Planning and Values
Subjective Understanding in the Planmaking Process

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MPhil Thesis in Town Planning

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Abstract

Recent critiques of planning have highlighted the limitations of objective ways of understanding contemporary society. Two bodies of theory, postmodernism and deep ecology, are introduced as potential keys to a wider, more subjective understanding in and of planning. Postmodernism is concerned with the variability of meaning and interpretation in the texts of planning, and thereby denies totalising stances. Deep ecology begins with a rejection of subject-object relationships to nature, leading to a concern with the role and expression of deeply held values in society. The research consisted of a case study of the emerging Unitary Development Plan of the London Borough of Newham. Textual analysis, in-depth semistructured interviews and a short survey were used to consider the role of values in the plan, and to see how the plan communicates with its multiple audiences. Changes in substance and communicative style are also analysed by comparison with the borough's previous local plans, written in the 1980s. The research found that deeply held values are embodied within the plan, but that they are not generally subjected to discussion either among officers or councillors, or with outside objectors. The research also found that there had been a shift in the communicative work of the plan from local residents to potential developers of the borough's extensive derelict land. While the contestability of the Newham UDP has been much greater than for previous plans, the participation of the local residents has fallen significantly. This finding supports the conclusion of other authors that the planning system operates within the discourse of the development community; it is primarily their interests which are served by the narrow remit of land use considerations in the planning system.

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Introduction
Subjective Knowledge in Modern Society

This thesis is an exploration of values in planning, which is a little-studied, but highly significant, aspect of planning theory and practice. It has a particular resonance in contemporary society, where growing unease with the effects on the natural environment and on human society of two centuries of modern industrialisation has led to an examination of the roots of the problem. Increasingly, the blame is being laid at the feet of modernism itself. Our relationship with the environment and with each other is affected by how we understand the world in which we live and interact, and that understanding is fundamentally rooted in the project of modernity.

Modernity is based on an objective understanding of the world, where fact and value, truth and perception are separate entities. The former of each pair is a property of the object, while the latter is projected by the subject. Based on this understanding, truth must be universal, and all interpretations of the object which differ from each other must be the result of subjective feelings. Since these are not part of the truth of the object, subjective understanding is generally discounted as irrelevant to scientific understanding, which is the basis of rational decisionmaking.

Challenges have emerged which question the entire basis of the objective perspective, and further argue that subjective understanding is a valid and indeed crucial part of our total understanding of a situation, and it is only in the wholeness of engaging in both types of understanding that decisions can be rationally founded, morally justifiable, politically sensitive and democratically legitimised.

To illustrate the limitations of scientific understanding, consider the following passage from Douglas Adams' science fiction series, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, in which Arthur Dent, an Englishman, is trying to get a cup of tea while on a high-tech alien spaceship:

> He had found a Nutri-Matic machine, which had provided him with a plastic cup filled with a liquid that was almost, but not quite, entirely unlike tea. The way it functioned was very interesting. When the Drink button was pressed it made an

> instant but highly detailed examination of the subject's taste buds, a spectroscopic
> analysis of the subject's metabolism, and then sent tiny experimental signals down
> the neural pathways to the taste centres of the subject's brain to see what was
> likely to go down well.

Adams' world is populated with inconceivably complex and intelligent scientific wizardry, and yet all the time there is a sense that something is missing in the lives of the protagonists. Even a simple cup of tea is too much for the machine to generate successfully. Later in the story, Arthur returns to the Nutri-Matic machine, determined to get his cup of tea. The machine dogmatically sticks to its original product, so Arthur sits down and expands the machine's understanding of what goes into a cup of tea, and of what comes out:

> He told the Nutri-Matic about India, he told it about China, he told it about
> Ceylon. He told it about broad leaves drying in the sun. He told it about silver
> teapots. He told it about summer afternoons on the lawn. He told it about putting in
> the milk before the tea so it wouldn't get scalded. He even told it (briefly) about
> the history of the East India Company.

The task of making a cup of tea was so complicated that the machine had to summon the assistance of the ship's on-board computer, the entire circuitry of which was then required to carry out Arthur's request. Sometime later, however, Arthur returned to the machine to find success:

> On the delivery plate of the Nutri-Matic Drink Synthesizer was a small tray, on
> which sat three bone china cups and saucers, a bone china jug of milk, a silver
> teapot full of the best tea Arthur had ever tasted, and a small printed note saying
> 'Wait'.

Although the story is comic, the point is a serious one. The incredible analytical capabilities of the machine were not, on their own, enough to make a cup of tea because they were constrained by the limits of scientific understanding. The machine's success in synthesising a real cup of tea comes only when Arthur has managed to communicate to it a much deeper understanding of tea. In producing the tray of china cups and a silver pot, the machine transcends its limited objective understanding of taste buds and metabolism, and incorporates the stories, pictures and values which are all an integral part of the whole experience of a cup of tea.

From many sources, there is a call for the adoption of a wider perspective to incorporate the wholeness of understanding gained from using both subjective and objective aspects. Planning has not been entirely deaf to these calls, and within practice and theory there are efforts under way to apply new thinking to the old problem of spatial planning in a democratic society.

This thesis is the product of a research project which, it is hoped, will take the work a little further, thereby adding to the depth of knowledge in this as yet little explored field.

1.1   Finding Your Way Around the Thesis

The research conducted for this thesis relies on two theoretical bases, postmodernism and deep ecology, for its inspiration and justification. Neither were originally developed with planners in mind, but they are joined together here by their similarity of focus on the failure of contemporary society to recognise and incorporate the variety of subjective ways of understanding. These theories are introduced in Chapter 2, after which there is a review of recent research which has made use of these ideas in the fields of planning and policy analysis.

This thesis is based on a case study of the emerging Unitary Development Plan (UDP) of the London Borough of Newham, which is situated in East London along the Thames. Chapter 3 describes the way in which the ideas of subjective understanding and the practical concerns of conducting a research project led to the choices of research questions, methods and case study authority. It also describes how the research was analysed.

Although the case study is concerned with values and communication in planning, and not on Newham itself, it is necessary to understand the context of the UDP to understand the theoretical issues on which the thesis focuses. Chapter 4 introduces the borough and its planning history.

Chapter 5 reports the findings of the research, and explores a variety of issues raised by it. The sections are ordered into three broad areas: values, communicative work, and the planning process. The complexity of this kind of qualitative research makes it difficult to focus on one issue without letting others slip in, but an attempt has been made to keep the analysis clear while acknowledging the interconnections of subjective and communicative issues in the planning process. The chapter also follows a larger pattern of widening the scope as it progresses, such that it begins with the localised issue of the plan's values, and ends with a comparison of the inherent flexibility of the planning system with the Government requirement that planning policies restrain themselves to land use considerations only.

In the Conclusion and Postscript, an attempt is made to bring together the issues presented, and looks forward to possible directions for further research.

A final introductory comment should be made regarding the use of references in this work. Academic papers have been referenced in the standard manner, with the author and year of publication in parenthesis. The Newham plans are slightly more complicated, as there were several different plans used for this research, and several different drafts of the UDP. The earlier local plans are referenced in the same manner as academic works. The UDP is referenced only with a note of the paragraph or policy number. Unless otherwise specified, the most recent draft (Newham Council, 1995a) should be assumed to be the referent. Government guidance documents are indicated by their number (*e.g.*, PPG12) and a paragraph number. Finally, the thesis contains substantial extracts from the transcripts of interviews. As far as possible, the informants were allowed to speak in their own words. These have been referenced by indication of the interview number and the paragraph number of the official transcript (*e.g.*, int.2.57).

Literature Review
Postmodernism and Deep Ecology

Planning is essentially an activity of synthesis, and therefore it is not surprising that its theory has always been highly reliant upon a wide collection of other disciplines for inspiration and direction. Much of the training of the professional town planner is focused on learning aspects of other disciplines: law, property development, economics, environment, sociology, surveying, engineering, architecture and so on. This is not necessarily to be criticised. Indeed, in an age distinguished by specialisation of function and knowledge, where expertise is acquired through a narrowing of focus, the world will increasingly come to depend on those who can synthesise knowledge across disciplines and communicate between multiple discourses. However, this tendency to cast a wide net of theoretical inquiry could also be of significant assistance in responding to the criticisms which have dogged the practice of planning for some years now, but which were especially damaging through the 1980s. This review of the literature relevant to values and planning begins with some of those criticisms (Section 2.1).

After a period of intellectual and professional contraction and conservatism, new searches for reinvigorating and relegitimising planning are underway. It may be said that planning is taking part in a search which spans the whole of Western philosophy and culture, and which is fundamentally changing the way we see and understand the world around us. Foremost among the new perspectives is the diverse collection of work assembled under the banner of postmodernism (Section 2.2). Originally a movement in literature and linguistics, its emphasis on meaning and communication has now infiltrated the whole of the humanities, the arts and social sciences. Postmodernism also has strong affiliations with the feminist concern with issues of inclusiveness and identity. Another source—less widely known, but no less powerful in its philosophy—has been the deep ecology movement (Section 2.3). Deep ecology is identified most strongly with the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, who coined the term in a paper entitled "The Shal-

low and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movements" (Naess, 1973). Deep ecology is a philosophical perspective which grew out of a belief that the source of the modern ecological crisis is rooted in the objectifying stance of modern scientific inquiry, and in the failure of society to recognise the importance of non-quantifiable values. Between these two methods of understanding and inquiry, it is believed that there is a strong basis of justification for further research into planning and values.

Finally, planning and policy analysis research which is based on, or relates to, the two bodies of theory is presented in Section 2.4. This section turns the focus to the synthesis of postmodernism and deep ecology, and their application to planning practice and research.

This literature review is intended to provide a starting point for inquiry into the question of values and subjectivity in planning, as researched for this thesis. It stops well short of a comprehensive investigation of postmodernism and deep ecology, the ideas of which are highly complex and constantly evolving. Nevertheless, it is hoped the review will be complete, in the sense that it will be clear why it was necessary to take a research project on town planning so far from familiar territory.

2.1   The Critiques of Planning

The planning system is founded on the claims that it functions rationally and in the public interest. From its roots in the design profession, the planner was seen as the master designer, arranging the built environment to optimise its organisational structure. As planning became institutionalised and professionalised in the 1950s and 1960s, the strength of its claim to rationality was enhanced by the adoption of social scientific methods of analysis and decision-making. However, the incompleteness of this claim began to show even as it was being established. For instance, Lee (1973) argued that the computer models being used widely by the end of the 1960s were not improving the quality of decision-making, despite their immense power to process information, since they were still subject to the input errors and biases of those who wrote the programmes. Furthermore, the infallible calculations of the computer programme could not replace the greater understanding of the human mind. The aim of greater technical competence in planning decisions tended to overlook the reality of a world of 'certain uncertainty' which could not be controlled, while it also tended to overwhelm dissenting voices in seeking to rationalise the ultimately political

process of decision-making. Despite their widespread condemnation by the early 1970s, models of "rational choice" and "rational decision-making" remain influential (Goodchild, 1990). The debate on the rationality of planning has raged on, and while the discourse of recent Government guidance communicates that rationality is indeed still a central claim of mainstream planning, the criticisms which have been levelled at that claim have not been answered.

Breheny and Hooper (1985) argue that the problem with the claim to rationality is that the term has been ill-understood by its claimants. The "potential richness of the concept of rationality" is lost on practice-orientated planners steeped in an oral tradition of education (*ibid.*, 1). The reflexive mode of theory is undervalued in planning, without which undergirding planners are subject to wide swings of fashion in practising their craft. Reade (1985) is even less sympathetic, hinting that planners suffer from an inferiority complex, which has led them to use the claim of rationality to bolster their pretension to legitimate professional status.

These tendencies were perhaps most in evidence in the 1980s, the decade of the Thatcher Government, whose attack on the bureaucratic professions as manufacturers of so much red tape, rather than defenders of the public interest (as they believed themselves to be), generated a siege mentality within the planning profession. In following a general trend of conservatism in the academic and professional world, planning sought the centre of its domain, narrowly defining its function as 'land use planning' (Dear, 1986).

In concurrence with Breheny and Hooper, Dear goes on to argue that the failure of planning to engage itself in a meaningful discourse between theory and practice left the profession open to the vicissitudes of dominant socio-economic trends. In short, planning has lost its ability to be a creative participant in development processes. Instead, it meekly facilitates the global capitalist commodification of, and state penetration into, all human activity. Dear's description of postmodern planning is as "a planning of filigree, of decoration... the fig leaf which discreetly covers the enterprises of state and civil society" (*ibid.*, 380).

This is a significant accusation to lay at the feet of planning, but there is other evidence to support it. In the ten years since that paper was written local government, and planning with it, seems resigned to the role of facilitator, even if its facilitation is not usually put in the terms used above. Local authorities are no long able to provide public goods and services as they see fit. Mandatory council housing sales and a moratorium on new

construction by councils have broken the most direct link between residents and the council. In many traditional local authority services, Compulsory Competitive Tendering has changed local authorities from providers into agents acting on behalf of their citizens. Without the ability to undertake public works unilaterally, councils are forced to engage in partnerships with the private sector, and seek public benefit through planning obligations, by which those community gains are tied to and dependent on the successful completion of the development.

Planning has therefore been shown to have lost its traditional sources of legitimacy, and in the process lost touch with the idealism which founded it. The next section turns to examine efforts underway and signs on the horizon which suggest a path to a relegitimisation of planning in contemporary society.

2.2 Postmodernism

As Milroy puts it, "academic planners are inevitably being drawn into the debate about postmodernism" (1991, 181). That postmodernism is to be found in discussions all across the arts, humanities and social sciences is perhaps a testimony to the ambiguity and flexibility of the term; but it is also an indication that its core contains a very powerful message, and that the world—at least the academic world—is ready to listen. My concern here is not with postmodernism *per se*, but rather with how the postmodernist critique enables a shift in perspective about values in planning. To do this, it will first be necessary to sketch a picture of the face of modernism, a picture of where we are today.

The modern era may be said to have begun with the Enlightenment, near the end of the 18th century. In politics, science, the arts and philosophy great changes were at hand which shifted the way we understand the world around us. The Church, with its mystical claims to truth based on divine revelation, lost power to the achievements of secular individuals who believed that God's truth could be discovered through the application of scientific methods to the physical world. Monarchies fell and empires receded in the face of the new democratic uprisings. Collective understanding gave way to individual rights; intuition gave way to rationality; and caste systems gave way (albeit very slowly) to freedom of physical and social movement.

These new freedoms were extremely liberating, and generated an unprecedented period of human achievement. For the first time, people were

given the freedom to define their own world, and to act within it as they saw fit. What is important here is that that freedom was inextricably linked to the new perspective of modernity. The legacy of the Enlightenment is a narrowly rational view of the world in which subject and object are separate entities and objective truth can be distinguished from subjective perceptions. Without a sense of individual identity (as opposed to collective identity), it would not have been possible for people to act wilfully to manage their own affairs and to define their own future. On the other hand, the emancipatory secular stance of modernity has resulted in a new kind of doctrine and a new power structure which inhibits free expressions of otherness.

Postmodernism can be defined in so many ways, and deconstructed into so many facets, that an attempt to pin it down in words is immediately fraught with difficulty. Yet perhaps this very fact is a suitable way to begin, for one aspect of postmodern thinking is that it denies the existence of a universal basis of truth. Meaning is created in a dialogue between the 'reader' and the 'text' (both terms being broadly defined). Language, therefore, is not a container of meaning, but rather a catalyst which triggers meaning within the person responding to it (Lee, 1992). To understand a thing is to engage with it, to generate meaning at that moment. The absence of absolute meaning in texts and other signs was argued most forcefully by French structuralists. Milroy (1994, 143) argues that the effect of this new perspective was that:

> socio-historical constructions which we take as utterly natural—such as consciousness, identity, reason, and logic—appear to serve western cultural rather than ahistorical ends... The Cartesian subject of knowledge is obsessed with mastery.

Removing the foundation of universal truth makes all assumptions about meaning and society subject to question. This has obvious attractions for feminist discourse, but in fact it allows any perspective which is not in the mainstream to generate a debate about what other ends besides the "obsession with mastery" might be pursued in public policy.

Consider, for example, the planmaking process under the British planning system. It begins with an analysis of current conditions in the city or borough, and with discussions among planners and politicians about what they would like the city to become. These empirical and normative elements are combined into a collection of policies and supporting text, which are then offered to the public for comment. Businesspeople, developers, landowners, private citizens, interest groups, and other public bodies all have their say, and the plan is modified. After a few iterations of the review-modification loop, the Government then has its say, and more changes are made. Finally,

after a process which takes a minimum of three years, and often much more, the plan is adopted. Even then, with the document fixed in place, there can be no likewise fixed interpretation of what it means in any given situation. A policy such as 'The Council will discourage any development which undermines the environmental quality of the area' is open to a range of definitions of what environmental quality is and when it is being undermined; the policy must also be placed in the context of other policies on other issues, and so on. With every addition of text to make the original definition more precise, there is always the problem of the supporting text itself being subject to interpretation. Under these conditions, is it possible to say that the plan has one interpretation or that one person is more qualified than another to give that interpretation (Mandelbaum, 1990)?

The concern with meaning and interpretation (known as hermeneutics) reflects the origins of postmodern analysis in literary criticism. The power of postmodernism is that it has relocated a method associated with the analysis of fiction to the world at large. Planning, although concerned with the study and manipulation of the real world, can be seen as comprised almost entirely of texts, and indeed is centred upon one particular text, the development plan. Hermeneutic analysis allows many different readings of the texts of planning, in ways which go far beyond a concern with technical accuracy or narrowly defined content (Kaplan, 1993).

Plans contain within them stories, or narratives, about the people and places they encompass. Good plans, like good narratives, follow the Aristotelian rule that they contain a plot with a beginning, middle, and an end. In just the same way that a good novel can probe deeply into a dramatic situation and thereby make some statement about life or human nature, planning narratives weave together a diverse and complex collection of arguments and facts to generate a decision for action. Without the thrust of a narrative sequence, plans become only lists of policies whose relationship to each other or to the whole plan is unclear, and which provide no useful basis for decision-making (*ibid.*). According to Mandelbaum, plans are in fact usually conceived of not as narratives, but rather as an assembly of fragments. Those who actually read the plan generally do so with the aim of winning— using the plan to promote their objectives—rather than understanding. This leads to the creation of "a defensive prose that is careful in its details but obscure in its framing assumptions and strategic choices" (Mandelbaum, 1990, 351), and the quality of the plan in probing the depths of modern planning problems is diminished.

By focusing on the text, it becomes possible to look at the plan and the planning process in different ways. We become open to alternative interpretations and then turn to look at the conditions under which different interpretations are constructed. While it may be said that ultimately any individual at any point in time may construct the meaning of the plan differently, in practical terms, patterns of discourse and meaning emerge and are relatively consistent among groups of readers over time. The plan operates in the context of a collection of 'discourse communities,' such as developers, the Government, or environmental groups, each of which engage in a dialogue with the plan to determine its meaning for them. Healey argues that when we see apparent inconsistencies or vagaries in a plan, they may be viewed instead as evidence of "multiple conversations" which are taking place between the plan and its discourse communities (Healey, 1993). Discourse communities are by no means treated equally by the plan. Anyone may read the plan, but it will make more sense to some, or be more relevant to their concerns. Thus the openness of interpretation is constrained by the way the plan is written.

What can we say about this shift from positivism to hermeneutics, from causal reasoning to the construction of meaning? It represents a more fundamental shift in the understanding of the world around us. Postmodern thinking is concerned with a much wider panoply of ways of understanding and acting. Milroy (1991) offers perhaps the most succinct summary of what is different about postmodernism: it is deconstructive, antifoundational, non-dualistic, and encourages plurality and difference. At its heart is an opening up of the critical thinking process to counterbalance the rigidity of causal reasoning with a more flexible and intuitive process; to augment facts with moral arguments; and to combine quantitative cost-benefit type analyses with other more qualitative assessment methods.

The postmodern vision is frightening, in a way, and it is not surprising that there has been some resistance to its message. Modernist thinking offers the security of hard facts and known relationships. Postmodernist thinking is soft, and suffused with uncertainty. But postmodernists will insist that their way of seeing is a more accurate reflection of reality. The Enlightenment began a process which blew apart the rigid social and religious structures of medieval society, and then tried to impose a new order in its place. These new structures are not holding, for they are undermined by the very processes which built them. Each wave of modern development tears down the structures of the previous wave and creates new ones in their place, only to be torn

down again by the next, faster and faster, until "all that is solid melts into air" (Berman, 1983, quoting Karl Marx).

Uncertainty, change, and diversity are all incontrovertible features of contemporary society. Postmodernism offers a way to accept them as part of the landscape, by opening up the process beyond traditional reason and rationality to include questions of values, aesthetics, intuition, and storytelling (Healey, 1992). If they are not accepted, then they become disruptive elements, sources of chaos which throw our rational plans to the winds. Once taken into the fold of our understanding and decision-making processes, they lose their demonic quality. We accept the contingent nature of all decisions, and may then begin to construct a planning system which operates within that reality.

2.3 Deep Ecology

Deep ecology is a term which is nearly twenty-five years old, although the philosophy it identifies has been traced back much further. Sessions (1995) suggests that contemporary deep ecological thinking began with Rachel Carson's 1962 warning of the effects of modern farming, *Silent Spring*. For Arne Naess, the 'father of the deep ecology movement', deep ecology was a way of identifying differences within the then burgeoning environmental movement. Some understood the apparent ecological crisis as a matter of environmental management which was not inherently at odds with a growing human population and consumption level, while others saw it as clear evidence that fundamental changes in human individual and collective behaviour were necessary to avert an ecocatastrophe. For deep ecologists, a solution to the crisis will not be found in merely raising the profile of environmental issues, or improving cost-benefit analysis techniques (although these are certainly part of the solution). What is necessary is a shift in the fundamental understanding of our relationship to the environment. In contrast to utilitarian or stewardship understandings of nature, it posits an intrinsic value to nature without any reference to its use or enjoyment by humans while still recognising the integral relationship of humans to their environment. Naess believed that the conclusions which had been drawn by those in the deep ecological movement were based on a profound level of philosophical inquiry. In his writings on deep ecology, he has sought both to suggest a way for more people to undertake that inquiry, and to bring

questions of deeply held values into public discourse on the environment (Glasser, 1996a).

It is important to distinguish the deep ecology movement from the deep ecological approach. The former is a loosely defined but politically aware group of individuals who espouse a platform (the "Deep Ecology Platform"; see Appendix) of principles and statements concerning the intrinsic value of all life (including inanimate life, such as rivers and forests), the current state of human activity with respect to the environment, and the responsibility of concerned humans to speak out and take action to effect a reduction in the pace of ecological destruction (Naess, 1986). The latter is the method of philosophical inquiry and self-reflection which emphasises the importance of questions of fundamental values. It is not necessary to adhere to the platform of the deep ecology movement to make use of the deep ecological approach. What is relevant here is the concern of the deep ecological approach with questions of fundamental norms, as well as the reasoning behind this concern. The starting point of the reasoning process is with a re-examination of our relationship to the world around us.

Relationship is a crucial concept in deep ecological thinking. According to Naess (1989), we exist, not as discrete bodies in a formless void, but situated in space and time. Our location at every moment thus becomes defined in relation to our environment. The uniqueness of our location has the significant consequence that to have 'the same point of view' becomes a logical impossibility! We can shift our positions, to stand where the other stood, but the moment has passed; we cannot stand where the other *stands*. This may be so much philosophical acrobatics, but to continue in this way leads to conclusions which become highly relevant to the planning context. The spatial and temporal identity of each being implies that every other being is likewise located. There exists, therefore, a relationship between ourselves and our milieu which moves in both directions.

