PLANNING AND MULTICULTURALISM: A PARADIGM SHIFT

AMINA HIRANI

Thesis submitted in part fulfilment of the requirement
for the
M.Phil (Town Planning) Degree

UCL BARTLETT FACULTY OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
BARTLETT SCHOOL OF PLANNING
November 2007

UMI Number: U593718

UMI

Dissertation Publishing

ProQuest

Declaration

I, Amina Hirani, confirm that the work presented in these thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated and acknowledged in the thesis.'

Acknowledgements

"We created you from a single pair of male and female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know each other. The noblest of you in the sight of God is the best in conduct..."   [Quran: 49:3]

Those whose lives are terminated by the angels, while in a state of wronging their souls, the angels will ask them, "What was the matter with you?" They will say, "We were oppressed on earth." They will say, "Was God's earth not spacious enough for you to emigrate therein?"   [Quran: 4:97]

"Just as biodiversity is an essential component of ecological sustainability, so is cultural diversity essential to social sustainability. Diverse values should not be respected just because we are tolerant folk, but because we must have a pool of diverse perspectives in order to survive, to adapt to changing conditions, to embrace the future."   [Hawke:2001]

Abstract

Social theorists 'as diverse as Durkheim, Weber and Marx argued that, as a concomitant of the 19th century emergence of modern industrial society, ethnic groups had lost their saliency in the lives of individuals'[1]. Policy-makers too believed that assimilation of the ethnic minority was a way forward and inevitable. This view was compounded by the idea typified in the 'global village' scenario brought out by the technological revolution. 'Transnational migrations, post-colonialism, and the rise of civil society' (Sandercock, 2000) has made the 21st century indisputably the century of multicultural cities which have brought about enormous socio-cultural changes. In 2000, between 150 & 175 million people lived outside the country in which they were born and Inglis (1996) points out that only 10 to 15 percent of countries can be reasonably described as ethnically homogenous. This has resulted in an increased ethnic and cultural diversity of cities and has led to co-existence side by side of 'dissimilar ways of life within the sphere of the world's main metropolitan areas' (Sandercock, 2000). Furthermore, the second and third generations of the settled immigrants – the Diasporas, the Internet and globalisation has led to fast shifting boundaries of social identity, which has in turn led to infinite number of sub-cultures.

The rediscovery of ethnicity and conflicts brought about as a result of unresolved underlying differences has made decision makers increasingly aware of the need to develop policies which will contribute to the development of harmonious relations within and between diverse ethnic groups. Rapid advancements in technology has enabled us to interact socially, politically and economically with other nations[2] and has gone a long way towards breaking the barriers that kept us apart from one another, allowing corporations to ignore the national boundaries and create networks that disregard politics. However as Schwetz (2004) argue, social understanding of the diversity of this world has not caught up with this technological interconnectivity. He concludes that cultural education is far behind the trend towards globalisation.

How can diversity be accepted and incorporated into a practice that is equitable and willing to accommodate different ways of dwelling in urban space and how does local government respond to a diverse community, ensuring that all services and processes are accessible by

all? To what extent planners can be said to have an awareness of racial disadvantage and its possible implications for planning? Planners are struggling to find answers to these questions which present relentless challenges.

This is made even more difficult when one considers the unrecorded or unspoken beckoning and nuances that have to be dealt with – for example, Qadeer (1997) recalls an story where the newspaper headlines in The Globe and Mail read: *"nature meets culture"* – 'Italians and Portuguese like to keep trees short, allowing a better view of the neighbours. Anglo-Saxons want trees to be tall and leafy, blocking any views from and to neighbourhood houses. The Chinese believe trees in front of a home bring bad luck. As if these different preferences were not enough, the city has strict bylaws that prohibit cutting down trees....' or for example, The Guardian Newspaper reported, 'beckoning to a Somali is very offensive... it is like calling someone a dog – one can just imagine how a friendly bobby's curling finger could seem to a Somali youth'[3].

This thesis argue that in order to grapple with these realities at the neighbourhood level in order to strive to achieve sustainable communities, planners will need to understand the wider social, ethnic and cultural 'histories' and 'stories' and to have a better and deeper understanding of the culture specificities intrinsic to every ethno-cultural community – a knowledge of their 'way of life': customs, faiths, and convention; codes of manners, dress, cuisine, language, arts, science, technology, religion and rituals; norms and regulations of behaviour, traditions and institutions.[4]

White Papers during the last decade have been informed by the government's desire of a non-racist and multicultural Britain. ODPM (2005) reminds the planners that planning is now operating within a different context than was the case in the past. Thus if the government's vision for Britain, 'where cultural, demographic and social diversity are respected and celebrated; where discrimination is tackled robustly; where different communities co-exit in mutual respect and understanding; and where attitudes that block the progress of individuals and groups are tackled'[5] was ever to become a reality then social disadvantage or discrimination related to ethnicity and to land use planning must be recognised and acted upon as otherwise they will remain just rhetorical and aspirational, or in Mitchell's words remain a 'liberal fantasy'.

Title: Planners & Multiculturalism - A Paradigm Shift

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1. Introduction

1.1 Framing the Research

Where 'we' are today globally is a situation in which every 'we' discover that is in part a 'they': that the lines between 'us' and 'them' are continuously redefined through the global realities of immigration, travel, communication, the world economy, and ecological disasters" (Benhabib 1995). We are all descended from immigrants - 'when you look at how Britain has assimilated groups over the years from Celts to the Romans to the Saxons, Vikings, Normans, lace makers from the low countries, dykes in East Anglia by Dutch builders and our German monarchy – George I could not speak English, although King of this country, then the influence of the commonwealth, and then the very real effort of getting West Indian people over to help run the buses in the 1950's.'[6] In more recent times, effects of globalization and the legacy of colonialisation have been instrumental in creating new cultural geographies in British cities. Whilst in-migration into the UK fell dramatically from 1970's onwards resulting from the draconian measures introduced to control entry between 1960's and 1970's, the demographic composition of Britain continue to expand. According to the 2001 census, figures show that 7 percent (4.6 million) belonged to non-white ethnic minority groups and represent 53% growth in the minority ethic population between 1991 and 2001[7].

In every sphere of human activity, all major cities of the world continue to become more diverse with peoples from different countries, 'the days of one-size-fits-all ...are gone forever, it seems....'[8] Migration brought about by various factors, coupled with new accessible information & communication technology and ease & lower cost of travel are some of the underlying causes for the multicultural cities and for this reason the 21st century is indisputably the century of multicultural cities[9] as immigration continues to transform all the major cities of the world. Whilst for some, multiculturalism 'portrays the dangerous divisiveness associated with ethnic and cultural diversity, which is brought to the fore by vivid images of the negative aspects of ethnic conflicts poignantly portrayed by the media, yet for others it is 'a way forward in addressing the challenges posed by the growth of conflict and violence associated by ethnic differences through taking advantage

of 'diversity advantage' – which means bringing people of different cultures together so that they can learn from each other and cooperate in an 'intercultural' way.[10]

These changes 'have not only challenged core notions of nation and national identity, they also have impacts at the level of cities and neighbourhoods, where groups with different cultural background, religions and social practices, and thus with different housing, worshipping and shopping needs, require urban and social policy responses which affect the built environment and the city building professions' (Sandercock 2000). However, neither the literature on planning nor recent experiences in planning practice make it obvious how one ought to deal with difference in planning (Wallace & Milroy 1999). Given the ever increasing conflicting and disparate interests of local communities, planners have not as it were, 'caught up' with the different nature of contemporary stakeholders. Sandercock (2000) argues that 'the building of a peaceful co-existence based on differences has been, and remains, among the most important challenges facing all urban societies and that our world is ethnically and culturally diverse, and cities concentrate and expresses this diversity.'[11]

Planners are accustomed to viewing people as public citizens with equal rights, making rational decisions, and subordinating their parochial interests for the welfare of society as a whole. The culture of planning is one that is rooted in the enlightenment values of rationality, scientism and universalism (Burayidi 2003). Planning is the mechanism through which planners bring about the well being of their communities and liveability of their places. However, Bollen (2002) argues that even in an ethnically polarised societies such as Northern Ireland, Israel and South Africa, they [planners] prefer to retreat to the comfort of professional technicality and regulatory control rather than assisting to find solutions to pressing issues raised by these groups. That planners are aware of the force of change in their communities is not in doubt and there is much rhetorical and 'wish list' like literature about the importance of urban planning towards responding to the ethno-cultural diversity. However a recent ODPM's (2003c) report states that diversity is a relatively new term and planners' understanding of it is clouded by unfamiliarity and that the biggest difficulty is that the planning officers do not know how to relate spatial planning to diversity issues.

Many people ask why Diversity? And how does it differ from Equalities and Equal Opportunities? These concepts are often used interchangeably and have been the subject of much debate. However, in its truest sense, Equality and Equal Opportunities, for which much is said, written and legislated, can only make sense if the intrinsic culture of the diverse communities is Recognised, Respected, and Represented. Moreover, Parekh[12] (1997) argues that the concept of equality is complex and not easy to articulate and that much of the traditional discussion of equality is predicated on the assumption of a culturally homogeneous society and does not help us much in discussing multicultural societies. He talks about five dimensions which are implicit in the idea of equal citizenship in a multicultural society. The fifth dimension which is of relevance to this study is about Diversity, which in the context of ethnicity, is the opportunity to preserve and transmit 'their' cultural identities including languages, cultures, religions, histories and ethnic affiliations.[13] More generally, diversity is a recognition that society is made up of many different social groups with cross cutting bases for identity – e.g. gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation... class and lifestyle (Best Value Guide to Planning). Bollens (2002) argues that it is extremely difficult to design for cultural diversity. Schwetz (2005) asserts that in homogeneous societies, a planner would need to have a thorough understanding of the social aspects, beliefs, history, and relations of the native people. This, he says, is a difficult task when the backgrounds vary and the beliefs are conflicting and thus the main goal should now be to balance integration and diversity, and this requires an intimate understanding of the interactions of various cultures.

This is compounded by the fact that the fast shifting boundaries of social identity that we are seeing has in turn led to infinite number of sub-cultures which too have to be catered for. Bhabha (1997) refers to this condition as 'inbetweenness' viewing as Ghilardi (2001) suggest, 'human existence as a porous, constant flux of definitions and redefinitions where nobody belongs completely to any one identity' and which Burman expresses through her art as, '28 position in 34 years'[14]. Ghilardi (2001) warns that this ideal of infinite cultural translation, however, poses serious policy implications as it radically challenges traditional top-down interventions. Thus 'in a rapidly changing society, with shifts in demographics, ethnic mix, social attitudes, and behaviour, it is clear that planning faces new challenges in ensuring that the evolving social complexity is responded to in ways that reflect the

government's agendas, one in which all groups and/or individuals benefit from planning policy and practice[15].

The conceptual meanings of these words and phrases including – diversity, cultural norms, equality, values, multicultural, multiculturalism, equal opportunities – have for so many years been used as if they have the same meaning for all those who read and hear them. Very often they are used as jargon or buzzwords without any deep meaning applied to it. Thus in recent years these words have all slipped into our everyday language without anyone caring to realise that they a laden with meaning. These concepts bring cultural implications especially when planners are dealing with accommodating the needs and aspirations of its diverse population. These pluralistic and inclusive significations of multiculturalism work well with current Community Cohesion and Inclusion agendas, 'representing the advocated inclusive society and realm'.[16] Worley (2005) argues that 'community cohesion is a term that has become increasingly popular in public policy debates under New Labour, and signals a shift from previous policies of multiculturalism'.[17]

1.2 Scope of my Thesis

As seen earlier in this **Chapter 1**, the increased ethnic and cultural diversity has led to the co-existence side by side of what Sandercock (2000) has termed a 'dissimilar ways of life' within the sphere of the world's main metropolitan areas. Fundamental issues need to be addressed in order to accommodate disparate differences within and between the increasingly diverse communities that the planners now have to plan for.

Chapter 2 looks briefly at how such dissimilar ways of life came about in Britain by looking at the history of immigration into Britain over the last 50 years. Migration of people from diverse countries to London has made it 'a World in a City', a phrase coined by the Guardian Newspaper. The mechanism, in terms of legislations and instruments, used by the government over a period of time to manage the social change resulting from the demographic changes are reviewed. The birth pains of the emerging communities in trying to establish themselves and the accommodation of their cultural and spatial needs are discussed. The settled migrants' cultural translation on the ever changing British landscape is touched upon.

Chapter 3 details a wide ranging desk based literature review on the subject of Planning and Multiculturalism in order to explore their underlying concepts and their relevance in today's diverse cities. This is with a view to construct the argument that diversity issues need to be addressed in contemporary planning practice. Current literature relating to the importance of recognition of diverse values and cultural norms, the ethnic disadvantage that results in failure to do so and the challenges facing planners is reviewed. How planning has responded to the challenges relating to multiculturalism are discussed briefly. Government's intervention is also touched upon in the light of the concerns that the diversity issues must be addressed and that the needs and aspirations of the increasing multicultural population within British cities must be catered for. The responses by planning to multicultural issues are noted.

Chapter 4 looks the political context for the emergence of the government's modernising agenda and considering the social dimension within the idea of sustainable development. It sets out the Government's statutory national frameworks which informs the regional and local contexts to plan for social dimension within the larger sustainable development agenda.

Recognising the importance of the relationship between planning and multicultural concepts in the Literature Review and the weight put on it by government, **Chapter 5** sets the context by selecting a case study of the Brent Planners. A brief profile of Brent is given as a backdrop which supports the choice as the Borough's majority are minority ethnics. Methodology in terms of research design for answering the research questions and the collection of data is set out.

Chapter 6 starts by setting the political context of the Brent planners and looks at the Brent's planning process. The key finding from the study of Brent planning documents and the discussions from the interview and the analysis is reported. These are categorised under four interrelated topics within the debates of multiculturalism that emerged from the Literature Review. Responses from planners are also analysed against the backdrop of issues discussed in the Literature Review.

Chapter 7 sums up by drawings some conclusions. This chapter identifies the gaps which need to be filled in if planning is able to deliver the diversity agenda. One of the gaps that

need to be filled in and highlighted in my underlying argument is that the key to deliver cultural specific planning is to understanding the needs and aspirations of diverse communities and translate these spatially. This chapter provides the reason for the need of a 'paradigm shift' and why planners will have to change their mindsets, acquire new skill sets and find a way of constructively use the data sets in order to realise the multicultural planning through addressing the diversity agenda.

2. Britain's Multicultural Landscape

2.1 In-Migration into Britain & Social Change - 20th Century onwards

Historically, the influx of immigrants has in the main resulted from factors such a demand for labour in Britain in the 1950's and in more recent times from people fleeing from oppressive political regimes, manmade and natural disasters. In the early part of 20th century, the pattern of immigration whereby small communities established themselves around inner cities in cities like Liverpool and Cardiff largely because they were port cities were common. Since the 2nd World War, however, immigration from the New Commonwealth grew and continued to grow until 1961 with about 30,000 and 50,000 people arriving every year. Many Caribbean countries suffered high unemployment after the 2nd World War whilst there was a shortage of labour in Britain. For example, in the 1950s and 1960s British Rail, London Transport, the National Health Service and the British Hotels and Restaurants Association set up recruitment schemes in the West Indies, especially in Barbados. Many, such as nurses, also approached prospective employers directly, after seeing advertisements.[18]

It should be pointed out here as it relevant to the subject of this thesis, that whilst the Caribbean countries share a colonial past, the people from each country are distinct from each other in terms of culture. The Caribbean immigration trailed off in early 1960's and that from India and Pakistan began, as the former British colonial subjects exercised their rights to citizenship and came to Britain in search of greener pastures. They were referred to as economic migrants. 60's & 70's also saw immigrants, mainly for India and Pakistan which consisted mainly of women and children joining their husbands who had emigrated in the 1950's. 1970's also saw large numbers of refugees from Pakistan and Bangladesh being admitted to Britain.

1970's heralded a decade of political unrest, dictatorial regimes and ethnic cleansing in former African British colonies and this resulted in an influx into Britain of many Asians, largely Indians, who had made their homes and lives in East Africa ever since they were first imported from the Indian subcontinent and employed in colonial East Africa by the British government. They were imported to construct rail network and help the British to

rule, as it were, the indigenous people of East Africa. Many of these Indians remained in East Africa after these countries gained independence from the British. They became an extremely important part of the East African economy, some occupying management positions in sectors such as banking, insurance and industry.

Thus from 1948 until the 1970s, Britain experienced an unprecedented period of mass immigration of people of many new and diverse cultures. By mid 1970's, immigration into Britain was in the main made up of dependants of the immigrants already settled in Britain. Problems from the presence in Britain of culturally-distinct immigrants were being voiced as early as 1968 when then home shadow home secretary Reginald Maudling put in a parliamentary debate, 'The problems arise quite simply form the arrival in this country of many people of wholly alien cultures, habits and outlooks'[19]. The legislative context enshrined in the Commonwealth Immigration Act 1962, the Race Relations Act 1965, the Immigration Act 1971, the Nationality Acts of the 1980's and further controls in the 1990's, mitigated against further in migration into the UK. However, Inglis (1997) points out that the contemporary ethnic composition of many societies continues to be transformed by the international population movement which started in 1980s and is a major feature of globalisation. These movements include refugee movements, asylum seekers, permanent immigration and contract labour. Britain is therefore no exception and will continue to experience in-migration. The 1990's have seen immigration of people from EEC countries, Eastern Europe and other commonwealth countries including Australia, New Zealand and North America. Refugees fleeing from war, persecution and ethnic cleansing from countries including Sri Lanka, Somalia, Ethiopia, Kosovo, Bosnia, Afghanistan and Iraq have also been admitted into Britain.

The above precipitated the existing Multi-Cultural landscape of Britain to the extent that in two of London boroughs, Newham and Brent, the majority population is made up of the minorities. A recent report in the Guardian – London: A World in a City reads as follows:

'Two separate parts of the Guardian today testify to the multicultural nature of British society. A special broadsheet version of G2 today pays tribute to London, possibly the most cosmopolitan city in the world: 300 languages, 50 non-indigenous

communities with populations of 10,000 or more, with virtually every race, nation, culture and region able to claim at least a handful of Londoners. Almost a third (30%) of the city's residents were born outside England (2.2m) with many tens of thousands more who are second or third generation immigrants. But ethnic minorities are not restricted to London. Some 53% live elsewhere.'[20]

There were 47 communities of over 10,000 people living in London according to the 2001 Census. Among the largest groups in 2001 were India (172,162), Ireland (157,285), Bangladesh (84,565), Jamaica (80,319), Nigeria (68,907) and Pakistan (66,658). The largest European countries represented are Germany (39,818), Turkey (39,128), Italy (38,694), France (38,130) and Spain (22,473). There were also 45,888 Cypriots, 45,506 South Africans, Australians, 27,494 New Zealanders and 23,328 from Hong Kong. Latin American countries included Brazil (8,162), Argentina (2,557), Ecuador (2,301) and Chile (2,054). Among the smaller national groups recorded were Uzbekistan, Belize, Moldova, Curacao and El Salvador, each with 200 to 300 London residents[21]. London seems to have had a reasonable record in accommodating millions of new overseas-born residents. There have been radical changes in the number and origins of immigrants in the past decade. 2004 saw the highest level of net international in-migration ever recorded[22]. Because such a large proportion of UK international migration is into London, it is inevitable that here the global will meet the local far more frequently and more intensely than in most of the rest of the country. The changing numbers and profile of international migrants have led to intense political pressures on many London boroughs[23].

As seen above, a conscious attempt to alleviate post-war labour shortages facilitated a favourable climate for immigrants to settle in Britain. The Resettlement Act 1947 was a constructive act and it acknowledged some of the broader social aspects of immigration and provided help with the 'assimilation' of migrants into the host community. The National Assistance Act (1948) provided the necessary instruments to facilitate integration by providing hostel accommodations and giving advice on subjects such as employment and health. Subsequent British Nationality Act also introduced in 1948, confirmed British citizenship to anyone born in the UK and allowed Commonwealth citizens' entry to Britain to find employment. However, the post war recession of the 1950's drew attention to the presence of the immigrants whereby the host communities attributed the strain on the

social services including housing and education to them. In 1949 questions were being asked in the parliament as to who had sent for the immigrants. The underlying unrest and disharmony culminated in the riots in Nottingham and Notting Hill in 1958. These events informed the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1962 and the solution to the unrest was to introduce a series of draconian measures essentially aimed towards tighter controls for entry to Britain for peoples from the New Commonwealth. Thus the in-migration into the UK fell dramatically from 1970's onwards.

Wilson's Labour Government took a different stance – 'We are not having the immigrant questions used as an alibi for the total Tory failure to handle the problems of housing, slums, schools and education in this Country'[24]. The first race related legislation – the Race Relations Act 1965 was introduced which made direct discrimination against ethnic minorities unlawful. This was followed three years later with the Race Relations Act 1968 and presenting it to the parliament, the Home Secretary, Jim Callaghan, said: 'The House has rarely faced an issue of greater social significance for our country and our children.' This Act kept the existing definition of racial discrimination, but it made the law broader in scope. It became unlawful to discriminate on racial grounds in new areas, such as employment, providing goods, facilities, or services, housing, and trade unions. The Act also created the Community Relations Commission, to promote 'harmonious community relations' by carrying out research, making recommendations to the Secretary of State, and helping to fund local community groups sharing the same purpose – including a network of community relations councils (most of which were later renamed racial equality councils). Controversially, the 1968 Act continued to exclude government functions and services from its provisions. The 1971 Conservative Government in response to crises of job, resource and home shortages in Britain introduced an Immigration Act which acted towards ending the immigration. This new act based on the concept of partiality, resulted in families from the new commonwealth being divided.

