of government and a wider community. In all three cases, attempts were made with varying success to disseminate the outcomes of deliberation. All the cases would have benefited from greater
dissemination of these outcomes. Transmission of deliberative outcomes was most successfully achieved by Agenda 21 who perceived their role as networkers influencing the planning practice of others. It was least effectively achieved in the Sumner case where participant support for the exercise was very strong, but there appeared to be little city-wide community or political knowledge of the exercise despite a commendation from the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment.

Given the dynamic nature of planning, it is important that information is also disseminated on an ongoing basis. This assists accountability and transparency in a dynamic planning situation. Overall transmission is an important condition for inclusive deliberation and social learning. Deliberation is not decision-making. New social movements like Agenda 21 are unable to make authoritative decisions but can make strategic use of opportunities to influence key decision-makers.

5. Transparency
Mechanisms for ensuring accountability in deliberation assist social learning, inclusive deliberation and the legitimacy of decision-making. Conditions of transparency ensure decision-makers are called to account for their decisions. In all three cases, there was little attention to the accountability of government to deliberative process. The accountability of face-to-face forums to a wider community was also unclear. This was particularly problematic in the Wastewater and Sumner cases where the legitimacy of the deliberative process was questioned by critics because it did not represent a wide range of interests. However, the Wastewater case shows that people are more willing to accept decisions, even if they do not agree with them, when they can see that their voice has been given serious consideration.
8.5. Summary: Beyond Consensus: Conditions for Social Learning

In their vision of communities engaged in collective deliberation and their emphasis on the possibility of transforming individual preferences through deliberation, deliberative planning theorists challenge the dominant economic discourses which currently constrain our planning imagination and limit our ability to reason collectively. Deliberative planners offer us inspiration, creative alternatives and a vision of a more empathetic, compassionate and just community. Nevertheless it is precisely their faith in this vision that has emerged in this study as one of the weakest points of deliberative planning theory.

Deliberative planning has developed few strategies for challenging macro-level constraints on inclusive public deliberation and transformative social learning. In this thesis I have identified strategies that were employed in practice to address the micro and macro level factors that constrained inclusive discussion and social learning. The strategies of: Treaty, Trust-building, Talk-plus, Third parties, Transmission and Transparency can be summarised as conditions of social transformation aimed not simply at ensuring all voices can speak, but at facilitating social learning so that these voices are heard by all members of the community, particularly decision-makers who can be called to account in situations where these voices are heard but not heeded. In the next chapter, I discuss research question four and consider the implications of my research findings for urban planning practice in New Zealand.
9.1. Introduction

In this concluding chapter, I consider the implications of the research reported here for urban planning practice in New Zealand. Drawing on the results of empirical research and theoretical discussion, I examine ways planning practice might become more inclusive, socially just and transformative. My discussion opens with a summary of the research findings reported in this thesis.

9.2. Summary of Research Findings

I began in this thesis, by arguing that the problems that will dominate this millennium will be urban ones, characterised by their complexity, intensity and diversity. These urban problems raise a number of technical questions that require instrumental and rational solutions. However many of the problems of urbanisation also essentially raise political questions. In particular I noted concerns about how the needs of diverse communities should be catered for, and the issues of who should have a say about what, in decision-making.

A number of critics have questioned whether experts can address the needs of diverse communities. These criticisms have challenged the traditional modernist assumptions inherent in urban planning. Given the cosmopolitan nature of urban communities, critics like Sandercock (1998c) and Johnston (1997) remind us that heterosexual, white, male planners can not readily understand or advocate for gay communities, indigenous
or ethnic minorities, street kids or women at home. These authors challenge planning practitioners to find new ways to give voice to the people of the ‘borderlands’, those groups and individuals who have stories, needs and concerns that are all too easily dismissed in traditional planning practice. Modernist faith in the ability of the State to plan for urban development has also been challenged by Neo-liberal theory. This theory seeks to diminish the role of the state in urban planning.

I have also argued that there has been surprisingly little vigorous debate between planners and political theorists interested in political arrangements that encourage a collective approach to urban problem solving. The absence of debate is disturbing. New theories of deliberative planning can enrich the understandings of political theorists grappling with questions of urban democracy and governance, while the arguments rehearsed in political theory can provide a valuable critique which can enhance deliberative planning theory and practice.

