Consuming Master-Planned Estates in Australia:
Political, Social, Cultural and Economic Factors

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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Australia
March 2015
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List of Abbreviations

NSW: New South Wales
HREC: Human Research Ethics Committee
LGA: Local Government Authorities
USA: United States of America
UK: United Kingdom
CBD: Central Business District
PVC: Poly Vinyl Chloride
USB: Universal Serial Bus
SQM (sqm) Square Metre

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Abstract

Over the last three decades master-planned estates (MPEs) have grown in popularity in developed and developing countries alike. Building on the body of Australian research on this topic, this thesis is concerned with MPEs developed since the early 1980s in Australia, and with analysing some of the social and cultural factors underpinning their contemporary growth and popularity.

The thesis examines the relationship between MPEs in Australia as a consumer product and the aspiration of its residents for social distinction. A number of social, political and cultural trends related to the consumption of social and spatial geography such as exclusivity, tendency for private governance, lifestyle and taste, consumer culture such as brand and subculture, and the motivation behind this consumption have been examined and matched to an empirical study involving residents of MPEs as consumers, in addition to developers and officers of local governments. The study relies on qualitative research method based on case study design consisting of two MPEs in the Sydney metropolitan area.

The findings based on the two estates support the argument that MPEs as consumer product that consumed in pursuit of a desire of social distinction. The findings also suggest that the estates are a product through which residents live an imagined sense of community and the house as walls and roof become a symbolic mark for that social distinction.

Furthermore, the study finds that the estates could constitute a subcultural capital in addition to the current social capital residents are accumulating. Findings also suggest that MPEs represented in these estates have the potential to become a brand culture in the future due to the high level of interest from the growing number of buyers seeking to procure social and cultural distinction.
Statement of Authentication
The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or in part, for a degree at this or any other institution.

…………………………………………………

Kamel Taoum
March 2015
Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the following people for their indispensable support during the research process and writing of this thesis: My principal supervisor Associate Professor Michael Darcy for encouragement and moral support, constructive criticism and advice, I appreciate the many unscheduled and spontaneous meetings and discussions as they enriched my skills and kept me progressing through the thesis, thank you for being patient with me; a special thanks to my co-supervisor Dr Andrew Gorman-Murray for his guidance through theories, concept and empirical discussions and not to forget his valuable comments across the thesis; my co-supervisor Dr Laura Schatz for her insightful comments and reading the drafts of this thesis. Thanks to Dr Tod Jones for his support and guidance in the early stage of the thesis. Many thanks go to Julie Brunner and Natalie Beard for their early encouragements while completing my Master degree.

My thanks also go to Maureen O’Brien and Sarah Fearnley of UWS Bankstown Library, Vanessa Goldie-Scot for grammar and proof reading, and thanks to Denis Rouillard for his GIS support. My thanks go for Nutan Muckle for her ongoing administrative support. I also thank Professor Kerry Robinson and Dr Peter Bansel the School’s HDR director and coordinator as well as Dr Awais Piracha for their encouragements.

Thanks to the residents of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove who participated in this study, your participation, time and information provided the study with rich and constructive data. Many thanks to the two people from Rose Development for Breakfast Point and Dandaloo PTY LTD for Harrington Grove, I want to also thank the town planning officers of Canada Bay City Council, Camden City Council, Liverpool City Council and Wollondilly Shire Council for their precious time and information.

Thanks to all friends and colleagues at UWS who shared with me their experience, thoughts and ideas. Special thanks to my friend Terry Tamer for his support and encouragements.

It would have been impossible to complete this thesis without the love and support of my amazing family. Thank you Sonia, Mariette, Sebastian and Luke, I am sorry for depriving you and myself from a lot of family time, I will compensate it.
Dedication

To Sonia, Mariette, Sebastian and Luke with love

To my Dad: I will not deceive you
Chapter 1  Introduction and Background

1.1 Overview

Over the last three decades master planned estates (MPEs) have grown in popularity in developed and developing countries alike. This thesis is concerned with MPEs developed since the early 1980s in Australia, and with analysing some of the social and cultural factors underpinning their contemporary growth and popularity (Cheshire et al., 2010). Among the first Australian MPEs of widespread notoriety was Sanctuary Cove, opened in the 1987, on the Gold Coast in Queensland (Kenna, 2006). Since, then MPEs have become a significant element of urban development across most of Australia’s major metropolitan centres as well as rapidly-growing mid-sized cities, including Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Adelaide, Brisbane, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast. In most instances, these estates have been marketed as “exclusive” social and physical spaces offering something different from the broader urban landscape (Johnson, 2010).

While MPEs vary in characteristics globally, they can be understood as a form of large-scale residential development that differs from “traditional” piecemeal suburban growth, and which includes a range of specific physical and regulatory elements. Cheshire et al. (2010, p.1) identified the Australian MPE as:

... Examples of this form of development are generally accepted to share several characteristics: a comprehensive master plan accounting for all or most of the lived space within a development; a single developer or consortium responsible for delivering the plan; distinct physical boundaries; uniform design features and some sort of appeal to a communitarian ethic.

While MPEs have some common characteristics around residential development, land use and special regulations, their material and social form can vary widely, according to land size, zoning instruments, and governance arrangements, the number of residents and available on-site services and facilities (Minnery and Bajracharya, 1999). While definitions have tended to focus on the physical or regulatory aspects of MPEs, it is important to note that in terms of social and cultural life, MPEs comprise a range of material and affective sites of belonging for homeowners/residents, including their homes, their neighbourhoods, their local facilities, and
the places where residents socialise, entertain and organise community associations. These social and cultural elements need to be more fully integrated into our understanding of MPEs and how they are defined. MPEs are not just developed and governed, but lived in and consumed: the topic of this thesis.

A body of literature that can provide some insights into the research topic of this thesis is that on consumption. Warde (2005, p. 8) defined consumption as “a process whereby agents engage in appropriation and appreciation, whether for utilitarian, expressive or contemplative purposes, of goods, services, performances, information or ambience, whether purchased or not, over which the agent has some degree of discretion”. In other words consumption means that the agent (consumer) likes and appreciates, either to use, and display their taste for materialities, lifestyle, commodities, food, media and any other kind of needs or desire in which agent may apply their choice, preference and judgment. As Bocock (1993) noted, consumption is not just the act of buying items; it is linked to identity formation and the construction of social divisions and groups. This thesis examines how residents understand their consumption of MPEs, taking into account the estate’s common facilities and social characteristics as well as their own homes.

Corrigan (1997) argued that the consumption process has become increasingly important in shaping social identities and explaining social behaviour, and as a consequence the consumer has become a suitable case for social analysis. In terms of the relationship between consumption, identity and place, Wynne and O’Connor (1998, p. 1) pointed out that the process of commodification, and the production of the consumer and places of consumption, has been central to the transformation of cities and urban spaces since the nineteenth century. Miles and Paddison (1998, p. 8) argued that cities have long been associated with consumption, but in the postmodern city the realisation of consumption contributes to the changing form of the urban and social life where consumption has been harnessed by the new wealthy to display ostentatious forms of consumer behaviour. Miles and Paddison observe that in the urban context, consumers not only reproduce their physical existence, but also reproduce culturally specific, meaningful ways of life. Moreover, Knights and Morgan (1993, p. 2) noted an upsurge of interest within sociological circles in the study of consumption, arguing that the concept of collective consumption is the most applied concept to housing and other aspect of urban life.
1.2 Statement of the Problem

The international academic literature on MPEs often describes them as walled, gated and fortified (Low, 2001; Lemanski, 2006; Luymes, 1997; Polanska, 2010; Touman, 2005; Murray, 2004). The themes of physical security and social segregation are prevalent in this international work. For instance, Coy and Pohler (2001) attributed the fast growth of MPEs in Latin America to social segregation and the need for security. Firman (2003) argues that MPEs in Indonesia have reinforced spatial segregation. Lemanski and Oldfield (2008) note that a high rate of crime and racial segregation helped spread MPEs across South African cities. While LeGoix and Webster (2008) found that MPEs in the USA are designed to appeal to residents’ desire for exclusivity and to offset inefficient public services, Low (2001) also underlines the inherited sense of fear that promoted the growth of MPEs in that country. In the United Kingdom, Atkinson and Flint (2004) argued that social segregation and fear of crime encourage residents to buy and live in MPEs.

In Australia, however, discussion of crime and security are far less prevalent and given much less emphasis. Attention is instead trained on issues of lifestyle, exclusivity, social capital and residential distinction (McGuirk and Dowling 2011; McGuirk, Atkinson and Dowling 2010; Johnson 2010; Cheshire et al 2009; Kenna 2007). This difference between the Australian and international literature on MPEs enables the question of consumption – of MPEs as a consumer product, not only a “gated compound” – to come to the fore in an analysis of their development, growth and popularity in Australia. Kenna and Dunn (2009) attribute the emergence of MPEs in Australia to many factors, including the rise of the middle-class consumer, a higher demand for “lifestyle” living within a residential setting, the emergence of a tendency toward private governance, and growing concern about socio-economic disturbance in the suburbs. Cheshire et al. (2013), in a case study on two MPEs in Brisbane, found that what differentiates MPEs from other residential areas included social cohesion and sense of community. Kenna (2007), meanwhile, in her research on the exclusivity and socio-spatial polarisation of MPEs in Sydney, found that motivations regarding affluence and status are prominent among MPE consumers. Consumers state their desire for locating amongst a “better” group of people either because of a mutual identification in social relations, or to improve their own social status.
Australian research has also begun to consider the process of consumption of MPEs, and which actors are involved in the consumer cycle alongside residents. Smith’s (2011) study investigates the discursive relation between place and space in MPEs and examines how developers use promotional materials to market and endorse MPEs as a response to the traditional suburbs’ problems. He states that the “results indicate that master planned estates are the manifestation of material relationships linking consumption to emotional qualities such as desire, satisfaction and happiness” (Smith, 2011, p. 1). Developers accordingly play a role in motivating prospective buyers through their marketing tools. Developers also play an important role in the physical and social design of MPEs; Bajracharya et al. (2007) found that developers, who for the most part are sole actors, play an increasing role in the provision of community services such as social and leisure facilities and community buildings by organising covenants, setting out legal obligations and community associations that impact the life of residents.

Australian research on MPEs has been growing over the past decade, including work on marketing, consumption and the formation of communities (Gwyther, 2005; 2008). However, there remain unexplored areas concerning the relationship between MPEs, consumption and social distinction, and this thesis extends existing work by exploring the social, cultural, political and economic factors that accompany the consumption of MPEs. The thesis will introduce a study of two MPEs to provide a way to look not only at the consumption of MPEs and social distinction, but also the way residents perceive the developers’ marketing tools and how they embrace their new social and cultural setting.

While existing literature focuses on the developers’ role in encouraging prospective buyers through advertising materials using logos and slogans, this thesis will examine the developers’ role from buyers’ perceptions; how prospective buyers react to these advertising materials and to what extent they embrace them. The thesis investigates two MPEs – Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove, both located in Sydney – as a consumer product in which the estate is consumed as not only the house itself, but also as the social, physical and spatial features that underpin and promote residents’ social interaction. It will focus on the role of the aesthetic and physical appearance of MPEs in developing residents’ taste in order to promote their social distinction. The thesis also examines the relations between these estates’ residents as consumers and the estates as a consumer product and brand, and aims to detect and discuss
consumers’ willingness, capacity and empowerment to form a subculture and brand culture of these MPEs.

Using the case of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove, the thesis attempts to answer the following questions about the consumption of MPEs:

1. How are these MPEs consumed, and what are the residents’ social and cultural aspirations?

2. What is the impact of the developers’ role, and buyers’ perceptions and motivations, on the consumption of these MPEs?

3. How is consumption used to generate social distinction?

In answering these questions, the thesis is structured around four main themes: motivation, developers’ role and private governance, consumption of space and place and community, subculture and branding. These themes hook into a critical analysis of social distinction by consumption activities.

This research utilises Bourdieu’s framework to analyse the meaning of living space and homeownership, consumption and lifestyles, community interaction and its social and cultural capitals. Using this approach, there are many elements of consumption of/in MPEs that this thesis considers. These include the material affordances of the estate (e.g. large land blocks, mansion-like houses, low residential density); sociality among residents and the development of communities within the estate; and how this community communicates, shares common facilities and decides collectively how to run the estate.

A study of two MPEs located within Sydney Metropolitan area was conducted for this purpose. First, Breakfast Point, a MPE located on the Parramatta River approximately ten kilometres from the Sydney CBD, previously an industrial site and under development since 1999 under different stages, and home to about 2700 residents. Second, the first precinct of the new Harrington Grove MPE, completed in 2012 (other precincts were still under construction during the collection of data). Harrington Grove has been under development since 2011 and is situated approximately fifty kilometres from the Sydney CBD. The development involves clearing pasturage and forested landscapes. Breakfast Point is marketed by its developer as a waterfront estate, close to city and upmarket. Harrington Grove, however, is marketed as
enabling a bush lifestyle. These are therefore complementary estates in terms of age of development and residential longevity, allowing a range of respondents and their experiences. Residents from Breakfast Point tended to be established, living on the estate for many years. Residents of Harrington Grove are newly settled and able to provide an account in which the purchasing process is “fresh”, with recent insight into the developer’s role, marketing and advertising material as well as their motivations. Each estate\(^1\) is located with a different geographical, aesthetic and architectural design and settings, which again furnished the study with different accounts on motivation, taste and cultural trends.

Both deductive and inductive logics have been applied in the study. The potential link between consumption and social distinction in MPEs inductively initiated the search for related conceptions. This led to the development of a conceptual framework that needed to be examined deductively by empirical work. The research draws on a qualitative approach using a variety of complementary data collection methods. The use of semi-structured interviews, observation means, marketing materials, graphic materials and documents helped to codify patterns in the different stakeholders’ actions. With this approach it was possible to understand the interaction between various strategies for motivating people to buy in MPEs, their depth of perception of MPEs as a consumer product, and the social and cultural outcomes of consuming the estate.

### 1.3 Aims and Objectives of the thesis

The objective of this thesis is to understand why and how resident homeowners consume MPEs in Australia and determine the factors shaping this consumption and examine the social and cultural implications occurring from this consumption.

More specifically, the thesis aims to explore and investigate the following matters:

- The consumers decisions and motivations to buy in Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove MPEs

- The developers’ role in marketing these MPEs and the consumers’ perception of the developer in this regard.

\(^1\) For more details about these MPEs, please refer to Section 4.3
- How consumers consume the social and physical spaces of the MPE concept

- The impact of this consumption on the broader social and cultural life of residents of these MPEs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
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| 'To investigate the consumers decisions and motivations to buy in an MPE like Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove' | 1- To describe the social, economic, political and cultural motives.  
2- To identify these motives and find their relationship with social distinction | 5       |
| 'To explore the developers’ role in marketing these MPEs and the consumers’ perception of the developer in this regard.' | 1- To investigate the developers’ marketing tools used to promote these MPEs  
2- To analyse buyers’ perception of the developers approach.  
3- To identify the role of other agents such as local governments, in promoting these MPEs.  
4- To explore the legal materials and organisations created by the developers and approved by local governments and their capacity to commodify residents’ social and cultural life. | 5       |
| To understand how consumers consume the social and physical spaces of the MPE concept in Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove | 1- To explore residents’ experience in consuming these MPEs, focusing on their satisfaction and how it is related to their social status.  
2- To examine how residents consume the physical features of the estates, how they perceive and appreciate them and how this is related to social distinction.  
3- To investigate the imagined lifestyle of | 6       |
To investigate the impact of this consumption on the broader social and cultural life of residents of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove.

1- The formation of communities and the sense of community for residents of these MPEs.
2- The social and cultural impacts of residents interaction
3- The capacity and aspiration of residents to form subcultural groups, and to what social and geographical extent if any, these groups can develop.
4- To investigate to what level brand culture is proliferating within these MPE residents and how it affects their social status.

Table 1.3 Research aims and objectives and their correspondent Chapters.

Chapter two of the thesis provides a historical background to MPEs and moves to explore contemporary MPEs worldwide and in Australia. It examines literature to identify scholarly trends and lacuna. Chapter three introduces and discusses history and development of consumption, approach and covers the theoretical framework and the literature review of the thesis. As stated in this Chapter, this thesis expands on previous literature, particularly the work of Bourdieu in regards to the consumption of space and place. Bourdieu (1984) argued that when people consume a particular style of symbolic commodity such as their living place, they apply a related system of classification to create their own taste that matches their social distinction. The section also discusses scholars such as Giddens, De Certeau, Lefebvre, Bennett and Bocock, whose work is about consumption in the geographical context, such as cities, spaces and social life. Other elements of consumption which this thesis rely upon are the social and psychological needs of motivation for consumption, as well as consumption in neo-liberal perspectives and consumer communities and subculture trends.

4 focuses on the empirical methods used for this thesis. It also explains the way the data has been collected, analysed and validated, an important literature review has been applied to
support the methodology and the case study sites, their characteristics and their importance to be selected.

Chapter 5 introduces the three empirical Chapters which are 5, 6 and 7. They contain the finding and discussion of field study. They are organised thematically which are discussed based on the data collected from the empirical study of the thesis.

Finally, Chapter 8, which summarises the literature and findings of the field study with suggestions on further studies emerged from the thesis but will not be possible to discuss it under the current scope.

This Chapter introduced the study and set up the research questions, aims and objectives after providing a brief history about consumption and MPEs, it also stated the problem that led to this study. The next Chapter explores the history and development of MPEs worldwide and in Australia and tries to establish a link between Australian MPEs, consumption and social distinction.
Chapter 2  MPEs Development and Consumption: History and Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter serves two aims. The Chapter’s first section covers the history and background to MPEs worldwide, and then in Australia. This is followed by a discussion of existing literature on MPEs, how they are developed, marketed and consumed in Australia and how their consumption is linked to residents’ social status. The Chapter forms an introductory pathway to Chapter three which examines a broad range of theories on consumption and social status that matches the consumption trends of MPEs in an attempt to provide answers to the research questions, aims and objectives of this study.

2.1.1 History of MPEs

A brief review of the historical background to MPEs is important in order to clearly understand the MPEs of today. The history of modern planned cities dates back to the late 1700s when P.J. Le Moine planned a total reconstruction of Paris under a master plan (Papayannis, 2004) and later toward the mid-1800s when master-planned cities were pursued by philanthropists in the UK (Campbell, 2000) for the purpose of rescuing workers from filth, disease and misery common to industrial cities (Cheshire et al., 2010). The best known models of master-planned cities to emerge from this period were Paris’s Renovation Plan for George-Eugenie Haussmann, which was eventually rejected by Napoleon, (Hall, 1997) and the UK’s ‘Garden City’, proposed by Ebenezer Howard in 1898 (1902). Howard sought a practical solution for overcrowded and poorly-planned cities (Webster, 2001, p.3).

While many of the major features of Howard’s Garden City were adopted by private developers, they were usually on a much smaller (and more profitable) scale, though it has been maintained that modern MPEs can still be considered as a continuation of Howard’s Garden City. According to Lucey (1973), while Howard was influenced by Marx and Engles, he considered his movement as a capitalist approach that would reduce the threat of communism. Lucey also noted that Letchworth, Howard’s Garden City later model provided more artistic features than social considerations; thus, thereby foreshadowing the profit making that underlies current MPEs.
Shortly after their appearance in the UK in the nineteenth century, in the USA, MPEs took the form of luxury subdivisions for wealthy people and were both owned and operated privately (Blandy, 2006), gradually expanding to wider include a wider class of residents. This growth was driven by property developers who implemented common codes of conduct and agreements (McKenzie, 1994), now are largely known as home owner associations or community associations.

The first, largest and best known MPE in the USA is the Levittowners in the state of New Jersey. Established in 1955, this post-war MPE was designed to house middle and lower middle class residents (Gans, 1967). Accordingly, the estate/city was planned as an “ideal community and good life” (p. xix).

- One of the more famous planned unit development in the US is New Jersey’ Twin Rivers, established in the 1970, this pioneering venture, featured townhouses and shared spaces for children’s play and adult work and play in a society that stressed individual over collective goals and private over public concerns (Keller, 2003). Keller explained through her book “Twin Rivers” how a human community comes to be and how aspirations for the good life confront the dilemmas and detours of real life.

- However, perhaps the famous MPE development that marked the modern days of MPEs in the USA is Celebration which is owned by Disney in Florida. Celebration a new town built and managed by Walt Disney Corporation. It is a planned or artificial town/community developed in 1990. Disney as a profit-making enterprise is primarily responsible to its investors, whose onerous concern is the return, or simply, profit. The objective of developing Celebration is firstly to expand the business base from physical and virtual entertainment to property development, and secondly to build an even better image to enhance later profit opportunities (Bartling, 2004). According to Bartling (2004), Celebration is the ideal showcase of the corporation’s power in “creation of lifestyle and happiness” (p. 13), like all their films, theme parks and playgrounds. Celebration was designed as their ultimate “fantasy driven” test case as well as their biggest property development project embracing the “community” concept in their consumerist philosophy.

In the American literature, MPEs are described as a mainstream option for the middle class, but with concern that MPEs can fragment a city, creating small fort-like enclaves that are
Beginning to wield tremendous power pursuing increasingly narrowed self-interests (Le Goix, 2003; Low, 2003). According to Blakely and Snyder (1997), some MPEs are petitioning to become separate governmental entities. Others wish to enjoy tax-free status for public services they replicate, while others wish to enjoy the benefits of city services while demanding their own space to be privatised and separated from the rest of the population (Flusty, 1994). While many American authors focus on the fact that MPEs are designed to deter crime and promote social and racial segregation (Low, 2001; Blakely and Snyder, 1994), some portray MPEs as the type of exclusionary development which might aggravate existing racial and economic housing segregation patterns eroding the social fabric of diversity and interaction that is essential to a democratic society (Vesselinov, Cazessus and Falk, 2007).

Johnson (2008) links new urbanism to MPEs. New Urbanism promotes traditional neighbourhood development with an aim to create a sense of community by planning for people to work and live in the same neighbourhood. Johnson (p.76) adds that this concept markets the community image, which is exactly what MPEs are developed for, with considerations to social segregation and safety, all wrapped by lifestyle and community slogans. In contrast, Australian MPEs are developed in a neo-liberal era relaying little on safety but have the marketing of the “Community Image” in similarity with the American MPEs (Gwyther, 2005p. 13).

MPEs have been developed in Argentina since 1930, and South Africa and Indonesia since 1960 (Glasze and Meyer, 2000). In Brazil, the first form of MPEs appeared after in 1970s in the form of luxury developments in areas far from cities, under the name of condominiums (Costa et al., 2011).

While the early concept of the Garden City and its subsequent upgraded stages were more concerned with establishing the foundations of the modern town planning system, Howard’s concept shifted toward other trends, such as consumption and social distinction. This argument is supported by Knox (1992) who argued that MPEs embrace an increasingly polarised lifestyle orientated and spatially segregated social order. Kenna (2010) also noted that MPEs are thought to be exacerbating polarisation in the urban landscape via the creation of exclusive spatial segments.
MPEs combine residential developments with a level and intensity of private service provision not often available in “public” developments (McGuirk and Dowling, 2011). In most instances, MPEs are developed privately, although sometimes this occurs in partnership with local or state governments (McGuirk and Dowling, 2007; Minnery and Bajracharya, 1999). The physical characteristics of MPEs typically include private roads, private infrastructure, customised mews rather than driveways, distinctive footpaths and substantial landscaping and security features. They are commonly greenfield developments (Cheshire et al., 2009), however may also be brownfield developments. MPEs exist worldwide and they range from single street developments to complete suburbs and sometimes to a whole town (Grant and Mittlesteadt, 2004), with commercial and educational amenities and even industrial hubs. Some commentators and indeed promoters of MPEs, argue such environments can provide a complete living experience, from child care centres and primary schools to parks and shopping centres (Johnson, 2010). Some have free entry for non-residents, some are gated estates with security guards and some employ private police (particularly in South Africa and South America) (Dowling and McGuirk, 2005).

Across the body of literature on MPEs, they have different appellations, mainly depending on the physical and architectural presentation. These include: privatopias (Murray, 2004, p. 2), meaning private place and invoking the idea of utopia; enclave estates (Woods, 2002), as they are sometimes developed later on market garden in sprawl and separated from the surrounding community (Dowling and McGuirk, 2005); common interest developments; (Johnston and Dodds, 2002, p.8), as they are characterised by individual ownership coupled with a right to use common areas and, all homeowners belong to a home owner association; private communities (Kenna and Dunn, 2009) as they are associated with a micro-urban form of private governance; private cities (Glasze et al., 2006), because they privatisate what are public spaces in other developments; gated residential development, because they have been designed to give the impression that roads have been closed to foot and vehicle traffic (Bowers and Manzi, 2006, p.3); and private residential clubs, as Hobson (2002) describes them as upscale luxury developments that incorporate five star services and private residential clubs.

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2 According to Reiner (1963), the word Utopia was introduced in European vocabulary during the Renaissance. The word Utopia originates from the ancient Greek: ou, ‘non’ and topos, ‘place’. i.e. the non-existent place. However, in common understanding, Utopia often has another meaning, which is more like the Greek eu-topos-eu meaning good, desirable, perfect, because Utopia is often thought of as the dream of the perfect place Reiner explained.
2.1.2 Australian MPEs

Background

The first MPE in Australia was modelled on Letchworth, Ebenezer Howard’s first Garden City. According to Freestone (1989), the early MPEs in Australia were adopted in 1920 by the Garden City Ideas of NSW Government, largely as a subsidised public rental project. The project was located on the current suburb of Daceyville a few kilometres east of Sydney. The historical development of master-planned developments in Australia is linked to the revival of the “city beautiful concept”, a focus on green open spaces, community building and place making (Freestone 2007) and on the original Garden City of England, the Australian version providing decent housing to workers through a combination of house and garden with the aim of extending it to other towns across the country (Freestone, 1989, p. 10). According to Spearritt (2000), the Australian Royal Commission for Housing recommended that the government should provide better living conditions for workers and redevelop current slum areas around Sydney. Accordingly, the concept of Garden City was adopted, structured around an axial landscape with scenic views, school, shops and over 30 acres of parkland (Spearritt, 1999, p. 19).

Ashton (1995, pp. 62-63) noted that the term “Master Plan” was first introduced in 1942 by members of the Sydney City Council, as part of a plan to reconstruct post-war Sydney, but this plan was rejected by the Commonwealth Ministry for Post-War Reconstruction. In 1943 however, Colonel Garnsey, a town clerk, re-proposed the master plan for both the City Council and the Ministry arguing that such a plan would embellish the city and will promote a healthy and recreational living. According to Ashton, Garnsey’s proposal lost momentum in the face of hostile opponents and was put aside. Thus, a master-plan is an instrument and form of planning control over an integrated project site, based on a particular vision for the completed development (Gwyther, 2005).
In Australia, MPEs are usually partially gated or not gated, with rare exceptions, such as Sovereign Island on the Gold Coast in Queensland (Rofe, 2006). This sets them apart from MPEs in most other counties where ‘gating’ is the norm (Easthope and Randolph, 2008), which suggests different motivations for residential choice of MPEs in Australia than elsewhere. Easthope and Randolph (2008) commented that the low frequency of “gating” of Australian MPEs was a result of a low crime rate and security issues. It is also argued that the rising popularity of MPEs has been due to a combination of factors, including the encouragement for urban consolidation in the metropolitan plans from state governments which increased both developers interest in such concept and buyers demand for exclusive living and leisure facilities. While there has been little research on the number, proliferation, geographic spread or popularity of MPEs in Australia, Cook (2008) estimated the number of residents of MPEs in Australia in 2008 to have about 250,000 residents. Research by Kenna (2010) suggests that in recent decades the appeal of MPEs to the home buyer, planners and governments has increased markedly.
The first contemporary master-planned community was Sanctuary Cove, on the Gold Coast in Queensland, opened in 1987 (Kenna, 2007). In Australia, the vast majority of MPEs have been established using community titles, which the NSW Department of Land and Property Information (LPI) defined as:

*schemes which are created by registration of a Community, Neighbourhood or Precinct plan and allow for various levels of management and stages of development...common areas within a Community, Neighbourhood or Precinct scheme are owned and managed by a body corporate comprising all lot owners within the scheme (LPI, 2013).*

Other Australian states also have in place similar legislation to create community title schemes and management of common properties. For example, the body responsible of common properties management in Queensland is called “Body Corporate” which complies with the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997 (Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney, 2015). In Victoria, management of common properties is made up by owner corporations which are legislated by the Owners Corporations Act 2006 (Consumer Affairs Victoria, 2015)

While generally MPEs tend to be small in size (Cheshire and Wickes, 2011), the largest, “Ripley Valley”, located near Ipswich in south east Queensland, a staged development, was commenced in 2008 and is expected to be completed in 2028. By then, it will have an estimated population of 100,000 people (Bajracharya et al., 2007, p. 7). MPEs in Australia attract generally middle class and young couples who look to upgrade their social status (Gwyther, 2005; Johnson, 2010) and promote a great sense of community (Gleeson, 2005; Cheshire et al., 2010).

As stated earlier, this thesis is concerned with MPEs developed since the early 1980s in Australia. During this economically prosperous period, Australia experienced rapid growth in the number of MPEs (Dowling et al., 2010; Randolph and Freestone, 2012) which enjoyed rich legacies. In Australia at the end of World War two, in what Gleeson and Low (2000, p. 24) called “the long boom”, the approach to housing consumption took an innovative turn in what could be as an early pattern of today’s MPE lifestyle living. Shortage of building materials, combined with lack of workers and high demand for housing, led building makers to invent
new, innovative and cheap building products. White goods and new building product marketing campaigns resulted in a new turn toward living consumption. Greig (1995), who explored the economic, social and aesthetic factors of housing history of the post-war era, argued that a domestic policy had been implemented with little success. Nevertheless, the focus on providing commensurate salary packages for workers enabled them to acquire their goods and service needs privately, including housing. Thus, according to Greig, workers had the opportunity to buy land, design and build their dream home in the suburb that suited that dream. He contends that “Mass advertising and home magazines were conduits linking mass production with mass consumption…therefore; it targeted the new suburbs where many young families were building their homes and seeking to equip them with consumer durables and products” (Greig, 1995, p. 25).

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>Neo-liberalism and Privatisation</td>
<td>1- Planned and delivered privately with the engagement of state or local government agencies.</td>
<td>McGuirk et al., 2010; Minnery and Bajracharya, 1999.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2- MPEs are iconic spaces of neoliberalism.</td>
<td>McGuirk and Dowling, 2009</td>
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<td>3- MPEs come with themes of privatism, privatisation and social distinction.</td>
<td>Dowling et al., 2010</td>
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<td>4- No full privatisation in Australian MPEs.</td>
<td>McGuirk and Dowling, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developers’ role</td>
<td>1- An idealised, imagined sense of community is commodified by developers of MPEs to tailor for certain needs, life-stages and lifestyles.</td>
<td>Rosenblatt, 2005</td>
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<td>2- Some developers of MPEs have also recognised the need to operate in a socially responsible manner and to provide the estates that meet social and environmental, as well as economic objectives.</td>
<td>Rosenblatt et al., 2009</td>
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<td>3- There is an increasing use of developer-imposed design controls</td>
<td>McGuirk and Dowling, 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exclusivity</td>
<td>1- Whether gated or not, MPEs encourage “middle-class disaffiliation” by affluent groups able to afford homes within.</td>
<td>Atkinson, 2006</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2- MPEs are homogenous internally and exclusive</td>
<td>Kenna, 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Social distinction</strong></td>
<td>1- MPEs are understood as affluent enclaves that provide a feeling of security and distinction.</td>
<td>Low, 2003; Gwyther, 2005; Atkinson, 2006.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2-MPEs come with themes of privatism, privatisation and social distinction.</td>
<td>Kenna, 2007; Kenna, 2010; McGuirk et al., 2010.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3- MPEs in Australia attract generally middle class and young couples who look to upgrade their social status.</td>
<td>Gwyther, 2005; Johnson, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Sense of community and social interaction</strong></th>
<th>1- Developers of MPEs often use the discourse of community in marketing these estates.</th>
<th>Gwyther, 2005; Kenna, 2007; Rosenblatt et al., 2009.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>2- A number of studies examine developer-driven discourses of community as well as</td>
<td>McGuirk et al., 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical characteristics</strong></td>
<td>1- Distinct physical boundaries, uniform design features and an appeal to a community ethics.</td>
<td>Cheshire et al 2010.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2- A master plan is a set of planning controls exacted over a landscape for the purpose of achieving a particular vision.</td>
<td>Gwyther, 2005.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3- MPEs tends to take the form of either</td>
<td>Ruming, 2005.</td>
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</table>

residents’ experience of it and their social interaction.

3- MPEs are homogenous internally.

4- The ‘community compact’ term by restrictions on design and behaviour are used to proliferate order and social interaction.

5- MPEs promote a great sense of community.

Kenna, 2010

Gwyther, 2005

Gleeson, 2005;

Cheshire et al., 2010
Table 2.1.2 Summary of general characteristics in Australian MPEs.

| Lifestyle | 1-Lifestyle and prestige communities are most prevalent, with sub-types based upon the life-cycle and status of residents.  
2- Some Australian MPEs are developed in semi-rural areas with communal agricultural setting attract residents who seek lifestyle aesthetic either working from home or retired. | Grant and Mittlestead, 2004  
Gleeson 2003, Cheshire et al 2010, Johnson 2010 |

Table 2.1.2 above which categorises the main topic discussed by previous researchers, the literature provides extensive information and characteristics about Australian MPEs while most researchers argued the similarity of them, others suggested divergent particularities. Despite potential benefits, there is also considerable criticism of the MPE as a development form, particularly from those who question the role of private interests in the provision of social infrastructure. The trend towards MPEs is seen by some as representative of a general move toward the privatisation of public space and services that is favoured by neo-liberalist policy, of which the “gated community” could be considered the ultimate expression (Gleeson, 2002; Gwyther, 2005). Although, McGuirk and Dowling (2007) argued, the privatisation of infrastructure and service, which is common in the USA, is not such a strong feature of Australian MPEs. Rather, the planning, delivery, and operation of MPEs in Australia tends to
be governed by diverse arrays of public and private guidelines and regulations. MPEs are also criticised for their focus on the questionable notion of “creating community”, with suggestions that their marketing actively trades on promises of exclusivity and social status (Gwyther, 2005; Costley, 2006). Rosenblatt (2005, p. 4) describes this “commodification of community” in his examination of MPEs in South East Queensland, noting how notions of community are packaged and marketed to sell a residential development to a potential home owner, in much the same way that other commodities and products are marketed to consumers.

**Developing MPEs: Developers and Government Roles**

In Australia, state governments are responsible for the planning regulatory system and assume responsibility for developing metropolitan strategic planning policy. State governments also apply some influence through their responsibility for major infrastructure delivery. Generally, local governments are delegated planning powers to develop local strategic direction within the frameworks set by the state and execute the statutory development approval process. However, state governments and their planning authorities hold significant influence on local planning, with a variety of measures and mechanisms in place which enable the minister to bypass and block policies and instruments of the local government administered planning process, raising “questions in respect of the role, power and influence of local council” (Hamnett and Kellett, 2007, p. 9). Examples of these mechanisms include greater ministerial control via “call in powers” (Gleeson and Low, 2000); the establishment of priority development zones; and the establishment of regional planning authorities with delegated planning authority in growth areas.

The main authority assigned with providing and maintaining community services is local government. In the case of MPEs, where developers increasingly play a role in the planning and provision of local services and facilities, there is generally a handover phase in which local government progressively takes on responsibility for the ongoing governance and service provision to the new development. The tension between the roles of the developer as master planner and local government as the ultimate management and service provision agency is the source of much debate and arguments (Goodman and Douglas, 2007). While developers are in the active selling phase of a development, which can last for many years, they have a vested interest in the physical appearance, smooth operation, and level of resident satisfaction; however, once selling is completed, this interest is removed, and the developer moves on to the
next project, leaving management and upkeep in the hands of local government or to an owners
corporation (Cheshire et al., 2009; Goodman et al., 2010).

The preparation of master plans is generally the developers’ field; states and local governments
control the strategic planning context and the planning approval process. The town planning
system, established, implemented and enforced by governments, sets both the strategic
framework within which MPEs can be proposed and developed, and provides the approval
process for implementing projects (Minnery and Bajracharya, 1999). It is this framework which
provides the local governments and other planning authorities with systems to control
development outcomes. The final output of the MPE development process can therefore be
considered a negotiation between public vision and interest (represented by government
planning processes) and private developer interest and the master planning process (Minnery
and Bajracharya, 1999).

Minnery and Bajracharya (1999) suggested not to consider the negotiation between developers
and local government authorities as just hostile, highlighting the benefits that councils gain
from dealing with large developments under the control of a single developer as opposed to
numerous and desperate small developers, in terms of getting consistent and significant
outcomes for the community. They also pointed out the potential for large developers to
leverage their profile to attract more support for major infrastructure components from state
and federal funds. They report the government-developer relationship as complex and widely
variable, with some local governments viewing large developments as central to their growth
agenda and others wary of the increased private control over community planning, citing
concerns about adequate provision of community infrastructure, privatisation of community
infrastructure, and satisfactory treatment of the environment (Goodman and Douglas, 2008).

Developers play an important role in the physical and social design of MPEs; Bajracharya et
al. (2007) found that developers, who for the most part are sole actors, play an increasing role
in the provision of community services such as social and leisure facilities and community
buildings by organising covenants, setting out legal obligations and community associations
that impact the life of residents. Developers also play a role in motivating prospective buyers
through their marketing tools.

*Marketing MPEs in Australia, Commodities for Social Identity*
Private developers have taken a leadership role in growing the market for MPEs. According to Grant and Mittlesteadt (2004, p. 2), developers see gated projects as an important niche marketing strategy in a competitive marketplace. They argue that enclaves can attract consumers searching for a sense of community, identity and security. MPEs are marketed as an attractive living place where developers claiming that they provide beautiful amenities and minimise undesirables, which are otherwise not available in the broader urban landscape. Furthermore, research has shown that “gating” may increase property values.

According to Goodman and Douglas (2010, p. 4), advertising for MPEs is often aimed at engendering an emotional response, promoting not only the product that is the house and land, but a particular lifestyle. Frequently, the lifestyle focus is upon the idealised construction of community with links to the natural world, such as bushland, beaches or lakes. Cheshire et al. (2009, p. 8) and Rosenblatt (2005, p. 12) pointed to the role of developers in making MPEs attractive through a visually appealing landscape and other aesthetic tools, such as location or facilities. Woods (2002) provides an example of how this concept, when used to market the estate, lifestyle and the type of people living within the estate, operates by invoking dichotomies that are derived from social divisions which invites buyers to identify with that exclusive group. He wrote:

*What I would like to propose in this essay is that the application of the notion of ‘nature’ as a connotation of class and status is not the only expression in operation here. ‘Nature’ is also being used to insinuate that the ‘community’ residing in the enclave is upright, well-disposed and, more importantly, wholesome. Representations of this notion can be found in the advertisements for the master planned estates in any real estate section of the weekend newspapers (2002, p. 1).*

Woods also stated that the other side to the advertising are the covenants and fees. Developers of MPEs construct idealised lifestyles using marketing tools, covenants and fees. Rofe’s (2006) account about the developers vocabulary in marketing MPEs demonstrates how the developers try to capture the hearts and minds of buyers, accordingly, developers used a poetic vocabulary to advertise MPES, such as “the finest residential islands in the world” and “paradise reserved for a fortunate few” (Rofe, 2006, p. 5).
In the Australian context, understanding both what drives the creation of estates and buyers’ willingness to submit to extra restrictions and costs, requires an understanding of the link between consumer choices and identity. Some formal covenants that prescribe legally-sanctioned standards of design and appearance, to which all new residents are required to abide such as the exterior colours of buildings, type and quality of fencing, landscaping and roof tiles design and colour (Please see contract for sale of land in appendix 1). Residents constructing new homes are also required to submit their building plans to the developer for approval before construction. The tools that developers use to shape imaginaries of urban landscapes and generate desire for exclusive MPEs have received little attention in academic literature. Research on covenants and by-laws, which developers use to create specific exclusive urban landscapes, tends to be limited by legal issues.