The Labour Government of 1976 introduced yet another Race Relations Act 1976 which made it unlawful to indirectly discriminate either intentionally or unintentionally against any particular racial group (section 71) and was intended to counter institutional discrimination particularly within Local Authorities. The commission for Racial Equality

(CRE), an independent body was also established by the Act with mandate to investigate allegations of racism, work towards eliminating discrimination and to promote good relations between different racial groups. The CRE has conducted and published three reviews of the 1976 Act's effectiveness – in 1985, 1991 and 1998. In all three reviews, the CRE recommended further changes to the legislation. It argued that, besides being bound by the Act in the same way as any other employers or service providers, public authorities should be required by law to promote racial equality. However, the 1976 Act remained unamended for over twenty years.

2.2 Migrants' Cultural Needs and Changing British Landscape

Thus the migration of various non-white people in Britain for various reasons since the 1950s has 'brought with it a number of important consequences that are only now becoming more evident, roughly a generation or two later'[25], as these communities mature and new ones emerge. The resulting diverse communities from diverse backgrounds become visible at the neighbourhood scale when their presence begins to manifest in physical form and built environment through their culture specific demands for commercial and shopping amenities, social and cultural institutions, residential housing forms and public services. Nassar (undated) argues that settled immigrants and their first and second generation Diasporas have transferred their own particular conceptualization of space, built forms and functional requirements to the new context, modifying British urban forms to their own designs. Hall (1966) observed that people from different cultures not only speak different languages but, they structure and experience space differently and as a consequence inhabit distinctly different sensory worlds.[26] Thus spatial perceptions and experiences vary from culture to culture.

Whilst it would be true to say that cities around the world share many spatial characteristics, Raman (2003) argues that there are significant differences in the syntactic and geometric structures of their spaces[27]. This is because different cultures use and develop their space differently. With this in mind, it would not be unrealistic to expect diverse communities with distinct cultures occupying the same city or region would make their own place in the same space and thus express side by side at the same time their cultural differences in a multicultural space. Thus the phrase coined by the Guardian Newspaper – London: a World in a City whence London in 2005 can lay claim to being the

most diverse city ever – where 'a little bit of Korea brought into a very English town (*New Malden*)'[28] and Congolese community in Tottenham have a distinctive presence 'because of the way we dress'[29]. Such coexistence of multiple cultures comes about when as research conducted in the Netherlands[30] found that neighbourhood preference of many Turks and Moroccan is where they see an ethnic infrastructure as well as the presence of member of their own ethnic group. It was also found that in Glasgow, the Pakistani community needs with regard to the dwelling were subordinate to needs with respect to the neighbourhood[31].

Modood et al (1997) point out that some of emerging communities from within those settled migrant groups and their Diasporas are capable of sustaining themselves as communities. They also argue that their ethnic identity has become politicised and whilst some assert racial identity based on their experience of having suffered racism, others choose to emphasis their family origins and homeland, while yet others promote a trans-ethnic identity such as Islam. Depending on their experience of cultural displacement have, various communities have sought to express cultural and explicit practices as form of self identity. Castell (2002) argues that, the reconstruction of cultural meaning in spatial form and processes is, at the same time, the oldest profession in the business and the new frontier of the planning. In a world marked by the abstract flow of information, and characterised by the uprooting of culture and the capture of experience in virtual reality, the marking of spaces, the new monumentality, the new centralities, the attribution of identifiable meaning to the places were we live, work, travel, dream, enjoy, and suffer are fundamental tasks in restructuring the unity between function and meaning[32]. Thus the need to reflect certain cultural practices, especially to do with the family and religion has become a feature of the British Landscape and Nassar (2005) has argued that the changes in the urban landscape are attributed to these everyday practices and social processes of the ethnic groups as a matter of representation and identity. Thus as communities have developed in British cities and towns, they have established institutions to cater for their social, political and religious needs.

Minority ethnic groups do not form a homogeneous mass but are differentiated by their origin, language, religion and culture and the social and economic experiences. 'It is only from the egocentric viewpoint of the British that this diverse immigrant group can be

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lumped together into a single class as *coloured people*[33]. For example 'the heterogeneity of the mélange of South Asians is reflected in the different histories, cultural traditions, social classes and methods of insertions into Britain. Thus, group solidarities are multivalent, constructed around one or more identities such as Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian, or ethnic such as Gujarati, Punjabi, Sylheti, or various sects of Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism'.[34] Ballard (1994) has shown how South Asian migrants and their children reconstructed their lives to create new homes with each community tending to adapt in its own distinctive way.

The *Planning for a Multi-Racial Britain* report (RTPI/CRE, 1983) recommended that the needs of the ethnic minority communities be taken into account. Planners were advised that 'local and structure plans' should not be produced in a colour-blind fashion, but should pay special regard to the development needs of different groups in the population of the area[35]. Nassar (undated) points out that the shift away from an assimilationist policies of 1960's and 1970's and towards a multicultural policy in the 1980's has been accompanied by an assertiveness in the representation of a South Asian identity whereby they have been able to adapt to the local urban tradition and its associated institutional building types in order to attain their social, cultural, economic and physical aspirations. The most visible manifestation of these institutions is the metamorphosing of the religious sites of worship. There was a gradual recognition by a number of local authorities of the constraints faced by diverse communities in catering for their religions needs and as Gale & Naylor (2002) point out, the change of policy to permit house-temple conversions and beyond was welcomed. Naylor and Ryan (1998) reported that the number of sites from only 13 officially certified sites of worship in 1964 that catered for the three main South Asian religious communities (Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs), increased by 1998 to 614 certified Muslim mosques, 109 Hindu temples (mandirs) and 193 Sikh temples (gurdwaras) clustered in Britain's urban areas.

They have also pointed out that the size of the places of worship, with small 'front room' worship halls being superseded by converted premises and also by purpose-built structures, the largest of which vie in size and grandeur with Britain's Christian cathedrals[36]. Such urban transformation has resulted in culturally distinct neighborhoods and has implications on the architecture and urbanism. This has thus been a place-making process with new

forms of purpose built temples has emerged designed with symbols such as a dome, *chhatri, shikara,* minaret and arches, 'the gradual reverse movement of architectural styles from the colonies to the heart of the empire'[37]. However these achievements have been inherently within contested contexts.

2.3 Cultural Meaning of Space & Contestation

The fact that people and communities have attribute different cultural meaning to space is not difficult to grasp if as Menski (2002) states 'earlier, in the colonial period, European colonisers went all over the world and took their *cultural baggage* with them. Today's migrants do the same, but are often denied the right to practice their cultures...'[38] is understood. In spatial terms, the above identities and cultural practices manifests through what Lefebvre (1991) calls 'representation of space' which denotes physical spaces to which social meanings have been assigned. However the desire for a particular community to realise their 'representational spaces' such that it is imbued with cultural meanings, is inextricably linked with the desires of 'representation of space' as understood and denoted by 'institutionalised conceptions of space inscribed within urban planning procedures'[39] and thus the politics of the built environment.

Gale and Naylor (2002) point out that 'frequently, the buildings of non-Christian religious communities have been portrayed as *alien* and incommensurate with surrounding urban landscape[40]. This undoubtedly has resulted in the minority religious groups being bound up with the negotiation and contestation when the need has arisen for expansion or modification of their space and the aspiration to create one space for congregation as well as imbue new meanings into it. These meanings are inscribed in the space by the communities by changing its uses as well as re-using traditional symbolic elements such as a prayer niche. Also, for example, Nassar (undated) points out that Muslims were differentiating a space for themselves and their needs by modifying the traditional layout of the terraced house. However as he points out, these conversions remained contested because of strong opposition by neighbours and local authorities. 'The antagonistic nature of inter-ethnic relations at this time had a direct influence on the outward expression of all appropriated buildings residential or otherwise'[41] and although as Nassar (undated) asserts that South Asians in Britain have been able to culturally reproduce themselves through construction of new social relations and everyday practices, he also points out the in a case

of a Birmingham Mosque, the loss of the minaret, which resulted from negotiations between planners and applicants, expresses a compromise on the applicants part 'within the hegemonic context of the system'[42].

Inglis (1996) points out that the impact of changing demography on the existing built environment is playing against the backdrop of fear of difference and deep-seated apprehension about change and its consequences are felt by the indigenous or host communities and the representation of space as seen by the institutional framework of urban planning. As Gale (2005) stated that out in the case of Muslim applicants, the reactions to the planning applications were frequently hostile, with respondents opposing the application by asserting the 'alien-ness' of the Muslim religion to the English national context. So in the case of Birmingham Central Mosque, the initial outline planning proposals had made no reference to the symbolism of the buildings. However, as we saw above, at the design stage the desire to incorporate a dome and minaret were met with disapproval in terms that construed them as symbols of 'alien' cultural presences[43]. Thus the meanings invested in architectural designs and cultural symbolisms have become contested features within the context of the institutional framework of urban planning.

Gale (2004) has articulated clearly not only how the grounds for contestations has been played out within the deliberative framework of urban planning but also how post-migration religious groups have interacted with and initiated change in the spaces in which they reside as an expression of their religious and cultural needs and how the engagement of Muslim and other religious groups with planning procedure have been effective in redefining the constraints that urban planning imposes. This acceptance of change however, is partly due to the fact as Modood (1997) points out, whatever cultural heritage migrants bring with them, in time, it inevitably becomes simplified or fragmented in the process of transplantation and reinterpreted in the adjustment to the new socio-cultural environment. He also argues that minority practices will of course also be influenced by various aspects of dominant British cultures and by the currents of thinking and feeling that are simultaneously influencing all social groups across British society. ODPM (2005) draws attention to the fact that characteristics of the area changes, so planners should take care to keep their information as up to date as possible.

2.4 The British Planning System and Black & Minority (BME) Groups

It is well established that the British planning system tends to disproportionately benefits particular sections of society such as the articulate middle class or property interest (Reade 1987). Links between planning and the ethnic minority began to manifest itself through the research carried out the 1970's onwards when the then Greater London Council (GLC) published a document titled 'Race and Planning Guidelines'. GLC's, Ethnic Minority Committee set up a new unit with objectives of implementing and securing racial equality. The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and the Commission of Racial Equalities (CRE) set up a working party in 1974 with an aim to examine planning issues impacting on the BME groups and the widely adopted 'colour blind' approach to planning. Whilst all branches of RTPI were invited to take part in this study, only the North West branch responded. Following a conference in Bolton which was held on the subject with planning professions from the North West of England, its proceedings were published in the document 'Planning for Multi-Racial Britain'. A number of issues were highlighted by the conference which included the lack of knowledge mainly resulting from ignorance of the needs of the various ethnic groups on the part of professional planners. This resulted in the misconception and stereotyping of the ethnic minorities and these issues surfaced mainly in the planning applications for 'ethnic places of worships'. Places of worships and cultural/religious schools were mainly set up in residential premises where the communities were small and in other hired premises such as village, school or church halls.

This was not without frequent complaints from local residents followed up by Enforcement Notices towards stopping such usage. This meant that the communities moved and set up again in different locations only to encounter the same problems again. Thus the problems encountered by the ethnic minority communities in tying to provide such basic facilities for themselves despite being funded by them were immense. Pressure resulting from contestation by local people on the local authority planners and the elected members was often the reason why the planning applications were refused or consents being conditioned inappropriately without regard to the need of the communities. Whilst objections mainly were on the grounds of increased parking and traffic problems and landscaping, it should be noted that where existing churches were acquired by the ethnic minorities for use as place of worship and made only internal changes, no such

requirements for parking or landscaping applied. This obviously highlights anomalies within the planning system whereby whilst planning permission is not required when a the proposed use of the existing building remain in the same use class, the fact remains that grant of the original use would have been under totally different sets of conditions in terms of traffic and parking! The fact that many churches were erected before 1949 means that planning permission was not even a requisite.

Pioneering research initiated by the RTPI in 1983, resulted in a seminal report which was jointly published in 1985 by RTPI/CRE titled 'Planning for a Multi-Racial Britain'. This report once again highlighted the problems faced by the ethnic minority groups and the need to incorporate the 'racial' dimension into planning practice. The GLC included an additional chapter in the Greater London Development Plan in 1984 on the race equality and planning for ethnic minorities. It also published 'Planning for Multi-Racial London: Report of Findings' in 1985 highlighting again the necessity of addressing the particular needs of the ethnic minority groups and for duty of town planning to include an active race equality dimension with respect to the 1976 Race Relations Act as most authorities were unaware of the obligations under this act (GLC, 1985). Reports relating to strategising race equality and ethnic minority in London and consulting with ethnic minority organisations were also produced in the 1980's. Most of these reports were aimed at the London Boroughs in order they endeavour to work towards helping ethnic minority groups in their areas towards realising their social and economic needs. Thus they urged that polices should be formulated towards achieving these objectives. Despite such advice, there was no commitment most London boroughs persisted in using the 'colour blind' approach; an idea entrenched in the view that planning is a technical and neutral activity. Where changes happened, these were on ad hoc basis. 'Lambeth and Newham were the only councils to implement proper race equality strategies in planning, although Brent to a lesser extent has also taken steps in that direction'[44], and these Boroughs incidentally had relatively high concentrations of BME groups.

Questions by the RTPI, other voluntary and professional bodies were being asked in the 1980's as to whether the lack of 'black town planners' effect the practice and policies within town planning and whether white town planners whilst respecting the planning

ethos of technicality and neutrality would have the deeper understanding and knowledge the diverse cultures of which they were not part of. Riots around the country predominantly in ethic areas including Notting Hill, Brixton and Southall in London in the 1980's prompted strong criticism of town planning and Lord Scarman, who presided over the inquiry in 1982 put much of the blame on to town planners. Despite scathing criticism, the survey carried out by the National Development Control Forum (NDCF) in 1988 found that most LPAs had done little to establish and assess the needs of their ethnic communities some even voicing that it was not a planning matter. Almost ten years on, another RTPI commission study on 'Ethnic Minorities and the Planning System' from Kryshnarayan and Thomas, was published in 1993. This study recognised that only some of the earlier report's (RTPI/CRE 1983) recommendations had been implemented including changes to the Institute's own working practices. There has not been any authoritative overview of planning practice in relation to the needs of ethnic minorities and that some issues touched upon in the earlier report needed further public consideration and discussion.

The research for this new study included survey, interviews and case study reviews of a 135 Local Planning Authorities with one of the objectives being to investigate the policies, practices and procedures of planning authorities with large... ethnic minority populations and how do these cater for the needs of ethnic minorities. The report argued that the diverse needs of ethnic minorities were not addressed and that planners and elected members lacked awareness of the issues that impact on the lives of the ethnic minorities. The report also argued that very little by ways of direction and guidance comes forth from the government to the LPAs concerning ethnic issues. The report revealed that Local Authorities fell within one of the three categories identified depending on how they dealt with planning and catered for the need of the ethnic minorities. The first category were those which adopted 'colour blind' approach and did not acknowledge that there were any problems; the second category included those which appreciated the problems and that certain policy areas may warrant specific polices but dealt mainly on a case-by-case basis and the third category of LPAs were those which had formal and comprehensive polices within its planning framework.

Vast variations between the LPAs were shown by the survey in terms of how equal opportunities and diversity issues were considered. Survey also uncovered denial by some LPAs, admittedly with smaller proportion of BME, that there even was a problem. On a positive note, the above RTPI 1993 found many LPA's felt that it was only the lack of resources that prevented the carrying out of appropriate research in order to identify ethnicity issues which therefore resulted in negative attitudes towards the BME. As will be seen later, this is still the reason given today. The research and experiences of those working within a multicultural landscape and findings from the above between 1970's and late 1990's confirms that ethnic minorities' distinctive cultural or religious needs have been haphazardly handled by the LPAs. That these, their needs no doubt have meanings in the way they use and produce built environment were not understood and thus were not addressed robustly.

As the Fourth National Survey (1997) by the Policy Studies Institute titled *Ethnic Minorities in Britain,* found that within the six main groups of immigration-based minorities there is systematic pattern with particular groups or sub-groups within them being severely disadvantaged through exclusion across a number of measures. Ratcliffe (1998) argues that there is much written about exclusion at individual, community and neighbourhood levels which has raised awareness and 'although this analytical paradigm raises awareness of important issues to do with economic division and gross material inequalities, conceptualising difference in this manner has led both to an oversimplification of the causes, dimensions and legacy of inequality, and to a discourse of disempowerment; in more familiar language, that of 'blaming the victim'.[45] This was initially the response when - 'after the street confrontations in 2001 involving Asian youths in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford, new issues have entered the national debate. These include alarm at the scale of ethnic deprivation and segregation in poor urban areas....'[46]. However, the Government's view was that 'the issue of segregation may be a smokescreen. More vital may be the quality of the neighbourhood in terms of housing, environment, and local facilities. There is a pressing need to systematically assess issues relating to housing design, safe neighbourhoods, sustainability, housing location and size, recreational and religious provision and transport. Key to this is a commitment to understanding everyday lives among BME communities'.[47]

Therefore the government now find that they have to address the issues of ethnic diversity and determine appropriate policy responses. Thus once again at the beginning of the 21st century, attention is drawn, this time as it were by second and third generation immigrants. Thus there is a shift in focus from issues faced by new arrivals to that of settled immigrants and their second and third generations – the Diasporas. Thus the Government made it explicit the need to make connection between the needs of the diverse groups and spatial planning. It also insisted that the new Act (The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000) presents a new challenges to planners to address and readdress how it approaches the formal processes of plan making and development control as well as the informal processes of identifying priorities, consulting the broader community, networking with stakeholders and recognising minority needs and aspirations'.[48] The government's Social Exclusion Unit recently reported that: 'While there is much variation within and between different ethnic groups, overall, people from minority ethnic communities are more likely than others to live in deprived areas and in unpopular and overcrowded housing. They are more likely to be poor and to be unemployed, regardless of their age, gender and qualifications'[49]. The London Plan notes that nearly a third of all Londoners are from black and minority ethnic groups[50] and that this plan will also support London's unique strengths as a diverse world city, including culture, tourism, learning, government and finance. It is also built upon London's ever increasing diversity of population, which is, in many ways, London's key strength.

3. Literature Review: Debates and Issues on Planning & Multiculturalism

3.1 Multicultural and Multiculturalism:

From the migration processes described earlier, there have emerged 'at least for some migrants and their descendants, new communities capable of and perhaps wanting to maintain themselves as communities. New cultural practices, especially to do with the family and religions have become a feature of the British Landscape...' (Modood et al, 1997). In less than three decades Multiculturalism has become a word instantly recognised by policy & decision makers, social commentators, academics and the general public. For Qadeer (1997), multiculturalism 'acknowledges racial and cultural differences in a society and encourages their sustenance and expression as constituent elements of nation's social order'. For Judy Spokes[51] the concept of culture is both 'overarching and underpinning' and covers both values upon which a society is based and the embodiments and expressions of these values in the day-to-day world of the society.

UNESCO (2001) describes *culture* as 'the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group...that...encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs'.[52]
Ulf Hannerz, define culture as 'the meanings, which people create, and which create people as members of societies'[53]. Hawkes (2001) suggests that culture is a much contested word and that without delving too deeply into the mass of scholarly literature that has developed around this word, two inter-related definitions stand out. They are:

- the social production and transmission of identities, meanings, knowledge, beliefs, values, aspirations, memories, purposes, attitudes and understandings;
- the 'way of life' of a particular set of humans: customs, faiths, and convention; codes of manners, dress, cuisine, language, arts, science, technology, religion and rituals; norms and regulations of behaviour, traditions and institutions

If as argued above, when culture is taken to denote the social production and transmission of values and meaning inherently entrenched within hearts and minds of the individuals and communities and the expression of this social and aspirational purpose, then it is at

the core of the public planning process and the connection between culture and planning becomes very clear.

For Inglis (1997) multiculturalism is about acknowledging the existence of ethnic diversity and ensuring that rights of individuals to retain their culture should go hand in hand with enjoying full access to, participation in, and adherence to, constitutional principles and commonly shared values prevailing in the society. Such a view no doubt has immense implications for the planning profession. She further states that multiculturalism acknowledges the legitimacy and need for equality of ethnic groups in the expression of their diverse cultures. Parekh (2000) argues that 'by definition a multicultural society consists of several cultures or cultural communities with their own distinct systems of meaning and significance and views on man and the world. It cannot therefore be adequately theorised from within the particular framework of any political doctrine which, being embedded in, and structurally biased towards, a particular cultural perspective, cannot do justice to others.'

Planning's ability to respond to difference and the global processes that are shaping cities today is being questioned by Fincher & Jacobs (1998). These are presenting relentless challenges for planners and as Kuhn (2002) points out that the challenge confronting planners today is to learn to live with the discomfort of there being no single answer, and to be more receptive to the unfamiliar. Sandercock (1998) suggests that there is a need to incorporate global socio-cultural processes of change. These encompass the age of migration - multicultural citizenship; the age of post colonialism – the reclaiming of land by indigenous people; and the rise of civil society – the age of minorities. The impact of this new demographic awareness on urban form must be felt. Sandercock (1998) also points out that these processes have had a huge impact on our cities, which cannot be ignored. Other researchers agree and provide different insights into the multiple cities, its constituents, their needs and the imperative for appropriate planning responses (Dunn, 1999; Fincher and Jacobs, 1998; Qadeer, 1997; Thompson, 2000).

The last few years have seen a plethora of proposals and theories to look for new approaches to public planning and there is emerging literature about how urban planners

should respond to ethno-cultural diversity. 'The government wants a public service which values and uses the benefits that 'difference' bring to it.... It must reflect the full diversity of that society if it is to deliver the policies and services required' (ODPM 2005). Sandercock (1998), in her book 'Towards Cosmopolis: Planning for Multicultural Cities has arguably done more than anyone to reappraise the planning profession within the context of diversity. She insists that if planning does not respond to different ways of being in the world, it will become increasingly irrelevant to contemporary society.