In chapter two, I then went on to examine the aims and assumptions of deliberative planning. I argued that this theory provides a normative vision of collective decision-making that has the potential to challenge the hands-off, individualism of neo-liberal planning. I then argued that the aims of deliberative planning are to foster inclusive, democratic deliberation, to enhance notions of social justice and to effect social transformation in ways which encourage consensus building or social learning.

In the empirical research reported in chapters three to seven, I considered the extent to which these aims could be achieved through greater public deliberation in practice. In discussion in chapter eight, I drew on this empirical research to argue that the transformative aim of consensus building in deliberative planning sets too high a standard or creates expectations that have potentially anti-democratic implications. Moreover consensus is not necessary to enhance the legitimacy of the
planning process. I argued that the alternative aim of social learning by contrast, provides a useful description of the empirical observations recorded here. I also argued that social learning has the potential to transform urban planning practice in quite radical ways.

The view of social learning as articulated by John Forester (1993 a and 1999) is essentially reformist. Forester promotes social learning as a way of enhancing the practice of urban planning as a modernist expert-led project. However, social learning can have more radical implications. In situations where new social movements foster public deliberation in planning, social learning has the potential to enhance the ‘political capacity’ of the public to participate in and challenge traditional planning practice and challenge the authority of the state and the expert planner (Bohman 1996, pp.110-111; Sandercock 1998 c; Friedmann 1987).

In discussing the aims of deliberative planning I also considered the way deliberative planning theorists have attempted to broaden the concept of social justice beyond a narrow distributive view of rights. These theorists raise questions about the procedures by which decisions are made, rather than simply examining the outcomes of institutional arrangements or planning processes. In my observation of practice however, I noted that considerable attention was paid to deliberative procedures, sometimes at the expense of consideration of the outcomes of deliberation. While more inclusive deliberative processes enabled voices to be heard, planning is a goal-orientated process and distributive effects do matter. There is a need to critically examine the outcomes not just the processes of deliberative planning. I now turn to examine the implications of my research findings for urban planning practice in New Zealand.
9.3. Implications of the Research Findings for Urban Planning Practice in New Zealand

In this section, I address research question four:

4. What are the implications of these research findings for urban planning practice in New Zealand?

At the outset of the thesis I noted concern that there has been a significant gap between planning theory and practice. In this research I bring some of the normative discussion of deliberative planning to bear on the evaluation of planning practice. I reflect on deliberative planning theory and consider opportunities for more inclusive, socially just and transformative planning practice in New Zealand. Discussion begins by considering significant macro and micro level constraints on planning practice and the conditions under which planning could be made more inclusive.

The results of the case studies confirm the suggestion that legislative frameworks have established broad macro-level parameters for urban planning. In the 1990s, urban planning in New Zealand was influenced by the definitions of the environment in the RMA (Perkins and Thorns 1999 a; and McDermott 1998; Memon 1993). In my case studies, these legislative definitions also influenced public discourse: the public focused on elements of non-human nature at the expense of considering social and economic aspects of the urban environment.

There are some planning provisions, notably the Local Government Act 1974 and Amendments 1988 and 1989, which provide local government with a mandate to plan for the needs of their communities beyond the bio-physical and built environment (Perkins and Thorns 1999 b and Forgie et al 1999). However, the Local Government Amendment Act 1996 gave greater emphasis to principles of financial management rather than to social or economic planning. Commentators have raised concerns about whether the complexity of the Local
Government Amendment Act 1996 will further exclude meaningful public involvement in planning in the future (Forgie et al. 1999, p.63).

Nevertheless, despite the legislative constraints imposed by the RMA and the amendments to the Local Government Act 1974, there are significant opportunities for innovative deliberative planning practice. In particular, this study highlights the significance of new social movements and the way even relatively small groups like Agenda 21 can strengthen the political capacity of individuals through social learning to encourage people to question accepted planning discourses and practices. For example, the international networks, local contacts and information base of Agenda 21 advantaged its members in comparison with the Sumner Residents Association. That Association lacked comparable skills and resources to develop strategies to make local developers or Council planners listen to their deliberation.