Housing, suburbanisation, consumption and lifestyle have long-standing linkages in Australian society and are embedded in the national cultural imaginary. With the emergence of neo-liberalism in the 80s and its impact on socio-political life of Australia (McGuirk and Dowling, 2009), MPEs appear as a product that responds to the modern trend of consumption and a revolutionary commodity with a new type of urban governance (Kenna and Dunn, 2009). Kenna and Dunn (p. 3) furthermore, argued that this consumption was as a result of the rise of middle class lifestyle consumers and a tendency towards consumer market. The new trend of urban governance in MPEs have produced what Cheshire et al. (2009, p. 4) called “desirable acts of housing consumption” and McGuirk and Dowling (2011, P. 4) highlighted as “the self-regulating consumer citizen”, it can be noted that neo-liberalism transformed a welfare-state policy to an individual, privately run society where social and physical infrastructures are privately governed and regulated. Rosenblatt (2005, p. 3) noted that within the context of increasing consumerism, master planned communities have the characteristics that provide competitive advantage in the market when incorporating the desire for communal conditions on one hand and the desire for individuality, privacy and security on the other hand. Rosenblatt argues that marketing MPEs as idealised communities appeals to particular sensibilities in purchasers such as people looking for new lifestyle or security. Gleeson (2005) also observed that MPEs in Australia are exclusively marketed to discerning consumers who distinguish themselves as lifestyle buyers. Gleeson noted that the principal object of discernment is “community”, this explains that Australians tendency towards living in master planned communities is clearly not security nor racial or class segregation. This argument supported by Goodman and Douglas (2008, p. 4) which stated “consider that Sydney has relatively few truly
gated communities and that those that do exist are probably more motivated by a sense of status aspiration than a true fear of crime”. Finally, Walters and Rosenblatt (2008) argued that MPEs concept is an echo for an ideal community that resonates in the collective imagination, evoking a nostalgic view of a small town or village setting and implores to a communitarian sense of sociability, happy family and environmental values.

Due to the strong relationship between MPEs and consumption as demonstrated in the literature discussed above, it is necessary to explore the different theories of consumption that could explain MPEs as a consumer product in Australia, but most importantly, examine the link between consumption of MPEs and the striving of their residents for social distinction. Consumption is likely and arguably to be related to MPEs in different ways, and MPEs in Australia are seemingly consumed through various trends and motives, while the study focuses on the social circumstances and motives for this consumption, a comprehensive examination of consumption theories and approaches, supported by a relevant historical background will developed in the next section of this Chapter.

Chapter 3 From Consumption to Consumer Product

The previous Chapter reviewed the history and development of MPEs and explaining the way they are promoted and consumed according to Australians and international literature. This Chapter provide a critical literature review on consumption and its geographical, social aspects and circumstances, as well as the theoretical framework of the thesis providing analytical necessary tools to later examine the linkages between consumption and MPEs in Australia which are the core discussion of this study and forms an equal role with the empirical findings to provide answers to the research questions, aims and objectives that are stated in Chapter one of this thesis. The Chapter also aims to place the study with the conceptual framework.

3.1 History and Background

Adam Smith (1904[1776], chap, IV, para. 49) wrote:
Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer. The maxim is so perfectly self-evident that it would be absurd to attempt to prove it.

Whether this is conclusive or not, consumption has however, been interpreted as the core of economy and society, especially in the twenty first century where “to live is to consume” (Borgmann 2000, p. 2).

Consumption between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries as documented by McCracken (1988), revealed a surge during the Elizabethan era in England toward the end of the sixteenth century when monarch and noble society. With a high scale of spending in order to rebuild a modern nation, began buying expensive furniture, clothing and indulged in lavish banquets which according to McCracken aimed to boost the power of government by drawing attention away from military and financial difficulties facing the country. This resulted in the nobles trying to match the Queen’s consumption and expenditure. Later, in the eighteenth century, McCracken indicates that consumption spree was maintained during that century in England with further more dramatic development that covered new items such as pets, gardens and home decoration. This upsurge of new trend of consumption has been labelled by McKendrick (1982, p. 3) as the beginning of the “consumer revolution for a “consumer society” where people consume with taste and sometimes through social projects which lead to the modern consumption culture. McKendrick (1982) and McCracken (1988) argued this upsurge to social competition that marked the era. The nineteenth century however, was marked by a complete change in the consumption process which possibly leads to the current approach and trends of consumption. While there was no consumer boom in the nineteenth century (McCracken, 1988), but the consumer society had already been established through most of Europe despite the French Revolution (McCracken, p. 23). Accordingly, this era generated new methods of consumption with modern characters; the appearance of department stores and consumer lifestyle, and most importantly McCracken noted, the emergence of product information designated to influence consumers. This can be considered as the turning point of the current marketing campaigns and new products advertising which developers of MPEs used.

Furthermore, the history of research into consumption dates back to the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century (Bocock, 1993). Bocock (p. 11) wrote that the early pattern of
consumption within a distinctively capitalist economic structure began to emerge in England during the post-civil war period in the second half of the seventeenth century. Patsiaouras and Fitchett (2012) noted that the economic and social scene changed with the advent of the Industrial Revolution, which makes mass production possible and established a dynamic commercial reality where interpersonal relations and product symbolism stimulated individuals to immerse themselves in a more diverse range of consumption practices. Patsiaouras and Fitchett also argued that technological developments and rising income have assisted the emergence of a middle class who can partake in conspicuous consumption and ostentatious behaviour. Together with other researchers, they link consumption in contemporary society with attempts to enhance social status.

However, Bocock (p. 3) argued that it was not until the 1980s that consumption became an important social concept with its own social theory. He added that activities related to consumption became the focus of sociologists due to the rise of nationalism in certain parts of the world that created social and cultural groups that became consumer groups and the trend towards postmodernism\(^3\) in capitalist western nations.

The United States, as well as other parts of the world, increasingly became characterised by the Fordism era (mid-20th century); consumption became a more important element than production. The economic system came to be based on the mass production of standardised goods and their mass consumption (Amin, 1997; Liechty, 2003). With standardised goods dominating the economy, and relatively higher wages making them more accessible to workers, the material wealth of people started to increase. Cars, televisions, refrigerators and other modern household appliances became available to a wide selection of the population. Everybody seemed to be able to share in a certain degree of wealth. The middle class still did not own the means of production, but they were offered access to other forms of “property” (Liechty, 2003, p. 18), namely consumer goods. Consumption had become more important than production and the middle class identity built on social identities over the types of goods and property that people owned, rather than the kind of work they did (Mayer, 1997). As Moskowitz stated, the standard of living, increasingly became defined through consumer goods and the spaces established and maintained to contain these goods, rather than a level of earnings.

\(^3\) Featherstone (2007, p. 11) defined postmodernism as “the loss of a sense of historical past or the replacement of reality by images, simulations, and even unchained signifiers”.
(Moskowitz, 2004, p. 4). Space and place thus gained importance, and at the end, people mapped out their differences on both conceptual and physical space (Liechty, 2003, p. 255).

A post-Fordism period of transformation replaced the Fordism era, this transformation extended well beyond process engineering and mass production of Fordism. It transformed not only how things were made, but also how people lived and what they consumed. It reflected the declining importance of both scale and scope and is driven by reductions in communications, logistics, and information processing costs.

Jessop (1997), argued that Post-Fordism demonstrably emerged from tendencies originating within Fordism, but still has marks of crucial break with it and involved many complex changes into society. Stuart Hall however, perceived the transformation as a result of changing patterns in many aspects of production and consumption, he stated:

*The shift to new information technologies, more flexible, decentralised forms of labour process and work organisation; the decline of the old manufacturing base and emergence of new “sunrise” industries; greater use of hiving-off or contracting out in production; greater emphasis on choice or product differentiation, marketing, packaging and design; targeting of consumer by lifestyle, taste and culture rather than by the categories of social class; the rise of service and white-collar classes and the feminisation of the workforce; an economy domination by TNCs*, with their new international divisions of labour and greater economy from nation state control; and the globalisation of new financial markets with new communications technologies

* (Hall, 1991, p. 57)

The transformation from Fordism to Post-Fordism prolonged till the 70s, where the industrial economy increasingly declined, along with the stable and regulated relations between the trade unions, employers and the state. The period of de-industrialisation that has characterised the global economy since the 1970s has been marked by significant changes in social organisation.

The economy has become characterised by deregulation, the provision of services, a flexible labour force, volatile capital flows and state “withdrawal” (Lash and Urry, 1987, pp.3-5). The

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4 TNCs, stand for Transnational Corporations. According to Vertovec (1999), many economists, sociologists and geographers have seen (TNCs) as the major institutional form of transnational practices and the key to understanding globalisation.
economy created a need for new white-collar jobs in administration, management, science and technology, and the middle class started to grow even further. Meanwhile, as the Fordist system of mass production and mass consumption shifted towards the system of flexible accumulation, based on small and demand driven production, individualised consumption could develop. The differences between people increased, and with a wide range of consumer goods available, it also became easier for people to distinguish themselves from other (Lash and Urry, 1987).

Kyrk (1923, p. 16) argued that the word consumption as a general term means as follows: “The use of goods in the satisfaction of human wants… the use of a thing or employing of it for the purpose of enjoyment and, the wealth-using as opposed to wealth-getting activities of man”. [sic]

Moreover, Kyrk explained that the act of consumption, when used generally and in an economic sense, denotes two different meanings: the spending of money and the use of wealth.

As can be seen from above, when consumption is defined by general and common use terms, it is about wealth, numbers, and money. Ritzer (1998) citing Baudrillard however, argued that consumption is not only the passion of buying so many goods, or fulfilment of needs, or accumulating and enjoying assets. Accordingly, he contended that consumption is an array of implications and acts that rely on a certain power or mechanism which function with non-material systems such as ideological values, use of signs, social influence or distinction. Consumption is used not just to satisfy basic needs but also to inform ourselves and others of our thinking, behaviour, and social identities (Ariely and Norton, 2009). Thus, consumption is more than a physical act; it is also a perpetual social phenomenon or tradition in what it can be described as a ceremonial act of a society that consumes as part of human accomplishment or fulfilment (Graeber, 2011). Consumption therefore can be considered as a factor for social positioning and identity construction both of which are important as contextual and theoretical questions (Glennie, 1998). Thus, consumption “is a social production, in a system of exchange, of a material of differences, a code of significations and invidious values” (Baudrillard, 1981, p.75).
When the acquisition of goods becomes the basis of human identity and sense of self, it can be called consumerism. While Miles (1998, p. 4) defined consumerism as “a way of life, and it is the cultural expression and manifestation of the apparently ubiquitous act of consumption”, Campbell (2004) noted that when this act occurs, humans are bound together in society by how they channel their wants, needs, desires, longings, and pursuit of emotional fulfilment into consumption. Under consumerism, the consumption habits define how humans understand themselves, how they affiliate with others, and overall, the extent to which they fit in with, and are valued by, society at large (Bauman, 2007). Consumerism also is called “consumer society” (McKendrick, 1982) and appeared in the eighteenth century as a consequence of a modern consumption trend that struck England and France (McKendrick, 1982, Graeber, 2011). Modern consumerism however, is an interpretation of a modern consumption trend which appeared in the 1950s when consumption was driven by the growing role of advertising (Mort, 1998).

Firat and Dholakia (1998) noted that in postmodern consumer society, in order to increase economic growth, the market has become the sole place making it legitimate and, no cultural or social movement has been able to provide a substitute. Indeed, they have themselves been marketed. Thompson’s (2000, p. 131) viewpoint on the “postmodern marketplace”, is that the market is proficient at separating people physically, socially and culturally, yet at the same time, only the marketplace can bring people together. Humans both follow and resist the prescribed meanings, which the marketers provide, producing new meanings and practices, marking their roles in the process. Cova, Kozinets and Shankar’s (2007, p. 4) work in “consumer tribes”, examines the “rotating cultural currents” that create the tension between consumption and production, culture and nature, communal and commercial life. Postmodernism concept has a high impact on research into consumption, with scholars such as Firat and Dholakia (1982), Belk and Pollay (1985) and Sherry (1989) observing that the postmodern consumer is the consumer and at the same time the consumed. Thus, the postmodern consumer experiences semiotic consumption patterns, because the implication of the reversal in postmodernism is that consumption is not the end, but a moment where much is created and produced. It is not a personal, private act of destruction by the consumer, but very much a social act where symbolic meanings, social codes, and relationships are produced and reproduced (Firat and Dholakia, 1982). Consumption is no longer a profane activity as opposed

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5 For more details, please refer to Identity and Status in section 3.4.1.
to production being sacred, for example, and no longer is conspicuous consumption considered a folly, something not to be very proud of. On the contrary, consumption has become the “means of self-realisation, self-identification; a means of producing one's self and self-image” (Firat, 1991, p. 3).

3.1.2 Motivation for Consumption; Social Needs, and Other Factors

“Motivation is the processes that lead people to behave as they do. It occurs when a need is aroused that the consumer wishes to satisfy”. (Salmon, 2008, p. 128)

According to Reeve (2009), motivation, at its highest level, contributes to the decision-making capacities, such as reason and choice and cannot be separated from the social context since it provides a natural stimulus to people’s emotion. He argues that social needs once acquired, manifests themselves in thoughts, emotion, action and lifestyle (p. 172).

For Clarke (2003), consumption is unavoidable and forms an integral part of human nature. Consumerism echoes the moral nature of modern human existence as much as any other widespread modern practice; significant change here would therefore require not a minor adjustment to the way of life, but the transformation of civilisation (Crocker and Linden, 1998). Consumers are “socially motivated” according to Goldsmith et al. (2010, p.1), they argued that in addition to satisfying perceived and factual needs, humans purchase for countless other reasons. When it comes to social reasons, it is the extensive and powerful desire for social status (Nunes and Dreze, 2009). Shukla (2010, p. 2) stressed that status consumption is “principally irrational” (psychological) in its expression and motivation and significantly influenced by consumers’ ostentatious behaviours. Similarly, Kilsheimer (1993) argued that there is a personal difference variable that addresses humans’ motivation to consume for status.

Many scholars have tried to explain consumption motivation and its trends; Scholars such as Marx (1932[1972]) and Weber (1904[1958]) dealt with consumption as a social need which they attributed to the capitalist mode of production. Furthermore, Weber (1904[1958]) asserted that consumption is linked to epicurean proclivities. Simmel (1904[1997]) also argued that shopping and mass consumption are ways of self-expression in modern urban societies. Veblen (1899[1970]) however, formulated a concept of the leisure class where consumption means superior social standing and class.
Part of the debate over consumers and consumer society hinges on the status and meaning that is awarded to the motivations behind consumption; whether need or want is consumption’s central focus. Consumption tended primarily to be about the satisfaction of needs, for example, the need for food, clothing, shelter or security (Maslow, 1943). Hence, until quite recently, these mostly physiological needs were of central importance, with wanting reserved for the powerful or monetarily proficient, reminiscent of Veblen. This means that there were limits to people’s wanting and consumers were in possession of a consumptive capacity (McDougall, 1933), but it also meant a certain order to things, which had to be produced and had an expected to be endurable.

Bagozzi et al. (2003) provide an overview motivation theories which propose, within their own framework, different sets of motives that drive human behaviour. The list includes theories of authors such as Murray (1938), Maslow (1954), and McClelland (1987) who suggested various categories of motives and needs, as well as more recent approaches to categorisation of general goals, evaluating them from different perspectives. Bagozzi et al. pointed out that to date most concepts of consumer motivation suggest universal sets or categories of motives, needs or goals which can be applied to any type of product, consumer and pattern of behaviour. These sets of motives are not the overall goals of the highest levels, which stand for values, and therefore, can be applied, to a particular purchasing behaviour. However, as this study is a sociological in nature, it is preferable to guide the discussion of motivation towards the social, economic and cultural streams and approach the psychological stream when necessary.

Arguments about the “aggressive” role of marketing advertising in motivating the consumer are largely supported by many scholars; Featherstone (1991, p. 14) for example, noted that advertising is able to exploit consumers and attach images of romance, exotica, desire, beauty, fulfilment, communality, scientific progress and the good life to mundane consumer goods such as soap, washing machines, motor cars and alcoholic drinks. Whiteley and Whiteley (2010, p. 9) similarly stated that “Consumer culture is the expansion of capitalist commodity production which has given rise to a vast accumulation of material culture in the form of consumer goods and sites for purchase and consumption”. Whiteley and Whiteley’s observation sided in line with Featherstone finding, they also noted a similar role of advertising in creating a romantic vision for consumers. Abercrombie (1994, p. 51) noted that producers try to commodify meaning, that is to say they try to make images and symbols into things which can be sold or bought. Consumers, on the other hand, try to give their own, new
meanings to the commodities and services that they buy. However, Lodziak (2000) argued that the ideology of consumerism has replaced the dominant opinion that the desire to consume is mainly the product manipulations of marketers and advertisers, and the public (consumers) are in part responsible for it. He further contended that, fundamentally, a passive public were deemed to be duped into spending money that was surplus to requirements on consuming things they did not need. He claimed that advertisers, via the use of clever psychological techniques, created desires and wants which were expressed as consumer demand. However, Lodziak also argues that the current ideology of consumerism dispenses with any notion of a passive mass of people heavily manipulated by advertisers, maintaining that people do not have to be persuaded to consume—they want to buy. He concluded that people seek what they want and what they want was not produced by advertisers but is of their own making (Lodziak, 2000, pp. 5-6)

3.1.3 Consumption in the Neo-Liberal Era

Neo-liberalism in general terms, means different aspects of societal changes presented over the years. Primarily it signifies political-economic transformations, which affect society and individuals. Deregulation, informalisation, decline of state power, and self-governing subjects characterise neoliberalism in its practice (Harvey, 2007). Foucault (2008, p. 121) describes neoliberalism as a governmentality that accords with the idea that “One must govern for the market, rather than because of the market”. He argued that neoliberalism is not a governmentality wherein the state intervenes within society “so that competitive mechanisms can play a regulatory role at every moment and every point of society and by intervening in this way” all of society can be subjected to the market (Foucault, 2008, p. 145).

Thus, neo-liberalism is a heterogeneous set of institutions consisting of various ideas, social and economic policies, and ways of organising political and economic activity (Campbell and Pedersen, 2001). Ideally, it includes formal institutions, such as minimalist welfare states, taxation and business regulation programs; flexible labour markets and decentralised capital-labour relations unencumbered by strong unions and collective bargaining; and the absence of international capital mobility. According to Campbell and Pedersen, neo-liberalism includes institutionalised normative principles favouring free-market solutions to economic problems, rather than bargaining or indicative planning, and a dedication to controlling inflation even at the expense of full employment. It includes institutionalised cognitive principles, notably a
deep, taken-for-granted belief in neoclassical economics (Campbell and Pedersen, 2001, p. 5). Larner\(^6\) (2000) argued that scholars interpret neo-liberalism in three general ways. First, as a coherent policy framework consisting of trade liberalisation, curtailing of the welfare state, labour flexibilisation\(^7\), privatisation of state-owned industries, and government fiscal austerity; second, as a pro-market ideology that is more complex and uneven than unified and coherent. Thirdly, as a form of Foucauldian governmentality, founded on discourses that establish systems of market governance through processes of so-called responsibilisation that operate at the level of individualised risk management.

Best (2005, p. 124) argued that, relative to Keynesianism, neo-liberalism resembles Marxist economics in that it pushes for the idea of the universality of a technical model of the world economy in which the politics that make national experiments possible, are normatively rejected. However, the productive, financial, technological and spatial fixes\(^8\) that followed the crisis of profitability of the late 1970s, at the core of the world capitalist economy (Silver, 2003), brought about a significant shift in the status of the consumer, in the so-called post-Fordist era. The advent of globalisation and the hegemonic advance of neo-liberal forms of governance produced three important transformations. First, instead of the passive, uniform consumer created by cultural industries and advertising for the sake of mass standardisation, there is now the emergence of the active, diversity-seeking consumer “a creative, confident and rational being articulating personal identity and serving the public interest” (Trentmann 2006, p. 2). The consumer’s agency therefore, obscured by the homogenising forces of mass standardisation, and subsumed into the bureaucratic cage of the scientific-technical apparatuses so incisively criticised by Marcuse \(^9\) (1964), has now been recovered by the empowered, self-reflexive individual so characteristic of late or advanced modernity. Second, unlike Keynesian political economy, which instituted the sharp separation between labour and consumption in contemporary societies, the boundaries between both terms have become blurred. Lazzarato

\(^6\) According to Larner (2000, p. 1) the term “neo-liberalism” denotes new forms of political-economic governance premised on the extension of market relationships.

\(^7\) A flexible form of employment has been promoted as a means to increase employment opportunities, especially for workers who have been subject to discrimination in the labour market. See Van Eyck, 2003.

\(^8\) The term spatial fix is embedded in Marxian thinking, which emerged in geography in the early 1970s. It is closely associated with the pioneering work of David Harvey on the historical geography of industrial capitalism. See Charney, 2010.

\(^9\) Marcus (1964, p. 145) argued that the transformation of negative into positive opposition points up the problem: the “wrong” organisation, in becoming totalitarian on internal grounds, refutes the alternatives.
(1996, p. 4) wrote, “Life becomes inseparable from work”. The distinction between work and consumption no longer makes sense because consumption cannot simply be reduced to buying or consuming a service or product. Rather, consumption involves the production of a whole “regime of signs” that functions as an order of “valuations, judgments and beliefs about the world, of oneself and others” (Lazzarato, 2004, p. 3). Third, it follows that, insofar as consumption, like labour, comes to be a socially valuable human activity, it is at the core of the production of modern subjectivities. For this reason consumption involves “belonging to a world, adhering to a certain universe.” It entails an invitation to espouse “a way of dressing, of having a body, of eating, communicating and travelling, a way of having a style, a way of speaking. (Lazzarato, 2004, p. 3).

Mudge (2008) contended that neo-liberalism’s societal project consists of raising the mechanisms embedded in the self-regulated market as a principle for organising social life and understanding human freedom. In other words, taking its deepest meaning, neo-liberalism is called upon to undertake a radical recasting of the way political power is exercised throughout society and, thus, the parameters upon which citizenship is delimited. Ultimately, neo-liberalism is, according to Rose and Miller (2010), a way of governing “at a distance”, a device for exercising political power beyond the state that is widely prevalent in advanced societies.

Consumption is therefore a paramount component of the neo-liberal technology of government (Foucault, 2008). In this respect, bringing consumption back in, seems fundamental to understanding contemporary forms of interpellation of the individual in today’s society. Under neo-liberalism, every consumption practice can be considered as a capitalising activity by which the entrepreneurial individual expands their human capital and realises their life project. Consumption comes to form part of a process, by which the modern individual’s subjectivity is socially constructed, politically mobilised, and thus governed (Foucault, 2008). Accordingly, education, health care, sports, nourishment, child bearing, entertainment and art, constitute interrelated domains of a comprehensive lifestyle that, materialised in certain forms of consumption, defines the individual’s place within the consumer society. This is why it is important to look at how the formation of certain consumption patterns interacts with social class dynamics.

MPEs are one of the best ways in which the neo-liberalism interpreted, a continued trend internationally based on private communities (McKenzie, 1994; Blakely and Snyder, 1997;
Low, 2003). These developments tend to be interpreted as iconic spaces of neo-liberalism (McGuirk and Dowling, 2009) that promote the privatisation of the cityscape (Frantz, 2006; Le Goix, 2006). Other researchers have argued that participation in local government and political engagement in general are both fostered by private forms of urban governance (e.g. Foldvary, 1994; Webster, 2001), since these allow for more involvement in the decision making processes. However, neo-liberalism in Australia has emerged in complex and hybrid ways that see neo-liberal policies and strategies characterised by a strong state role (McGuirk, 2005; Ruming, 2005; Cook and Ruming, 2008). Therefore, neo-liberalism in Australia seems to carry some contradictory elements and may differ from the supposedly pure and strong neo-liberalism characterised by absolute private market dominance.

3.1.4 A Reflective Discussion

The above discussion reviewed the function, meaning, history, different understandings, assumptions and analysis of consumption and consumer concepts. A common theme has been that consumption has an extraordinarily central place at every level of society; that the consumer model is occupying every level of imagination to a degree where underlying metaphysics of consumerism has in the process become a kind of default philosophy for all modern life (Campbell, 2004, p. 42). Referring to the literature, goods are described as building blocks used for social climbing, status display, and their basic nature being to differentiate (Slater, 1997, p. 153). As such, they have gone from merely being objects, to functioning through their material properties, serving as creators of identity, objects of communication. However, in contemporary consumption lies the danger, which Sennett (1977 [2002]) pointed to a number of decades ago, that the motivations behind consumption has gone from social imitation and convention, with people consuming goods only for the reasons mentioned above, to believing that they might locate their “true selves” through consumption, awarding consumer society the ironic position of its inhabitants looking for something real in the synthetic. Moreover, someone speculates that consumer society has tipped the balance between public and private in a manner reminiscent of the modernity-analysis by Beck, Giddens and Bauman. In all eventualities, and contrary to some beliefs, the problem seems not to be the withering of private-space but the disappearance of the public, as all problems are gradually becoming individual problems (see Bauman, 2000 and Sennett, 1977 [2002]). This seems to be in line
with the standards of the autotelic\textsuperscript{10} consumer society, functioning as a way to automatically accelerate its purpose. On a societal level, focusing on consumption seems to result in dual-processes involving the commodification of private and public spheres alike. In the analysis of consumer society, this commodification is often taken to be tightly connected to the general construction of action (Dholakia and Firat, 1998; Slater, 1997; Bauman, 2007). To this end, theorists point to how society’s capitalism is a function of society servicing the encounter between commodity and consumer; how it is systematically dependent on the insatiability of needs; how consumers have a moral responsibility to keep the wheels of society going; and how the measurement of happiness is connected to the rise of income. In short, the health of the economy has become the purpose of society, as consumption has become primary to a degree where anyone who does not contribute (by consuming) should be outside.

By attempting to link the above discussion on the research questions of this study, it would be possible to argue that MPEs are an iconic product made of space and place, socially consumed involving an amount of economic and political ingredients, motivated by the want rather than the need. It is also possible to argue that consumers of MPEs are the consumed product while consuming the estate itself in a similar way as the literature above suggested. In line with the literature, it can be argued that under social and cultural influences, residents (consumers) of MPEs consume collectively their estates in order to build an individual gratification to improve their personal social status. Hence, to better respond to these arguments, and to provide a thorough theoretical examination on how MPEs can be fitted within a conceptual framework, the following section proposes this framework which is developed in order to establish theoretical, in depth investigation of the relationship between consumption and social distinction. The conceptual framework also aims to support the empirical findings of the study where MPEs are considered as a consumer product and argued to be consumed for social distinction by this thesis.

### 3.2 Social Distinction and Consumption: Conceptual Framework

After providing an overview on consumption, motivation for consumption and key social, economic and political factors affecting them in the previous section, it is possible now to build

\textsuperscript{10} A thing which is autotelic is described as "having a purpose in and not apart from itself" according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary.
up a picture of the complexities surrounding the relationship between consumption and social distinction in a socio-geographical context such as place and space, and in what it concerns this study, the positioning of MPEs in regards to consumption and social distinction. Furthermore, this section takes a closer look at the ways in which individuals and social groups increasingly construct their identities and distinguish themselves through their consumption practices. In order to fully understand the extent to which consumption plays a role in the formation of identities and the shaping of urban space, it is necessary to take a closer look at the psychology of consumption which has been mentioned in the previous section and the way consumption practices are used by people to differentiate themselves from other individuals, groups and classes. Thus, the aim of this section is to draw on these understandings and develop a comprehensive conceptual framework to cope with these complexities cited above.

Before developing this section, and unpacking the notions of social distinction, it is important to note, and in accordance with previous Chapters of this thesis, that existing research agreed that MPEs are understood as affluent enclaves which provide a feeling of social distinction to their residents (Low, 2003; Gwyther, 2005; Atkinson, 2006; Kenna, 2007; Kenna, 2010; McGuirk et al., 2010).

The term social distinction means a process that builds cultural differences between individuals and social classes, and these differences are usually defined by the ruling class and create social hierarchies that are typically witnessed through aesthetic choices (Bourdieu, 1984). In his “Distinction”\(^\text{11}\), Bourdieu noted that people’s choices are the result of how they wish to be perceived by society, and the extent of choices are wide. These choices can range from the type of cars someone prefers, food preferences, clothing and outfit style, or buying products related to social trends. When people commit to these choices, they are committing about what they value and how they wish to be perceived. Thus, cultural groups engage in social distinction to separate themselves from other classes or demographics, in addition to fitting into their own.

Furthermore, as Bourdieu (1984) noted, through the consumption of products, people make sense of themselves, others and their surroundings. If material objects have social significations, then what people buy, certainly become more important. Therefore,

consumption is not only about how much someone possesses in comparison to others, but also what kinds of products they own.

In the light of Bourdieu’s work, and strongly helped by other scholars in this section, an expanding body of research will thematically examine the nature of relationship between social distinction and consumption and how this distinction can be mirrored in the consumption of a range of physical and social trends and the social, cultural and economic conditions produced from consumption as well as the implication of actors in this process.

3.2.1 Consuming for Social Status (Status Consumption)

A number of researchers link consumption in contemporary society to attempts to increase social status. Lodziak (2000, p. 12) identified that some individuals use consumer goods to display solidarity with certain others or to differentiate themselves from others. Scheetz et al. (n.d) indicate that status divides products and brands into separate categories; high status products that are consumed and used in the presence of others, and low status products that are not consumed in the front of others. Eastman et al. (1999, p. 1) defined status consumption as “the motivational process by which individuals strive to improve their social standing through the conspicuous consumption of consumer products that confer and symbolise status both for the individual and surrounding significant others”. Phau and Cheong (2009) and Vigneron and Johnson (2004) argued along the same lines asserting that status consumption is achieved through the act of conspicuous consumption and thereby making theme one and the same. However, other scholars such as (O’cass and McEwen, 2004) and Truong et al., 2008) noted that status consumption and conspicuous consumption are different from each other but are in somehow related.

Batra et al. (2012) argued that consumers aspire to self, and socially express themselves through the products they buy; they do not hesitate to demonstrate feelings through products and brands and consumer self-image is dependent on the symbolic meanings attached to

12 O’Cass and Frost (2002, p. 68) defined status consumption as “the process of gaining status or social prestige from the acquisition and consumption of goods that the individual and significant others perceive to be high in status”.

13 Patsiaouras and Fitchett (2012, p.1) stated that conspicuous consumption refers to the competitive and extravagant consumption practices and leisure activities that aim to indicate membership to a superior social class.
products and the relationships established through them. Thus, postmodern consumers have the chance to choose from a wide range of products and have ongoing opportunities to buy on a daily basis. This selection process influences the identity and consumption, becoming what Giddens (1991, p. 201) called a “looming threat of personal meaningless”.

Other scholars have used consumption habits to measure how social boundaries are created and maintained. Douglas and Isherwood (2000) argue that culture is ostensibly a set of “justifying principles” for bringing about “support or solidarity” (p. xxiv) among groups. Consumption habits, they suggest, evolved from the human need to relate to others, with goods acting as “mediating materials” for signalling one’s position in society (p. viii). Goods therefore, serve as markers of social alignments, communicating what you are for or against.

Weber (1978) considered consumption as a unique way of life in which relationships are formed in hierarchic order and built based on style rather than economic position. Other empirical research, conducted since the 1950s supported Weber’s assertions; Holt (1997, pp. 3-4) citing Warner (1960) and Rainwater and Coleman (1978), argued that consumption served as a fertile domain for social classification. Unfortunately, this upsurge of research interest of the 1950s began to fade in the 1970s; this lack of interest was attributed to the low influence of social conditions in forming consumption patterns in advanced capitalist societies Schouten and McAlexander (1995); Wells (1974). Baudrillard (1988) and Featherstone (1991) went further attributing this decline of interest to postmodern cultural conditions in which systematic relationships between social categories and consumer behaviours were breaking down.

In regards to conspicuous consumption defined at the beginning of this section, Veblen (1899[1970]) noted that consumption is set about two principal concepts, conspicuous consumption and social emulation. More precisely, Veblen argued that in capitalist societies, status commonly related to money, therefore, the price tags on items for sale people use is a symbolic appearance of people’s richness, thus of people’s status. McKendrick, (1982) as previously discussed in this Chapter, argued that the rich cleared the way in leading the new era of consumption through a veritable spree of spending, which was imitated by the middle

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14Whitford (2010) referring to Veblen (1899[1970]) stated that the term ‘social emulation’ describes the idea that whenever people buy something conspicuously, they do it to emulate their social superiors. People would not want to buy something which gave signals of a lower social status; they always want to aim higher.
class of society and then by the lower classes resulting in all classes being involved in consumption.

*Identity and Status, Consumerism and Individual Identity*

The aspiration for individual identity plays an important role in individual consumption. The ideologies of consumerism and individualism are closely related. Furthermore, as Slater (1997, p. 91) stated “We are personally responsible for every aspect of ourselves and how we appear, our health, our manners and social conduct. And we can always do something to improve these aspects of ourselves”. Further than self-improvement, consumerism also applies what Bauman (2007, p.100) called “the constant pressure to be someone else”. Through consumption, individuals can attain the appearance of their “better selves”.

On the other hand, social connections with community life are being replaced by consumerism according to Elliott et al. (2006). In a consumerist society, defining and displaying individual identity is no longer derived from character but rather through the acquisition, ownership and display of goods. People are increasingly defined by “having” rather than being’ (Fromm, 1941).

Consumption mirrors individual identity, but it can also be used to mask what is dissatisfying. As Baudrillard cited in Lane (2000, p. 29), “Whatever is lacking in the subject is invested in the object”. This compensative consumption is illustrated by the common practice of “retail therapy” where shopping is a temporary replacement for a genuine solution to a problem. Dissatisfied individuals will forget worries by consuming them away. Where an individual is not content with their lifestyle and status, they can emulate the signs of the lifestyle and status they aspire to through their consumption choices, just as Bourdieu (1979) observed the middle classes emulating the bourgeoisie through their consumption. However, ‘retail therapy’ and aspirational consumption only provide a fleeting comfort or a surface solution to a more significant problem. Consumerism adopts a less important concept of identity, focusing solely on style and image (Lodziak, 2002, p.53). Self-identity is that part of the self that is most important and most authentic (Lodziak, 2002, p.63).
Bauman (2007) drew on the connection between consumption and identity by arguing that people are promoting their individuality in a manner that commoditises them. Bauman argues that consumers themselves are becoming commoditised as demonstrated through social networking sites such as Facebook (Bauman, 2007). Social networking sites ask the user to profile themselves and essentially market their personality with the view to attracting “friends” who sign up and forge an ongoing connection to their profile. This moves beyond the common understanding that there are goods to be chosen and people who choose them, to a situation where the person’s profile becomes the product to be chosen.

This section investigated the link between status and consumption from one side and individual (self) identity and social distinction on the other side. The next section will bring to light the consumption of place and space’s trends and their impact on consumers’ social distinction.

3.2.2 Consuming MPEs: Physical Aesthetics, Materialities and Social Distinction.

Hubbard (2005) noted that space and place seem to be two concepts that are self-explanatory in nature, yet they remain very complex, ill-defined and unclear in the social sciences and humanities. In everyday usage, the concepts of space and place are often associated with terms such as region, location, landscape and environment. This complexity of space is reflected in the fact that there is no universally accepted definition for this specific concept. Space is not an immaterial idea; According to Cavallaro, space is the:

...embodiment of cultural, political and psychological phenomena...Whereas space refers to the structural, geometrical qualities of a physical environment, place is the notion that includes the dimensions of lived experience, interaction and use of a space by its inhabitants (Cavallaro, 2001, p.170).

Relph (1976), in his book Place and Placelessness, discussed the ways in which places manifest themselves in the consciousness of the lived-in world, in other words, describing the various aspects of places as they are expressed in the landscape. One of the major concerns in Relph’s writing, however, is the fact that certain places seem to be more authentic than others. Another matter of concern is that community belonging, as well as a “sense of place” only surface where the bond between people and the specific place is entrenched (Hubbard, 2005, p. 43).
For Tuan (1977) place is often associated with the concepts of security and enclosure, while space is linked to freedom and mobility. It is, however, the ideal to consider the concepts of space and place in terms of a cultural geography that explores the relation between these concepts, thus implying that both space and place are created and recreated by means of networks which involve people, practices, languages and representations (Hubbard, 2005).

De Certeau (1984) contended that consumption is above all a spatial practice. He makes a distinction between the concepts of space and place. Accordingly, if place appertains to a distinct location, a configuration of positions, and with what is “proper”, then space is more ambiguous. Space is composed of an intersection of mobile elements: time, speed, and direction. Space happens as an effect of the different practices and operations that occur. In other words, space is a practiced place (De Certeau, 1984, p. 117). For example, the street is a place at the hands of town planners, but for pedestrians and drivers, the street is a space for walking and driving. Similarly, De Certeau maintained that the written page is a proper place for an order of co-existent words and signs. Indeed, the practice of this specific place produces the space in which the reader reads it. The spaces of consumption are constructs: material assemblages of artefacts, signs and symbols. They are also highly monitored spaces, where the consumers’ movements and activities are put to careful scrutiny and analysis. Indeed, spaces of consumption have become both domains of liberation, and of repression.

Geography is well connected to consumption behaviour through the sites and patterns of consumption, as well as the spaces and places of consumerism. Changes in geographies have created a totally new consumer landscape of urban peripheries, “gentrified inner cities, shopping malls, entertainment landscapes and theme parks” (Dodson, 2000, p. 2). Cities, as well as the places and spaces in them, can be consumed visually or literally. Accordingly, as city life has moved to being more oriented towards consumption, the ways in which consumers interpret these urban spaces is connected with their experience of “everyday lives and concepts connected to value, use and meaning” (Jayne, 2006, p.7).

**Consumption, Lifestyle and Social Distinction**

Lifestyle is like emotions, collective and discursive socio-historical constructs that individuals utilise in their self-formation (Holt, 1997). It is a socially desired and collective template that people attach to defining themselves; still each human customises the coupled lifestyle via individual preferences and internalised meanings (Holt, 2005).
The continuous choosing of oneself, and one’s lifestyle, is currently privileged by the ideology of consumerism as an explanation of consumption. Within this ideology self-identity, lifestyle and consumption are “conflated and positively adorned in the language of freedom and power” (Lodziak, 2000, p. 9).

Lifestyles reflect, on the one hand, habits and routines, and on the other, choices. Sociological definitions of lifestyle focus on the “patterns of unconstrained daily choice individuals make in leisure, shopping, recreation and so on” (Binkley, 2007, p. 111). Time use and consumption patterns are important aspects of lifestyle and reflect underlying sets of choices that people make. These choices are an indication of what individual’s value, what they deem desirable, and the beliefs they have about the “courses of action that are available” (Blunsdon et al., 209, p. 2).

A lifestyle\textsuperscript{15} can be defined as “a more or less integrated set of practices which an individual embraces, not only because such practices fulfil utilitarian needs, but because they give material form to a particular narrative of self-identity” (Giddens, 1991, p. 81). Jensen (2007, p. 4) however, defined lifestyle as “the routine manifestation of subcultures, regulated and influenced by family (social class), friends (status, groups, gender, generation) and different types of movements and networks”.

Lifestyle research in the values paradigm relies on a similar assumption that lifestyles are structured by quantitative differences in universal values across groups (Holt, 1997 and MacEvoy, 1990). The Rokeach\textsuperscript{16} Values Survey and List of Values (LOV) have dominated recent lifestyle research, but these schemes are only the most recent incarnations of values/needs/motives typologies advanced in psychology, sociology, and anthropology since the 1920s. In the line with previous efforts, lifestyle researchers, using the values paradigm draw from a short list of universal antecedents to human action to explain consumption patterns. Instead of inducting psychological traits from an amalgam of measures as the

\textsuperscript{15} These definitions seem somewhat contradictory. However, both are needed in this thesis because they lead to consumption and master-planned estates which constitute consecutively, theoretical and empirical frameworks to the thesis.