Sandercock (1998) draws on recent theoretical and political debates on gender, race and sexuality as well as on grassroots struggles in the radically multiple cities of the late 20th Century to argue that planners have to find a way of building the new multicultural city. Thompson (2000) urges planners to counter ill-founded community protests based on misunderstanding, stereotyping and racism. The growing body of UK equality legislation including, Race Relations Act 1965, 1968, 1976, Race Relations Amendment Act 2000, and the European Equal Treatment Directive, makes it abundantly clear that there is a requirement to ensure that issues of diversity are fully considered in all policy developments, delivery of goods and services. This no doubt is significant for the planning system in terms of consideration of planning and diversity in development plans and development control (ODPM, 2004). Thompson (2003) urges given the magnitude and significance of the contemporary global socio-cultural processes of change, there is an urgency to place multi-culturalism firmly and centrally on the planners' agenda.

A workshop in November 2002 on planning, immigration and diversity at the Fifth International Metropolis Conference in Canada, also brought to the fore the common challenges practitioners face when planning in an ethno-cultural diverse city and how the reality of ethno-cultural city was increasingly becoming relevant for planners internationally given global and economic and migration trends. Sandercock (2000) states that there is now an important body of theoretical and increasingly inclusive literature which addresses and issues of multiculturalism in relation to urban planning.

3.2 Recognition of Diverse Values and Cultural Sensitivity

Whilst 'serving the public interest' is the motto of planning (RTPI, 1997), it is an accepted fact that what constitutes the public and its needs, wants or interests is problematic and that as the society is pluralistic and not monolithic, planners should not treat all groups the same in the name of 'equality'. Davidoff's (1965) concept of advocacy planning, whereby pluralism within society was to be represented in the production of plurality of plans, was a compelling call for planners to become committed practitioners and proffered a possibility that the cause of social justice would be enhanced directly by its adoption.[54]

Sandercock (2000) asserts that there has been little attempt to find out how different communities understand and desire, for example, the use of public space and that to do so, requires the development of cross-cultural skills on the part of designers and planners, especially those who specialise in community consultation techniques. Reeves (2005) assert that the practical importance of diversity for spatial planning and sustainable development is still not widely understood and that potentially all aspects of planning have a diversity dimension and so it is important that the government guidance reflect this. She demonstrates the importance of diversity and equality and its connection with spatial planning and sustainable development through using international case studies. She urges planners to use a framework titled, a '5 Habit Approach' which she has developed by adapting one in the medical legal field in the USA. By illustrating real life situations, she shows how this approach shows the planners to take account of the need for them to learn on three levels; cognitive, behavioural and emotional.

Several reports by statutory bodies since the 1960' including a seminal joint publication by the RTPI & the CRE as early as 1983, 'Planning for Multi-Racial Britain' and followed by RTPI's another empirically based study in 1993 entitled 'Ethnic Minorities and the Planning System' brought to the fore many issues that planning authorities should be aware of. These reports warned against the failure to challenge the traditional values of the planning system and the confusion as to the relevance of social need in planning

The above 1983 RTPI/CRE report also made reference to the fact of how Circular 68/78 which dealt with the newly passed Inner Urban Areas Act made no specific reference to

racial minorities and also how also the Statutory Plans made no such references despite substantial number of births were registered 'new commonwealth' mothers. Amongst the 36 recommendations that the report made, it recognised that specific policies reflecting the values of the large scale settlements of racial groups in inner cities was imperative and may therefore justify culture specific policies both in local plans and in development control relating to the sub-division of buildings, re-housing of communities and provision of specialist or religious centres. The above 1983 report also suggested that 'town planners should be aware of the diverse characteristics of the racial groups in their area and how existing polices of land use and development control and existing channels of communication fail to match this diversity'[55]. Krishnarayan and Thomas (1993) recommended in the study titled *Ethnic Minorities and the Planning System,* that 'If ethnic minority groups have distinctive needs which have implications for the use and development of land, or if there is a likelihood that their needs (even if not distinctive) are being overlooked, then it is good planning practice to acknowledge these needs explicitly'. They also asserted the fact that there are low proportions of ethnic minority planners and their absence at senior levels in the professions inevitably means that planning will be insensitive to the needs and aspirations of ethnic minorities.

Fifteen years later, recent research report by the ODPM (2004), found that 'diversity is a relatively new term and planners' understanding of it is clouded by unfamiliarity' and that 'issues about diversity and planning are not that well understood or a priority in planning practice and procedures'[56]. Its case study research on Harrow Council found that planning officers do not get involved very much in diversity issues as they see them as the remit of specialists. The Head of Local Planning said that the main push in terms of planners' sensitivity to diversity comes from specialist officers'. 'Outside of access (*disability*), we don't really get involved'. Also it reported that the planning department has no real method or means of gauging the impact of planning policies on different groups. This is despite the fact that there is plenty of empirical evidence of the social change that has occurred in Harrow's demography over the years. However such an attitude is not surprising as most of the government guidance on diversity and difference issues had only made reference to disabled people and until very recent times, simply stated that plans should have regard to social considerations in their general polices and proposal. This

therefore has resulted in misunderstanding and the example of Harrow above confirms that no or very little change has occurred on the ground. Mayor of London (2006), points out that effective provision for communities cannot be made if their specific needs have not been recognised and understood. Government's objectives reflected in the PPS1 stresses that pre-application discussions are critically important and benefit both developers and local planning authorities in ensuring a better mutual understanding of objectives and the constraints that exist. In the course of such discussions proposals can be adapted to ensure that they better reflect community aspirations and that applications are complete and address all the relevant issues.

Uyesugi & Shipley (2005) point out that by acknowledging the presence of visible minority groups must be a fitting first policy step in demonstrating that the thoughts and actions of those groups are valued and that such contents would undoubtedly enhance the cultural content of policies. One of the other aspects of multicultural planning pertains to the language of discourse. Providing written material or at least summaries of such material, in the mother languages of the residents once again validates their opinions[57] and shows that it is a conscious effort in respecting and acknowledging diversity by planners. Inglis (1997) argues that where minorities are concentrated, local initiatives are extremely valuable as examples of what can be achieved through an explicitly multicultural policy. The policy issues that arise is that whilst it is necessary to address the ethnically linked social and economic disadvantage highlighted by the census, it is equally necessary to ensure that distinctive elements of the ethnic culture are respected and addressed. ODPM's research report of March 2004[58] concluded that planners' knowledge of diversity issues is vague, that they are not familiar or comfortable with the term 'diversity and that most do not really know what it means.

Planners have been criticised for paying little attention to multicultural issues in their practical work and as Milroy and Wallace (2002) point out that many planners say 'we treat everyone the same and don't (wittingly) discriminate or disadvantage anyone. Also as Reeves (2005) stresses that professionals who treat everyone the same are likely to be insensitive to and unaware of the diverse needs of different people and their rights to equality. Thus it is important to realise that in order to treat people 'equally', it is important to respond to their diverse needs. Gloria Davies of the World Bank said, '...it occurred to

me early in my undergraduate career that I would not be able to understand why people behaved as they did if I did not understand something about their cultures.'[59] Reynolds (2006) points out the importance of understanding the backgrounds of their communities and asks us to imagine the difficulties faced by those who arrive in England from country where freedom of speech and democracy do not exist and then find themselves in a society where they are invited to have their say and help shape their future. In the same vein, Farrar (2002) tells us that 'Black people – people from the Indian sub-continent, from East Africa and from the Caribbean – arrived in Chapletown already formed by their experiences in the countries of their birth'[60] and Bhat et al (2005) stresses that 'five decades of India's independence, People of Indian Origin (PIOs) have continued to nurture close socio-cultural relationship with their motherland. These relationships are primarily cultural in nature, in their spheres of religion, language and regions, films, music and performing arts.[61]

Sandercock (2000) talks about Mazumdar's ethnographic approach in which the primary emphasis is on taking a genuine interest in, learning about and understanding the culture of different groups, and what the members see as important. She draws attention to his 'ten aspects of architectural ethnography' that includes close observation of the relationships between people, their clothes, their interactions and behaviour, the buildings, and the products of their common efforts and enterprise in particular culture. Hawke (2001) insist that their 'way of life': customs, faiths, and convention; codes of manners, dress, cuisine, language, arts, science, technology, religion and rituals; norms and regulations of behaviour, traditions and institutions[62], must be the understood by planners and in order, as Burayidi (2003) put it, 'to make planning relevant to a multicultural public, planners have to face the challenge of a professional 'messiness' and address the problems that matter to society'.

Often knowledge of cultural diversity is equated with the awareness of a limp notion of multiculturalism as a superficial representation of immigrant foods, costumes, and folk music - or 'ideologically justified ... through calling upon a tradition which Derrida (1976) calls the 'metaphysics of presence' .... What this means is the way in which a representation becomes aligned as standing for or representing, a distinct referent and the way in which the referent, in its presence, is posed as authentic origin of a specific image.[63]

In the context of the London Plan, the black Londoners' Forum's response in September 2002 was that the London Plan must avoid the generic equal opportunity clichés if we are to avoid tokenism.

Without deeper knowledge and understanding of cultural specificity and meaning, it is it not possible to understand, respect, value and harness the differences inherent in the diverse communities. These differences are reasons why people are different as this narrative by Dodd (2002) points out:

> Only in a discussion limited entirely to architecture would masjid, or mosque, be understood as a building. A mosque is composed of an Islamic community, the *umma*, and the functions that nurture and support it. ....Among other [functions] figure the teaching of religious and worldly affairs, the acquisition of knowledge and education of community members, the housing of the poor Muslims, the collection and distribution of charity, the holding of consultative meetings, and most importantly, the building of community.[64]

Serageldin (1996) asserts that although the Mosque is a physical building, clearly from the above narrative, it is imbued with social and cultural dimension and realisation of the Muslim ethos – that Islam encompasses every aspect of life. Thus the space represents both the spiritual and functional needs of the community, which is the role historically played by the mosque in Muslim societies to provide a sense of community, identity and place. Reeves (2005) recalls a similar situation where failure by the planners to understand that a Buddhist Temple functions both as a community centre and a religious place, felt that the temple best be located in the peripheral industrial zone. The location meant that the community could not use it on a daily basis and thus the monks set up temples in suburban houses. However this was stopped by the planners following complaints of smell of incense burning from neighbours. Not only did the planners not understand the cultural specificities of the Buddhist community, but as Reeves (2005) point out, 'it seems that they may have superimposed their own religious cultural understanding of a church, which tends to be used on one or two days each week.

In a case of a Birmingham Mosque, the loss of the minaret, which resulted from negotiations between planners and applicants, expresses a compromise on the applicant's part 'within the hegemonic context of the system'[65]. This loss resulted precisely because the Planners did not understand the symbolic meaning underlying the use of such an architectural feature and its importance to the applicants. To really foster change and bring cultural harmony by ensuring that the meanings that that the diverse communities attribute to their symbols are understood, a clear understanding of their histories, their traditions, theory values and their cultural contexts must be understood. The challenge is, therefore, is to develop the understanding of knowledge of a diverse society and its needs, and to demonstrate how planning is able to respond in ways that do not prioritise one lifestyle and/or culture over another to the detriment of others. (CRESR 2003)

Findings from a focus group discussion with a faith community conducted as part of a separate study[66] asked questions such as 'why do you sit cross-legged on the floor and don't use chairs; why do you have to remove your shoes and why do you celebrate on the first day of spring.' The main objective of the focus group discussion was elicit information on how might this community be better understood by other communities and how might it be possible for a faith community to facilitate dissemination of your intangible cultural specific knowledge. An interesting by-product of this project confirms that how meaningfully engaging or consulting as the focus group members expressed the instead of sending a standard letter stating 'This May Affect You', the planners could have come to them and made a presentation of the planning application for a development of 400 flats and retail space, a stone throw away from their community centre. Such a presentation could therefore have led to two way communication each able to understand the other better thus building bridges of communication and moreover, the planners and the developers would have been able to talk to a potential audience of a thousand people in one hit.

The Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Communities (2003) challenges the very basis upon which we think about planning, and argues that the future decisions about sustainable communities and regeneration must be far more grounded in an understanding of possible repercussions. Egan defines Sustainable communities as that which meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, contribute to a high quality of life and provide opportunity

and choice. This is achieved amongst other things by enhancing the environment and promoting social cohesion and inclusion and strengthening economic prosperity. 'This means not only their impact upon the surrounding environment and the economy but on the people on the ground. It means a reappraisal of the knowledge, aptitudes and skills that we expect of the people who make the relevant decisions.' 'Professions must now attend to the needs, desires, dreams and prejudices of real people while continuing to operate within the rational, measurable environment in which they developed, lest they waste valuable time and resources on creating environments which are ultimately rejected.[67]

Researchers at the Academy of Sustainable Communities state that 'our aim in particular is to encourage the towns and cities of Britain to shift their mindset. To start thinking of their own cultural diversity as an asset not a liability, and to start looking for advantages – not only economic, but social, cultural, political – that can be derived to help them position themselves in a more advantageous position.[68] Hawkes (2001) asserts that the society's values are the basis upon which all else is built. These values and the ways they are expressed are a society's culture. The way a society governs itself cannot be fully democratic without there being clear avenues for the expression of community values, and unless these expressions directly affect the directions society takes. These processes are culture at work. Reeves (2005) suggests that as all aspects of planning have an equality and diversity dimension and at every stage of policy making, implementation and monitoring, diversity and equality need to be explicitly addressed. Thus she suggest that mainstreaming which involves building a consideration of fairness, equality and diversity into all aspects of planning and this approach has the potential to integrate the social dimension of sustainability into planning policy . She states that if something is not in the mainstream it is in the margins, in a side stream; in a backwater.[69]

3.3 Diversity and Ethnic Disadvantage

'If existing 'multicultural policies' are examined closely it can be seen that many of them implicitly ignore the unequal distribution of power and privilege and generate a range of self-perpetuating and self-renewing stereotypes. In their current definition, cultural diversity policies are often designed to 'protect and promote' distinct cultural attributes, or various forms of 'otherness.' Council of Europe (1997)

RTPI & the CRE (1983) report titled 'Planning for Multi-Racial Britain' and RTPI (1993) report titled 'Ethnic Minorities and the Planning System urged the central government to issue direction through circulars or planning policy guidance to underline 'the fact that a particular pattern of use of the built environment can erode or sustain ways of life and that to that extent racial and cultural diversity is a material consideration in decision making in planning'[70]. To this effect PPG15 essentially reiterated the essence of Circular 22/84. However Recent Government's research report (ODPM 2003), found that the PPG series contain no explicit reference to planning for diversity and sets up priorities in the review process of the PPGs. Reeves (2005) found that the existing government policies, guidance and advice treat diversity and equality issues inconsistently. Some groups are mentioned, others are ignored; some groups are characterised inappropriately as problems, others as vulnerable. Stereotyping and inappropriate language is evident. She also states that there is an implied co-existence of ethnic minorities and old city neighbourhoods, which means that black and ethnic minority groups outside urban areas are overlooked in policy.[71]

Planners are supposed to use the instruments of the Planning System in order to achieve the well-being of communities and liveability of places. Reeves (2005) bring to attention the statistics of the most comprehensive survey ever undertaken by the Local Government Association in 1998. Only 3% of Local Planning Authorities (LPSs) monitor the impact of planning policies on BME groups; 14% of LPAs have in place formal mechanisms for direct contact with ethnic minority groups (22% indicated informal mechanisms), 13% of LPAs said they had in place planning policies specifically related to the needs of BME communities. Pestieau & Wallace (2003) contend that little attention has been paid to the implications of immigration and ethno-cultural diversity for local planning. There is a wide gap between planning practice, in the broadest definition, and the important contribution that planning theory has made to our understanding of cultural diversity. They further confirmed through their workshop held in 2000 that there are few documented examples of planners taking diversity into account in the practice of their profession. Burayidi (2003) argues that planners are accustomed to viewing people as public citizens with equal rights, making rational decisions, and subordinating their parochial interests for the welfare of society as a whole. Qadeer (1997), in Canadian context but relevant in the UK context as well, argues that planning standards and criteria continue to be based largely on unitary

conceptions of citizens' needs. Based on the rational-comprehensive outlook of planning as a technical, neutral activity, many policies are also neutral, and are assumed to reflect the views of the "public interest" (Uyesugi & Shipley 2005). This argument is also put forward by Reeves (2005) in that the planning's legal framework is embedded in a particular conception of democracy as a majority rule and a corresponding belief that the right to difference in effect disappears once the majority has spoken.

CRE[72] points out that majority of planners still consider their work wholly in terms of land use and therefore view planning as a race-neutral activity. This is despite the fact that planning decisions can encourage or restrict access to employment and training, accommodation, community facilities and safe and accessible environments[73] and also have an impact on relations between and within different ethnic groups[74]. An example illustrated in a recent study on policy in practice, noted that in the delivery of employment training, it emerged with respect to Muslim women in the Turkish Cypriot and Pakistani communities, the respondents did not deem it culturally acceptable for these women to come into contact with males with whom they are unfamiliar. It was felt by them that training must be delivered by women trainers and on-site.[75] Thus even when a specific policy may be in place with an intension of achieving a targeted objective of tackling social exclusion affecting the BME, the colour-blind approach, in the sense lumping the socially excluded into one category, would lead to failings and ultimately discriminatory practice, if planners are not culturally sensitive.

Ratcliffe (1998) refers to this as 'Internal Diversity' and draws attention to the fact that each of the 'ethnic groups' are internally diverse. He also points out that a common stereotypical attitude of an 'Asian' household in Britain is that they 'prefer' to live in large extended family units, and as a result these are the norm rather than the exception. However, in his 1995 survey in Bradford with a sizeable South Asian population he found that this was by no means a norm and suggested that the essentialising of ethnicity and ethnic divisions, combining with stereotyping and static conception of culture under the rubric of "tradition" have led to a misinterpretation of needs. He concluded that it would be serious mistake for planners to assume that the existing levels of extended households will remain however; many extended families may prefer to live close rather than together.

Given the ever increasing, conflicting and disparate differences of local communities, planners have not 'caught up' as it were with the new nature of contemporary stakeholders. In order to tackle disadvantage, 'in a post-modern era where planning is often a discourse of difference, and especially in regard to places with fast-growing immigrant populations, it has been repeatedly proposed that the "public interest" must encompass multiple, rather than single viewpoints' (Sandercock 1998). Burayidi (2000) argues that the contemporary planning practices fail to deal with these newly acknowledged multiple landscapes. It was felt that regeneration projects have a crucial role to play in building an integrated society and that such debate have an important role to play in shaping the cultural dynamics of urban policies in Britain over the next decade. Various survey findings confirmed that the regeneration policies often ignored the diversity and difference within local areas due to the inadequacy of information collected or available (Chahal 2000) and it was felt that whilst 'the council can tackle the areas that people would like to live in, ...the housing isn't designed for the housing that Asian community would like to live in..." [76]

'Subsumed within the category 'Black African' for example, Somalis do not share any culture, language, diet, dress and religious practices with their neighbours. As Muslims Somalis worship at mosques along with co-religionists from Asian and Arab countries but they do not share other aspects of culture, language, diet or dress with these groups. The lack of sensitivity in monitoring categories has frequently resulted in the Somali community's, often desperate, needs being overlooked.' [77] Cole &Robinson (2003) have pointed out that 'Somali' is rarely recognized as a distinct ethnic category in research and analysis, limiting understanding of the location, nature and extent of social, economic and material needs within the Somali population and how these compare and contrast with other minority ethnic groups and the White-British population.

Research into policies and procedures (ODPM 2004) of the local planning authorities' asserted that knowledge of diverse groups within their areas tends to be 'dated and is likely to perpetuate policies that are problematic'[78]. ODPM's (2005) good practice guide on 'Diversity and Equality in Planning' state that 'Planners need to monitor how their area is changing, what the different local residents and businesses value about the place, and the

range of expectations and aspirations they have for its future' to combat disadvantage. Only then can appropriate polices be developed and its intended impact realised.

A British survey (Khakee & Thomas, 1997) notes that whilst there was evidence that authorities had planning policies related to the criteria to be used in approving location of places of worship, and ethnically sensitive policies relating to housing, specific economic uses likely to be important to ethnic minorities (e.g. Take-away hot food establishments and mini-cab hire offices), polices which go towards mitigating harm from racial harassment, when investigated further were generally a reactive or an hock response to procedural and political difficulties which had beset the planning authority rather than elements of a concerted strategy to sensitize the system to the needs of blacks and ethnic minorities.

Booth (2006) stresses that the way our living environment is organised can affect our quality of life. Different groups and/or individuals demand different things from the environment; and there is no 'one size fits all' in the way the past policy statements may have espoused. [79] Cole & Robinson (2003) found that the experiences of Somali households suggest that there is an urgent need for providers to respond more effectively to the culturally and socially specific requirements of service users from different minority ethnic populations. They highlighted social and cultural factors peculiar to the relatively large Somali households and the difficulties of accommodating these – for example a Somali specific social and cultural factor whereby the 'traditional social function of the kitchen as the hub of the household and cooking traditions' was incompatible with the small kitchens with limited storage space and inadequate ventilation. Other factors include the fact that the Somali children stay in the family home longer, than is the norm in White British households, there is reliance of people with housing and support needs on their families and the relatively there large number of children in some families. Thus accommodation designed around the needs of the White-British nuclear family rarely provides the accommodation needed. As a result they are disadvantaged and may have to spend lengthy periods on the housing register waiting for a suitable property to become available, live in overcrowded and poor housing conditions, accept unsuitable or inadequate accommodation when it is offered, or break up the family unit in order to be

housed. It is hardly surprising, given the lack of understanding of Somali housing needs, that certain aspects of provision are not sensitive to their preferences. This result in a failure to provide new housing opportunities in preferred locations and include relevant design features, the failure to recognise and respond to Somali needs in the allocation process, the insensitive allocation of properties and the limited provision of culturally sensitive services.