In 1999, it appeared that Neo-liberal proposals for legislative reform of the RMA would reduce opportunities for public deliberation in planning particularly by restricting notification, reducing appeal rights to points of law, limiting the opportunity for the community to debate matters of fact and increasing the formality of proceedings. The proposals also sought to make it easier to refer matters directly to the Environment Court, thereby curtailing local planning (Agenda 21 1999). However the election of a Labour Government in November 1999 has sparked renewed public debate about the role of the State in planning and discussion about new forms of urban governance. Moreover, it is possible that the RMA legislation could be interpreted in ways which encourage a greater role for the State and enhance public deliberation. For example, the RMA has the potential to facilitate a range of opportunities for public deliberation and social learning in planning, through pre-hearing meetings and greater public notification. At present if an application is ‘non notified’ there is usually no opportunity for citizens to participate in council
hearings and only very limited rights of appeal. Legislative reform to encourage greater public notification would enhance opportunities for public deliberation and for legitimating planning decisions.

There have also been experiments to promote more inclusive deliberation using co-management models that encourage extensive deliberation between stakeholders and governing agencies (Memon and Selsky 1998; Hughey et al 2000). Internationally, Brown and Adger et al (1999) have reported successful social learning in situations where stakeholders come from widely divergent backgrounds. Overall, the success of these attempts to involve citizens in collective decision-making can be explained in the context of this thesis. These cases have resulted in significant social learning under conditions of inclusive deliberation. For example, a great deal of effort was made to ensure that a wide range of stakeholders were consulted and that deliberative processes included a variety of communication techniques. Moreover, Brown and Adger et al (1999) have noted the value of facilitators as third parties to mobilise the public to participate in the consultation process and assist the community to scrutinise subsequent decision-making.

In New Zealand a review of democratic practice at local government level was released in 1999. This review suggested that there has been considerable improvement in urban planning. The authors of the review concluded that:

'The introduction of statutory requirements for consultation has encouraged greater citizen involvement in local authority decision making, consequently councils have committed significant resources to democratic processes to create a growing culture of consultation' (Forgie et al 1999, p.iv).

I argue there is still considerable scope for micro level improvements to contemporary planning practice. Micro level practices which encourage more talk do not necessarily result in more inclusive planning. The results of this thesis indicate that the time demands of face-to-face deliberation
provide a deterrent to participation for many people. The interviews and focus group discussion for this research also revealed that some Council staff and community members showed signs of consultation fatigue and that there was a great deal of uncertainty about what public consultation has achieved.

Increased consultation without attention to the conditions under which the consultation takes place may simply mean more talking with fewer people. One feature of the case study research was the fact that three of the key players in two or more of the case studies were the same individuals: this included representatives of local environmental advocacy groups, business leaders and Maori communities. This finding supports fears expressed by Forgie et al that in fact ‘fewer people have been involved in the process of determining environmental outcomes under the RMA than under the Town and Country Planning Act 1977’ (Forgie et al 1999, p.74). Attention to micro level planning practice could encourage public deliberation. This attention would move deliberation beyond practices involving face to face interaction, for example through enhanced interactive media debate (Budge 1996), to maximise public debate, scrutiny and social learning while minimising the demands on the public in terms of time commitment. Discussion now turns to consider the conditions for enhancing social learning in New Zealand in detail.

9.4. Enhancing Social Learning In Urban Planning in New Zealand

In this section, I consider the implications of the study for New Zealand urban planning. I suggest that inclusive public deliberation and social learning could be enhanced with attention to the conditions identified in chapter eight.

First establishing a treaty or rules of deliberation is particularly significant in New Zealand, given the concerns expressed by Maori that
their special status as an indigenous community may be threatened if they are required to join a deliberative forum with a range of other interests. Therefore, in New Zealand establishing a treaty for deliberation requires us to recognise the special status of Maori and the Crown under the Treaty of Waitangi, as well as establishing a general mandate for deliberation, rules to protect minority interests and the conditions of uncoerced deliberation. For example, in the Wastewater case establishing the rules or procedures for a Treaty Audit prior to consultation (and the conditions for challenging this Audit), would have clarified the opportunity for Maori to question deliberative outcomes. Setting clear terms for a Treaty Audit, would have also clarified the conditions under which Maori demands would be exposed to wider public scrutiny.