This relationship is more than one of geography. It is in the relationship that the nature of things is defined. Naess (1989) suggests the example of placing your hands in a bucket of warm water. If one hand has been in the cold open air, and the other in your pocket, then the two hands will send different signals to the brain about the temperature of the water. This simple paradox might resolved in one of two ways. We may say that the water was neither cold nor hot, that both hands attributed a quality to the water which was not intrinsic to its nature. Alternatively, we may say (as Naess does) that *both* hands were correct, in that the water's temperature quality was defined

in relation to the hands. Thus, the water in relation to the cold hand was hot and in relation to the warm hand was cold. Once again, the exercise is somewhat esoteric, but within it is a fundamental difference about how we perceive the world around us. Rather than having intrinsic qualities which may only be established objectively (that is, without our perceptions getting in the way of reality), objectivity and subjectivity are merged, and we and the world around us are defined in relation to one another. If the relational understanding of reality is accepted, the implication for our treatment of the environment is rather profound. It says that if the environment is changed, *we* are changed. The environment could no longer be seen exclusively as a resource to be exploited; it would become an extension of our own identity, and we of its.

What becomes of scientific truth under this relational model? Deep ecology does not suggest, for instance, that one cannot identify water as composed of two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen, nor that it is not often important and useful to do so. Rather, the relational model denies a special ontological status to those descriptions of the world which are universal, objective, or quantifiable. The problem with the universal definitions offered by science is that, ironically, they fail to define a thing in its wholeness. Identifying the temperature, volume, flow rates and mineral concentrations of a body of water sacrifices truth for accuracy. The complete nature of the water could only be fully understood by seeing it—if it were possible—in the breathtaking complexity of all its relationships, all its infinite variations.

The multiplicity of simultaneous relationships is best understood by reference to the concept of gestalt. "Gestalt" (a German word) literally means "shape" or "form" or "figure". As used by Naess, it refers to a *wholeness of experience* which binds together the subjective and objective aspects of the experience. Gestalts are wholes, but they are composed of other gestalts, and themselves are part of larger gestalts; hence a pattern of relationships evolve between higher-order and lower-order gestalts. To use an example to hand, each word in this thesis has meaning which is independent of each other word, and is therefore a self-contained whole, a gestalt. But each word is also experienced as part of a sentence, a chapter, and the whole thesis, each layer creating new gestalts which inform and are informed by the components. Meanwhile, the experience of the reader is also informed by the physical appearance of the words (the font, the quality of the print), the feel of the paper, the weight of the document, the comfort of the seat, the weather, *etc.*

By gathering all these fragments of experience in a single unity, gestalt thinking obviates sharp distinctions between descriptive and normative elements, and emphasises the relational quality of experience:

> *Gestalts bind the I and the not-I together in a whole.* Joy becomes, not *my* joy, but *something joyful* of which the I and the something else are interdependent, non-isolatable fragments.　　　　　　(Naess, 1989, 60-61; emphasis in original)

It may be suggested, in the example given, that the normative judgement of the thesis should not be 'biased' by such irrelevant and emotional factors as the comfort of one's chair or the mood of the reader. While fairness dictates such objective standards of assessment, the resulting mark will describe only a fragment of the total experience of reading the thesis. Although the example is banal, the use of gestalt thinking shows that only one facet—the use value—of the thesis is being assessed. If one substitutes the word "forest" for "thesis", the significance of gestalts for the environmental movement, and policymaking in general, cannot be missed. As Naess puts it, "The gestalts 'the heart of the forest', 'the life of the river', and 'the quietness of the lake' are essential parts of reality for the conservationist" (*ibid.*, 66).

Deep ecological thinking is rooted in a wide experience of reality, in which subject and object are part of a larger whole, the identification of which defies rational analysis. Conventional scientific thinking "tears gestalts asunder" (*ibid.*, 61), and in the process misses out on a large part of that experience. In this way, a relational understanding re-asserts the importance of values in the decision-making process. To act in the world, we seek to understand the situation in which we are to act. The decision requires not just the information provided by the facts of science (or social science), but also a form of knowledge which must be put in the context of a value system which can process that information into a decision to act.

2.4 Synthesis

We have explored two different bodies of social and cultural criticism, both of which have origins far from the domain of planning and indeed, far from each other. What links them together is the insistence that an objective understanding of the world has led to multiple failures in both planning and society at large. The power of scientific method and understanding has been allowed to overwhelm the essential input of moral values, intuitive reasoning and voices of otherness, leaving us with a system of understanding which is inadequate to cope with the vortex of change and complexity which

makes up contemporary society. If this is so, then we are required to adopt a new kind of understanding which can encompass the challenges posed, one which explicitly incorporates other ways of seeing into the planning process.

At this point in time, these ideas are in a state of flux, and it is not clear how they would apply to the practice of planning, particularly as planning is highly structured by statutory procedures and guidance. No local authority could be said to have explicitly adopted a postmodern or deep ecological stance, nor indeed is that occurrence very likely. Actual research—as opposed to essays—trying to link these theories to planning practice is rather thin. This section presents a review of such recent research as has been conducted on subjective and interpretative modes of understanding in planning and policy analysis.

Although he does not undertake any research, Naess (1989) suggests a method in his discussion of a 'deep questioning' process to establish a personal philosophy. If human actions are to be consistent with fundamental values, it is necessary to establish the linkages from one to the other. To this end, he posits a model of a normative structure composed of *norms*, which are prescriptive in nature, and *hypotheses*, which are descriptive in nature. Lower order (or instrumental) norms are derived from higher order norms via hypotheses. A hypothesis may include what many would consider to be irrefutable facts, but the purpose of the term is to emphasise the tentativeness of normative structures. That is, there is certainty at any given time, but the norms are open to change in response to new information or understanding expressed in hypotheses. Thus, given a policy statement expressed as a norm (*e.g.*, Provide workplace childcare facilities!), deep questioning might be used to explore the normative roots of the policy. A chain of logic may then be established, such as:

> N   Provide workplace childcare facilities!
> (why?)
> H   Mothers with young children cannot work without childcare facilities.
> N   Provide employment!
> (why work?)
> H   A job provide self-esteem
> N   Self-esteem!
> (why self-esteem?)
> H   Self-esteem is a component of happiness.
> N   Happiness!

At some point, the questioning reaches a norm which cannot be derived from some higher-order norm. In this way, Naess shows that all policy statements are ultimately based on some normative statement (or statements) for which

there is no justification. Here is further evidence of the importance of values in the decisionmaking process. Ultimately, all actions rest on non-rational statements—statements of faith, not of fact. The purpose of deep questioning is to clarify the connections between fundamental norms and actions, since (according to Naess) they are often lost in the middle, resulting in actions which are inconsistent with fundamental norms. According to Glasser (1996a, 3), deep questioning, as a part of the deep ecological approach:

> is meant, primarily, to aid individuals in the process of weaving their own descriptive and prescriptive premises into a normative framework which melds a values system with an ontology.

However, Naess (1995a) has described it in terms which suggest that it could also be used in a conversation between people. Therefore, it would not in theory be incompatible with a research interview.

Healey (1993) analysed three local authority development plans to identify the "systems of meaning" in the plans and to explore the relationship of the plan to its discourse communities. She found that, in all three cases, only very limited conversations were taking place between the planning authority and one or two discourse communities. For the public at large, the plans seemed to suggest that actions would be taken on their behalf, rather than inviting them into the process. All the plans presented the issues as resolved, with decisions already firmly taken. They failed to acknowledge the full range of discourse communities who have an interest in the plan, and thereby fail to acknowledge the conflicts which must arise from making decisions between and among different communities. "In this sense, they do not achieve a democratic form" (Healey, 1993, 102).

Forester (1994) explores the challenges of planning from the practice stories of one transportation planner. The planner reports his experiences in negotiating solutions and making politically informed decisions; to be successful, he is constantly required to synthesise facts and values in the context of power relationships and the sometimes conflicting values of other decision-makers. The stories reveal for Forester that the reality of planning is, even now, a practice which is interpretative as well as calculating, reflective as well as pragmatic, and that it is politically aware. He concludes that the failure to recognise this reality tends to undermine the importance of value-based decisions:

> We need an account of judgement that is as attentive to Habermasian inclusiveness and participation as it is to Aristotelian perception and recognition of value, as attentive to issues of 'right' as to issues of 'good.' Without the perception of value,

participants can have little to say; without the inclusion of citizens, deliberation
can have little legitimacy."   (Forester, 1994, 202)

In a case study on the acid rain controversy, Hajer (1993) focused on the
role of discourse in structuring public debate and policymaking. The Nordic
countries and the environmental lobby in the UK criticised the British
Government and the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) for not
reducing sulphur emissions in coal-fired power plants. The government-
industry coalition was able to resist calls to invest in smokestack 'scrubbers' by
demanding incontrovertible proof of the link between coal combustion in
England and acid rain in Norway, a feat which was effectively impossible, due
to the extremely complex nature of atmospheric chemistry. This clouded the
issue for the public, who were unable to know which scientific team was
telling 'the truth'. More significantly, the coalition was able to limit the
discourse to the debate over whether there was enough scientific evidence to
justify a costly investment. Larger issues, such as the fact that auto emissions
also contributed significantly to atmospheric pollution and acid rain, or the
fundamental problem of unrestrained growth of human consumption and
pollutant output, were completely ignored by both sides.

Hajer identifies an emerging "ecological modernisation" discourse
which appeared to gain ascendancy in the late 1980s and challenge the "tra-
ditional pragmatist" approach. However, he argues that the Government's
sudden reversal of policy on coal scrubbers in 1986 was not due to the
infiltration of the eco-modernist perspective. Instead, the change of heart was
due to two main factors, both of which were consistent with the institu-
tionalised traditional pragmatist discourse. First, research funded by the
CEGB was beginning to provide more certain evidence of a link between
sulphur emissions and acid rain. Second, and even more significantly, new
projections of electricity demand suggested that new power plants would
have to be built. Therefore, a response could be made which was less costly
than retrofitting scrubbers, but which still gave a nod to the political
commitment of the Government to maintaining or lowering sulphur
emissions. Hajer concludes that the acid rain issue offered the first oppor-
tunity for the eco-modernisation discourse "to show that the old ad hoc
technocratic discourse coalition was not qualified to cope with the new
environmental problems and was therefore no longer a legitimate basis for
policy-making" (*ibid.*, 66), but that it failed signally. Despite the adoption of
eco-modernist rhetoric by the Government and by the European Community,
the environmentalist coalition made the strategic choice to operate within the

traditional pragmatist discursive practice. They did not invoke the "precautionary principle" or argue for broad environmental responsibility in order to promote their own respectability and focus on a single-problem-single-solution perspective which was completely at odds with the new rhetoric and indeed, with the new environmental problems. As Hajer rightly points out, to have institutionalised the eco-modernist discourse would have had major ramifications for Government priorities and would have necessitated substantial changes in the culture of many Government departments, such as Industry, Energy, Environment and Transportation.

Craig *et al.* (1993) directly explored the question of values in environmental policy by interviewing a number of senior policy advisors across the European Union. They asked each one "Do you have environmental values?" and "How would you describe those values?" One of the key results of this research was the discrepancy between the advisors' personal values and their public advice. Many were found to hold personal environmental values which closely correspond to the platform of the deep ecology movement. Nevertheless, they did not allow them to come through in their work. One person said "As a government official of course, I'd have a much more balanced view than as an individual person" (*ibid.*, 139). From this research they conclude that "deep environmental values are widely held—and consequential" (*ibid.*, 150). Policy processes which fail to acknowledge their presence do not eradicate them, and therefore attempts to use analytic tools which are value-free are misguided, and may lead to "the generation of schizophrenic environmental policies—policies which stem from a severe mismatch between evaluation tools and policy instruments" (*ibid.*, 151).

Healey and Shaw (1994) note the tendency of the planning system to adapt to changing views about the built environment. In light of the growing importance of sustainable development, they take a historical survey of the meaning of 'environment' in British development plans. Through this survey they attempt to assess whether the very different priorities and values embodied in the concept can fit comfortably within the discourse and structure of the planning system, or whether the apparent flexibility of the system may have reached its limit in sustainable development. They pose the question:

> ...how far will the planning system be able to take on board the *moral considerations* which are central to the contemporary environmental agenda...? How will this pressure to engage with *value-laden debate* affect the argument and policy discourse of the system? (*ibid.*, page 426; emphasis added)

They identify five broad definitions of environment over fifty years, namely, welfarist-utilitarianism, growth management, active environmental care, marketised utilitarianism and sustainable development. These stages seem to emerge not in discrete lumps, but rather as overlapping trends in which the new stage never wholly eliminates the previous ones. They further identify three main ideas related to the environment and policy which transcend the five stages. First, the environment has been seen as a resource to be used. The utilitarian notion gave rise in the 1980s to the economic terminology of environmental assets, which have influenced a more limited conception of sustainable development as the maintenance of natural capital while harvesting the yield. Second, they find a "moral and aesthetic notion of the environment as backcloth or setting" (*ibid.*, 433). This was seen in the stewardship principles espoused in the 1970s. In terms of the contemporary debate, they find that it could either lend support to the environmental asset conception, as an argument for improving the stock, or it could support a stronger conception through a renewed emphasis of the stewardship principle. Third, they identify a less clearly articulated idea of the environment as a constraint on human activity, which would support more radical environmental stances.

Despite observing some potentially radical conceptions of environment in development plans over time, Healey and Shaw argue that planning has always allowed economic imperatives to dominate environmental concerns. At the general policy level, the dominant discourse has emphasised a utilitarian definition of environment, a conclusion supported by Hajer's (*op. cit.*) research on acid rain policy discourse. At the level of planning debate, stronger conceptions of the environment—the stewardship principle, moral assertions of the intrinsic value of nature, or recognition of the constraints imposed by the environment—have been "repeatedly pushed to the margins" (Healey & Shaw, 1994, 434). To overcome this obstacle to realising the ecologically supportive potential of contemporary sustainable development rhetoric, they argue that planning must incorporate questions of value. If the "entrenching" of radical environmental conceptions into planning policy and practice is successful, they argue, a new system could develop:

> informed by an argumentative approach to planning debate allowing both technical and moral/aesthetic issues to be discussed in an open, democratic way.   (*ibid.*, 435)

Perhaps the most compelling and significant recent research into values and the policy process is that of Kempton *et al.* (1995). They undertook an investigation of environmental values in the USA, using techniques of cognitive anthropology. The research consisted of two parts. First, they in-

terviewed forty-six "informants" (adopting the term used by researchers studying other cultures) using a semistructured technique with open-ended questions. Informants were asked such questions as:

- Would you say that you have 'environmental values'? (If yes) How would you describe those values?

- How would you describe the relationship between humans and nature?

- Do people have responsibilities toward the environment?

This allowed them to probe for the values and beliefs of the informants related to the environment. The interview responses then became the source of questions for a fixed-form survey of 142 individuals from five subgroups selected to represent the full spectrum of environmental values. By asking people to describe their environmental values at length, the researchers were able to avoid a pitfall of past efforts to define the nature of environmental values among the public; that is, the questions asked by previous studies presupposed a set of values which had been derived from the environmentalist literature, and individuals were asked whether they adhered to them. The study's open-ended questions instead allowed "unexpected responses to emerge" (*ibid.*, 88).

Among their findings was that environmental values appear to be widely held in American culture, and that they are based upon three identifiable sources: religious and/or spiritual teachings and beliefs; anthropocentric values, including ideas of intergenerational equity as well as those of utilitarian resource or aesthetic value; and biocentric values, which express the intrinsic right of nature or plants and animals to exist and flourish. Significantly, questionnaire statements expressing values based on all three sources found majorities in agreement even among the study's subgroups thought least likely to do so—managers of dry cleaning shops in California who were adversely affected by stringent air pollution regulations, and laid-off sawmill workers in Oregon, where there have been ferocious political battles over the preservation of old-growth forests.

Besides offering strong evidence that environmental values are now deeply embedded in American culture, and therefore cannot be seen as a passing fad, Kempton *et al.* conclude that learning about values could have significant implications for how politicians and those who communicate with the public do their jobs. In the case of politicians, it appeared that people would in fact respond favourably to costly measures, such as a carbon tax, in order to reduce the threat of global climate change (the particular problem on

which the research focused), and that the use of standard future discounting methods and 50- to 100-year time scales did not correspond to the value Americans seem to place on maintaining a healthy environment very far into the future. For those who communicate with the public, one major problem appears to be public misconceptions of environmental problems (such as thinking of global warming as a pollution problem rather than a carbon dioxide problem). Additionally, it appeared that arguments in favour of preserving the environment would find more fertile ground if they invoked the values of religious or spiritual thinking and intergenerational equity, instead of reasoning only on utilitarian grounds. Environmentalists and their opponents alike greatly underestimate the strength with which these moral, non-quantifiable values are held.

This research underscores the potential power in exploring questions of values. Rather than merely revealing some surprising results about the values and beliefs of the American public, the researchers are able to make concrete proposals about how environmental policy should be made and communicated. The research does not say what the most effective policy would be in a technical sense; rather, it makes some convincing conclusions about how the political decision-making process could generate a solution which was more acceptable both in terms of public opinion *as well as* environmental protection.

2.5   Conclusion

The critiques highlighted in this chapter all point to the inadequacy of decision-making processes which do not take explicit account of the subjective and normative elements which are inherent in those processes. We cannot claim to act without reference to some moral system, nor is it possible to claim that only one such 'true' system exists. When planning claims to make decisions "in the public interest" it glosses over the multiplicity of *interests* which belie the universality of that phrase. Similarly, rationality is only one of a great variety of ways of seeing the world, all of which contribute to a *wholeness of understanding* which is a precondition to good decisionmaking.

In arguing for a more comprehensive perspective, the literature of postmodernism and deep ecology present new ways of looking at old problems and issues, and therefore research opportunities open up in almost any facet of planning. The next chapter presents some possible research

questions suggested by the literature, and describes the evolution of the research project from initial questions to complete design.

Research Methods

The general questions I initially set out to answer in this thesis were:

1. How are values incorporated into the plan-making process?

2. How may they be more explicitly made a part of it?

These questions focus attention on the central textual element of the planning process, the plan itself. In that position, it is a key document for the interpretative analysis suggested by the postmodern critiques. Furthermore, its importance—and therefore its contestability—has been considerably raised by the 1991 amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and in particular Section 54A, which states that decisions on planning applications should normally be made "in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise." Previous to the amendments, the plan had been considered to be simply one material consideration among many. The statutory change gives an extra impetus to research on the plan and the planmaking process in general, and makes clear that the plan is and will be the arena in which questions of value are fought.

The work presented in Chapter 2 provided two possible directions for research activity which follow from my initial questions. The first direction is to look at planning with the new eyes of textual interpretation and discourse analysis. How does the plan communicate? How may it be interpreted? Who is being included in the conversation, who is left out? What story does the plan tell? Is the story coherent? How are planning decisions made? How are dissenting voices treated? These questions are concerned with issues of inclusiveness and democracy in the planning process. They focus on the plan itself, but also on the activities of planners in the creation of decisions. Both the work of Healey (1993) on the communicative elements of the plan and of Forester (1994) on the negotiative and decision-making processes could be repeated on other plans and planners. In both cases, the research has been exploratory in nature, and their conclusions would benefit from attempts to repeat them. For instance, it may be that there are structural

differences between American and British planning which would affect the outcome of a repeat of Forester's work on this side of the Atlantic. The ideas on the plan-as-narrative put forward by Kaplan (1993), Beauregard (1991) and Mandelbaum (1990) did not accompany research on the planning context (although Mandelbaum used the then recently adopted plan for Philadelphia as the springboard for his essay), and thus may also be a fruitful avenue for research.

The second direction involves application of the deep questioning process developed by Naess (1989). What are the values of the plan? Why has a given policy been chosen? What values and hypotheses are embedded in it? How do its authors understand the values of the policy or the plan? How do its readers interpret them? At what level do disagreements about policy lie? At what level is there agreement? These questions are concerned with the way values are expressed and debated in the planning process. They also point to the need to make the value priorities of a plan (or a planning authority) more explicit, in order to foster debate and discussion at the level of genuine disagreement (Glasser, 1996a). Their intention is also to spark an internal process of deep questioning to establish one's own personal value system, and to ensure that one's actions are consistent with that value system.

3.1   Research Design

The sum of these questions represented a potential research project which was far beyond the scope possible here. The process of choosing which questions to pursue went hand in hand with the design of the research process itself. To begin, Kempton *et al.* (1995) demonstrated that values research initially requires qualitative analysis to reveal them. For instance, to understand what the norms of an individual or a planning authority are, the questioning process must go beyond the closed-ended methods of highly structured surveys and questionnaires. What does have the potential of uncovering the normative side of planmaking is a qualitative case study approach, using in depth interviews and careful textual analysis.

According to Yin (1989), there are three issues which influence the best choice of research method. First is the form of the research questions. If they are 'what,' 'who,' 'how much' or 'how many' questions, then a survey or archival analysis might be appropriate. If, on the other hand, the questions are of the 'how' or 'why' type, then experiments, histories or case studies would be more suitable. Although some empirical research was called for

("What are the values of the plan?"), most questions implied an evaluative approach, *i.e.*, case studies or histories. In addition to this major categorisation, it is relevant to consider the amount of control over the events or actions which the researcher possesses, and whether the events being studied are or should be contemporary. If the answers are that the researcher has no control and that events will be contemporary, then a case study is recommended. Where control exists or is required to answer the research question, experimentation is the best choice, and where events are not contemporary, histories become the ideal option.

In any type of research into planmaking, the researcher has no control over the events in question. The best he or she can do is either watch it happen (which requires several years from start to finish) or investigate it at some stage in the process. This therefore leaves out the possibility of conducting an experiment. Using the criteria set out by Yin (*op. cit.*), the appropriate method to choose would be either a history or a case study; indeed, these two methods might be thought of as two aspects of the same method—in-depth, non-interventionist, qualitative analysis—which only differ in the time period the events in question took place. Implied in the research questions is a focus on current and future practice, and hence a case study of a process which had either just finished or is still underway seemed most suitable.

Having chosen a method of research, it was then necessary to select an appropriate location for conducting the case study. To qualify, the local authority needed to meet the practical criterion of accessibility, and the substantive criterion of suitability for an investigation into values in planning. On the practical side, the London Borough of Newham became the most obvious choice. In the Summer of 1995, I began work in the Newham Planning Division, and thus had easy access to both materials and personnel related to the planmaking process.

Newham was also appropriate from a more substantive side. At the time of the method development stage in the research (Summer 1995), the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) had passed through two published drafts and another set of proposed revisions, and was then under review by a Department of the Environment Inspector, after a public local inquiry in late 1994. Thus the plan was still under active evaluation by the Planning Department, but it was nearing the end of the process. By the time the research would be presented, the Inspector's report would have been submitted, and thus another stage in the process would be available for analysis, if it were deemed relevant. In consideration of values in the planmaking process,

it may be argued that any plan would be capable of scrutiny, since it was hypothesised that, irrespective of their explicit discussion, values are an integral part of the process. Nevertheless, the Newham UDP has a distinctive feature which suggested that conscious and deliberate decisions had been made about the form and content of the plan, and therefore about the values which the plan embodied. The first chapter of Part II which contains any policies is entitled "Urban Regeneration," a departure from the normal range of chapter topics suggested by Government guidance. This will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 4, but it suffices here to say that the focus on urban regeneration suggested deliberate choices about the values of the plan, which gave it a greater interest from a research point of view. Furthermore, given that part of the research justification was based on the methods of a radical environmental philosophy, it was necessary to test the method against a different core issue of planning, such as urban regeneration.