Race, housing and community have become intertwined and gained a high political profile following events such as the murder of Stephen Lawrence whereby an inquiry was followed by the publication of the MacPherson Report (1999). The Cantle Report (Home Office 2001) investigated issues following disturbances in Burnley, Bradford and Oldham. The MacPherson report emphasised the importance of positive action in addressing inequality between different minority groups. MacPherson (1999) also developed a new understanding of the concept of institutional racism and described it as the collective failure of organisations to provide appropriate and culturally sensitive services to minority communities. One of the key tasks arising from the Cantle Report (Home Office 2001) was for the local authorities to lead the development of community cohesion strategies in their areas with the emphasis on difference, identity and cultural norms. Promoting greater knowledge, respect and contact between communities and cultures is seen as essential to maintaining a cohesive community, and establishing a greater sense of citizenship. In the ensuing debates following the unrest, it was recognised that there are serious implications for all of the sustainable communities' professions, including planning, regeneration, social work etc, particularly for the skills they will require for engaging with communities. All areas of life of the local communities should be looked at and see how planning can maximize formal and informal levels of interaction between people whilst eliminating factors which exacerbate distrust and disengagement. Thus the concept of community cohesion within public policy and the task of building 'cohesive communities' was identified - 'As where there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities; the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued; those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and strong and positive relationships are being developed between people

from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.' (LGA, 2004)

Khakee and Thomas (1995) suggest that governmental and political attention in relation to disadvantage related to ethnicity tends to be focussed on issues other than the development of buildings and land although the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) has recognised that it is unlikely that the planning system is insulated from patterns of disadvantage and discrimination found in British society as whole (CRE/RTPI 1983). Recognising this, the Social Cohesion & Inclusion section of PPS1 says 'Development plans should promote development that creates socially inclusive communities, including suitable mixes of housing. Plan policies should [amongst other things] ... take into account the needs of all the community, including particular requirements relating to age, sex, ethnic background, religion, disability and income'.

Khakee and Thomas (1995) point out that the land use system has rarely been the primary focus of attention for those concerned about social disadvantage and discrimination related to ethnicity. They point to the body of evidence which has been accumulated which suggests that racially and ethnically related disadvantage exists within planning system. They point out that the monitoring exercises of rates of refusal or approval of applications for planning permission over a numbers of years have revealed higher rates of refusal for ethnic minority applicants than white applicants and that this is an important issue to be addressed in a society committed to eradicating social disadvantage.

3.4 Engaging Meaningfully

Skeffington report, People and Planning (1969) made the case for greater public involvement and made far reaching recommendation to involve the public. These informed subsequent legislations whereby public involvement became a statutory requirement. If Planners acquired and understood the knowledge relating to the background, histories & geographies of their communities – where they have come from, what is their culture – they would stand a better chance of engaging these groups rather then as the special report in the Guardian Newspaper put it, 'just shake their heads, muttering something about "hard to reach" and leave it at that'[80]. However, Reynolds

(2006) argues that it is often the other way round – it is the people who need to know their communities are 'hard to reach' and spatial planners are often criticized for spending too much time at their desks and too little time out and about.[81] Reynolds (2006) further asserts that we should be calling the so-called 'hard to reach', 'seldom heard' groups. She asks, 'how hard is it to find out where and when a local youth or Somali women's group meets'?[82] Research has shown that these community organisations can be a conduit to access 'hard to reach' groups (Mullins et al, 2004). Khakee and Thomas (1995) found just fewer than 50% of planning authorities they surveyed had 'consultation machinery' which included links with local Race Equality Council, appointed specialist officers, community forums and joint committees.

Many theoreticians argue for the need to bring about radical changes in current planning practice and urge for markedly different approaches. Healey (1997) and Forrester (1999) for example, suggest ways to move towards a responsive and inclusive policy/practice, which acknowledges and works with the new global forces impacting on local areas. They assert that not only are the stakeholders different to those traditionally identified in planning disputes and decision making, they have a wide range of needs in terms of appropriate consultative mechanisms. Day (2003) asserts that in neighbourhoods, with diverse populations (indeed, in all neighbourhoods), links between local culture and design & layout characteristics should be explicitly discussed, with residents and they should be engaged in these discussion about their locality and multiple local histories should be accommodated.

Thus it is no longer adequate, if it ever was, to accept that a large public meeting will satisfy the consultation requirements. Morris (2006) argues that the era of holding public meetings and hoping for the best is well and truly over. However, he agrees with most that public involvement and consultation remain central to the quiet revolution engulfing planning and allied professions[83]. Subsequent legislation has ensured that actual participation is enshrined in law and guidance such as Community Involvement in Planning: The Government's Objectives (OD PM, 2004) and in the guidance issued to regional and local planning bodies has reminded the planning community that legislation

comprised not simply a revision of procedures but a new way of thinking and acting which would require 'culture change'.[84]

Changes to the Planning System, as a result of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) makes it a requirement for local authorities to engage more effectively with local communities and there is a compulsory requirement for councils to draw up Statements of Community Involvement (SCI) making planning the only public service with legal obligation to consult the public. ODPM (2005) informs 'authorities who previously have not seen diversity and inclusion as planning matters will need to rethink many aspects of their past approaches to public consultation. Consensus building and collaborative practices, which acknowledges and respects the diversity, different ways of learning and understanding, must therefore, becomes a cornerstone of this new planning practice.

The importance of production of Community Strategies and that issues identified in this process should be fed into the implementation across wider policy areas, including spatial planning has been the stressed and how measures such as these encourage the integration of spatial and service planning and ensure that the needs of local communities are central to the way that both plans and services are conceived and delivered.[85] A study titled 'Cultural Diveristy in Britain' (2006) explores ways of unlocking the potential of 'cultural diversity and identifies practical strategies to encourage intercultural exchanges between different groups

A key message from ODPM (2005) although - 'an essential requirement of the new planning system is that planning authorities develop creative and meaningful ways to engage diverse communities and that different methods and techniques are required for different section of the population.' It goes on to say that the Government expects Statements of Community Involvement (SCI), which is a requirement of the new planning system, to show how and when the planning authority will creatively and meaningfully engage all sections of the community. Innovative ways of engaging the communities must be found. In recognising this, in an Australian context, the importance of community's input in a cohesive design for public spaces within town centres and realising this McIntosh (2002) felt that consultations will be tricky, and stated that 'the traditional ways don't get bums on seats'[86]. The RTPI has produced practical guidance on how to engage

with communities sensitively.[87] However, Morris (2006) argues that the best time for communities (or stakeholders) to make their views known is at the beginning of the planning process so they have a better chance of influencing policy rather than getting involved when an application is made. This approach would also give the Planners the opportunity to acquire in a subtle way the much valued culture specific knowledge. Louise Waring, RTPI community planner[88], argues that it should not be about speaking to them about a specific application or plan, but getting them to tell you how they see the future of their community and that is all about capacity building and that this element has not been pushed far enough.

ODPM (2004) makes it clear that 'a colour-blind approach based on a false belief that the planning processes are neutral in their impacts on different communities cannot be sustained. Instead what is needed is a proactive approached based on consultation with communities; race equality proofing of polices and procedures; collection of data together with analysis and monitoring so as to be sensitive to ethnicity. The Egan Review (ODPM 2004) recommended that pre-planning application discussion be held involving all stakeholders – developers, councilors, local authority staff, infrastructure providers, built environment professionals and community groups – to ensure that 'more effective community engagement is the norm not the exception'.

Engaging the public mainly through consultation has a long history in British Planning and is justified by the idea of 'fairness and justice'. The needs and preferences which may be culture specific of the many diverse groups are often not recognised through normal information sources and analytic procedures and as Innes and Booher (2004) argue that these needs may only come to fore during an open participating process. Listening to, learning from, supporting and developing a relationship with the ethnic minorities ensures, as Agyeman (2001) suggests, that wider opinions of both women and men from ethnic minority are sought rather then just 'rounding up the usual suspects. Rydin (1999) notes the contrast between a genuine desire on the part of planners to engage with the public, and the public's 'profound distrust' of planners, lead to 'repeated evidence of dissatisfaction with the way in which participation has been sought'.

Thus for example Day (2003) points out that the question of who identifies the relevant 'local' context matters. As we saw, in chapter 2, the design and spaces are not universal and that its uses, and its meanings 'resonate differently with diverse groups' and this therefore must be addressed directly. This is because, she points out that the danger exists that well-meaning professionals will misinterpret or caricature key aspects of local cultures to which they do not belong. Sandercock (1998) endorses the postmodernist paradigm which reflects that of Jan Jacobs and suggests that we 'need greater and more explicit reliance on practical wisdom ....learn to access other way of knowing ...experiential, grounded, contextual, intuitive knowledges, which are manifested through speech, songs, stories, and various visual forms.'[89] She also urges that a shift from 'top-down' planning model towards 'a community-based planning, from the ground up, geared to community empowerment... makes it less document orientated and more people-centred'[90] is necessary.

Thompson (2004) states that their approach to community involvement is constantly evolving having carried out well in excess of one hundred exercises and have found that even private developers have begun to see benefits that can accrue from such involvement. A four stage approach of approach has been developed by them of which the second stage termed 'vision building' involves a large scale participatory event when 'people of different ages, backgrounds and cultures, with different concerns and enthusiasms get a chance to listen to each other, to offered suggestions and to enter into a constructive dialogue. The aim of the public sessions is to tap common intelligence and create value for everybody'.[91] A participatory approach could therefore be developed whereby planners can interact and engage with the communities. This would facilitate information gathering and as ODPM (2005) points out this should never be a one-off exercise, since the make up of communities' can and does change over time. Schools, for example, may have more accurate information about what countries children come from. Social services, education, leisure and community development departments, equalities sections, refugee councils, various voluntary and regeneration organization, places of worship, etc, can keep planning departments up-to-date with populations characteristics and what services are required to serve local communities.[92]

The idea of stakeholder engagement and interaction within planning has occupied a central place in theory and practice over the last two decades.[93] However, the stakeholders have changed, evolved and mutated but it would seem that the interaction with planning has not. In trying to ensure that the cultural specificities come to the fore so that these are input strategically into policy making, into specific area action plans, new ways of knowing must be explored. The RTPI secretary-general Robert Upton describes the shift as a 'long slow pilgrimage from policy-based evidence to evidence-based policy'[94] as there is increasing concern about the limitations of existing policies to address the changing patters of inter-ethnic relations. Thompson (2004) suggests that to create real added value, Planning Delivery Grant should be invested as a catalyst for imagination, facilitating front loaded vision building processes, identifying real community needs.

3.5 Multicultural Planning - Responses to Diverse Needs

The burgeoning literature, which addresses the issues of multiculturalism and planning point out that urban planning, has been very slow in recognising the significance of the ethno-cultural minority populations and there are few documented examples of planners taking diversity into account in the practice of their profession. In terms of the practicalities of working in pluralistic communities, Blackwell (1994) shows how local councils can develop accessible and equitable approaches. While her focus is on the communication strategies for people from non-English speaking backgrounds and in an Australian context, many of her ideas can be used across other dimensions of difference such as class, gender, disability and sexual preference. Beebeejaun (2004) details how interactions in the context of consultation with ethnic minorities in two Local Authorities in the West and Midlands of England have been established by drawing upon two case studies carried out in multicultural cities. Authorities in both the cities targeted specific groups because they realised that certain interests were under-represented within planning arenas. She sheds light on different strategic methods including the use of traditional tools of consultation, information dissemination, presentations, which were given at Friday prayers at mosques, and of employing a specialist planning officer in order to access the ethnic minority groups.

The *Community Visions Program* (Uyesugi & Shipley, 2005) in Vancouver, Canada is an initiative, which involves communities in creating neighbourhood-level plans called Community Visions. These plans contain policy directions on topics including new housing types, shopping areas, traffic and transportations, and safety and services, thus bringing Vancouver's official plan, the *CityPlan* to the neighbourhood level - [95]

> *Vancouver, British Columbia.* Vancouver's *CityPlan Community Visions* provides a good case example of a proactive approach to ethno-cultural diversity. In its neighbourhood visioning process, the City of Vancouver recognized up front that they needed to address ethno-cultural and linguistic diversity in their outreach and communications strategies. In ethno-culturally diverse neighbourhoods, the city identified key ethnic groups with high proportions of neighbourhood residents (e.g., Cantonese and Punjabi speakers). The city then employed outreach workers, used ethno-cultural media to publicize events, translated surveys, educational and communication materials, and used translation services for community meetings and workshops. These efforts helped to facilitate the participation of recent immigrants in the community visioning process (Lee 2002).

Such an approach which has gained popularity in North America is termed 'visioning' – the word vision according to Nadin (2002) refers to a visualisation of a predicted future state of affairs, perhaps to a desired outcome in the long term. Rather than forecasting the future or projecting current trends as basis for planning, visioning attempts to invent or imagine a desired future and bring it into being through appropriate planning interventions.

Uyesugi and Shipley (2005) point out that whilst visioning involves engaging local people in the planning process; this public participation is only one of its aspects. It has the potential to help realise 'multicultural planning' by its implicit aim to promote equity and facilitate democracy through the planning process. In a recent study (2003), The Alternative Planning Group advocates radical proposals towards, in fact a Paradigm Shift towards an alternative planning framework – 'social planning' whereby the role of governments and other funding bodies is one of building the capacity of communities to become self-governing planners and effective social actors, ideas which are akin to Hazel Blears's 'New Localism' Agenda in which 'at its heart is a basic notion that ordinary people are capable of taking decisions about their own services and communities.'[96]. One of the ideas from the above Alternative Planning Group proposes that functions of the social planning would be:

> Research as the collection and documentation of diverse information through which knowledge is legitimized, created and shared within and between communities

through research participation. Dissemination thus becomes less of a technical issue and more an issue of "awareness" or "consciousness" raising. This is done in order to create new pool of knowledge and innovation, which can in turn create a progressive society. Without active engagement, legitimization and awareness or consciousness, research becomes technical and sterile, incapable of enervating community action.[97]

Two Councils in Sydney, Australia are cited by Thompson (2003) as 'a landscape of cultural diversity with both municipalities having experienced considerable physical and social change over the last 20 years as immigrant groups settled and built homes, shops, cultural centres and scared places of worship'. She too highlights through case studies the central role that planning has played in addressing the needs of different communities. She asserts that the plans, policies and actions, which are on going, provide excellent examples of what can be done by progressive administrations responding to a diverse citizenry. Her survey in Australia revealed that innovative ways were being used by councils to reach both the immigrant people and traditionally marginalised groups and how the council officers judged their success in responding to the needs of a culturally diverse citizenry relatively highly[98].

Burayidi (2000) draws on several cases from the USA involving indigenous people and immigrant communities and his examples are taken from planning practice in land use, housing and historical preservation. Conflicts that have arisen from clashes between dominant and minority cultures are described and he believes that these conflicts can be avoided through the practice of multicultural planning. Thompson (2003) looking at the Australian context again, has argued for culturally aware and inclusive planners. Advocating the necessity of progressive policy documents, she urges planners to develop the necessary tools in order to 'plan for all'. Thompson (1998) sheds light through case studies on some good examples of inclusive, democratic processes and on instances where intolerance of difference is ignored and practices of inclusive democracy shunned.

Pestieau and Wallace (2003) provide examples of conflicts over land use that are influenced by cultural difference, and point to the tools and strategies planners have or need to cope with these new challenges. Using international examples and a wide range

of good practice illustrations, Reaves (2005) has shown to planners and those involved in planning, the benefits of building in a consideration of diversity and equality at each stage and level of planning and shows how they can develop their sensitivity to and expertise of aspects concerning multiculturalism.

There is evidence that things are changing. For example, Birmingham City Council's recognition of the aspirations of its communities is explicitly detailed in its 'Sacred Spaces' document. In Manchester, a case study is cited by ODPM (2005), whereby 800 local people made over 4000 suggestion on how to regenerate their area. These 4000 suggestions made personally by the members of local diverse communities reflected their own very personal cultural specificities in terms of their values, their needs and their expression of what they wanted to see on the ground. 'Top priority suggestions were turned into a series of Action Plans for environmental housing improvements, public transport and traffic calming, crime and safety, community issues, health and leisure facilities and employment and training initiatives'[99].

Bedded on the concept of 'vision' again, Brighton & Hove used an innovative technique by carrying out 'Community Visioning' exercise in 1998[100]. An appropriate consultation strategy was commissioned whereby recommendations were for a series of representative focus groups and 'community visioning' exercises, bringing together people from diverse background to express a 'vision' for the future. The interesting part was that the participants were not reacting to a Plan already drafted by the Council. Thus participants expressed needs and aspirations were underpinned and informed by their cultural specificities. ODPM (2004) points out that the consultation results infused policies throughout in this case. It also highlights that the 'vision' has been incorporated into the plan both in terms of setting the context and justifying individual policies. The consultants who carried out the Community Visioning said that the preparation of the Plan has been informed by the 'relative weight' attached by people from under-represented groups to different priorities[101]. In an Australian context, Thompson (2003) highlighted an initiative by a local council in Canterbury who proposed a 'Multi-cultural Oral History Project' which would 'document the social history of migration into the Canterbury Area. It would acknowledge the contributions of local migrant families to the economic and social life of the municipality. Further, the richness will feed into town planning polices

by facilitating support of the heritage needs and aspiration of migrant communities. Finally, it will play a significant role in community relationship by promoting cultural understanding and learning.

Bearing in mind the fundamental link between society and culture, Ghilardi (2001) explores new approaches to cultural policy, such as cultural planning, and with applicability of these frameworks to societies where cultural diversity is increasingly challenging and replacing vertical and hierarchical policy models with a fragmented patchwork of different ethical orientations.[102] Mayors 'draft Supplementary Planning Guidance – Planning for Equality and Diversity in London (2006) sets out principles that should guide planners towards meeting the spatial needs of their diverse communities. The Mayor recommends Boroughs to have policies in place 'so that planning applications can be refused, amended or approved with conditions if issues of diversity and equality have not been properly addressed'.[103] Planners are also advised to consider setting out further information on planning for diversity and equality in detailed guidance documents which support their planning policies.[104]

Woods et all (2006) have drawn on evidence from numerous sources in the UK and internationally and the expertise of a diverse team through extensive research for Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and have devised a 'toolkit' towards living and working together in the increasingly heterogeneous urban communities of the UK. The fundamental assertion of the study is that increased interaction between ethnic cultures will produce social and economic innovations that will drive the prosperity and quality of life of our cities. The purpose of the report is to give cities the encouragement and some of the tools to achieve this. The toolkit illustrates how an intercultural approach can work towards urban place making.

4. Political Context for Social Dimension of Sustainable Communities

4.1 Need for Social Sustainability

In today's age of multi-ethnic societies, the need to find enduring policy models to ensure avoidance of ethnic conflict cannot be overstated as inevitably the root of these conflicts is in the difference between tangibly haves and have-nots and intangibly acceptance and rejection, perceived or otherwise. Issues which concern the ethnic minorities include opportunities to express, to maintain distinctive elements of ethnic culture, especially language and religion where these are associated with ethnic distinctiveness; the absence of ethnically linked social and economic disadvantage; opportunities to participate in political decision-making and the avoidance of racism and discrimination. .....these should go hand in hand with enjoying full access to, participation in and adherence to institutional principles and commonly shared values prevailing in society.[105]

MacPherson Report's core message, following Stewart Lawrence murder inquiry (1999), was that policies and processes can unwittingly be insensitive to some groups and/or individuals and may well, unintentionally, discriminate against some section of society. The Cantle Report (Home Office, 2001) on Community Cohesion concluded that 'the towns showed a 'depth of polarisation' around segregated communities living 'a series of parallel lives'.'[106] The Home Secretary established the Community Cohesion Review Team under Ted Cantle which signalled the government's strategic objective to 'promote community cohesion, based upon a greater knowledge of, contact between and respect for various cultures'[107]. It expects its 'modern planning process' to respond to the new policy agendas concerned with social inclusion and diversity'[108] as minority ethnic population cannot be treated as an homogenous group and to assume that all groups will be equally well served by blanket policies.

The government's sustainable communities agendas at national level, makes it clear in all of its guidance that regional and local plan policies are expected to co-ordinate involvement and integrate all strategic programmes, partnerships and community involvement (ODPM 2003a). It also urges that the local planning authorities ensure that the impact of development on the social fabric of communities is fully considered[109]

(ODPM 2005). In the PPS 1: Creating Sustainable Communities it is made clear that the local authorities have a huge responsibility in shaping and supporting our daily lives through regeneration, planning, transport, schools etc. The government believes that the current culture and framework of local government does not allow it to reflect the way people live their lives today.

4.2 National Level

Since 1997, the New Labour government has been following a radical modernisation programme across numerous areas of public policy with ambitious programme of reforms collectively known as 'local government modernisation agenda' (LGMA). The initiatives have been prompted by the need to respond to the social and demographic changes overlaid by the issues of diversity (Booth, 2006) and social inclusion as seen above. Significantly for planning the modernisation involved a move towards 'Community Strategies', Spatial Planning and the new statutory purpose for planning interpreted in Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1). PPS1 highlight issues of social cohesion and inclusion and advises local planning authorities to seek to reduce social inequalities and take account of the needs of all the community (ODPM, 2005). Local Government Act 2000 which places a duty on local authorities to prepare community strategies. The introduction of community strategy was a vital component of a local authority reform programme initiated and driven by central government. One of the main aims of this reform, particularly in relation to community planning, is that local authorities actively involve and engage the community in local decisions (ODPM 2000). At local authority level therefore, the community strategy should set the agenda for all other plans and programmes.