Second, inclusive deliberation and social learning requires more than an opportunity to participate through critical argument. The conditions of talk-plus require that a variety of deliberative techniques such as visualisation, story-telling, discursive media and community activities are required to encourage social learning. Moreover, in a multicultural community like New Zealand, talking can be a problematic way of learning, as Metge and Kinloch noted in a ground-breaking study in 1974. Planning theorists who emphasise the value of critical argument and minimise the importance of other methods of communication (for example body language) would do well to heed Metge and Kinloch’s caution:

(Pakehas) are failing to pick up much of the communication directed their way because they are ‘listening’ with their ears instead of their eyes. To Maoris and Samoans, Pakehas often seem deaf to what others are trying to tell them, while at the same time they are ‘forever talking’ (Metge and Kinloch 1974, p.10).

More than twenty-five years later, the level of generalisation made by Metge and Kinloch may be questioned, but the basic thrust of their argument remains a caution to those who would wish to apply deliberative models of planning. In my observation, present theories of
deliberative planning have been unduly influenced by the ideas of critical argument developed in North America and the United Kingdom. These ideas are culturally bound and as such they cannot be applied indiscriminately in planning contexts in New Zealand.

For example, Pakeha often regard Maori culture as highly oral, and on these grounds it would be easy to conclude that an approach to planning which emphasises public debate would be a more appropriate model to develop plans in communities with significant Maori populations. However, the deliberative model defines oral communication largely in terms of critical, verbal argument: there is little opportunity to consider body language, song (including waiata) or greeting rituals (taking time for powhiri and mihi) or spirituality (including karakia). Simply providing a deliberative forum will not ensure the problems that cultures currently experience in talking past each other in New Zealand will be minimised.

Third, the use of third parties in planning can assist inclusive deliberation and social learning. The implications of my research results suggests, however that it is more difficult for planners to act as ‘bridges’ in the learning process than Forester implies (1999). Very few interviewees trusted anyone in authority. Independent facilitators, who were seen to be outside the Council, were perceived to be neutral and therefore able to act as bridges and advocates for the community, but their independent role was constrained by the terms of their employment. In contrast, activist groups like Agenda 21 and participants, who had detailed knowledge of two or more life worlds, could act as very effective informal third parties facilitating inclusive deliberation and enhancing understanding. This finding builds on the ideas of Friedmann (1987), Sandercock (1998 c) and Dryzek (1997 b) who suggest that new social movements can be effective in social learning, mobilising the
community and building the 'political capacity' of individuals to learn and participate in planning (Bohman 1996).

Finally, the transmission of deliberative outcomes to a wider community (and government) and the transparency of deliberative processes emerged as significant conditions facilitating inclusive deliberation and enhanced social learning. These conditions were not accorded sufficient attention in the Sumner and Wastewater case studies. If face-to-face forums are used, deliberation needs to be accompanied by ongoing public scrutiny through the mass media and through predetermined lines of communication with key decision-makers and community groups. High rates of public cynicism and feelings of disempowerment in New Zealand make it particularly important that theorists of deliberative planning consider strategies to effect change and improve the transparency of the planning process. Otherwise a deliberative planning process may simply compound public cynicism and weakened faith in democratic process.

My research results suggest that public deliberation in planning may help address public cynicism, particularly where citizens can see that they have been listened to seriously even if they do not agree with the outcome. However, the impact of social learning within deliberation in planning is inevitably limited. The constraints of face-to-face deliberation and the restricted scope of urban planning practice in general mean that enhancing planning practice cannot be expected to reverse all the wider failings of the democratic process in New Zealand. Nevertheless, there is normally significant value in encouraging public participation in deliberation.

However, deliberation can be a lengthy process, as the Wastewater case demonstrated. Consequently, the evidence from my case studies suggests that deliberation through face-to-face participation is most usefully applied in small neighbourhoods. Greater public deliberation on
issues affecting a wider community, or on medium to long-term questions, can be achieved through communication techniques beyond face-to-face deliberation, such as iterative media reporting and interactive public surveys.

In this study, I suggest that this experience can increase the public’s capacity to effect political change, but there will be times when legitimating decisions through deliberation is simply ‘not the point’ (Elster 1997). Sometimes the need to make fast, effective decisions will override the public’s right to deliberate. Planning is a goal-orientated process and there are limits to deliberation in planning. Nevertheless, the conditions of social learning identified in this thesis, can be applied to the deliberative process of elected institutions as well (Uhr 1998), improving the level of accountability and inclusiveness of these forums, even when the community is not directly consulted.