Having selected a suitable candidate for a case study, I then began to develop interview questions for the central element of the research project, the interviews. Six questions were adopted from the range of suggestions at the beginning of the chapter. These were:

1. What types of understanding are relevant to the planmaking process?

2. What are the values of the plan?

3. How are values treated in the planmaking process?

4. Does deep questioning assist in understanding the plan, including all its under-currents of subjectivity

5. What is the communicative work of the plan?

6. How can the insights derived from the research inform the planmaking pro-cess?

The first question was, in effect, answered by the literature review, although the research was intended to explore how the variety of understandings actually appear in a real plan. The second question adopts the deep questioning approach to explore the fundamental values of the plan. The third question deals with the negotiative process of writing the plan. The fourth question allows a reflection not just on the issues themselves, but also on the way the issues were explored. Deep questioning is a particular application of a open-ended interview structure, but whether it would be successful in eliciting responses from informants remained to be seen. The fifth question is a repetition of Healey's (1993) work to see if her conclusions

could also be repeated. The sixth question helps to focus attention on the planning system as a whole. From these six questions, further issues to explore would be allowed to arise from the actual carrying out of the research.

3.2   Research Procedures

The research methods closely followed those used by Kempton *et al.* (1995). The central element of the research consisted of semistructured interviews with six officers and two councillors who had been involved with some aspect of the planmaking process. The interview protocol asked open-ended questions about the informant's role in the process, how the plan was discussed and debated, what types of comments and objections were received (and from whom), and finally focused on one policy in the plan to probe for the values which are embodied in it (see Appendix). All officer interviews were conducted in their own offices, while the two councillors were interviewed in a meeting room in the Planning Department building, with which they were both familiar. The interviews took between forty-five and seventy-five minutes, and were conducted between January and April of 1996.

The deep questioning portion of the interview was based on Policy UR8, in the Urban Regeneration chapter, which addresses the Council's community benefit objectives with respect to the Beckton Gas Works site, in the southeastern corner of the borough. This will be described at greater length in Chapter 4. However, the first two interviews used a different policy, EMP6, which relates to workplace nurseries. The different policy was used because the informants were more familiar with the policies of the Employment chapter. Later interviews were also conducted with officers who had worked on other parts of the plan than Urban Regeneration, but it was decided that, in order to be able to compare across interview responses, Policy UR8 should be used consistently for the rest of the interviews. Finally, since the provision of childcare facilities was one of the objectives listed in Policy UR8, it was decided that the deep questioning responses of the first two interviews could be incorporated into discussions of that aspect of the policy without losing validity. Therefore, the report of research does not separately mention Policy EMP6 in the discussion of the values of the plan.

All interviews were recorded, and then transcribed. Language was not regularised in terms of grammar or syntax, but stutters, repetitions and 'filler words' (um, like, sort of, etc.) were omitted. The estimate by Young and Mills (1980) that it takes six to ten hours to transcribe each hour of tape was found

to be accurate. Although transcribing is a time-consuming process, this method was necessary for two reasons. First, the informants' time was limited (interviews were conducted during normal working hours), and therefore the effectiveness of the time had to be maximised. Second, discussions of values are quite complex, and defy swift comprehension and assimilation on the part of the researcher. Third, this thesis is concerned with textual interpretation, and therefore it was important to have an accurate record of the text created by the interviews.

To insure the confidentiality of responses, all names have been omitted, and quotes have only been identified with a reference to the interview number and the paragraph number of the transcript (*e.g.*, int.4.74). Transcript quotes in italics are those of the interviewer; informants' words are in plain type. Rather than use pseudonyms to refer directly to informants, they have simply been identified as "Officer Five" or "Councillor Three", the number corresponding to the overall order in which they were interviewed. The two councillors were third and fourth in the sequence of eight.

The interviews resulted in a mass of very rich but not very well organised data, and one task of this thesis has been to sort through that data to analyse and present it in a way which is orderly and coherent. Hopefully that effort has been successful. One method of organising the value explorations was through a graphic 'mapping' of the value structures. To give an example, the following excerpt is from the interview with Officer Eight. It begins with a question relating to the provision of childcare facilities in Policy UR8:

> Newham, I believe, has the second highest growth rate in terms of... Anyway, it has one of the highest child-bearing age group populations, and the birth rate is the highest or second-highest in the country. The idea is that there are not enough childcare facilities provided for children. If you provide a job, then more women are going to work, but they can't go to work unless there are sufficient childcare facilities. Also, organised childcare facilities... Children are likely to get a better start in life.
>
> *Why is that?*
>
> There are facilities, there are games, they could provide [more] incentive for the children that just staying at home... Also the poor [families] may not be able to provide sufficient toys or whatever, or they may not be able to motivate children. Childcare facilities, in a way... Smaller resources can provide better care facilities if they are organised outside, rather than having individual parents having to buy their toys.
>
> *In a sense it's a pooling of resources.*
>
> Yeah, pooling their resources together.

Two questions. First of all, why is it that you want to provide job opportunities for women?

If there are two incomes, the condition of the household will improve. There will be more money. And also, it provides dignity for women, rather than having to rely on one income. A lot of women are obviously quite capable of doing—it's not patronising—of doing useful work, it's because of the lack of opportunities. Providing childcare would free them off, give them enough time.   (int.8.42-48)

The responses were then converted into a list of norms (N) and hypotheses (H), ordered as far as possible to indicate a derivation of higher-order norms to lower-order ones:

N   Dignity!
N   Provide opportunities for women!
H   Provision of childcare facilities would provide women with the opportunity to pursue other activities.
N   Improve conditions!
H   A second income will improve conditions for poor households.
N   Give children a good start in life!
H   Poor families cannot always provide the resources to motivate children and give them a good start in life.
N   Facilitate employment!
N   Pool resources!
H   More women are going to work.
H   There is a high birth rate and a high population in child-bearing age groups.
N   Provide childcare facilities!

These lists were then transferred (omitting hypotheses) to a graphic form, as shown in Figure 3.1 (the horizontal line divides fundamental norms from derived or lower-order norms). Finally, the value maps constructed from each interview were amalgamated into composite maps for different elements of the policy, as shown in Chapter 5.

As a cross-check to the interviews, and to test the effectiveness of the technique itself, informants were sent a short questionnaire, after the interviews were completed, which asked them to mark which of a range of statements about the values of the plan they agreed with. A final question asked them to identify the single issue which was most important in the plan (see Appendix). The follow-up survey was also sent to the other councillors sitting on the Environment and Planning Committee, and given to two officers not included in the interviews. A total of fourteen questionnaires were returned out of a possible total of 28. In reporting responses from the survey, the statements are presented with the number they appeared on the form, and the extent agreement and disagreement. Indications of strong agreement or disagreement, where significant, are mentioned in the supporting text. To prevent overzealous conclusions from such a small sample

size, responses are indicated as the actual number of ticks on each side, not the percentage of the total.

In addition to the interviews and survey, a textual analysis of the local plans, the several drafts of the UDP and other related documents was undertaken. This work was aimed to examine the communicative work of the plan, and to complement and compare the informant responses on values and on the relationship of the plan to its audiences.

Have a purpose in life

Happiness

Dignity

Trouble-free life

Improve conditions for people

Improve local environment

Health

Reduce poverty

Maximise opportunities

Reduce pollution

Promote employment

Give people a start in life

Give women more opportunities

jobs for local people

Give children a good start

Pool resources

Jobs for women

Public safety

Seed beds

Training

Developers help pay for improvements
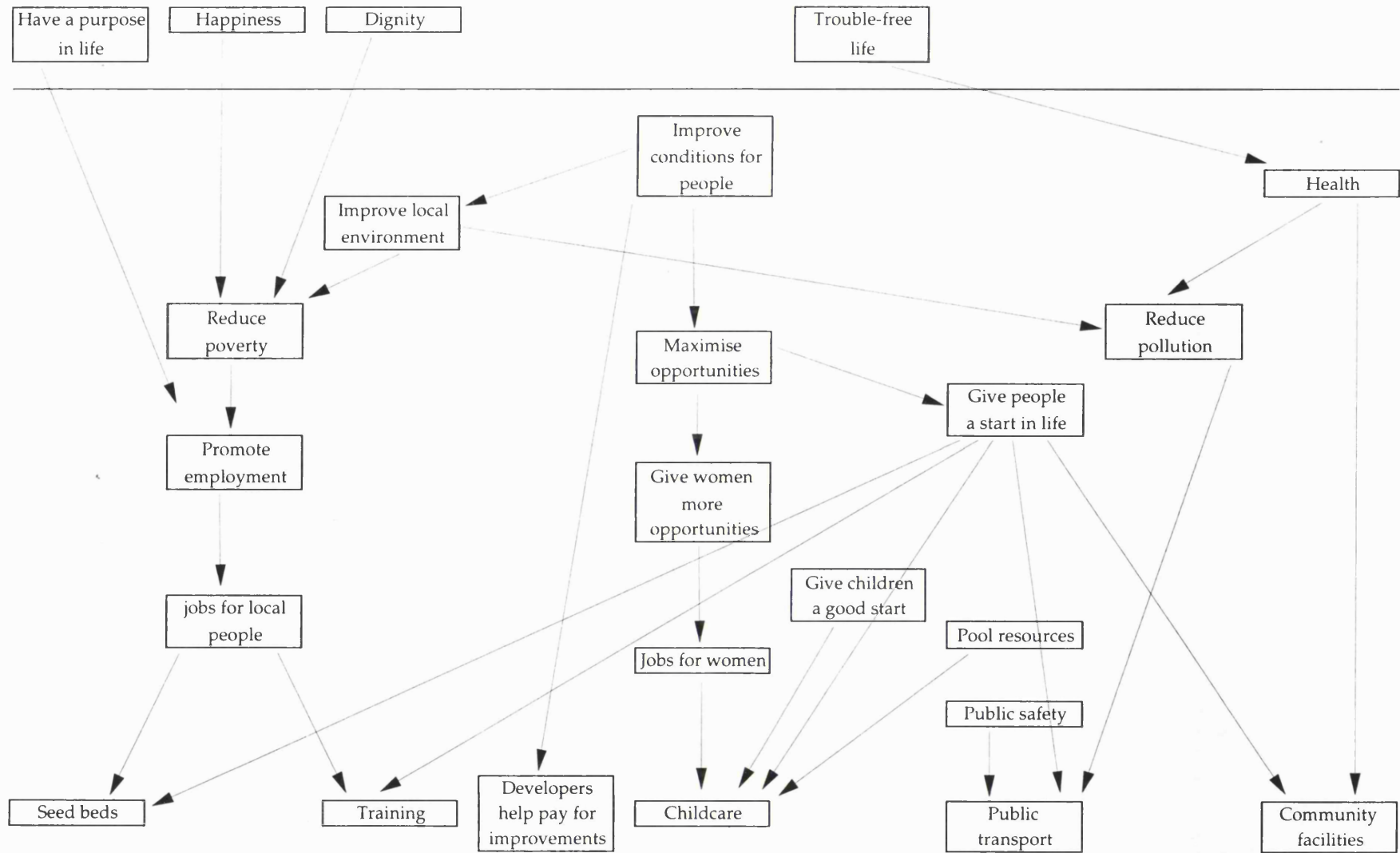
Childcare

Public transport

Community facilities

Figure 3.1 Sample Value Map for Interview 8

Setting the Context
The London Borough of Newham

The London Borough of Newham is strongly defined by its location—six miles east of the City of London and bordered on the West, South and East by the Rivers Lea, Thames, and Roding, respectively (see Figure 4.1). Once the site of major industrial activity, its history since the First World War has been one of accelerating decline and dramatic changes in its population composition. It is only within the last ten to fifteen years that the decline has shown any signs of being reversed. The following sketch provides a background from which to understand the decisions of Newham's planners and policy-makers today.

4.1 A Short History of Newham

The jurisdiction of Newham is the result of the amalgamation, in 1965, of the county boroughs of East Ham and West Ham, and the section of Woolwich north of the Thames, called North Woolwich. Up to the end of the 18th century, the area was characterised by pasture and farmland, although the River Lea had been long used for milling operations, and a porcelain industry flourished in West Ham in the 18th century.

In the 19th century, industrial expansion profoundly altered the character of the area. The River Lea formed the eastern boundary of legislation which controlled the operation of noxious trades in metropolitan London; hence many early chemical and animal by-product industries made Newham their home, a noxious tradition which continues up to the present day (Archer & Yarham, 1991). Along the Thames, the soft, low-lying ground proved ideal for the construction of new large docks with the capacity to handle the volume of shipping traffic generated by the burgeoning British Empire. The opening of Victoria Dock in 1855 inaugurated a period of significant growth in shipping related industries. Other major industries in the

Figure 4.1   The London Borough of Newham

borough were the Beckton Gas Works (at one time the largest in the world), the Stratford Rail Lands, rubber manufacturing, and the not-yet-amalgamated sugar refinery of Henry Tate and golden syrup plant of Abram Lyle (*ibid.*, 1991).

These industries, and the residential areas which grew up to support them, were unregulated and in many ways represented what was worst about the rapid industrialisation of the 19th century—cramped living conditions, poor drainage, no amenities of open space and fresh air and the constant stench and noise of the industries themselves. An 1857 account of Canning Town and Hallsville described the conditions in these terms:

> We come to a row of houses built with their backs to a stagnant ditch. We turn aside to see the ditch, and find that it is a cesspool, so charged with corruption, that not a trace of vegetable matter grows upon its surface... to our great wonder, a few consumptive looking ducks are swimming, very dirty; very much like the human dwellers in the fouled alleys as to their depressed and haggard physiognomy...
>
> (quoted in Archer & Yarham, 1991, 8)

In contrast to the activities in West Ham and North Woolwich, East Ham became a vast residential area for the expanding population of London. Here were developments typical of the whole of London: "Long terraces of small but well-built dwellings for clerks and skilled workers" (*ibid.*, 9). Archer and Yarham conclude that:

> By the time of the First World War, the pattern of what later became Newham was shaped—the docks and heavy industry in the south and west, residential areas with some light industry to the north and east.   (*ibid.*, 9-10)

However, by the time Newham was created in 1965, these shaping forces were already in a decline. Newham's population peaked in 1921, at 444,000 (Newham Council, 1991, 7). Bombing raids during World War Two wrought massive destruction upon the area, and almost completely depopulated it. After the war, much but not all of the population returned (the population in 1949 was 296,000), and much of the industrial base was rebuilt, but the heyday was clearly over. Dockyard operations moved out towards the mouth of the Thames with the introduction of containerisation, the final blow being struck in November 1981, with the closure of Newham's Royal Group of Docks. In addition to the dock closures, the rail lands at Stratford, the Beckton Gas Works, the West Ham Bus Garage and a number of other manufacturing firms have all closed or reduced their operations to a fraction of what they were at the peak of activity (Newham Council, 1995, 79). In the twenty years from 1971 to 1991, the number of jobs in Newham was almost halved, from 110,000 to 58,000 (Griffiths, 1994, 32).

With the loss of industrial employment on such a massive scale, the population of Newham continued to fall until 1987, when it reached a low of 206,000, less than half the number of sixty-six years before. Those who were left behind were mostly the ones who could not afford to move out, which has only exasperated the problems of poverty and decline experienced by the borough. Newham has become a location of multiple deprivation on a scale which would be difficult to exaggerate. According to a 1992 survey by the London Research Centre, 82% of households have incomes under £20,000, compared with 67% for London as a whole. In 1993, the official unemployment rate was 21%, while the 1991 Census shows that some subgroups— young adults and South Asians, for instance—had unemployment rates as high as 40% (Griffiths, 1994). Figure 4.2 provides a selection of poverty indices taken from the 1991 Census.[1]

Newham's situation is further complicated by its diverse cultural composition. From the beginning of the century, immigrants moved into Newham to meet the growing demand for workers. These were largely of European origin with, in particular, a large Jewish population. Most of the first immigrants moved 'up and out' to the more desirable surroundings of Essex and other suburban areas, and were replaced by a new wave of mostly Afro-Caribbean immigrants in the 1960s (Griffiths, 1994). A third wave, dominated by Indian subcontinent and Chinese immigrants, has occurred since 1980 with an even more recent influx from East Africa and Vietnam. For example, the number of Bangladeshi residents rose from 500 in 1981 to nearly 8,000 in 1991, while the overall population of ethnic minority populations increased by over half, to 90,000. This represents 42% of the total population, second highest among English local authorities (Newham Council, 1995, 64-65). In contrast to earlier waves of immigration, there is no longer the promise of steady jobs for the newcomers, who have therefore arrived with little hope of following the path of those who went before.

Aside from the difficulties of racism and the clash of inherited and adopted cultures, Newham's ethnic minorities have different needs with respect to the particular aspects of poverty they display. For instance,

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[1]It should be noted that resistance to the introduction of the Poll Tax resulted in higher than normal margins of error in the 1991 Census. This was particularly true among low income and immigrant groups, both of which are overrepresented in Newham. Recent estimates suggest that the population undercount might have been by as much as 15% in Newham, which represents approximately 33,000 people. If so, it is likely that the numbers quoted here may significantly underestimate the level of deprivation in the borough, a situation which incidentally has profound consequences for the borough's projected social service spending levels (Griffiths, 1994, 144-145).

Figure 4.2 Poverty Indices for Newham, with Ranking Among English Local Authorities

Index	Percentage	Rank (of 366)
Department of the Environment Local Conditions Index 1993[*]	n/a	1
Index of Material Deprivation[**]	n/a	1
Index of Social Deprivation[†]	n/a	10
Households with children under 5	18	1
Households with 3 or more children under 16	8	2
Ethnic minority population	42	2
Unemployed young adults	n/a	5
Pensioners with no car	74	7
Lone parent households	7	10
Long-term limiting illness (standardised for age and sex)	n/a	31
Council accommodation	31	32
Pensioner households with no central heating	33	33
Private rented and housing association accommodation	19	34
Population aged 75 or over	5	334
Self-employed as a percentage of economically active	8	335
Home ownership	50	348
Women in part-time employment as a percentage of economically active female population	18	355
Economically active population (*i.e.* in job market)	72	360
Households with 2 or more cars	9	362

[*]Based, *inter alia*, on unemployment, overcrowding, lack of amenities, income, mortality ratio, education, and amount of derelict land.

[**]Based on households overcrowded, with no car, lacking or sharing basic amenities, lacking central heating.

[†]Based on unemployment, lone parents, youth unemployment, single pensioners, long-term illness, number of dependants in households.

Source: Griffiths, 1994, 142-143 [adapted by Griffiths from Department of Environment, uncited report of 1994 (DoE index), and Forrest & Gordon, *People and Places: A 1991 Census Atlas of England*, School for Advanced Urban Studies, 1993 (all other indices)].

overcrowding is a major problem among Asian communities, who generally have larger than average families, while Afro-Caribbean households are more likely to have a single parent, and therefore will be more concerned with issues such as childcare facilities (Griffiths, 1994). All of these groups have brought with them different cultural practices, religious affiliations, shopping demands and leisure activities; therefore the local authority is pressed to account for this variety in its planning and development strategies.

4.2 Recent Developments

The collapse of the industrial economic base resulted in large areas of dereliction in Newham (indeed, across the whole of East London). Although little redevelopment has occurred in Newham, the regenerative potential of

the former industrial lands and watercourses was recognised at least as far back as 1976, when the non-statutory London Docklands Strategic Plan (LDSP) stated its objectives:

> to use the opportunity provided by large areas of London's Docklands becoming available for development to redress the housing, social, environmental, employment/economic and communications deficiencies of the Docklands area and the parent Boroughs...   (cited in Newham Council, 1984, para. 1.21)

Subsequent plans and other corporate documents have reaffirmed the Council's commitment to redevelopment coupled with significant local improvements (*e.g.*, Newham Council, 1985a; 1986; 1991; 1992).

With the change of central Government in 1979, there emerged a very different set of principles from those described in the LDSP. The Thatcher Government believed that private sector development was the proper and most efficient means to bring new life into declining urban areas, and expressed great scepticism about the ability of local government ever to be able to achieve the task on its own. It sought to remove the bureaucratic barriers to private investment by putting control of some of the most depressed and physically ravaged areas of the country into the hands of relatively independent Urban Development Corporations, bodies similar to the New Town Development Corporations which flourished during the 1950s and 1960s. In 1981, the first of these were created, and the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) became the development control authority and lead regeneration organisation of an area of 2,150ha along the Thames, including Beckton and the Docklands communities in Newham.

The LDDC has been a highly controversial body throughout its 15-year history, and its achievements have been of a very uneven nature (Imrie & Thomas, 1993; Middleton, 1991). In terms of physical development, the majority of activity initially focused itself west of the River Lea, especially the Isle of Dogs Enterprise Zone, where planning controls and the costs of development were minimised. When the recession hit London in the late 1980s, much of the Royals and Beckton remained untouched. Nevertheless, the LDDC have overseen the construction of several major infrastructure projects in Newham, such as the London City Airport, the Docklands Light Railway, the Jubilee Line Extension to Stratford, North London Line improvements, the Docklands Highway and the Blackwall Tunnel under the River Thames. As a counterpoint to these achievements, the LDDC has come under intense criticism for ignoring the interests and needs of the local

residents in its rush to attract private investment. Its focus on levering private capital did not allow for extraneous expenditure on community benefits which had little or no short term effect on the Docklands' image as an investment location. The pro-development mentality hardly acknowledged that a community existed: "References to a greenfield site were made despite the fact that 40,000 people lived in the LDDC area and numerous firms were located there" (Brownill, 1993, 46). Even when the Corporation appeared to soften its stance towards the existing communities in the second half of the decade, local partnerships were made among unequal partners, and agreements for the provision of local benefits evaporated when the property market went bust (*ibid.*). Into the 1990s, the LDDC was criticised by the Public Accounts Committee for having "given too little attention to the housing and social aspects of regeneration" (NAO, 1993, 14); despite the Committee's previous admonishments, the Corporation still spent only about six percent of its budget on community support in 1990 (Keith & Rogers, 1991, 8).

Elsewhere in Newham, a successful City Challenge bid in 1992 for Stratford brought funding (albeit on a more modest scale) for capital projects, such as a new bus station and town centre improvements, in the north-west corner of the borough. The Stratford Development Partnership has also been a key figure in the successful bid for the second London station of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link.

Since the tentative recovery of the property market in the mid-1990s, there are again signs of interest being shown in the undeveloped areas of Newham. As the infrastructure projects noted above are completed, it is possible to imagine that there may yet be a genuine period of regeneration in the next twenty years, but whether the regeneration will be meaningful for the existing communities is by no means clear. Improving the social landscape may be a much more difficult task than improving the physical one.

4.3   The Planning Context in Newham

Changes in legislation and local and national policy over the last twenty years have brought a number of changes to the planning framework in Newham. This section gives a brief description of that evolution.

Until 1985, London operated under a two-tier planning system, with structure plans produced by the Greater London Council (GLC), and local plans produced by each of the thirty-three London boroughs. In 1977, owing to the varied character of the borough, Newham undertook the creation of six

separate local plans (later revised to five when events overtook the plan adoption schedule in the Docklands and a single plan was produced for the whole area). Two of these, East Ham and Central Newham, related to areas which were largely built up and therefore focused on local environmental improvements within an overall management strategy. The other three, Stratford and Canning Town, South Docklands and Beckton, included large areas of dereliction, and therefore focused on the potential benefits and costs of development activity on those sites. Throughout the borough, however, the Council maintained a strong social focus in its plans, in each case devoting the plan's first chapter to a discussion of the characteristics and needs of the people of Newham. The culmination of this policy focus came in the Central Newham Local Plan (CNLP), which was adopted in 1989. The CNLP was based on a "social audit" exercise, involving extensive public consultation to assess the needs of the population. The results of the audit were then developed into a fairly radical set of planning policies which attempted to respond directly to those needs, ranging well outside the traditional land use remit of the planning system (Best & Bowser, 1986).

Meanwhile, the ability of the Council to autonomously set its own planning policies was progressively undermined as political power in the UK became more centralised (Stewart, 1994). The establishment of the LDDC removed development control powers from the Council within the Docklands area, and although the Council retained planmaking powers, the plan was given little weight by the Corporation, particularly in the first five years of its existence (Brownill, 1993). In 1985, the abolition of the GLC removed the tier which separated the local councils from the Central Government, exposing the former to even more stringent fiscal and political control. The change also required adoption of the then new Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which incorporated both strategic and detailed policies within one plan document.