At the heart of modernisation agenda is a new concept of planning known as spatial planning given expression in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCP Act 2004), new legislation and planning policy for England. Spatial planning has been defined as going 'beyond land-use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function' (ODPM, 2004), and reasserts the importance of

people and communities towards the 'delivery of the community strategy setting out its spatial aspects where appropriate and providing a long term spatial vision' (ODPM 2004). The incorporation of sustainable development into a new national planning policy is set out and interpreted in Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1). Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1): Delivering Sustainable Development published February 2005 (replaces PPG1: General Policies issued in 1997) set out national policies for different aspects of land use planning and are built around three themes:

- Sustainable development
- The spatial planning approach
- Community involvement in planning

They must be taken into account by regional planning bodies in the preparation of regional spatial strategies, by the Mayor of London in relation to the spatial development strategy in London and by local planning authorities in the preparation of local development frameworks. The policies put the duty on regional and local planning bodies to contribute towards sustainable development when preparing development plans, as required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. They may also be material to decisions on individual planning applications. The policies seek to ensure balance in the integrated consideration of environmental issues alongside the need for sustainable economic development and the aim of creating genuinely sustainable communities.

A number of key principles are set out to ensure the delivery of sustainable development. These include emphasis on integrated approach towards achieving environmental, economic and social objectives, impact of climate change, spatial planning, high quality design, social cohesion and inclusion and community involvement. PPS1 makes it clear that in order to deliver social sustainability the following will need to be addressed:

- Development Plans should seek promote inclusive, healthy and safe communities taking into account the needs of all the community and pursue in an integrated manner the environmental, economic and social objectives and that these contribute to global sustainability

- Spatial Plans should bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other non-planning policies, programmes and strategies which can also impact on land use and how places function.

- Design should not only be an aesthetic consideration but be integral towards achieving sustainable development and the delivery of safe, inclusive and successful communities. High quality and inclusive design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process. Design should be appropriate to its context and improve the quality, character or function of the environment.

- Community Involvement is important to planning and communities should be asked what the vision for an area should be as well as being given the opportunity to participate in the production of local development documents. An inclusive approach should be taken to provide opportunities for all groups to participate. Local Planning Authorities must prepare a Statement of Community Involvement which sets out how the Council intends to involve and consult the Community.

There is a specific requirement for local planning authorities to build a clear understanding of the make up, interests and needs of the community in their area and that the 'community' will be made up of many different interest groups. The government points out that these social aims should be pursued in an integrated way with the environmental and economic aims through a sustainable, innovative and productive economy that delivers high levels of employment, and a just society that promotes social inclusion, sustainable communities and personal well being, in ways that protect and enhance the physical environment and optimise resource and energy use.

4.3   Regional Level

The Spatial Development Strategy for London, known as The London Plan and adopted in 2004, provides the regional planning context and sets out the Mayor's vision for London and his general policies for land use and development until 2016.   Policies 3A.14, 3A.15 and 4B.7of the London Plan specifically cover diversity and equality. Other policies are also relevant and there are references throughout the plan to equality issues. The Mayor's draft Supplementary Planning Guidance on Planning for Equality and Diversity provides detailed guidance on how to implement the key London Plan policies relating to addressing

the needs of London's different communities. Preparation of Supplementary Planning Guidance on the implementation of Policy 3A.14 is a specific commitment made in the London Plan. The new planning system requires local authorities to engage more effectively with local communities. As part of these requirements a Statement of Community Involvement which sets out how planning services intend to involve stakeholders and local communities in the preparation of all development plans for the area and in the consideration of planning applications must be prepared. There has also been an increased focus on local authority's Community Strategies and how the issues they identify can be implemented across wider policy areas, including spatial planning.

The key spatial and land use issues faced by different communities are outlined in the London Plan and this draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) builds on these. Amongst other, BAME – Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people are identified as a target group. The draft SPG highlights the key spatial issues relating to each of the equalities target groups and suggest what planning can do to address these. The draft SPG aims to achieve this by:

- providing guidance to boroughs, partners and developers on the implementation of policies in the London Plan which relate to equalities issues and addressing the needs of London's diverse communities;
- setting out some of the tools for promoting equality and diversity in planning processes e.g. Equality Impact Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal, actions plans, and community consultation;
- highlighting the spatial impacts of wider socio-economic issues such as poverty and discrimination in the planning context;
- setting out overarching principles and the key spatial issues for planning for equality e.g. deprivation, regeneration, cohesion, sustainable communities; and
- examining in greater detail the spatial needs of London's diverse communities and identifies how spatial planning can be used to try and address these.

The SPG has set out guidance under 'Promoting Equality and Diversity' in planning issues, Key Spatial and Social issues and Addressing the spatial Needs of target Equality Groups'.

4.4 Local Level

Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2000 places on principal local authorities a duty to prepare 'community strategies', for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well being of their areas, and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK (DETR 2000). The government's legislation for community strategy outlines four objectives and four key components that must be met if the aim is to be realised:

Four objectives of the Community Strategies are:

- allow local communities to articulate their aspirations, needs and priorities;

- co-ordinate the actions of the council, and of the public, private, voluntary and community organisations that operate locally;

- to focus and shape existing and future activity of those organisations so

   that they effectively meet community needs and aspirations;

- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development both locally and more widely, with local goals and priorities relating, where appropriate, to regional, national and even global aims.

The components of a Community Strategy are defined as:

- a long term vision for the area focusing on the outcomes that are to be achieved

- an a action plan identifying shorter-term priorities and activities that will contribute to the achievement of long-term outcomes;

- a shared commitment to implement the action plan and proposals for doing so;

- arrangements for monitoring the implementation for the action plan, for periodically reviewing the community strategy, and for reporting progress to local communities (DETR, 2000)

Within the Act, local authorities are advised that: 'only by working together with other public, private business and voluntary bodies will it possible to deliver the broad range of outcome encompassed by community strategies'.[110]

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and eventually the Local Development Framework (LDF) have to be prepared statutorily by the local planning authorities for delivering the local spatial planning strategy. Local strategic contexts differ widely because of diverse historical and political contexts and priorities. Corporate contexts are set out in a number of local strategies and policy initiatives like Community Strategies, and their interactions with planning policies are generally brought together in the spatial plan expressed through Local Development Framework (LDF). This is with a view to strengthen the link between service provision and spatial planning to ensure that the needs of local communities are central to the way the plans and services are delivered.

The LDF will effectively act as the land use enabler for or spatial expression of the Community Strategy's key priorities and include Local Development Documents (LDDs). The LDDs will set out the planning authority's policies for development and land use and will include a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI will spell out how people can be involved in plan making and determining planning applications. At the local level, the government wants to see the planning process streamlined with a proactive, positive approach to managing development. Among the key aims are flexibility, a strengthening of community and stakeholder involvement, early consultation, sustainability appraisal and programme management. 'Sustainable Communities' agenda, as set out by the present government, is predicated upon local people becoming more actively engaged in the development of their own communities. The necessary regulations under Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCP Act 2004), underpinning these changes are now in place. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has also published guidance on how the new system should work. Stakeholders who fully reflect the social and cultural diversity of Local communities will need to be involved in the planning process. With this approach, a system which is inclusive, accessible and ensures fairness of treatment to all participants in the process may well be achievable.

5. Methodology & Setting the Context

5.1 Literature Review & Scoping

Chapter 3 above, explored the current thinking through wide ranging desk based Literature Review in order to bring to the fore the pertinent issues that are raised in debates on the subject of planning, multiculturalism and diversity. In terms of techniques used for sourcing out the literature, these included a wide ranging key-word search of library catalogues, electronic journals, Guardian and Observer Electronic Databases and an Internet search. National policy reports were analysed and more specifically the debates around the issues of planning and social cohesion precipitated by Macpherson to Cantle Reports respectively were reviewed. More interesting literature on the reality and practicalities of addressing the needs of the diverse communities by academics from around the world was explored. Literature both from formal as well as informal sources was used. Policy Reports, leaflets, speeches, conference proceedings, research & government commissioned reports and academic papers derived from international but English-language sources were reviewed.

The Literature Review highlighted the importance and value of thinking through the multicultural and diversity issues within planning and supported the argument that developing and implementing culturally sensitive policies continues to be the recurring theme in order to address the needs of the various communities who coexist within the same urban space. The Literature Review thus contextualised this thesis by identifying key issues, concepts and possibly good practice in the sphere of multicultural planning and diversity. The review highlighted the phenomenon of the shifting realities on the ground and that planners will only be truly able to grapple with these if they will understand the wider social, ethnic and cultural 'histories' and 'stories' of their communities. The wide ranging review which spanned across interdisciplinary fields, also reiterated the fact that ethnicity and planning was a legitimate area of professional and academic inquiry.

5.2 Selection of Case Study: London Borough of Brent

The issues and debates highlighted in the literature review found a special resonance in the choice of case study of Brent Planners as their citizenry comprise of a majority of ethnic

minorities - tangibly felt on the streets as a colourful patchwork quilt and intangibly felt through senses of sound, sight and taste. 56.7% ethnic minority population of Brent thus makes it a relevant case from the multicultural perspective.

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) classifies London Borough of Brent as one of the 19 Outer London Boroughs. However, of all the Outer London Boroughs, Brent is the most densely populated, at 61 persons per hectare compared to an Outer London average of 35.2 persons per hectare, and an Inner London average of 78 persons per hectare. Brent has attracted diverse immigration over the years and the 'so called visible minority have actually become a numerical majority' akin to the situation that prevails now in the City of Vancouver in Canada (Sandercock 2004).

The London Plan notes that nearly a third of all Londoners are from black and minority ethnic groups[111] and that this plan will also support London's unique strengths as a diverse world city, including culture, tourism, learning, government and finance. It is also built upon London's ever increasing diversity of population, which is, in many ways, London's key strength. An extract from Census Headline Indicators 2001, show that London Borough of Brent is one of the two most culturally diverse boroughs in London where the BME groups now make up the majority of the population with 56.7%.

Table 1: Census headline indicators for England and Wales, 2001 (extract)

- 87.5% of the population is white British - the BME population has risen since 1991, from 6% to 9%

- In Leicester, the Indian community makes up 25.7% of the population, in Tower Hamlets, 33.4% is Bangladeshi, and 36% is Muslim, **in Brent, 43.3% of population is white, and 56.7% is BME**, in Newham, 39.4% is white, and 60.9% is BME, in Harrow, 21% is Indian,

- National figures show a growing multifaith society, 71% - Christian, 1.1% - Hindu, 0.5% - Jewish, 3% - Muslim, 0.6% - Sikh. In Harrow, 19.6% is Hindu, Barnet - 14.8% is Jewish, and Hounslow and Ealing - 8% is Sikh

5.3 Profiling Brent

The London Borough of Brent is located in North West London, occupying an area of 4,325 hectares (c 17 sq miles), bordered by the boroughs of Harrow, Barnet, Eagling, Camden and Westminster. Brent extends approximately 5 miles (8 km) long on its north to south axis, from Queensbury to Kilburn, and 6 miles (10km) wide on its east to west axis, from Cricklewood to Sudbury. This area encompasses both Outer and Inner London suburban and urban locations, with the North Circular Road effectively separating the less populated northern areas from the more densely built southern parts of the Borough.
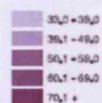
Fig 1

Fig 2

Figure 5: Percentage of 'BME' ethnic groups per ward

Brent is ranked 58th out of 354 on the local authority national deprivation index. A recent academic study, undertaken for the Council, estimates that the population is now at least

267,000, although the extent of 'undocumented' recent arrivals makes any precise estimate impossible. Over 5% of Brent residents are registered as refugees and asylum seekers. Brent's population is extremely diverse as almost half of its residents were born outside the UK, effectively making the many ethnic minority communities the 'majority' (55%), the second highest ranking in England and Wales. But because of the relatively small area in which Brent's many ethnic communities live, the chances that any two residents encountering each other in a Brent street will be of different ethnicity is 85%; making Brent the most 'ethnically diverse' area in the country (Office of National Statistics).

Brent has the second lowest percentage of white households (45.3%) in London and in England and Wales as a whole. Residents speak over 120 languages. People born in India (18.5%) constitute the largest ethnic minority and it also has the second highest Hindu population (17%) in the country. Other substantial ethnic minority communities include persons born in the Caribbean (10.5%) and in Africa (7.8%). Although the Irish born community (7%) has substantially decreased in the last two decades, it still represents the highest proportion of London's Irish born residents. An indication of the changing origins of recent incomers can be gleaned from the birthplaces of those issued with new National Insurance Registrations in Brent. Of the 15,060 Registrations in 2005-06 (up from 11,920 in 2004-05) to workers born outside Britain, the approximately one hundred long countries list was headed by India (2,950), followed very closely by Poland (2,780).

Brent's population is has a relatively young, 25% are under 19 years, 19% are aged between 20-29, with a total of 62% aged under 40, and a relatively low proportion of pensioners (14%). This age profile combined with a fertility rate substantially above the average London level is imposing significant stress on the Borough's social infrastructure, particularly schools. This demographic structure has also resulted in the third highest household size in England and Wales (2.62 persons) and the second highest level of overcrowding in London. Brent is relatively densely populated with 61 persons per hectare (55 in 1991) compared to the Outer and Inner London averages of 35 and 78 respectively. Unemployment in Brent (4.3%) is substantially above the London average (3.3%), with male unemployment rates of 5.7% and female rates of 2.7% as compared to their respective London averages of 4.4% and 2.1% (Oct 2006). Residents in Brent South have

the second highest unemployment rate (14.6%) at London parliamentary constituency level. Brent's average earned income is only 66% of the London average of £41,759, the fourth lowest in London. And the Brent average salary of £27,402 is even lower than the national average of £28,941 (Office of National Statistics, 2006).

5.4 Research Questions, Research Design and Data Collection

There remains considerable professional uncertainty ....about how planning can be responsive to the complexities of multi-ethnic and multi-racial society.'[112] The pivotal arguments that the literature review raises are about planning's ability to understand and respond to the difference and the global processes that are shaping our cities today and how can the intangible nature of diversity be accepted and incorporated into planning practice that is equitable and willing to accommodate different ways of dwelling in urban space.

This research therefore is an attempt to find answers to the following questions:

i)   Do the Development Practitioners and Policy Makers – in this case the Brent Planners possess or have access to knowledge of the culture specific dimension of the diverse cultures of their communities in order that this dimension underpin and inform their interventions to make them meaningful?

ii)   Do the Development Practitioners and Policy Makers – in this case the Brent Planners seek actively to meaningfully engage and involve their diverse communities whose daily lives are impacted upon by their (planners') interventions?

Analysis of planning and other relevant documents, the review of planning practice in Brent and semi-structured interviews were carried out in order to establish the extent to which Brent's policies and practices are sensitized to the implications of working within its diverse communities. The objective is to investigate whether or not these reflect any ethno-cultural diversity issues, to find out if anything particular about ethnic minorities' situations was specified and to establish what if any tools, mechanisms were in place which planners use to deal with issues of diversity in a multi-cultural society and to discern

any evidence of efforts at the local level to make the planning more sensitive to the needs of its diverse communities. Documents were also reviewed with a view to look at empirical evidence of what policy responses that 'recognise, respect, value and harness the difference'[113] do the Planners use. Summary reviews of the archival sources and findings are listed in Appendix 1.

Qualitative Research method was used for the data collection, which comprised of 10 semi-structured interviews conducted face-to-face with Policy and Development Control Planners. A semi-structured topic guide was given to the interviewees in advance to help steer discussions and were framed in such a way so as to extract the Planners' knowledge of their multicultural and diverse communities. The discussions were taped and notes were made. The interviews were also used to tease out the experiential knowledge embedded in the memory of the long serving Planners which then formed part of analysis. The issues discussed and questions asked together with the summary of responses are detailed in Appendix 2.

The data obtained was thus used to look at the implications of findings for the following dimensions of the planning system which emerged from the wide ranging literature review:

- The importance of recognition of distinctive needs and aspirations of ethnic minority communities in planning policies and practice and planners' sensitivity to these needs and aspirations
- The what extent to which Brent Local Planning Authority can be said to have an awareness of racial disadvantage and its possible implications for planning;
- In built mechanisms within engagement machinery with the planning process which allows views of the ethnic communities to be heard and
- Policy responses to the spatial needs of the ethnic communities

6. Key Findings – Context of Brent Planners and Results of Research

6.1 Critique of Brent Planners and their Political Context

Brent Planning Service is one of the service units under the Environment and Culture Service Area. The Service is organised into two groups, Area Planning and Policy & Projects. The Heads of these two Groups together with the Director of Planning form the Strategic Management Team. The Strategic Management Team together with Team Managers from within the Area Planning and Policy & Projects groups make up the wider Service Management Team. All the members are senior planners with acknowledged long service within Brent. None of these senior posts is held an ethnic minority member. The Planning Service is responsible for all planning matters in Brent. The services provided include policy making and the processing of planning applications through development control. The Area Planning comprise of three teams – North, South & West – and an enforcement team and together with support form Landscaping Unit, Land Charges, Urban Design, Conservation and Regeneration team deal with all planning applications and enquiries in Brent North.

The Audit Commission (2004) found that Brent's performance had improved steadily so that **72** per cent of major applications, 75 per cent of minor and **88** per cent of 'other' applications were processed well within the government performance targets and during 2003/04, consultants appointed by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) identified that the council has made significant progress in improving performance to meet the statutory targets. However, the Audit Commission (2004) also noted that whilst the performance against key government targets is good and improving, performance information provided to them indicated internal processes could be improved. Furthermore, performance against the key national user satisfaction indicator was falling.

Decisions on most of the application classified as 'minor development' are made under delegated power by the senior planners and are informed by officer assessment and recommendation. Planning Committee makes decisions on application recommended for approval by officers for proposals for construction of 10 or more dwellings, of non-residential building exceeding 500 sq. metres in floorspace outside a designated

employment area and other major outline applications and those called in by councillors. The Planning Committee is made up of a total of 10 Councillors of whom since May 2006, 4 are Liberal Democrats, 3 are Labour and 3 are Conservatives. The chair is conservative. 7 councillors including the chair are from ethnic minority communities. The Director of Planning is the Council's Lead Officer for the Planning Committee.

The Planning Code of Practice instructs members of the Planning Committee to determine applications in accordance with the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It states that the provisions of this code are designed to ensure that planning decisions are taken on proper planning grounds, are applied in a consistent and open manner and that Members of the Planning Committee making such decisions are, and are perceived as being, accountable for those decisions. This directive is not surprising because as councillors of the planning committee, they should make decisions in the interests of the authority as a whole, based on land-use policy consideration, and put their own local ward interest to one side.[114] Nolan Report states 'as politicians, local councillors must listen and be responsive to the views of their constituents. As members of the planning committee, they must make a decision using only planning criteria. This may be delicate balance to achieve.'[115]

The power to make planning policy within a local authority is formally in the hands of the local politicians who form the planning committee and who may therefore be seen as the key figures in shaping policy. However, this power is not exercised in all cases and on all issues and Senior Planners at Brent, play a central role in the planning process and report the draft polices to the planning committee. They supply the technical support for the planning system and enjoy an 'expert' or 'professional' status. This is evident from the review of the 'terms of reference' which clearly makes no reference into policy content or policy making in terms any input by the councilors that they may want the officers to addressed in the first draft on behalf of the constituents. In this respect Brent can be regarded as an officer-led authority. It also states in the 'Planning Code of Practice' that 'Members of the Council who are consistently unable to support the Council's planning policies should not be considered by their political group for membership of the Planning Committee'[116] alludes to the fact that some councillors may not subscribe to the ownership

of the polices may not support them.   One of the reason reasons for 'planner-led' processes given by Bruff & Wood (2000) is because of the perceptions of the professional expertise of planners by councillors whereby they are perceived to be best qualified and competent and able to act independently of direct political involvement.

The two early plan making stages – Survey of planning area whereby the local authorities are required to keep under review all matters that affect development in their area and Publicity & Consultation whereby local authority is required to review plans regularly, give adequate publicity to proposals for new plans, and make opportunity for representation to be made whilst the plan is being prepared – are perhaps considered an appropriate stages for intervention by councillors, whereby, principles of social sustainability reflecting diversity and cultural issues can influence plan making. However, no documentary evidence was found in relation to any issues that may have been brought in by Brent councilors which could influence or inform policy which would make explicit in the plans the diverse needs of their constituents. The diverse Black, Asian and Minority Ethnics (BAME) communities which form a substantial proportion of their constituents do not play an active part in design and drafting of policies. As councillors are not generally planners, planning training for the councillors generally lasts one day and comprise of presentation dealing with planning policies and procedures and regulatory contexts within which it operates and a workshops in 'The Role of Councillors in Planning: probity and propriety' which include issues such as lobbying, conducts of committees, conflicts and declarations of interest etc and although the list looks endless, the literature did not include issues of diversity, difference, multiculturalism.

In the committee report or in the debates recorded in the minutes[117] that took place during the deliberations at the Planning Committee of the well publicised redevelopment of the Oriental City planning application, no issues relating to the cultural specificities, needs and aspirations or indeed the social disadvantage that may arise for the specific racial group either for the loss of the current facility or for the provision in the future facility were raised. One councillor who although voted in favour to approve the application, expressed a lone view 'that not sufficient investigation had been conducted into the environmental statement and in particular, the loss of the cultural centre'.[118] The applicant's agent stated

that the 'scheme had taken around 4 years to evolve .... and accorded with local and national planning policies and design guidelines',[119] thus confirming Bruff & Wood's (2000) argument that, 'deliberations and decision of the local planning committee are just 'the tip of the iceberg' as far as the wider planning process is concerned .... with significant discussions between local actors taking place before committee decisions are made and Planning Officers .... can play a central role in this part of the process.'[120] The Audit Commission (2004) reported that the Brent Planning service uses the development team approach in the negotiation of particular planning applications. This involves a small corporate teams being put together to ensure that the developers receive a consistent and clear negotiated position from the Council.

In response to the request for Racial Equality Impact Assessment (REIA) for the development by the objectors' representative, 'the North Area Planning Manager submitted that there was no requirement that the application should be subject to REIA but one had been carried out at the policy formulation stage of the Unitary Development Plan'[121]. Whilst this may be the case, as according to government's Communities and Local Government Department 'the aim of a race equality impact assessment is to assess how the impact of an organisation's policy in relation to the public duty to promote race equality and within this, to identify whether there is a differential and adverse impact on particular racial groups.'[122] However, as was found in the study of Brent's Planning literature and substantiated by data obtained from interviewing Brent's senior planners, UDP policies are generic and no communities or racial groups are named.