Finally, greater public deliberation in planning, as evidenced in my research, challenges planning as a modernist project. Democratic decentralisation and social diversity have highlighted the limitations of modernist urban planning practice in New Zealand (McDermott 1999) and the rest of the world (Sandercock 1998 c). Deliberative planning processes that are orientated towards social learning introduce new forms of reasoning, enhancing planning by improving our understanding of difference and legitimising decision-making. Deliberative approaches to planning can open those processes to more effective public scrutiny and challenge.

9.5. Conclusion

In this study, I have been cautious about the possibilities of inclusive deliberative planning and social learning in urban planning in New Zealand. However, deliberative planning serves as a counter-factual or vision, to inspire better practice. New Zealand has relatively few
remaining public spheres for deliberation. Over the past fifteen years, there have been limited opportunities for citizens to come together to reason collectively about issues of national importance. The opportunities that exist in planning legislation to debate local issues of concern are precious and endangered. Deliberative planning, for all its limitations, reminds us that we do not always aspire to establish economic relationships. We can dare to dream of citizens provided with opportunities to reason collectively. The challenge is to translate the aspirations of deliberative planners into democratic action in an imperfect world.

The results of this study also have wider implications for deliberative theories of planning and democracy. I have challenged the transformative intentions of deliberative theory. The consensual model of public deliberation is problematic. It sets a high standard, one that is unnecessary and may be anti-democratic. In contrast, models of social learning are valuable for medium to long-term planning. Yet planning is essentially an instrumental and goal-orientated activity. Learning about the values of tolerating difference and about the issues at hand is an important way of enhancing the legitimacy of democratic decision-making in an increasingly globalised and urbanised world. This study suggests that a deliberative process that encourages social learning might be a particularly effective strategy for social transformation when it is initiated by new social movements. Greater public deliberation can enrich and enhance traditional, representative institutions of local and central government, as these institutions plan to meet the challenges of complex and diverse urban communities in the future.
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### Appendix One: Research Schedule and Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb–July 1995</td>
<td>• “gleaning” (newspapers etc.)</td>
<td>• Develop research focus, questions and methods</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Review of secondary literature</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Informal scoping interview</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Attended participatory planning workshops</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>August–Sept 1995</td>
<td>• Otago University proposal presentation</td>
<td>• Present research proposal and methods to Department and initial review to peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 1995–Feb 1996</td>
<td>Maternity Leave</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb–Oct 1996</td>
<td>• Informal scoping interviews</td>
<td>• Gather background information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Participant observation begins June 1996, ongoing to January 2000</td>
<td>• Determine theoretical sampling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Literature review</td>
<td>• Gain access to the field through introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• CCC archive search</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Key informant interviews (n=25)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 1996–May 1997</td>
<td>Wastewater: Attended workshop meetings and special public meetings, hui and council committee meetings. Interview key informants (n=8)</td>
<td>• Main data collection begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Summer: Attended public meetings and planning hearings, residents association meetings, and a Concept Plan meeting. Interview key informants (n = 6)</td>
<td>• Preliminary analysis of data</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Agenda 21 Initial coding proposed and analysis</td>
<td>• Develop and reflect on the questions for interviews and focus groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interviewed key informants (n=8)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>June–Dec 1997</td>
<td>• Focus Group Interviews:</td>
<td>• Develop a conceptual framework for analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wastewater (2) n=16 (June – August 1997) (Interview key informants n=6)</td>
<td>• Integrate data</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Additional interviews (4)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sumner (3) n=22 (July – September 1997)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Agenda 21 (1) n=8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 1997–Jan 1998</td>
<td>Maternity Leave</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 1998–June 1999</td>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>• Develop a conceptual framework for analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Coding</td>
<td>• Integrate data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Key Informant interviews (n=4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>August–Sept 1999</td>
<td>• Informal participant observation (25 hours)</td>
<td>• Maintain a watching brief on outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Literature review</td>
<td>• Reflect on theory</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Analysis of data</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Sept 1999–March 2000</td>
<td>Results presentation and feedback</td>
<td>• Dissemination of analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presentations of analyses to Christchurch City Council staff and Councillors</td>
<td>• Integration of coded responses in analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix Two: Letter of Introduction

October 1996

Dear [Participant]

I teach politics and public policy at Lincoln University. I am also writing a PhD study at the University of Otago which compares different ways of consulting the public about planning issues.