\textsuperscript{16} The Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) is a classification system of values. Developed by social psychologist Milton Rokeach, the system consists of two sets of values, 18 individual value items in each. One set is called terminal values the other instrumental values (Rokeach, 1973)
personality approach, values research pursues a more deductive project in which people are classified into lifestyle groups on the basis of their rankings or weightings of a priori values.

The production of lifestyles through fashion and marketing became an issue of major importance to sustain the incredible expansion of American capitalism in the first half of the twentieth century (Rifkin, 1995). Not incidentally, after the Great Depression, the creation of Americans as consumer citizens realising their life projects within a prosperous market economy, was an explicit goal pursued by the “New Deal” (Cohen, 2003). Thus, the making of consumer workers through the uninterrupted improvement of their living standards, was at the core of the socio-economic regime of the post-war era (Beck and Camiller, 2000). Researchers have accounted for the rise of affluence and positional consumption as a locus of class divisions, not only in the USA, but also in Western Europe. Goldthorpe (1968) had showed how the advent of the post-war era was changing both the structural position and social behaviour of the English working class. Although he rejected the hypothesis of the working class’ “embourgeoisement”, according to which it becomes completely assimilated into the middle-class by adopting its habits, styles of decor, leisure activities and aspirations, Goldthorpe highlighted the progressive erosion of traditional working class communities, as the counterpart of the individualisation and privatisation of lifestyles, now increasingly centred around family life and consumption.

One of the best examples of contemporary and proliferating consumer product which has been linked to lifestyle is the MPEs concept. The factor of lifestyle in MPEs brought attention to many researchers. Whitelegg (2005) for example, in a study on MPEs in Georgia, USA, found that residents of MPEs no longer come from the same race, or ethnic or social classes; they are a homogenous community of different races and socio-economic classes.

Rosenblatt (2005) observed that marketers of MPEs accommodate lifestyle choices in general and facilitate individual choices that contain the desire for certain communal conditions and security with quality control. Goodman and Douglas (2010) argue that in MPEs, community, spatial setting and natural themes such as bushland, coast and landmark are the terms that are

17 The New Deal was a series of domestic programs enacted in the United States between 1933 and 1936, and a few that came later. They included both laws passed by Congress as well as presidential executive orders during the first term (1933–37) of President Roosevelt. See Moran, 2011 and Cohen, 1990 and 2003.
18 Second World War.
used by developers and buyers alike as lifestyle. Cheshire el al. (2010) have also noted that MPEs have always offered lifestyle in different forms and terms depending on the location and setting of the estate, associating the concept of community spirit (moral) to the physical features of the estate (spaces) as a lifestyle. Some scholars linked lifestyle to the exclusivity offered by MPEs; Aalbers (2001, p. 5) for example noted that many buyers opt for MPEs as they wish to join what he called “well minded people” and sharing them leisure and social facilities such as the estate’s club, golf and tennis court.

Lifestyle factor to consume MPEs goes beyond social space and natural themes; it is also presented in some MPEs as element of health and wellbeing (Maller, 2012). In a case study on MPEs in Victoria Australia and citing a definition from the World Health Organization 1986 which defines health as a “resource for everyday life, not the object of living” and “health and wellbeing are created, including the built, social, economic and natural environments” (Maller, 2012, p.7). Drawing on Maller’s work, in MPEs, lifestyle is associated with the social, economic and natural elements as well as health that motivate buyers to consume the MPE concept.

Roming, in an empirical study on MPEs in Arizona USA, argues that because of what he called "scripting forces" that in his opinion are postmodern lifestyle advertising and promoting the estate, community associations and local peer pressure that are famous personalities living on the estate. These scripting forces according to Roming generate what residents conceive as natural which is in reality artificial or prescribed lifestyle (Roming, 2005, p.7). Based on Roming finding, it can be argued that in MPEs, the consumption of lifestyle is not always naturally generated, these scripting forces described by Roming have been created by a third factor.

**Taste, Consumption and Lifestyle**

Throop and Murphy (2002, pp.186-187) noted that Bourdieu’s Distinction offers a great analysis of the interaction between cultural taste preferences and social class. It works on the basic premise that, while people are unconscious of it and likely could not articulate it if asked, their personal taste is based strongly on habitus\(^{19}\) – deterministic, internalised, seemingly

\(^{19}\) The habitus of a person or a group of persons occupying a similar or neighbouring position in social space that in their behaviour, sharing common activity, affinity or style. Bourdieu (2005, p. 44)
inescapable social structures that form people’s actions, thoughts, and tastes. Habitus is “both the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgments and the system of classification of these practices” (Bourdieu, 1984, p.170).

Bourdieu (1984) argued that when people consume a specific type of symbolic commodity, they use habitus-based systems of classification to create for themselves a disposition of aesthetic taste preference that generates “meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions” that are totally reliant on a cyclical system distinct from other schema (Bourdieu, 1984, p.170). These systems define and are defined by intrinsic relational properties, primarily class standing. Since the dominant classes in a given society control the distribution of symbols and economic capital, they mediate the lower classes’ habitus (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 260) and set the configuration for society’s lifestyle and preferences.

As stated in Chapter one, one of the products people can consume is the place they live; this includes the home, its attachments and the surrounding environment. Taste is an important factor in the selection of where people live. People tend to shape their lifestyle, including where they live, to match their taste. When taste is associated with lifestyle they produce what Bourdieu called well matched property. Bourdieu argues that “The system of matching properties is organised by taste; lifestyle is increasingly a matter of what Weber calls the stylisation of life. Taste is the basis of the mutual adjustment of all the features associated with a person” (1984, p. 174).

Bourdieu worked on class as a lifestyle, by observing that for members of the upper-class, the development of tastes or “manifested preferences” is mediated through an “aesthetic disposition” that frees them “from urgency through the practice of activities which are an end in themselves” (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 54). This aesthetic disposition reinforces cross-class barriers, as, according to Bourdieu, members of the same class participate in similar activities and have similar practices. With his focus on the social aspects of class, Bourdieu neglects to address the elite’s shared economic interests or the level of income necessary to participate in their leisure activities. Hall (1986, p. 14) on the other hand, translated the mid-twentieth century writings of Gramsci to state that a group exercises hegemony when their interests encompass the interests of lower or subordinate groups, while, like Bourdieu’s elites, the American middle-class participates in a distinct set of activities, such as conspicuous consumption. Their
According to Bourdieu (1984, p. 57), the “aesthetic stances” that people adopt in a wide variety of fields such as music, painting, reading, sport, house decoration, cooking, fashion or even food can be interpreted as practices more or less consciously oriented towards the assertion of “one’s position in social space, as rank to be upheld or a distance to be kept”. Bourdieu argued that dominant classes’ everyday practices are endowed by an “aesthetic disposition” that serves as a means of reproduction of class domination at the cultural level. The “stylisation of life”, in which struggles over the definition of legitimate tastes play an essential role, appears as the most visible manifestation of these practices. To the extent that aesthetic tastes emerge as detached from the constrictions of necessity, they manifest the “practical affirmation” of the objective conditions of existence, and thus enable classifications in the social space. Thus, the “aesthetic disposition” works as “cultural capital”, as a means for yielding a profit in distinction through the exclusive appropriation of socially valued activities, relations and positions. Bourdieu’s prime contribution to understanding the interactions among culture, consumption and class can be summarised in three key arguments. First, cultural capital, understood as the ability to define, master and manipulate the legitimate practices in particular fields, has the attributes of private property, in the sense that those who hold it can gain, at the expense of those who do not hold it (Bennett, 2009, p. 11). Second, cultural fields are structurally alike. Although practices within fields (whether in fashion, interior design, sport, culinary pursuits, holiday choices, literature, music) can only be intelligible in terms of the relationships that are internal to the field, they are structured along similar principles. This is in similar vein to the polarisation between those practices endowed with honour and aesthetic grace, and those rendered ordinary due to the constraints of necessity. Thus, practices carried out along different fields share common patterns, forming a space of lifestyles that tend to correspond with the space of class positions (Bennett, 2009). Third, cultural transmission plays a crucial role in reproducing social inequalities. As children from families considered to be cultivated are better prepared to perform well in education, they are more likely to turn their inherited cultural capital into credentials that can be used to acquire advantaged positions. Hence the social circulation and accumulation of cultural capital has very much to do with class reproduction and inheritance (Bennett, 2009).

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20 Cultural capital will be discussed in more details in section Subculture and Cultural capital below
Similarly, Bocock (1993, p.2) stated that “consumption as a set of social, cultural and economic practices, together with the associated ideology of consumerism, has served to legitimate capitalism in the eyes of millions of ordinary people”. Thus, class identities can be compared with identities based on race, gender, language, religion and nation and also with socio-economic status (Veenstra, 2005, p. 5). This is because identities are always based on a certain distinction or grouping together of similar features. In addition, class is defined in terms of the above groupings, although socio-economic status seems to be the primary means of defining class identities.

Miles and Paddison (1998, p. 8) argued that cities may have long been associated with consumption. However, in the postmodern city the realisation of consumption contributes to the changing form of the urban and social life where consumption has become harnessed by the new wealthy to display ostentatious forms of consumer behaviour. Miles and Paddison observed that in urban context, consumers not only reproduce their physical existence, but also reproduce culturally specific, meaningful ways of life. Knights and Morgan (1993, p. 2) observed an upsurge of interest within sociological circles in the study of consumption arguing that the concept of collective consumption is the most applied concept to housing and other aspects of urban life. These arguments are supported by Bocock who stated that the pattern of consumption partially resulted from living in the metropolis, the city and its suburbs. Accordingly, living in cities increased awareness of style, and the need to consume within a repertoire which is distinctive to a specific social group and expressive of individuals’ preferences (Bocock, 1993, p. 17). Veblen (1899[1970]), a century earlier had noted that the less obvious form of consumption, but the most prevalent, is the consumption of food, clothing, furniture and dwelling, accordingly,

*Consumption becomes a larger element in the standard of living in the city than in the country. Among the country population its place is to some extent taken by savings and home comforts known through the medium of neighbourhood gossip sufficiently to serve the like general purpose of pecuniary repute. These home comforts and the leisure indulged in—where the indulgence is found—is of course also in great part to be classed as items of conspicuous consumption; and much the same is to be said of the savings* (Veblen, 1899[1970], p. 88)
Thus, through the consumption of products (signs), people being to make sense of themselves, others and their surroundings. If material objects carry social meaning, what you buy automatically becomes more important. Because of that, consumption is not only about how much you possess in comparison to others, but also what kinds of products you own. According to Bourdieu’s work (discussed in this Chapter), taste functions as a marker of social class. Possibly, even more so now that marketers and producers of all kinds of products, are increasingly using the symbolic value of goods and attempting to create new signs and images relating consumer goods to consumers’ most fantastic dreams and desires.

**From Taste to the Consumption of Materiality**

Aestheticised places have their origin in the big cities of 19th century capitalist societies, “which became the intoxicating dream-worlds, the constantly changing flow of commodities, images and bodies” (Featherstone, 1991, p. 68). In contemporary society, these kinds of dreamworlds have become the standard for many urban development projects. They exist as shopping malls or leisure spaces, but also in the form of residential projects conceived and developed under a master plan. These new forms of residential developments have experienced a real boom in the last three decades\(^1\). They are considered by many scholars as a commodification product offering a “choice” of not simply where to live but an invitation to construct a “sense of place where not previously existed” (Wynne, 1998, p. 31).

Bourdieu (1984) described the status of objects which are given function and meaning through practice, how objects are ascribed value through use, and how the quality of objects are embedded in the consumers’ perceptions and lived experience. If we apply this perspective on material (architectural) urban environments and urban design, such as size and shape of blocks of land or landscape, and streetscape of urban developments, Bourdieu’s argument can be stretched to connect architecture and the transformation of social space. Urban practices are, in the same way as consumption of goods, embedded into processes of appropriation, and in the same way as the consumers help to produce the product they consume.

Bourdieu discussed the difference between the limited conception of the use value of material products among professional producers (and marketers) of objects, and the perception of the objects’ useful properties and use values that are created by the consumers or users. Whilst

\(^{21}\) For more details, please refer to sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2
Lefebvre (1970) and De Certeau (1984) distinguished between urban spaces and other products, both of them also discussed the gap that exists between the professional, analytic conception of how “things are supposed to work” and the individual, lived perception of possibilities and qualities, function, use-value and meaning produced through dispositions and practices.

However, one of the ways to frame the relation between humans and their surrounding environment is through the dwelling perspective. This idea of is based on Heidegger’s (1971, pp. 148-146) following thoughts:

*We do not dwell because we have built, but we build and have built because we dwell, that is because we are dwellers... To build is in itself already to dwell ... Only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build.*

This idea was developed by Tim Ingold (2000 and 2011) who argued that dwelling is a way of conceptualising human existence as “being-in-the-world”, the immersion of human actors in their environment. Challenging conceptualisations of material culture, Ingold’s dwelling perspective opposed what he calls the building perspective, the transitive relation between subject and object that creates objects and things (Ingold, 2011, p. 9). Instead, dwelling shifts the focus to an appreciation of the “manifold constituents of the world”, and how materiality and ideas are enrolled into a regular pattern of life activity (Ingold, 2000, p. 153). Dwelling can then be defined as the product of “the specific relational contexts of people’s practical engagement with their surroundings” (Ingold, 2000, p. 186). Wylie (2007) extended this further: there has been a conceptual shift from “the horizon to the earth”, and landscapes are now understood as the multi-sensual performance of lived experience. The engine of landscape’s being is practice: everyday agents calling the landscape into being as they make it relevant for their own lives, strategies and projects (Rose, 2002) In other words, the life worlds of humans are informed by an inseparable relationship between actors and their surrounding environment, revealed in turn by practice and everyday rhythms.

**Consumption and Affordances**

According to Gibson (1979), “The affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill. It implies the complementarity of the animal and the environment” (p.127). According to Chen (1993), affordance is not a word in any
dictionary; it was invented by Gibson to mean something that the environment offers human beings.

Gibson’s affordance represents a critical concept for the design community as it embodies the interaction between the user and the device based on the user’s perception of the properties of the device. In fact, the design literature has emphasised that an important attribute of an affordance is how well it fits with the user. For example, Gaver (1992) provided an excellent example of how the emergence of an affordance critically depends on the characteristics of the user when he said, “a cat-door affords passage to a cat but not to me, while a doorway may afford passage to me but not somebody taller” (p. 80). Affordances only emerge from the interaction between the user and the place or item. However, Lang (1987) developed the concept further and argued that the environmental design theory in which affordance also affords meanings and aesthetic appreciation for human experiences.

According to Chen (1993), people build houses with natural materials with roof and walls to protect from natural elements, while windows provide light and fresh air. Chen added that houses also have design and colours so they acquire their residents’ needs to identify themselves with others.

**Exclusivity, Boundaries and Social Distinction**

Jenkins’ (1996) research of social identity provides great insight for the study of boundaries work. He described collective identity as constituted by a combination of processes of internal and external definition. Individuals must be able to differentiate themselves from others by drawing on criteria of community and a sense of shared belonging within their subgroup.

These days, due to globalisation process, the individual’s relationship with space and time has become increasingly complex. This complexity has in turn led to identity and self-identity problems (Massey, 1994). Massey attempted to interpret and evaluate the current relationship between space, time, self, and society, pointing out that the geography of social relations forces humans to recognise their interconnectedness while also underscoring the fact that both personal identity and the identity of the space–time in which and between which humans live and move, are constructed precisely through that interconnectedness (Massey, 1994, p. 122) This interconnectedness also affects community relations.
In line with Jenkins and Massey’s opinion on identity and society, Giddens stated that self-identity becomes problematic in modernity in a way that contrasts with the relationship between self and society in more traditional contexts (Giddens, 1991:34). Related with this point, Giddens claims that:

...modernity breaks down the protective framework of small community and of tradition, replacing these with much larger, impersonal organizations. The individual feels bereft and alone in a world in which she or he lacks the psychological supports and sense of security provided by more traditional settings. (Giddens, 1991, p. 33)

Best match Giddens arguments about identity, self and communities is the concept of MPEs. MPEs could have similar characteristics, for example, Davies (1992), Hook and Vrdoljak (2002), Landman (2000), Damstra (2001), Firman (2004) and many more scholars have focused on security as a key motivation factor. However, other researchers found that the theme of security was not more than a context in a greater theme rather than exclusivity. Horst and Brand (2008) for example, noted that within the neoliberal era, walls, gates and social segregation as well as security systems, guards and fences around MPEs mean to define an exclusive community and reflect a private and disconnected society more than anything else. According to Caldeira (1996, p.55), segregation brings social differentiation and separation, and the new fortified enclaves “no longer relates to the modern ideals of commonality and universality, thus, social interaction tends to disappear”.

Gleeson cautioned that exclusivity in Australian MPEs will lead to social segregation arguing that this exclusivity sounds like exclusionary some times (Gleeson, 2005, p. 8). Atkinson and Flint (2004) also noted previously that the expansion of MPEs in Australia will go beyond exclusivity and will cause social segregation. Kenna (2007)) found that motivations regarding affluence and status are prominent among MPEs consumers. Consumers stated their desire for locating amongst either better group of people because of the desire for mutual identification in social relations, or to improve their social status. Rofe (2006, p. 4) found that MPEs has been considered as an enclave to respond to the matter of community belonging. Referring to Giddens, Rofe (p. 7) argues that MPEs offer a way of “ontological security” which provides the feeling of security via social segregation and separation from exterior comers. Giglia (2008, p. 3) noted that MPEs become more desirable as residents desire to contain safety, leisure, sports and internal socialisation in a separate enclosure in quest for exclusivity. However,
Giglia argued that such containment will not guaranty a real exclusivity and there may be more constraints than benefits as there is hidden inconveniency in the estate management, the type of neighbours and the tightness of security measures that forcibly lead to social segregation. Exclusivity within residents of MPEs is conceived around psychological feeling and emotional need for safety; Low (2003) noted that residents despite gates, guards and high fences, want to fulfil their inherited need for safety through exclusivity rather than a current need for that safety. Low (p.11) warned that despite living in MPEs which accordingly offer “well-being” for their residents, they also generate social inclusion and spatial segregation. Pow (2011) contended that exclusivity in MPEs is considered as a trademark for wealth and wealthy elite with prestige and status.

3.4.3 Consuming in Community: Subculture, Brand Community and Social Distinction.

The previous section discussed the relationship between the consumption of spaces and places and their physical natures and the impact on consumers’ social distinction, citing MPEs as a contemporary example of this relation. This section will focus on the relationship between consumption and community, while community is a broad term and requires special consideration to which context is going to be approached. In this thesis, the term community will be discussed in its socio-spatial and cultural meanings in order to draw a parallel with the main goal of this study which focuses on MPEs as a potential subcultural and brand culture place, more precisely, on how residents of MPEs in Australia consume the social and physical nature of their estates and how this impacts their social status.

Sense of Community, Neighbourhoods and Social Interaction

The term community represents a constant, geographically dedicated group of people, with family being the essential component (Thornton, 1996; Bell and Newby, 1975). Apart from arrangement to a geographical area, for Bell and Newby (1975, p.19), community consists of “a set of interrelationships among social institutions in a locality.” In other words, community is created by its members and their relationships with each other. These relationships are both functional for they aim to achieve group and individual goals (Bell and Newby, 1975), and solve problems arising from sharing a locality. They are also symbolic in the sense that they develop a sense of collective identity and belonging (Hale, 1990).
In *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* (translated as Community and Society), Tonnies (1887 [1988]) makes a distinction between two basic forms of human groups, those formed around “natural will” and those created as a result of “rational will”. The former, *Gemeinschaft*, is the traditional community, such as families and neighbourhoods. Accordingly, *Gemeinschaft* is a homogeneous group of geographically isolated individuals, dominated by tradition and the sacred. In *Gemeinschaft*, relationships are based on kinship, and there is minimal division of labour among members. The latter, *Gesellschaft*, is the modern society, cities, suburbs and states being the best examples.

Thus, divisions of labour and goal-oriented behaviour characterise the *Gesellschaft* world, in which individualism is encouraged. For Tonnies, modernity is associated with a loss of community, passage from traditional to the modern community and from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft*.

However, in contrast to Bell and Newby, and Tonnies, community has been given various contradicting interpretations in regards to its geographical context. McDowell for example, believed that symbolic meanings prevail on the physical aspect of communities, and particular communities can be formed and exist in different locations. McDowell refers to community as:

... a fluid network of social relations that may be but are not necessarily tied to territory. Thus a community is relational rather than a categorical concept, defined both by material social relations and by symbolic meanings. Communities are context dependent, contingent, and defined by power relations; their boundaries are created by mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion... The term ‘community’ should neither be rejected out of hand, nor automatically seen as either a good or a bad thing. (McDowell, 1999, pp. 100-101)

This study focuses on community within MPEs, which in turn fall under the neighbourhood category, and investigates the community life and residents’ social interaction. It also explores the impact on their social status, in line with Bell and Newby’s definition and Tonnies concept of *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft*.

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22 *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* generally translated as “Community and Society” are categories which were coined by the German sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies in order to categorise social ties. Tonnies (1887 [1988])
Thus, neighbourhoods, as examples of traditional communities (*Gemeinschaft*), are considered as geographical communities composed of closely entwined groups of residents who are dependent on each other for survival (Rivlin, 1987). In the past, neighbourhood’s residents were obliged to satisfy a wide range of needs within the neighbourhood, as a result of obstacles created by transportation deficiencies within the city. Today’s neighbourhoods, on the other hand, are characterised as providing only shelter and several essential commodities for residents. Janowitz (1952) viewed neighbourhoods as “communities of limited liability” where members share few ties with each other beyond their common interests such as security, and infrastructural services. These communities are intentional, voluntary, and partial in the level of involvement they engender.

Warren (Cited in Rivlin, 1987, p. 3) proposed six different types of neighbourhoods, based on three dimensions of social organisation of residents: interaction, identity, and connections. The integral neighbourhood is characterised by high levels of face-to-face contacts, shaped by norms and values supportive of the larger community. It is viewed as both “local” and “cosmopolitan”. In a sectarian-type neighbourhood, inter- community interaction is excessive but ties with the larger society are weak. The disconnected neighbourhoods however, lack informal social participation, and even if local organisations exist, they do not represent the interests and values of residents. In a stepping-stone neighbourhood, residents do not have a strong commitment to the area, and they have ties with outside groups rather than local ones. The transitory neighbourhood is characterised by a high population turnover, and it is a source for urban anonymity. The absence of norms and values in the neighbourhood will result in a disorganised residential area which lacks ties both within and outside the community. It is important to notice that these categories are not mutually exclusive.

Mason (2000) argued that while the notion of community is effectively vague in both theory and practice. He stressed that the term is used to indicate distinctive and complex categories of relationship. Mason focused on the category used to designate group, whose members share similar values, identification with the group, mutual recognition and lifestyle. Members are equally concerned with the same obligations which he called the “moralised concept of community” (Mason, 2000, p. 19). Usually, this concept or category is presented and commercially marketed as “idealised neighbourhood” and literally described as “sense of community” (Talen, 2000, p.5). The idealised neighbourhood and its sense of community are
generally consumed “symbolically” and basically imagined. By situating MPEs communities in a geographical context, we could obtain a perfect example of these communities. Where communities manifest geographically in an urban setting such as MPEs, they are apparently to be symbolic communities, the place will become combined in a distinct set of values through symbolic and hypothetical references and cultural artefacts (Gwyther, 2005). Furthermore, Gwyther who conducted an empirical study on the community formation within MPEs in Sydney argued that:

> Common recognition of the symbols and artefacts by community members provides cohesion within the group. The common set of values further bolsters the cohesion. As lifestyles values are likely to reflect life stage, interests, occupation and income, the ideology community tends to be highly homogenous, which in turn supports the development of community ties. (Gwyther, 2005, p. 108)

**The Imagined Community and Social Distinction**

The concept of imagined community was introduced by Benedict Anderson in his 1983 publication *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (Anderson, 2006). Anderson’s main focus was nationalism. The idea of imagined community was applied to describe how nation states are able to present a collective culture and identity, despite the fact that the universality of shared value, and the possibility for social relations with all community members was not possible in such contexts. According to Anderson, the imagining process allows community members to overlook discrepancies in an individual’s interpretation and use of the symbols of the community, and also in the ways individual members experience the values that are said to define it. This works because imagination is stereoscopic; it discerns patterns in unrelated impressions, whilst holding contradictory aspects steady (Brann, 1991). Anderson (2006) described this using the concept of simultaneity, proposing that simultaneous actions or the objects that represent them are used to make these connections across time and space. In doing so he pre-empts the emphasis on the significance of non-human relations outlined above. But what is most important, at this point, is the recognition that these simultaneous actions or experiences support the imaginative aggregation of difference that enables diverse groups of people to identify as community.

**Consumption as a Social Contagion**
In MPEs consumption, like most of other consumer products, the phenomenon of social contagion is very influential in developing the community. Buyers tend to join the same affluent place or product which friends or family members bought. Emotions play the major role in social contagion and mostly motivated by the desire to delineate the same social status of their friends or family members or more specifically, they feel their social status being downgraded by not sharing the same values and myth that MPEs supposedly provide to their residents.

Emotions are dependent and mediated by the “discourse of our culture” (Jaggar, 1989, p. 148) and individuals are “not reducible to a physiological entity ... biology/self and culture/society are considered inseparable” (Sturdy, 2003, p. 90). Thus, it is argued that personal and emotional developments are situated in the social and cultural environment (Vygotsky, 1978).

Scholars working from sociocultural perspectives embrace the notion that people and their social environment are inherently interconnected and cannot be separated. From this perspective, the context in which one works is not separate or external from the individual. It is argued, therefore, that the way people feel about themselves mediates their performances (Roth, 2004). Contexts in this thesis includes structures such as work groups, roles and resources that encourage learning action and interaction (Owen, 2001), and culture, which is a shared group of understandings manifested in artefacts, values and beliefs and how people relate to and interact within this culture that is constantly changing (Owen, 2001; Savage, 2004). Culture can influence behaviour in organisations and therefore work activity (e.g., Roth, 2007). Structures, such as work groups, come with their own set of norms, values and beliefs, thus enabling cultural variety amongst groups (Cox, 1993). Moreover, the degree to which cultural difference exists in a group can influence people’s affect experiences (e.g., trust) (Hughes et al., 2011).

**Consumption, Subculture and Social Distinction**

Subculture used to be referred to a subset of a national or larger culture, composed of a combination of factorable traits, such as class status, ethnic background, regional residence (e.g. rural or urban), and religious affiliation. These subsets form a “functioning unity which has an integrated impact on the participating individual” (Gordon, 1947, p. 40). Gordon views subcultures as a combination of demographic factors such as age, gender, class, occupation etc.
and questions whether the change in one of these variables is a sufficient marker of subculture. For its members, subcultural ideologies and practices draw the boundaries between the mainstream and the subculture (Thornton, 1995) which serves as a means of exclusion of non-members and inclusion of members. Through subcultures, members express their distinctiveness from the undifferentiated mass. Subculture can be defined as following:

A sub-culture of consumption is a distinctive subgroup of society that self-selects on the basis of a shared commitment to a particular product class, brand, or consumption activity. Other characteristics of a subculture of consumption include an identifiable, hierarchical social structure; a unique ethos, or set of shared beliefs and values; and unique jargons, rituals, and modes of symbolic expression (Schouten and McAlexander 1995, p. 2).

The modern consumption landscape is obviously abundant with consumers who have important subcultural affections: Goths, punks (Hebdige, 1979), gays (Kates, 1998), lesbians (Weston, 1993), fundamentalist Christians (O'Guinn and Belk, 1989), Harley Davidson enthusiasts (Schouten and McAlexander, 1995), Star Trek fans (Kozinets2001), mountain men (Belk and Costa, 1998). Subcultural groups emphasis consumption as a critical site where identities, boundaries, and shared meaning are formed (Kates, 2002). Furthermore, subcultures embrace the consumption of particular brands (Kozinets, 2001; Schouten and McAlexander, 1995), styles (Fox, 1987), or consumption activities (Belk and Costa, 1998; Thornton, 1995) and have relevant associate disuses of uniformity and authenticity (Kates, 2002).

Brake (1985, p. 13) stated that subcultural style “indicates which symbolic group one belongs to, it demarcates that group from the mainstream, and it makes an appeal to an identity outside that of a class ascribed one.” This common definition of subculture informs much of the work in cultural studies and many contributions in consumer research (Kates, 2002, p. 3). Contemporary sociological investigations into consumption practices begin with Bourdieu’s (1984) concept of “cultural capital,” which explains how individuals employ consumption to demonstrate social status and Ritzer’s (2011) theorisation of the “McDonaldisation” 23 of

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23 The term McDonaldisation refers to “the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as the rest of the world. The central concepts employed in the fast-food industry have spread not only to other types of restaurants, but also to
society,” where he argued that modern consumption is rationalised by large corporations. More recently scholars were increasingly analysing non-economically rational consumption practices. Some consumers use purchasing decisions to support issues they feel strongly about, and in some case use consumption as a political tool (Michelleti, 2003). These consumers, who make non-economically rational purchasing decisions to support social issues, are engaging in ethical24 consumption (Tallontire et al., 2001).

According to Van Raaij (1993, p. 11) subcultures have an important impact on the introduction of new trends where multiculturalism is accepted by many people. Accordingly, in postmodernism terms, commodities become the producers of benefits for individuals who use them correctly according to subcultural norms. Van Raaij (p. 12) concluded that postmodern consumers are encouraged by marketing messages and images to play a game of “image switching”. They play the roles of the caring mother, the efficient manager, the loving partner, and the gourmet cook.

**Subculture and Social Identity**

According to Winters (1979) the character of a neighbourhood represents the values and lifestyle of its residents. It achieved social character then attracts more residents who think that the character fits, and reflects, their own character. The mutual interaction of the identity of residents and social character of the neighbourhood bolsters the reputation of the neighbourhood, even to the point of a type of self-identity being formed by residents because of the distinctive social character of the neighbourhood (Cole, 1985). Often, as a result of this perceived social/local identity, residents may feel a sense of connection to their neighbourhood. Attachment to place, according to Shumaker and Taylor (1983), attributable to five factors: local social ties, physical amenities, individual/household characteristics, perceived choice of location of residence, and perceived judgment of the costs versus rewards of living in that neighbourhood, as opposed to living elsewhere. Rivlin (1987, 13) argued that attachment to places entails the development of roots, “connections that stabilise and create a feeling of comfort and security.”

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24 Ethical consumption will not be developed any further in this thesis as it is out of scope for the topic.
According to Tuan (1980, p. 6), rootedness is “an unreflective state of being in which the human personality merges with the milieu”. Since this merging involves development of social ties with other members, the availability of local public spaces (i.e., parks) becomes an important element in the neighbourhood life.

According to Rivlin (1987), the roots in a neighbourhood is deep if it serves a wide range of needs such as shopping, socializing, work, recreation, community work etc. If those needs are concentrated within an area in the form of neighbourhood, and if the satisfaction of needs are anchored by both group affiliations and time that is, if these satisfaction of needs are diffused over time, there emerges shared memories, habits, and relationships. Moreover, physical landmarks, such as buildings, monuments, streets and landscape also contribute the identity of the neighbourhood.

**Subculture and Capital Culture**

Thornton (1995), in her study of club cultures, argued that the term subcultural capital refers to knowledge, skills and experience accorded to the status within a subculture. Thornton’s work is based on Bourdieu’s (1984) book “Distinction”. She claimed that he was the first to use the term cultural capital to discuss the knowledge acquired through development and education which confers status within society.

Bourdieu conceptualised the structure of society as dictated by the consumption of hallmark of distinction which affirm people’s tastes. While Thornton has been accredited for bringing the concept out of the realm of high class consumption context (Bennett, 1999; Kates, 2002), a closer reading of Bourdieu, reveals that he did not mean the term to be narrowly defined. Indeed, Bourdieu argued that in all fields, including subculture, social differences are made through expressive consumption.

Thornton (1995) noted that the difference between her concept of subcultural capital and Bourdieu’s cultural capital is the role of the media. She argued that the media plays an important role in the expansion and circulation of subcultural capital, where as there is no such thing in cultural capital. Therefore, the distinction between the two terms appears to be more a

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25 Discussed in previous sections of this Chapters
26 For more details, please see next section.
question of characteristics than a distinction between the two concepts. Both concepts suggest that subcultural capital is not class bound; rather it is the cross-boundaries concept which produces a high sense of community (Belk and Costa, 1998, Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001).

The notions of social and cultural capitals discussed in this section reflect idealised nature of MPEs, with its promotion communitarian interest to secure social and cultural assets and their distinction from traditional residential suburbs of Australia.

**Consumption Communities and Consumer Communities: the Role of Media and Advertisement in Consuming Subculture**

The term consumption communities was first introduced by Daniel Boorstin (1973) to refer to informal groups expressing shared needs, values, or lifestyles through distinctive consumption patterns. These new communities are invisible, quick, non-ideological, democratic, public and vague, and rapidly shifting. For Boorstin (1973, p. 89), the act of acquiring and using has a new meaning. The nature of things has changed from “objects of possession and envy into vehicles of community.” These communities replace local, ethnic, and religious connections with a consumer-oriented lifestyle.

As Schouten and McAlexander (1995) observed, consumption communities are very prevalent in society. That is, we can label any collectivity united by a consumption object, practice, or pattern as a consumption community. For example, vegetarians, with their non-meat diets, supporters of a football team, attending games, purchasing team-related merchandise etc., devotees of a particular brand, and performers of a particular leisure activity; all form consumption collectivities.

Consumer communities however, are groups of people living in close proximity with mutual social relations characterised by caring and sharing (Kozinets, 2002, p. 4). In terms of consumption, Burgh-Woodman and Brace-Govan (p. 12) noted that consumer communities fit into a broad definition of subculture such as: “a social subset of individuals bound together by a common activity, unique philosophy and outlook which find its origins in cultural, historical and social influences” (Burgh-Woodman and Brace-Gavin, 2007, p. 3).

Consumption communities and consumer communities are both considered as “subculture of consumption” (Kozinets, 2001, 68). The effect of the mass media in the creation of these...
communities is also an important point. Celsi et al. (1993) argue that mass media is one of the Macros environmental factors that enculturate and motivate individuals to high risk consumption. In the case of HDSC\textsuperscript{27}, the mass-mediated images of riders, often as outlaws, is the key to the foundation of the subculture (Schouten and McAlexander, 1995). Belk and Costa (1998) observed that mass-mediated representations of historic mountain men provide the foundations of the fantasy construction in the Fur Trade Rendezvous. Kozinets (2001), in order to theorise the relationship between mass media-influenced consumption meanings and practices between subculture and macro culture, examines the construction of consumption meaning as negotiated from mass media images and objects. Moreover, Thornton, as stated in the previous section, also argued that mass-media are not oppositional to the subcultural activity; rather they help the formation and maintenance of subcultures (Thornton, 1996).

In line with the discussion above, if we argue that residents of MPEs constitute either a consumption community or a consumer community, it can be easy to notice a similarity in the role of media in promoting MPEs as a subcultural product. Goodman and Douglas (2010) and Wood (2002) for example found that developers use the media to commercially promote the estate using graphical and textual materials relaying on a wide range of media hubs which in turn sparks spontaneous, national media coverage with various articles and opinions about MPEs.

**Subculture in Urban Consumption, Would MPEs be an Example?**

The choice of where to live has a privileged place in shaping sociality, and as such creates a marketing opportunity for developers of MPEs. They differentiate their product based on the image of a socially connected and united community, linked to the physical and regulatory structure of the estate (Williams and Pocock, 2010). This creates two sets of issues. First, Williams and Pocock (2010) note that the physical and social infrastructure needed to support this social connection is limited and irregular. Second, there is the question of how residents respond to the commodified subculture, particularly if they were not aware of the restrictions and costs of living in an MPE. Is it the extent to which they conform to the subculture that determines their sociality, enjoyment or degree of conflict within the estate? How does the subculture shift over time with different residents’ engagement with the community association? Does it adopt a life of its own beyond the parameters of the developer’s vision?

\textsuperscript{27} Harley Davidson Social Club.
The way that the shifting patterns and importance of consumption have influenced MPEs in Australia and its implications for residents’ enjoyment of, and conflict on, MPEs will be addressed in this thesis.

Miles (1998, p. 7) has called to construct an ethnography of urban consumption, arguing that the only way to come to terms with the complex of interrelationships both geographical and sociological, is by addressing how consumers construct their meanings on the urban map. Miles concluded that urban forms of consumption are expressed through a diversity of value systems and individuals express and interact within those value systems in different ways.

**Brand: Economic, Social and Cultural Dimensions**

Holt (2010), referring to the marketplace ideologies, explained that a brand realises a significant advantage when it is coupled with a certain ideology that is on the rise against prevailing ones. Holt did not detail the cultural aspect of the brand but reduced it to a single ideology (Holt, 2010, pp.173-192; 2004, pp. 6-10). Yet, society has a variety of detached cultural discourses, amongst which a brand is always positioned. Reducing the symbolic aspect of the brand to a single populist myth that covers only the consumption side of the brand does not do justice to its complex nature. In addition, Holt emphasised only the large-scale alternative cultural meanings, but even mundane, unchanging discourses contribute to the brand, which is a complex set of cultural meanings from numerous discourses. Some academics have maintained that brands are multi-dimensional entities (Kornberger, 2010, Lury, 2009, Arvidsson, 2006). However, even for these researchers, a brand is just an exchange system between producers and consumers. Arvidsson asserted that the brand is a frame of action, in which consumers and producers act. He applied a Marxist framework and based all aspects of the brand on an economic framework, in which all actions of agents can be rationalised via the norms and rules of capitalism.

Both Lury and Arvidsson admitted the multi-dimensional nature of brands, which they captured dimensionally from an economic, market perspective. Similarly, Kornberger stated that “The brand is the interface between production and consumption that transforms the economy and society” (2010, p. 35).

However, the brand is something more than an exchange system in which consumption and production meet. It is not simply a commercial product or a service that has a single cultural
coupling since it is a multi-dimensional socio-cultural entity that takes part in numerous distinct discourses with its diverse meanings. Holt argued that there is certain interplay between the functional and the single cultural aspect of the brand by asserting that a strong cultural value emphasises the functional value (2004, pp. 179-181). However, he simply said that this is a complex situation, in which the consumers’ perceptions are highly influenced by superior cultural expression by which they are made to believe that the brand is superior in other terms as well.

Askegaard emphasised the multi-cultural aspect of the brand, and conceptualise it as a structuration device by applying Appadurai’s ideoscape, in which various diverse ideas are maintained and filtered. Askegaard was right in asserting that brand functions as a translation entity:

*Branding as a global ideoscape thus provides the ideological basis for the establishment of new meaning systems, new practices, and new identity forms for the members of the consumer culture. It provides the logical basis for the whole idea of “experience economy”, of new distinctions between social groups, of new types of (brand) communities, new central stories in people’s lives and new identification patterns of both oneself and others.* (Askegaard, 2006, p. 98)

Moor (2007) made similar assertions that support the hub-like nature of the brand:

*This book has made a number of claims about brands: that they organize forms of economic activity; that they render a greater array of materials communicative and informational; that they attempt to give concrete physical form to abstract values and concepts; and that they try to influence the perceptions and behaviour of customers and citizens.* (Moor, 2007, p.143)

Nevertheless, both scholars trace and rationalise the existence of the brand back to the identity projects and meaning making of consumers. Even if there is a reference to multi-dimensionality, it usually arises from the motives of the individuals, and not from the disparate cultural discourses. These conceptualisations do not detail how the brand arises on the cultural level but rather show how it ends up being used.