Khakee and Thomas's (1995) have found that expectations of a more sensitive and sophisticated planning regime depends on the degree of local political mobilisation, history of immigration and the role of professional institute, the RTPI in the case of Britain. British case studies have shown that local political interest is crucial for sustained initiatives to improve local government sensitivity to the interest of black and ethnic minorities (Thomas & Krynarayan 1994). However, in Brent despite the fact that the majority of elected members on the Planning Committee are from BAME communities and there is a long history of settled diverse communities, there is no evidence that the planning policies are sensitized to the needs and aspirations of its communities. It may be the case that there exist skill shortfall as is substantiated in a

report to the Planning Committee[123] outlining the response to consultation on draft PPS1 to the government in 2004, the Director of Planning articulated to the secretary of state the need for further guidance on – 'How to build "...a clear understanding of the needs of the community" (paragraph 1.39 *of draft PPS1*) and that whilst the statement that "There is no 'one size fits all' solution if a genuine dialogue is to be established and maintained" (paragraph 1.39 *of draft PPS1*) is acknowledged, more positive or proactive assistance on how Local Authorities might go about doing this would be appreciated'.[124] According to the ODPM, 'effective data analysis combined with local knowledge is essential to identify needs, forecast future requirements and monitor progress'.[125]

Jackie Barry-Purssell, Audit Commission senior manager stated that 'Brent Council provides a good planning service for the local community. The council is delivering on a series of challenging targets and has been successful in delivering an accessible and responsive planning service. Challenges facing the council include, declining user satisfaction ...'[126] The Audit Commission (2004) also found that concerns in how the service had responded to residents groups were raised and these included Council's failure to respond to residents' concerns on the design and layout of specific schemes. The report pointed out that other challenges facing the service include declining user satisfaction and high refusal rates and stated that the 'officers felt that this reflected the high proportion of applicants who apply directly themselves rather than retaining a professional agent and that in the officer's opinion, the low satisfaction stems from the large number of cases which are refused because of difficulties applicants have in achieving successfully negotiated scheme. The report points out that the refusal rate of 33 per cent was the joint highest figure of all London boroughs. As Brent Planning Service did not monitor the cases, it is difficult to ascertain who the users that the Commission is referring to above are but given the higher percentage of the population of Brent comprise of Black, Asian and Minorities Ethnics, it would not be out of place to assume that a sizable percentage of users are from this group. The report also stated there the partners and stakeholders 'spoke highly of how the service on major projects'. It is assumed that the partners and stakeholders that the report is referring to are mainly housing and property developers, both private and public.

6.2 Recognition of Distinctive Culture Specificities and Planners Sensitivity

Issues researched in the Brent's planning documents and those emerged from the interviews with Brent planners broadly covered importance of recognition of distinctive needs and aspirations of ethnic minority communities in planning policies and practice, planners' sensitivity to these needs and aspirations and planners sources of such knowledge. A short document meant for staff induction titled 'West London People' and produced by West London Partnership of which Borough of Brent is part of, goes someway toward imparting distinctive features of the various communities referred to as 'dynamic mix of communities' - 'the collection of personal histories presents a slice of West London life as seen through the eyes of people living, working and worshipping in the area', and intended to help strengthen relationships between people of all backgrounds.

One of the indicators of multicultural planning is the extent to which the voices of the typically marginalised ethno-cultural groups are manifested in policy and the cultural specificities acknowledged and documented in Supplementary Planning Documents. A diversity proofing by way reviewing each section of Brent's main planning document, Brent UDP 2004 and Supplementary Planning Guidance for direct references to cultural specific recognition or the use of such knowledge which has translated in the policies was carried out. Whilst mainly the text makes references to the diverse communities, there is no explicit mention, recognition or specifications of the cultural specificities in terms of community values, norms, ways of living and no indication that any of these specificities have been used to underpin or inform policies.

Brent Policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance do not employ any 'cultural' vocabulary whatsoever which would acknowledge the uncompromising presence of the diverse groups with the borough. It makes no direct mention of specific groups where appropriate apart from referring them as diverse communities. Despite the fact the Brent has had a long history migrants settling in the borough, no reference of substance in terms of the importance or the necessity of acquiring and understanding the cultural specific knowledge of their diverse communities that coexist was found in any of the Brent Planning Documents. Any kind of factual information about the norms & values, needs and aspirations or the lived everyday lives of these communities is also totally absence in

the Planning Documents. Policy BE12 – Sustainable Design Principles omits any mention of the social dimensions of 'Sustainable Development' despite the fact that for realisation of 'sustainable communities' within the urban renewal agenda, understanding how its 'social dimension' is considered alongside economic and environmental dimensions is necessary.

Brent's Service Operational Plan 2006 – 2007 includes one of it objective as 'promoting and mainstreaming diversity' by being 'responsive to the diversity of community needs and ensure access to, and through our services'.[127] However, it does not reflect how diversity should be understood and appears as though the word is misused. The Audit Commission (2004) noted that 'although the borough has one of the most ethnically diverse populations in London the UDP follows a standard format. The plan does not reflect the wealth of diversity and the opportunities which this represents.

In the interview discussions, almost all respondents agreed that recognition and knowledge of cultural specificities and their underlying values for their diverse communities would be beneficial to have at the back of one's mind. However all respondents expressed the fact that such knowledge was not available readily and certainly there were no formalised mechanisms in place to collect and record or make such information accessible to planners. Nevertheless, a view by some planners was also expressed that it was not their remit to obtain such information. The connection between ethnic pluralism and planning policy and practice was not mainstreamed and some planners also felt was not necessary. Two respondents specifically mentioned that it was only own experiential knowledge gathered over many years of serving Brent, that they relied on in terms of knowing cultural specific norms and values when dealing with applicants from diverse communities. However, this knowledge just goes as far as dealing at level whereby cultural sensitive courtesies are observed - for examples taking ones shoes off when entering sacred spaces within places of worship.

A view was also expressed by one respondent that without culture specific knowledge, it is difficult to understand why someone raised an objection or indeed why they had not done so and that one can appreciate the importance of having or relying on specialist knowledge or personnel. The respondent also stated that this was a route that some planning

authorities have adopted, as it were, to blow the whistle to wake one up, making them aware of the reasons for why certain cultures behave as they do as this may not be obvious to all. This would also ensure that these sorts of issues are highlighted and debated and the outcomes recorded and shared. The same respondent, expressed the view that historic background is very much a guiding force in the way people behave and thus to 'prepare for the future study the past'[128] In this sense the Planners, who are at the forefront in informing change in society, must understand the past of its diverse communities. To foster change, a clear understanding of the traditions and the social, institutional, and cultural contexts of the communities is absolutely the minimum. Notwithstanding the above, the same respondent expressed the opinion that for traditional planners, it has not been necessary to know why people want what they want or when they want it and that in terms of planning applications, if the proposals comply with policy, they are approved, thus sticking to the belief that planning is a neutral, technical activity and that this perspective must accommodate future users of a site or building, and not be wedded to the needs of any particular user group. None of respondents were able to say what the distinctive ethnic needs relating to housing, public places or specialist commercial places were and even felt that there should not be any. Most planners felt that 'place of worship' was the only category that has recognisable distinctive needs.

All respondents to a greater extent agreed that there were no particular or formalised structure through which culture specific knowledge is recognised and recorded. However, one respondent alluded that the recognition of cultural specificity comes from experience and the sources of such knowledge are the applicants themselves. An old planning application was evoked during which time he was a planning officer and it became imperative for the officer to 'know what they (the applicants) knew'. Thus cultural specificities of the applicant, a Hindu community, had to be learnt in order to understand their culture, and this understanding became an important part of its assessment of the planning application. This application was submitted in 1984 for the proposal of erecting a temple for the Hindu community. The proposals were recommended for approval and the Committee Report included a substantial section highlighting the background, history, needs, aspirations and future directions of this particular Hindu community in Britain. The officer explained that who this specific group of Hindus were and why they were pursuing a slightly different teaching then other Hindu groups had to be understood. The officer

stated that a powerful message was that you cannot just say that they are Hindus so they can go here or here. He added that this Hindu community aspired to their own facilities which fulfilled their needs as theirs is a distinct group from other groups.

The respondent also added that this was clearly an attempt to understand the cultural sensitivities, practices and aspirations of a community, who had made Britain their home. Another respondent, also a senior planner, too recalled the same application and felt that it is because the cultural specific needs of this community were understood that it was argued in the committee report that this scheme should be allowed on the Metropolitan Open Land which although was not of particularly good quality. However, this was a definite shift from policy despite the heavy contestation from residents and councillors. Another respondent, a senior policy planner expressed the view that this contestation resulted from the fact that the objectors did not have the all important knowledge of the Hindu community and what they stood for and therefore did not understand the community needs. Thus the above three long serving planners acknowledged cultural specificity for different viewpoints and the recommendation for approval of this heavily contested planning application for a Hindu Temple was recognition of the needs and aspirations of this particular community. Whilst this planning application was called in by the Secretary of State and subsequently refused it nevertheless shows that one way in which Brent Planners acquire culture specific knowledge be it on case-by-case basis.

One of respondent, a principal planner strongly felt that culture specific and changing knowledge about the diverse communities within Brent would be invaluable and currently there is no framework within which this information is researched, collected, stored and disseminated to planners. It was strongly felt that it is the long experience of working with these diverse communities over so many years that has helped planners to deal with the diverse communities who they encounter on daily basis. By having this knowledge at the back of their minds was the only way they are able to observe cultural sensitivities and specificities when practicing planning. So for example it was mentioned that through experience planners have learnt that Friday is of religious significance to the Muslim Community and so it would not a good day to call a public meeting as this specific community would not be able to attend. Also if a presentation to this community is arranged in the Mosque, women may not be present. Such resource of experiential

cultural specific knowledge must be formalised so as to prevent its loss if the planners live work and the difficulties the Local Authorities face in retention of planner are well documented. Respondents expressed the following opinions during the discussion of the importance of acquisition of culture specific knowledge:

- That there is mismatch of information and ideas between the planners and the diverse communities is not in doubt.

- When policies are made up, families who want to worship at home, families who have larger households don't get consulted (*the implication being planners are not in a position to know who wants what and the cultural specificities*)

- importance of acquiring culture specific knowledge involves breaking down of barriers, thus a new breed of planners with appropriate communication channels are required to endeavour to reach the 'hard to reach groups' in order to make relevant the land use planning to the diverse communities.

- Lots of people who work in multicultural areas don't have knowledge of how certain culture work, understanding of religions, most religions have rules and have to come to grips with the 'cans and cants'.

- In Brent, although we do not do enough, we know broadly what the characteristics of the various communities are what religion they are but nothing is documented.

- Differences are recognised but hard to get information thus debates, seminars, education etc. on such subjects will enable us to use information to good effect.

- Planners don't always need to know cultural specificities

- It is very important for planners to know what the cultural norms of particular communities are. This allows you to make sure you are not offending. Also it is important to know how they do things so planners are prepared and does not come as a shock.

- There has been discussions to bring into post people for different background but has not been formalised.

- We only get to grips of what is required by becoming aware because of shortage or need in the community through situations or incidents that arise.

- Difficult to know values of cultures, why do they want to live next to each other-provision of basic standard of accommodation

- Cultural specificities not at all understood – does not seem to be part of our planning agenda

- It is difficult to find out what diverse cultures want because of reticence on their part - apart form giving out information in different languages there is nothing much we can do

The findings show therefore that whilst there is appreciation that the diverse communities have particular cultural specificities, the nature and extent of these would remain hidden largely as a result of inadequacies of traditional approaches of determining these and profiling need.

6.3 Awareness of Ethnic Disadvantage

Brent's planning documents and discussions with planners around the issue of social ethnic disadvantage and its possible implications for planning confirmed that none of the document made explicit link between disadvantage related to ethnicity and land use. Archived documents which were reviewed revealed that in the 80's and 90's Brent had an equal opportunities unit and a Race Relations Advisor under S11 funding was employed. A series of initiatives organised for the planning staff included seminars organised by higher education establishments to discuss and articulate the changes and actions required in line with recommendations relating to ethnic disadvantage and their implications contained in the 1983 RTPI/CRE reports to articulate the necessary actions. Monitoring of planning application and collection of information on issues affecting non-white ethnic minorities was considered and Departmental Race Awareness Working party was set up to monitor the progress of this action. Initiatives including questionnaires to record ethnic backgrounds & open days for public to develop rapport with ethnic minorities were organised. However, Mankoo (1994) points out that during the time of his research, none of the above had endured in Brent and the Audit Commission (2004) recommended Brent

Planning to develop monitoring systems which identify the outcomes achieved by the service in line with community strategy priorities.

The dynamics of social change is recognised in the Brent UDP 2004 which would seek through section 106, affordable homes together with mix of sizes to meet the diverse needs of the communities. That there is a relationship between the ways cultures use their physical or built environments has long been established but not acknowledged in the Brent's planning literature. Absence of recognition of such relationship could mean that the intended policy impact could be reduced as was seen in the case of specific kind of need that the Somali community have thus giving rise to social disadvantage.

Brent planners responded to the need of reducing social exclusion highlighted in the to 2001 Census[*] data, which showed the disparities in unemployment rates of the ethnic minority groups compared to its white populations by creating a UDP policy with states:

> Policy EMP4 – Access to Employment Opportunities – states that Brent will assist in reducing social exclusion by seeking to secure training, associated facilities and information on vacancies in large schemes (UDP 2004).

However, resulting from the lack of deeper understanding of the inherent values and intrinsic cultures of the communities and subcultures within them, such above polices are not able to reach far enough in addressing the distinctive cultural sensitive needs of specific sections of the community as was illustrated earlier in the case of Muslim women in the Turkish Cypriot and Pakistani communities. The above shows that Brent's definition of Diversity is narrowly defined and often in terms of race and as shown above planners fail to distinguish differing needs within one particular racial group or within the wider community. Thus planners' lack of cultural specific knowledge or access to it when needed could inadvertently produce and reproduce spatial inequalities and would deepen the exclusion of people living in margins of social, economic and ethnic space. The policy issues that arise is that whilst it is necessary to address the ethnically linked social and

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[*] Unemployment rates for Black and minority ethnic (BME) workers across Greater London averaged 11.3 per cent - more than twice as high as rates for White groups (5.3 per cent),

economic disadvantage highlighted by the census, it is equally necessary to ensure that distinctive elements of the ethnic culture are recognised and addressed.

One respondent, a long serving planner clearly articulated the fact that 'when polices are made up, families who want to worship at home, families who have larger household do not get consulted' as a matter of fact but we do seek a mix of houses to ensure varying needs are met. Absence of 'culture specific need' knowledge or know-how means that 'house-types' for specific communities are not sought and the problem is compounded as the Supplementary Planning Guides pedantically sets out of the rules giving precise dimensional details of how wide, how deep, etc. an extension should be, and if these 'rules' are not adhered to, applications will be refused with no room to manoeuvre for cultural specificities, thus severing a link between 'voice and choice'. This link is active when communities' needs are met and this must be a continuous process of reinforcement and a major objective of the community planning process. It has been widely acknowledged that certain ethno-cultural communities have or may have differing spatial needs. One respondent felt that whist it is recognised, for example, that some diverse groups have peculiar shopping requirements, planners do not intervene and leave it to market forces and also added that to a certain extent by making the culture comply with prevailing policies and putting them in 'one size fits all' structure, hopefully there is some amount of latitude! Thus in Brent, 'non-market values centred on people and social or cultural needs play only a minor part in determining planning decisions' and 'the weakness of planning system is that it represents a value system that places markets above people.[129]

In view of the fact that the existing ethnicity mapping in Brent confirmed by the Census of 2001 show that minority groups have a distinctive territorial base, it was put to Brent planners whether an explicit recognition of their needs and formulation of bespoken policies, guidance or area actions plans which explicitly address the social and economic disadvantage of the specific communities would be beneficial. The response from planners to the above was once again that more could be done but was generally felt by majority of the respondents that that the planning polices contained in the UDP are meant to be broad and it is difficult to address the particular characteristic of the individual neighbourhoods and even more difficult to include their cultural distinctions.

One respondent ironically stated 'planning is meant to be a forward looking profession except it is forever looking backward' and that because planning is a statutory process where one is reliant on case law, the appeal decisions, things that happened in the past and the effectiveness of policies in the past, there is always a tendency to look backwards and not forward and that in a very rapidly changing environment we come into contact with diversity in our day to day working but we do not register very effectively what is going on very well. The respondent expressed the fact that other services e.g. education can register it far more comprehensively as they are dealing with children and understand when there is a demand for say faith schools. As a local authority although we are good, we need to be able to share this kind of information. The planner thus alluded to the importance of joined-up thinking within and between service units of a local authority in order to make informed decisions.

6.4 Engaging with Communities

One respondent stated that his planning career started around the time of Arnstein's writings on public participation and that his whole life has evolved around improving consultation. Most of the respondents whilst acknowledging that seriously involving the public in planning is not something Brent does very well, it was stressed by one respondent that this was not by design but by very often, being unaware of what is around you. Also other issues like lack of resources, constraints of time, pressures for achieving performance targets etc takes the focus away. However, one respondent recalled new ways of working with ethnic minority communities during the of the 80's and 90's during which time a couple of Brent Planners were instrumental in getting involved with a Hindu group and a Muslim group in Cricklewood and developing mechanisms by which these groups could successfully engage with council. Steering and working group structures were set up in order to ensure joint working and further understanding so that these communities can understand what planners could and could not do and vice versa. At this juncture it is appropriate to point out that this was a time of intense activity in terms of research, reports and the involvement of the government and the GLC in trying to deal with endemic racism problems faced in this country. The 1985 GLC Report on 'planning for a Multi-Racial London' acknowledged that Brent had developed its awareness and

recognition of racial issues in planning since the 1983 joint CRE/RTPI report 'Planning for Multiracial Britain'. Also this period is typified by the fact that the ethnic communities not only needed their cultural and religious needs met but also needed funding, sites and planning consents. Needless to say whilst those earlier communities have moved on, new ones have emerged and one planner alluded to the fact that it was easier to deal with communities who were part of the colonial history, the new communities are different and difficult to understand.

Despite the expressed difficulties, all respondents acknowledged that none of what Sandercock (1998) terms innovative, practical ideas on multicultural outreach strategies are in place and no 'new ways of knowing' are explored within the consultation machinery within planning. One respondent expressed the view that for new ways of engaging the communities, new breed of planners are required and to explore these new ways of knowing a two way dialogue is needed in order to equip planners with the intangible knowledge which underpin certain behaviour and certain characteristic of specific communities. What came across very strongly from the interviews was that more should be done through education. One respondent, a policy planner also expressed concern stating whilst there was a statutory requirement for the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), as part Local Development Framework (LDF), the new Planning System, how culture specific knowledge in terms of values, norms histories which underpins the community behaviours and needs can be useful or used is not clear. This is not surprising when the government (ODPM 2005) states *there is an expectation* (my stress) that Statement of Community Involvement will include evidence that diverse communities have been targeted, including those who, by definition, are 'hard to reach'. With only expectation and not commitment, expectation is all that will remain! Respondents expressed the following views:

- As a service unit we are changing and we need to be more proactive. We need to plug into the communities networks to tell them in their own setting about current and future developments and at the same time understand the needs and aspirations of these communities - rules of engagement has be thought through

- If you are going to involve everybody than you need to have some understanding of whether they want to be involved or whether they are allowed to be involved. We need know the community, and they need to know us (the planners).

- Barriers need to be broken down through forums such Brent's Area Consultative Forums – an Initiative aimed at bringing the communities of Brent together with Planners closer together so that there is as it were a cross-cultural understanding through dialogue with one another in a informal setting. However, the issues of how to get large numbers of local people with diverse background involved in these Area Consultative Forum is challenging.

- Speaking with community and faith groups can be very beneficial but the rules of engagement need to be cleared – good opportunity to plug into communities network – but can be manipulated with the trustees of such organisations – they are power brokers- you have to see through their agenda

- We cannot force ourselves on the communities if they don't want to get involved.

- It is a very difficult subject– even within culture there are different personalities subcultures it is difficult to say that they are from a particular country and will have similar aspirations or same view – so one size fits all policy draws a consensus and it can be helpful in some respect to try and convey in terms of conditions of what should be preserved and introduce gradual change

- How wide a net are you going to cast in terms of how many cultures are you going to involve to see how our policy impact on them – how detailed are policy going to become – idea of LDF to simplify policy – which tends to go against the idea of accepting certain cultural dimension

Planners were asked that rather than reinventing the wheel, especially as the question of limited resources kept coming up in the interviews, should they not consider tapping into the already existing comprehensive networks, civil society institutions or the community service organisations, to which people from various interest communities and ethnic minority communities already belong and a huge range of community, cultural, religions and social activities take place. In this way the local authorities' can satisfy their moral

imperative – to recognise and value difference and to find out about, engage with, support and help develop what is already happening in such communities[130]. Most respondents felt that that would be a way forward. One respondent, a senior planner pointed out that on larger applications, it would be beneficial to go out to various community and religious gatherings to inform them about the proposals for a new development before a planning application is made. Lack of resources and time would not allow it such presentations. However, two respondents, both senior planners strongly felt otherwise and expressed the view that they can only go to communities if they have something to tell them, i.e. a planning application that has just come in. This, one respondent felt was because without something tangible, conversations can hold out the promise and prospect of us being able to do things that we may not be able to do and thus raise expectations of the communities when we may not be able to deliver. These views only go to show the superficiality of the relationship that planners have with their communities.