I am keen to follow the [name of process]. I am particularly keen to talk with people who have been involved with this process. Later next year I would like to talk with you about your experiences. I hope to talk with you at your convenience [either: individually or in a small group of other people who also took part].

The study is entirely independent [of the Christchurch City Council or Ministry for the Environment] and your comments would be used only for the purposes of research and would be kept strictly confidential. No comments would be reported in any way that could identify people and you would be able to read and confirm the way your comments are recorded in the final report before it is completed.

If you are not prepared to be approached about your views and experiences could you indicate this by contacting either the facilitator [name and phone number] or myself. You are free to withdraw from participating in the study at any time.

Your thoughts and experiences are valuable and I would appreciate the opportunity to talk with you later next year.

Thank you very much for considering this request.

Yours sincerely

Bronwyn Hayward
Lecturer: Human Sciences
Lincoln University
PO Box 84
Canterbury
Home Ph: 379 7069
Appendix Three: Letter Sent to Prospective Focus Group Participants

June-November 1998

Dear [Participant],

I am writing to invite you to attend a focus group discussion to review the [name of process].

Your insights and thoughts about the process are valuable for me in my PhD research and for other groups who may embark on similar exercises in the future.

I would like to talk about the process; what worked, what did not, what your impressions were, what changes (if any) you would recommend etc.

[In letter to the Wastewater case participants: The focus group will not include council staff, the facilitator, or councillors.]

[In letters to participants in other cases: I have invited six to eight other people recommended to me by [name of facilitator or key informant].

Your comments will be treated with the strictest confidence and will not be reported in any way that might identify you. As focus group participants, you are warmly invited to review and comment on my report before it is completed if you wish.

The focus group discussion will be held in: [Details of time and place]

A meal will be provided.

I greatly appreciate your time and consideration of my request. I look forward to the chance to meet with you, thank you very much,

Yours sincerely,

Bronwyn Hayward
Lecturer: Human Sciences
Lincoln University
PO Box 84
Canterbury
Home Ph: 379 7069
Appendix Four: Interview Prompts for Focus Groups/Intensive Interviews

Introduction
Welcome, thank you [for coming tonight/talking to me]. I really appreciate you giving up your time to review [case].

As you know I lecture at Lincoln but I am writing a PhD at Otago University—evaluating public consultation methods

I am very interested in your thoughts about how this workshop/concept plan/forum worked for you- range of views.

Before we begin, I would like your permission to tape-record the discussion. I will not be reporting your comments in any way that identifies you, but I would like to use the tape while I write the study—it would help me make sure I can record the range of views. You will be given the transcript and you are welcome to correct or withdraw comments I have recorded.

I would also welcome your comments on the draft of my report and I will be happy to post it to you

Initial ice breaker
Your insights are important—it would help me if we could start by getting some background from everyone about how you came to be involved in this process

Other Questions
What were your initial impressions? (Did these change...how? why?)
Do you feel you have learned anything new/gained anything from the process? (Can you elaborate?)

How about facilitation of the meetings in general—what did you think about:
  • the ways the meetings were run?
  • agenda setting?
  • food, location, timing, length etc?
  • attitudes of council staff and facilitator?
  • did you feel you could speak you mind?

Did you feel listened to and understood/who by, when ?/why not?
Communication inside/outside the process- how effective was it?

When was the most important business conducted? [can you tell me more?]

Who were the groups who you feel should be involved—were they? [why was that?]
Who will benefit most from the ideas/scheme/plan do you think do you think- has that been considered?

Is there a downside/cost/who will carry the can? [in what ways /why is that do you think?]

How do you think environmental issues/impacts were handled?(any ecological issues?-any others? Future generations?)

Social impacts—were there any? What and how were they handled?

How much influence should specialist groups have?

How do you feel about the way consultation with Maori was handled? How much influence should their voices have?

What overall impressions do you think should be recorded in a review of this process?

Any major changes you would make- things you would do differently?

Any thing else? Any recommendations?

Thank you very much for your time- I will be writing up a chapter on this case together with the meetings we’ve been at- feel free to phone me if you want to check anything.

I will make sure everyone gets a draft of the transcript so you can check the way I’ve recorded your thoughts- just let me know if there is anything you want to add or change or withdraw thanks again.

[Session closes with dinner/or a meal was eaten while we spoke depending on group’s choice—thank you notes afterwards included a small petrol voucher for participants).]