_Brand Community, Consumption and social Interaction_
The first in-depth study of a brand community was conducted with a Harley Davidson owners group by Schouten and McAlexander (1995). They discovered that brand communities are a good way for a company to socialise with new members and build brand loyalty. However, Harley-Davidson owners may be regarded as a special case or a subculture with a very strong individual-centred approach (Holt, 1997) with a significant degree of marginality as an outlaw culture (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). This subculture differs from the brand communities, having an active interpretive function, with brand meaning being socially negotiated, rather than delivered unaltered and as whole from context to context, and consumers to consumers (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001, p. 3). Consumer-initiated innovation, such as ideas of designing for clothing and accessories was identified, and a hierarchical structure based on status was also discussed in their findings. Muniz and O'Guinn (2001) interviewed members from Ford Bronco, Saab, Apple Macintosh brand communities in a U.S. neighbourhood, offline and online. They confirmed the existence of three components or markers of a brand community – consciousness of a kind, shared rituals and traditions and sense of moral responsibility. Consciousness of kind refers to the intrinsic connection among members and a collective sense of belonging distinguishing them from outsiders. Shared rituals and traditions propagate the shared history and stories of the community and brand. Moral responsibility is a sense of duty to the community as a whole, and to individual members of the community (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). They suggested that marketers’ thinking of brand should move from traditional consumer-brand dyad to the consumer-brand consumer triad. This model takes into consideration more relationships that could take place within the brand community, like consumer to consumer, consumer to brand and give more emphasis on the active role that consumers play. This point was also supported by Cross and Smith (1995) who explained that the community has widened the relationship with the brand to include the role of other consumers. As a brand community affects brand equity (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001), and influences consumer behaviour more than in mere repurchase, it is a crucial part of relationship marketing for consumers’ commitment and loyalty (McAlexander, et al., 2003; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). Brand communities furnish the platform for consumers to share information about brands, learn from others’ experience about them and seek help or assistance from others. Authors, such as Bianchi, contended that consumers’ interactions and choices and actual consumption practices play an important role in the evolving forms of sociality (Bianchi, 2007, p. 17).

3.5 Summary of Discussion
This Chapter provided a thorough discussion to the theoretical concept that underpins this thesis. It was presented in two parts. The first part covered the theoretical framework of consumption and how it has been developed through the years. The second part discussed the relationship between consumption and social distinction through a wide range of theories, trends and concepts.

The Chapter argued that people consume to improve their social status, define their social boundaries and where relationships are formed in hierarchic order and built based on style rather than economic position. Further, the Chapter discusses how social connections with community life are being replaced by consumerism where individual identity is no longer derived from character but rather through the acquisition, ownership and display of goods. The Chapter argues that consumption of MPEs is above all a spatial practice where space is composed of an intersection of mobile elements: time, speed, and direction, and that places and spaces can be consumed visually or literally and the ways in which consumers interpret these urban spaces is connected with their experience of everyday lives and concepts connected to value, use and meaning.

The Chapter found that in the postmodern city the realisation of consumption contributes to the changing form of the urban and social life where consumption has become harnessed by the new wealthy to display ostentatious forms of consumer behaviour. The argument is that in urban context, consumers not only reproduce their physical existence, but also reproduce culturally specific, meaningful ways of life and urban forms of consumption are expressed through a diversity of value systems and individuals express and interact within those value systems in different ways. The Chapter argues that these notions of community, consumption and urban forms match perfectly the concept of MPEs and their symbolic communities where the place will become combined in a distinct set of values through symbolic and hypothetical references and cultural artefacts.

Furthermore, the Chapter discussed the relationship between consumption and social identity focussing on the motivation for consumption within a social geographical setting, such as the consumption of place and space, lifestyle and exclusivity, consumption for taste and their impacts on human social status. The Chapter also investigated the notions of community within geographical context and the formation of cultural communities as a result of new consumption
trends such as subculture and brand culture and their impact on social status within the community.

This review has uncovered a number of gaps in the literature. However, this study adopts an empirical research and collected significant data, the purpose of the thesis is not to address the theoretical side of the literature, rather to allow a new theory to emerge out of the data analysis. While reviewing the literature for this purpose, and from the dozens of concepts and approaches I studied, MPEs has not been approached in many of these concept previously such as brand community and subculture. Therefore, in addition to the examination of consumption and social distinction, this study will add new approach for exploring brand and subculture within MPEs setting. The next Chapter will provide the study with the research method and design adopted and an overview on the study’ human and physical characteristics, which served as source to collect data.

Chapter 4 Methodology, Research Design and the Study

In the previous Chapter a literature review and conceptual framework were developed for understanding the different consumption trends and theories and examine theoretically the emergence of various themes, culture and features by residents to gain their social distinction. This Chapter explores the relevant methodological approaches to test the developed conceptual framework. The aim of this Chapter is to discuss and justify the manner in which the research was approached and carried out. This Chapter discusses the criteria by which the research was designed, and describes the methodological tools applied to collect, transcribe and analyse the needed data during the fieldwork. Discussion in this Chapter is built around a detailed report of the fieldwork and the experience gained from it, and at the same time linking it to the relevant
literature on methodology. The first section provides a detailed account of the data collection methods and the method used for the research. The second section explains the way the research is designed and the source and methods the data have been collected and provide details about the participant’s characteristics and the nature and form of data collected, the quality of questions used in the interviews and their relation to the conceptual framework of the study as well as strategies employed for the analysis of the data. Finally, the second section elaborates on the tactics applied for securing validity and reliability in this study. Section three of this Chapter provides a deep understanding of the selected case study. It explains the importance of the two estates and the justification for their selection. The section also contains the history, geographic and demographic information related to the case study, types and tenure of dwelling, as well as the related planning and development regulation and guidelines.

4.1 Methodology

4.1.1 Introduction
The different philosophical views on practice cannot be easily transposed into empirical studies according to Warde (2005, p.5). Theoretical accounts show a tendency towards idealisation, abstraction, and do not pay enough attention to the social processes in the production, sustaining and reproduction of practices. The meta-theoretical assumptions are often such that they, to a very high degree, presume a commonality of conventions, a shared sense of understanding, and widespread consensus. Such conditions are highly unlikely and just could not be met, Warde (2005, p. 5) contended.

The dictionary Webster defined method as “a procedure or process for attaining an object”. In common ordinary usage, an appropriate phrasing is “the way to go”. However, these definitions bring a certain reification of method, whereby and the dynamic and (re)iterating qualities of research risk getting lost. Nietzsche (1895[2003]) regarded method as one of the essential and most important issues of all times, and also the most difficult, considering that habit and laziness work strongly against it. In science there is often a recurrent use of one and the same
method, which according to Dumez (2006, p. 1) will merely lead to a “methodolatry”28 that will only serve to generate and multiply “neat little studies”.

4.1.2 The Method

This thesis applies qualitative methods. The purpose of qualitative research is to understand and explain participant meaning (Morrow and Smith, 2000). More specifically, Creswell (1998, p. 15) defined qualitative research as, an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. Thus, using a qualitative methodology allowed the thesis to study the consumption of MPEs in its best settings and the social, political, economic and cultural outcome of this activity. MPE is a product conceived and developed by a party on a geographical space, approved by a second party with the use of texts and maps, and consumed by a completely separate party by its social and physical forms. Thus, there are multiple stakeholders and a number of documents, maps graphs involved in the empirical work. Therefore, qualitative method attempts to gain the stakeholders perspectives (Maxwell, 1996), MPEs are not only commercial products; they are also social and cultural products where human identity and social status are determined and social interaction takes place. MPEs are also physical products where people’s living experience creates the “home” (Mallet, 2004); qualitative methods also help make sense of the particular context within which the individuals take action, and the influence of this context on their actions (Maxwell, 1996). The contextual focus of qualitative inquiry assists in gaining an understanding of the research objectives. Research on lifestyle and exclusive brands and products such as MPEs argue that factors related to the cultural elements, the historical context, the government regulation, developers and consumers (residents) shape the concept on which MPEs are developed and socially and physically consumed (LeGoix, 2006; Alvarez-Rivadulla, 2007; Staeheli, 2008).

MPEs associate people and local place (Chaskin, 1997; Cheshire et al., 2010) making it of importance to geographers, therefore human geographers highly rely upon qualitative methods when taken a humanistic approach.

28 Janesick (1994, p. 7) defined the term methodolatry as “a combination of methods and idolatry, to describe a preoccupation with selecting and defining methods to the exclusion of the actual substance of the story being told”.

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Human behaviour is, in fact, subjective, complex, messy, irrational and contradictory. As such, humanistic geographers begin to draw on methods that would allow them to explore the meanings, emotions, intentions and values that make up our taken-for-granted life worlds (Clifford and Valentine, 2003, p. 4).

There are certain limitations in the application of a questionnaire survey. The problem of impropriety of using this traditional method for solving a whole number of problems facing researchers is not new. As Denzin (1989) highlighted, qualitative research techniques such as open-ended surveys or in-depth interviewing provide insight into the way that individuals make meaning of their own attitudes, beliefs, values, feelings and behaviours. Similarly, Lincoln and Guba (1985) pointed out that successful qualitative research provides an understanding of the meanings that people construct of their experiences; therefore, providing the reader with better understanding of what is being described.

Qualitative research methods are particularly suited to exploring subjectivity and context (Denzin and Lincoln, 2007). While debate continues as to the nature of rigour and validity in qualitative research (Cho and Trent, 2006), the best of all of qualitative rigour is still accepted as Lincoln and Guba’s (1989) evaluation (See Padgett, 2008 and Liampputong, 2005).

When designing a research project, researchers might want to begin by choosing a philosophical, paradigmatic and interpretive framework and then go on to choose a qualitative approach to their inquiry. In this regard, Creswell (2007, p. 37) stated that:

Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and the complex description and interpretation of the problem and it extends the literature or signals a call for action.
In this thesis, the research is designed about the motivation for consuming MPEs, practically, it is about people’s social, cultural, economic and legal experience while buying and living in MPEs. This approach provides a diversity of data sources that were activated through qualitative, semi-structured interviews of residents of two MPEs in Sydney region, developers of these two MPEs and town planners of the MPEs and two other town planners of two different local governments in Sydney region. In addition, documents such as contracts for sale of land and other legal annexes, covenants and restrictions, as well as plans and subdivision papers issued by state and local governments and a wide range of artefacts materials such as magazines, advertising materials and photos where used.

4.2 Research Design and Data Source

This thesis utilises the case study design of two MPEs. More specifically, the thesis applies a non-comparative case study design where data collected from both estates are analysed, then merged and discussed together. According to Yin (2003), case-study research involves the study of an issue explored in one or more cases, bound by time and place, by detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information such as observations, interviews, documents, audio-visual material. The case is selected to illustrate the issue.

Case studies are an “exploration of a ‘bounded system’ of a case or multiple cases over time through detail, in depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context” (Creswell, 1998, p. 61). As Stake (1995, p. 1) explained, case studies are investigated because of their uniqueness and commonalities.

4.2.1 The Participants and their Role in Consuming MPEs

According to Arthur and Nazroo (2003), the guiding methodological principle of a fieldwork analysis lies in the fact that human actions are managed by two forms of conscientiousness; a discursive conscientiousness for the knowledgeability of human agents, and a practical conscientiousness which is a perpetual and ongoing habitual activities (Giddens, 1991). In this thesis, the players of primary importance are residents of MPEs, followed by the developers of MPEs and then, by the town planners who represent local governments that officially assess application and issue approvals for MPEs development and community title writing. Therefore, studying the experience of these players and analysing their actions,
meaning implicates exploring both the discursive conscientiousness and the practical conscientiousness that hold their actions. Thus, applying semi-structured interviews accompanied by informal discussions, documents and artefacts collection and site observation will cover both the discursive conscientiousness and the practical conscientiousness.

Hence, there are three sets of major players each from its own position play a role in producing, legalising and consuming MPEs in Australia. As the literature review of the thesis suggested that the developers design and produce the product (MPEs), the local governments assess and approve the product while the residents (buyers) consume the product. Thus, the case study focuses on interviewing the three sets of players in relation to their roles.

4.2.2 Field Work and Data Collection
In order to gain a wide perspective about the consumption of MPEs in Australia, this thesis will use two MPEs in Sydney. Twenty-six properties from both estates participated for semi-structured interviews with the participants formed from adult; males and females, married, single and divorced residents. Interviews with residents of both MPEs of the study, town planners of the two local governments under which fall the estates, two additional town planners from two other local governments in the area with a very high level of MPEs applications and approval, interviews with the developers of both MPEs and a site observation were conducted on the site during different times and days of the week during the field work period. Data collected from developers and states and local authorities such as covenants and sales contracts, strategic plans, concept plans and DA’ approvals for both estates.

The research relied on semi-structured interviews as it involves posing a number of predetermined questions and topics with ability to investigate deeper and wider as required (Berg, 1995). Therefore, semi-structured interview aims to capture exact data and explains behaviour within predetermined categories and attempts to understand the behaviour of a group while posing spontaneous, open ended questions which do not impose a priori categorisation (Fontana and Frey, 2000). Thus, in semi-structured interview, participants’ perspectives are “likely to be expressed in a relatively openly designed interview situation than in a standardised interview or questionnaire” (Flick, 2000, p. 74). Semi-structured interview can also provide a rich source of data in regards to participants’ feeling, thoughts and experience (Kenyon, 1997).
According to Bernard (2000), a semi-structured interview is the best style of interviews when an interviewer will not get more than one chance to interview someone.

However, it is important to note that while the questions in an interview’s guide are predetermined and ordered, there was some flexibility in how to ask each question, as well as the ability to ask additional questions which may not be on the interview’s guide (Dunn, 2005).

**Sampling, Interviews and Questionnaires**

Qualitative interviews are a leading method in human geography and have been a basic method of data collection in research on MPEs (see Low, 2002; Gwyther, 2005; Kenna, 2007, Cheshire et al., 2013). As stated previously in this Chapter, open-ended interviews were the principal method of data collection for this research.

Three sets of interviews were designed for this thesis. The first set designed for residents of two MPEs in Sydney, twenty-six interviews were conducted with different brackets of age, marital status and employment fields. The recruitment focussed on owners only as the study needs to examine and investigate buyers experience and their living experience on MPEs. Sixteen interviews were conducted with participants from Breakfast Point MPE and ten other interviews were conducted with participants from Harrington Grove MPE. Size of samples was selected according to literature of previous work in qualitative social research. According to Bertaux (1981) and Guest et al. (2006), fifteen is the smallest acceptable sample. Ritchie et al. (2003) argued that qualitative samples often lay fewer than fifty participants; Charmaz (2006) suggested the number of twenty-five participants. However, Green and Thorogood (2004[2009], p. 120) stated that “the experience of most qualitative researchers is that in interview studies little that is new comes out of transcripts after you have interviewed twenty or so people”. For this thesis, the recruitments campaign launched as soon as ethical clearance has been approved. Firstly, hundreds of leaflets were dropped in mail boxes of the two targeted estates, and received few immediate responses, then, early participants were asked if they could help by convincing friends and neighbours to participate in the study. This action was taken in order to create a snowballing. As residents of MPEs tend to be affluent with desire for privacy, the snowball sampling can help alleviate this problem for a researcher in that “doors open when

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29 For more details about both case studies, their size, population and selection and importance of these estates, please refer to section 4.3.1 of this Chapter
one member of an elite group passes you on to another” (Bernard, 2000, p.179). However, for this research, the outcome was below expectations and a second round leaflets dropping improved the number of participants.

As I explain in this section, the attempt for snowballing did not succeed and that the result was below expectation. In fact, there were no interviews generated from this method.

In regards to the sampling framework and the selection of field sites, the field work began in 10 January 2013 in Breakfast Point Where I dropped the first round of leaflets in mail boxes to recruit participants then went to Harrington Grove and drop leaflets. The next round of leaflets drops begin in 1 February 2013 and lasted 5 days in Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove.

Site observations took place in March 2013 for Breakfast Point where I attended the Market Place in front of the shops sitting in the small park and observing the reaction and interaction residents on every Sunday from 9 am till 1 pm. I repeat the observation for Harrington Grove in April 2013 for 3 Sundays. Most of the photos taken for the estates took place during the observations. However, as I am not authorised to photograph people, no data is available for the matter.

It was not possible to interview neither the community association nor attending any of their meetings at Breakfast Point as they have strict rules about who can attend meeting or give interviews. In regards to Harrington Grove, interviewing the developer who is also in charge of the community association could cause more complications to the data collection and the nature of questions and answers.

The interviews were lasted between forty five minutes and one hour and fifteen minutes approximately, participants were handed participant’s information sheets and consent forms prior to interviews, they also were advised verbally about the nature of the interview and that the questions will be about their experience before and while living on the estate in relation to MPEs. They were also been reminded, as the consent and participant’s form states, that they could withdraw at any moment from the interview and that no information could be used if they change their minds and that their identity will be protected and their names will be modified, for this purposes. Participants were offered to choose a pseudonym if they wish,
otherwise their name will be modified, and a pseudonym was offered during or at the end of the interview. Therefore, all interviews were conducted in accordance with the Australian Human Research Ethics Committee, and this research has been approved by the committee under number H10273. Only once the participant understood the terms of their involvement were they given the Consent Form to sign. The interviews were audio-recorded generally, with exception of four participants who wished that their answers and comments to be in hand written and notes were also taken during the interviews. Audio-recorded interviews were accompanied with notes taking, these notes are important for recording participants’ behaviour and other physical expressions such as body language and the couple’s reaction or complaisance. These actions are not possible to be recorded by audio-recorder devise. (Please see, appendix 2, participants’ consent form, and appendix 3, participants’ information sheet).

Interviews were selected as a principal method for the research because this thesis wanted to understand not only how MPEs produced by stakeholders (such as governmental and developers) but how the context of this concept was experienced by the players implicated in these production and consumption. Discussion with these players, in the form of semi-structured interviews, remains one of the best approaches to gaining insight into the social outcomes and experiences through the consumption of MPEs concept. Furthermore, the flexibility available in open-ended interviewing eases and helps the participants’ involvement in the research, sharing the themes and subjects that they think are interesting, this allows the interview to obtain a more comprehensive idea of the research topic and a the tendency for researchers to preclude their results through their research design.

An extensive literature review on the theories on MPEs, on consumption and on social identity, social status and their relation to taste, brand community and sense of place and space, revealed a list of topics in order to prepare the questions. Residents’ interviews are structured to cover the thesis’s themes and provide answers to the aims of the research which are the following:

- The developers’ role in marketing MPEs and the consumers’ perception of the developer in this regard.
- The consumers’ decisions and motivations to buy in an MPE

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30 Please refer to appendix 14
• How consumers consume the social and physical spaces of the MPE concept
• The impact of this consumption on the broader social and cultural life of residents of MPEs.

Thus the residents’ interview (please see Appendix 11 for the preliminary interview questionnaire) is divided into five sections. Along the first section that covers the personal information of participants, there are twenty questions in the other four sections presented as follows:

Section two covers questions related the motivation factors behind looking and buying into an MPE.

Section three covers the developers’ role and marketing materials.

Section four covers the experience of participants in the community. How MPEs are consumed and what social implications result from this consumption and how much are empowered residents of MPEs in facing social and political matters.

Section five covers participants’ perception of private governance.

Married and de-facto couples were interviewed together (when possible) to echo their emotional intimacy (Bott, 1959). There was a clear harmony and complaisance during the interviews as they complete each other during their responses.

The developers of Breakfast Point have been represented by their manager in the interview which took place in their head office in Sydney CBD. The developers of Harrington Grove have been represented by one of their sale managers in their sales office located in the Country Club of Harrington Grove. The town planners were also interviewed in their offices located in their city council buildings in Drummoyne, Camden, Liverpool and Picton. Interviews with developers focussed on the approach used to develop and promote the estates, the process of sales and the strategy used in the initial concept of development. Interviews with town planners focussed on the local government role in amending MPE concept into their development control plans, the social, economic and politic factors underpinning their developments and the legal process used with developers during the approval process.
Participants Characteristics

Participants belong to different ranges of age brackets ranging from thirty to seventy. Most of participants are married couples, few couples are de facto and singles constitute the smaller
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Name of the Estate</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Age Bracket</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Living in the estate since:</th>
<th>Owner or Tenant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Albert and Kate</td>
<td>Harrington Grove</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>35-40</td>
<td>Real Estate Marketing</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Simon and Paula</td>
<td>Breakfast Point</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>55-60</td>
<td>Property services and Lawyer</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Peter and Carmen</td>
<td>Breakfast Point</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>65-70</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Shaun and Brigitte</td>
<td>Breakfast Point</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>60-65</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Jeremy and Nathalie</td>
<td>Harrington Grove</td>
<td>De facto</td>
<td>35-40</td>
<td>School Teacher and Bank Employee</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Wendy</td>
<td>Harrington Grove</td>
<td>Single Mum</td>
<td>35-40</td>
<td>School Teacher</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Andrew</td>
<td>Breakfast Point</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>Government Employee</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Bret and Vilma</td>
<td>Breakfast Point</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>50-60</td>
<td>Finance and Hospitality management</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Owner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Dan and Jenny</td>
<td>Harrington Grove</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>60-70</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Charlie and Tania</td>
<td>Harrington Grove</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>35-40</td>
<td>Carpenter and Hair Dresser</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Yves and Pam</td>
<td>Breakfast Point</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>55-65</td>
<td>Retired and School Principal</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Debbie</td>
<td>Breakfast Point</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>Self Employed Health Industry</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Gary and Martha</td>
<td>Harrington Grove</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>Food Industry, Self Employed</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Jeff</td>
<td>Harrington Grove</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>50-55</td>
<td>Finance Industry</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Chris and Sarah</td>
<td>Harrington Grove</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>Builder and Education</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Jacque and Vivian</td>
<td>Breakfast Point</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>65-70</td>
<td>Retired and Media</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Damian and Tracey</td>
<td>Breakfast Point</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>40-45</td>
<td>Business Owner and Health Industry</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Sam and Ena</td>
<td>Breakfast Point</td>
<td>De facto</td>
<td>35-40</td>
<td>Education and Government Employee</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Terry and Gina</td>
<td>Harrington Grove</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>45-50</td>
<td>Property Industry and Mother at Home</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Charles and Sonia</td>
<td>Breakfast Point</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>40-50</td>
<td>Business Owners in Food Industry</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>George and Stephanie</td>
<td>Breakfast Point</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>65-70</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
part of respondents. In this case of single participants where the marital status could be
divorced, but due to the non-importance of this matter to the study, I did not insisted on the
case and classified them as single. It’s worth noting that respondent from Breakfast Point are
generally older than respondent from Harrington Grove, from the sixteen respondents in
Breakfast Point there are five retired couples or single. However, there are only one respondent
single of the ten respondents in Harrington grove. Working participants constitute the majority
of respondents and belong to a wide range of occupations and industries.

It’s also worth noting that from the sixteen respondents of Breakfast Point, there are fourteen
married or de facto couples. Participants have been chosen from owners respondents only as
this research focuses on MPEs as consumption product where buyers and developers play an
important role. Therefore, it will be not suitable to include tenant’s respondents to keep the
research under the scope limitation of the thesis.
The average time living on the estate vary between Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove. In the first, participants live there since 2004. For the second, the estate is fairly new and still under development. One married couple of the participants live there since 2010, this means that they are of the first residents to move into Harrington Grove.

**Sites Observation and Visual Data**

Observation allows reaching conclusion about participants’ meanings and perspectives that could not be obtained only by relying on interview data (Maxwell, 1996). It is a valuable approach used for overcoming the risk of reducing social life to the definition of the participants (Silverman, 1993). While interviews reveal what participants say, observations reveal what participants do (Silverman, 1993).

The sites observation for this research involved visiting and exploring the estates’ facilities supported by photos and non-formal discussion with residents during community activities in buildings dedicated to the local community to provide different type of activities.

Photos were taken in different settings and in different times in order to provide a visual representation of the developers’ strategy of promotional materials such as signs, building design, symbolic gates and walls. Another set of photos was taken to record residents’ social interaction and their collective practices. Photographing sessions took place in public places such as parks and streets, from participants’ balconies and in common facilities such as the Country Clubs, the workshops, Gym, Sauna and tennis courts.

In order to better understand residents behaviour, their communication with each other and their mutual social interaction, both estates were visited by the researcher during different hours and days of the week to monitor residents activities around shops, sports’ facilities, clubs’ restaurants and events as well as attending two session of one estate’s men activities in which male residents apply their trade and art skills for painting, timber decorating, steel designing, furniture repairing and other. The researcher also attended community halls where residents participate in music and singing classes, tutoring classes, first aid classes and computer
classes. The observation data used in conjunction with other collected data to complete the picture of Breakfast Point and Harrington.

**Documents**

As Creswell (2003) argued, documentary data can be useful in providing additional insights about the research and so improve the course of analysis. Thus, two types of legal documents were collected during the field work to support the empirical part of this thesis. Four Contracts for sale of land (two of each estate) containing legal covenants, restrictions imposed by developers and approval for community title scheme approved by local government authorities. Documents containing DCPs (Development Control Plans) and maps for concepts and development approval for master plans of both estates. The researcher experience and qualifications in the field with helped collecting, transcribing and analysing these documents.

**Advertising Materials**

In addition to photos taken in the estates covering signs and design used by the developers as promotional materials and discussed in previous section of this Chapter where also examined. For the same purposes, this study is also provided with a rich data collection of advertisement materials used by the developers as a marketing tool. This data is collected in the form of electronic devices such as USB containing professionally produced short films and presentation for Breakfast Point, websites, Booklets and magazines for both estates as well as access to Breakfast Point online local paper.

**4.2.3 Data Analysis**

According to Wolcott (1994), data analysis refers to the process of extending data beyond descriptive account. Its importance relies on the identification of key factors and relationships that interpret the case or study under examination. However, due to the complexity of information and diversity of sources, I followed a well-established process of thematic analysis (Creswell, 2003).

In this study, interviews were considered as the backbone of data collection. Therefore, the data collected from interviews shaped the data analysis process. Before analysing the data, all

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31 Please refer to Features and Facilities in section 4.3.2 of this Chapter.
32 Please refer to section Researcher Experience further down in this Chapter.
interviews, observations’ notes, documents, advertising materials, photos and field notes were transcribed manually into text form. The process of transcribing allows researchers to become acquainted with the data (Reissman, 1993). More specifically, the process was executed with two different techniques to ensure that all information is extracted from the interviews and nothing left behind. I begin by listening to the audio-recorder of each interview and time after time, I proceeded by playing and pausing the device in order to write down the information. The target was to intercept the basic ideas in participants’ responses that are relevant to the aim and objectives of the study first. These involve identifying keywords or quotes that match the research concept initially generated from the literature review in form of topics with which the questionnaires were formulated. For example, when a participant used the word “our social status” or “distinctive people”, these words explicitly denote social distinction. At other times, participants’ language was rather coded using words or sentences like “decent and nice people” or “different mentality” which also refer to social distinction. These articulations were analysed in term of their reference to self-perception of social distinction and the perception of other to social distinction. Separate sheets were used to list the themes where each significant word, sentence or quote was listed in the suitable sheet. In the second technique, I manually wrote a summary of each interview, then using highlighter from four different colours, I marked each quote, word or sentence in a colour that match a specified theme. At the end of the two techniques, I focussed on terms and words that could create a potential theme or topic which can be used in the thesis.

As the thesis follows the case study design, the data is analysed through thematic analysis (Stake, 2006). Thus, interviews, observation, documents, advertisement materials and field notes were analysed for each case. Following the case-by-case analysis, all themes are used to conduct the cross-case analysis. Themes salient across all cases were kept as well as those that were different. The different emerged themes were re-examined and most of them were re-categorised within existing themes or have been used as new themes providing the study with new and innovative ideas, but related to the concept of the study. For the thematic analysis, I followed Braun and Clarke (2006) step-by-step guidelines. The authors used the word guidelines to highlight the flexibility of this qualitative analytic method. These guidelines are (1) familiarising yourself with your data, (2) generating initial codes, (3) The researcher read throughout each transcript to immerse in the data, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report. Stake (2006) described three different cross case procedures for a multiple case study. For this qualitative study, I followed a merging findings
procedure. According to Stake, the priority is to merge the findings across cases and use this particular method.

These themes are interconnected to each other either directly or through their sub-themes which is the strong result of the discourse implemented when developing the interview questions in order to obtain a unified theorem. According to Liampputong (2005), themes are identified and developed while the interview is being conducted, then, the themes will be grouped and related to form more complex sections and categories. The use of mind mapping in this section explains the concepts of the themes and assists the readers to understand better the flow of sub-themes that emerged from the development of the research. In this context, Ryan and Bernard (2000) explained the merits of applying schemas analysis and visual displays of themes and concepts arguing that a schema analysis could combine elements of both linguistic and sociological traditions which enable skilled people to fill through in details of events. They also suggested displaying concepts and models which are dynamic ways to communicate ideas to others.

Each theme and sub-theme began with a quotation from residents’ interviews that reflect the discussed theme or sub-theme and then supported by existing empirical studies on MPEs that related directly to the theme or sub-theme under examination. Sullivan (2011) suggested that quotation or what he calls ‘data extract’ forms an important part of qualitative reviews. Sullivan argued that choosing a quotation will be a good idea to highlight distinctive issues and give evidence on what the data is like.

As the data have been analysed through themes salient, three themes were produced and each theme then was developed, discussed and matched against existent literature into a Chapter and obtaining the three empirical Chapters, five, six and seven of this thesis.

In Chapter five, the theme buyers’ motivation to buy and live in MPEs. This theme is organised around the following three sub-themes:

1 Self-Governance. MPEs are privately governed and self-governance plays an important role in affluent societies due to the emergence of neo-liberalism according to the literature review. I analysed the data collected from residents, planners and developers’ interviews along legal documents using framework that denote or provide terms or titles containing community association, private governance, local government, and city council.
2 Buyers motivated by material affordances. This is an emerging theme discovered during the transcription of resident’s interviews, then when analysing the interviews. The data revealed that some residents of Harrington Grove were motivated and believed that large size of blocks offered in the estate will improve their social status. Participants from both Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove showed that the location of their estates near maritime transport from the first and working distance to major shopping centre for the second motivated many residents to buy and move in their estates. Therefore, words such as land, size of block, two storey home, more space, privacy, kids and playing, walking distance, wharf, Parramatta River, traffic, transport were analysed and listed within buyers motivation theme.

3 Encouraged by family and friends. Social contagion is a well-known among academics and theorists. Words and terms in residents’ interviews such as family, friends, previous visits, encouraged, knowing the estate before, reputation, advised and opinion were analysed and listed under buyers’ motivation theme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resident Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developers Role</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumption of space and place.</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subculture and Brand Culture</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 Source of themes.
Chapter five also develops the themes of developers and governments’ role and in promoting MPEs. The theme is also divided into three sub-themes. Marketing materials and advertisement, information to prospective buyers and community association. These sub-theme are listed under developers’ role as the literature review proved a strong link and an influential role of developers on these sub-themes. Thus, the data collected from advertisements materials, legal documents and interviews of residents, planners and words and terms such as restrictions, covenants, easement, by-law, signs, booklets, media, advertisements, contract, community association, strata, fees, regulation, meeting, sales office, master plan, court, fines, exclusive, lifestyle, design, paradise and sanctuary were analysed and developed in this Chapter.

Chapter six is about consuming MPEs, how residents of MPEs consume the estates’ space and place. Why they bought in an MPE, the meaning of social and physical and economical values of the estate. Most of information used for developing this Chapter comes from residents’ interviews. Words and terms such as buying, paying, expensive, exclusive, design, community, neighbours, luxury, unique, distinctive and distinction, price, money, privilege, special, good environment, identity, socially, concept, values, private, mansion, architecture, harmony, tranquillity and elegance, these words and term were analysed and listed in a theme named Conspicuous Buyers and Proud Residents, the theme then have been grouped in 3 sub-themes which focus on the consumption aspect of MPEs, the impact of community, price, design and aesthetical appearance of the estates on the self-identity of residents and to improve their social capital.

In Chapter seven, data collected from site observation, residents’ interviews and advertisement materials were analysed developed and discussed relying on terms and words from the content of this data such as community, national, nation, distinction, culture, brand, consuming, club, associations, consumption, wonderful community and name of the estate. The Chapter was formed about social distinction through the club culture and the brand subculture as theme and have been divided into two sub-themes; one focussing on subculture formation in MPEs through the “club” and consumer community and the second is about brand community and consumer community and their impact on social distinction within residents of MPEs. It is important to note that these themes and sub-themes are inter-related and unified under the consumption notion as showing in diagram 4.2 below.
Validity and the Research Quality

In qualitative research like this thesis, quality measured based on its credibility, transferability and trustworthiness (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002). While quality in quantitative research methods depends on the available research tools, in qualitative research methods it bases on the researcher’s skills, ability and efforts (Denzin, 1989). To add value to the quality of this research, multi-methods techniques and skills were used to gather the best of information and experience of various stakeholders involving in producing and consuming of MPEs.

It is worth noting that no scientific methodology, whether quantitative or qualitative in nature, is completely objective and free of biases. Intentionally or not, a researcher’s values and beliefs can influence how a topic is studied, or even determine which cases are studied in the first place (Winchester, 2005). For example, when designing statistical surveys, the researcher chooses which questions to include or to omit. When conducting interviews, the researcher...
chooses not only the questions which will be asked, but also the manner in which the questions will be delivered to the participant. Furthermore, when analysing transcripts from interviews, the researcher must infer meaning from what was said by the participant, and be careful not to give meaning to a participant’s words that he/she did not intend. As a result, issues of power, subjectivity, position, and ethics must be considered when conducting research. This study, as with any research project, does contain subjectivities and value based judgments. However, through critical reflexivity (Winchester, 2005) and strong ethical commitment, the goal of this study was to minimise any subjectivity which might alienate or violate the informants of this study in any way, or which might undermine the scientific validity of the study’s conclusions.

However, there are various validation strategies to make a research credible and rigorous (Creswell and Miller, 2000). Credibility for this study was achieved using various validation strategies such as researcher reflexivity, deep and rich description, and peer assistance.

The data is matched against the various forms of other materials that were collected in this thesis (i.e., interviews, observations, documents, advertisements materials, photos and field notes). In addition, to the diversity of data methods and materials, and in order to enhance the credibility of findings, the research approached various stakeholders such as developers which play the role of sales agents at the same time, the town planning authorities of local governments where the estates fall under their jurisdictions and two other planning officer from two different local governments which have approved a record number of development applications for master planned estates in the last five years.

Deep and rich description is achieved by using quotes from the interviews and presenting the participants’ voices through the three empirical Chapters of the thesis and by providing detailed description of each of the cases supports the analysis and increase the transferability of assessment. Finally, three peers supervised and assessed the validation process through face to face meetings and written comments. The three peers are familiar with qualitative data analysis and they are my supervisors for this study.

**The Researcher Experience**

As the researcher for this study, I have a thorough practical experience with the development and sales process of MPEs gained over the past ten years. My experience with MPEs in Australia begins in 2004 when I appraised and listed a property for sale in Liberty Grove near
Rhodes, a MPE located west of Sydney CBD. In 2009, while working with Wollondilly Shire Council as development assessment planner, I participated in the assessment and site inspections of Bingara Gorge, a MPE located about fifty kilometres south west of Sydney. Thus, prior to conducting this study, I have gained a kind of physical knowledge and have been accustomed with the design, facilities and regulation of MPEs, equally, I acquired the experience in dealing with developers through formal meetings to discuss legal and compliance matters, and socialising with residents and prospective buyers I met on many occasion while conducting open house sessions. Theoretically, I gained research experience through my dissertation for my Master degree in Urban and Regional Planning and read widely about qualitative research methods and attended many seminars and conferences in University of Western Sydney, University of Western Australia and Griffith University where I presented part of this research in form of non-peer review presentations and received many and divergent comments which helped improve this research.

Thereafter, my experience with MPEs could help strengthen the validation of finding in this study as discussed in the previous section of this Chapter. This experience also provided valuable assistance in approaching participants from all stakeholders and gave access to materials and documents and more importantly the ability to understand the legal jargon of contracts, restrictions, covenants and other legal terms.

4.3 The Study Sites

The role of this section is to provide a basis to the field work Chapters. It outlines the general characteristics of the sites’ study and gives a concise description of Breakfast Point Estate and Harrington Grove Estate. The section appraises the geographical, demographic, political, social, historical and economical contexts of both estates.

In addition to the typology and taxonomy presented originally in Chapter 2, which categorise MPEs worldwide, and in Chapter 2 page 14 where Australian MPEs are generally defined and explained. Furthermore, Blakely and Snyder (1997) presented a kind of typology of MPEs based on the following characteristics: functions of enclosure, security features and barriers, amenities and facilities included and type of residents. Blakely and Snyder argues that there are three major types of MPEs which differ in how they address the development of a sense of
community: 1) prestige communities for the elite, 2) lifestyle communities where leisure and exclusive access to amenities is a key concern, and 3) security, where safety of the residents is the main concern. Grant and Mittelstadt (2004) also provided a similar typology to MPEs in Sydney. Lifestyle and prestige communities are most prevalent, with sub-types based upon the life-cycle and status of residents. In examining the elements and factors presented above, Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove tend to fit in the types of prestige communities for the elite, and lifestyle. Thus these two factors contain all the ingredients to explore the sense of community within the consumption setting that the study aims to explore.

However, for the purposes of this study that Harrington Grove and Breakfast Point are not treated as separate case studies but as two field sites within a single qualitative study. They were selected in order to provide a greater range of demographic and design characteristics in the data collection, they are not compared or contrasted in the analysis, but their inherent differences add to the richness of the data.

**4.3.1 Selection and Importance of the Study**

While Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove are two typical Australian MPEs, they are fenced but not walled, symbolically gated with low level or inexistent security. However, they have been chosen as a case study due to their divergent characteristics which it is hoped will provide a rich field work outcome.

Breakfast Point is a Brownfield site located about ten kilometres from Sydney’s CBD. Established since early 2000, it can be described as one of the first of its kind in Sydney. This was the advantage of having experienced participants.

Bordering the Parramatta River, and benefiting from its fluvial transport as well as its proximity to Concord and Burwood train stations, Breakfast Point moderate weather and panoramic views of the water, and Sydney City’s famous Harbour Bridge. The suburb contains different types of housing ranging from two-storey low density homes to high rise apartments. The developer’s marketing tools and slogans focus on the elements cited above to engage prospective buyers. Their motivation to have close proximity to public transport and the city, and the common desire of buyers to adhere to sea change mode form a kind of subculture unified in the suburb and create different types of consumptions.
Harrington Grove however, is a Greenfield site located about forty five kilometres from Sydney CBD. This MPE forms part of a bigger MPE, Harrington Park. Harrington Grove is a MPE under construction. Only about thirty percent of the estate has been completed to date. Residents are new to the estate and this can offer the thesis useful information about their fresh experience that can be more accurate and up to date. Harrington Grove is surrounded by a natural, green landscape with woodlands and a panoramic view of Camden Valley and the Blue Mountains.

Breakfast Point and Harrington grove have been selected for this study as they provide wide range of residents experience as the first has been established since more than decade, the second is still under construction and current residents would provide recent experience. In addition, the first estate combines high and medium density developments, while they are managed under community title scheme, many precincts are equally managed under strata title scheme which supply the study with more than one type of legal documents, and a distinctive participants experience from traditional low density MPEs. Breakfast Point is one of the rare MPEs bordering the water and located near a fluvial transport facility. Harrington Grove however, as noted before, is a low density MPE under development and provides the study with current and ongoing experience of “new” buyers (consumers). In addition, Harrington Grove is dotted with comparatively large blocks of land and mansion-like dwellings which are located within a bush landscape. Thus, these uniqueness characteristics of both estates contribute to data needed to answer the research questions and meet the aims and objectives of the study which is primarily concerned about social and physical outcomes while consuming MPEs. As indicated previously in this Chapter, this study not seeking to generalise its finding on all types of MPEs, however, as Johansson (2003) noted, if a case is purposefully selected, then there is an interest in generalising the findings, accordingly, generalising the findings of this study will be recommended for further investigations.