Failure to communicate with the communities, reflected poignantly in recent example in Wembley, a prominent part of Brent. A special report in The Guardian, whilst ironically celebrating the diversity of London under the headlines 'Every race, colour, nation and religion on earth' stated – 'Wembley Square is deserted.... This, of course, is what we are here to see: the thriving centre of Britain's Somali community swept aside to make way for a shopping centre to match England's glorious new national stadium. .... But there won't be another place for the community. That's what we've lost, a whole community... we have to leave by February 18'[131]. The Somali community who had occupied the Square for almost two decades, insisted that they were not trying to stop the proposed development and understood that changes were inevitable, but felt strongly that they needed recognition and help with relocation having been a model community for over a decade. They felt that 'this being a Somali problem, nobody knew about it'. This anecdotal example illustrates the failure to recognise and engage a whole community. Whilst acknowledging the fact that the action by the Council may have been the same, whichever community was involved, it does go to show that planning whilst described as a neutral and technical land-use activity; every planning decision has social, cultural and economic implications for someone.

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One respondent expressed regret and felt that Somali's traders were badly affected and they felt that they were pushed out and were not consulted. One senior planner acknowledged that the Somali Community felt that their importance in terms of the overall development was not recognised. Should there have been a policy in place to consult and involve the users and the occupiers whose lives will be directly impacted upon, such a situation would have been handled sensitively.

Indeed 'The 'Oriental City' communities objected because they felt that there was 'no consultation with the communities who will be adversely affected by the plan.'[132] Whilst as the Brent Planning's committee report stated that 'wide spread consultation was carried out for this proposal by the Council; a total of 756 individual letters were sent out'[133] including to the tenants who would be directly affected, the following extract from a campaign by objectors elaborate on who they considered 'the community' was:

'Over the years, Oriental City has become a focal point for Far Eastern communities to meet, socialise and gather for community support and celebrations and is also regularly visited by other BAME communities. Heads of States and Ambassadors have attended the many Thai, Pilipino, Malaysian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Asian festive, cultural and religious events at the Oriental City'[134]

Over 10,000 objection letters were sent to the Mayor as following the approval on 21st November 2007, Brent Council referred the application to the Mayor of London. A further 8000 signature petition was delivered to the Mayor following his approval , , which ensured that the centre will remain open until May 2008 giving time for the tenants and community to move on.

6.5   Informed Policy Responses to Diverse Needs

The discussions yielded stereotypical issues mainly expressing opinions that the policies are generic. One respondent however, expressed the following:

> UDP policies are generic and can be applied to many situations. So if
> you have culture specific knowledge, you could interpret the UDP

policy to suit. However, the supplementary planning guidance is used mostly as these are elaboration of policy. There is no culture specific guidance, not even in different languages.

There was a general feeling that it was difficult to translate the intangible nature of needs and aspirations into policies. The following is some of the views expressed:

- planners can send out wrong messages to public if they are made aware that because of diversity reasons, policy could be changed for you
- information planners rely on is 'old information'
- Sustainability Agenda – difficult part of this is 'social sustainability' and how can you translate what people want into policy? Very difficult to translate a very aspirational objective in practice
- No legal requirement to monitor impact of the policy
- Diversity objectives – mainly reflected in accessibility and we do not monitor the impact of policies
- We do not have one set of policies for one area and another for another
- Planners try and come to consensus or balanced view
- Policies do not mention any community by name and they are generic

One respondent expressed the opinion that planners' culture specific knowledge is non-existent and thus is difficult to integrate or reflect the needs and aspirations of the diverse communities in development plans or policies or through built environment although professional planners are rightly placed and are in a position to strongly influence the procedures within the Local Authority. Without informed policies in place, which are underpinned by the understanding of the nature of need /aspiration of a specific community, it is difficult to see how new developments could be targeted toward meeting the specific needs peculiar to that community. Several respondents confirmed that the as the policies are generic so they can be applied to all situations. Thus new developments will replicate the size, structure or design and the problems encountered by say the Somali households with their current provision of housing will be replicated as the current policies guidance set out in Supplementary Planning Guidance no. 17 for new developments are generic.

There is evidence that polices in the UDP and its elaboration in the Supplementary Planning Guidance's remain blind to the ethnic and cultural characteristics and was confirmed in the interviews that although this may not be intentional, change is only occurring on a case-by-case basis.

Whilst none of the existing literature that was analysed contained any policies which directly talked about the various communities who have distinctive territorial bases within the borough, the emerging LDF however, referring to Ealing Road and Harlesden, states that, 'Brent's two most distinctive multi-cultural centers will be promoted to maintain their vitality, enhance their special local roles, and support their regeneration. Regard will be had to the strategies for these centers, and development proposals should contribute in frontage and public realm design,' (LDF Core Strategy Submission 5th Nov - 17th Dec 2007). In this respect it has tried to answer the Audit Commission (2004) criticism that despite the rich diversity, this is not reflected in the UDP and does not convey the 'sense of place'. The paragraph about is more about acknowledgment that these places exist almost like a specimen rather than its importance in fulfilling the need of the communities. Without such recognition, could it too receive an 'oriental city' treatment?

7. Summing Up: Conclusions

7.1 Mindsets, Skill Sets and Data Sets

The birth of the planning profession has its root in doing good in that its traditional concerns are to address human, social, cultural, environmental, natural aspects of settlements, as well as infrastructure[135]. Ebenezer Howard invented his Garden City in the same vein where the original concept was to make a pleasant working city and for it to stay that way, it had to embrace change to meet the needs of the day - 'each generation should build to suit its own needs'.[136]   Part of these needs today is fuelled by fact that cultural and ethnic diversity is constantly mutating and increasing. Thus planners and decision-makers are faced with re-evaluating traditional planning structures and processes to ensure that they are able to adapt and respond to the needs of changing world around them. Indeed one of the principles of Spatial Planning[137] as viewed by Tewdwr-Jones (2004) is 'integrating, through the bringing together of both spatial issues relating to the development and use of land, and the users of planning'. Thus as Kalirai (1997) argues that the major problem in formulating specific polices relating to ethnic groups is in the nature of planning itself, with its primary focus being, 'land –use' rather than 'land-user'. The challenge thus for planners and policy makers is how therefore to balance its technical and neutral axiom with all its rules whilst at the same time genuinely spatially address the needs and aspirations of the ethno cultural communities. Ziller (2004) points out that 'the question of reducing status differentials between neighborhood is not just about what proportion of housing should be 'affordable, and where public and affordable housing should be located *(land use)* *..... Rather the question concerns relativities between all kinds of housing and between all kinds of lots' *(land-users)**. It is about relationships across the whole, not about where to slot in the 'poor'.....'[138]

The Literature Review above confirmed a strong link between Multicultural Planning and the importance for planning to embrace the diversity and equality issues which are at the heart of the new planning and diversity agenda. However, these links were not found in the data collected through the study of Brent planning documents, the review of Brent planning process or from interviewing Brent's senior planners. The data revealed that in

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* *my addition*

the main the planners relied on their experiential knowledge for cultural specificity or dealt with issues on ad hoc basis. This is far from desirable as not only such information is lost when possessor of this knowledge leaves. No mechanism exist to find out about the needs of new communities, currently mainly from Eastern Europe, who enter society at the local neighborhood level although their presence is unmistakably felt on the shopping streets, in residential area, in the schools, on the buses and in the shops signage.

Whilst, the findings from the interviews supported the fact that Brent planners value and recognise that borough is made of many different cultures co-existing side by side and expressed the willingness to change their 'Mindset', in order to achieve social benefits for their diverse communities, nonetheless an ambivalent disquiet was expressed in relation to the benefits of acquiring multicultural literacy or a new 'Skill Set' – expressing that 'a new breed of planner is required to usher in the change' thus signalling that the way the planners are educated need to be evaluated by the relevant bodies.

Some respondents argued that diversity, resulting from people from very different cultural backgrounds with their customs significantly different from the host community and then to map 'this intangible soft, fuzzy, possibly non-spatial information from the public'[139] based on local knowledge and make it accessible and available in order to meaningfully plan requires a more proactive effort by the central government to ascertain a kind of ethnographical knowledge-base of the various ethnic minority communities so planners can ground their policies and practices in this knowledge. Indeed, Brent planner as was noted earlier requested direction for how this knowledge can be gathered and applied from the government.

However this signals to a skill shortfall among planners especially as the meaning and weight given sustainable development or community involvement are provided within legislation and guidance - lest they are misunderstood or overlooked – for example, genuine Community Involvement is often falsely understood as Community Consultation and thus resulting in lost opportunity of extracting culture specific knowledge and the 'poor cousin status'[140] of social sustainability often means that this dimension of sustainable development is often forgotten or 'have tended to be narrow and insubstantial and the

lions share of research and evaluation goes to environmental and economic issues'. Mechanisms and vehicles including social impact assessments, social sustainability criteria and social auditing are already available. There are now Data Sets which for example show relationship between health and poverty, crime rates and income inequality etc should no doubt be included within the planning assessments and SPG's which are so rigidly followed.

The technical advances have made the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) accessible and this can be an answer to mapping the intangible information. GIS has been used and developed for communities to add their own 'cultural imprint'. Once culture specific knowledge and information is organized & referenced, this is entered into the GIS and the information is then spatially represented as a series of GIS layers with varying levels of detail, sensitivity, confidentiality and access level. There exist a body of research under the concept of Public Participation Geographic Information System (PPGIS) 142 which incorporates participatory research process within the communities in order to elicit intangible value based local knowledge and then integrate this with spatial information. Brent has an advanced Geographical Information System (GIS) in place, and so knowledge if available in text or graphic form, ethnicity mapping could very readily incorporated within distribution mapping of the diverse communities in the borough already available to Brent planners.

7.2 Filling the Skill Gap and Main Signposts

The political instability, economic changes and ever-increasing levels of international migration which have contributed to the increasing range and extent of inter-ethnic contacts show little sign of abating, and even were they to do so, the new ethnic diversity which they have introduced into states will not disappear overnight. 143 The policy makers seeking to manage the diversity through policy face major challenges as has been shown in this thesis. Brent Planners expressed the view that they cannot do it alone and strongly felt that they should not necessarily be up front or take a lead on all issues relating to multiculturalism and diverse groups. What was also expressed was that a number of service units across the Council should work together toward as it were a Multiculturalism

Project which could then form the basis of multicultural policy formulation and implementation across all service units of the Local Authority. Indeed in the countries which has officially or constitutionally adopted multiculturalism as a policy model for managing its cultural diversity, the specific countries being Australia, Canada and Sweden, its overall effectiveness depends not on any one program or policy initiative by one service unit but on their cumulative effect from within and between the various service units like education, social services, housing, transportation etc.[144] Specifically, diversity needs to be integrated as a horizontal thread which intersects all activities, at all levels and all stages in the planning process. The interconnectedness of polices and inherent tensions and conflicts between them need to be examined.[145] Ethnic minority issues overlap various policy areas and to this end Inglis (1999) has listed a number of policy issues which are of concern from the perspective of ethnic minorities and are shown in Appendix 3.

Translating this to our cities today which as we have seen are characterised by multiplicity of cultures, means 'planning in this multicultural arena requires a new kind of multicultural literacy.'[146] Thus if information and data was available say within the Housing Service Unit regarding to house types that a particular section of the society prefer in order to meet their cultural specific need, this knowledge could then be used by planners to influence policy formulation and also use this feedback in pre-planning application discussions and in negotiations with the developers. Multicultural literacy is not difficult to obtain as 'if as professionals, we do not know what our communities want – then we need to ask'[147] in order to find out. However, it is also as much about asking the correctly framed questions in order to yield information and useful answers. Thus participation, as opposed to consultation, with of the diverse communities must be one of the core principles which would enable planners to acquire the culture specific knowledge and to know and engage their diverse communities. 'It is only through listening that planners can become aware of the diverse needs of an ever-changing society'[148]. Planners are often ignoring an important readily available resource of the community and civil society organisations (CSOs). Brent's communities are well established and this is visible at the neighbourhood levels where community centres, places of worships and schools are all manifestation of the struggles they have been through in order to have their needs and aspirations materialise spatially. These ethnic minority communities through their own

social networks very often comprising of professions in various fields, are already dealing with wide range of issues and concerns, from traffic levels to truancy, and child-care to crack cocaine which is of daily relevance to their lives.

This is confirmed by Colenutt (1997) who pointed out that many of elements of the people-based planning already exist in countless community projects..... They embody principles and practices that are the starting point for turning planning around.' [149] The spatial planners should therefore take 'a more holistic view combined with a strong social capital born out of communities, ruptures or spaces of resistance' [150] and should make use of this available resource by participating in their festivals, their celebrations and their well-being. These would help planners understand and plan for their communities as this knowledge can be used to effect the required change and create indicators and benchmarks for monitoring community health, physical spaces, issues of social justice etc.

Ziller (2004) argues that the role that universities and teaching institutions need to play is to create means of 'locating a place in planning curricula for learning analytical concepts and methods, identifying recent, valid and reliable research outcomes to include as content or as the framework for self-directed learning, and a research base within the faculty dedicated to refining questions for further systematic review and research. It is suggested that 'there are other important roles for universities in supporting the role of planning in social wellbeing. What is required is in many respects a **paradigm shift** and paradigm shifts in disciplines typically happen at universities, usually in response to disgruntled students or a new cohort of academics seeking a niche. Facilitating these challenges and responding to them sustains intellectual energy and universities should embrace these challenges as their lifeblood.' [151]

The Audit Commission (2002) report titled, *'Directions on Diversity'* conveys current thinking and debates and points to key messages including the importance of realizing that the diversity agenda is not about treating everybody the same but about recognizing and valuing differences as well as addressing inequalities and disadvantage. The Best Value guide to Planning 'signposts' a plethora of literature and lists the key drivers underpinning the Governments modernizing agenda and its vision on equality, inclusion and diversity.

ODPM (2003) now Department for Communities and Local Government produced a report *'Equality and Diversity in Local Government in England – Literature Review'* which provides an overview of recent literature, which examines how local authorities in England have dealt with issues of equality and diversity. Three themes are covered in relation to equality and diversity: representation and participation; employment; services. Mayors Supplementary Planning Guidance (2006), *'Promoting Equality an Diversity in Planning Issues* sets out the key spatial and socail issues and addresses the spatial needs of target equality groups.

7.3 Paradigm Shift

Planning, by its very nature is politically biased and as a form of state intervention administered at the local level, is inevitably subject to the pressures and vagaries of governmental and societal change.[152] Thus there may be general recognition on what may be the key issues for the area – affordable housing, traffic and transport, investment in health & leisure facilities, diverse cultures etc, but there is substantial disagreement over who provides and pays, the role of public/private partnerships, individual freedom, location, choice and who benefits. Policies, proposals and action plans and seemingly new initiatives may replace fervently held approaches over time and the planner has to adapt and develop new insights in a changing political climate. However, the literature review and research findings show that a radical shift of the present planning paradigm will be needed and is given by the government in the form of the new planning system. In terms of the Brent planners, perhaps unwittingly, the old planning system bedded in the old paradigm is extending into the gap between itself and the coming reality of the new planning system. The research found that planners do not seem to be ready to translate the new policies and paradigm into new practice.

The paradigm, in Kuhn's view, is not simply the current theory, but the entire worldview in which it exists, and all of the implications which come with it. Taylor (1999) suggested that arguably, a more likely candidate for a Kuhnian **paradigm shift** has been the shift from a view of the town planner as an expert to the planner as a manager and facilitator – the shift, in other words, away from a view of the planner as the supplier of answers (in the form of 'master' plans) to that of the planner as someone skilled at eliciting other people's

answers to urban problems and somehow 'mediating' between these.[153]   This shift is detailed in the myriad reports and publications – good practice guides, guidance notes, literature reviews, signposting – all part of the government's modernizing agenda and above all it is embodied new planning system brought in by the PCP Act 2004, which has reasserted the importance of people and communities and the PPS1 and provides the impetus for addressing the diversity issues directly and for planners to find a new role with much wider responsibilities and be the catalysts of change.   It remains to be seen if Development Practitioners and Policy Makers to do what it takes to be able to deliver the Diversity Agenda.

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Archival Studies:

A. <u>Brent UDP 2004</u>

The Brent UDP 2004 acknowledges that as per the 'Strategic Guidance for London Planning Authorities (RPG3) issued in May 1996, the UDPs should give more attention and noted that this will be replaced by the above Mayor's plan. Brent UDP 2004 notes that planning for individual diverse communities of London is the role of UDPs. It explicitly recognises and acknowledges the existence of the 'increasingly multi-cultural nature of the British population is especially reflected in Brent'. Bearing this in mind, the UDP states that its 'revised strategy emphasises the social aspects of sustainable development such as reducing social exclusion. However, the policies under every chapter makes no explicit reference any of the ethno-cultural communities in terms of their origins, background or mentions any of their cultural specificities. Brent's first UDP Monitoring Report investigated the robustness of this plan's land use strategy and planning policies. One respondent, a policy senior planner specifically pointed out during the interview that monitoring of the UDP was a statutory requirement in which and it is necessary to establish whether or not the targets and standards are met as planning delivery grants depend on this and that policies were robust. However, the monitoring criteria, pointed out did not require assessing the impact of policies on the populations and acknowledged that it would make sense to be able to do that and would be of value

B. <u>Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)</u>

i. SPG 5: Extending Your Home

This adopted document sets out guidance towards implementing policy contained in the UDP relating mainly to the built environment and housing sections of the UDP. It gives detailed & precise dimensions extension and what you can and cannot do. However, no cultural specific information or pertaining to any recognition to the diversity in the borough is included or even mentioned. All householders are therefore treated the same if the buildings they live in are similar thus specific regard is availed to properties – whether they are terraced, semis or detached.

ii. SPG 17: Design Guide for New Development

This guidance states that it aim amongst many others is to supplement the policies and guidance found in Boroughs UDP. It gives information about the acceptable amenity spaces, distances between buildings and precise dimensions of dwelling sizes, acceptable densities etc. There is once again no mention of the many diverse communities who live within the borough and whose housing or shopping requirement may be specific. For example, a courtyard style of housing with communal gardens is preferred by certain cultures are children playing are looked after communally. Certain cultures require certain types of separation within the house.

C. Brent's Cultural Strategy

An objective of the strategy is to assist in achieving the priorities within the Corporate Strategy Themes. Two such priorities amongst others, under the theme of 'Promoting quality of life and the green agenda' are:

- provide an additional focus on improvements of the built environment and
- to provide a positive and unique cultural profile for the borough

The report to the executive mentions that no culture specific consultation with the public had taken place and that Council was unaware of the Brent's specific culture requirement. However, it recognises that Brent's diversity is one of its major assets and cultures from around the world are represented in the borough with each bringing to Brent their culture and expression.

The strategy sets out its key themes of Civic Pride, Social and Environmental Regeneration and Employment. Priorities under each of these is noted and most of these a planning dimension. Priorities within this document could therefore be spatially translated through targeted policies.

D. Brent's Sustainable Community Strategy 2006 -2010

This states that it was developed following extensive consultation with residents and local organisational and it provides an insight into the residents' aspirations and illustrates Brent's commitment to meeting them. The whole strategy is visionary and the aspirations are the basic requirement. No cultural specificity is mentioned or how this will be researched, collected and acted upon or linked with policies. However, in the report to the executive prior to adoption, it states that 'Local Development Frameworks should be soundly based, incorporating the principles of sustainable development and informed by robust evidence of monitoring. As such they will provide the spatial expression of the Borough's new Sustainable Community Strategy.

E. Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

This newly adopted statutory document after providing background information relating to the new planning system, the LDF and how the SCI fits in, it talks about the various community involvement vehicles. Whilst each one of these are useful in their own right, these are by large existing vehicles. No new or innovative ways of engaging the various ethno-cultural communities are included. It does however, mention that 'due to the boroughs diversity, the corporate commitment to equality and the Planning Services desire to contribute to the delivery of this vision, the SCE seeks to specifically target the 'hard to reach groups' and goes on to mention the methods which will be used to do this. Cultural specific knowledge does not seem to be of substance as the SCI seem more about process rather than the content.

Summary of Semi-structured Interviews:

The respondents were informed their views, opinions and experiences will be used in my research. However, they were also informed that they will not directly be named as my research does not concern individual views but in the collective experiences of the planners and collecting empirical evidence.

A. Record of Interviews

The following is a table is a record of the interviews conducted.

Respondent	Position	Interview Date	Interview Place	Duration
1	Senior Planner	23rd June 2006	Brent House	1hr 15min
2	Senior Planner	26th June 2006	Brent House	1hr
3	Policy Planner	27th June 2006	Brent House	1hr
4	Policy Planner	28th June 2006	Brent House	1hr 15min
5	Senior Planner	30th June 2006	Brent House	50min
6	Senior Planner	12th July 2006	Brent House	50 min
7	Principal Planner	14th July 2006	Brent House	40 min
8	Principal Planner	20th July 2006	Brent House	40 min
9	Planner	21st July 2006	Brent House	45 min
10	Policy Planner	28th July 2006	Brent House	40 min

B. Questions on Diversity Issues:

Question 1: Do you think that cultural specific knowledge is important in view of diverse community that you serve?

Issues: Importance of Culture Specific Knowledge

It is only through knowing and understanding your area and your culturally diverse populace that planners can begin to form a judgement about how the local population may engage with the planning system locally, what do they want and why do they want it what are their needs and aspirations, etc. Often cultural diversity is equated with the 'limp notion of multiculturalism as the superficial celebration immigrant foods, costumes, and folk music'. Planners have been very concerned about 'knowing' what interest groups want, much less with really appreciating why they might want it (Jens Kuhn, 2002).

Question 2: Are there any formalised structures or mechanisms within the Council or the Planning Service, which makes Culture Specific Knowledge available or accessible to Planners?