The first draft of the UDP was published in 1991, and largely represented an amalgamation of the policies of the five local plans. After a period of public consultation, a new and much larger draft was issued in 1993. One of the most significant revisions in the Deposit Draft was the creation of a separate chapter on Urban Regeneration, which focused on the regenerative potential of a number of large tracts of derelict land in Stratford, Docklands, and Beckton, identified as Major Opportunity Zones (MOZs). It sought to marry large scale development with significant improvements to and for the local community, among them affordable housing, employment opportuni-

ties, transport improvements, open space, and community facilities. One of the major mechanisms of this union would be planning obligations (Newham Council, 1993).

As a result of extensive negotiations with objectors, the Council issued two sets of proposed modifications to the 1993 draft. A public inquiry was held on the plan between October and December 1994, with publication of the Inspector's Report (Bingham, 1995) a year later. At the time this research was undertaken, no formal response to the Inspector's Report had been issued by the Council. The draft used in the interviews was, therefore, the twice-amended deposit draft. Hereafter, the term "the plan" will refer to this document, unless otherwise indicated; specific passages of text will be referred to by either the paragraph or policy number.

The 700-page Inspector's Report praised the efforts of the Council to negotiate with objectors to resolve differences before the inquiry, but broadly criticised the plan for setting policies which strayed beyond the Government's definition of relevant land use and development concerns. As noted above, the borough's combination of physical development opportunities and desperate social and environmental needs make the issue of planning obligations a central one to the plan. The Inspector deemed that the Council's approach was in danger of being "so heavily weighted" towards achievement of community benefit objectives through planning obligations as to be a "disincentive to development" (*ibid.*, 5).

The deep questioning portion of the informant interviews began with a single policy in the UDP, namely policy UR8, from Part II Chapter 2, "Urban Regeneration". The policy relates to the Beckton Gas Works site, in the southeast corner of the borough. The site—owned entirely by British Gas—is quite large (130 acres), and as a result of over a century of heavy industrial use, it is also contaminated. The 1991 draft contained a general policy related to community benefits arising from development within MOZs, specifically including public transport improvements, environmental improvements, training facilities, seed bed units for small businesses and childcare facilities. Outline planning permission was granted in 1992 for a comprehensive mixed use redevelopment of the Beckton Gas Works site (identified as MOZ13), with open space along the River Thames. As part of the permission, a planning agreement was negotiated with British Gas, committing the would-be developer to provision of, or contributions for, a number of community benefits. The details of the permission and the agreement then became the

basis for a new set of policies relating to the gas works site (although the benefit objectives remained consistent with those identified by the 1991 draft).

In the 1993 Deposit Draft, policy UR8 read as follows:

> The Beckton Gas Works development will require a range of additional community benefits in order to ensure both that local residents are able to take full advantage of the opportunities it provides and to minimise any adverse impact associated with such development. The benefits shall include:
>
> A)   Seed bed units / managed workspace;
> B)   Training centre;
> C)   Childcare facilities;
> D)   Contributions/improvements to public transport (DLR link, river-bus, bus link);
> E)   Leisure facilities.

Upon consideration of a number of objections to the policy, the Council proposed to modify the policy and supporting text with new wording which allowed for possibility of different development proposals coming forward. The revised policy deleted any reference to the local residents, and assumed a more contingent tone (changes in boldface):

> The Beckton Gas Works development will **be expected to contribute towards achieving community benefit objectives commensurate with the merits, size, type and value of the scheme and the abnormal development costs associated with the site. Required** benefits **may** include:
>
> A)   Seed bed units / managed workspace;
> B)   Training centre;
> C)   Childcare facilities;
> D)   Contributions/improvements to public transport (DLR link, river-bus, bus link);
> E)   **Community** leisure facilities.

The reference to the "abnormal costs" acknowledges the necessity of decontaminating the site before any development could be commenced. The policy quoted above was the one used in informant interviews.

It is perhaps worthwhile to also note here that this policy was recommended by the Inspector for deletion from the plan. He deemed that the policy was impractical, as there was little chance of the site being developed as a whole. Furthermore, he wrote:

> it would be difficult, if not impossible, to show that provision of any of the facilities listed in Policy UR8 were necessary to the grant of permission for the development of a sector of MOZ13...   (Bingham, 1995, 151)

Again, the goal of explicitly linking development and community benefit in a statutory land use plan, as proposed by the Council, has been wholeheartedly

rejected by the Inspector on the grounds that such benefits do not relate sufficiently to the development and use of land.

Research Report
Values, Communication and Process

This chapter is divided into several sections, each one addressing a particular issue which has arisen from the interviews, textual analysis of the plans and other related documents, and the follow-up survey. Inevitably, the imposed structure is an artificial one, and there is a substantial amount of overlap from one section to another. Nevertheless, it has been possible to find common strands and recurring issues in the responses of the several informants, and the sections have been chosen with the intention of drawing together those strands. Broadly speaking, the chapter is organised into three parts. The first part relates to questions of values and other subjective ways of understanding (Sections 5.1 to 5.4), the second attends to issues of communication (Sections 5.5 and 5.6), while the third is concerned with the planning process and system (Sections 5.7 to 5.9).

To achieve the richness and depth of understanding made available by the methods used here, it has been necessary to sacrifice some amount of generalisability. Many of the conclusions drawn from the research are tentative, and indeed raise more questions than they answer. As already noted, however, research into values in planning is not very far advanced, and therefore will benefit from the kind of exploratory work which has been undertaken. It is my hope that in time, some of the questions will be subjected to broader forms of analysis, and in that way they may gain more prominence within the planning profession.

Descriptions of policy elements and values have been taken from informant responses. For the sake of narrative continuity, this is not always made explicit. Statistical and other types of evidence in support of policies have been taken as part of the understanding of informants, and therefore have not been verified independently. The purpose of the research is to examine the values of the plan and the planners, not to critique the technical justification of their policies.

5.1 The Values of the Plan

Policy UR8 of the Newham Unitary Development Plan (UDP) identifies five community benefit objectives associated with development of the Beckton Gas Works site, and states a general principle that developers should be expected to contribute to the provision of those benefits. From those six 'policy elements', deep questioning of informants resulted in a far-ranging exploration of some of the fundamental norms which guide planners in their policy development work. Each element of the policy will be taken in turn, followed by a broader look at the more fundamental values expressed in the policy.

As part of the explanation of the values of the plan, schematics maps of value derivations have been produced for each element of Policy UR8, as explained in Chapter 3. Although not referred to specifically in the text, the value maps are intended as a visual summary of the values described in each subsection.

Seed Bed Units / Managed Workspaces

Seed bed units are small commercial or industrial spaces designed to facilitate the growth of new businesses. The high turnover rate of the units, in part due to the high failure rate of new businesses, means they are typically not viable as profit-making developments, and are therefore sparsely provided by the property market. The Council is keen to promote the growth of small indigenous businesses, and therefore sees such units as a worthwhile benefit to secure for sites which might otherwise house only larger and more established firms. The primary motivation is employment. A decade and a half after the collapse of the local economy, Newham is still trying to rebuild a base from which to replace the "whole way of life" (int.6.32) which disappeared with the closures of the docks and other industries. Although the plan specifically states its objective of "boost[ing] the East London economy through increased inward investment" (para. 2.11.d), informants suggested that expectations were relatively low in respect of real employment growth from that source. Other informants noted that the direct employment benefits of inward investment tend to be limited, since in many cases the investment consists of a relocation of a business which brings many of its employees along. Growing new businesses results in new jobs for the local residents, and it holds out the promise of future growth as some of the small firms become more successful. As noted by Officer Six, this policy element was also a reflection of a long-standing Government policy directed at
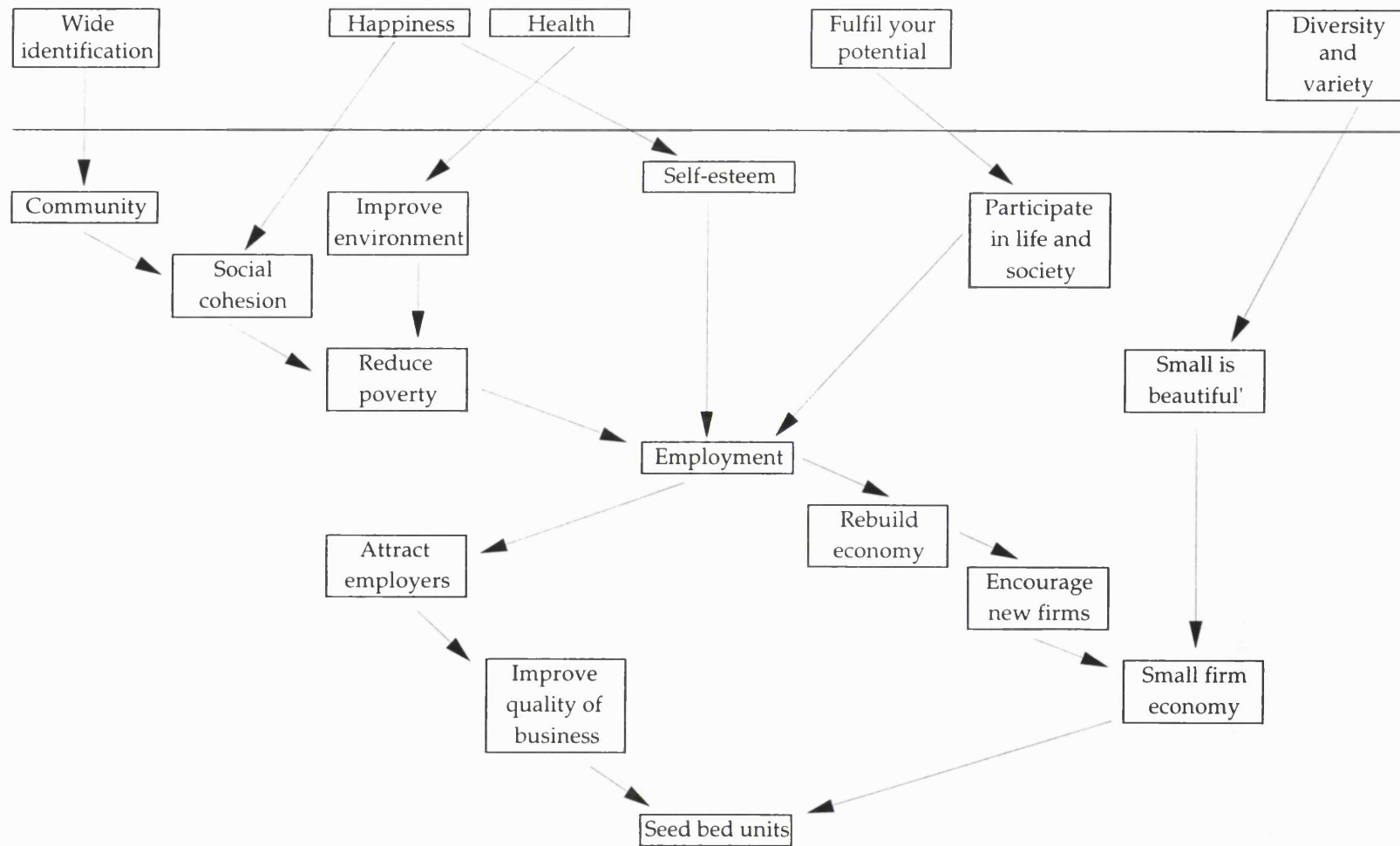
Figure 5.1 Value Map of Seed Bed Units

dispersing manufacturing and other major employment activities away from the Southeast, leaving deprived boroughs such as Newham to create their own new economic base.

Seed bed units—the rents of which would be subsidised either by the developer or the Council—are targeted at literally home-grown businesses which have outgrown the garage or the back garden. That transition is seen as a crucial stage which can make or break the business, and where a little help from outside is needed:

> You can manufacture widgets in your garage, but once you take on more orders and your garage isn't big enough, and you need premises, you get into paying rent, you need to employ an accountant, you need to borrow more money. How can you do these things at the same time as running a business?   (int.6.33)

Another facet to the policy was to address the nuisance caused by home-based businesses whose activities are not compatible with their residential surroundings. This is a more traditional aspect of planning, but is nevertheless a live problem for the borough, and perhaps one which relates more immediately to residents' local concerns than the broader objectives of employment and economic growth. Finally, it appears that there is a deeper principle at work related to encouraging the growth of small businesses. As Officer Five puts it, "the idea of the future economy [is] based on 'small is beautiful'" (int.5.45). An economy of small firms provides variety and diversity, which in turn leads to a more stable economy than the borough had in the past.

Training

If the plan is successful in drawing inward investment to Newham, it is important that the workforce is able to undertake the work which becomes available. Training centres are therefore another aspect of lowering unemployment in the borough. Training expands the opportunities of local residents, and in particular may help an unskilled or inappropriately skilled person meet the employment profile of the new growth industries. Furthermore, attracting inward investment depends in large measure on Newham creating an image of being a good place to locate: "if you have got a trained up workforce available for work, then that is another box that a potential employer can tick" (int.6.34).

The 'localness' of the workforce (as opposed to one composed of commuters from outside the area) is argued to be clearly in the interest of prospective employers, since the new economy demands flexibility. When pressed to explain the value of a local workforce, Councillor Three responded:
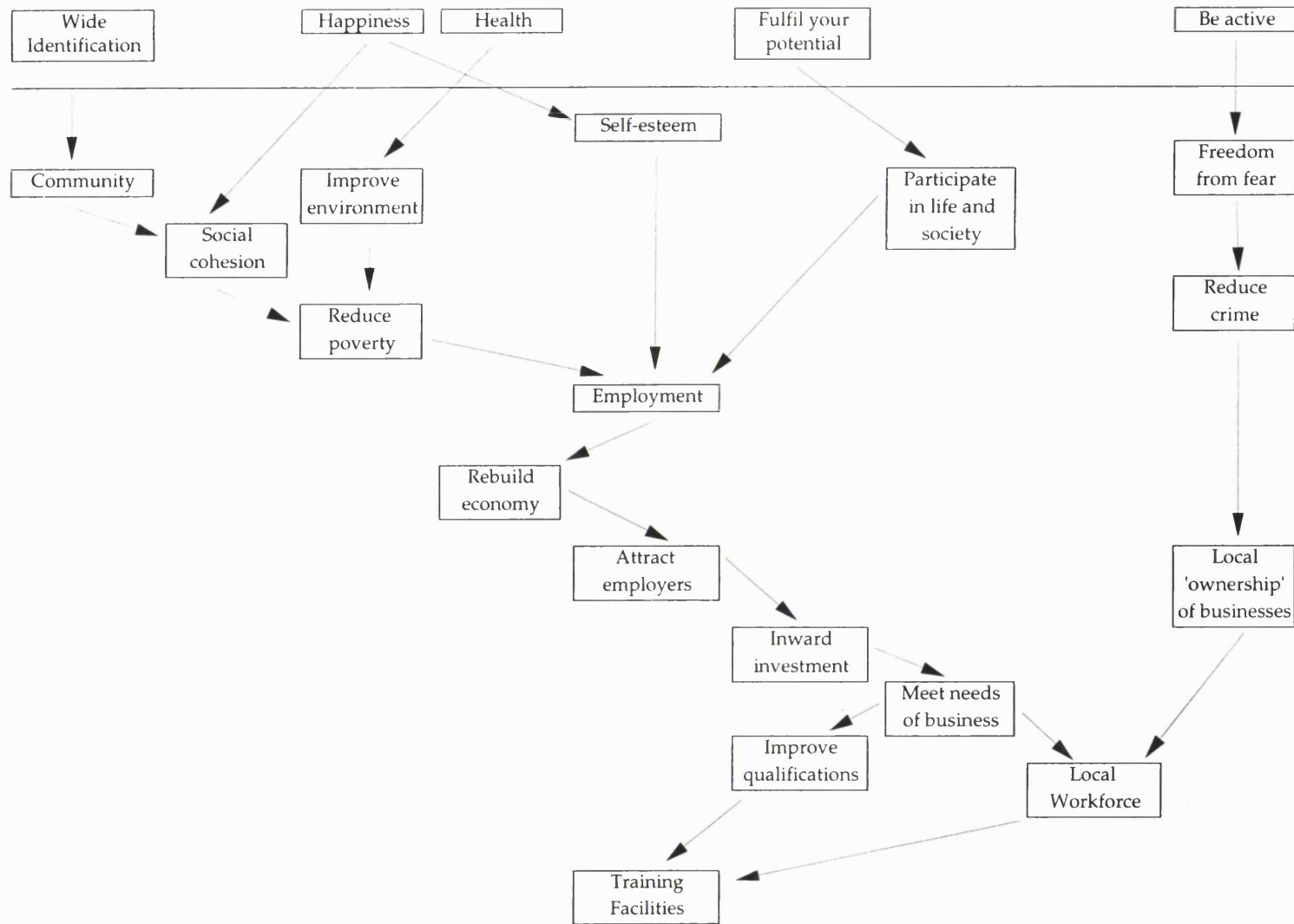
Figure 5.2 Value Map of Training Facilities

> Yes it is a plus for developers, particularly for the types of development being
> envisaged: retailing, hotels, conferences. They are all 7-day-a-week, 24-hour
> operations... So commuting becomes even more difficult if it's outside standard
> hours... And also potentially more flexible because they can come in at shorter
> notice if there is a particular demand that weekend for a conference.   (int.4.53)

Councillor Three then brought out a deeper issue which should also convince the developer that promoting local employment is in his or her interest:

> ...And also the notion of ownership. Developers do seem to think that if the local
> community "owns" a development, that they feel it is part of their community, then
> they are much less likely to vandalise.   (int.4.54)

It was readily apparent from the interviews that to link training with employment and then stop would be to see only the beginning of a much deeper and wider chain of reasoning and values. These deeper issues will be returned to in the next section, but it is worthwhile to comment here upon the way in which one value leads on to the next in the minds of informants. The pace of questioning was such that informants were usually given ample time to identify any linkages between other values and the one about which the question was initially posed; the often elaborated on a first idea as the connections were made in their minds.

Childcare Facilities

Regarding the objective of providing new childcare facilities, two officers pointed to now-discredited fears which had been raised in the 1980s about the 'demographic time bomb': The number of young people entering the workforce was declining, while the economy was growing, resulting in a projected rise in demand for economically inactive people to join the work-force. In the case of carers—typically women with young children—their re-entry was dependent on the provision of nurseries, which would free them up to become employed. With the recession in the early 1990s, fears that the economy would rush headlong into major shortages of labour were significantly dampened. It would seem, based on this depiction of the policy element's origins, that the childcare provision objective is a vestige of early drafts which were never updated. Indeed, Officer Two remarks, "I don't think it is really a burning issue" (int.2.39). However, the situation in Newham— with high incidence of single parent households and households in poverty, and a high birth rate—is not the same as in other parts of the country, and other informants countered the claim of unimportance. The argument from the employer's side may not be so strong, but the desire to facilitate
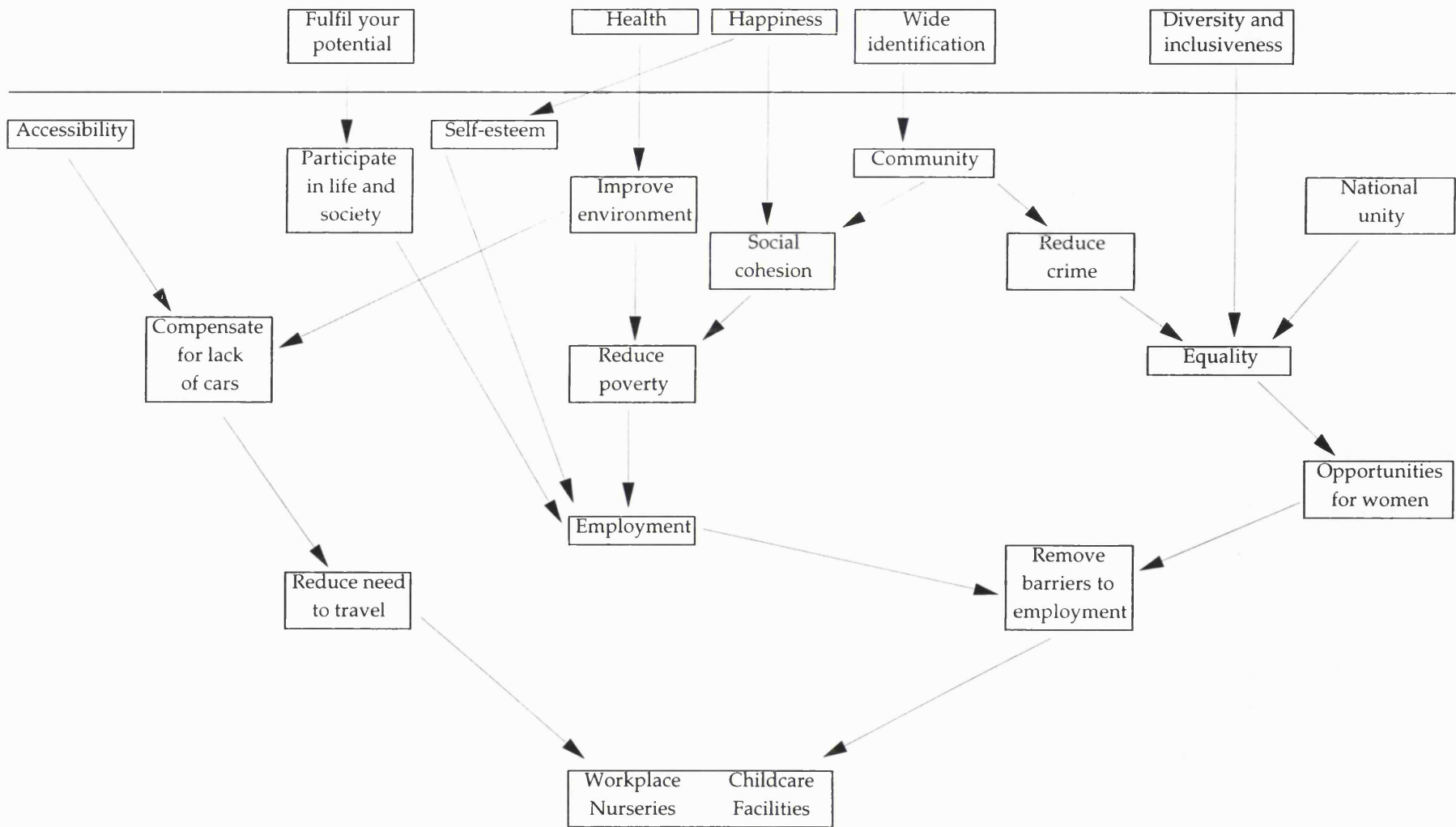
Figure 5.3 Value Map of Childcare Facilities

employment for those who need it has not abated in Newham. Councillor Three elaborates on the difficulties of families stuck in poverty:

> Getting out of that scenario does require working, and that requires childcare. It's all right if you are a middle class family. You can stay at home, in a reasonable house—I have done it myself. When you have got a very low income, it isn't the same thing at all. I think there is more need for those sorts of facilities, and you will find more of them in Newham...   (int.3.61)

Another officer described the bind of parents in need of childcare:

> You're going to find that there is a high amount of single parents, you have got to look at the average household income in Newham as being £12,000—an appalling amount. So you have got situations where you literally can't afford to pay for a private nursery. There is no state provision—they are really full. The only way you are going to get into a council-run nursery is if the child is possibly at risk. That's the only way you are going to get it. You aren't going to get into the private nursery because you haven't got the money.   (int.1.55)

Thus, it would only be through benefits flowing from development that affordable childcare facilities would be made available to those parents.