The study is interested in these two estates as there characteristics offer vital information about a specific social research matter. It is about the consumption of space and place of MPEs within a geographical setting and then explore its relation to residents social status, thus, this involves the examination of social and aesthetics features of these estates which are some of the rare to my knowledge that affords these features. Some of these social and aesthetical features are the locations of the specific geographical and natural setting of the estates, the
building, architectural and landscape’s designs, the attractive and unique size of blocks of land, and a particular legal status. All these factors cited here and more in details in the coming sections of this Chapter respond to essential components of the study such as consuming the physical aspects of MPEs and consuming for taste, motivation of buyers and later residents as consumers to consume such products and the way socially and culturally they consume them and how this is related to residents social distinction. Other factors that characterise these estates are their legal status for one and being under development for the other provide various and rich data based participants’ experience.

Thus, this study generally tends to be a “purposefully selected”. According to Johansson (2003, p. 8) “The alternative to an intrinsic case study is a purposefully or analytically selected case. A case may be purposefully selected in virtue of being, for instance, information-rich, critical, revelatory, unique, or extreme”.

4.3.2 Breakfast Point.

Figure 4.3 Breakfast Point. Source: Breakfast Point Estate (2013)

**Geographic location and general description**
Situated about ten kilometres from Sydney CBD, this MPE is consisted of about fifty two Hectares of waterfront luxury houses and apartments of low, medium and high density of about 2700 residents.

Figure 4.4. A map showing Breakfast Point circled in red and Sydney CBD circled in purple. Source: Google Maps (2013)
Breakfast Point is located on the Parramatta River, adjacent the panoramic Kendall Bay and Fairmile Cove to the north, narrowly separated by Hill Street Mortlake from Majors Bay to the west and, surrounded by the suburb of Cabarita from the south. The suburb is a combination of a number of precincts which all together constitute the suburb of Breakfast Point with the postcode 2137 under Canada Bay Council jurisdiction.

Administratively, Breakfast Point is bounded by the Parramatta River in the north and east, Medora Street, Bishop Street and Brays Road in the south, and Adams Street, Emily Street and Tennyson Road in the west.

The construction commenced in 1999 and by 2005 the majority of town planning, engineering and community infrastructure including roads, streets, utility services, community centres, sport facilities and parks were operational. Breakfast Point is situated in walking distance to
Mortlake ferry allowing residents to travel to Sydney and Parramatta. Breakfast Point is a combination of different types of vertical and horizontal MPEs. While the construction of the first estate dates to 1999, there are still ongoing developments of new MPEs and will be discussed further in the coming sections. Breakfast Point like most of other MPEs in Australia, is partially walled on one side to prevent noise of neighbouring busy road and symbolically gated on the four main entries. Streets and traffic of the suburb have planned matching older suburbs of Sydney; two ways streets with side parking with different time limitations and, underground car parks for residents and visitors.

Figure 4.6 Symbolic wall offering a kind of design more than security. Tennyson Road, breakfast Point.
Source: Author (2013)
Figure 4.7 A side entry to Breakfast Point, fenced, but there is no gate. Source: Author (2013)
Breakfast Point is a fully integrated typically Australian suburb missing only a primary school; it has its own town centre with food and grocery retailers, bank, restaurants, clothing shops, child care facilities, hairdressers, day spa, pharmacy, dentist and optometrist. In addition, the suburb and as part of its master plan, also integrates a community meeting hall, recreation and leisure centre, a sport oval, water front park, foreshore cycleway and landscaping and sea walls. Breakfast Point is connecting to Burwood train station and Concord by bus and to Sydney and Parramatta by a ferry which is located hundreds of meters on Cabarita Park and the suburb is connected to the opposing suburb of Putney by a daily ferry too.

**Housing type and tenure**

Breakfast Point is planned and developed as a community title scheme with some of the development is registered into a strata title scheme which form a part of the whole suburb’s community title. The suburb has been planned as a master-plan that includes many different aspects of master-planned developments under different names and housing types. These master-plans planned, staged by Rose Development and approved by planning authorities in
stages as precincts and will be discussed further in the coming section, some of these precincts are still under construction. Some of the characteristics of Breakfast Point are that it contains not only horizontal, low and medium density houses like Australian types of MPEs, but also integrates vertical multi-storey apartments and will explored in the next paragraph.

Breakfast Point is a residential suburb with homes ranging from 450,000 dollars to over three millions dollars and combines the following developments:
The village centre is a mixed use development of ground floor retail and services facilities and one top floor residential apartments. The village centre properties are strata titles and managed by an on-site management which report to the suburb’s community association.
Admiralty Drive Homes, a type of two-storey detached homes built around Admiralty Drive in a circular shape.
Pavilions, Endeavour, Sirius Scarborough, Acacia and Norfolk are five storey apartments’ buildings.
Shutters, a three-storey apartments building.
Sirius, a two-storey Townhouse dwelling.
Bellona, two-storey townhouses dwellings.
The Hamptons, is a new release and it is already marketed and developer selling of the plan.
The Hamptons is presented a five-storey luxury apartments, two and three bedroom and penthouse apartments.
Lighthouse Hill is a ten-storey vertical MPE apartment.
The Harbour, a five-storey recently completed apartments.
Features and Facilities

Breakfast Point has natural features such as its location on the panoramic Kendall Bay on the Parramatta River, with picturesque views on the river, Sydney City and surrounding suburbs as well as a distant view on the Blue Mountains.

The suburb is developed with much recreational, leisure, sportive and social facilities, it caters for a range of social and multifunction clubs. The Country Club is one of the first developments of the suburb. Owned and managed by the Breakfast Point Community Association, it is located on the hill dominating Kendall Bay and overlooking Sydney Harbour, Country Club is a comprehensive facility that accommodates a library, state of the art gymnasium, a swimming pool overlooking the Sydney Harbour and encloses a swimming lagoon for children. The club also have five professional tennis courts a golf course, a steam room and sauna and, a spacious café and restaurant. The entry to Country Club and its car park is restricted to residents only and a prior approval is needed for their guests.

The Community Hall and Village Green both owned and managed by the community association of the suburb are surrounded by the circular shape road “Village Drive” and
dominate the rest of the suburb and much further out looking Sydney Harbour Bridge, Parramatta River and surrounding suburbs with a view on Blue Mountains. The Community Hall gathers for residents’ functions and social activities such as wedding celebrations, birthday parties and national day’s events. It is a fee paying heritage listing hall restricted to the local community and consisted of an old church used to hold masses for workers of the gas site and other factories. The Village Green is an adjacent pergola type building with toilets and barbecue areas in front of the cricket playground and both are fee paying services and restricted to the local community.

![Figure 4.10 Entry door to Breakfast Point Country Club. Source: Author (2013)](image)

There are two community facilities owned by Canada Bay City Council and managed by the local community association. The first is the Activities Centre, a former administrative building of the disaffected old site of the gas factory AGL, the building is listed as heritage and contains many heritage items inside and outsides such as the fence, the light fitting and chimney. Currently, the building offers a wide range of activities ranging from community association meetings, general community meeting, music and singing classes, tutoring classes, first aid classes and computer classes. The building interior walls carry an exposition of old frames
representing the site and its old buildings. The use and access to the activities Centre is free of charge and restricted to local residents only.

Figure 4.11 Left, Community activity centre. Right, the Men’s shed. Source: Author (2013)

The second council owned building is the Men’s Shed. The Men’s Shed is relatively small heritage building. It’s currently dedicated to all senior male members of Breakfast Point. The centre is open seven days a week and contains expensive tools and machines to provide trade and building related activities for public or private purposes such as painting or varnishing chairs and plants pots, the building use and access is restricted for local community, managed by a designated member of the community association and it is free of charge.

The suburb have two main parks; Silkstone Park, a water view medium size family park and well known for wedding photos and the Water Front Park located below Country Club, boarding the water and overlooking the Sydney Harbour and Bridge. The Water Front Park is adjacent and connected to the famous Cabarita Park that has a Marina, wharf and swimming pool.
One of the features of Breakfast Point is its location between two ferry wharfs and two marinas. The first wharf that the suburb shares its location with the neighboring suburb of Mortlake, allowing cars, bikes, and people to cross the Parramatta River to opposing suburb of Putney and from there to the North Shore in their private boats. The second wharf located in the neighboring Cabarita Park hundreds of meters only to the east of the suburb connecting the suburb to Sydney and Parramatta. Each wharf harbours a marina giving the opportunity to Breakfast Point residents to moor their private yachts and boats. The suburb has its cycleway with double purposes; allow local residents to enjoy a water front rides and connecting the main bike route between Cabarita and its Ferry, and Mortlake as well as an assembling point to cross on the ferry to Putney.

Breakfast Point like all urban suburbs across Australia, is connected to all advanced technology communication. It also covered by the Inner West Local print and digital paper and recently had its own local digital paper. Breakfast Point Lifestyle is the latest media paper covering the suburb local activities and news, real estate and social news which is accessible from www.breakfastpointlifestyle.com.au

Site History
“Today you will find that over 200 years after Thomas Rose set foot on these shore his family still remains intimately connected with the local community through the founding of Breakfast Point” (Breakfast Point.com, 2013).

Breakfast Point is thought to be named in honour of the first point of contact between Europeans and Aborigines on the land, during breakfast (City of Canada Bay, 2013). According to Attenbrow (2009), the Aboriginal name Booridiow-o-gule is associated with Breakfast Point, where a Breakfast was cooked and served during an exploration of the Parramatta River led by Captain Hunter on 5 February 1788.

The first settlement of the area dates from the early 1800s, with land used mainly for farming. However, many industries were established in the early 1900s, such as AGL gas work which was the primary coal gas producing site, providing the energy needs of Sydney for over 100 years. With the introduction of natural gas, coal gas production ceased and the site ended its industrial life. The subsequent remediation action plan clean-up resulted in all the vegetation, and all the soil and significant portions of the underlying bedrock, being removed from the site. (NSW Government, 2013)

With the area remaining industrial, there was no population until after 2001. Rapid growth took place between 2001 and 2011, a result of large numbers of new dwellings being added to the area, particularly from high and medium density housing on the former AGL gasworks site. (City of Canada Bay, 2013).

**Planning and Development of Breakfast Point**

According to the Breakfast Point master plan (NSW Government, 2013), much of the area at Breakfast Point was occupied by the Mortlake Gas Works of the Australian Gaslight Company (AGL). AGL began developing the site from 1883. The Mortlake Gasworks site offered river access for colliers to bring coal and virtually unlimited space for expansion. The gas works remained in operation until the 1990s when in 1998 AGL, with the introduction of natural gas, coal gas production ceased and the site ended its industrial life after a selected tender process, selected Rosecorp Pty. Ltd. to progressively acquire and develop the Mortlake site. Redevelopment has proceeded since then.
Breakfast Point is a Brownfield site. A Brownfield site is a disaffected pervious industrial land that has been rezoned for urban residential purposes. Alker et al. (2000, p.7) define Brownfield site as “any land or which has previously been used or developed and is not currently fully in use, although it may be partially occupied or utilized. It may also be vacant, derelict or contaminated.” Dixon (2006, p.6) describes Brownfield site as “any land, which has been previously developed, including derelict and vacant land, which may or may not be contaminated”.

Thus, Breakfast Point site as a previous coal gas production site for more than 100 years was contaminated. Under the NSW Managing Land Contamination Planning act and Guidelines of SEPP 55, (State Environment Planning Policy, 55) the site was restricted for residential development. A remediation action plan was put in place and most of the vegetation and soil being removed from the site and a new soil and revegetation of site was conducted prior to the development approval.

Figure 4.13 Dated 1933, Breakfast Point AGL gas site. Source: Local Studies Collection, City of Canada Bay Library Service (2013)
The site has been rezoned under the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) No 91 of Canada Bay City Council. The construction of the site has been approved for two master plans; 1999 Breakfast Point master plan and 2002 Breakfast Point master plan. 2002 master plan is an improvement of the previous plan with increasing of floor space ration, number of stories and the creation of the community plan that lead to a community title scheme. However, issues rising between Canada Bay City Council and the developer slowed the process of development. The developer lodged a new master plan directly to the NSW Department of Planning and the application has been transferred from Canada Bay and in accordance with Division3, Part 3A of the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (EPA 1979) major infrastructure and other projects, the Breakfast Point Concept Plan 2005 has been created allowing the developer to construct new phases with more diversifying commercial and residential developments while maintaining the objectives of 2002 concept plan in relation to the establishment of a new community within an urban village and urban context, and achieve quality urban design with high levels of amenity at the street level and create a sense of community (Please see appendix 5).
Demography

According to the Census 2011 of Population, there were 2,744 residents in Breakfast Point. In Breakfast Point, 54.9% of people were born in Australia. The most common other countries of birth were China (excludes SARs and Taiwan) 7.7%, Korea, Republic of (South) 4.1%, England 3.5%, Hong Kong (SAR of China) 2.1% and Italy 2.0%. 59.2% of people only spoke English at home. Other languages spoken at home included Mandarin 7.7%, Cantonese 5.7% and Korean 4.5%. The most common responses for religion in Breakfast Point (State Suburbs) were Catholic 32.9%, No Religion 20.4% and Anglican 13.0%.

According to ABS (2011), in the 2011 census the population of Breakfast Point was 2,744 and is comprised of approximately 52.4% females and 47.6% males.

The median/average age of the people in Breakfast Point is 40 years of age.

54.8% of people living in the suburb of Breakfast Point were born in Australia. The other top responses for country of birth were 7.7% China, 4.1% Korea, Republic of, 3.5% England, 2.1% Hong Kong, 1.9% Italy, 1.9% South Africa, 1.8% New Zealand, 1.6% Malaysia, 1.2% India, 1.0% United States of America, 0.7% Vietnam, 0.6% Scotland, 0.6% Singapore, 0.6% Sri Lanka.

59.1% of people living in Breakfast Point speak English only. The other top languages spoken are 7.6% Mandarin, 6.8% Language spoken at home not stated, 5.6% Cantonese, 4.5% Korean, 4.4% Italian, 1.9% Greek, 1.5% Arabic, 1.1% Other, 0.9% Hindi.

The religious makeup of Breakfast Point is 32.9% Catholic, 20.4% No religion, 12.9% Anglican, 9.2% Religious affiliation not stated, 4.5% Eastern Orthodox, 4.0% Buddhism, 3.7% Presbyterian and Reformed, 3.3% Uniting Church, 2.0% Christian, nfd, 1.7% Hinduism.

61.6% of people are married, 24.2% have never married and 8.5% are divorced and 2.9% are separated. There are 66 widowed people living in Breakfast Point.

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33 Special Administrative Regions
69.5% of the people living in Breakfast Point over the age of 15 and who identify as being in the labour force are employed full time, 22.0% are working on a part time basis. Breakfast Point has an unemployment rate of 3.5%.

The main occupations of people living in Breakfast Point are 32.6% Professionals, 26.3% Managers, 16.3% Clerical & administrative workers, 9.1% Sales workers, 5.9% Community & personal service workers, 4.9% Technicians & trades workers, 1.9% Labourers, 1.8% Occupation inadequately described/ Not stated, 1.2% Machinery operators & drivers.

The main industries people from Breakfast Point work in are 12.6% Professional, scientific and technical services, 11.2% Health care and social assistance, 9.5% Wholesale trade, 9.4% Retail trade, 8.8% Financial and insurance services, 8.3% Manufacturing, 7.4% Education and training, 5.2% Construction, 4.1% Administrative and support services.

28.3% of homes are fully owned, and 41.4% are in the process of being purchased by home loan mortgage. 29.6% of homes are rented.

The median individual income is $1064 per week and the median household income is $2503 per week.

The median rent in Breakfast Point is $650 per week and the median mortgage repayment is $2817 per month.
4.3.3 Harrington Grove

Figure 4.15 Harrington Grove, Corner of two busy roads, Camden Valley Way and Oran Park Road. 
Source: Author (2013)

**Geographic location and general description**

Located about fifty Kilometres from Sydney CBD and centrally between Liverpool and Camden towns, Harrington Grove is a MPE partially completed (Under development) and forms a part of the bigger and larger Harrington Park, which is a master planned suburb developed since early 1990s and have the postcode 2567.
Figure 4.16 Harrington Grove site location and nearby Harrington Park MPE. Source: Bing Maps (2014)
Harrington Grove has been planned to be developed in different stages. The current study covers the section developed and under development which called Harrington Grove East. Therefore the focus and location of this study is mainly on this section. The non-developed section which is called Harrington Grove West is still Greenfield row site.

Harrington Grove bordered by Camden Valley Way which runs southerly along the estate, Oran Park Road from the north and Harrington Parkway from the west. The estate is within two kilometres from Narellan shopping and business centres and across the road from the industrial hub of Smeaton Grange. The estate has three entries; one from Harrington Park via Harrington Parkway, one from Oran Park Road and one from Camden Valley Way via Sir Warwick Fairfax Drive. Harrington Grove benefits from the shopping centre, public school, childcare centres, streams, parks and modern sporting facilities of its closest neighbour Harrington Park, the renowned multi award winning estate (www.harringtongrove.com.au, 2014).

**Site History**
The estate has a long history of being the homestead of a rich family that used to own thousands of acres of grazing land in the area which was maintained over the years with a parklike. The current site contains heritage items such as the Homestead that now is used as the sales office.
Camden city Council imposed a covenant on the development of the site as to maintain the previous owner wish of the site to keep the area green.

The history of Harrington Park and Harrington Grove began in 1944 when Sir Warwick Fairfax, who lived on the property build the current Homestead as the family residence (Griffen-Foley, 2007). Later, the property and the estate became the family holiday home and recently, under the approval of Lady Mary Fairfax the property developers applied for the rezoning of the land which led to the creation of Harrington Park estate (harringtonpark.com.au) and few years later to the development of Harrington Grove.

Features and Facilities

Figure 4.19 The Country Club, the “pride” of the developer. Sources: Author (2013) and Harrington Grove Country Club (2013)

Harrington Grove estate is featured with a natural woodland setting and panoramic views on the Blue Mountains from the west and the greenly hills of Razorback and Cowdor to the south providing the estate with an influential feature for bush lifestyle and mountain views lovers. In addition to its natural features, Harrington Grove is provided from its early stage of development with physical and social facilities which have also been used in the developer’s marketing tool to attract buyers.
One of the most impressive facilities is the Harrington Grove Country Club, the two levels one acre building hosts many social and sports facilities such as the wedding function hall, the Gym, and a restaurant/Bar Grill and opens to the general public. However, the developer, on the estate’s website, still states that residents of Harrington Grove receive membership to the Country Club and use of all its facilities which contradict the advertisement’s campaign which promote the estate as an exclusive place (Please refer to the estate’s website). The Country Club is considered as the backbone of the development activities.

Set amidst gorgeous leafy surrounds, Harrington Grove Country Club is a meeting place to encourage social interaction, recreation, sport, or simply sit and enjoy the views. The leisure and recreation facilities will be reserved for residents and their guests. Enjoying excellent natural acoustics, the amphitheatre is perfect for outdoor entertainment including local concerts with professional music and theatre performances. (www.harringtongrove.com.au, 2013).

The estate is also equipped with walking and cycling trails and tennis courts and the heritage building of the Homestead which used to be the Fairfax family farm house for generations. The estate has its own online media, the Grovelife.com.au which covers the estates social activities and provides regular local news and advertisement, it is accessible to the community’ members with a log in system.

**Housing type and tenure**

According to the developer (Harrington Grove, 2013) Harrington Grove Estate comprises more than 1500 residential allotments. Less than 50% of these allotments have been built so far, the size of allotments varies between 600 to 1500 SQM.

The land in Harrington Grove is rezoned into different zones and land uses including 3 residential zones only; Zone R1 General Residential, R5 Large Lot Residential and E4 Environmental Living. However, on the three residential zones mentioned above, only low residential development permitted. Houses on Harrington Grove are large single and double storey homes with wide front landscape and porch style entries (please see appendix 11).
Planning and Development of Harrington Grove

According to the Camden Local Environmental Plan known as LEP 2010, Harrington Grove is an approved community title residential development that includes over 1,200 residential lots. Harrington Grove occupies part of the former grazing property that was associated with the Harrington Park Homestead. The subject land is located within the Camden Council Local Government Area and the site is 6km northeast of Camden, 20km southwest of the Liverpool CBD, and about 50km southwest of the Sydney CBD. The residential development of Harrington Park is located immediately to the south of the site, with the South West Growth Centre abutting the northern boundary. Harrington Grove is bound by Cobbitty Road and Oran Park Drive to the north, Camden Valley Way to the east and Macquarie Grove Road to the west. The Northern Road divides the Harrington Grove development area in a north-south alignment.

Harrington Grove was rezoned for residential development in September 2007. Since then, a multi-purpose community facility incorporating a restaurant, cafe, function rooms and recreational activities has been constructed in addition to over 250 residential allotments. As part of the development over 280 hectares of land containing Cumberland Plain Woodland vegetation is being protected for conservation and rehabilitation, which is to be mostly maintained as part of the community title scheme but still accessible to the broader local community and general public. (Camden City Council, 2012).

As part of rezoning Harrington Grove, the land was comprehensively investigated to confirm its suitability for a residential development. Site investigation studies undertaken to determine the constraints of the subject land were used to support the evolution of a concept design for an environmentally responsive development outcome. The concept plan below illustrates the area of bushland to be retained and green spaces to be created, which is substantially greater than other urban developments within the region.
Harrington Grove is an estate within the suburb of Harrington Park. According to ABS (2011), in the 2011 census the population of Harrington Park was 7,638 and is comprised of approximately 50.6% females and 49.4% males.

The median/average age of the people in Harrington Park is 33 years of age.

78.9% of people living in the suburb of Harrington Park were born in Australia. The other top responses for country of birth were 4.2% England, 1.3% New Zealand, 0.9% Scotland, 0.8% India, 0.8% Italy, 0.7% Philippines, 0.6% Fiji, 0.5% South Africa, 0.4% Ireland, 0.4% Chile, 0.3% Afghanistan, 0.3% Lebanon, 0.3% Hong Kong, 0.3% Mauritius.

84.6% of people living in Harrington Park speak English only. The other top languages spoken are 2.6% Language spoken at home not stated, 2.0% Italian, 1.5% Other, 1.0% Arabic, 0.9% Spanish, 0.8% Hindi, 0.6% Croatian, 0.6% Serbian, 0.5% Mandarin.

The religious makeup of Harrington Park is 39.7% Catholic, 28.2% Anglican, 10.8% No religion, 4.1% Religious affiliation not stated, 2.6% Eastern Orthodox, 2.5% Uniting Church, 2.0% Presbyterian and Reformed, 1.6% Christian, 1.4% Pentecostal, 1.2% Islam.
64.5% of people are married, 25.7% have never married and 5.1% are divorced and 2.6% are separated. There are 114 widowed people living in Harrington Park.

64.8% of the people living in Harrington Park over the age of 15 and who identify as being in the labour force are employed full time, 25.9% are working on a part time basis. Harrington Park has an unemployment rate of 3.9%.

The main occupations of people living in Harrington Park are 17.6% Clerical & administrative workers, 17.0% Professionals, 15.3% Managers, 14.5% Technicians & trades workers, 11.6% Sales workers, 9.3% Community & personal service workers, 6.8% Machinery operators & drivers, 6.1% Labourers, 1.8% Occupation inadequately described/ Not stated.

The main industries people from Harrington Park work in are 12.5% Manufacturing, 11.7% Retail trade, 9.1% Construction, 9.0% Education and training, 8.9% Health care and social assistance, 6.8% Transport, postal and warehousing, 6.7% Public administration and safety, 5.5% Wholesale trade, 5.2% Professional, scientific and technical services.

19.6% of homes are fully owned, and 66.1% are in the process of being purchased by home loan mortgage. 13.0% of homes are rented.

The median individual income is $770 per week and the median household income is $2124 per week.

The median rent in Harrington Park is $465 per week and the median mortgage repayment is $2500 per month.

4.4 Conclusion

This Chapter discussed the research methods and design that were regarded as appropriate to this study. It argued that qualitative research method is the best suitable and effective in a research that focus on investigating the social impact of case study.
The research design chosen was one that attempted to explore, from the participants’ perspective, supported by a range of secondary data, how affect, social distinction is embedded in residents of MPEs and the impact of exterior agents on this.

The research method for this study involved semi-structured interviews which provided guidance for the interviewer and at the same time allowed the interviewees to speak freely. Analysis of the data involved building categories from participants’ responses and literature reviewed. The evaluation of the research and limitations of this study were also discussed. This Chapter have also outlined the participants’ characteristics, the nature and the importance of the case study chosen for this study.

The next Chapter is one of three empirical study Chapters which introduce the empirical part of this thesis and develop and discuss part of the data analysis in a thematic structure.

Chapter 5 Self-Motivation, Developers and Government’ Role

What persuaded us to buy in Harrington grove was a whole bunch of good things, the size of the block, the freedom to choose the design of your home, access to private
This Chapter is the first of three empirical Chapters in this study. It focuses on analysing and discussing data related to buyers’ motivation and the role of developers and local governments in promoting and spreading MPEs in Australia using the two Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove as samples taking into account the particularities and uniqueness of their features. The second is Chapter six; it focuses on how MPEs are socially and physically are consumed and how it is related to resident desire for social distinction. Chapter seven is the third and last of the empirical Chapters, it focuses on the social and cultural outcomes when consuming the estates, more specifically, the Chapter explores residents’ aspiration to social distinction through the club and brand Culture and the formation of subculture.

Thus, this Chapter explores the motivation factors that lead prospective buyers to buy and live in Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove as well as explore the roles of developers and governments and their involvement in fast spreading of MPEs in general. It is developed around four sections detailing thematically both targeted and emerged sub themes. Motivation to buy in Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove, found according to data to be linked to five main factors (please refer to diagram 5.1 below); these factors are then sub-grouped into smaller categories and are discussed through Chapter five, six and seven. It is worth noting that some themes showing in diagram 5.1 are also discussed in Chapters six and seven under different themes, this interconnection is also linked to the fact that buyers and later residents of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove found to be motivated by most of factors discussed through the empirical Chapters which justify the interconnection of the themes34.

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34 Please refer also to diagram 4.1 as well
5.1 Self-Motivation

Figure 5.1 Diagram of Motivation chart.
5.1.1 Motivation by Self-Governance

Our experience with private governance is fairly short, but we’re happy so far, we are looking forward to disconnecting from local government... How? I don’t know. We hope to realise it one day. (Chris and Sarah).

Field work research on existent self-governance in MPEs support claims that this thesis aims to prove towards the tendency of some MPEs towards a complete autonomy and self-governance. Hook and Vrdoljak conducted a study on the heterotopia in South African Security Park that form a type of MPEs. They observed that residents of these security parks have a strong penchant for independence. They stated that:

...an agenda of separatism is enforced in security-park living arrangements seems obvious...The outcome has been that the city council has only very limited powers of intervention within security-park complexes, which is not the case with the vast majority of building projects scattered across the greater Johannesburg metropolitan area (Hook and Vrdoljak, 2002, p. 12)

Giglia who studied gated MPEs in Mexico City, also observed an empowerment of self-governance within these estates and suggested that the examination of gating and the DIY (Do it yourself) governance of MPEs offer privileged vantage points to study the incipient constitution of new forms of citizen participation (Giglia, 2008).

There are two motives for self-governance of MPEs; first, the residents’ tendency to manage the estate infrastructure and communal life in their own way. Second, self-governance can go beyond simply managing the estate, to a vision of a wider form of private governance that begins by suppressing local government taxes, all the way up to implementing one’s own rules of subculture, which do not conflict with existing local and state laws and public orders.

From the twenty six participants interviewed, eleven openly expressed an interest in private governance or been motivated by self-governance. Ten other participants either ignored the questions or avoid talking about it or their response to the matter was not clear or unrelated. Five participants however expressed different opinions on self-governance and were not motivated by it.
Chris and Sarah from Harrington Grove were relaxed, and the interview was going smoothly until I asked them about their experience with private governance and community association. As this point, they suddenly sat up very straight and alert and Sarah gave the above statement cited at the beginning of this Chapter in a complicit manner.

Chris and Sarah are in their mid-forties, he is a self-employed in the building industry and she is a specialised educator. They come from the Newcastle region and bought the block of land in mid-2009 and were among the first residents to settle into the estate. As their interest for private governance was obvious, I decided to allow more time for the question. Chris and Sarah, with their short experience on the matter, seemed to have thought about it years earlier. Accordingly, they started dreaming about self-governance, making enquiries about it endeavouring to find out to what extent the community association could provide this self-governance within the current legislation of the state.

Peter and Carmen, a retired couple living in Breakfast Point since 2006, had many reasons for choosing this MPE: It was well located on the Parramatta River offering panoramic views and pleasant lifestyle. However, the deciding factor for Peter and Carmen was that the estate was managed by a community association, which meant that the residents can vote and make their own decisions. Moreover, they enquired with the developer about the possibility of joining the community’s management board. Peter stated:

\[
\text{City councils have failed to provide us with adequate policies... each suburb needs its own policies and what is applicable to Breakfast Point may not suit neighbouring suburbs, local governments choose what suits their financial and political interests... Here in Breakfast Point we choose our representative to... the body corporate that is made of local residents led by the community association which is located on the estate. (Peter and Carmen)}
\]

Inspiration by self-governance is also discernible among other participants such as Dan and Jenny of Harrington Grove who are attracted by self-governance as a concept that only MPEs could provide, when they were looking for a new home.

\[
\text{It’s not 100% private yet, we still have to deal with many of the council’s policies on the estate, but I agree that is much better than being ruled completely by people who}\n\]
visit the estate on elections. [Then Dan continued]: Can you imagine yourself or even your next door neighbour representing you in estate decision making, someone from the estate work for the estate, that’s how I see it. (Dan and Jenny).

Philip and Ann were also motivated by the private governance available for MPEs. They had moved to Breakfast Point in 2007, coming from the neighbouring suburb of Burwood. They believed that MPEs offer an alternative way to self-governance through under the management of the community association. They stated that residents of their estate are elected within the community association to manage the day to day affairs of the estate which results in the direct involvement of residents and an excellent quality of life.

The pursuit for self-governance found in the participants’ statements in this section, reflects Harvey (2007) and Foucault’s (2008) arguments discussed in Chapter three, both maintained that the shift towards self-governance is due to impact of neo-liberalism on political and economic and social patterns of citizens.

Yves and Pam from Breakfast Point had different thoughts about private governance. Having moved to the estate in 2010 with no interests in self-governance, their position had not changed, they had been motivated by factors such as lifestyle and exclusivity and accepted private governance through the community association as they had no choice. According to Yves:

Private governance can provide good services at the estate level, but we need a real government to supply and maintain major infrastructure. Do you think the community association will be able to cope with a major disaster? Personally, I don’t think so.

Terry and Gina from Harrington Grove also had divergent opinions on private governance. After spending five years in a similar estate near Brisbane, they told me in the interview that among other factors, they had been attracted by the concept of MPEs as it provides great lifestyle and community spirit, however, they believe that the reputation of self-governance is undermined by the people who run the estate and represent residents to the body corporate explaining that self-governance is something “We’re not ready for in Australia Yet”

However, overall, the perception participants had of self-governance, and their stories and answers, indicate that motivation by self-governance is high among MPE buyers. Some
residents, like Chris and Sarah gave high priority for self-governance when they bought their home but they still believe that this self-governance is not complete and are hoping that in the future they will enjoy a total independence from local government. Other participants like Dan and Jenny also share their hope of reaching some independence from local government. Dan’s argument is that in self-governance, governing representatives are elected from neighbours and will work better for the estate. Dan and Jenny’s motivation went as far as participating in the governance themselves sharing an even deeper inspiration of independence. Other participants such as Peter and Carmen have put more pressure on local government, and their motivation for MPEs is due to their previous unhappy experience. It can be observed that many participants came from nearby suburbs in their quest for self-governance.

On the other hand, some participants declared not to be motivated by private governance or self-governance. They either estimate that self-governance is inadequate due to infrastructure costs or that self-governance is something not applicable in Australia yet.

Results of the field work on motivation by self-governance under the various elements cited above, such as a sense of safety and inspiration for complete independence from local government are identical to empirical studies conducted by Glesson (2003) and Thompson (2013) and correspond with the views expressed by the developer of Harrington Grove interviewed in this study.

Glesson (2003) argues that the common preference for private governance among MPE residents is mainly due to security concerns and buyer aspirations, the former, in the sense of convenient facilities that are close to home in the physical meaning and restricted to residents. This creates the feeling of security even through current and previous research detected no security motive behind the proliferation of MPEs. Buyers aspirations however, are strongly confirmed in participants declarations.

Thompson (2013) contended that the sense of private governance among MPE residents is a consistent theme in academic debates. He argued that the discernment of private governance is linked to neoliberalism and has its own mechanisms such as community title, covenant restrictions and owner corporations.
Karen representing the developer of Harrington Grove (Dandaloo Development) in her interview declared that many buyers volunteer to participate to the community management and this happens on their arrival.

5.1.2 Encouraged by Family and Friends’ Experience

The factor of encouragement by the experience of friends is common on both estates. Many people consume or buy because of the experience of friends and family. In the case of MPEs, which are considered as providing lifestyle and a sign of social status, buyers are more influenced by their family and friends seeking to match their social status with them.

In the case of Charles and Sonia, the experience of their friends who settled before them in Breakfast Point, played a major role in choosing their estate. They came from far north NSW in 2009 to launch a new business in the food industry and said that visiting the estate previously and noticing the positive opinion of their friends gave them a bit of encouragement to overcome what they called “Community association hassles” and helped them understand how the concept works. Therefore, the factor of friends and their experience play a role in motivation and impact their decisions. Similarly, Blundson and McNeil (2010) argue that there is no longer any structural connection, or inherent unity, between social location and lifestyle. In this view, society previously offered a set of types of lifestyle that people selected on the basis of choices determined by socialisation into class cultures. Like Charles and Sonia, Chris and Sarah reported being influenced by friends who moved to the nearby MPE Harrington Park across the street from their current home. They visited the estate twice and were inspired by their friends’ satisfaction.

One of the things which motivated us was the fact that our friends had been living in Harrington Park for almost five years, they looked very happy, everything was different from our previous area, and we felt a bit behind.

Matching family or friends’ lifestyle and consumption is known by academics as “social influence” or social contagion” (Dholakia and Talukdar, 2004). Social influence in the case of MPEs fits well with existent theories, which has been discussed amply in Chapter three. For example, theorists working from socio-cultural perspectives such as Vygotsky (1978), Roth (2004) and Owen (2001) found that people and their social environment are inherently
interconnected and cannot be separated, and personal developments are placed in the social and cultural environment which forms their social identity.

5.2 The Role of Developers in Motivating Prospective Buyers

...The sales team was very helpful, they gave us all documents and advised us to speak to our conveyancer ...They also gave us a bundle of magazines, discs and a USB that has everything you want to know about the estate. Things went very smooth, and they were well organised (George and Stephanie)

Developers, using various methods in spreading MPEs culture, have an important role in motivating buyers by different means and impacting their decision making using a wide range of traditional tools such as road signs and print media to modern and sophisticated methods such as internet, website and social media. In this thesis, the developer’s role as a theme links motivation to consumption and subculture as it plays the role of connector between them, the link to consumption is made through information to prospect buyers and the link to subculture is made through the community association, an important ingredient in the formation and regulation of subculture within MPEs residents.

Using data from residents, developers and council planners interviews, as well as analysing developers’ marketing materials and home purchase contracts themselves, this Chapter examines the role the developer plays in helping to orchestrate consumption through the following themes: Marketing and Advertising, Information to Prospective Buyers and Community Association. Developers’ role is very influential among participants’ responses. All participants have shared a story or answered with ample details to questions that are related to developers’ role sub-themes.

5.2.1 Marketing and Advertising

With all my experience in property marketing, my husband and I were fascinated with the huge sign’s content on the corner of Camden Valley Way and Cobbity Road...We couldn’t avoid looking at the sign every time we drove on Camden Valley Way- We ended up buying (Albert and Kate).
As this quote from Kate (Harrington Grove) shows marketing and advertising comprise an important tool used by developers to promote their product (MPEs) and influence buyers. According to Goodman and Douglas (2010) advertising for MPEs is often aimed at engendering an emotional response, promoting not only the product that is the house and land, but a particular lifestyle. Frequently, the lifestyle focus is upon the idealised construction of community with links to the natural world, such as bushland, beaches or lakes.

_The Rose family’s affinity with this land has become ingrained in its development, in every aspect of its architecture and in every detail of its beauty. From the magnificent buildings that grace its shores, to the rolling green grass that dresses its lawns, the facilities that provide the foundations for a better way of living, Rose has endeavoured to make the coastline and surrounds of Breakfast Point a special place to be, and a proud place for those who call it home. It’s the combination of location, amenities and attention to detail that culminates in the unrivalled lifestyle that has become synonymous with Breakfast Point. It is a lifestyle that invites residents to plot their own course, write their own history and discover and build the life they have always dreamed of living._ (www.breakfastpoint.com, 2013).

Like Albert and Kate of Harrington Grove (cited above), nearly all participants have showed that they were influenced by the marketing and advertising of their chosen MPE. Charlie and Tina from Harrington Grove gave similar statement about their experience with marketing and advertisement materials they fall on while looking for a home to buy; they said that road sign panels and their content themes impacted our decision and felt attracted to visit the estate for first inspection. As Charlie stated:

...there is something...say... appealing in these signs boards; we kept looking at them even after we bought the block of land. They give a feeling of happiness (Charlie and Tania).

Tony and Rosa bought their apartment in Breakfast Point since 2006. They look amazed and overwhelmed by the advertisement materials they received from the developer when first visited the sales office;
in addition to the tour of the estate and its Country Club, Gym and the community hall which already made us... stunned, we received a pile of high quality, state of the art magazines which explain the care the developer is taking to make everything perfect (Tony and Rosa).

Albert and Kate work respectively as marketer and real estate sales adviser. They both have enough experience in the marketing arena and would be able to detect the sense of motivation in the developer’s message on that road sign. This was the same for Charlie and Tina and Tony and Rosa and most of the participants who have been struck by the content or the presentation of the materials that come from the sign board panels, the magazines, newspapers, virtual tours (Websites), USB and DVD.

Wendy also admitted she had been influenced by the estate advertisement, in Wendy’s words:

_The wall signage on both corners of the estate’s entries is impressive. Their rusted, aged style give the impression that the estate is well and long established one. I used to drive along Camden Valley Way, slow down and contemplated the signage. One day, I found myself at the sales office enquiring (Wendy)._ 

Wendy’s answer matches well Featherstone’s (1991) argument in Chapter three about the impact of marketing and advertising to motivate consumers, He noted that advertising is able to exploit consumers and attach images of romance and desire. Dan and Jenny from Harrington Grove answering a question about if they have planned to move in MPEs when deciding moving home. They said that originally they weren’t interested specifically by the concept of MPEs. However, while doing the home’s hunting, they found about the estate through advertising and the road panel signs. They spoke about the developer’s introduction to the concept, the benefits of living in MPEs such as exclusive use of facilities and private governance. They agree not to feel pressed or hassled, but indeed were very impressed by the presentation, site visiting and facilities including the Country Club which has been constructed before the housing construction begin and harbour the sales office. Since, Dan and Jenny embraced the concept and bought a block of land in Harrington grove and build their home.

Data collected from developers of both estates under the form of advertisement materials shows what it is likely making buyers emotional; a well presented in a luxury exposition box USB
collected from Rose Development of Breakfast Point a dreamily virtual tour of one development of the estate viewer can watch a TV documentary style supported by panoramic views and movie music presented personally by director, number of people plying the role of local community members featuring in the Country Club, the gym and riding their bikes happily along their kids on the riverside. The developer telling the history of the development and the benefits to live in it such as lifestyle, luxury and exclusivity (Please see appendix 9). Magazines collected from Harrington Grove and Breakfast Point are many. While the Harrington grove ones are made from modest papers and finish, they are titled with “hooking” themes such as “Your Sanctuary” on one of these magazine, and “Harrington Grove, welcome to the golden era” on the cover of another magazine. Contents of advertisement materials of Harrington Grove focus mainly on bush views and mountains’ aspect panorama as it is the strongest attractive theme for the estate (Please refer to appendix 9).