Issues: Sources of Cultural Specific Knowledge
Immigration continues to fuel Brent's population growth. Statistics etc. confirm that Brent is the 2nd most diverse borough in Europe. Planners are therefore increasingly being challenged not only to understand diverse cultures, but also to recognise and balance the various needs of their diverse populace. Formalised structure of acquiring and recording culture specific knowledge, use of knowledge in order to cater for the needs and aspirations - how researched – how recorded – how accessed – ethnographic approach – awareness of ethnic disadvantage

Question 3: How do you engage or involve the diverse communities in order that interventions are meaningful?

Issues: Engaging & Involving the Public
Use community networks – why reinvent the wheel – communities have well developed networks – two way understanding – New and innovative ways of knowing, multicultural outreach activities, learning from good practice – cross cultural skills – Statutory Statement of Community Involvement.

Question 4: Does cultural specific or ethno-cultural knowledge underpin and inform policy formulation, action area plans, planning briefs, supplementary planning guidance or are there any specific ad hoc cases in which culture specific dimension was incorporated?

Issues: Diversity and Multicultural aspects addressed through policies
Specificity of Policy - targeted towards a named community to address culture specific needs – view to have policy responses to issues on the ground – Supplementary Planning Guidance and/or Area Action Plans – New Planning System

C. Key Points from Interviews

Respondent 1	
Q1	1. Without culture specific knowledge, it is hard to understand why someone has objected or indeed why they haven't – thus importance about specialist knowledge/personnel needed to blow the whistle to wake you up – why has the public not raised or raised objection – reasons may not be too obvious – Importance of making sure these sort of issues are debated. 2. Certainly the historic background is very much a guiding force in the way people behave but also how recently some of these have arrived in the country is a key issue - over time acculturation, cross culturation and hybridisation occur e.g. for these groups and vice verse. Indians move from inner-city to wealthier suburbs just like Romans arrived south east and worked their way across country and all these activities as assimilated - two way process 3. Diversity it is not only the richness of different cultures that inspires but there are other groups which stand out because they are 'in the see or are heard 'and it may well be that whether by colour or race or music or costume – people can stand out in the crowd an how you build it into the society you've got, can be a problem as stereotypes are very much abused 4. In Brent, although we do not do enough, we know broadly what the characteristics of the various communities are, what religion they are but noting documented
Q2	1. That there is mismatch of information and ideas between the planners and the diverse communities is not in doubt. 2. Experience gathered over many years 3. Discussions to bring into post people form different backgrounds but not formalised

		4. Planning major role in two respects – planners can bring groups together and because they innate ability to talk – area of work that needs to be developed 5. ethnic disadvantage – free market prevails – planners cannot intervene directly
Q3		1. When policies are made up, families who want to worship at home, families who have larger households don't get consulted 2. The old dictum 'rubbish in rubbish out' applies equally to public – if you give public half the information, you cannot be too surprised that they come up with recommendations which are half baked almost because they cannot or do not take in the full information that planners have 3. If public are gong to contribute fully, barriers have to removed, continuous feedback, delegation and devolvement 4. Issue there is certain amount of culture shock for other groups to be involved in the process, they have a worthwhile contribution to make, there are barriers there which need to be broken down 5. For the traditional planners, it has not been necessary to know why people want what they want and that in terms of planning applications and if the proposals comply with policy, they are approved. For new ways of engaging the communities, new breed of planners are required to explore new ways of knowing
Q4		1. Impact of our polices – we don't do this terribly well- we may well conclude that it has an impact but in terms of changing it is another matter. 2. Planners can send out wrong messages to public if public are made aware that because of diversity reasons etc. policy could be changed for you - difficulties therefore, planners stick to policy rather than send wrong messages and raise hope
Respondent 2		
Q1		1. Long association with Brent so can look back couple of decades- new ways of looking at involving people – 1980s and 90s – planning took a lead- down to a couple of individuals instrumental in getting involved with a couple of groups one Hindu and one Muslim group in Cricklewood and instrumental in getting a proper working constitution organised for the group and their benefit but also developing mechanism by which group can more successfully engage with council – work demonstrate that you needed to be more proactive – certainly poor positive communication between parts of community and council 2. Lots people who work in multicultural areas don't have detailed

		knowledge of how certain culture work, understanding of religions , most religions have rules – cans and cants –where the flexibility is - have to come to grips – We don't to this do this particularly well – has to be learned – with Swaminarayan Temple – committee reports – never came to anything in the end – public enquiry – had quite a section in the report of the history of Swam – quite important at the time – gave background information – group who they are, why are they pursuing a slightly different teaching – a message was that you cant just say they are Hindus so they can go here or here, they want their own facility as they are a particular group and distinct from other groups – 3. Differences recognised but hard to get information – with above force us to debate and hopefully use information to good effect – in consultation there are issue
Q2		1. few years ago we became aware of shortage of community buildings – for communities to establish their own facilities- important issues that there is dialogue at the right time – getting messages out - e.g. Through situations like that we get to grips of what is required 2. try deal with ethnic disadvantage on case by case bases.
Q3		1. structures steering and working groups to deliver – to ensure individual project were delivered e.g. long standing relations with Swaminarayans, Mosque in Will Green came about by joint working – doing the right things at the right time – furthered understanding – they came to understand what we could and could not do and vice versa 2. Mosque in Ealing Road – came about – enforcement notice for the use of dwelling house as place of worship – planners pointing community in right direction – church on Ealing Road acquired to make into Mosque 3. It is how we behave – as a service unit – we are changing and we need to be more proactive – use the existing resources of telling communities in their own setting about current and future developments and at the same time understand the needs and aspirations of these communities 4. Speaking with community and faith groups can be very beneficial but the rules of engagement need to be cleared – good opportunity to plug into communities network – but can be manipulated with the trustees of such organisations – they are power brokers- you have to see through their agenda 5. Big issues for planning is to get people to understand what our policies are intended to do and why it important to get their views and that they engage with us when we ask them to.

Q4	1. Planning is not front line but can be – partly to do with process and partly to do with information we rely on tends to be old information e.g. Census information out of date - someone once said 'planning is meant to be a forward looking profession except forever looking backward' in some sense is true and because Planning is a statutory process where you are reliant on case law and things that happened in the past and the effectiveness of policies in the past so there is always a tendency to look back and not forward and I think with a very rapidly changing environment we come into contact with it in our day to day working but I am not certain whether we register very effectively what is going on very well – other services, take education have to register because they are dealing with all these children – far more likely to know – e.g. demand for faith school - As local authority we are not very good – generally good – passing on such information – joined up approach – my frustrations in planning – we just have this lack of information – we are all told we must monitor etc. – not a problem with this but without up-to date information it is very difficult to make informed decision.
	2. Sustainable communities agenda – government's agenda on this – the difficult stuff is social sustainability and what it means and how can we tackle it successfully by using our planning powers – and how do you make the leap to getting far more localised approaches to various areas - we need different approach – local action plan – successful vehicle – in areas where change and pressure – done in Kilburn to some extent – challenging for staff – some staff from New Zealand
	3. Diversity is a material consideration in a way – how you translate what people want into policy - e.g. larger accommodation require therefore larger extended required – deal with mix of houses in the area
	4. It is important that we acknowledge some of the diversity things in our guidance and acknowledge why they say want to make two houses into one rather than just give hard and fast rules – we don't acknowledge or address through policy or guidance
	5. Brent creating spaces and opportunities for various communities to express their own entities, they demonstrate the richness - and message to communities that they can come here and do this – Wembley regeneration creation of such opportunities – secure benefits through section 106

Respondent 3

Q1	1. Diversity and process of planning – has got to do with certain aspects of planning – always don't need to know what people are like and what

		they want. 2. Culture specific – in recognising that certain groups have certain needs, we will need to turn our policies to meet these needs – but today for community buildings there are different needs
Q2		1. Values of the culture – why do they want to live next to each other - I suppose we can accept threat certain groups are more likely to need more space – basic standards of accommodation – but can see it potentially an issue that need to be addressed – kind of shopping they need – e.g. we have to recognise that there is particular way that communities want to spread out – balance we have to have – change all the time – no conclusion
Q3		1. Community involvement (SCI) doesn't set out new ways of doing things – we have set out mechanisms and tools – we do want to do some local events – organise some formal meetings with the community – but leave some flexibility – so whether they are workshops or area consult forms or one public meeting – leave us the possibility of what to do 2. About tapping into the networks of the community – we cannot force ourselves on them – talk about planning to groups - only the usual suspects get involved in the process – have to think about how to get through the hard to reach groups – need to bring down the barriers – BME Forum, disabled forum – keen to get involved - to get view – thus chipping away at it - personal contacts – but need to be more proactive – but resource question – time consuming - continuous engagement – where opportunit8ies arise we would engage – limit what we can do – cant do a presentation with every group every organisation 3. LDF – actually ask what people want - however, the more proactive we are we can establish what they need what they want but question of resources – did questionnaire survey in Brent Magazine – have diversity monitoring - particular needs of particular groups in society – identify 4. 1% of households respond normally – get a fair reflection of what communities want - we went to Respect Festival and tried to reach a wider community - we need to take opportunities to engage - we don't like to go out unless we have something to go out with - In terms of going to community without anything to give them but just to know them, we should employ community workers who can key into the community - to learn about them
Q4		1. UDP policy – statutory requirement – annual monitoring report – no requirement in to monitor the impact of policy – it would make sense to be able to do that – but not done it. Value in doing monitoring to see what impact policies have on society - have to do EIA – 2. Monitoring – to achieve what policies achieve – certain number of

		affordable housing have to be achieved – monitor to see that has happened – related to planning delivery grant
		3. Policy objectives is access to all – could mean locational policy – when you grant pp, you make sure that facilities are put in so that they are accessible to pedestrians l, ramps for disables, for push chairs – full range of thing on accessibility to take account of older, younger people
		4. Theoretical examples – when temple to be built - we were happy to set aside our normal policy for the benefits the temple will bring – attractive building, setting - example that planning was not a technical activity but tried to change policy to suit the need of the community.
		5. Structural requirements have to be addressed – community building required - making use of space to reflect cultural diversity –
		6. Section 106 – contribution for training and development – for local people – but need to do the ethnic monitoring that those for whom these are intended for benefit.

Respondent 4

Q1	1. In order to keep ourselves informed – we know there are these groups, for examples Somali traders in Wembley were particularly badly effected by Wembley development and in effect that they felt that when the development proposal was approved
Q2	1. Somali Community in Wembley they felt they were pushed out and were not consulted and felt that we did not recognise them and their importance in terms of the overall development – my problem is the very limited resources and I don't feel that we (planners\) should be necessarily up front to carry pit out the consult with these groups – my argument is that we should be one of a number of services that are trying to find out the aspirations the new communities – we cannot do it alone – no particular mechanisms in place.
Q3	1. Generally very bad at the way we consult, don't do it very well but at the same time generally better than most other parts of the council.
	2. Particularly new groups are perhaps the hardest to reach and we know we don't by and large reach them. LDF – now groups much more mixed in general public meetings – we had to go out and consult with African Women's Group, Brent Indian Association & Moslem women groups – thus much better represented in general public meeting meeting.
	3. We know we don't get many representatives from migrant workers, Somali and otherwise flourishing, Moslem groups – we rarely see young black faces as with young white faces. First thoughts for the immigrants could not be general planning issues – but other issues – e.g. jobs, education

	4. Council do not have a huge pot of money - Council cannot help social groups out as it does not have money – and generally groups only start to engage when they have sufficient resources and start demanding and put money on the table
	5. What I would like to try is – and it a question of resources – we have to look and try and engage a particular group and see – through participatory methods – take one group for example and see how would it work by us trying to go to them – but my feeling – the issues that will be brought up will be less to do with planning and more to do with other agenda. I would be very keen to go to groups in their own setting - but difficult for us to find a particular solution to say problems like when communities set up without planning permission to go and tell them
	6. my concern is that Conversations holds out the prospect of us being able to do things but we are not going to be able to anything at all – cannot raise expectations when we cannot do any thing at all
Q4	1. My worry is that we would raise expectations of what planning can do – when we can do important things – much wider approach from council rather than just what planners can do – we do some important stuff – some tangential benefits like we negotiate for affordable housing for example and a proportion goes to Brent minority housing association to house BME – so that is very important in meeting some basic housing needs – in the past and in the future provide comm. Community Facilities through planning gain and or support new communities. To find meeting places – places of worship- e.g. Ealing road, Asian comm. In Willesden, Swaminarayan Community. And so on and so there are some things we do
	2. In terms of quality in The LDF – question from one of our Inspection Regimes – our UDP plan looked like every body else's - LDP will correct that in terms of overall strategy – change will become key part of the strategy – but whether there will be something tangible – question of debate
	3. Local community when involved in regeneration schemes – not well informed – not knowledgeable of the issues involved - so people with more knowledge get involved – results in new nymbism – excludes those new communities
Respondent 5	
Q1	1. We do not understand specificity of multicultural issues – our pp done mainly on projects where you have objections – do a public meeting for larger cases – we are not geared specifically towards multicultural issues

	- what we have, we haven't done very well – send it out in one language – when we go to public meetings, we don't have interpreters – mainly attended by white middle class people in these meetings
Q2	1. Cultural specificities not at all understood – does not seem to be the part planning agenda – not enough thought given to these issues. Needs of communities considered as they arise – otherwise we would not have had temple in Ealing Road or other such centres. Could look at cultural specific policies in the UDP – reflection of culture – questions of what their aspirations are – but say giving permission for larger extension to specific communities – question of equality comes into it – however, can be looked at for specific areas where there are very settled specific community.
Q3	1. We might – say, when we have a large project and we might go community and tell them – not very often – not on a regular basis – difficult when changes to community facilities which are used by people from other part of the country or world – community defined differently 2. We should go out and tell them how they could be involved more - go to community centres and telling them what they could do – could not do – generally educate the communities what planning can and cant do for them as individual, as communities – use existing ready made resources 3. Planners can therefore also understand from communities – wider knowledge – why building set as it is – what are the ideas behind the building layout etc.
Q4	1. We don't do any monitoring of what the impact of our polices would be – no impact studies or that sort of things – have not had any planning disasters so that has not prompted any monitoring 2. We could not have one set of policies for one area and another for another – does not work that way but I suppose we could look at it where certain areas are populated by a specific cultural community and they all want the same thing.

Respondent 6

Q1	1. Understanding or lack of understanding of what a cultural group is trying to provide and whether that is a reasonable standard of provision of facilities and whether that is ok with neighbours – we as planners we come to agreement whether some thing is reasonable for both neighbours and communities – especially when we have very strong objections from one cultural group to other cultural group – we therefore will concern on land use issue

	2. Aspirations of different people will vary, expectations of different people will vary – people who want to extend their house, neighbours sometimes want no change – they take view that is how that was built why change – disparate views
Q2	1. It is difficult to find out what diverse cultures want other than information in various languages. Always got difficulties with other cultures because reticence on their part they may not want to get involved
Q3	1. It is a very difficult subject– even within culture there are different personalities subcultures – it is difficult to say that they are from a particular country and will have similar aspirations or same view – so one size fits all policy draws a consensus but it can be helpful in some respect to try and convey in terms of conditions of what should be preserve and introduce gradual change. 2. How wide a net are you going to cast in terms of how many cultures are you going to involve to see how our policy impact on them – how detailed are policy going to become – idea of LDF to simplify policy – which tends to go against the idea of accepting certain cultural dimension
Q4	1. On planners' part, you are very often trying to come to some consensus or balanced view as to a way forward to drive policy forward. So always problem to try and accommodate all cultures or partly in terms of not finding out the information from the various cultures themselves and what you do is trying to make that balance. 2. In moving forward to advance planning issues, it very difficult to provide something which is different from what you have there already or trying and adapt. Whether or not we a catering for cultural diversity in terms of shops – we don't get involved in that – that is for market to decide and is difficult to decide on and very often that we do get involved in issues that are for particular culture – tend to give rise to concern from other parties 3. Difficult balance to strike to prove particularly policy or to interpret policy or guidance that will allow exception or to provide facility or accommodation for particular groups for two reasons from planning reasons – why you making exception for that group and other group comes along and say we want this – many groups therefore diff to draw a path through – 4. The other problem is that whilst you provide a particular facility for a particular group they may require it for a limited period and move on – difficult period – trying to be flexible – try to say to someone that you can't do that or can't have that because of certain policies – both helpful and detrimental for certain culture but help because it provides what is

acceptable and what is not – to certain extent making the culture comply with prevailing policies – putting them in 'one size fits all' stricture - hopefully there is some amount of latitude – can be difficult to make allowances for certain culture - if you are seen to be accepting from one particular culture – is it because they are making the loudest noise – others cultures may not be geared up to make their view known, getting involved and participating – for various reasons

5. Cultural Diversity should be a material consideration but how far you take the idea of translation into policy or whether policy should be in vague manner and say we will take into consideration when determining applications – this makes onus on planner in determining app – how much cultural issues to take in determining of application

6. It is very difficult to translate a very aspirational objective in practise – at best provide building uses within which individuals and groups can express themselves – even that how they do express themselves there may be a problem with neighbours and though no problem for planning – problem for others environmental health – thus trying to overlay them with another layer of aspirations of what the divers e cultures want will make it difficult doubly or more to try and deliver policies –

7. When you have an intangible aspirations– very difficult to make sense in terms of policy – even if you have policy which attempts to provide policy – using this to come to conclusion what is going to be acceptable to the culture and broader public is going to be different.

Respondent 7	
Q1	1. It is very important for planners to know what the cultural norms of particular communities are. This allows you to make sure you are not offending 2. Also it is important to know how they do things so planners are prepared and does not come as a shock 3. Differences are recognised but hard to get information thus debates, seminars, educations etc. on such subjects will enable us to use information to good effect
Q2	1. Only from my experience I have culture specific knowledge of some of the communities that I have worked for a long time with 2. When planners leave, they take away the knowledge with them and it is lost. There is no mechanism to record it, collect it. Electronically this is possible to access if readily available
Q3	1. We don't engage the communities well at all. There is so much one can do. Go to the community centres, places of worships, festivals of the various community to engage with them, to involve them

| Q4 | 1. Policies are generic. It is possible to have policies addressing particular communities. For example we know where which community lives so policies could be area specific. |
| | 2. Danger is that when a community is transient, you are left with facilities that no one else wants. |

Respondent 8

Q1	1. Yes it would be very useful to know where the communities come from, what are their histories, their background
	2. What they value most of all. This would help planners understand their communities
Q2	1. We have GIS system which gives us ethnicity information but not any specific details about the communities
Q3	1. New Planning System and SCI should include new mechanisms and vehicles to communicate with the communities.
	2. There are many opportunities to engage with them if we know when their festivals are and have a mechanism where we can go and talk to them
Q4	1. All policies we deal with are general and have their impacts are not monitored

Respondent 9

Q1	1. There is too many community groups. It is not very important to know what their culture is as planning is giving everything the same for equality purposes
	2. Planning does not impact on practicing their cultures do it is not important to know everything. People have to adapt
Q2	1. Not that we are aware of. We know from experience of what the values are of a particular culture if we have dealt with them before. But culture changes so it is difficult to know everything about all cultures.
Q3	1. Normal consultation to neighbours when planning applications are made. No new methods are used
Q4	1. Policies do not mentioned any community by name and so their culture does not inform polices
	2. Culture specific knowledge is non-existent and thus is difficult to integrate or reflect on the needs and aspirations of the diverse communities in development plans or policies.

Respondent 10	
Q1	1. Without knowing the community we serve, it is very difficult to know what they want. With agency staff, it is about just processing without taking into account what the background of the applicant is and deal with application in a similar way as the one like it before – in terms of similar building.
Q2	1. Planners do not get too involved with background of people so they do not need to access such knowledge. Sometimes if it is necessary there is information on the internet. 2. Other Brent Units must have information. Disability needs for example, can be found from social services and housing departments
Q3	1. No I am not aware of any new methods. There are community Forums which tell the public what new developments are going to be in the area. They are not very well attended. People normally find out when development on site begin and then they get concerned.
Q4	1. UDP polices are generic and can be applied to many situations. So if you have culture specific knowledge, you could interpret the UDP policy to suit. However, the supplementary planning guidance is what is mostly used as this is the elaboration of policy and there are no culture specific guidance, not even in different languages

Selected Policy Issues

Source: Inglis C (1996), *Multiculturalism: New Policy Responses to Diversity*

From the following list of potential policy issues, a framework could be developed whereby cultural specific information is collected through research for each of the ethno-cultural community. This knowledge can then yield a diversity mapping tool which could be made accessibly seamlessly within and across the various service units of the Local Authority in order to deliver service which is culture specific.

Potential Policy Issues

Ethnic Minority Languages
- Freedom to use the language
- The teaching of the ethnic language and its use as a medium of instruction in schools
- The existence of radio, television and print media in the ethnic language.
- The use of the ethnic minority language in other institutional areas including health, welfare services, and the legal system
- The availability of interpreters and the provision of information in translation in the ethnic minority language

National Language
- Access to instruction in the national language for children and adults

Religion
- Freedom of worship and ability to observe religious rituals and practices
- Institutional structures which are compatible with a religion's tenets e.g. in the legal system, education

Legal Status
- Situation of non-citizen residents
- Access to nationality of the country of permanent residence
- Availability of dual nationality
- Existence of a special status for ethnic minority group
- Freedom of association among ethnic group members and the right to form their own social organisations
- Freedom of cultural expression

Education
- Equality in educational attainment
- Curriculum which incorporates the perspectives and experiences of ethnic minority students

Employment
- Access to employment without discrimination
- Recognition of existing qualifications and experience
- Access to training opportunities

Health & Welfare Services
- Access to information on the operation of the health and welfare system
- The delivery of these services in a way which takes account of the ethnic minority's cultural patterns

Housing
- Access to appropriate housing without discrimination

Racism/Discrimination
- An absence of racism
- An absence of discriminatory practices

National Identity
- The place of the ethnic minority in the national identity

Political Representation & Autonomy
- Involvement of ethnic minority group in policy making
- The opportunity for the minority to take responsibility for making decisions relevant to its concerns

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