As well as being derived from the norm of increasing employment, the provision of childcare facilities also draws on another basic aim of the Council, which is to remove barriers to the activities of disadvantaged or discriminated population groups. The perception that it is mostly women (either as wives or as single parents) whose access to employment is being limited by their traditional carer role raises the issue of equality, the promotion of which is "a fundamental principle, both of this organisation, and of the individuals that participate in this organisation" (int.5.86). Thus childcare provision carries with it a dimension which is unrelated to the economic benefits derived from the policy. If it appears that women are being restricted from pursuing their careers or some other aspect of their personal development (*e.g.*, further education), then that is unfair, and the inequality should be addressed. Women should be allowed to "play a fuller role" (int.3.60), to "get back into work if they want to" (int.5.80).

It is interesting to note that there is an underlying (and probably unintended) assessment of the value of childcare in the statements of informants. Officer Eight put it most bluntly, saying:

> A lot of women are obviously quite capable of doing—it's not patronising—of *doing useful work*, it's because of the lack of opportunities. Providing childcare would free them off, give them enough time.   (int.8.48, emphasis added)

In many responses, taking care of one's children was implied to be less "useful" than getting a job. The context of informants' responses on this

questions was the assertion that single parents can't move out of poverty without a job, while two-parent families often need a second income to be comfortable as well. As described by informants, the options facing poor families are sometimes horrible, with neither choice being a good one. The implied conflict between *providing for* one's children and *taking care of* one's children exemplifies a more general tension between economic and non-economic values in contemporary society.

Public Transport

Public transport provision was generally agreed to be inadequate in Newham, especially so on the Beckton Gas Works site. Three deeper values were expressed in justifying increases in its provision. First is the recurring theme of poverty and employment. Less than half the households in Newham have access to a car, and therefore accessibility to sites of employment-generating redevelopment is a key aspect of helping people seize job opportunities as they appear. Besides employment, redevelopment of the gas works site is expected to include retail and leisure uses, all of which would also be inaccessible to people without cars unless public transport is brought to the site. Secondly, a hidden factor in car ownership statistics was mentioned, that among households with one car but more than one driver, it is typically the man who takes the car, leaving the woman to find her way around by other means. This relates to the Council's value of equality. The third deeper value is the improvement of the environment through the reduction in car trips, an argument which seemed to be well-rehearsed by most of the officers: "Public transport, we all know, is important because of PPG13 [Transport] and sustainable development" (int.6.36).

Some informants recognised that public transport provision was an objective more in line with traditional land use planning, or at least more in line with Government policy. For instance, in reviewing the likelihood of being able to defend the five community benefit objectives against the Inspector's criticisms, Officer Five said:

> Things like contributions to public transport, they are clear objectives that, really, development of these sites shouldn't go ahead without... It gets more difficult when you start looking at things like seed bed, training centre, and child facilities.
> (int.5.100-101)

Community Leisure Facilities

Community leisure facilities, the final community benefit objective, elicited a variety of responses. Recent social and economic changes (both

Figure 5.4 Value Map of Public Transport Facilities

Figure 5.5 Value Map of Community Leisure Facilties

voluntary and involuntary) have led to an expansion in the amount of free time people have. It was argued that addressing that change through the development of more leisure opportunities was a relevant planning issue. Councillor Four suggested that for young males having such free time was dangerous, in that they were likely to put it to ill use, such as vandalism, if another outlet for their energies was not provided. Also, linking leisure and other uses would extend the hours during which the site was in use, making it safer and less vulnerable to vandalism. Another officer noted that the policy was amended by adding the word "community" before "leisure facilities," which indicated that there was a difference between a profit-seeking private developer's notion of leisure and that of a low-income resident of Newham: ·

> When you are talking about *community* leisure facilities, you are not necessarily talking about a built facility. You might be talking about an open space, with a limited built element, which would probably be public open space; in other words there would be free entry.   (int.7.47)

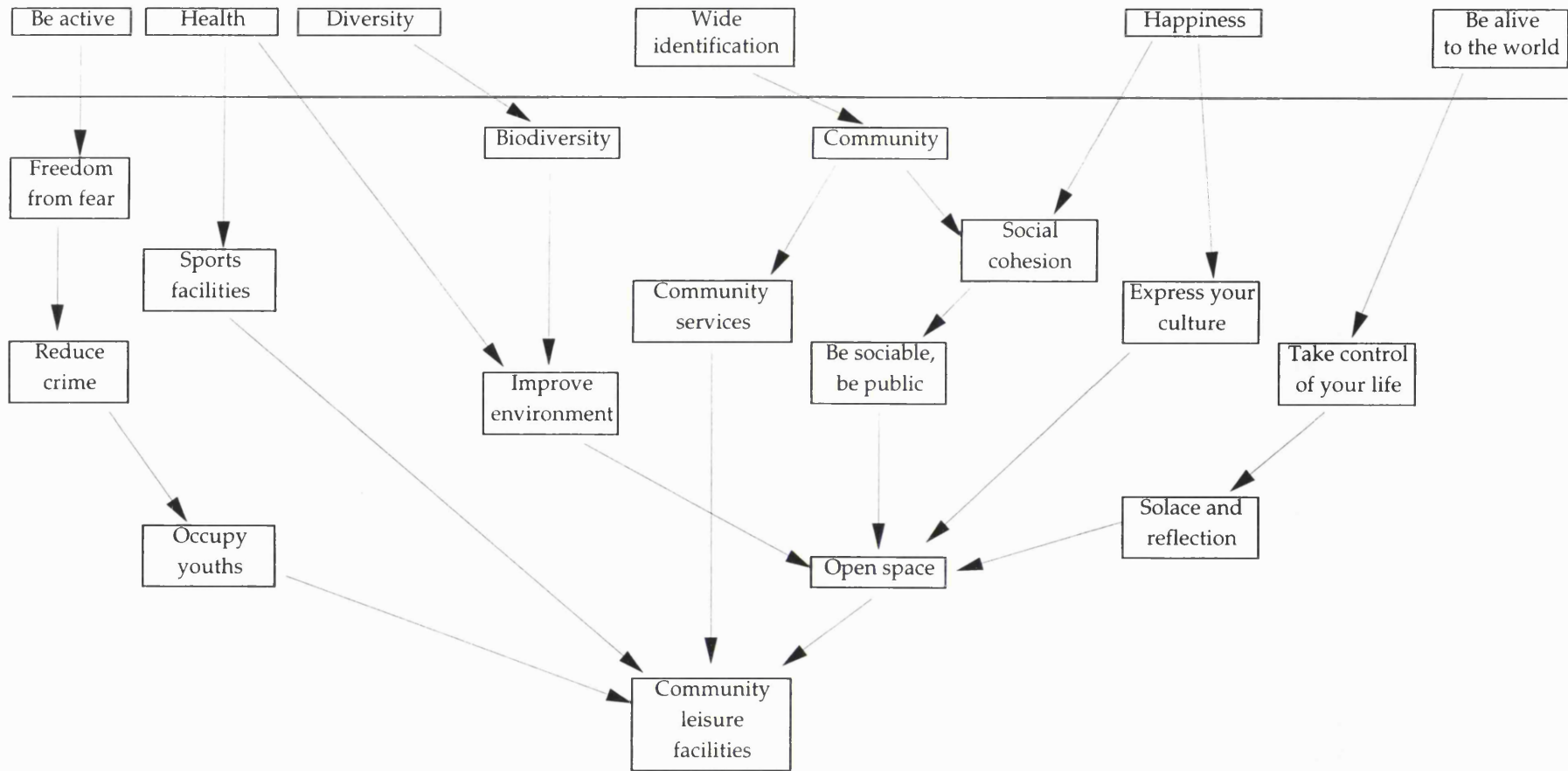The particular reference to open space for the gas works site was mentioned by other officers. As one of the few sites in the borough with unoccupied river frontage, it was hoped that this could be secured as publicly accessible open space. The follow-up question "What is the value of open space?" received many answers, such as the facilitation of solace and personal reflection, provision of a place for public interaction, a connection to the environment, a laboratory for young students of ecology, and as a pathway for cyclists and pedestrians.

Developer Contributions to Community Benefit Objectives

The last element of the policy refers to the means by which the five community benefit objectives would be provided. Developer contributions through planning obligations are a part of a key objective of the entire plan, to ensure that the benefits of urban regeneration flow to the community. Officer Six explains:

> In terms of values, the way the economic benefits of development work, it was an out-and-out rejection of the 'trickle down approach.' It was saying 'We have got to have a mechanism in place which tries to transfer job opportunities from Stratford Railway Lands to Canning Town.'   (int.6.21)

Rather than "trickle-down", the strategy might be instead called the "irrigation approach". Community benefits would be siphoned off from the privately funded developments. Why was this approach chosen? Officer
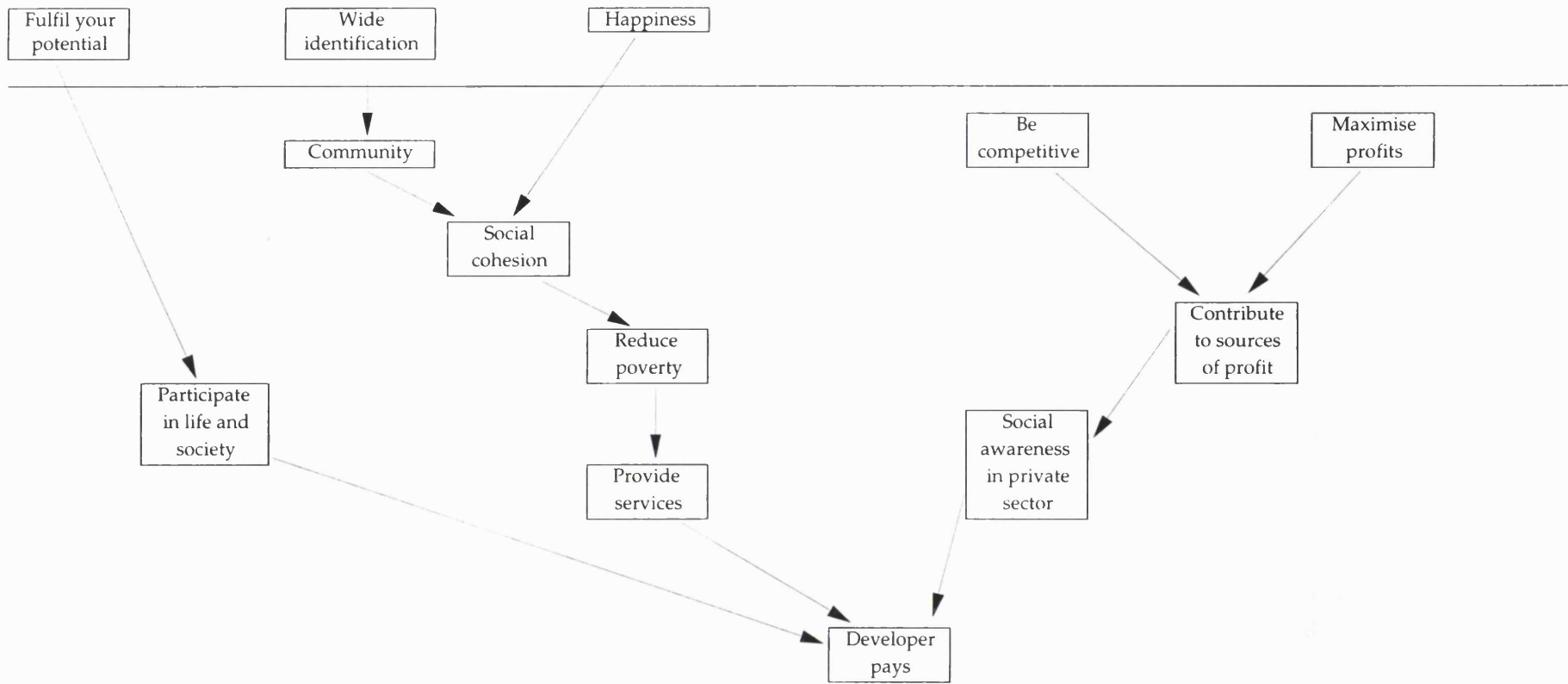
Figure 5.6 Value Map of Developer Contribution to Community Benefit

Two said cynically, "Planning nowadays is about screwing as much out of people as you can" (int.2.37). Officer Five begins in a similar vein, but then moves on to a serious point:

> I could be flippant and say 'Because he's got the money and we haven't.' He's getting development benefits out of the granting of planning permission. He is realising a greater value for the site, and out of that greater value he should provide something back to the wider community.   (int.5.100)

This approach appears to have been chosen out of political realism, not necessarily exclusively from a careful exploration of the Council's values related to development of the borough's derelict land. Officer Seven suggests that the Council's approach to development benefits is actually rooted in the Labour Party tradition of municipal socialism, of the Council providing services to a relatively passive public. They can no longer provide services in that way, having been forced by Government to sell many of their assets and then not being allowed to use the capital receipts freely. Nevertheless, he argues that the Council's paternalistic logic endures in setting out the policy of mandating community benefit objectives for developers. Councillor Three seemed to agree with that assessment, saying:

> The whole reason for... well, half the reason for a council to exist is to provide services, organise services, plan services for the people who live in the area. There is very little other point in existing, is there?   (int.3.52)

He acknowledged that the Council could no longer do what it used to do—like build housing for poor residents—but the image of a council which provides seems not to have diminished. In a discussion over childcare provision, Officer One used the context of recent changes to the national Labour Party under the leadership of Tony Blair to argue that the Council had no other options than to depend on the private developer for community benefits:

> *You see the private sector as necessarily having a role?*
>
> It's accepted now, it's accepted. In the 1945 brave new world, the policy would have been 'And it's the Council's intention to provide 5640 child places.' Not on anymore.
>
> *So why is that true?*
>
> Possibly because the political right has won the argument. I'm not saying it's true. I could argue that we should get back to Stalin without the extremes. The point is that the New Right from the '70s onwards—Hayek and all that—they have done an incredible job of winning the argument. Hence you have this... changing Labour.

So you think the Council believes that there is a social role for the private sector to play.

Well, they are obliged to believe it, they are forced to believe it. I am sure, from the heart, everyone would want to vote for Arthur Scargill's real Labour.[2] Unfortunately, everyone is so uncertain: 'Oh my God, I wonder, is it a dreamworld of Arthur's?' You know what I mean? Therefore they don't want to do it, they don't want to go down that route, and so obviously you take Blair's route. Maybe Blair is right, maybe it is a joint approach.   (int.1.74-79)

As will be shown in Section 5.6, the changing attitude to the role of the private sector is brought into sharpest relief when the UDP is compared to the local plans of the 1980s, in which the focus was first on the people of the borough, and references to private developers had the appearance of an afterthought.

5.2   Deeper Values

As can be seen in Figures 5.1 to 5.6, systems of belief—even fragments of them—are complex and involve multilayered logical derivations from fundamental norms to policy statements. As the deep questioning exercise began to delve into the normative roots of the policy, informants often found it difficult to say exactly what those more fundamental roots were. Some, it seemed, had not often considered such questions, and therefore were at a loss to express themselves, while others were overcome with the enormity of the task of answering a question like "Why do you want people to be employed?" Nevertheless, most informants took the questions seriously, and genuinely tried to give answers which matched the depth of the questions.

Economic Values

Providing employment was a key middle range value which often served as a conduit through which more fundamental values were converted into policy. As noted in the preceding narrative, the provision of seed bed units, training facilities, childcare facilities and public transport improvements all had as part of their value system the increase of employment opportunities. Employment as a value is largely derived from the things which having a regular income provides. Some informants pointed to the self-esteem or dignity which comes from employment, and one also noted the social interaction opportunities which workplaces provide, but employ-

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[2]Arthur Scargill was leader of the National Union of Miners and a prominent figure in the Labour Party. He has now formed a new party, the Socialist Labour Party.

ment was seen primarily as the material means to a better life, in myriad ways. Officer Six summed up the value of employment for individuals and for the local economy:

> It's about income generation, which will spin off into other local businesses, and which enables people to acquire the basics of modern urban living, which is shelter, heating, clothing, food, and so on and so forth, above whatever level is required to take you out of the definition of poverty. It's about providing...income that is spread about other shops, whether it's drycleaners or food shops or newsagents.
>
> (int.6.61)

Besides acquiring the material goods which are necessary to live in comfort, employment was linked to values of human behaviour. Employed parents, it was argued, tend to bring up their children in a better way, which raises the children's aspirations and drives them to achieve their goals. It brings down the level of crime, and tends to make people more tolerant of difference. In explaining the value of employment, Councillor Four merges the issues of crime and intolerance:

> And then estates where people are not working, often young men on such estates be-come disillusioned and there is an upturn in vandalism, petty crime, and break-ins. So we want to try and change that outlook for jobs and employment. To take a very graphic example, Rotterdam, which has a very large docks area...the second biggest party in Rotterdam is the Fascist Party, the National Front. Now in an area with a large multiracial population, like Newham, that's a real fear, that we might have a fascist party represented on the Council.   (int.4.60)

Given the many benefits which stream from employment—and the many values which are allegedly realised through it—an attempt was made in the follow-up survey to see if there was a consensus about the proper place of employment promotion in planning decisions. Two statements were presented on this theme:

	Agree	Disagree
3. Employment-generating developments should only be allowed as long as they don't undermine other social and environmental goals.	7	7

	Agree	Disagree
12. Employment concerns should take priority in planning decisions and policies.	7	7

These results suggest first and foremost a lack of consensus. Given the small sample size, very little else can be concluded, other than a tentative statement that despite the stated importance of employment as an instrumental value officers and councillors do not absolutely place it above all others in the plan.

Although employment was the most significant economic value mentioned—since it provides the connection between economic growth and residents' material well-being—informants also expressed general values of capitalism and profit-making in general. Councillor Four, for example, focused heavily on the importance of creating the conditions for business growth. Regarding the promotion of business growth, Officer Six said, "There has to be wealth creation somewhere, I've never had a problem with that, it's just how you distribute it" (int.6.61).

Environmental Values

Protecting and improving the environment was a value which was less often mentioned in interviews than generating employment, although I do not attempt to argue that frequency of mention is a proxy for intensity of feeling. The policy which was chosen for deep questioning tended to focus more heavily on benefits which had obvious employment consequences. Selecting a different policy might have resulted in no mention of employment at all. This may also account for the appearance of environmental values as of a lesser status than employment, or indeed derived from that value itself. However, environmental values were mentioned in a variety of contexts, and in some cases were put forward as a future first principle of planning policies.

Most commonly the value of environmental protection was determined by anthropocentric norms, such as health and the joy and variety of experience derived from open space. The extent of deprivation in Newham, as well as its position between Central London and commuters in Essex— Officer Five referred to the 80,000 cars per day using one major route—has heightened informants' awareness of the problems of pollution and health for the borough. Councillor Four argued that a better local environment (specifically improved housing) made people happier and helped them raise happier children.

Environment was also expressed as a derived norm in the context of improving the image of the borough in order to attract inward investment. Officer Two said caustically, "Newham is seen as a crap town" (int.2.58). As a result, he continued, the offensive industries which crossed the River Lea a century ago are still here, and the hoped-for science parks and commercial centres aren't, and the poor image is reinforced. Perceptions may be illusory, but they have real consequences which bear on the real circumstances of the residents of Newham. Looking at the potential positive economic effects of a

pleasant environment, and particularly of open space, Officer Six acknowledged the effect they can have on property values, and commended the LDDC on their recognition of this principle.

Besides economic benefits and the personal pleasure derived from "just sitting and walking" (int.6.45), the presence of green space served as a reminder and connection to the larger environment of which we are all a part. The notions of stewardship and intergenerational equity was mentioned by Officer Six, saying:

> ...we have responsibility which goes beyond the self, which is not just directly to other individuals that we interact with, but what is, I suppose at the most banal level, a responsibility to other life forms.   (int.6.73)

The importance of this larger awareness was also mentioned by Officer Seven as a feature of a good quality of life. This value was corroborated by the survey, which generated almost unanimous agreement—nearly half agreeing strongly—with the statement:

	Agree	Disagree
10. A fundamental part of our well-being is the awareness that we are part of something bigger than ourselves.	12	2

A working hypothesis employed by Naess is that there is no systematic fundamental disagreement with the Deep Ecology Platform. If an individual engages in the deep questioning exercise to construct an environmental value system (or ecosophy), he or she will find that it is compatible with the platform. "The modern ecological predicament is the result of thoughtlessness, rather than thought" (Naess, 1995a, 205). This hypothesis would perhaps be met with incredulity by a large proportion of the public, and it is not the purpose of this thesis to either refute or support it. However, it is interesting to note that the language used by some informants to speak about the environment does not seem so far from that of the Deep Ecology Platform, or of Naess' personal ecosophy, which he calls 'Ecosophy T' (Naess, 1989). For instance, although the term 'biodiversity' was mentioned by only one informant, diversity as a general principle was mentioned by others (usually in terms of the stability derived from a diverse economy of small firms). Survey responses to Statement Four were similar to those of Statement Ten:

	Agree	Disagree
4. Diversity is a fundamental principle of all life, and should be supported equally within the economy, society, culture, and the natural environment.	13	1

The awareness of something beyond the self is closely related to Naess' ultimate norm, which he calls "Self-realisation." Self-realisation, though defined with deliberate vagueness, refers to a *wide identification* of the personal self as a gestalt within much larger gestalts. It describes an active process of connecting with other human beings, other species, and with Nature itself.

As further evidence of the tentative but growing support for the principles expressed by the Deep Ecology Platform, two officers pointed to a future in which environmental issues play the central role in planning decisions. Officer Seven mentioned the Local Agenda 21 protocol which emerged from the watershed 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development. Local Agenda 21 would to help the Council integrate environmental criteria into its entire decisionmaking structure, and thereby not allow those issues to remain residual considerations. Officer Five suggested that a new approach might be taken when the UDP comes up for review in a few years' time:

> ...it might be if you really want to take environmental issues seriously, you say, 'Right, we'll start off with an environmental appraisal, we'll look at objectives of sustainability, we'll look at public transport accessibility, and they will be our main objectives in dictating the future direction of development in the borough.'
> (int.5.25)

These approaches are not in use in the current plan, and in spite of the hints of affinity with the Deep Ecology Platform in practice, environmental concerns do seem to show up only at the end of the process. Environmental problems are still seen as an unfortunate side effect of otherwise beneficial development. Both officers who broached the possibility of raising the status of environmental concerns immediately contradicted the idea for the present, saying that Newham has to address its problems of poverty and deprivation before it can consider extensively limiting development solely on environmental grounds. Officer Five said that Local Agenda 21 also included decisionmaking criteria of social and economic benefits, and they would outweigh negative environmental effects such as pollution and automobile congestion, which would then need to be ameliorated *post facto*.

Survey questions sought to test the extent to which environmental values have been relegated behind more pressing considerations:

	Agree	Disagree
2. The Council will not be in a position to base its actions on environmental criteria until it has improved social and economic conditions in the borough.	8	6

	Agree	Disagree
7. Environmental criteria should be the first consideration of planning decisions and policies	5	9

Statements Two and Seven are substantially similar to the paired statements respecting the status of employment objectives (Three and Twelve) As already noted, the sample size was quite small, while the split in all four statements was not very decisive. However, with that caveat, the responses suggest more unanimity about the need to balance environmental concerns with other values than about the need to balance employment objectives.

Fundamental Values

Glasser argues that it is impossible to truly understand someone's ultimate norms, since to do so would require such a background of unarticulated worldview assumptions that a lifetime might be spent in the explanation.[3] However, the deep questioning exercise did reveal values which informants either could not explain, or said were fundamental and had no deeper justification. I will use this more modest definition of "fundamental" to describe those values at the top of the map shown in Figure 5.7. The fundamental values were of either a personal or a social nature.

Among the personal values, human health was deeply held as a value and a right of everyone. Sometimes it was simply asserted as a fundamental value or right, but other informants implied that it was an instrumental value for the more fundamental norms of realising one's potential as a human being or living a trouble-free life. Officer Five asserted that "We all should have the confidence that we live in a safe environment" (int.5.73). When asked why, he said:

> I think it's about basic humanity. I honestly don't think we have a society today where we can't care about people's health, where we'd say, 'All right let's carry on with that activity despite the fact that it might lead to the premature deaths of so many thousands.' We simply have got to be careful about what we do, and make certain that we're not damaging people's health. (int.5.75)

Health was also described as an element of personal well-being, although it is difficult to say whether well-being is more fundamental, or whether, like sustainability and quality of life, well-being might better be described as a composite term which groups together a number of values without adding any depth to the meaning of each individual value. That is perhaps a matter for semantic philosophers and need not concern us here.