The magazines of Breakfast Point however, are made from very high quality gloss papers assorted with PVC papers to reflect the imagery style to photos and maps. These magazines covered with different themed titles; one of them for example is titled “A sense of place, a feeling of belonging” another one “Life as it should be”. The contents of these magazines are attractive short texts under the form of residents’ quotations and some other magazines’ texts are written in embossed letters. Photos of these magazines are panoramic views available from the estate, internal views and image of streets, buildings and apartments as well as photos of families gathering happily together on parks, club and gym.

The use of thematic message in the advertisement materials such as the themes cited above showed in Wood’s work. Wood (2002) in a case study conducted on MPEs in the Hunter Valley Region located about 200 KM north of Sydney has investigated advertisement and marketing material in depth and with ample details; Wood found that the advertisement material are constructed around different themes and delivered to consumer like a delicious dish. Wood identifies that themes such as “Community”, “Lifestyle”, “Exclusivity”, “Environment”, “Leisure” and “Location”. All these themes separately or together depend on their availability supported by the physical nature of the estate which again could always suite the developer’s slogan in what Galbraith (1958) attributed to the responsibility of the producer (developer) to create the consumer desire. Babin et al. (1995) attributed it to the influence of consumer  

35 Please see Chapter six for more details.
emotions which in Kemp et al. (2012) opinion plays an important role in buyers’ decision making. Previous studies about marketing and advertisement elements in MPEs and their outcome for developers and impact on buyers’ motivation prove the correctness of the thesis to focus on and explore this sub-theme. According to Goodman and Douglas (2010), advertising for MPEs is often aimed at engendering an emotional response, promoting not only the product that is the house and land, but a particular lifestyle. Frequently, the lifestyle focus is upon the idealised construction of community with links to the natural world, such as bushland, beaches or lakes.

On the other hand, and while findings in this study implicated the developers’ roles and different tools used to create an enticement and motivate prospective buyers to buy in MPEs, and this has been supported comfortably by theoretical and empirical previous work. There are important work that have been done about other motives than the producer’s role behind human consumption. The pursuit of individual identity and self-improvement for example plays a decisive role in buyers’ motivation for consumption. This consumption often happens while connecting with surrounding community exactly as in MPEs where the pursuit of individual identity occurs within the confines and parameter of social class and social norms (Holt, 2005). Individuals follow the signs of the lifestyle and social status they aspire through their consumption choice which Bourdieu (1979) argued in Chapter three to the aspirational consumption. Residents of MPEs could also follow up their (hidden) aspiration and the developers and their marketing tools have only played a cover-up role for buyers to commit, developer had only alarmed or brings buyers attention. It could be that participants of this study have responded to an inner message rather or with the message of the developer. Academics such as Lodziak (2002) and Bauman (2007) went further arguing that when people consume, they focus on style and image and self-identity is just a part of this concept. For example, when participant Wendy of Harrington Grove was impressed by the aged sign on the entry of the estate, she evoked the need for an established estate that potentially provides her with reputed community and strong social ambiance to promote her self-identity.

5.2.2 Information to Prospective Buyers

*We kept our main concentration on the property’s suitability and the estate’s features and left the contract and other legal documents to our solicitors... We remember seeing that thick document and we knew that this is something we can’t deal with ourselves,*
so we neither asked the sales team to explain it, nor did they bother explaining it to us (Damien and Tracey).

Information to prospective buyers as a sub-theme which is strongly linked to developers’ role theme. It is also linked to motivation and consumption. While is the developers who generate, provide fully partially or not provide at all the information to prospect buyers, inexperienced, motivated and enthusiastic buyers can buy into a MPE without asking for further documents or, without examining giving documents.

The City Future Research Centre of the University of New South Wales on behalf of The Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) had conducted a study on The Cost and Provision of Community Infrastructure in Community Title Schemes in NSW where the study targeted local governments, property developers and community associations found that in the case of MPEs, prospective and new buyers receive small amount of information little details about the estate’ management, process and election for community associations, and about their rights and obligations in regards to community title. The researchers also found many non-professionals conducts related to community associations managements. The research concludes that “An issue was raised in regard to people buying into the scheme without understanding the requirements for payment of levies. This concern arises in part because real estate agents do not always provide this information to prospective resident” (City Futures Research Centre, 2008, p. 35).

Damien and Tracey from Breakfast Point (cited above) knew that such huge contract will surely contains so much legal information, so they kept focussing on the property rather and left the decision in this matter to their solicitor. Andrew, another resident of Breakfast Point said that the developer gave him all information needed and advises him to check it with his solicitor, however, the developer didn’t initially gave him a clear number on how much exactly he would pay as community association fees.

Since the first inspection I asked them how much fee in total I will have to pay, the first couple times I asked, I received different numbers, then, I had been told to check it with my solicitors which in turn couldn’t get the exact amount (Andrew)
From the 26 participants 22 declared not being well informed nor did they received accurate information from the developers and their stories range from completely neglected by developers, inaccurate information such as participants cited in the paragraph above to other who have received less or incomplete information but could overcome the issue relying on their solicitors to more satisfied but unable to deal with the legal jargon of the contact. Participant Wendy from Harrington Grove admitted receiving full and accurate information but she took a considerable time and high assistance from her solicitor to understand certain clauses.

*At first I started reading the contract myself; I did it for a couple of times over a week or so. Then, I handed it to my solicitor and it took him a week to come back to me with clear information about fees, conditions, restrictions and dozens of terms I had highlighted* (Wendy)

George and Stephanie moved to Breakfast Point in 2011 when just retired. This couple have considerable experience in buying properties; according to them, they’ve bought and sold a dozen of houses since they get married forty years ago. However, this is the first time they deal with developer directly and the first time they buy into an MPE. George and Stephanie’ experience with developers is limited, they felt very excited and satisfied with the information they’ve been supplied with. This is the first time they receive a USB and magazines about a property which explain their satisfaction. However, when I asked them if they have been told how many fees they will pay for example. They said that such thing wasn’t really mentioned or it has been discussed but they forget about it in that time. Usually when they buy a property, they first arrange the finance and inspect it, in the worst case; they send a copy of the sales contract to their solicitors for a quick advice. This time they agree feeling completely guided by the developers sales office and team; a team member to welcome them at the sales office entry, another to worm up their presence with a virtual tour, then the sales officer with whom they inspect, discuss and close the sale. A sales manager completes the transaction and forwards it to the legal team which liaise with their solicitors. Naturally, George and Stephanie are very impressed by this process/ceremony that they’re not familiar with before. The developer’s role has so much impression on them that made the whole process stress free. On the other hand, the developer knows well how this ceremony could impact hesitant and fussy buyers, hesitant and fussy buyers in this case are the buyers who ask so many questions about fees, the estate management and covenants.
The majority of participants declared been miss informed or couldn’t understand the legal terms of the contract for sale and the attachments such as the strata and community title schemes which is contain the rules and regulation for the management of the estate. These legal terms are written by or on behalf the developers and certainly have control on their contents. In addition, ongoing inquiries and requests for clarification from prospective buyers and settled residents should imply the developers to revise these contents especially when the estate management is bounded by both strata and community title schemes that add to complication of legal terms the size of the contract which in the case of Breakfast Point exceed 400 pages.

Data collected from Harrington Grove and Breakfast Point under the form of contracts for sale of land which are the legal purchasing documents and contain all covenants, restrictions and estates’ management rules could give us clear insight about both the developers’ empowerment in writing what they want and a number of clear or misleading clauses. In this section I expose and discuss complicated texts and legal jargon issues, I leave the content of covenants and restriction to the next section as part of the community association benefits, empowerments and relation to residents.

There are sixteen terms of easements and seventeen sub-terms called terms of restriction in the contract for sale of land for Harrington Grove in addition to the eleven pages of the “Community Statement Management” commonly called “By Law”. Some of the terms used in the contract are Identity of easement, profit à prendre and restriction or positive covenant to be created.

In the four hundreds plus pages of Breakfast Point contract for sale of land there are forty terms of easements and fifty five terms of restrictions. About hundred and twenty pages for strata scheme information and two hundred pages for community title scheme, many of the pages are hand written which add other difficulties for prospective buyers to interpret them (for more details, please refer to appendix 8).

Similarly, Kenna and Stevenson in a case study conducted on a MPE located in Campbelltown’s suburb of Macquarie Link South West of Sydney, found that developer’s have promised through its marketing and advertisement an utopian and distinctive living, has failed to give sufficient information about the legal obligations of covenants that himself created and endorsed into a community title scheme. Kenna and Stevenson (2010, p, 12) stated that:
Real estate agents and developers could provide more simplistic and concise information in this regard at the point of sale so that the realities of such residential living environments are not completely masked by the excitement of a new development complete with pools, tennis courts, manicured gardens and the like.

Douglas and al. (2008) also found that developers of MPEs in Australia fail to give prospective buyers sufficient legal information about the property and the estate that are buying, they recommend that developers at an early stage of engagement with prospective buyers, must provide complete and accurate information about legal structures and obligations of both developers and buyers. Levin (2011) found that MPEs developers in many cases mislead buyers in not disclosing hidden cost and “scary” or repelling legal conditions that could undermine the sales process.

However, despite the lack of information, misleading advertisement and complicated legal documents found in the data and discussed in this Chapter, participants in this study have already committed and enjoying their living in MPEs as the data showing through the four empirical Chapters. The question is how and why buyers have committed to MPEs. Most of participants who complained about these issues cited above, have been asked why they finally bought in a MPE. Three participants gave an account for their commitment. Wendy from Harrington Grove justified the purchase of property for sake of a better living where neighbours are socially well-mannered. Andrew from Breakfast Point argued the final decision to the better quality of living in general and a personal choice for sense of community in the estate. Dan and Jenny of Harrington Grove explained that despite the complications and extra ongoing fees, they prefer to be in an MPE and benefit from the culture of real and modern society. In line with the discussion of Chapter three, social status is very influent in MPEs consumption which had been described by Douglas and Isherwood (1979) as to satisfy social need of buyers. Furthermore, participants have expressed their freedom of choice through the act of consumption (Giddens, 1999). It is obvious however that buyers in MPEs don’t have really a large margin of choice, all MPEs in Australia (and worldwide too) are bounded by nearly the same amount of legal documents and developers act equally once it comes to adequate information. Thus consumers (MPEs buyers) had to choose from limited options because what they choose from is chosen for them (Bauman, 2007) by developers.
5.2.3 Community Associations

*We normally apply the best interest of residents through these covenants and restrictions. Learning from previous developments and issues, conflicts and complaints generated, in accordance with section 88B of the conveyancing Act 1919. In regards to the community association, we apply the restrictions and covenants supporting them By-law rules to empower the community association for better governance* (Developer, 2)

In this thesis, community association is linked to developer’s role theme because that the developer initially create the community association that ran and manage the estate on his behalf until developer sells the last home where he has no more interest in keep managing the community association. The sub-theme community association is important for this research as is symbolise the power of the developers’ role, the political influence and self-governance within MPEs.

Many scholars have empirically studied community associations, their legal status and empowerment in Australia and worldwide. To support the importance of this sub-theme in this introduction, Goodman and Douglas (2008), in an empirical study explored the privatised nature of MPEs in Australia, They found that in Victoria for example, MPEs community associations became so powerful that led government to impose tighter regulation of their function and place many of their assets such as parks, clubs and under local government’s managements. Thus further in this Chapter, the finding related to this sub-theme will discussed deeply. Bajracharya, et al. (2008) found that developer’s role to temporary managing MPEs and set up the community association which will be in charge to take over once developer has no more interest in governance after selling all lots.

Jim and Doris from Breakfast Point were very serious once I asked them about community association management and if any conflict related to. They looked each other before Doris answered as to give each other permission to talk about it:

*In many ways, our community association is tougher than the city council, I have to re-install new blinds to the apartment as the first ones did not match the rest of the building, they saw them from the street...I know some residents faced court over non obedience of the community association rules.*
Among the twenty six participants only seven gave detailed answer for questions related to community association, for the rest, either they preferred not to answer these questions, or, they gave briefed response such as “we’re fine”, “there are so many thing happening there”, I don’t really understand what is going on”. Or, “we don’t need more trouble, let’s not talk about it” Many of these “careful” participants asked me to make sure that their names will be modified or unknowing.

One common fact between participants who gave detailed information, is that they showed concerns about the way the estates are managed and even who credited the community associations positive comments, they expressed concerns about the empowerment of these community associations. Jeremy and Nathalie from Harrington Grove for example showed some satisfaction and enthusiasm toward the community association in previous answers, even though, they kept that enthusiasm when asked about their opinion of the community association and management of the estate, but they couldn’t hide their concern about its over-empowerment.

> It’s useful to have tough rules and we’re accepting that, as we believe that the association looks after us and protects our assets. However, sometime things go beyond these rules like when they rise fees or impose new restriction with short notice (Jeremy and Nathalie)

Answers similar to those of Jeremy and Nathalie are in harmony with the discussion in the literature review, Mudge (2008) and Lazzarato (2004) argued that under neo-liberalism, the political power is exercised throughout the society and citizens’ options are limited.

Caution and reluctance to talk about experience with community associations among participants is very high. Even when participants showed some satisfaction, they noted and expressed their concern on the empowerment of associations and their ability to imply residents to new and existing rules via covenants that are written at the time of development which oblige residents to obey these rules and be obliged in the future to obey new rules set up by the associations. This situation leads to the initial role of developers when they wrote the covenants and restrictions which while is not knowing to participants but documents from data collected in this study such as contract of sale of land and its attachments as well as interviews with town
planning authorities which could shed a light on the process the developer prepare and submit applications for community title schemes and community associations registration as well as understanding the origin of community association empowerment. It is vital to note that the lack of response to this question led to lack of information about the compatibility and professionalism of the community associations functioning.

In Harrington Grove’s Contract for sale of land, attachment “Community Management Statement” under the Community Land Development Act 1989 and Community Land Management Act 1989 under which community associations manage and rule MPEs in NSW Australia, and are written and submitted by developers prior to land development stated a text added By-Law by clause (F) in sequence 18 page 6 that:

The owner or occupier of a lot must not, except with prior to written approval of the Community Association and further in compliance with requirements (if any) of council, construct, install or attach to the outside of any building on a lot, the outside of any building containing a lot or a structure on a lot: (a) any television, radio or other aerial or antenna or any other transmitting or receiving device. (b) any solar energy collector panel.... (c) any energy equipment conservation or (d) a solar hot water system.

This is an example of dozens other By-Law restrictions created by the developer and implemented by the community associations. Another example from Breakfast Point extracted from attachment Community Management Statement for Land at Breakfast Point, in page 64, clause 76 (1) Failure to Comply with Obligation, Power of Community Association. The statement reads:

In addition to its powers under the Management Act and elsewhere in this statement, the Community Association has power under this By-Law 76 to do anything in the community parcel that should have been done by an owner or occupier or subsidiary body under this management statement but has not been done, or not done to the satisfaction of the community association.

Zack, a town planning officer from Liverpool City Council, interviewed for this study explained that these conditions, restrictions, easement and covenants mainly applied under the
form of By-Laws are the developers’ pure inventions. He argue that developers comply with the NSW Community Land Management Act 1989 guidelines only, there are a lot of flexibility within the Act that developers could slip between and create powerful incontestable By-Laws. As Zack said:

_Developers are equipped with strong teams of lawyers, planners and other technical team and they know how to write very efficient, hard to dispute, but legal documents_ (Planner, 4)

Thus developers’ role in spreading MPEs and influencing buyers is detected through the finding above, Cheshire et al. (2009) drawing upon an empirical study on MPEs in Queensland found that developers of MPEs play a decisive and impacting role on spreading the concept and influence buyers in all phases of development. Even more, according to Cheshire et al. developers keep holding the community associations until selling the last house or block of land because of their business interests.

Developers role in promoting MPEs and motivating prospective buyers is also attributed to other factors such as flexibility in local governments strategic planning, the easy approval of applications for new MPEs and community title schemes that governs MPEs. Data collected from Camden City Council in the form of Precinct Plan and Building Control 2006, Section 1.3 (Variant and Standard) page 4, Harrington Grove states that “The preparation of Part B Precinct Plans and Building Controls will guide development across the Precinct. However, there may be circumstances where development will need to respond to changes in design that more appropriately address individual considerations relating to the environment, building styles and market trends, which require a variation to the standards in this DCP”.

This information demonstrates an obvious encouragement of the local government in favour for the developer.

Developers gave different account about their role in spreading MPEs culture in Australia; they believe that buyers ask for MPEs and they only respond to the market. Rose Development for Breakfast Point interviewed for this study, answering a question about how they select marketing text and what criteria they do apply, He said:
It keeps changing, we don’t have standard criteria, we respond to the market demands for design, facilities, and social infrastructures (Developer 2).

The developers role not is only limited creating motivation within prospective buyers, they are also implicated as part of their role in creating rules, restrictions and covenants to shape residents life for the rest of their living on MPEs; Data collected developers under the form of contract for sale of land expose the power and ability of developers to control every single word of the contract and it legal attachments that are easements, strata and title schemes. For example, easement for encroachment created by the developer of Harrington Grove gives the power to the developer himself to build part of dwelling on other neighbouring lot with no possible later objection of owners of affected lot. (Breakfast Point, attachment of contract for sale of land, notification 28, easement for encroachment, appendix 10)

5.2.4 Buyers Perception of Developers Role: Back to Motivation

As it can be noted from the study’s findings and literature in the sections above, the developers played a significant role in motivating what now became residents of MPEs. This context precisely has been widely discussed elsewhere, however, how buyers perceived this role once they became residents and realise the immense influence of developers on their social, cultural, economic and even political lifestyle need more attention. After discussing the developers’ role and how residents (buyers) had been motivated by the developers marketing tools, this section, based on data collected from residents interviews investigate the perception of residents of the role mentioned above.

According to George and Stephanie, participants from Breakfast Point and cited at the beginning of section 5.2, the developer team, who in the same time conduct the marketing campaign and the sales transactions was very helpful. This positive perception from George and Stephanie did not hold for long time, at the end of the interview, when asked if they will buy in an MPE again, their response was a mix of a vive reaction and a statement:

*We will buy again…but not in the developer’s terms and guidance, we will give ample time to our solicitor and even consult building professionals.*
Charlie and Tina from Harrington Grove, who were amazed by the advertisement materials, gave a different account when they had been asked if they have anything to add. The couple hoped that buyers could have more choices and some freedom when choosing for building design, colours and landscape. They believe that the developer could loosen the limitation without really loosing on the profit, in their own words:

*Look, the design of our home is great, but we wanted something slightly different, we showed them our drawing from a decent architect and that costs us about twenty thousand bucks...The developer not flexible at all...We’re not convinced by the consistency story.*

Tony and Rosa from Breakfast Point found that despite the effort the developer made to present the perfect image of the estate, declared being deceived by the developer’s use of power in regards to legal restrictions and the way community association is set up and how it works.

*We need tough rules to manage the estate perfectly, but there are so many legal terms that we missed or couldn’t understand when buying...later we found that this is written by the developer and not a government regulation or something like that.*

What can be argued from these participants’ experience that residents in the case of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove have is a two-stage perception of developers. The first is positive and related to their excitement and motivation, the second perception is a mature one based on their experience with the product. While the second can be classified as a normal reaction to any product after experience, the first perception is likely related to buyers’ enthusiasm which in turn linked to the desire to consume for social reasons, more specifically; it is the combination of buyers’ self-motivation driven by a “want” and the developers marketing tools. Within modern social life, cycles of want-creation are encouraged by reference groups and the media. Individuals are encouraged to believe that more goods and services may genuinely improve their wellbeing, although consumerism is often only a surface answer for deeper questions. Consumerism is also driven by society’s “progress fetishism”, which in turn, reflects the consumer desire to keep ‘on the move’. Individuals within a consumer society are encouraged to consider their identities to be an ongoing project managed through the consumption and display of goods. Consumption theory has evolved towards a social critique of consumerism. From when Marx (1867[1976]) believed that consumption constituted basic acts of eating, drinking and procreation, the understanding of consumerism has evolved, constituting a range of cultural, social and symbolic acts (Paterson, 2006, p.15).
5.3 Conclusion

This Chapter has explored the ways prospective buyers were motivated to buy and live Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove, with potential link to social distinction. The result and outcome of this Chapter come from data extracted from resident’s interviews, town planners’ interviews, developers. The data were matched with literature during the discussion. There are many factors to motivate prospective buyers in buying and living in MPEs. Some of these factors are stronger and more influential than others; there are some factors that participants were reluctant to talk about.

Analysis of the data found that residents of these MPEs have a great aspiration for self-governance and have been attracted by private governance with different level of motivation; some participants showed full support for self-governance through the community association, other accept the role of community association to govern their estate, however, they complained about tough rules, high fees and sometime poor management of the association. Most importantly, the analysis found that residents from both estates rely on private governance to provide a better social status through rules, restriction, security and the maintaining of high and distinctive lifestyle that they expect from living in MPEs.

In regards to motivation by material affordances, analysis of data found that residents of MPEs are generally attracted by different factors of affordances depending on the location of the estate. In the case of Breakfast point which is located near an important maritime transport facility, many participants showed their appreciation to this commodity. In the case of Harrington Grove, the large size of blocks also plays a role in motivating prospective buyers who valued this commodity. In the case of Harrington Grove, the large size of blocks also plays a role in motivating prospective buyers who valued this commodity.

Based on the analysis above, the commodity of large blocks in Harrington Grove has been intentionally selected by residents as a sign of social status and they showed their tendency for social distinction by having large blocks and building big houses. However, participants from Breakfast Point have also demonstrated their interest in the proximity of the estate to transport facility; they did not show any sign of social status as a result of such commodity.

Analysis of the data in this Chapter also found that the factor of social influence where residents have been motivated by the experience of friends and family carry demonstrated a need of
residents for social identity matching. Participants who said been encouraged by such factor have showed that the reason is more about their social status rather than a need for physical, material or moral support.

This Chapter also explored the roles the developers played in conceiving, planning, developing and marketing MPEs. It also shed on the smaller role played by the government when encouraging the development of MPEs through lexis regulation and abandoning approval for more developments and more creation of community associations.

Relying on the analysis of a huge data composed from residents’ interviews, developers interviews, town planners interviews and consulting legal documents and advertisement materials, the all discussed and compared to previous research conclude the following:

- Advertisement materials used by the developers to promote MPEs create emotional responses in already motivated buyers (please refer to Chapter 4). Furthermore, advertisement materials activate and develop prospective buyers’ imaginary perception of MPEs. The research found that in addition to advertisement campaigns, developers offer prospective buyers impressive and expensive materials causing impressive impact on their decision making.
- Despite the quantity of information given to prospective buyers by the developers and their agents at different stages of the inspection and purchasing process. These information range from general information about the house or unit to more complicated covenants, restrictions and community association fees and management rules. When analysing this information, and the opinion of residents interviewed, the research found that these information are cumbrous, very complicated even for legal professionals and sometimes are missing important information needed by buyers.
- As result of residents’ interviews, the study found that participants generally fear talking about the community associations’ experience, which explains the empowerment of these associations.
- In addition to the developers’ ability to impose restrictions and covenants on contracts for sale of land and their legal attachments, developers create community associations and their rules and By-laws, they use them, and at the completion and sales of last lots
or dwellings, they pass the management to community association run by voluntary members of the estates who apply more strictly these rules and restrictions.

- The role of developers go beyond the elements cited above to reach the way residents of the estates will spend the rest of their life affected by what developers had dictated for them when creating the legal terms and rules.

- Nonetheless, the analysis of residents’ answers throughout the interviews found that despite the above cited information, and even at the time they were prospective buyers and declared not been sufficiently informed, residents showed some enthusiasm and acceptance of these rules and restrictions and other matter related to community associations.

- The role of local governments is important in facilitating the proliferation of MPEs in Australia through the easy permission for development and the endorsement as a law to restrictions and covenants written by the developers.

- Buyers often take the risk and uncertainty to buy in MPEs as they put their desire to be socially distinct before financial matters.

Finally, this Chapter explored the perception of buyers towards the developers’ role in motivating them into buying in Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove. The Chapters investigate how buyers perceived the developers role when buying and later when residents became, it found that this perception evaluate with time and experience and the primary motivation came from buyers themselves and their desire to consume for improving their social status.

The pursuit for self-governance found in the participants’ statements in this Chapter reflects Harvey’s (2007) and Foucault’s (2008) arguments discussed in Chapter three. Both maintained that the shift towards self-governance is due to impact of neo-liberalism on political and economic and social patterns of citizens. Matching family or friends’ lifestyle and consumption is known by academics as “social influence” or social contagion” (Dholakia and Talukdar, 2004). Social influence in the case of MPEs fits well with existent theories, which has been discussed at length in Chapter three. For example, theorists working from socio-cultural perspectives such as Vygotsky (1978), Roth (2004) and Owen (2001) found that people and their social environment are inherently interconnected and cannot be separated, and personal
developments are placed in the social and cultural environment which forms their social identity.

The pursuit of individual identity and self-improvement for example plays a decisive role in buyers’ motivation for consumption. This consumption often happens while connecting with surrounding community exactly as in MPEs where the pursuit of individual identity occurs within the confines and parameters of social class and social norms (Holt, 2005) discussed in the conceptual framework earlier in this thesis. Individuals follow the signs of the lifestyle and social status they aspire through their consumption choice which has been argued by Bourdieu (1979) in Chapter three to the aspirational consumption.
Chapter 6 Consuming MPEs, Experience from the Field.

We not only own the house, we also own the whole estate... We use every facility and space of the estate... in a way, we own the estate if you understand what I mean... we even pay for its maintenance and improvement (Chris and Sarah)

The previous Chapter discussed the way Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove are planned, regulated, developed and marketed to buyers including the role of actors such as the developer and the government. This Chapter is based on the data collected from both MPEs. The Chapter is divided in two sections; the first investigates the way these MPEs are consumed and the extent to which this consumption create social, cultural and economic changes among residents. The second section explores the relation between an imagined living on MPEs and the way resident consume the space and place of the estates.

This study reveals that living in a MPE such Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove means more than a roof and rooms for its residents. The residents want to display their social status while consuming everything within the estate. The residents also know their legal obligations and they know what legally they owned, however, their enthusiasm goes beyond the legal limits of ownership to match an imaginative ownership that is sharing by other residents. This is similar to Dowling and McGuirk (2010) finding that MPEs offered as to distance their residents from a broader urban collective where these residents benefit by a social distinction. Analysing data from residents, developer and council planners’ interviews, as well as analysing marketing materials, this Chapter examines the consumption experience of residents of MPEs through the following themes: Consuming the affordance materials of the estates, conspicuous buyers and residents and the consumption of space and place in MPEs. This theme collected interesting responses among participants giving the study an opportunity to explore it in depth.

As stated in Chapters one and two, existing academic research approached the consumption of MPEs tend to focus on lifestyle consumption such as clubs, sports facilities and the estates’ natural setting of certain MPEs (Cheshire et al., 2009; Cheshire et al., 2010) and other work on consumption of MPEs and legal obligations (Douglas et al., 2008) and MPEs, affluent and aspirational consumers (Costley, 2006; Gwyther, 2008). This Chapter will focus on how residents perceive themselves when living (consuming) the MPEs as space and place and investigate social and cultural distinction resulted of this consumption.
6.1 Consuming the Material Affordances of the Estates

Gibson (1979) explains how affordances of natural environments have for ages influenced human life; long before anyone was able to understand why certain materials functioned the way they did. Diverse materials qualities afford both animals and humans with certain possibilities. Bourdieu (1984) also appreciated the context of objects and commodities and their roles and implications through practice, how these objects and commodities are attribute to value through use, and how the quality of commodities are installed in the consumers’ perceptions and lived experience. In line with Gibson and Bourdieu, data collected from various sources, and more specifically from interviews with residents of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove, demonstrated some trend towards different aspects of affordances which depend on the estate’s natural features or an outcome of strategic planning. Data collected in this thesis found two matching material affordances; the size of block available in Harrington Grove, and proximity, which is available on both Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove estates.

6.1.1 Size of Block

Many participants spoke about being motivated by the size of block offered by Harrington Grove. Size of block is a matter of attention available only and detected only on Harrington Grove, not only because the other case study Breakfast Point is developed as high, medium and low density with detached dwellings giving no place for small backyards but also because Harrington Grove is one of very rare developments offering such large blocks around Sydney. There are two different aspects to consider in regard to the size of block on Harrington Grove; the developer’s argument during the interview that their aim is to “Create homesites which provide privacy and space within bush setting”. Data collected from Camden City Council, more specifically from Part C of Camden Development Control Plan (DCP 2011) section C9.14 Specific Development Precincts’ objectives:

1. Enable residential development that minimises adverse impacts upon and contributes to the quality, maintenance and integrity of the natural and cultural heritage values.
2. Ensure a distinctive character and urban form that reflects and responds to the natural context of the area and considers bushfire risk.
3. Create large residential allotments that interface appropriately with the defined ecological/bushland.
However, either way or through a combination of both the developer’s intention and government planning decision, prospective buyers seize the opportunity or secured their large blocks.

Jeremy and Natalie bought the block of land in early 2010 and settled there early 2011 having just got married. They first saw the road panels on Camden Valley Way, but accordingly, they thought they could not afford it.

*The presentation of the estate by the developer on the corner of Camden Valley Way and Oran Park Road gives the impression that you’re in a different world. Once we consulted the blocks prices and spoke to our builder, we told him, mate, go ahead.*

Jeremy explained that the estate position, location and what they heard about it made them opt for Harrington Grove. The way in which the estate was presented, and the size of the blocks (over 700 sqm), in particular point has an important impression and valorised their decision. In line with Bourdieu’s (1984) appreciation of context of objects and commodities discussed in further details in Chapter three, Nathalie stated:

*You can’t find a large size of land in new subdivision anymore, we’d been looking for few months, and all that is offered is 450 sqm blocks.*

Wendy, also a resident of Harrington Grove is a single mum working as a school teacher in one of Campbelltown’s public schools and moved to the estate mid-2011. Large blocks, prestigious castle-like houses, and security made her choose Harrington Grove rather than other suburbs.

*I could buy a house anywhere at that price, even closer to my workplace... But living in a MPE would provide me with a feeling that life is really enjoyable. A great place where everything is planned for residents’ comfort and relaxation (Wendy).*

Terry and Gina also said being interested and indeed surprised by the large size of lands which offered in abundance on Harrington Grove. As Gina said
There is plenty of room for kids to play, room for the trampoline... again, look at the trampoline, you can't fit it on smaller block, a decent barbecue area and we’re planning to ask permission to replace this pergola with larger one.

6.1.2 Proximity
Proximity as affordances applies on both Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove estates. Breakfast Point is set on the Parramatta River with a ferry access to Sydney and Putney, and Harrington Grove is walking distance to Narellan Town Centre, a major shopping centre in the area (Please see maps in chap 4). Both estates have excellent locations which play an important role in motivating buyers to purchase in MPEs.

Peter and Carmen declared location to have been a motivating factor for them when choosing of the estate on Parramatta River which for them is “Very handy to travel”, and George and Stephanie said that the location of the estate, very close to Sydney City with the opportunity to travel by ferry was a deciding factor for them. Some participants from Harrington Grove also showed a degree of motivation by proximity. Gary and Martha, for example said that among other features of Harrington Grove, they were attracted by its close distance to Narellan Shopping Centre and they are not disappointed. Martha said

   It is very handy to have a major shopping centre near your home, and we took in consideration this matter when we decided to buy ... and sometimes we walk to the shop, especially when we do light shopping while exercising on the way.

While previous work on MPEs found that they are developed in different locations in cities and also in the outer-skirts and semi-rural areas with no norms or specifications (Cheshire et al., 2009; Minnery and Bajracharya, 2009). This thesis found that proximity plays a role in motivating prospective buyers to certain types and locations of MPEs.

6.2 Conspicuous Buyers and Proud Residents, how Residents of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove Perceive their experience on the Estates.
I believe I paid the right price, I know I could buy in a more upmarket area, but it didn’t really impress me... Breakfast Point is a private suburb estate. The estate is known for all the good things...so yes it was worth the price after all... (Jonny).

This is the extract of an answer of a resident of Breakfast Point Estate. It is one of replies when residents have been asked how the property price impacted their decision to buy in the estate, in line with Cheshire and Wicks finding, MPEs are offered as exclusive residential developments for affluent consumers seeking to live in landscapes of distinction alongside those who share their aspirations, values and lifestyle patterns (Cheshire and Wicks, 2011).

Other participants from both estates also shared Jonny’s view in relation to purchasing price impact. Jeremy and Natalie a couple from Harrington Grove whose their property was worth more than three hundred thousand dollars than in the next suburb of Narellan showed a high conspicuously action to claim their social distinction. In Jeremy’s words:

*If you look at the good time, and the years we enjoyed living on the estate to the extra money we paid, well yes, it worth it...At least we live in a well-known and private place... Don’t forget, we live in Harrington Grove.*

Less impressive but still indicative responses from other participants give indication on how residents buy in MPEs as to what Nunes and Dreze (2009) described in the literature review as social reasons which are strong desire for social status.

For example, Gary and Martha, a couple from Harrington Grove Estate declared that the price is less important when it comes to high quality living and standing above the rest. Damian and Tracey a participant couple from Breakfast Point estate said:

*...we thought well about the price difference between the estate and nearby suburbs and we know the difference in price brackets, but we wouldn’t have it any other way.*

Asking the developers of both estates about the price factor in selling the estates, developer of Harrington Grove said that buyers usually are aware of the price difference with surrounding suburbs,
...but they [buyers] commit to purchase even aware about additional fees for maintaining the estate. But I can see a strong determination supported by buyers desire to be among the elite. (Developer 1).

The developer for Breakfast Point said that there are mixed reactions from buyers, some of them committed with no hesitation based on their motivation to be a part of a particular community while there are many other prospective buyers who did not pursue their purchase due to the price factor.

However, when participants have been asked their opinion on management fees, some of who make it sound like lifestyle and social status are more important than price gave different accounts. Gary and Martha from Harrington Grove and Damian and Tracey from Breakfast Point complained about the amount of fees they pay for the community associations of their estates. In Martha’s words:

We pay about three thousand five hundred dollars in fees per year...it is costly to live here.

When asked Damian and Tracey about fees, they said:

We pay triple fees, one for the strata that runs the building, one for the community association for the estate and we still pay the council rate too... Do you think this is fair?

It can be assumed that either buyers accepting the situation and found an opportunity to complain while they still maintaining their willing to declare a social status, or residents did not give enough attention about ongoing during the purchasing process which can be referred to Shukla’s (2010) argument that status consumption is principally irrational and psychological in its expression and motivation and significantly influenced by consumers’ ostentatious behaviours.

**Proud Consumers**

The participants were very open to talking about the perception of others towards their living in a MPE, which helped the study measure their attempt for social distinction in what Eastman et al. (1999) referred to as the motivational process, by which individuals strive to improve their social standing through the conspicuous consumption of consumer products that confer
and symbolise status both for the individual and surrounding significant others. These others could be anyone, but more importantly family and friends first.

Wendy, for example, when asked about her family and friends’ perception about her living in Harrington Grove, she replied

*As I am still new in the estate, I feel that some people are curious to know about my experience…they ask me questions about… say… the gym membership and access…the Country Club and if they will be allowed in…and many other things.*

This fairly low key response about how others might react was more clearly expressed by other participants. Sam and Ena from Breakfast Point did not hide their thoughts on how others perceive their delightful lifestyle:

*Moving to Breakfast Point was exciting for us and to our friends as well. We feel very happy when we have guests from out of the estate, we can see some times a sort of… maybe… if I can say… a bit of jealousy. You can feel…see… from their admiring looks and questions about the price, cost and fees, what we can and can’t use.*

While the above answers give some insight into how residents of MPEs think others can perceive their social status, which in turn reflects their appreciation and satisfaction with their social image, below are some answers of participants of this study regarding what particular gain they feel they have living in an MPE.

*For me, there is no greater privilege than feeling special… and Breakfast Point has given me that feeling. Here I have access to the state of the art gym, tennis club, restaurant and panoramic views… it is the ideal suburb for me…It is a well-defined suburb with real boundaries… if you understand what I mean”. (Andrew).*

When I asked Andrew to clarify what he meant by benefits of having “a well-defined suburb” and “real boundaries” he replied “this means that residents can really feel within their environment, their community, something unique which can only be felt by residents of the estate”.

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Dan and Jenny of Harrington Grove gave a similar answer but worded it slightly different. For them, living in Harrington Grove means acquiring a sort of fame, as Jenny recounted:

*Our estate has impressive houses in the area, apart from Harrington Park*[^36] and Harrington Grove, you can see these mansions around, we feel different thanks to the outstanding type and size of homes.*

**Many Motives for Social Distinction**

However, participants gave divergent answers when asked about the particular reason that encouraged them to move to their estates. Most said that the lifestyle and exclusivity they offered were the main reasons for moving in, a finding supported by previous studies on Australian MPEs (See Gwyther, 2005; Dowling and McGuirk, 2005; Cheshire et al., 2010 for example). Other participants declared that they were looking for a peaceful place and a better community, which also aligns with previous literature (Gwyther, 2005; Gleeson, 2005; Goodman and Douglas, 2008; Johnson, 2010). Other participants however gave more details on what exactly they were looking for, or if they did elaborate on what they believed to be the main reason, it tended to be similar to what their co-residents above mentioned: lifestyle, exclusivity and the peaceful atmosphere. Eight participants wanted to be different, distinctive and were looking for social prestige (O’Cass and Frost, 2002) or what Douglas and Isherwood (1979) described in the literature review as social alignments.

*Breakfast Point is an excellent place to live, with many features available for its residents...It makes some residents from the neighbouring suburbs of Concord and Mortlake do their shopping and enjoy their coffee in our shopping village a daily habit....We always wanted a particular place with particular people to be with. (Bret and Vilma)*

Debbie of Breakfast Point gave her account about what particular reason lays behind her choosing the estate as her home.

[^36]: Harrington Grove constitutes a part of Harrington Park that was initially developed by the same developer, for more information, please refer to Chapter 4.
... You know, sometimes where you live affect your personality, well being and your social interaction. I always wanted to be located among nice and cool people who in turn make me feel different (Debbie).

Findings from participants in this section show how they express their social distinction through their choice of estate, its residents and facilities showing similarities to the findings of Gwyther’s (2005). Seeking distinction via the community is common in MPEs, as Norm and Christina show in the proud way they talk about their estate. They believe that Harrington Grove is a unique place that no other estate can begin to compare. As they both tried to talk first, Norm was the first to speak.

Our estate runs a Christmas decoration competition every summer. Thousands of people across Sydney and other regions visit and enjoy the expo.

Then Christina completed

Our estate appears in many national magazines, I feel so proud when my colleagues and friends show me an article or a photo about it.

This feeling about distinction discussed above was also detected in other participants from Harrington Grove.

Despite Harrington Grove still being under construction, a lot of people visit the estate every weekend... some are looking to buy in... others for curiosity... not to forget the Christmas decoration show for the second year in a row. This gives us a great feeling of admiration for the estate as well as a kind of self-esteem. (Charlie and Tania)

Previous answers from participants of Breakfast Point were cited earlier in this section and the following reply from participants Shaun and Brigitte demonstrate the depth of feeling of personal and individual distinction that comes from being part of the estate itself. Jim and Doris said:

...people come from nearby suburbs to shop, meet friends and spend precious times in the estate; others use the bike track and walkways of the estate.

Doris added:
Many people visit the estate for discovery and we see tourist buses on the estate streets... I don’t know if our estate is a national tourist attractions list or something like that.

Other participants also demonstrated high level of pride in their estates. Brigitte of Breakfast Point for example said:

...We are very proud to be Breakfast Point residents, the entire place is fantastic, and all residents are friendly, what else we need? (Shaun and Brigitte).

6.2 Distinctive Lifestyle, Imagined or Real? How Resident Consume the Space and Place in MPEs.

6.2.1 Lifestyle, and Self-Identity in MPEs

**Breakfast Point is a great estate if you are asking me about lifestyle... I can tell you, the right place for cool people... no doubt about it.** (Simon and Paula).

Like other consumption practices, the choices of dwelling and living places reflect people’s values, habits, and lifestyles. MPEs have a “linking value” (Cova, 1997) that gathers people around a perceived common identity. MPEs are seen as an important part of self-identity for the residents. Place-identity is a culture of self-identity according to Proshansky et al. (1983) as discussed in Chapter three who argued that place identity serves the need for a certain level of integration of the individual’s self-identity which contains ideas, feelings, attitudes, values, preferences, meanings, and conceptions of behaviour and experience which relate to the variety and complexity of physical settings that define the day-to-day existence of every human being (Proshansky et al., 1983).

However, the relationship between place and identity seems to be one way, it is more complex in the sense that there is a constant and dialectical interaction between identity and place. In other words, individuals construct the place with their narratives, behaviour, and even their mere existence (Proshansky et al., 1987). In turn, place serves as a source of identity for the individuals it hosts. Space, or as Lefebvre (1974) precisely called “social space” is a social product, it becomes thereby a metaphor for the very experience of social life and affect social status simultaneously according to Lefebvre, Similarly, in the case of MPEs, this relationship is more evident, as MPEs become a site of community and communities already have their borders, norms and values as constructed socially. Thus the culture provided by MPEs, such as senses of community, physical and social infrastructure create a lifestyle and that lifestyle offers resident the feeling of distinction.

Simon and Paula in their fifties moved to Breakfast Point mid-2004, when their children had left home, and spend their precious time within the estate. Aside from their work in the Hills area north west of Sydney, where they have to travel five days per week, they believe that the estate offers them everything they need and want; sports and social activities, security and convenience, walking distance to the marina where their boat is docked, but most importantly, residents who look “like them”. When asked what they mean by this, Paula replied:
They like exactly what we like, they choose to live in Breakfast Point, and they use same club and facilities, belong to the same community and ruled by same association.

The motivation of lifestyle behind Simon and Paula’s motivation to move into a MPE is shared by most of participants interviewed in this study; Bret and Vilma, also from Breakfast Point showed a similar enthusiasm. They moved to Breakfast Point in 2009, originally from the Illawarra region on the south coast of NSW. According to Vilma, there are so many new coastal developments but nothing can match Breakfast Point. She explained:

An estate is the size of a suburb... and has all its own amenities... shops, club, sports and community buildings... it wouldn’t be possible in other places

When I asked if it is important to be in a master planned estate, Bret replied:

Only these kind of estates can offer such great facilities... be strict in their rules... the people care about their suburb, neighbourhood and respect each other.

Values in the Estate
Participants’ attached importance to the estate values, and meaning of physical and social infrastructures. Jeff, who is single in his mid-fifties moved to Harrington Grove in late 2011, having lived in Liverpool for about three years in order to find what he called “a little pre-retirement haven”. As a self-employed mobile lender, he controls his working time schedule and can afford to leave home after traffic and come home after peak hours. When asked why choosing Harrington Grove as his “pre-retirement heaven” Jeff explained

I like to live in a big house and a very quiet location... wide and maintained streets, club, tennis court and gym... most importantly, well minded people and great location.

Debbie, a participant from Breakfast Point had spent a considerable amount of time searching for a new home. Visiting a dozen new developments in the area ranging from high rise apartments to luxury two- storey dwellings she hadn’t been able to decide as there was always something missing. She explained:
You can find any type of luxury homes you want... there are so many developments around. But when it comes to sticking to the rules, design and style, only this kind of developments have them all. Therefore, my search focused on master-planned estates. I searched more through internet, visited a couple of them until a colleague of mine suggested that I visit Breakfast Point.

**Lifestyle and Social Status**

There was a common theme to participants’ stories showing a strong attention to the lifestyle which MPEs offer rather than the luxury itself. It seems like most of them were attracted by the social concept of MPEs which Bourdieu (1979, p. 173) described in previous Chapters as “the propensity and capacity to appropriate materially or symbolically”. It should be noted that some participants had looked at other developments, had inspected luxurious homes, yet not felt attracted enough to buy. There are other factors such as the size of block or proximity that play a role in motivating prospective buyers, however, the preference for the MPE concept rank higher on the participants’ list, and prevails over the factors cited above.

Thus, prospective buyers are mostly motivated by the social and aesthetic components of lifestyle, which Elliott (1997, p. 3) argued to the fact that consumers no longer consume products for their material utilities, rather, consume the symbolic meaning of the products painted in their imagination. Furthermore, MPEs provide through the concept when formulating a combined social and physical infrastructure coupled with thematic locations and slogans, and governed by private body which in the opinion of residents is much closer to the daily needs of the estate.

Jensen (2007) argues that lifestyle is a matter of exhibiting choice which is sometimes combined with influence, so buyers were influenced by other external factors while they believing they had full control over their choice. Thus, MPE residents adjust their choice to match their lifestyle, which is similar to what Roming (2005) meant when claiming that MPEs, with their social and spatial dimensions, are humanity’s aspiration toward perfect order and harmony.

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37 Please see section 6.2.3 below
6.2.2 Exclusivity, Social Distinction and the Sense of Place in Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove

*Only local residents have access to the club and other facilities...you can drive through the estate but you can’t use the tennis court or the sauna ... believe me... this is an estate developed only for its residents.* (Shaun and Brigitte).

Developers of MPEs through their marketing materials claim to offer exclusive living and distinctiveness and promote this exclusivity either consciously or unconsciously. Residents themselves happily seek social distinction using this same exclusivity to create their new social identity as the developers promised to them. As Watts (1997) mentioned, identities are complex sorts of ‘holding operations’, stories told by people about themselves. They are imaginary, fictional, straddling so to speak the real and desire, from which they seem to obtain their impact and effect.

Residents of MPEs seek exclusivity to distinguish themselves from general community outside the estate and acquire special privileges. Thus they buy and live in MPE which emerged according to scholars findings as a new trend of exclusive lifestyle for distinctive and affluent people (see for example Gwyther, 2005; Rofe, 2006; Kenna, 2010).

According to previous studies, in some countries, MPEs create social segregations by privatising community space, not only individual space. Many MPEs also privatise civic responsibilities like police protection and communal services such as street maintenance, recreation, and entertainment (Blakely and Snyder, 1997; Schrag, 1997). Some of these characteristics such as private streets maintenance and other communal services are available in Australian MPEs and are discussed in Chapter four as part of private governance. As Schrag noted, MPEs divide community into those inside and those beyond the wall. Residents identify themselves only with the community inside the gate, where their responsibility to the real community ends at the main entry of the estate.

Alvarez-Rivadulla’s (2006) found that buyers invest in MPEs, locking themselves in what she called “voluntary confinement” to occupy a position of superiority in power, status and wealth in relation to outsiders. Savage et al. (2005) viewed elective belonging as a core feature of contemporary attachment to place. This notion of elective belonging involves choosing a place
to live and moving among people of one’s own kind. Data collected in this thesis, from interviews with town planning officers and developers, confirm the role of exclusivity in the motivation of prospective buyers and mirror Alvarez-Rivadulla’s argument and Savage et al. views; Dominic is the development planning officer at Wollondilly Shire Council, when I asked him what in his opinion motivate property buyers for MPEs, he said that among many social, economic and individual aspirations, exclusivity is a key factors, as it is easily detected by buyers through covenants, restrictions and the estate’s marketing campaign. Dominic added that people interested in the MPEs concept are often looking for exclusive area and joining like-minded residents. Nathan, from Rose Development of Breakfast Point, also recognised buyers’ tendencies for exclusivity when answering to the question about what buyers usually ask for in a MPE, Nathan replied:

Prospective buyers ask for estate rules and restrictions, access to the Country Club and facilities, for side street parking and the enforcement of these rules on non-residents as they believe that exclusivity offers them a higher social status.

Many participants from both Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove highly support all findings discussed above.

For example, Shaun and Brigitte retired after more than thirty years running a pharmacy in Sydney’s CBD. As part of their pre-retirement plan, they moved to Breakfast Point in 2008. They used to live in one of the most establish upper class of Sydney’s Eastern suburbs where the property price equal three times the current two – bedroom apartment in Breakfast Point. They used to attend the most expensive facilities around, famous restaurants patronised by well knowing personalities in the city, however, these places are open to the public. Shaun and Brigitte had made their decision; “We wanted a place where it belongs only to its residents”. When asked how important this is for them, Brigitte replied

These facilities and other things and places like parks and bike track in the estate can be used only by people from the estate…the surrounding suburbs don’t offer you these things.

Charlie and Tania in their mid-thirties bought a block of land in Harrington Grove, built a house and settled in end 2011. They come from the neighbouring suburb of Narellan just two km away from Harrington Grove and when asked what difference there was between the estate and Narellan which are only across the street from each other, Charlie replied:
Narellan is a public suburb where anyone can park in front of your home, anyone can use your space, people are a mixed of all classes, and you have the nice neighbours, the noisy ones, and unfortunately, the bad ones. Here, people share the same values and the estate spots and places for residents only.

Similar stories to those already recounted about wanting to improve their social status through the exclusivity of MPE concept continue to flow. Jack and Viviane, a couple in their sixties moved to Breakfast Point in early 2011. They have had enough of the daily problems associated with living in their previous suburb. For them, it had been great living a hundred meters from the railway station and walking their kids to schools and shops, however, this was in the past. Now that they are in the process of retiring, all they want is to enjoy a quiet, organised, and at the same time, dynamic retirement. They first began to make enquiries through their friends who live in the estate before approaching the developer’s sales office. When asked what they had wanted to know about the estate from their friends, Jacque said

We learned many things, but in particular we wanted to know about the Country Club, the sports and other facilities, how they are managed, who has access to these facilities, how the rules are enforceable, this concept is great... socially, it is much better.

6.2.3 Taste, Consumption and MPEs

Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classifications is expressed or betrayed (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 6).

In the previous section I discussed the role of exclusivity in producing social distinction among the estates residents. This section will focus on the relationship between taste, social distinction and residents of MPEs. Unlike Veblen, who assumed taste to be directly linked to income, wealth and money, Bourdieu (1984) believed that exploring taste in terms of wealth is to miss the principles that taste is a cultural capital which has its own nature and value that can be converted to social power away from income and wealth. Participants’ profile, income and background showed a high similarity with Bourdieu’s opinion on taste. Furthermore, in other
work, Bourdieu (1990) also relied on the practice of taste and consumption as a map of social classification which lead to social distinction. It is obvious from the participants’ profile that residents of MPEs belong to a wide range of occupations and age groups and come from different and divergent social background and suburbs. Furthermore, in accordance with Bourdieu’s views on taste, participants of this study showed a common taste for the aesthetic, design and architecture of their estates.

Gary and Martha of Harrington Grove, in line with Bourdieu’s arguments, gave their account of why they bought their block of land in 2010, build their dream home and moved in 2011. For this couple in their forties, they were very interested in the design and architecture of their prospective home, so they patiently bought the block, build their house and waited more than a year for it to be completed. They have looked in the past for their dream “mansion”, as Martha recounted:

We always wanted to live in a two-storey home... We spent so many years planning and saving... But the issue was that there is no suitable block to put a decent two-storey house... all we found was five hundred to six hundred square meters. Finally we found Harrington Grove and its blocks are nine hundred square meters and bigger... As you can see, we built that dream home and still have plenty of room.

Chris and Sarah also spoke of their attraction to the design and architecture of Harrington Grove. As Chris answered the question about what motivated them to move into an MPE, he said “The houses are very large, well designed and very elegant”. Dan and Jenny from Harrington Grove have also expressed their admiration to the large size of the houses and Debbie from Breakfast Point also said being attracted to the design and style of the estate.

Jonny, a lawyer in his mid-fifties bought a three bedroom townhouse in Breakfast Point in 2009 after experiencing MPE living in the USA for more than ten years. For him, the exterior design of the building and harmony in colours and architectural finish are very important. In his words: “There is that harmony in the building design and a consistency in the way everything looks... It is very attractive and pleasant”.

38 For more details, please refer to Chapter three
Jim and Doris of Breakfast Point also said they had been attracted by the design of the buildings. As Doris said “What I liked on the first inspection is that kind of timber arcades on buildings’ entries and the consistency of colours in the estate”.

Harrington Grove is like many MPEs which have been developed on the fringe of cities comprise what the media called “Mc Mansions”39 (IPA, 2014). These types of two-storey mansion-like homes with rich architectural designs attract many home buyers specifically into MPEs, as they also offer big size blocks that suit its large size. Thus, the aesthetics and design in MPEs, as in the case of large two-storey homes in Harrington Grove and Breakfast Point demonstrate that the role of taste in consuming MPEs is very meaningful, but most importantly, it brings people together despite other different characteristics they may have (please see appendix 11). As Bourdieu (1984) argued, taste is a match maker, brings things and people together creating well matched couples (p. 241). In similar vein, taste is also able to bring things and people and creating well matched properties through MPEs. Attraction by design and other exterior elements found in this study match the work of Cheshire et al. (2009), Maller (2012) and Burke et al. (2013) on MPEs in Queensland, Australia, who also found through empirical studies that MPEs are aesthetically appealing and their consumption promotes the spirit of community.

6.3 Conclusion

The aim of this Chapter is to validate consumption as a way of social system, where residents of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove can express their social status and therefore their social distinction. Data collected from various ways for the study, analysed and compared with existing theoretical and empirical research, demonstrated how people consume conspicuously and buy in MPEs motivated by the concept, the sense of community, self-identity and the desire to belong to a defined and distinctive community. The Chapter also established a link between taste for design, social distinction and consumption of MPEs.

39 According to the Institute of Public Affairs (2014), the term McMansions describes the big, new houses out in suburbs with names like Caroline Springs and Kellyville. McMansions, their nickname suggests, are the McDonald's of housing - they're super-sized, American and mass produced.
Findings from the section about status consumption of this Chapter demonstrated the willingness of residents to conspicuously buy into MPEs despite the higher price and additional ongoing fees, residents express an obvious interest in their social status. Interest for social status also has been expressed through participants who felt improving their social distinction which is perceived through others.

Meanwhile the section about the consumption of space and place through lifestyle, examined to what context resident could build their social identity, revealed that these MPEs provide their residents with sense of community which is supported by social atmosphere that procure residents a feeling of social distinction that is not available in ordinary suburbs.

One section of this Chapter focussed on link between exclusivity, social distinction and sense of place and found that while developers of the estates do usually promoted them as exclusive place, residents strive to build their social identify through exclusivity as a mean of distinction from outsiders. Residents of these MPEs use the legal status of their estate such as restrictions, community associations and exclusive use of facilities as a tool for social distinction.

Finally the last section focussed on the role of taste in improving social distinction. Analysis of data found that some residents of MPEs focus on the design, architecture and exterior appearance of their estate and match it with their own taste. The section also matches Bourdieu’s views on taste where taste is not related to wealth and income, rather taste is linked to cultural capital. Analysis from the data prove that residents of MPEs come from divergent social, geographic and economic background and belong to a wide bracket of ages, they are unified by their common taste to what MPEs offer in design and appearance. Thus, cultural capital gained from MPEs used by resident to express their social distinction.

Findings in this Chapter align with the theoretical framework explored in Chapter 3. For example the fact that participants were very open to talking about the perception of others towards their living in a MPE, which helped the study measure their attempt for social distinction in what Eastman et al. (1999) in Chapter 3 referred to as the motivational process, by which individuals strive to improve their social standing through the conspicuous consumption of consumer products that confer and symbolise status both for the individual and surrounding significant others. These others could be anyone, but more importantly family and friends first.
The finding of this Chapter also aligns with the discussion of theories in Chapter 3. For example, this Chapter found that choices of dwelling and living places reflect people’s values, habits, and lifestyles. Therefore MPEs have a “linking value” (Cova, 1997) that gathers people around a perceived common identity. MPEs are seen as an important part of self-identity for the residents. Place-identity is a culture of self-identity according to Proshansky et al. (1983) as discussed in Chapter three, place identity serves the need for a certain level of integration of the individual’s self-identity which contains ideas, feelings, attitudes, values, preferences, meanings, and conceptions of behaviour and experience that relate to the variety and complexity of physical settings that define the day-to-day existence of every human being (Proshansky et al., 1983).

Space, or as Lefebvre (1974), more precisely specified, “social space”, is a social product, and it becomes thereby a metaphor for the very experience of social life and affects social status simultaneously. This Chapter found that this relationship is evident in MPEs, as MPEs become a site of community and communities already have their borders, norms and values as constructed socially. Thus the culture provided by MPEs, such as senses of community, physical and social infrastructure create a lifestyle and that lifestyle offers residents the feeling of distinction which has been discussed in the conceptual framework of this thesis.

Finally in accordance with the theories and concept explored in Chapter 3, where Bourdieu (1984) argued that exploring taste in terms of wealth is to miss the principles that taste is a cultural capital that has its own nature and value that can be converted to social power away from income and wealth. Participants’ profile, income and background showed a high similarity with Bourdieu’s opinion on taste. Elsewhere, Bourdieu (1990) also relied on the practice of taste and consumption as a map of social classification which lead to social distinction. It is obvious from the participants’ profile that residents of MPEs belong to a wide range of occupations and age groups and come from different and divergent social background and suburbs. In line with Bourdieu’s views on taste, participants of this study showed a common taste for the aesthetic, design and architecture of their estates.
Chapter 7 Social Distinction through the Club Culture and the Brand Subculture

Living in a master planned estate is like belonging to a club or an association, you know the members and they know you...I hope to see one day a sort of a nationwide association for master planned estates where our interests could be defended (Albert and Kate).

The previous Chapter discussed how MPEs, more precisely, Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove are conspicuously consumed and how the spaces and places of these MPEs play a role in promoting social distinction among their residents as well as the elements and factors existing with these MPEs that help attain this distinction. This Chapter investigate the role of community, facilities and social interaction in the estates in developing their social distinction and the way residents perceive MPEs as branded culture and how they match their social distinction through the brand culture. The Chapter also investigates how social distinction make MPEs as subculture product and a national brand starting from the consumer community, it explores to what extent, if any, they gather these residents, as well as to the tendency of certain others (residents) to promote MPEs as powerful brand and organise themselves with clubs and associations.

Thus, social and cultural distinction in MPEs might also be mirrored through subculture, in the same way as any other consumer product, such as music, fashion and food and the consumption of cultural resources circulated through markets such as brands, and leisure experiences (Schouten et al., 2007). Many brands and social clubs, such as the Harley-Davidson Motorbike Club (Schouten and MCAlexander, 1995); “My Nutella Community” Club (Cova and Pace, 2006), The Cult of Macintosh (Belk and Tumbat, 2005) or ethnic and cultural clubs such as Quinn and Divasagayam’s work (2005) about ethnic brand communities in the USA, have been researched. To my knowledge, the impact of subculture and branded communities on social influence and quest for social distinction within MPEs residents in Australia has not been investigated to date.
7.1 Residents, Clubs and Consumer Community

Before moving here, we always liked to have a kind of association or organisation in our street so we could create that sort of common themes like a gathering day for the community or kids day out and other activities, but as you know, this is likely impossible in ordinary suburbs (Jacques and Vivian).

It can be concluded from participants’ comments, through this section, that they start nurturing an imagined view of community before buying and moving into their MPEs. Jacques and Vivian look like they are interested in the community spirit, where things are organised. In their sixties, this couple of Breakfast Point seems excited living the “club” estate. They believe that living in an MPE can bring them a sense of community they looking for or what it has been described in Chapter three by Kozinets (2002) and Woodman and Brace-Govan (2007) as “consuming in community”.

Based on participants’ answers in this Chapter, residents of the estates see and rather feel community as a way of expressing their social distinction, they use the idea of community as solid base to that distinction. While some participants have asked to skip the question about their views of a community in general, which in some cases can be interpreted based on their body language as a non-satisfaction or may be a deception of their expectation from a community. Other participants did not want to talk about community, apart from their perception of it, which will be developed and discussed in this section.

Charles and Sonia of Breakfast Point were relaxed and doing their best to answer question after question without hesitation until they were asked about their experience with and expectation from the community. They looked at each other and Charles, with a shake of his arm and lips tightly pressed, shook his head and said “Community... forget about it”. Jim and Doris of Breakfast Point also gave a very brief and discouraging answer to the same question, clearly indicating was not happy with the way the community going. As Doris unhappily murmured: “This is an old story, no need to talk about it”.
The participant Debbie, who gave a sort of moral presentation about the positive role of the surrounding society and social interaction on wellbeing and improving social status, as discussed in the previous Chapter and will be discussed further in this Chapter, gave an answer which conflicted with her previous response about her community experience. She had expected to join an affluent community, but once she settled in the estate she rarely mixed and socialised with other residents. She added

“You know... I work long hours... I have a big responsibility there...so I don’t have the time for socialising...I don’t know.

Other participants however, gave different accounts, talking about the community of their estates as described below.

Simon and Paula for example, did not hide their desire for a community with common values, which according to them was not available outside Breakfast Point. In their own words:

*Breakfast Point provides us with the opportunity to belong to a true community... The benefits of being a resident of Breakfast Point are like having access to the country club, the gym, the tennis courts...being members of a community that share same values, and interests...that what stands out our estate from other traditional suburbs.*

Research conducted in Australia about community interaction in MPEs fit well with Jacque and Vivian’s answer. Kenna and Stevenson (2013) found that community is made distinct by its exclusivity and distanced from the neighbouring suburbs. Gwyther (2008) found that residents of MPEs seek like-minded neighbours to express their social influence as a group.

However, Kenna and Stevenson’s work, along with other studies conducted by McGuirk and Dowling, 2007; Walters and Rosenblatt, 2008; Rosenblatt et al., 2009 found that the idea of community in MPEs is often a contradiction of opinions and aspirations, and is more about a design, a club, facilities or infrastructure. According to these researchers, the community building efforts of the developers did create a ‘sense of community’ for the residents of MPEs, but this did not translate into a willingness to actively participate in community matters. The findings also suggest that shared values and principles are vital constituents of community, but there is lack of willingness on the part of residents to apply these principles, and thus the community becomes rather an imaginary one.
In line with the above findings, sites observation and data transcribed from residents’ interviews, it is clear that the community association membership, club and sports facilities joined upon the arrival of residents to the estate, are granted to them by the developer as mandatory. However, these residents rarely socialise or share conversations about common ethics and values. The results show that most of the time residents see each other infrequently and rarely share social activities, let alone talk about spending time together and sharing conversations about common ethics and values. Thus, despite the findings above, the quest for a community with shared values dominates participants’ comments. Wendy from Harrington Grove said about the benefits of being part of a group of residents.

> Joining an association or any social group will give you a sense of strength and a feeling that you’re not alone… So can you imagine what it would be if you and your neighbours came together as one…like…say… about one single cause…which is the estate itself.

When I asked her if she could give me an example, she thought for few seconds and then said

> I don’t have one in my mind right now…but the feeling that I have… tells me that I am not wrong.

Again, a couple interviewed from Harrington Grove gave a similar account about their feeling of belonging to an influential community. “Harrington Grove residents make a great community” and when I asked to explain to me how, they said:

> The name of the estate! Why do you think people ask you where do you live? Well they judge you upon your suburb’s name and reputation (Terry and Gina).

Typical answers about social interaction in Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove were:

> We don’t even know the name of their kids, we see theme every so often (Shaun and Brigitte).

Or like Jeff:
I talk to my neighbours when I go the tennis court, I don’t see them that often around their house.

There are a lot of young Asian people around, I think they are students; anyway, we belong to different age brackets, so we don’t have many things to say (Andrew).

Many appartments are rented in our building; by the time you get used to them, they are already moving out (Yves and Pam).

The lack of social interaction between residents, illustrated by participants’ activities contradict their previous answers about their interest and desire to be part of an affluent and unified community, is referred to by Anderson (2006) in Chapter three as the “Imagined Community”. He argued that this is a process in which members carry individual interpretations and use the symbol of and values of their community to match their own views on community individually. This is also referred to by Janowitz (1952) who viewed neighbourhoods as “communities of limited liability” where members share few ties with each other beyond their common interests such as security, and infrastructural services. According to Janowitz, these communities are intentional, voluntary, and partial in the level of involvement they engender. Iris Young (1990), in her book Chapter titled “the ideal of community and the politics of difference” argued that in reality, there is no common concept of community; she went further by criticising the notion of community on both, metaphysical and practical base. In her own words:

As in all conceptual reflections, there is no universally shared concept of community, only particular articulations that overlap, complement, or sit at acute angles to one another…the desire for community relies on the same desire for social wholeness and identification…insofar, the ideal of community entails promoting a model of face-to-face relations as best, the ideal of community totalises and detemporalizes its conception of social life by setting an opposition authentic and unauthentic social relations (Young, 1990, p. 302).

In accordance with Young, when participants were asked if they belong to any association or club other than the ones set up by the developers and run by the community association. There answers was no. However, my observation work also confirmed the matter, there are no other clubs and associations apart from the ones above mentioned in this paragraph. Residents share
a quick greeting in front of their door steps. It needs to be mentioned that during the first interviews, participants were asked to help recruit other neighbours and friends on their estates. This was done in an attempt to create a snowballing effect. However, many participants declined to do so, explaining that they did not have that level of interaction with neighbours to ask them such a favour.

However, participants in this study are still unified in that they consume the estates’ different facilities, so still form a community and consume the estates’ physical and social infrastructures either in groups or as individuals. Therefore, residents of MPEs can still be considered consumers in the community and this act of consumption is considered by researchers as a subcultural form of consumption. More exactly it matches what Kozintes (2002) and Burgh-Woodman and Brace-Gavin (2007) have labelled “consumer communities”. Similarly, residents of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove live in close proximity to each other on the estate, share values, lifestyle and some level (even moderate) of tendency for self-governance and are socially influenced by the concept of MPEs. Furthermore, based on the findings of this section, the case of MPE residents can be compared to previous work by Schouten and McAlexander (1995) with their research on the Harley-Davidson Bikes Club, found that subcultures of consumption, may include status differences among members within the community.

Thus, MPEs residents in the case of Harrington Grove and Breakfast Point tend to “personalise” their estates and see in their estates some uniqueness and non-similarity with other MPEs building up their own “fit to size” community.

The ideal of community therefore is related to the level of attachment of residents to their estate. Like in the response of participants Terri and Gina of Harrington Grove who expressed a great importance on the name of the estate in regard to the community image, or like Simon and Paula of Breakfast Point who wish to shape the community to fit into their own values. Thus, there are that kind of individualism that according to Young (1990) forms an important element of subculture.

7.2 MPEs, Brand Community and Consumer Culture
The location of Harrington Grove in a bushy area was very important in our decision...The name of the estate sounds very familiar as an extension of Harrington Park estate; you know how Harrington Park became very famous... it is the first and biggest master planned estate in the area. (Dan and Jenny)

Data collected in the form of advertisement and promotion materials such as magazine and electronic devices, show to what extent developers are advertising MPEs as a luxury brand, by applying attractive texts to high quality materials. Residents are, however, far more involved in promoting MPEs as a brand culture.

The significant number of answers about brand community related questions likely due to the fact that Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove are like any valuable good or brand in their residents’ opinion. As Keller (1993) argued, that the key for the creation of powerful brands is the creation of distinctive and favourable associations in consumers’ minds in order to differentiate the brand and create competitive advantage.

Participants were very motivated on an individual basis, to express their interest in the estates’ prestige and reputation, as they promote their “club good” (Buchanan, 1965). The club good is a term used by Buchanan to explain collective consumption with shared interests and applied by Webster (2001 and 2002); Manzi and Bower (2005); Wu (2005 and 2010) on their studies on MPEs and how residents as consumers improve their lifestyle and properties values through the legal system (Community association) via the club consumer which transform MPEs to a brand or good. Thus, this section will explore the notion of brand community in MPEs.

...The more Breakfast Point becomes famous, the more people try to buy in, and the more people try to get in Breakfast Point the higher the price will go.

This quote belongs to Jonny, a resident of Breakfast Point. When I asked him if this does not bring undesirable residents to the estate, he replied “No, because we have the community association to take care of this matter, and they are good at it”. Similarly, Jeff of Harrington Grove said

The name of the estate means the reputation of that estate, and reputation means better values than surrounding suburbs... and never know, we may be able to compete with the main estate... I mean Harrington Park itself.
When Jeff asked how, he replied “Well, it is the efforts of all residents and when the community association does its job”.

On the other hand, many participants perceived their estates as a brand or a culture and that there will be a lot of benefits from living in. Other than the interest in price rise and market values, some participants see their estate’s name as a social capital that provides them a higher social status. Tony and Rosa, Business owners and residents of Breakfast Point since 2006 commented “We are delighted to live in Breakfast Point…it is a great estate with lovely people”.

Sam and Ena who live in Breakfast Point since 2011 said:

> We could buy in much closer area to city if we wanted to... believe me... there is no real community at all...anything from what it called sense of community and nothing to share with other residents (Sam). Then Ena continued: Here, there are many things that belong to the community... you see the club and playground and parks and other places that belong to the estate belong to us too”.

Similarly, repeating the quote from participants Chris and Sarah, discussed in the previous Chapter:

> We not only own the house, we also own the whole estate... We use every facility and space of the estate... in a way, we own the estate if you understand what I mean... we even pay for its maintenance and improvement.

Again repeating Jeremy and Nathalie’s answer from the previous Chapter:

> “If you look at the good time we’ve had, and the years we’ve enjoyed living on the estate, to the extra money we paid, well yes, it worth it... At least we live in a well-known and private place... Don’t forget, we live in Harrington Grove”.

Some participants attached importance to the brand name and were happy to pay more to “get in”. As quoted in Chapter six, Damian and Tracey from Breakfast Point estate said:
We thought well about the price difference between the estate and nearby suburbs and we know the difference in price brackets, but we wouldn’t have it any other way.

Then there is Debbie’s account about her satisfaction in choosing the right place to live. From her answer quoted and discussed in Chapter six, it is clear that she believes that where one lives affects the sense of self and the way one behave socially, and that living in an affluent community has improved her social standing.

The above findings are in line with the literature discussed in Chapter three by Schau et al., 2009; Cova et al., 2007; Brown et al., 2003; Kates, 2002; Muniz and O’Guinn, 2001, who pointed to the constructs of legitimacy, where community members differentiate others inside the community based on the authenticity of their consumption practices. Participants showed a high awareness of adhering to the code of ethics set by the community associations of their estates. They know that there are rules to follow, unlike in traditional suburbs, and as discussed earlier in this section, residents tends to “discipline” unethical co-residents relying mainly on the community association.

In order to measure the power of brand focal point that could link MPEs in particular, Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove nationwide as a brand identity. Participants were asked if they liked to communicate with other residents of MPEs in Australia, either directly or through their community associations. Here, the focal point of brand is linked to Kotler and Keller’s (2006) concept of brand awareness, or what Nandan (2005) called brand image. Replies were varied and sufficiently divergent to not yet match Kotler and Keller’s concept of brand awareness within these MPEs. This could be because it was still early days for the participants to be living in MPEs and the impact of their move had not been fully felt.

“Breakfast Point is unique... you know what I mean... like... let’s say it is different from other estates... we’re not aware of other similar estates with similar location and concept ... We may join other associations or groups if will be proposed, but again, what for? How this could help Breakfast Point?... I don’t know.
This was George and Stephanie of Breakfast Point’s opinion about branding MPEs in Australia. Philip and Ann also from Breakfast Point, in their answer showed a non-awareness of brand development in MPEs:

*We don’t think we need to join other associations...that if there is any... Breakfast Point’s name and image can simply be promoted by its local community... I am pretty sure.*

Garry and Martha of Harrington Grove did not see any benefit from communicating with other MPEs or joining any Trans Australian association for MPEs. In their words:

*There are hundreds of master planned estates across Australia, but there is no benefits in forming a national association for that... focussing on how we improve our estate would be much better.*

While some participants did not comment or give answers on this matter, others believed in a national association of MPEs, but again, they did not know where to start, or if it should go through the local associations or through groups of residents or something else.

*It is a great idea to form a national association of master planned estates...I think this is the local community association’s job... you agree with me?* Replied Wendy from Harrington Grove, or as Bret and Vilma responded:

*... that will be a good idea, we would like to communicate with other residents of master planned estates...I think it is a complicated process, where to start and who to contact?...This is the question.*

However, one participant couple from Breakfast Point had its own view on the matter;

*There are many national and international associations which begin with a small number of members and expand dramatically though... Thanks to the internet you can reach anyone anywhere...it will be very easy to spot master planned estates in Australia then to start with an initial contact with their community association (Peter and Carmen).*
When asked about the purpose of such association, Peter and Carmen replied

*It could be just for fun... or for sharing experience... like common legal issues... never knows...there will be some sort of cultural and social things.*

### 7.3 Conclusion

This Chapter examined the link between MPEs, subculture, brand and their importance in building social distinction for residents. To achieve the best outcome from this Chapter, I analysed data collected from residents’ interviews and advertisement material used in promoting the estates. Data was then has been matched with existent theoretical and empirical research on MPEs and subculture and brand. I divided the Chapter into two sections; the first focuses on clubs and consumer community and how residents list themselves in these categories, strongly believing in the sense of community as an ethos to their social distinction. The second section focuses on brand and the consumer culture considering MPEs as a consumption product.

The study found that there is a strong sense of community between residents of MPEs, however, there is a very low level of social interaction between the same residents which can be concluded that residents rather maintain an imaginative view for community and they live in an imagined subculture.

In regards to branding, residents of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove care about the name and reputation of their estates and procure their social status from them. However, they do not act collectively to promote their estates to the rank of a national brand, but tend to focus individually on their own estate and also tend to compare their standard living and the social benefits they believe they reap to the surrounding suburbs and demonstrate their higher social status to people with whom they interact with during everyday life. Residents though, apart from a few zealous ones, are not very motivated by the idea of brand community.

Social and cultural distinction in MPEs through subculture and brand culture reflects the discussion of these cultures in the conceptual framework of this study, like other consumer product, such as music, fashion and food and the consumption of cultural resources circulated
through markets such as brands, and leisure experiences (Schouten et al., 2007). Many brands and social clubs, such as the Harley-Davidson Motorbike Club (Schouten and McAleander, 1995); “My Nutella Community” Club (Cova and Pace, 2006), The Cult of Macintosh (Belk and Tumbat, 2005) or ethnic and cultural clubs such as Quinn and Divasagayam’s work (2005) about ethnic brand communities in the USA, have been researched. To my knowledge, the impact of subculture and branded communities on social influence and quest for distinction within MPEs residents in Australia has not been investigated to date.

The lack of social interaction between residents, illustrated by participants’ activities in this Chapter reflects Anderson’s (2006) work discussed in Chapter three as the “Imagined Community”. Anderson argued that this is a process in which members carry individual interpretations and use the symbol of and values of their community to match their own views on community individually. This is also referred to by Janowitz (1952) who viewed neighbourhoods as “communities of limited liability” where members share few ties with each other beyond their common interests such as security, and infrastructural services.
Chapter 8 Conclusion: Social Distinction and the Consumption of MPEs

8.1 Introduction

One has to bear in mind that goods are converted into distinctive signs, which may be signs of distinction but also of vulgarity, as soon as they are perceived relationally, to see that the representation which individuals and groups inevitably project through practices and properties in an integral part of social reality. A class is defined as much by its being-perceived as by its being, by its consumption—which need not be conspicuous in order to be symbolic—as much by its position in the relations of production (Bourdieu 1984, p. 483).

This study examined, both theoretically and empirically, the relationship between the different trends of physical and cultural consumption on the one side, and social distinction on the other. Furthermore, the theoretical contribution of this study can be seen in its ability to bring together the views presented in previous literature and take into account several aspects of consumption, such as consuming physical form of place and space, the aesthetic and “materialities” of the built environment, consuming for taste and lifestyle, consuming for exclusivity, subcultural consumption and brand culture and how they are connected to social distinction. For this study, consumption patterns were discussed based on the content of residents’ stories. Explanations were sought and provided in order to discern the changes occurring in the forms and proportions of changing consumption patterns.

Empirically, the thesis set out to examine two MPEs, Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove as a consumer product within these theoretical constructs. A number of significant empirical studies have been conducted on different topics and matters of MPEs, and many more are still being done. Previous studies on MPEs suggested that residents tend to consume the exclusivity and particular lifestyle offered in MPEs which have been planned and marketed for these purposes. These studies also found that residents seek a better social status when moving into an MPE. This thesis found that exclusivity and lifestyle were not the only motives for living in Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove, but also to be among affluent people. The taste for them to feel and display social distinction was apparent in both the above estates. In this case, these MPEs are a consumer product; residents consume the physical and cultural aspects of this
product to symbolically improve their social status. Because Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove are more than a mere product; they are form of a cultural product and consumed like a brand (Bourdieu, 1984).

8.1.1 Chapters Summary and Contribution to the Study

This section summarises the key findings from the literature review, research methods and design, and the empirical Chapters of this study as well as their role and contribution to the study.

Chapter two, in its first section, provided an historical background to MPEs, explored their development and proliferation worldwide and reviewed their typology and different appellations in order to offer an explanation on the way they going to be named through the study. In the second section, the Chapter introduced the Australian MPEs, including their history and origination, detailed definitions and what differentiates them from the example of other countries.

Chapter two also summarise the Australian MPE characteristics, the legal process of their development and the role of government and developers in their proliferation. The Chapter played a vital role in guiding the study towards it theoretical framework which is consumption for social distinction. The Chapter argued that MPEs are developed and marketed for affluent consumers who seek a better social status.

Chapter three, provided a theoretical framework to the study and after the reviewing of general definitions and trends of consumption, it oriented the study towards its conceptual framework after an historical background about consumption and the way it evaluate across the last few centuries to became a want rather than need. In this context, the Chapter explored the different elements and factors of motivation, in particular, the sociological factors and more specifically, motivation by desire to gain social distinction. The Chapter also explored the theory of neo-liberalism and the different views of sociologists on how neo-liberalism affected the consumption trends and consumers’ choices and freedom and focused on MPEs as a known product of the neo-liberalism era, it argued that MPEs in Australia carry some contradictory perspectives that distinguish them from MPEs worldwide due to the partial intervention of governments in their development.
The rest of the Chapter three focused on the conceptual framework, as MPEs and more specifically, Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove. Therefore, the Chapter provides a deep and thorough discussion on various theories and constructs that could offer an understanding of the consumption trends which are related to social and cultural capitals such as consumption for taste and consuming the imagined lifestyle, thus, the focus on the consumption of place and space and how they impact consumers’ social status.

The final part of Chapter three reviewed the literature on community cultural formations, more specifically; it explored the relationship between community and social interaction and cultural capital and how they contribute to social distinction within socio-geographical contexts. The Chapter also reviewed the consumption for cultural purposes such as subcultures and brand cultures, how cultural product affects consumers’ social distinction, and how consumers empowered by, and empower products making of them brand cultures.

Chapter four set out the methodological framework and research design to guide the study in a qualitative setting which helped design and implement a set of approaches to collect and analyse the data that constitute the core of this study. The Chapter also presented the case study sites and their uniqueness and particularity in order to contribute to specific requirements of this study. The Chapter also provided legal and geographical information on the case study as well as participants’ characteristics overview which helped in building up and analysing the data.

Chapters five, six and seven\(^{40}\) focused on the analysis of data, Chapter five examined the motivation of buyers to invest in MPEs, the role of developers and governments in motivating buyers and proliferating theme. The Chapter argued that buyers are mainly self-motivated by a desire for social distinction; however, developers and local governments, particularly developers, are responsible in exciting and igniting buyers appealing into MPEs. Theoretically, this Chapter contributes to the understanding of the producer’s role in motivating consumers’ desire for consumption and the transformation of product from a need to a want.

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\(^{40}\) Findings from these three Chapters are discussed in the next section in form of aims and objectives.
Chapter six examined the consumption of place and space; it explored the way Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove are consumed, how the place and space of these estates are perceived by their residents, and the impact of physical appearance and taste on the consumption of built environment. The Chapter argued that residents consume symbolically their estates and lifestyle and exclusivity is proportional and it is not dictated to norms and limits, residents of these estates have an imagined perception of MPEs.

The Chapter also contributes to the understanding of consumption within a socio-geographical context, and to the notion of symbolic and imagined meaning of consumption and its impact of consumers’ social status.