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[3]Personal communication, 2 April 1996.

Health, well-being and realising potential are all part of a constellation of fundamental values which serve as a guide for the policies and decisions on the ground. Putting them into words imbues them with a false preciseness, and therefore debating one word versus another shifts attention from the value itself to the word with which the value is named.

Realising one's potential relates to a person's ability to act freely in the world, and a number of descriptions surrounded this idea. First, like health, education and training were key derived values, since preparation allows opportunities to be seized. Second, raising the aspirations of the people of Newham was also important, as an expression of the internal human process of 'regeneration' that mirrors the external physical one planned for the borough. A third form of acting freely is the freedom from fear which was expressed in relation to crime. Fear, rather than outright damage to property or persons, was seen to be the greatest cost of crime, and one which offended both personal and social fundamental values. Councillor Four returned several times to the problem of crime and the fear of crime. For instance, fear limited job opportunities for women, since they might be disinclined to take jobs which did not have normal business hours. He later said:

> I think it is a social point of people to feel safe and content in their homes, to be able to move around, go out for a meal in the evening in a restaurant. I think it is a basic human right...   (int.4.75)

Fundamental social values centred on the maintenance of communities and social cohesion, but also expressed a more general idea of participation in society. Society is "flaking around the edges" (int.6.66), and much of the plan is rooted in the value of social cohesion, the achievement of which will turn the process around. For informants, the flaking process was related to inequitable divisions in society, where opportunities are made available to one group, but not to another, without reference to the latter group's abilities or potential:

> It goes to wider issues, about community cohesiveness. Do we want to live in a society divided within itself?... If a society is cohesive, even if it might be diverse, you are talking about a better quality of life, a happier society, a society at peace with itself.   (int.7.57-58)

Diversity, according to the hypothesis of Officer Seven, is not inherently incompatible with community cohesion. Indeed, the diversity of the borough was celebrated by a number of informants. Councillor Three pointed to the pleasure of being among and learning about different cultures and people.

Figure 5.7 Value Map of Policy UR8

a b c d e f g h i j k l

Employment

Protect environment

Rebuild economy

Local ownership' of businesses

Attract employers

Encourage new firms

Remove barriers to employment

Occupy youths

Solace and reflection

Inward investment

Create open space

Meet the needs of business

Local workforce

Provide services

Social awareness in private sector

Improve qualifications

Reduce need to travel

Small firm economy

Training Facilities

Seed Bed Units

Childcare Facilities

Public Transport

Community Leisure

Developer Pays

Officer Six argues that social cohesion is a measure of civilisation. Without it, the joy of urban living is lost:

> What is the point of living surrounded by all these people if you are too scared to go
> out and meet with them, and talk with them and mingle with them?   (int.6.69)

In summary, the values of policy UR8 may be described in the following manner: The policy is fundamentally about building diverse but socially cohesive communities in which people are able to realise their potential as human beings and grow in awareness of the larger world of which they are a part. These fundamental values are to be realised through increases in employment opportunities for local people and improvements to the environment. From these twin instrumental values are derived the mechanism of drawing community benefits from new private sector developments, and the choices of benefits themselves.

A further conclusion is that the values of the plan and the values of the Council are not, of necessity, the same thing. This study of values in the Newham planning process has, in part, attempted to determine the values of the Council and the plan, and to see how the choices between values have been made. However, the choices are not for the Council to make unilaterally, since the plan must be understood within the context of a political process. Deep questioning on an individual scale is different from that at a corporate scale. We, as individuals, have only ourselves to account for in construction and enactment of our philosophical value systems. The plan is a joint production of the Council, the people and organisations with which it consulted, its ninety objectors, the DoE Inspector and the statutory framework of planning law and Government guidance. If the plan's policies at the end of the process are not perfectly consistent with the Council's fundamental values, perhaps this is no more than may be expected from a negotiated document. This issue will be returned to in Section 5.4.

5.3   Dual Reasoning

Any policy statement represents a number of higher order values and hypotheses which justify its presence and form in the plan. Within the context of this general principle, a particular kind of policy justification emerged from the interviews. Typically two value statements would be offered in explaining a particular policy element or issue, one founded on some aspect of moral or fundamental values while the other would relate to the financial or economic implications of the element or issue in question. This dual

reasoning process seemed to be a reflection of the lower status of non-economic value statements in public policy and society at large. There is some suggestion that officers and councillors in Newham attempt to balance the economic arguments with other values but they have an intuitive understanding that the economic justifications are the ones which are more politically salient. A number of examples are presented.

Environmental protection was closely linked to the fundamental value of promoting the health of the residents of the borough. In one exchange on this question, as if the claim of "basic humanity" were not enough reason to protect public health, Officer Five adds, "There's also a legal implication. More and more you'll get liability, getting sued, for not making sure of that" (int.5.75). Clearly the legal implication is also a financial one for the Council. Environmental protection as protection of public health was also set against the necessity of improving the borough's image in order to attract new investment.

The childcare policy element elicited strong expressions of the Council's belief in equal opportunities for women, the group most likely to benefit from the policy. Expanding on that theme, I asked Officer One why inequity (his term) was a problem. He began by invoking national economic competitiveness, moved through the indirect effect of inequity on the (mythical) law-abiding middle class, and finally ended up with the real source of the value:

> Why? [laughs] I suppose it's like [Tony] Blair's stakeholder arguments now. You can't go ahead as a country, economically, with all the inequity, because we've got people who don't feel like they belong, you have got potential social problems, criminal problems, which will eventually impact on those people in cosy situations...

> *Would you say that, fundamentally, that policy is derived from an economic standpoint?*

> I think you have got arguments for an economic argument, but really it's from the heart, it's from an ethical point of view. That's where it really is, but you can justify it in some respects. The Government has been forced to justify it, because of changing economic circumstances, because of changing demography. That's why they are accepting it.

> *But for the council—*

> For the council, it comes from the heart.   (int.1.58-66)

One almost gets the impression that it wouldn't really matter to the Council if their childcare policy had no economic effect whatsoever, were it not for the political reality of policy justification. Another issue with strong moral over-

tones is racism, which again relates to the Council's stance on the value of equality. When Councillor Four talks about it in the context of council housing, he gives two reasons to oppose racism, even though the first is absolute, and might be considered an example of the "moral imperative" of Max Weber's substantive rationality (Reade, 1985):

> Firstly, we will not tolerate it... But if we did let racism get a hold, then we might find whole estates, whole areas of Newham, where we couldn't house people. And that leads to less flexibility in housing and greater costs to repairs to housing.
>
> (int.4.78)

A third moral issue, fear of crime, is also subject to more practical justification. Councillor Four puts it succinctly, "I think it is a basic human right, but it is also self-interest" (int.4.75). The self-interest part of the argument is that the fear of crime is a factor in whether people want to remain in an area if they can afford to leave, which has consequences for the prosperity of that area.

At the end of the interview with Officer Six, I asked him what motivated landowners (such as British Gas) to agree to funding community benefits. Was it the basic value of responsibility to one's fellow human being which we had been talking about, or something else? He answered in a way that obviated the need for moral issues to arise in property development; a stronger force had overtaken them:

> I think there has been a shift, typified by the attitude that the Rosehaugh Stanhopes of this world took,[4] where as a response to the office boom of the '70s and '80s, where they said, 'Look, maybe there are some moral imperatives, but hey, there is quite a big economic imperative, because if you don't win people over before you build your office block next to their housing scheme, they will come along and kick all the window panes out at night.' It's not just people being nice to people. It's not just a moral thing. There's got to be an economic imperative behind it, because of the kind of economic system that we've got.   (int.6.86)

As long as the discourse of land development and planning is dominated by the language of money, economic forces will be stronger than non-quantifiable values.

Turning to the plan adoption process, dual reasoning was also evident in the Council's decision to negotiate with objectors and to become partners

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[4]Rosehaugh was a property development company which gained national prominence through its involvement in a number of large projects in Britain, only to collapse, bankrupt, in 1991. It formed a partnership with Stanhope Properties to develop such projects as Broadgate in the City of London and an aborted massive redevelopment scheme for the Kings Cross area. Rosehaugh Stanhope became as notorious as Olympia & York, developers of Canary Wharf, for symbolising the excessiveness of the boom-and-bust years of property development in the 1980s (Adams, 1994).

with the LDDC. Officer Six, who had an important role in the process, referred to the goal of broad 'ownership' of the plan, of fostering partnerships rather than adversarial relationships. He then added that another consideration was the cost of the plan adoption process (int.6.14): "Also, in terms of a hard-nosed decision of, 'What's going to be the most cost-effective way of getting the plan on deposit?'" The answer to both goals was to negotiate with all objectors to resolve their differences before the public inquiry. With regard to the LDDC in particular, the reasoning was the same. They had the desire to promote partnership, but there was also the "hard-nosed" and politically astute realisation that LDDC funding would only be brought to bear on the problems of the borough if Newham actively courted the Corporation as a partner in regeneration.

Dual reasoning shows that there is a constant tension between the values which tell the Council what is right, and the economic and political imperatives which determine what is practical. The frequency of examples of dual reasoning in interviews suggests that expressions of non-quantifiable values to justify policy are not sufficient, and therefore they must also have a financial element as well. This is true even in widely held values, such as equality and racial tolerance.

Expressions of economic value are, rightly, an important aspect of decision-making. What has been argued in the explorations of postmodernism and deep ecology is that this constrained understanding of value fails to capture the multidimensionality of planning issues. It is refreshing to see different expressions of value side by side with economic ones. If, as this research suggests, they exist that way in the minds of planners and councillors, it is argued that such expressions could also be openly honoured as a valid part of the planning process.

5.4 The Role of Values

In the artificial format of a research interview, a rich exploration of the values of the Newham UDP was possible. However, in the practical and politically charged real world of planning, what can be said of the role of values and subjective understanding in general? How do they affect the plan document?

To begin, the question was put directly to informants, by asking them whether discussions about the values of the plan had taken place during the preparing and writing of plan drafts. The responses did not markedly differ

from what were expected, but the comments which sprang from the intro-
duction of the topic were of greater interest. In general, there was little
explicit discussion of values among officers and councillors, or between
officers and outside objectors. Officer One reflected the opinions of both
officers and councillors who were interviewed, saying, "No discussion
whatsoever on values." According to him, that does not matter: "It's like,
you know what the council expects" (int.1.35). On the other hand, Officer
Two said that he would have found a discussion helpful in guiding his work
on the plan.

A number of other explanations were suggested to explain the apparent
lack of normative debate. First of all, Newham has long been a staunchly
Labour borough and currently has no opposition party represented on the
Council. This has not prevented significant debate and disagreement among
individual members, but the traditional structure of two- or multi-party
governance, which might give rise to debates at a more fundamental level,
does not currently exist. Second, Councillor Three pointed out that the
officers are familiar with the party manifesto document, so councillors don't
need to have a great debate about it, nor indeed do they have much time for
it, since most councillors are busy with their own lives and only serve on a
part-time basis. At the committee meetings in which drafts were reviewed,
discussions were of a concrete nature, focusing on a few pages at a time:

> Now we might then spend twenty minutes discussing one of those clauses and
> somebody might say, 'Well look you've missed out something here, what about so
> and so'...   (int.3.25)

Finally, such discussions were also stifled by the way the plan was produced.
Since the previous local plans provided the base for the new UDP, the values
of those plans were incorporated without an opportunity to rethink the plan.
As some officers noted, the process in Newham was rather informal and, for
the first few years, had not been given a high priority in the department.
Therefore, there had not been the staff resources to devote attention to much
more than the details essential to putting a plan together. When the 1991
draft was looked at afresh, in preparation for putting a new draft on deposit,
there was a recognition that the original approach had been flawed It would
have been better to have thrown out the out-of-date local plans and started
with new research and new objectives; however, by then time became a new
constraint on considering larger issues.

Despite these explanations, the UDP has undergone significant changes
from its early draft and the previous local plans, particularly in terms of the

communicative work of the plan. The changes raise the question of whose values the plan now expresses. A variety of responses were elicited from informants, some cynical while others were sanguine about the ability of the Council to be the master of its own plan. Since the plan begins with a draft produced by the Council planning department, the implicit question concerns the extent to which other interested parties have been able to modify the plan to more closely reflect their concerns or values. On the mind of a number of officers was the then recently released Inspector's report. Officer One objected—somewhat bitterly—to the power of a single individual to change the plan:

> ...And you can sense it in the values, the Council's values are extracted from the plan by this process of having this besuited civil servant—who's quite quirky, he's quite funny in some of the things he says... At the end of the day, it's the little individual civil servant who's taken a year to produce his report...earning his money, having his nice little job and having quite an impact on the final product...
> (int.1.15)

Officer Seven was also disappointed with the report, and suggested that the individuality of inspectors means that there is a kind of lottery going on in the planning process, and that Newham was unlucky:

> It depends very much on which inspector you get. Some inspectors have a greater understanding about what the local authorities are trying to achieve through the planning process. I don't think they would express that openly, but they probably have an underlying sympathy for local authorities and the type of things they are trying to achieve. Other inspectors take a more traditional view, which is in line with advice from Government... (int.7.14)

Since the plan, at the time of writing, had not yet been revised in response to the Inspector's report, it is not clear just how far his influence will go in the adopted plan. However, the report does place a heavy emphasis on the plan's inclusion of issues which are beyond the scope of land use concerns. The report also expresses a deeply held disagreement with the Council regarding the proper responsibility of developers. To state the difference in terms of values, it appears that the Inspector does not accept that the value of Self-realisation—being part of something larger than yourself—concerns developers applying for planning permission. If a proposed development would cause some demonstrable harm to the surrounding environment, then planning gain agreements might be used to ameliorate that damage. However, he does not take the line that there is a value of *wider* social and community responsibility which should influence either the plan or development control decisions which are based on the plan.

In respect of private sector influence, most informants referred to the ability of developers, landowners and large companies to participate in the process more successfully than individuals or small organisations. Notwithstanding Government guidance, which is sympathetic to developers' reluctance to add to the cost of development with (to their eyes) irrelevant community benefits, the private sector has the means and the familiarity with legal and planning discourse to make a greater impact than those who are less familiar. Officer Seven claimed:

> The only reason why the Inspector has recommended a major watering down of a lot of our policies, is because the private sector has been very vigilant in minimising the cost of development to themselves.   (int.7.15)

Officer Eight described the problem as the result of systematic bias:

> To a great extent, whoever has got a voice, you have to listen to them. Quite often it happens that business or the other organisations who are organised, they get a better hearing.   (int.8.71)

This illustrates a basic element of the postmodernist (and other) critiques. While there might be a recognition that a multiplicity of voices have a stake (even if not a direct legal or financial interest) in the physical development of the borough, the system by which choices are made about that development is restricted by its complicatedness, its institutional framework, and the dominant discourse of the development community.[5] Those whose access is restricted by virtue of their limited means, time or familiarity with the discourse will not be able to make their voices heard. Those who are not limited will tend to effect a more sympathetic outcome.

Another aspect of this debate revolved around whether such modifications as had been made to the plan were in fact fundamental to the integrity of the plan and its values. To some officers, the plan has been watered down by objectors, the result being a document which no longer expresses its values in a way which is meaningful. For example, the 1991 draft policy on development proposals in conservation areas (ENV37) stated that they "must complement and reflect the historic or architectural character of the area." The 1993 draft modified this policy (then changed to EQ35) by changing "must" to "should." Proposed modifications leading up to the inquiry completely rewrote the section on conservation areas, and the equivalent policy (now EQ35B) became:

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[5]'Development community' refers to the agencies and actors in the business of land development. Besides being a functional categorisation, the terms also implies a discourse community which expresses a positive attitude towards development.

> The local planning authority will seek to ensure that development in a conservation area preserves or enhances the special character of the area...

In his comments on the policy, the Inspector recommended rewriting it along the lines of "the local planning authority will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the special character, *etc.*" (Bingham, 1995, 322). As another example, the 1991 draft policy on workplace nurseries (EMP27) read:

> The Council will expect major new developments...to provide a purpose-built nursery facility of at least 20 places on site... Smaller developments...will be encouraged to provide nursery facilities themselves or, alternatively, to make a financial contribution towards provision...

This was modified in 1993 (now EMP6) in favour of less stridency, with "The Council will seek the provision of on-site nursery facilities, *etc.*" Pre-Inquiry proposed modifications inserted the word "appropriate" after "the provision of". Not surprisingly, the Inspector has recommended deletion of this policy.

What is the real meaning of such changes as these? Officer One, referring to Policy EMP6, said:

> Yeah you can see [one] of the changes there, is the word 'appropriate' and you can see where that came from, for that word 'appropriate' is another watering down. So you start off with this good sentiment, about 'Yeah we're going to have it, regardless,' and then suddenly, it's 'appropriate'.   (int.1.54)

One the other hand, Officer Six attested to the success of the negotiations with objectors by saying that they never "had to compromise on any of the basic principles" (int.6.14). For him, this was indicative of the nature of the planning process, in that "You end up talking as much about the meaning of words as you do in a head-to-head confrontation about whether something's basically right or wrong" (int.6.15). Agreement on this question, therefore, is not to be found among the informants.

Survey responses were somewhat more elucidative on this question, as there was stronger agreement with the idea that the Council had retained the integrity of the plan's values than that it had been overtaken by outside influences. The two statements were:

	Agree	Disagree
1. Although the plan has been modified during the consultation process, the plan is still an accurate reflection of the values of the Council.	12	2

	Agree	Disagree
5. The influence of business, developers, landowners, the LDDC, and the Government have fundamentally changed the values expressed by the plan.	8	6

It is perhaps worthwhile to note the nature of many of the policy modifications. The Inspector has recommended deletion of a large number of policies, such as the workplace nursery policy noted above, on grounds that they have no bearing on land use and development. Since they also tend to have cost implications for developers, the Council has been engaged in a kind of dance around the objections, trying to find mild enough wording to make the objectionable policy palatable to all parties. To have a policy saying anything about workplace nurseries is better than no such policy at all, which is in fact the likeliest outcome. In other words, the Council is trying to bring to bear its values about the connection between development and the community in which the development takes place.

This research does not satisfactorily resolve this question, but one may tentatively conclude that the values of modified policies, if they remain, still reflect the values of the original. However, other values, such as attracting development or promoting broad acceptance of the plan, have influenced the policy to counterbalance them. If, as seems likely, the policies are deleted in compliance with the Inspector's recommendations, it would be hard to conclude otherwise than that the Council's social values in the plan would be seriously eroded.

5.5   Storytelling

Narratives, as noted in Chapter 2, are a powerful device for communicating complex ideas and assembling salient issues in preparation for policy decisions (Kaplan, 1993). For instance, in Beauregard's analysis of Peter Marris' novel, *The Dreams of General Jerusalem*, we see how the story the European planners tell themselves about the African city for which they were making a plan leads to a clash not just between cultures, but also between "a modernist planning project [and] a nonmodernist reality" (Beauregard, 1991, 189).

The use of stories was seen in two aspects in the research interviews. First, one particular example shows how a story can be superior to a more direct explanation in communicating the sense of a deeply held value. Second, throughout interviews and the texts of plans, a narrative about the borough emerges, which has clearly led the Council to its particular set of policies. I will explore the story which is told by the plans and by informants.

The Story as an Expression of Values

In the course of the interviews, as questions about values probed more deeply, informants would sometimes take great pauses to consider an answer, and would even become somewhat frustrated at the effort to explain things which are so difficult to put into words. At one point, one informant blurted out:

> This is getting very deep! ...I'm a very simple man, I'm afraid. You'll have me going home troubled, soul-searching about what I've done for the last thirteen years. (int.5.78)

Another said, "This is getting very philosophical, isn't it?" When I replied that that was my intention, he said, "Oh is it? I thought you were doing a third degree on the Council" (int.3.57-59). The challenge to adequately explain and communicate fundamental values prompted Councillor Three to give a story which serves as a very good example of the power of narratives, and it is quoted in full. The conversation began with an explanation of the childcare policy element of Policy UR8, which was partly derived from the value of equal opportunities, not just for women, but also for new immigrant populations. His story came in response to the next question:

> *Well if these groups come in... A newly arriving group arrives and is in that situation where they are without the kind of subculture support system—the right kinds of food in the shops and all the rest of it—what becomes the problem with that? Why is that something you want to overcome?*

> Well they are part of Newham, aren't they? Let's give you an example. A couple of months ago, I was invited to this Somali group that were trying to get planning permission for a shop they converted... They wanted to make it into a community centre. The plan was that their kids would come there after school, and the mothers would come along with them, and there would be English classes, but given by a Somali. So it was a two-way process: The kids would experience Somali language in an educational surrounding, and the mothers, who only spoke Somali, were able to hear their kids talking English (and the tutor). It was all voluntary.

> So there was a need for it. There was a group of my community. They are mine now, because they are in my ward, so to me (if I look at it the way I like to) it is part of the group, they make it interesting, and therefore they have the need to start somewhere else. It was fascinating. There was a Pakistani guy who owned this place, who was letting them have it free, and there was a Sikh councillor, and a Pakistani councillor, and we were all sitting there...

> Yeah it was lovely, somebody brought some samosas, and somebody brought some soup, and we had [a senior planning officer] along, who talked about the planning thing. They invited some of the neighbours along as well, one or two very white straight-faced shopkeepers who didn't really know what they were doing there. And one of the problems was that these people [the Somalis] brought with them AIDS, unfortunately, so they were getting some sponsorship for an AIDS programme. That did seem to shock this couple a bit. But they were there listening

to it, getting involved, feeling [like] they were doing something useful, so I think the whole thing was... Hopefully some sort of good came out of it.

To me, I find that—I'm lucky, in a way—I find that interesting and exciting, and to me that was an experience like going to a film or the theatre, you see. So other things I do as a councillor sometimes I find a bit of a drag, you know, but they sang a few songs, and I had to give an impromptu speech, which I don't like doing. But you put it all together and it was a bit of fun really. And afterwards, the guy who owned it, he brought in some wine and things. And I would never have met those people under other circumstances, so that's why I find it interesting. And they are part of the community in that area. Very much so.   (int.3.65-67)

This story weaves together ideas of community, diversity and distinctiveness, participation, and enjoyment of life in a way that directly asserting their value could not have done.

It is not made entirely clear in postmodernist planning literature (*e.g.,* Healey, 1993) what bearing the telling of myths and stories could have in planning. Councillor Three's narrative, however, suggests first that stories are alive in planning and policy discussions—they are part of our under-standing of the world—and second that a story could indeed become the focus of a policy prescription. The story brings to life the non-quantifiable values which are often neglected in the face of the concrete and clear values expressed by "cost-benefit" type analysis. Recent attempts to integrate subjective values into a cost-benefit framework—such as Lichfield's (1994) Community Impact Analysis—acknowledge their 'fuzzy' nature, that defies incorporation into a single measure. The story, as exemplified here, might be another way of understanding and presenting the subjective issues so that they can be laid on the table alongside traditional objective measures.

The Story as Heuristic Device

Narratives have been used in the same way in writing the plan. Within the UDP and the local plans, and within the minds of informants, a story has been created which tells us and them about Newham, what it is like, how it got that way and—projecting the story forward—what should be done to guide it into the future. Pieces of the story have been presented through-out this chapter and another version of it was told in Chapter 4. Here I will only assemble the broad outline of the narratives as presented by the local plans, the UDP, informants and the public inquiry Inspector.

The central theme of the story, told over and over by the plans and by informants, is the combination of profound deprivation and great oppor-tunity. Newham was built on the heavy industry associated with the docks and the growth of lower middle class suburban areas in the north. The

decline of the industrial base through the second half of the century has destroyed a proud but hard way of life, but the hard life mentality carries on in the low aspirations of the residents. Waves of immigrants have dramatically changed the composition of the population from its solid white working class origins. The decline has also inspired a hope that new opportunities can be seized from the land left vacant by departing industries. Grand schemes—a university, a science park, significant open spaces and large new residential areas—with benefits spread throughout the community have all sprouted in the Council's imagination, fed by the empty tracts around the borough. The continual pairing of human despair and development opportunity has led the Council to focus heavily on securing benefits to the community from development. There is the sense that new developments have a moral obligation to make good on the disappointments and destruction of the past.

Although some of the expected or proposed developments had become reality between the writing of the local plans and the UDP, the story they tell is much the same. Officer One notes this, saying:

> ...you could argue that from a land use point of view, things have probably just gotten slightly worse, nothing has changed enormously since the first local plans were produced. There had been radical changes just before those local plans had been produced, *i.e.*, the Royal Docks closing down, so there was massive structural changes taking place, and I think the initial plans would have reflected the concerns about what to do about that. (int.1.7)

All the plans reflect concerns about the docks and other closures, but the emphasis in the UDP differs from the local plans in its greater attention to the development community as the means of regeneration. This issue is addressed in the next section.

The Inspector's remit did not allow for much consideration (or at least expression) of a narrative about Newham, and therefore any conclusions based on that limited narrative must be tentative in nature. Nevertheless, in his introductory notes and elsewhere, the Inspector describes Newham in terms which seem to place different emphasis on the same facts. As a closing comment to the formal introductory statement, he writes:

> I was struck by the many and varied development opportunities Newham has to offer. The potential for substantial quality development is outstanding.
> (Bingham, 1995, 4)

His story begins with the vacant sites and the development opportunities they represent. In further general comments, he acknowledges the dubious

honour accorded to Newham as the most deprived local authority in Britain, but the attention to the land and the potential of its development is greater:

> The Borough has colossal resources in the form of vast tracts of land awaiting redevelopment. Moreover, these lands are in a Borough with good road, rail and air links, many of which are identified for improvement. In addition the Borough has a frontage to the River Thames. It is in the 'Thames Gateway', an area which the Government is promoting for development...   (Bingham, 1995, 5)

The Inspector makes clear that his notion of the purpose of a plan is to encourage development, and his vision of Newham is that it is filled with sites "awaiting redevelopment". In this story, the land is the main character and therefore development is the central action, which then leads to improvements in the well-being of the people of the borough. The central action should not be hindered by efforts to add a social dimension to physical development. The benefits come as a result of the development itself.

5.6   Communicative Work

Given that the story told by the local plans and the UDP is more or less the same, it raises the issue all the more dramatically of how the communicative work of the UDP has changed from that of the local plans. This section explores the differences and suggests implications for the democracy of the plan.

Healey (1993) contrasts two notions of the communicative work of development plans. Government guidance given in PPG12 (para. 5.3) states that:

> Plans should be clear, succinct and easily understood by all who *need to know* about the planning policies and proposals in the area.   (emphasis added)

In her analysis of three development plans, she finds that the necessarily narrow discursive style which emerges from that advice does not allow for a more open conversation "among all those 'with a right to know'" (*ibid.*, 102). Plans typically represent choices made from among multiple discourses, with some being left out. If Government advice is followed, then the discourse adopted will inevitably be that of those with an interest in land or property development, since it is they who must be included. As a result, others with a stake but not an interest, such as an unemployed person or a single parent without property, are most likely to be excluded from the plan. If Healey's analysis is correct, then this runs against the Council's values of equality and inclusiveness. The communicative work of the plan is perhaps just as

important as the values of the plan, since it is in the communication that the values are acted upon.

Local Plans

The local plans make perfectly clear to whom they are writing. In the preface to the Stratford and Canning Town Local Plan, the Council Leader writes, "This is your plan and you, the public, have been involved at each stage in its preparation" (Newham Council, 1985b, 3). The plan also contains a glossary at the back giving simple explanations of the jargon of planning and property development. The local plans contained pictures, some with photographs highlighting points made in the text, others with pencil sketches which related to the theme of each chapter. The South Docklands (SDLP) and Beckton (BLP) Local Plans, where development activity was expected to be greatest, begin with summary sections entitled "Development Themes". The BLP states:

> Local Plans can be complex, detailed and lengthy documents.[6] Despite the fact that many topics are closely linked, *e.g.*, new housing cannot be considered in isolation from community support facilities, or employment proposals without reference to transport infrastructure, it is often difficult to grasp the essential objectives that the Plan is seeking to achieve... This section aims to pull these diverse threads together. (Newham Council, 1986, 2)

As another example of community awareness, the BLP and SDLP wrote Appendix 3.3, "A Place to Worship", in four community languages besides English.

The plans engage in reflection of the "'tragic' choices with which the community is confronted" (Healey, 1993, 103), which particularly meant the conflict of vision with the LDDC and the Government, and the limited ability of the Council to unilaterally fund desirable improvements such as new housing with gardens. The CNLP highlights the funding gap in its introduction:

> The proposals in the Plan are for developments the Council considers would be desirable and for which there is a prospect that finance would be available. At this stage, however, the proposals are not certain investment projects.
> (Newham Council, 1989, 7)

In summarising the situation on housing, the SDLP admits that, despite the substandard condition of much of the borough's housing stock:

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[6]The plan's 'lengthiness' is dwarfed by the UDP. The BLP is 46 pages long, including appendices, while the UDP is over 450 pages, ten times the length.

> The current housing [supply] problems of the Borough make it unrealistic to pursue a
> policy of demolition of large numbers of dwellings...as this would lead to
> substantial losses in the existing housing stock.   (Newham Council, 1985a, 2)

The plans, particularly the SDLP, also engage in a direct conversation with the LDDC, which was the development control authority for the plan area. The Council differed fundamentally with the approach to development and regeneration taken by the Corporation, and made no secrets about those differences:

> There is no analysis of community needs and consequently a failure to establish the
> role of this part of London's Docklands as, first and foremost, a resource for the
> Borough. There is no commitment to meeting the needs of Newham's population.
> (Newham Council, 1985a, 1)

The plan is therefore part of a larger campaign to bring local needs onto the development agenda pursued by the LDDC.

Other players in planning and property development, such as private sector developers, are only mentioned in passing. The plans communicate a clear message to the development community that development will have to be on the Council's terms; that is, taking the needs of the local people into account.

As noted in Chapter 4, the people-centred approach to planning culminated in the Central Newham Local Plan. However, when the plan was mentioned in interviews, it was seen as an unmitigated failure. Officer Two said "That is probably one of the worst examples of trying to lead from the plan" (int.2.81). Officer One saw it as another source of cynicism in the borough:

> [It was] highly regarded as a radical plan elsewhere in London. But at the end of
> the day, it raised people's expectations and it really couldn't be used... I think the
> councillors were really put off planning by the fact that we had been blowing our
> trumpet so much that this was going to be a really radical plan, but nothing came of
> it. So you have got a history of radicalism in the department, but it really doesn't
> help us in any way.   (int.1.39)

In terms of its communicative work, the local plans failed to be democratic, though perhaps in a different way from what might be expected by the term. The development process involves the interaction of a wide range of interests, and in focusing only on the needs of and contributions to be made by the people of the borough, the plan cut itself off from the other players in the process. The outcome was different—little development took place, as opposed to significant development without considering local interests—but the notion that not all players were at the table is the same.

The Unitary Development Plan

When informants were questioned on the communicative work of the UDP, a multiplicity of answers was given. The plan was, alternatively, a statutory framework for officers, councillors and developers so that all parties know what to expect and decisions can be made in a depoliticised atmosphere; a corporate document for residents to see that the Council will act in their interests; a promotional document to interest developers and investors in the development potential of the borough; and an internal document from officers to councillors to verify that the latter are satisfied with the performance of the former. Not all audiences were identified by all informants, and in particular, the success of communication with residents was subject to some dispute

The Newham UDP is a composite document, and its multiple functions have given rise to different discursive styles in different sections of the plan. Officer Six described the way they had looked at the borough's combination of dense development alongside large tracts of derelict land:

> We...said, 'You know, that's 1,000 acres of developable land. What we actually need is two plans in one. We need a regeneration strategy, which is going to be looking at development, new development almost on the scale of new towns, for our development sites. But we also need a document which will be an urban management document for the built up area, which is the rest of the borough where everybody lives.'   (int.6.4, emphasis added)

This approach is reflected in the different style of the Urban Regeneration chapter, which is distinctly promotional in its description of the borough's potential:

> Newham has over 1,000 acres of *prime development land*. The Borough occupies the hub of three major opportunity corridors—Lea Valley, M11 and East Thames [now the Thames Gateway]. And it has an enviable record of *constructive partnership and development achievement*... Overall the Council is seeking a series of *prestigious developments* which individually will address the social and economic problems facing the Borough, but when combined will achieve the critical mass necessary to tilt the balance of East London's economic and environmental recovery.
> (paras 2.2-2.3)

The chapter then presents its "Vision for the Future" (a device which is repeated for each chapter):

> The International Passenger Station at Stratford will be complemented by new strategic rail and road links elsewhere in the Borough. A Higher Education Institute, International Exhibition Centre and other *prestigious commercial and cultural facilities* will have been established in Docklands. Thousands of new homes, with matching social infrastructure and environmental improvements, when combined with the Station, *will have transformed the image of the Borough as an investment opportunity* and provided the catalyst and focus for development on

> Stratford Railway lands. The rail link to Europe will have assisted the regenera-
> tion of the Royals and contributed towards it reaching its *full potential as a*
> *European destination.*   (para. 2.8, emphasis added)

Gone is the exclusive concern with the welfare of the people of the borough, and gone too is the language of Council *provision* of that welfare. The UDP sets out a vision which embraces the principle of private sector funded benefits through "prestigious" developments. The Council learned its lesson about ignoring the private sector, without which, Government guidance accurately points out, development simply doesn't happen (PPG12, para. 1.1). The plan is also noticeable in the attitude it strikes towards the LDDC. This shift is more recent than the 1991 draft UDP, in which a statement by the LDDC expresses concern that the new plan might "conflict with or frustrate" the LDDC's regeneration efforts (Part I, para. 79b). The current draft empha-sises the importance of working with the Corporation, and framing policies which are flexible and responsive to its efforts in the Urban Development Area.

The UDP has not abandoned its communicative effort with the people of Newham. There is still a glossary of terms, and the introduction lays out the purpose and vision of the plan in simple terms, and in a question-and-answer format which is specifically geared to those who might be unfamiliar with the workings of the planning system, *i.e.*, local residents. Although the length of the document might be daunting to a newcomer to plans, Officer Six argues that the volume of text serves a specific and important purpose. The Council wanted to create an "audit trail" of information which would make clear the full reasoning process which had given rise to the policies in the plan. It would be a single document which had it all—strategic guidance, current conditions, objectives and vision for the future (int.6.12). The com-prehensiveness of the plan is a reflection of the wide range of audiences of the plan: "It was a deliberate attempt to pick up on these audiences" (int.6.23).

A different hand takes over in the rest of the plan, which is the "urban management" part. For instance, The "Vision for the Future" in the Housing chapter promises 6,450 new homes between 1993 and 2001, and that:

> A significant proportion of these will be at a price people can afford and will
> enable those currently homeless, living in overcrowded or unsatisfactory conditions
> as well as newly-forming households, to gain secure accommodation of an
> acceptable standard.   (para. 4.4)

Here we see a return to the traditional concerns of the Council. The language also reclaims some of the discourse of a Council which provides for its citizens (for which the Inspector criticised it). However, the text within policy

sections is less accessible to the lay reader as it is written in a technical manner which minimises ambiguity for the developer. Assuming the Inspector's recommendations are largely complied with, this will become even more prevalent, as policies of a 'management' nature are culled from a strictly 'land use' document.

The explicitly bifocal arrangement of the UDP tends to widen the communicative base in which it operates. It strikes a balance more success-fully than the local plans in the recognition of the role to be played by the development community. However, the extensive supporting documenta-tion does not engage in much discussion of the 'tragic choices' facing the borough. The tragedy is left behind in the Council's eagerness to promote the borough as a site of massive development activity. What the plan attempts to communicate is that the choices are no longer tragic, since development and community benefits can happily coexist. It is by no means clear whether this is in fact the case, but one feels some healthy scepticism.

5.7 Public Participation

A recurring theme throughout the course of interviews was the disappointing level of public participation in the UDP process. A very small proportion of the ninety objectors were individuals or even community groups. No shortage existed, however, in the explanations offered by informants of why this should have been the case.

The demographic conditions in the borough were taken to be one reason why people had not become involved. Political participation is typically the domain of the middle classes, it was argued, since it is they who tend to be well-educated and at leisure to attend to wider interests. As many are also homeowners, the plan is more likely to have a direct effect on their property interest than those who are renting, and are thus somewhat disengaged from the property market. Newham does not have large numbers of middle class families who might take a greater interest. This explanation, though not unreasonable, is not entirely satisfactory either. Numerous examples attest to the ability of low-income communities to become politically engaged and to exert some power and influence over the future of the planning and development of their neighbourhoods. Wates and Knevitt (1987) document a number of case studies in community architecture and planning, while the recent Coin Street development along the South Bank in London and the community-based Kings Cross Team proposals for

redevelopment of the area around the forthcoming Channel Tunnel Rail Link terminus provide convincing proof that poverty and participation are not always mutually oppositional qualities of a community.

Another demographic explanation for low participation is the instability of the population. Newham has seen periodic waves of immigration, accompanied by waves of emigration of those who came before. "The history of Newham is that people come in and move on" (int.3.54). If people are only staying for a short time, then they are not likely to become engaged in a planning process which takes years to get through, and even longer to have an effect on the borough. There is not enough time for people to put down roots, and therefore they don't care enough to get involved. The Council has recognised this problem in general terms, and makes specific reference in the Housing chapter to restricting housing types (*e.g.,* studio flats) which:

> are associated with relatively short periods of occupation and therefore do not contribute to building stable and secure communities.   (para. 4.66)

Another factor working against public involvement is the mismatch of scale, in two respects, between the interests of individual residents and the focus of the plan. Several informants said that the loyalty of residents is highly localised, and has no resonance at the borough-wide level. Councillor Three attributes this, at least in the south of the borough, to the "culture of a very hard life" working on the docks. The result is that, even today, loyalties are almost "tribal":

> ...so residents of North Woolwich, for example, sometimes feel not completely alike residents of Silvertown, which is literally half a mile along the road; or people from Silvertown might complain that they have nothing to do with the people from Custom House, which is the other side of Victoria Dock.   (int.4.31)

Even outside the Docklands, Newham is an artificial entity, created by Government fiat, while most people think in terms of East Ham or Manor Park or Plaistow, *etc.* The local plans reflected this scale by dividing the borough into five smaller sections, and as a result, participation was much higher than for the borough-wide UDP:

> It's just too big, it's too strategic to get people's attention on the ground in the way that the [local] plans did. My experience on the Central Newham Local Plan was very different—you know, a small part of the borough... [It was] basically an urban management document, very little opportunity for redevelopment, but nevertheless a huge amount of interest from individuals and local groups. So the UDP response was much different, at a different level.   (int.6.13)

Since the GLC had taken care of strategic matters in the two-tier system abolished in 1985, local plans did not have to include more than passing references to the wider concerns of Greater London or the Southeast of England.

In addition to the scale of the plan, the scale of development which is envisioned for the south and west of the borough is seen to be beyond the ability of individuals to influence it. Notwithstanding the extraordinary organisational achievements of the Kings Cross Team, developments of hundreds of residential units or tens of thousands of square metres of office space require a devotion of time and energy which few people without a professional or financial interest will be willing or able to give. As Officer Eight says, "Ordinary people are interested, but they can do very little about this kind of development, the massive development" (int.8.21).

If the scale of planning and of development is in conflict with the Council's values of participation and community (which are intertwined), then perhaps the scale of both should be reduced. Tower Hamlets, for instance, decentralised its administrative structure in 1986; this is reflected in its UDP, which contains a chapter devoted to issues particular to its several neighbourhoods, as well as a strategic policy relating to the implementation of the plan through its neighbourhood structure (Tower Hamlets, 1992). Decentralisation was met with public approval rates for the Council which were higher than the London average (Lowndes and Stoker, 1992). Reducing the scale of development may appear more unusual a proposal, in that a borough in need of development and the benefits it brings is not likely to refuse a proposal simply on the grounds that the scale is too large. On the other hand, the inquiry Inspector chastised the Council for assuming that development on the Beckton Gas Works site would be undertaken under a single scheme, a likelihood he considered to be "remote" (Bingham, 1995, 151). Notwithstanding his comments, the Council does in fact have contingency plans in case development on any of its large Major Opportunity Zone (MOZ) sites does not happen under the aegis of one developer. Policy S11, in Part I, states:

> Land, buildings and other related facilities realised as community benefit will be received, distributed, operated and maintained by appropriate agencies established for that purpose, such as development or enterprise trusts.

The purpose of development trusts would be to manage "contributions from smaller scale development or phases within [MOZs]" such that developers and community members could have confidence that "the money wasn't

going to disappear off into a sack under the Director of Finance's desk" (int.6.27).

Taking the historical perspective, it was suggested that the traditional relationship of a paternalistic Council and a passive public has not changed, despite the Council's inability to provide services in the way it used to. This viewpoint has been presented earlier in this chapter, and is partly supported by the analysis of the communicative work of the plan. It raises the question of whether, given this relationship, it really matters that the public does not get involved. While that may go against the grain of traditional models of the spirit and purpose of planning, we have already seen how those models do not always stand up against postmodern understandings of planning and society. After all, according to Officer Seven, "people have a clear idea in general terms about what the Labour administration stands for" (int.7.33). If they continue re-electing Labour councillors, then there must be some satisfaction that the Council is in fact doing the best it can in providing for the residents of the borough. When the proposition that participation was not a prerequisite for representation was put to officers and councillors answering the survey, there was a modest amount of agreement.

	Agree	Disagree
8. Despite the low participation of residents and community groups, the plan does successfully take their needs into account.	9	4

It has not been possible in this research to empirically determine an answer to the question posed in Statement Eight, but it is possible to argue that in either case, public participation does matter. Turning back to the post-modern argument, the world has become more fragmented, and decision-makers are even less able (if they ever were able in the first place) to claim that they are acting on behalf of a monochromatic 'public interest'. If the notion of enduring and universal principles is being eroded in the face of a society in constant flux, then the possibility argued by Dear (1986) that planning is becoming a practice of "filigree", without substance, can only be countered by a more substantial basis of decision-making, *i.e.,* one which has the explicit support of as wide and diverse a community of interests as possible. To put it another way, planners cannot depend on anything more secure than historically situated (and therefore temporary) mutually negotiated decisions. In this context, the importance of ensuring that such negotiations are conducted with the active involvement of the full spectrum of all those "with a right to know" about planning decisions is even greater.

As plans have gained in statutory importance, the downward trend in public involvement has been crossed by an upward trend in the contestability of the plan from the private sector. Adams (1994) notes that landowners and developers have become more savvy at using the planmaking process to ensure that their properties are not devalued by plan designations, such as green belt or industrial land, or by policies, such as restrictions on out-of-town shopping centres. This trend was also observed by informants who had worked on the local plans. As a result, the worrying picture which emerges is that the local plans were like toy plans, fine for local residents to play with, but without much significance in the real world. The plans of the 1990s are the domain of powerful development interests, and the local citizen has been squeezed out of the process, because the plan is too important now to allow them to air their views. Understood this way, the proposition that the average citizen is acting rationally by staying away gains credibility. Residents understand that their participation is meaningless, and therefore they earn no return on an investment of time and energy spent on the planmaking process.

The onus is on the planning system to create a space in which residents can feel involved in a meaningful way, where they can have some access to the power exercised over the future of development. This research does not prove that such postmodern methods as Healey's (1992) communicative rationality will truly result in a planning system which brings the public into the process in a meaningful and legitimising way. However, it does lend credence to the conclusion that, more than twenty-five years after the Skeffington Report (MHLG, 1969) highlighted the importance of public participation in the planning process, much distance has yet to be covered, while its importance is greater than ever.

5.8 Conception of the Planmaking Process

Following the argument of postmodernist planning, the plan may be looked at as an artefact or a record of a compromise reached between the several parties with an interest in the plan (*i.e.*, the Council, the Government, the LDDC, residents, landowners, developers, *etc.*). Once approved, the plan is fixed, but the circumstances which produced the plan have changed, and are constantly changing. This notion, if adopted widely, might give rise to a very different planmaking style than that currently in use—one which emphasises the temporary nature of the agreements represented in the plan,

and which itself is frequently subject to revisions, perhaps even a 'rolling pro-gramme' of revision and review. This new style is suggested by Healey as a process in which there are no end states rigidly defined by the plan, only directions of movement:

> Rather than Lindblomian marginal adjustments to the present, its language would
> be *future-seeking*, but not, like its 'physical blueprint' and 'goal-directed'
> predecessors, *future-defining*.   (Healey, 1992, 158)

Planmaking with a light touch presupposes that a constant and lively level of communication takes place among interested parties in the plan. An open stance aimed at understanding and negotiation is necessary to generate the broad ownership which legitimises the plan.

Turning back to the Newham UDP, it is a matter of interest to judge how the planning process is conceived by officers and councillors and how that has been reflected in the actual process and outcome. Based on infor-mants' responses and the plan itself, there appears to be some affinity with a postmodern style, but that is contrasted by more traditional elements and conceptions.

First of all, the time taken to adopt the plan militates strongly against a "light touch" process. Five years after preparations for a new plan began, it has yet to be adopted. Several factors have influenced the plodding pace. First, the plan did not initially have a high priority in the department, which meant that it was under-resourced. Second, the Inspector took a year to complete his report, during which time very little action could be taken on the plan. Third, and perhaps most important, the development oppor-tunities and the heightened status of development plans have combined to make the plan a major battleground—as evidenced by its 2,000 objections—between the Council and development interests.

Officer Six highlighted the understanding that the plan needed broad support to be effective:

> ...we felt that, in terms of producing a plan which the maximum number of partners
> could own—because landowners, developers, and the Development Corporation
> have to be seen as potential partners rather than adversaries or natural enemies in
> the development process... we embarked on this process of negotiation and amend-
> ment...   (int.6.14)

In terms of the Council's ability to resolve differences, especially with the LDDC, the strategy was very successful. Out of 350 objections from the Corpo-ration, only six were left unresolved by the time of the public inquiry, at which the Corporation expressed their support of the plan as written. Given

the history of tense relationships between the Docklands local authorities and the LDDC, this achievement is even more significant. As noted previously, Officer Six was of the opinion (not universally held, however) that the Council never had to compromise on the fundamental values of the plan in its negotiations and modifications.

On the other hand, the comment quoted above hints at the larger failure of the plan, which was that maximising ownership of the plan did not include local residents. The exclusive reference to "landowners, developers, and the Development Corporation" might be a reference to only those players who had expressed fundamental disagreement with the plan; but they are also, in effect, the players who have the resources to take a seat at the bargaining table. Other officers also acknowledged that the process had not been successful in generating a sense of ownership among its own residents.

Despite the efforts at negotiation, the notion of partnership among players is still slow to dawn on both sides of the plan. Officers all agreed that when anyone commented on the plan, they were doing so out of their own narrow self-interest. Even councillors did not respond to the plan except when they were keen about a particular issue. Officer One inadvertently echoes the words of Mandelbaum (1990), saying "you have got to have...a useful document from which you're going to *defend your decisions*" (int.1.39, emphasis added). Similarly, Councillor Four saw the plan as a technical document whose function was to depoliticise the decisionmaking process. Clear guidelines allow the Council to be firm in the face of opposition, or of financially tempting offers which nevertheless do not meet other objectives set out in the plan. These interpretations push the plan further away from interpretative flexibility.

The Government recommends that plans be flexible enough to allow for the particularities of individual proposals to be considered justly. This was a recurring theme in the objections submitted by the LDDC as well. This attitude is supported by a postmodern conception of planning. However, the key feature of a postmodern planning—something shown in Section 5.7 to be lacking in Newham—is that the flexibility is combined with a democratic base of decisionmaking. Once again, the problem of public participation and ownership arises to cloud the picture of success in the planning process in Newham. The concern raised by some informants that flexibility means not "having really to analyse the social implications of...inward investment" (int.1.17) does not arise if planning is conducted in an atmosphere of open

participation of equals representing a full range of interested parties (*i.e.,* one which includes members of the public in a meaningful way).

5.9 Land Use Planning

Government guidance on development plans (PPG12) states that:

> Development plans should contain the local planning authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land... Policies for non land-use matters should not be included.   (paras 5.4, 5.6)

It acknowledges that other considerations, such as economic, social and environmental issues, will have a bearing on the plan policies, but "the underlying approach must be to limit the plan content to...considerations that are relevant to land-use policies" (para. 5.51). In his report, the Inquiry Inspector frequently refers to the land use relevance criterion in justifying his recommendation for deletion of policies on, *inter alia,* equal opportunities, workplace nurseries, community benefit, residential environmental improvements, and standards for disabled access. For example, regarding Policy H9 ("Mobility Standard Accommodation"), he writes:

> The Council's...arguments are persuasive, and I accept that the Council's strategy is well intended. However, in respect of the UDP, the matter needs to be seen in the context of land-use planning. The Council's objectives are worthy of support, but I do not accept that they can be properly achieved within the constraints of a development plan. Many of the points raised by the Council would undoubtedly assist disabled people...but they need to be pursued by means other than a development plan.   (Bingham, 1995, 397)

The Inspector's criticisms caused consternation among informants, who had the task of revising the plan to conform with the bulk of his recommendations. Officer Five described how they had tried to modify Policy UR8 to comply with Government policy, by adding a clause relating the scale and type of benefits to those of the development (see Section 4.3). It was still not acceptable, and so they would try again. Despite the Inspector's comments, he said, "I still think it's reasonable to indicate, in the plan, the type of benefits we will be looking [for]" (int.5.41). Later in the interview, Officer Five reflects on the ability of the Council to defend their community benefit objectives for Policy UR8 on land-use criteria. Public transport was clearly a land use issue, without which most developments on that site should not proceed. Other benefit objectives were more subtle, while others just wouldn't fit:

> I think on seed bed, you can say that on large scale sites like this where there is tremendous opportunity to provide a range of employment-type facilities, that

there should be a certain mix, subject to market considerations. Once all these opportunities are developed there will be difficulty in the borough in realising this...

Childcare. Well, it's awkward really. Large firms in theory should provide it, and most good employers would provide it. I don't really think we can justify it.

But you still want it.

In an ideal world we'd like it, but it's really more of a social issue which has probably fallen outside planning issues. It's maybe the sort of thing we can put in the text [to] highlight, as a benchmark. I don't really think it's a thing we can enforce or refuse applications on.   (int.5.101, 103-105)

The officer's comments on childcare facilities highlight a central problem of the land use 'ring fence'. There may be issues or concerns which have an indirect bearing on the use and development of land (*e.g.*, childcare influences employment, which influences the local economy, which influences the local environment and inward investment decisions), but which would not be a directly material consideration in any single development application. The Council's awareness and values encompass a wide understanding of the needs of the borough, while the applicant's interest stops at the property boundary. Planning is meant to take the public interest into account, but it is restricted by the limits of the use and development of the land in any single proposal.

The planning system is conceived by the Government as part of a seamless web of statutory systems—including building control, housing and environmental protection—which guide all aspects of land use, protection, management, occupation and development. There is no need to adopt a wide understanding of land use in the planning context, since other systems will take up where planning leaves off. According to Government guidance on planning and pollution, the planning system "assumes that the pollution control regime will operate effectively" (PPG23, para. 1.33). Indeed, recent case law has firmly established the principle of non-overlapping statutory powers.[7]

According to this description, there is no problem, for surely some other statutory system will take up the slack. Yet it does not entirely satisfy. Some informants felt that there was contradiction ("muddled thinking, to put it kindly"; int.6.30) in the advice given by Government. Despite the guidance on land use relevance, Officer Seven said "They seem to be saying 'Yes, the planning process can [also] be used as a mechanism to achieve other things'"

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[7]Gateshead MBC v the Secretary of State for the Environment and Northumbrian Water Group plc, *Planning Law Reports*, 1994, vol. 1, p. 85.

(int.7.16). Speaking directly about the use of planning obligations to secure community benefits, Officer Six said:

> We thought we were responding to the guidance set out in PPG12, although the Inspector, and others who were arguing and objecting to those policies in the plan, were relying more on the different, slightly contradictory advice that was coming out, saying 'Well, you shouldn't create these onerous frameworks.'   (int.6.30)

There is a feeling among officers that the Inspector's murmurs of sympathy with the Council's social objectives are the sugar coating on a bitter pill which undermines the entire thrust of the plan as a means to achieving those objectives. The impression of internal contradictions in government advice is supported by Healey and Shaw (1994), who observe that the inherent flexibility and negotiative decision-making structure of planning allows for "the main institutional players of the system...to shift policy agendas...without having to engage in major legal processes" (*ibid.*, 426). They argue that a significant shift seems to have taken place in environmental issues, as exemplified by the decision of the Government to name the planning system as a key mechanism for implementing its *Strategy for Sustainable Development* (DoE, 1993). In the face of this apparent policy shift, they conclude:

> The tendency has repeatedly been to contain the planning agenda to a narrow remit focused on land use and development and to a discourse dominated by forms of utilitarian functionalism.   (Healey & Shaw, 1994, 436)

If Healey and Shaw suggest that planning need not necessarily be subjected to such a narrow remit, the values research in this project suggests that the ring fence is arbitrary, and does not reflect the wide understanding and value system which the planners and officers bring to bear on the plan. They are engaged in the active creation of cohesive, sustainable communities out of the raw materials of a degraded environment, a highly diverse and deprived population, and a devastated economic base. The planning system is the medium through which they work. Seen in this way, it is harder to differentiate between two policies (regarding, say, public transport and childcare facilities), both of which they believe serve the wider values of the plan, on the basis that one has a specific and immediate effect on the use and development of a particular plot of land, while the other's effect is more nebulous or remote, but no less real.

Adopting the postmodernist perspective, we may ask with Milroy (1994), what power interests are being served by the land use criterion? The empirical evidence from this research suggests that those who are being

excluded from participating are those without an interest in land. We have seen how people are restricted from participating in the planning process by virtue of education, scale, or historical attitudes and relationships. A final cause of this restriction might also be the understanding and ability of people of what constitutes a valid objection, and what form (*i.e.,* discursive style) the objection must take to be honoured. This lack of understanding was noted by Officer Seven, who spoke of the qualified success of a now-abandoned consultative forum in the Docklands:

> ...But they still didn't really understand what the planning process was about, and how you could intervene, and what criteria you could intervene on. It's no good saying 'I oppose that development' or 'We think it's bad, because it does this or that' if you can't show... You have got to show planning criteria. You've got to make an objection on the basis of issues which are covered through the planning legislation... You've got to come forward with very clear reasons. (int.7.19)

The sense is conveyed that valid concerns of local residents are not being heard, or are being ignored on procedural grounds. It may be that some objections are based on irrelevant interpersonal grounds, but given the concerns raised previously about the dearth of public participation, it is all the more worrying to imagine that even when a member of the public does raise his or her voice, the concern expressed might still go unregarded. Hajer (1994) has shown how an institutionalised discourse can structure, and therefore limit, debate on an issue. Part of the discourse structure of the planning system is the narrow remit of land use and development. That remit is therefore also implicated in the exclusion of real concerns about the future of the borough.

Conclusions

Planning has recently come under criticism which questions the legitimacy of its claim to rational decisionmaking in the public interest. Through the examination of postmodern and deep ecological arguments, a means of reinvigorating and relegitimising planning is suggested. Both arguments emphasise the weakness of policies and actions which are based exclusively on objective, quantifiable criteria. Values and other forms of subjective understanding promote a wider perspective which more accurately reflects the richness and complexity of contemporary society.

Postmodern analysis undermines the modernist notion of a universal basis of truth and emphasises the interpretative quality of our experience and understanding of the world. By this account, decisions for action or policy can be seen as based upon narratives which select fragments from the available information and fit them into an existing structure of moral and heuristic understanding of the world. The deep ecological viewpoint begins with a denial of the separation of subject and object in our relationship with the natural world, and expands that to present a picture, similar to the postmodernist turn, in which normative aspects of decisionmaking are intertwined with descriptive ones, forming a wholeness of understanding which facilitates actions consistent with established fundamental norms.

From these new paradigms of our experience of reality, the application for planning practice is that morals, aesthetic values, myths and stories all have a legitimate place alongside traditional objective knowledge. Indeed, given the bogus division of object and subject, to fail to acknowledge these other ways of seeing the world is to self-impose a "kind of radical blindness" (Naess, 1989, 66). Furthermore, where such blindness occurs, it signals an exercise of exclusionary power in the planning process. The narrow discursive structure—in planning, defined by the development community (see note 6, p. 84)—sets the terms by which people can enter the debate or decision-making process, and as a result people "with a right to know" about planning are being prevented from making a contribution and having an influence on

the process (Healey, 1993). Finally, the new paradigms suggest that without an enduring base of legitimacy, such as a monolithic "public interest", coalitions for action and policymaking can only be generated in a contingent and historically situated context, which emphasises the importance of a diverse community of interests participating in the process, and questions the function of the development plan in setting down fixed policies and certain targets for ten- to twenty-year time horizons.

In this thesis, postmodernist and deep ecological analyses and critiques gave rise to a research project which explored how values and subjective understanding are addressed in current planning practice. The development plan case study of the Newham UDP allowed an in-depth exploration which extracted a rich store of information about the values of the plan, the role of values and narratives in the planmaking process, public participation, and the narrow definition set by Government guidance of what constitutes a legitimate plan policy. The findings may be summarised as follows:

The Values of the Plan. Deep questioning of informants on a single policy, combined with textual analysis of the plan, revealed a wide ranging normative structure which supports the plan. The plan's fundamental values are in creating cohesive communities in which diversity is celebrated, and each individual's potential is given all opportunities to be fulfilled. A primary mechanism of realising these values is employment growth, coupled with environmental protection and improvement. Furthermore, the values will be imposed as far as possible on prospective developers in Newham, by whose works significant community benefits are to be funded or provided. In terms of Policy UR8, the specific policy elements—seed bed units, training facilities, childcare facilities, public transport improvements and community leisure and open space provision—are derived from the higher-order values combined with specific information about the site to which the policy relates (*e.g.,* poor public transport access and a Thameside location).

Deep questioning is a term used by Naess (1989) to describe an individual process of self-inquiry which he believes leads to an articulation of a systematic personal philosophy. Thus, the use of the method in an interview format was an application of uncertain appropriateness. However, the method was found to be successful, and showed that, in sympathy with the environmental values research conducted by Craig *et al.* (1993), values in plans, and of planners, draw on deeply held fundamental norms which represent goals far beyond the traditional scope of planning practice.

Dual Reasoning. A recurring aspect of informants' responses was the double justification of policy norms and values on moral and practical or economic grounds. It appeared that, in many cases, a policy existed on the basis of deep moral values, while it was justified publicly using the politically salient terms of the realm of economy, efficiency and finance. This finding reinforced the conclusion of the literature review that subjective reasoning is undervalued in policy discourse, and is therefore not expected to justify policy prescriptions without reference to economic arguments. While it is not suggested that economic arguments should not be relevant to policymakers, it *is* suggested that the converse of the above finding tends not to be true; that is, economic arguments may be—and are—made independently of moral arguments and codified into official policy. It is further suggested that, following the conclusions of Kempton *et al.* (1995), policymakers may underestimate the salience of moral or non-economic arguments among the public, especially with widely held values such as equality and racial tolerance. (This pre-supposes, of course, that the public is involved in a meaningful way in the planning process.) This hypothesis would be a useful avenue for further planning research.

The Role of Values. In practice, values are not discussed openly. Informants suggested that such discussions were not held to be either necessary or an efficient use of limited time and resources. Generally speaking, officers believe they understand the objectives of the Council and incorporate them into the plan. Councillors, who are too busy to spend a great deal of time on the plan, only attend particularly to matters on which they are keen. Meanwhile, it is also believed that the public also understands what the Council's values are, which slightly mitigates the concern over low public participation in the planning process. The belief of the public's understanding and acquiescence is enhanced by the perpetual return of the Labour Party at each local election in Newham. In respect of the modifications which have been made to the UDP, the research could not provide a firm conclusion on whether the plan's basic values were changed. However, the tentative conclusion was made that if the numerous policies to which the Inspector fundamentally objected are deleted, then the plan will have lost something of its essential nature. If they remain intact, subject to further modifications which soften the wording, it can be concluded that the values remain. To follow the postmodernist argument, the truce which the plan represents will have to be recreated each time a development application arises which challenges Council intentions. With weaker wording, the

Council will not have as strong a foundation for its arguments (say, in insisting on childcare facilities with a new commercial development), but regardless, the outcome will still have to be negotiated, and in those negotiations the opportunity will arise to incorporate the Council's values into development proposals.

Storytelling. Narratives were explored in two aspects. First, one interview produced a very good example of how stories can communicate the intangible aspects of values in a way that more straightforward expressions of value fail to do. Second, stories have been used throughout the plan and in interviews to assemble salient facts and to direct policy choices. The research showed that the story told by the plan and by informants has remained consistent from the local plans to the UDP. By contrast, the Inspector's report takes note of the same issues—widespread deprivation and significant development opportunities—but appears to give a greater emphasis on the latter, and in that way turns around the priorities for the development and use of land in Newham. This research supports the argument that storytelling provides a mechanism for combining objective and subjective understanding in the decisionmaking process. It also provides an illustration of the power of narratives in narrowing policy choices. Practising planners would be well-served by becoming more aware of the use of narratives, both in their own work and in the arguments of those with whom they negotiate.

Communicative Work. The picture of a consistent policy narrative does not sit easily with the manifest changes in plan content and focus from the local plans, written in the 1980s, to the current draft of the UDP, suggesting that while the local story has not changed, larger political and cultural forces have shifted notions of what policy solutions are appropriate for a local planning authority. The UDP has shifted the communicative focus from residents (with a subtext of tension with the LDDC) to the development community (with a subtext of cooperation with the LDDC). While the local plans failed to acknowledge the diversity of interests in the planning and development process, the UDP has relinquished some acknowledgement of the difficult choices in its discourse of promotion. In terms of the communicative work with the local public, they seem to have been returned to their role as passive recipients of the services and consideration of a paternalistic council.

Public Participation. The issue of public participation had not been part of the original research design, but its ubiquity in informant interviews prevented it from being ignored. Participation was low for the UDP, which

was a marked change from the local plans. The control of the planning system (as well as the rest of society) by concentrated powerful interests is a well-known theme in policy analysis research, and therefore, as far as the state of power relations are concerned, this thesis does no more than emphasise the *status quo*. However, it does provide some evidence to support the postmodernist interpretation of those power relations. For example, finding of the source of low public participation was in the inability of members of the public to express their concerns in terms which fit the dominant discourse of development interests. Assuming (as this research does) that democracy is a procedural goal of the planning system, the tight discursive restrictions inhibit democratic decisionmaking. In other words, when people speak the language of subjective values, the tongue is foreign to those involved in the planning process, and therefore the words are in effect unheard. Democracy requires wide understanding, which in turn requires an acknowledgement of subjective understanding.

Conception of the Planning Process. In the case of Newham, planners still generally conceive the planning process in terms of antagonistic self-interested players in land use and development. The Council still sees a key aspect of its role in the traditional defence of public interests and the promotion of public welfare. The lengthy process and weighty document suggest that the plan is an enduring document, a notion against which postmodern writings on the planning system argue. Nevertheless, wide plan ownership and participation were at the forefront of a positive stance towards negotiating with all objectors, most of whom were businesses, landowners and developers. Although postmodernism argues that the planning system's flexibility is a virtue which should be enhanced, it emphasises that real flexibility must occur within an open democratic system. The conflicts between the Council and the Government on this matter highlight the difference between flexibility for the development community and flexibility for the *entire* community.

Land Use Planning. The following comments about the planning system as a whole are too wide to be unilaterally supported by the research presented here, but they are included as part of a look beyond the research to the general issues of values and planning. Regarding the position of the Government that planning policies should relate strictly to land use considerations, the research tends to support the concerns, raised by Dear (1986) and Healey and Shaw (1994), that to restrict planning to such a narrow remit is to miss the richness of the higher goals towards which the plan

strives. Furthermore, planning is the central regulatory system over human influence upon the land, and it is unique in its in-built flexibility and emphasis on negotiated solutions. If the flexibility is to be used to its full potential, then planning needs to be released somewhat from the manacles of land use as the sole determinant of relevance. As it stands, the system tends only to be flexible for those with an interest in land use and development, *i.e.,* private sector developers and landowners.

Finally, in reporting my research, I have made use of such phrases as "seen in this way" or "from this perspective". This is a key signal of the nature of this research, and the theory behind it. The postmodern and deep ecological turns in planning research do not represent new ways of solving problems or new solutions. What they provide is a different means of conceptualising and understanding those problems. This case study has raised issues of the role of values and other subjective modes of understanding, and highlighted the communicative work of development plans. From these issues, a wider circle of conclusions have been drawn about the planning system as a whole. This research has been exploratory in nature, and therefore its conclusions are tentative. With that caveat, this research supports previous findings that values are a consequential part of the decisionmaking process, but their importance is generally left unrecognised in public debates. Full understanding of a policy situation is inhibited while democratic structures are undermined by the language barrier between those speaking the hard language of the development community and those speaking the soft language of values and intuition. In conclusion, the adoption of a wider range of *understandings* of planning issues could lead to a system which more successfully meets the fundamental values set out by development plans.

7.1 Reflection on the Research

The research involved three primary methodological elements: textual analysis of recent Newham plans and related documents, in-depth interviews with Council officers and councillors who had a direct involvement with the UDP process, and a follow-up survey which sought to verify and clarify comments made in interviews.

As a general comment it was useful to have all three elements to provide a kind of 'triangulation' of value orienteering. Because it is inherently soft, subjective understanding is difficult to identify and describe with certainty.

As another general comment, the personal connection to officers was probably crucial to the operative success of the research. Councillors, with whom I had no acquaintance, were less responsive to attempts to enlist interviewees and to collect survey responses, while officers were willing to sit for as much as an hour and a quarter answering probing questions in the midst of busy working days.

Conspicuous by their absence are the values and perceptions of participants in the planning process who were outside the Council. It was determined not to be feasible for this project, but expansion of the analysis to include interviews with objectors along with textual analysis of their statements of objection would have added an interesting dimension to the exploration of the planmaking process.

7.2 Suggestions for Further Research

One possible route for further research would be to expand on the methods used here to include responses from outside the Council. This would help consider the questions raised about the fundamental values of the plan as they conflicted with those of landowners or developers. How self-interested actually is everyone? This needs to be pursued directly, rather than

counting on the (sometimes jaded) feelings of officers and councillors. Does the plan communicate in the way that it appears? Analysis of the communicative work has been presented in this research, but it has not been tested against responses from those to whom it is allegedly communicating.

Another research option would be to follow in the direction taken by Kempton *et al.* (1995). They converted their interviews into a widely distributed survey. Rather than focus on one plan, investigations could apply a composite picture of values in planning from among a number of plans, and then test those values against a wide audience. Among other questions, this research could test the hypothesis that non-quantifiable values have a greater salience for the public than is currently assumed by policymakers.

A.1 Interview Protocol

Below is the list of questions used for informant interviews:

1. Tell me what your personal role is or has been in the UDP process, such as writing, debating, giving evidence, speaking with interested parties, voting to adopt drafts, etc.

2. Who is the plan speaking to?

   Prompt: Citizens (in general or as a subset--homeowners, RAs, women, minorities), business groups, developers, investors, the DoE/Government, the LDDC...

3. How has the Urban Regeneration chapter been received? What was the nature of the objections? What was the nature of the supporting statements?

4. Now I want to ask about a particular policy in the Urban Regeneration chapter.
   a. Why was a separate chapter decided upon?
   b. What is the aim of the chapter?
   c. Why was it felt that this aim was important?

   d. What is the aim of policy UR8?
   e. Repeat question c.

5. Does the UDP reflect the values/norms of the Council?
   (If no) In what way(s) does it differ?
   (If yes) What would you say are the values or norms for which the Council stands?

A.2 Follow-Up Survey

The follow-up survey was given or sent to eight officers and twenty councillors in early May 1996. A total of fourteen were returned. One respondent did not give an answer to statements 6 or 8. Not everyone gave an answer to the final question, while some answers fit into more than one category. The survey (with responses) was as follows:

For each statement below, please indicate whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD). Please note that statements about "the plan" refer to the Newham Unitary Development Plan.

	SA	A	D	SD
1. Although the plan has been modified during the consultation process, the plan is still an accurate reflection of the values of the Council.	4	8	2	0
2. The Council will not be in a position to base its actions on environmental criteria until it has improved social and economic conditions in the borough.	1	7	4	2
3. Employment-generating developments should only be allowed as long as they don't undermine other social and environmental goals.	1	6	7	0
4. Diversity is a fundamental principle of all life, and should be supported equally within the economy, society, culture, and the natural environment.	5	8	1	0
5. The influence of business, developers, landowners, the LDDC, and the Government have fundamentally changed the values expressed by the plan.	2	6	5	1
6. The Council is seeking to transform the borough economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally.	1	11	1	0
7. Environmental criteria should be the first consideration of planning decisions and policies.	2	3	8	1
8. Despite the low participation of residents and community groups, the plan does successfully take their needs into account.	0	9	3	1
9. The Council wishes to maintain the basic character of its communities while improving conditions in those communities.	5	6	3	0
10. A fundamental part of our individual well-being is the awareness that we are part of something bigger than ourselves.	6	6	2	0
11. The Council accepts Newham's role as a borough with a constant flow of residents in and out, and seeks to create to conditions by which people can move 'up and out'.	0	4	6	4
12. Employment concerns should take priority in planning decisions and policies.	3	4	5	2

Finally, please write down the single issue you believe is most important in the plan.

Answer	Number of Occurrences
Regeneration / Urban Regeneration / Sustainable Regeneration	6
Employment	3
Balanced, Socially-Cohesive Communities	1
Credibility	1
Vision/Framework	1
Inward Investment	1
Housing Improvement	1

A.3 The Deep Ecology Platform

A number of references were made in the thesis to the Deep Ecology Platform. As it is not very long, and will be unfamiliar to most readers outside the Deep Ecology movement, it is included in its entirety. The Deep Ecology Platform was first created by Naess in the early 1980s, and has been revised a few times since then. The version quoted below was written in 1995, and was kindly given to me by David Cadman. In an 1986 essay discussing the platform, Naess laments that it is identified by that term, as he feels it might be better understood if it were called "A set of fairly general and abstract statements that seem to be accepted by nearly all supporters of the Deep Ecology movement" (Naess, 1995, 214). But this is not a catchy enough title, so it remains a 'platform'.

(1)   The flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth has intrinsic value. The usefulness of non-human life forms is independent of the usefulness these may have for narrow human purposes.

(2)   Richness and diversity of life forms are values in themselves and contribute to the flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth.

(3)   Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.

(4)   Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.

(5)   The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease in human populations. The flourishing of non-human life requires such a decrease.

(6)   Significant change of life conditions for the better requires change in policies. These affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures.

(7)   The ideological change is mainly appreciating *life quality* (dwelling in situations of intrinsic value) rather than adhering to a high standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.

(8)   Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to participate in the attempt to implement the necessary changes peacefully and democratically.

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