Chapter seven investigated the social interaction between residents of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove, the notion of community and social and cultural capitals. The Chapter found that in the absence of social interaction within the studied estates, the community is a virtual and imagined one, as in Chapter six; residents have their own perception rather than a collective definition to their community. The Chapter also explored the notion of cultural aspect in MPEs based on the findings from the above estates. It argued that these estates have the potential to become a subcultural product and brand culture, compared to existing subcultural products such as Harley Davidson and Nutella brand, the Chapter concludes that MPEs could attain this category of product in the future.

Theoretically, the Chapter contributes to the understanding of how product becomes a culture, and how the empowerment of the product contributes to the social distinction of consumer and how consumption is transformed to consumer communities and cultures.

This final Chapter draws together the various interlinked issues which have been raised in the study. These will be discussed in turn, and references will be made to the findings of particular Chapters where appropriate. This Chapter begins by returning to the research questions, aims and objectives highlighted in Chapter one which have directed the study and led to consider these MPEs in this study as a consumer product for social distinction ends. It will move on to link the proposition to the main consumption theories and positions. To conclude this study, the Chapter highlights some recommendations for further potential research. It also identifies further analytical and some outcomes of MPEs development and practices beyond Australia.
8.2 Key Findings

The research questioned the impact of developers’ role and buyers’ motivation on the consumption of the two MPEs studied in this thesis and has also questioned the way these MPEs are consumed and what are the social, political and cultural aspirations. These questions were articulated into aims which in turn can be answered through objectives. The multidimensionality of such aims and objectives required the construction of a conceptual framework that represents its complex interrelation. The key elements of these interrelations within these MPEs are; the level and nature of residents’ motivation, the social interaction between residents and the social and cultural capital resulted from consuming two MPEs. Therefore, a macro to micro level and analytical approach was adopted, the assumption being that without such an approach the collection, analysis and data interpretation in this thesis would have been illogical and confusing.

Applying multi-method techniques in data collection and bringing forward the experiences of different stakeholders aimed at improving the quality of the findings. Therefore, the data was organised in two groups; the physical context of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove, and the social and cultural extents. Regarding the physical context, the data focussed on legal matters, promotional materials, and physical characteristics and facilities of these MPEs. This data was obtained through collecting relevant documents and through interviewing planning officers and developers. This data was complemented by web materials and visual materials such as photos. For the social and cultural context, the data focussed on motives related to buying in these MPEs, buyers’ perception of developers’ role as well as their perception of community, in addition to their experience on the estates, their social interaction and their aspirations. Thus this data were obtained through interviews with residents from two these MPEs in Sydney.

The methodology used in this research attempted to minimise the influence of the researcher’s own values on respondents’ account in order to increase objectivity. It also tended to facilitate the examination of the strategies that are applied to enhance the consumption of MPEs; the factors affecting residents’ perceived the developers’ role and community as well, and the interaction between all of these by focussing on and the meaning of community and the motive behind consumption.
The rest of this section will bring to light and discuss the findings of the study based on the setting of the research questions and aims. It will begin with the motivation of buyers to buy and live in Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove, then move on to explore the developers’ role in marketing these MPEs and the consumers’ perception of the developer in this regard, then how consumers consume the social and physical spaces of MPE concept and finally, to explore the impact of this consumption on the broader social and cultural life of residents of these estates.

8.2.1 Motivation to buy in Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove
To investigate the consumer’s (buyers) decisions and motivations to buy in the estates mentioned above, was the first aim of this study. To attain this, two objectives were set; the first is to describe the social, economic, politic and cultural motives, and the second is to identify these motives and find their relationship with social distinction. To achieve these objectives the research in Chapter five, in its first section, analysed the motivation factors emerged from the data. The key findings are; 1) Motivation by self-governance; 2) Motivation by material affordances; 3) Motivated or encouraged by family and friends. When exploring in depth each of these findings, it can be found that each of them can be broken down into narrower themes as following:

Motivation by Self-Governance
Finding 1, self-governance contains motivation by; a) Dissatisfaction from traditional local governments; b) Aspiration for full private governance; c) Community associations are better. This study has demonstrate that motivation to buy and live in an MPE is not linked to social factors only, political factors also play a vital role in consuming MPEs. Dissatisfaction from traditional local governments and aspiration for full private governance represent an important political shift toward a new trend of governance and a mark of decline for public governance. The findings of these two elements consolidate previous literature about the role of neo-liberalism in weakening the public realm to the detriment of private mode of governance, as well as their arguments about MPEs fast growing in Australia. The finding “community associations are better” however, denotes an aspiration for self-governance and tendency toward exclusivity.
As discussed in Chapter three, neo-liberalism affected the economic and political mechanisms, declines the state power and promotes self-governance (Harvey, 2007). Reflecting Harvey’s argument, the MPEs concept proved to carry some socio aspects of, and being influenced by neo-liberalism (McGuirk and Dowling, 2009; Cheshire and Lawrence, 2005). MPEs are marketed by developers, and perceived by buyers as a way for self-governance. However, this study supported the views of McGuirk and Dowling and Cheshire and Lawrence, MPEs are governed by an elected body which make most of decisions and applied the rules, covenants and restrictions issued by the developers at the initial stage of development. Thus, they are found to be collectively managed and common spaces are owned by the community association and not jointly by owners. The only change from traditional public governance is the semi-absence of public services.

In regards to the third finding which established that buyers were motivated to live in Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove because “community associations are more rigorous in managing the estate”, consumption of MPEs means belonging to a world, adhering to a certain universe (Lazzarato, 2004). Buyers of MPEs wanted to adhere to the universe of private life and enjoy exclusively the uniqueness and particularity of the concept. They also prefer the rules of community associations as a sign or a mean of distinction, as this system of governance is new or less known in the society and may looks like a novelty or new product, however, this matter will be discussed in the coming sections.

Motivation to buy and live in an MPE could therefore be partially due to neo-liberalism trends. While neoliberalism has its impact in organising social life (Mudge, 2008), and promoted to be a way of governing (Rose and Miller, 2010). MPEs concept is in a way controversial, it combines notions of privatisation of spaces and governance which are signs (symptoms) of neo-liberalism but the concept shows some significant role for local governments mirrored in the provision of infrastructure and land tax imposition. Thus, local governments play an important role in the development and therefore the consumption of MPEs, based on the data collected from developers and town planners in this study and supported by the literature, the analysis of data concludes local governments are delegated planning powers to develop local strategic direction within the frameworks set by the state and execute the statutory development approval process. Therefore, the main authority assigned with providing and maintaining community services is local government. In the case
of MPEs, where developers increasingly play a role in the planning and provision of local services and facilities, there is generally a handover phase in which local government progressively takes on responsibility for the ongoing governance and service provision to the new development.

The study also found that the preparation of master plans is generally the developers’ field; states and local governments control the strategic planning context and the planning approval process. The town planning system, established, implemented and enforced by governments, sets both the strategic framework within which MPEs can be proposed and developed, and provides the approval process for implementing projects (Minnery and Bajracharya, 1999). It is this framework which provides the local governments and other planning authorities with systems to control development outcomes. Thus, local governments play an important role in promoting the culture of MPEs and facilitating their spreading at the Australian level.

B**uyers Motivated by Material Affordances**

The second finding in this section is motivation by material affordances. This finding contains the following elements: a) Size of blocks of land, and b) Proximity.

The study also found in Chapter five that buyers of MPEs were attracted by the material and affordances naturally or through the concept are provided in MPEs. In regards to the motivation by the size of block of land, Harrington Grove is particularly offered with large blocks of land to up to 1500sqm. This particularity attracted a significant number of buyers to opt to the estate. Despite the number of MPEs being developed in the area, Harrington Grove is the only MPE with such large blocks of land. Participants who declared being attracted by such feature stated that they can build bigger and better homes, have more options to design their two-story dwelling and use the backyard as playground for their children or even entertainment area. The strategic plans tailored by Camden City Council planning authorities helped residents reaching what Bourdieu (1984) argued it as the a context of objects and commodities that trigger consumers’ desire and motivation. MPEs offer many other commodities in the size and importance of Harrington Grove’s large blocks, residents, as found in this study, use these commodities as a sign of social distinction since these features are not available in traditional suburbs.
One of the affordances that motivated buyers to MPEs is proximity. In this study found that Harrington Grove’s residents were motivated because the estate is in walking distance to Narellan Shopping centre. In Breakfast Point case, the location of the estate near maritime transport facility makes it attractive for many buyers.

These finding, in addition of their relation to residents’ social status, they bring some arguments that there are various motives, less studied before that attract people to MPEs.

**Motivated or encouraged by family and friends**

Encouragement by others has been studied and researched by many psychologists and sociologist. However, as is study focuses on social science only. This study found that there some residents who were encouraged by their family or friends who had committed to MPEs before them. When looking at the process in first instance, it matches Vygotsky (1978), Owen (2001) and Ross’s (2004) arguments that people and their social environment are inherently interconnected and cannot be separated and personal developments are placed in the social and cultural environment which forms their social identity. This argument fits very well the MPEs context; however, there are some cultural contexts beyond this social contagion. These buyers, who were motivated this way, have the potential to create a kind of consumer culture that can be interpreted in subcultural groups or brand culture.

8.2.2 Marketing and proliferating of MPEs

This section focuses on findings from investigation of key players’ role in proliferating MPEs, more specifically; this concerns with the developers of MPEs and in lesser minor role the local government authorities. This section will also discuss the buyers and later as residents’ perception of the developers’ role. To investigate these aims, four objectives were set and have been examined in Chapter five and the finding will be discussed here.

As stated previously, to explore the role of developers and local governments in the fast spreading of MPEs in Australia, this study set the following objectives, 1) To investigate the developers marketing tools used to promote MPEs; 2) To analyse buyers’ perception of the developers approach; 3) To identify the role of other agents in promoting MPEs such as local governments; 4)To explore the legal materials and organisations created by the developers and
approved by local governments and their capacity to commodify residents social and cultural life.

Investigation of the first objective led to the following discoveries: in accordance with previous research (see Wood, 2002; Rosenblatt, 2005; Rofe, 2006; Bajracharya, Earl and Khan, 2008; Cheshire et al., 2009; Levin, 2011; Kenna and Stevenson, 2010) Developers use various means to attract buyers. Most discovered in this study are magazines, brochures, road panel boards, the big signs on the estates entries and walls. Developers use materials such as high quality magazines and emotional words and slogan promising bright and happy future for residents. One of the tools developers use is a documental film distributed on a USB device which provide a high quality presentation about the estate. Therefore, Developers are a major factor in proliferating MPEs in Australia.

Investigation of the second objective demonstrate that residents of MPEs know that developers provide them with ample information about the estate’s lifestyle and facilities but very little about legal documents and details of fees, restrictions and obligations. They discover these matters after settlement. However, residents, (by then, buyers) ignored the issue of lack of important information and focused on pursuing their desire combining their dreams to be among the “best” to the developers message for a better lifestyle. They rely on their emotion to consume in an attempt to improve their social status (Holt, 2005) and expressed their freedom of choice through the act of consumption (Giddens, 1999). This is what Bourdieu (1979) called it the aspirational consumption.

Regarding the third objective, the key players in promoting MPEs in Australia are in addition to buyers, the developers of MPEs and local governments. For the fourth objective, the study examined the legal material as part of the data as well as the structure and power of community associations which govern MPEs. As stated in this section, residents knew little about legal involvement as future residents and discovered late. Regardless their acceptance to the situation, the responsibility is on local governments first, as they approve such complicated documents and give full power to the developers to control residents’ life. This finding supports previous academic work (see Douglas et al., 2008 for example).

Buyers of MPEs believe choosing the design of their future home and the way they want to live, however, them, as consumer, they are controlled by what the producer (developer) has
masterminded for them. They are as Bauman (2007) argued; consumers who consume what are produced for them while thinking that they made the choice what to consume.

8.2.3 How Consumers Consume the Social and Physical spaces of the MPE Concept?

The previous sections discussed the motivations factors to buy in an MPE and the role of developers and local government in proliferating MPEs in Australia and argued that at the end, MPEs are consumed mainly because buyers want to consume for their social status. This section reviews the findings of investigation of Chapter six where the Chapter investigated one of the study’s aims: how consumers consume the social and physical spaces of the MPE concept?

As stated in Chapter one, to find answers to this aim, three objectives were set up; 1) exploring residents experience in consuming MPEs, focussing on their satisfaction and how it is related to their social status; 2) examining how residents consume the physical features of MPEs, how they perceive it, appreciated and how it is related to social distinction and 3) investigating the imagined lifestyle of residents and how is mirrored through the consumption of place and space in MPEs.

Beginning the discussion of the first objective, an extraction of findings from Chapter six found that; a) residents pay higher price than traditional suburbs and tied up themselves to legal restrictions but still feel happy to their commitments, this similar to findings from Chapter five. Residents committed to live in MPEs for their social image, for what others think about them, they were curious to discuss how family and friend are jealous. Living in an exclusive type of suburbs provide them with pride and feeling with higher class which create what Savage el al. (2004) described as an element of contemporary attachment to place; b) findings of this objective are that residents see their MPEs as a source of social identity and display a satisfaction from being residents. They attach great importance for what the media present MPEs; they argue this to the estates’ features and people, in other word, to the community. They link their personal identity to the estate’s one and associate to what Cova (1997) called the common identity. However, it has also been found that residents focus more on their individual identity which they aim at in branding the estate’ common identity. Residents use the estate’s common identity as a background through their satisfaction and pride to strengthen their self (individual) identity (Proshansky et al. 1983).
Findings from the second objective argued that MPEs physical appearance such as design, architecture, streetscapes, urban design and landscape play an important role in both buyers’ motivation and later as tool for social distinction. Scholars such Bourdieu (1984) linked this relation to taste, arguing that taste is linked to consumption and people among other reasons, consume to build their social capital. In this study, residents showed a high appreciation to these elements of physical appearance and believe that this could bring them a great feeling of distinction which people “outside” will not be able to enjoy, or they could but temporary when visiting the “estate”.

The third objective in this section investigated the way residents of MPEs live an imagined lifestyle through spaces and places of their MPEs. Finding from this objective summarise those in first two objectives; it argues that residents of MPEs believe that by living in an exclusive place and beloning to the estate are improving their social status. Furthermore, residents believe that other members of the community share same values and appreciations for the estate. This could be true, most participants have showed this kind of belief, however, not all values and appreciations are shared, findings across the study, and from previous research (please see McGuirk and Dowling, 2007; Walters and Rosenblatt, 2008; Rosenblatt et al., 2009) demonstrated that residents of MPEs do not socialise so often; they tend to have a short, over the fence or in the street conversations and ignore simple details about each other’s number of family, names of children and even their last names. Finding of this objective want to argue that residents of MPEs tend to build an imagined community and live (consume) an imagined lifestyle or they consume the symbols (Bourdieu, 1997, Elliott, 1997) of the estates and what represent their social status and rather than the walls, streets, gym and other things. Thus, this finding suggests that residents of MPEs practice an imagined community and an imagined sense of community (Talen, 2000).

8.2.4 Consuming MPEs: Social and Cultural Impact.
To explore the impact of this consumption on the broader social and cultural life of residents of MPEs is the fourth aim of this study. To achieve this aim, four objectives were set up and have been explored in Chapter seven of this thesis as follow; 1) investigate the formation of communities and the sense of community within residents of MPEs; 2) examine the social and cultural impacts of residents interaction; 3) explore the capacity and aspiration of residents to form subcultural groups, and to what social and geographical extents if any, these subcultural
group could develop; 4) investigate to what level brand culture is proliferating within MPEs residents and how it affecting their social status.

For the first objective, the key findings are; a) in MPEs, community is not created by resident, it is rather pre-designed by the developers. The developers create the physical, social and legal structures (Walters and Rosenblatt, 2008; McGuirk and Dowling, 2007) for community as part of their marketing plans; b) sense of community in MPEs is a kind of virtual process, residents believe that they live it, however, practically its existence was not detected and findings demonstrate the absence of social interaction to a degree that residents does not even know the name of a neighbour in some cases. Residents of MPEs are unified in their mind for sense of community and they seem convinced by their beliefs, however, they form a consumer community (Kozinets, 2002) rather than sense of community. Community in MPEs resemble more to a club where people join and benefit from its features. Residents, in addition to exclusivity and the lifestyle offered by their estates, they achieve a social distinction from the concept as whole and may better form a cultural community because of the lack of social interaction which constitute an important ingredient in community formation (see Tonnies, 1887 [1988]; Bell and Newby, 1975; Rivlin, 1987; McDowell, 1999).

Regarding the second objective, as discussed in findings of the second objective in this section, in the absence of social interaction, residents of MPEs form rather a community culture. Thus findings from the examination of this objective suggest that the lived experience of residents which is the consumption of MPEs equally, generate some social and cultural capitals that residents based on to improve their social class and status.

Finding of the third objective demonstrates that there is a burgeoning form of subculture in Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove. This subculture is generated by the phenomena of MPE more likely than by the residents. In the absence of social interaction, residents themselves are unable to form a subculture. Thus, in these MPEs as urban concept, the only form of subculture that could match as discussed in this section above, the consumer community, a type of subculture that is characterised by people live in close proximity where members exercise some caring and sharing (Kozinets, 2002). Similarly, MPEs residents care about their estates and share a desire for distinctive living. This objective revealed that Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove as MPEs remain growing and attracting more people with some of these people would
start organising clubs and cultures like Harley Davidson, or other form of consumer culture such as Nutella and other brands.

Finding from the fourth objective argued that developers play an important role in promoting these MPEs as a brand; however, findings also showed that residents are also involving in the creation of these MPEs brand. Their interest for their estates is mostly individual but frequent among residents. They see their estates as a “valuable” brand. One more thing that could present MPEs as a brand is the community associations which regulate the functioning of these MPE, but these associations may play a favourable role in the future and could becoming a central point in organising and maintain members and membership. The brand image (Nandan, 2005) of MPEs produces a social satisfaction among residents. Residents are interested in promoting their estates’ image as it reflects their own social status, the more the estate is known, the more they feel socially distinct.

8.2.5 Conclusion
As stated through the thesis, the aims and objectives of this study reflects the research questions set up in Chapter one. These questions are set as following: in the case of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove:

1- How these MPEs are consumed, and what are the residents’ social and cultural aspirations?
2-What is the impact of the developers’ role, and buyers’ perceptions and motivations on the consumption of these MPEs?
3- How is consumption used to generate social distinction?

Overall, studying Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove inform how these two MPEs are consumed and to what extent this consumption impact the social, economical, political and cultural life of their residents. Following Bourdieu (1984), when people consume a particular pattern or product of symbolic commodity such as home, they follow related systems of classification to create for themselves a creative taste that match their social distinction. In the case of these MPEs, I argue that residents consume their estate in a way that either match or upgrade their social distinction. Therefore, by summarising discussion of key findings in the previous section of this Chapter, the study responds to the research questions as following:
The study found that in the case of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove, residents focus merely on aesthetic and social features of their estates. Furthermore, they consume the exterior appearance of their estates and on an imagined ideal lifestyle where “one for all and all for one”, while the study further found that there is a near absence of social interaction among residents. Thus there is a symbolic meaning behind the consumption of these estates, in other terms, there is desire among residents to either change or upgrade their social status and seek a high level of social distinction. Residents of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove have great social aspiration mirrored by their desire for social distinction, however, residents showed little tendency to form subcultural groups. The subcultural formation if exists is not caused by residents of these estates and will be discussed as part of the third research question. Similarly to brand culture, residents do not have any significant aspiration to launch their estate as a brand, rather the concept itself tend to become as such, this again will be discussed in the third question.

In regards to the second research question, the developers of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove played an important role in not only motivating prospective buyers by their marketing tools, but also in shaping the imagined lifestyle I wrote about in discussing the first research question. Developers of these estates found by this study to influence people form the stage of prospective buyers till they sell and move out the estates.

Buyers and currently residents of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove have different phases of perceptions, one when they are buying which mostly positive, and the second when they settle and discover the “damage” done by the developers. As discussed in this section, buyers are motivated by a desire for social distinction using the estates (as product) as their “pride” and the estates’ physical facilities, distinctive legal status and aesthetics appearance to demonstrate their level of taste as a social distinction symbol.

The third research question tends to deal with the broader experience of MPEs as a consumer product. However, in the case of breakfast Point and Harrington Grove, the study found that the estates themselves as part of the MPE concept tend to be a source of social distinction to their residents. Thanks to the formation of consumer culture rose as an outcome of consumption of these estates, the product (MPEs of this study) start to becoming a cultural product, both as subcultural and brand culture. The high number of buyers moved into and filled these estate in
a short time cannot be argued to be due to housing demand only, the study found, there are many developments near both estates, however, these particular buyers preferred MPEs to traditional suburbs with similar locations and even cheaper price. Thus these MPEs spreading fast and start to influence the social curiosity of home buyers and may risk becoming, if not a subculture, probably a brand culture.

Answering the third research question attempts to provide a contribution to the literature about the role of MPEs and their potential to become subcultural product and brand culture. This field has not been investigated previously and this study could offers some insight about the cultural impact of consuming MPEs is it is generalised to cover more MPEs across Australia and worldwide.

Thus, this study demonstrates that MPE concept, as reviewed in Chapter one, is not about security and social segregation, it is a consumer product with growing potential and expansion. Due to the ongoing domination of neo-liberalism worldwide, consumption of MPEs keeps offering new trends and patterns. This study found that MPEs are not only a consumption product; indeed, they are consumer product and can be consumed for social, political, economic and cultural advantages and an excellent place for social distinction.

8.3 Limitations of this Study and Recommendations for Further Research

As it can be noted across the thesis, this study focussed on two MPEs in Sydney. The reasons behind the selection of these estates were explained in Chapters one and four. Due to their uniqueness in what they offer the study such as their physical characteristics and their history of development which offers a diversity of experiences that match the study’s aims and scop from one side, and other logistic factors such as the financial and time restraints on the other. Therefore, it is wise to be cautious about generalising the findings of this study to other MPEs. The uniqueness and non-typicality of Breakfast Point and Harrington Grove together with the qualitative approach of this research limit the application of findings; however, it would be possible to extend these findings in further case studies and to test their applicability through sample surveys across a wide range of MPEs in Australia.
A further limitation of this study is the absence of renter residents of these MPEs in the interviews. Due to the nature of the scope of the research which centred on buyers’ motivation and perception of the developers’ role in promoting MPEs, interviews with renters would have detracted from this focus.

While the findings presented in this study have made a number of theoretical and practical contributions, the understanding of the social and cultural impacts on the consumption of all MPEs in Australia and worldwide is still incomplete. As mentioned across the thesis, this study based on non-comparative case study of two MPEs only, I also noted that the findings cannot be generalised due to the non-typical nature of these targeted estates. The current study identifies a string of subcultural capital and brand culture in the studied estates in addition to consolidating previous studies on the impact of MPEs to improve residents’ social status. The study also identified the notion of symbolic consumption within residents of the estates and an absence of social interaction. Therefore, future studies should focus on the subcultural and brand culture in MPEs, extend the scope of social distinction to cover the maximum number of MPEs and investigate symbolic and imagined consumption on a national level.

The study brings together the notions of urban development and social development providing a better understanding of the functions of government process towards the built form. The study also shed a light on an important academic topic that is the consumption of built form within a social context. Furthermore, the study brings together a conceptual framework of social distinction, social identity, social and cultural capital and consumption of space and place. The study adds to our understanding of the complicated relation between governments’ policies, urban planning and the way people consume the urban form in order to improve their social status.

The importance of this study lies in the theorisation of MPEs where an opportunity to affluent, middle class Australians to live in, and consume a community that is highly exclusive that provide them with a high level of symbolic capital and social prestige. Thus the study is very important for urban policy and practice as well as a considerable sociological significance and new opening for new theories to be investigated.
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Appendices
3.2 Anticipated structure

The Developer proposes to structure the Community Scheme as set out in the Community Management Statement.

3.3 Developer may alter structure

(1) Subject to paragraph (2), the Developer may, at its discretion, alter the anticipated structure of the Precinct Scheme during the Development Period subject to the matters set out in this management statement.

(2) The Developer must consult with Camden Council before making any changes to the Precinct Scheme under paragraph (1).

4 Design and building standards

4.1 Design Guidelines – Community Scheme

All parties to this management statement must comply with:

(1) the Design Guidelines in place under the Community Management Statement for the Community Scheme; and

(2) the procedure set out in by-laws 4 & 5 of the Community Management Statement.

4.2 Creation

Design Guidelines may be:

(1) adopted by the Community Association as Rules;

(2) adopted by the Precinct Association as Rules; or

(3) during the Development Period imposed by the Developer,

with respect to Precinct Property or Precinct Development Lots.

4.3 Who must comply?

(1) All Residents must comply with the Design Guidelines.

(2) The Precinct Association must comply with Design Guidelines with respect to Precinct Property.

4.4 Variation

(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the Design Guidelines may be varied by an Ordinary Resolution of the Precinct Association, provided that any such amendment Management Statement for the Community Scheme and Subsidiary Design Guidelines in force at the relevant time.

(2) The Design Guidelines must not be inconsistent with any DCP or other Council planning instrument applicable at the time those guidelines are adopted or varied.
FORM 28
COMMUNITY LAND DEVELOPMENT ACT 1989
COMMUNITY LAND MANAGEMENT ACT 1989
COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

WARNING
The terms of this Management Statement are binding on the Community Association, each Subsidiary Body within the Community Scheme and each person who is an owner, lessee, occupier or mortgagee in possession of a Community Development Lot, Precinct Development Lot, Neighbourhood Lot or Strata Lot within the Community Scheme.

PART 1
BY-LAWS FIXING DETAILS OF DEVELOPMENT

These By-laws relate to the control and preservation of the essence or theme of the Community Scheme and as such may only be amended or revoked by a unanimous resolution of the Community Association in accordance with section 17(2) of the Management Act.

1 Architectural and Landscape Standards

1.1 The Community Association may prescribe architectural and landscape standards for the Community Scheme.

1.2 The Architectural and Landscape Standards bind:

(a) the Community Association; and

(b) each Subsidiary Body; and

(c) each owner or occupier of a Lot; and

(d) each mortgagee in possession of a Lot; and

(e) each lessee of a Lot.

1.3 The Community Association must, when requested by a Subsidiary Body or the owner of a Community Development Lot and on payment of a reasonable fee, provide an up-to-date copy of the Architectural and Landscape Standards.

2 Varying Architectural and Landscape Standards

2.1 The Community Association may from time to time vary the Architectural and Landscape Standards but only in accordance with this By-law 2.

2.2 A Subsidiary Body or the owner of a Lot may apply to the Community Association requesting the variation of the Architectural and Landscape Standards.
Participant Consent Form

Project Title:
Consuming Master-Planned Estates in Australia: Political, Social, Cultural and Economic Factors

I, ........................................, consent to participate in the research project titled (Consuming master-planned estates in Australia: The political, social and economic factors that underpin the rise in popularity of master planned estates in Australia).

I acknowledge that:

I have read the participant information sheet [or where appropriate, 'have had read to me'] and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s.

The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

I consent to the participation in the interview involving writing notes and audio taping.

I understand that my involvement is confidential and that the information gained during the study may be published but no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher/s now or in the future.

Signed: _______________________

Name: _______________________

Date: _______________________

Return Address: _______________________

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee.
The Approval number is: H10273

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au. Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.
Participant Information Sheet (General)

Project Title: **Consuming Master-Planned Estates in Australia: Political, Social, Cultural and Economic Factors**

Who is carrying out the study?
Kamel Taoum as doctoral candidate at the University of Western Sydney for the completion of PhD degree supervised by Associate Professor Michael Darcy, Dr Andrew Gorman-Murray and Dr Laura Schatz

You are invited to participate in a study conducted by Kamel Taoum, doctoral student at the Urban Research Centre, University of Western Sydney

What is the study about?
The purpose of the study is to examine the political, social and economic factors that promote the rise in popularity of master planned estates in Australia. It will examine the relation amongst residents of master planned estates, and between residents and the community associations that manage the estates where they live. Some consideration will be given to conflicts that arise between residents and community associations in relation to rules and restrictions that may be imposed on residents (e.g. on the design of homes and landscape; the use of the estates facilities such as tennis courts, gym or golf clubs). Additionally, the study will examine the role of developers in shaping the lifestyle of residents by and through developing, advertising and selling master planned estates as a 'lifestyle choice', and what might motivate residents to buy into a master planned estate.

What does the study involve?
The study involve an interview of about 60 minutes of voice recording and note taking where participants will be asked questions related to their experience with master planned estates, satisfaction and their relations with community association and neighbors.

How much time will the study take?
The study will take about 60 minutes for an interview of 14 questions
Will the study benefit me?
While there is no direct and individual benefits to the participants, this study will shed a light on master planned estate in Australia and provide a general knowledge about this living concept.

Will the study involve any discomfort for me?
The study will not involve any discomfort for participants.

How is this study being paid for?
The study is not sponsored by any organisation, it’s intended for the completion of a postgraduate research degree (PhD).

Will anyone else know the results? How will the results be disseminated?
The results of this research will be disseminated in a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Social Sciences at University of Western Sydney. The analysis and results will be also published in refereed academic outputs such as journal articles and conference papers.

Can I withdraw from the study?
Participation is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to be involved and – if you do participate – you can withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without any consequences.

Can I tell other people about the study?
Yes, you can tell other people about the study by providing them with the chief investigator's contact details. They can contact the chief investigator to discuss their participation in the research project and obtain an information sheet.

What if I require further information?
When you have read this information, Kamel Taoum will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Kamel Taoum, Urban Research Centre, University of Western Australia. Mobile phone 0417254681.

What if I have a complaint?
This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. The Approval number is [enter approval number].

If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Office of Research Services on Tel +61 2 4736 0229 Fax +61 2 4736 0013 or email humanethics@uws.edu.au.

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this study, you may be asked to sign the Participant Consent Form.
Dear residents

My name is Kamel Taoum, I am a research student at University of Western Sydney. I am undertaking a research study on Master-Planned Estates and I have chosen your estate as a case study. Part of this study is an interview of residents of your estate.

Objectives of this research are:

To examine the political, social and economic factors those underpin the rise in popularity of master planned estates in Australia.

This research focuses on how and why it is important to buy into a master planned estate, and expose the role of developers and community associations in shaping the lifestyle of residents.

If you wish to participate in this interview, please contact me on 0417254881, or email me at 17855352@student.uws.edu.au

Participation entails a 60 minutes interview with one or more residents it will be recorded on audio recorder and also involve some notes taking in hand writing. I would like to conduct the interview at your home or a place convenient to you.

I thank you in advance for your participation and assistance in my research.
4 STATUTORY CONTEXT

4.1 Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979

Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act commenced operation on 1 August 2005. Part 3A consolidates the assessment and approval regime of all major projects previously considered under Part 4 (Development Assessment) or Part 5 (Environmental Assessment) of the EP&A Act.

Under the provisions of Section 75B of the Act development may be declared to be a Major Project by virtue of a State Environmental Planning Policy or by order of the Minister published in the Government Gazette.

In accordance with Section 75M of the Act, Rosecorp lodged the Concept Plan which was approved by the Minister on 7 April 2006. The purpose of this submission is for the Director General to provide a report on the Point Precinct project application to the Minister for the purposes of deciding whether or not to grant approval pursuant to Clause 75J of the Act.

4.2 State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005

State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005 outlines the types of development declared to be a Major Project for the purposes of Part 3A of the Act.

For the purposes of the SEPP certain forms of development may be considered a Major Project if the Minister (or his delegate) forms the opinion that the development meets criteria within the SEPP.

On 31 August 2005 the Minister for Planning formed the opinion that remaining development of the Breakfast Point site was a development described in Schedule 1, Group 5, Clause 13 of the SEPP, namely:

"Development for the purpose of residential, commercial or retail projects with a capital investment value of more than $50 million that the Minister determines are important in achieving State or regional planning objectives."

As the capital investment value of outstanding development on the site was in the order of $554 million and therefore exceeded the $50 million criteria, the Minister formed the opinion that the development was a Major Project. In doing so the Minister satisfied himself that the development was important in achieving State or regional planning objectives on the basis that:

- Breakfast Point was identified as being of "strategic significance" in SEPP 56;
- The redevelopment of the site would significantly contribute to major residential growth in an identified urban renewal area;
- The site is well located for public transport (bus and ferry); and
- The capital investment value of outstanding development on the site was in the order of $554 million with a current construction workforce of approximately 1000.

On 29 November 2005, following Rosecorp’s revision of the area they sought to obtain a Part 3A approval for, the Minister revoked the opinion formed in August 2005 and formed a new opinion that the revised area was a Major Project under Schedule 1, Group 5, Clause 13 of the SEPP. In doing so, the Minister authorised the submission of a Concept Plan and associated project applications for those areas of the site.
Harrington Grove and has confirmed its support for the proposed development except for Precinct J. The proposed larger allotments that fractured the ownership of the area containing significant vegetation was not considered by DSEWPC to be a satisfactory arrangement for the ongoing protection of the Cumberland Plain Woodland vegetation.

To obtain full support from DSEWPC to then enable the issue of an environmental approval under the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act, a smaller development footprint was identified where a greater concentration of residential development is allowed. The area of land outside the development footprint is to be contained under a single tenure and management arrangement. The difference in the development footprint under the existing LEP and the proposed amendment is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Development Footprint</th>
<th>Conservation Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing LEP</td>
<td>17.23ha</td>
<td>32.55ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed Amendment</td>
<td>13.65ha</td>
<td>36.13ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In light of the above, the existing 2000m² minimum lot size in CLEP 2010 does not enable an increase in residential development within the smaller development footprint in accordance with the DSEWPC approval. Therefore, a minimum lot size of 700m² within the E4 zoned area of Precinct J is proposed to facilitate the improved environmental outcome approved by DSEWPC.

Precinct G

CLEP 2010 currently allocates a minimum lot size of 2000m² to Precinct G, which was adopted from the minimum lot size requirement in Camden DCP 2006 on a like-for-like basis. However, prior to the finalisation of CLEP 2010 Council approved a subdivision layout within Precinct G that contained lot sizes of around 700m² to 800m² or greater under Development Application 1267(5)/2006 (issued 16 June 2010) (Refer to Attachment 6 – Approved Subdivision Plan).

Accordingly, it is proposed to update the minimum lot size for Precinct G so it is consistent with the development approval applying to the site, being a minimum of 700m². In addition, the amendment to the minimum lot size will enable an irregular lot boundary for two allotments within the Precinct G area to be rectified.

Precinct O

CLEP 2010 allocates a minimum lot size of 2000m² to Precinct O, which was adopted from the minimum lot size requirement in Camden DCP 2006 on a like-for-like basis. However, the 2000m² minimum lot size requirement does not enable the necessary flexibility to deliver a lot layout that responds to the topography and development constraints applying to this Precinct.

It is intended to implement a minimum lot size regime that will deliver a lot layout reflective of the existing lot pattern in Kirkham Estate for area forming the floodplain of Narellan Creek, which are allotments that are typically 6000m² in area or greater. This
emissions from Camden Valley Way, a more regular subdivision layout that results in more contained private open spaces and built form will achieve a more optimal response to noise emissions.

This is demonstrated in the subdivisional layouts along the Camden Valley Way interface to the north. These approved residential allotments that front and side Camden Valley Way underwent rigorous noise modelling to ensure that noise emissions could be attenuated successfully. In comparison to the irregular shaped allotments, which form the existing southern boundary to Precinct F area, the regular shaped allotments were significantly better performing in mitigating the noise impacts.

In addition to the subdivision layout delivering a better response to traffic noise impacts, the design will achieve a better lot layout pattern that includes a logical ‘rounding-off’ of the interface between Precinct F and Stage 34 in Harrington Park.

The proposed amendment will facilitate a residential development that does not result in any adverse visual or environmental impacts and subdivision layout that will provide optimal noise attenuation opportunities for the future residents of Precinct F South. In addition, the proposal will result in an improved and more efficient use of land, and will contribute to increasing housing supply without any adverse impact on infrastructure or Council resources.

District Playing Fields

District playing fields and associated facilities are planned for Lot 8 DP 1132349, which are to be provided in accordance with the Voluntary Planning Agreement for Harrington Grove. The site is zoned RU1 Primary Production in CLEP 2010, which does not permit a full range of sporting facilities. Prohibited uses include indoor recreational facilities, such as swimming pools and gymnasiaums, and major recreation facilities. Furthermore, the RU1 zone does not reflect the planned and intended use for this site, which is for a major public recreation and sporting complex.

A more appropriate zone for the site is RE1 Public Recreation, which permits a range of sporting facilities associated with the playing fields and aims to “provide a full range of recreational settings and activities”. Accordingly, it is proposed that Lot 8 be zoned RE1 to reflect the future use of the land and to enable the successful delivery of the facilities required under the Harrington Grove Voluntary Planning Agreement.

2. Amendments to Minimum Lot Size Maps (Refer to Attachment 3)

Precinct J

It is proposed to amend the minimum lot size requirement for the Precinct J area from 2000m² to 700m² to enable the environmental outcome in the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act approval issued by the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPC) to be implemented (Refer to Attachment 4 - letter dated 25 May 2010 by Ecological Australia & Attachment 5 – DSEWPC Approval).

As detailed in the previous section explaining the proposed zoning amendments to Precinct J, DSEWPC has completed a comprehensive environmental assessment of
Heavy Vehicles

72.5 Heavy vehicles may be parked in the Community Parcel only for the purpose of loading or unloading and then only for as short a period as is reasonably practicable.

Repairs

72.6 Repairs to Vehicles must not be undertaken in Community Property or Subsidiary Body Property.

73. Payments to be made

73.1 An Owner or Occupier must comply at their cost and on time with this management statement, any applicable Subsidiary Body By-laws and any applicable Rules.

73.2 An Owner or Occupier must pay the Community Association and any relevant Subsidiary Body interest from and including the day on which the payment is due until the day it is paid on any amount they owe under this management statement, any applicable Subsidiary Body By-laws or any applicable Rules that they do not pay on time.

73.3 The Community Association and any relevant Subsidiary Body must calculate interest under this by-law 73 at a rate of 10% simple interest per annum or the rate of interest for unpaid contributions under the Management Act or, where the Subsidiary Body is an Owners Corporation, under the Strata Management Act.

73.4 The Community Association may recover as a debt amounts payable to it under this management statement or any applicable Rules that are not paid.

73.5 A Subsidiary Body may recover as a debt amounts payable to it under this management statement or its Subsidiary Body By-laws or any applicable Rules that are not paid.

73.6 An Owner must pay:

(a) when they fall due, contributions levied under the Management Act and under the Strata Management Act, as applicable; and

(b) on demand, any costs, charges and expenses of the Community Association or any relevant Subsidiary Body incurred in connection with the contemplated or actual enforcement or preservation of any rights under this management statement, any applicable Subsidiary Body By-laws or any applicable Rules in relation to the Owner.

73.7 A certificate signed by the Community Association, its Managing Agent or the secretary of the Executive Committee or a Subsidiary Body, its managing agent or the secretary of its executive committee about a matter or a sum payable to the Community Association or relevant Subsidiary Body, as the case may be, is prima facie evidence of:

(a) the amount; and

(b) any other fact stated in it.

74. Rules

Purpose of Rules

74.1 In addition to its powers under the Management Act and elsewhere in this management statement, the Community Association has power under this by-law 74 to make and vary rules about the control, management, operation, use and enjoyment of the Community Parcel and, in particular, Community Property and any part of it, including Porchiori Lot any Community Facility (Rules).

74.2 In addition to its powers under the Management Act and the Strata Management Act, as applicable, and elsewhere in this management statement, a Subsidiary Body has power under this by-law 74 to make and vary rules about the
19 Obligations and Restrictions

19.1 Noise
An owner or occupier of a Lot must not create any noise on a Lot or Community Property likely to interfere with the peaceful enjoyment of the owner or occupier of another Lot or of any person lawfully using Community Property.

19.2 Obstruction of Community Property
An owner or occupier of a Lot must not obstruct lawful use of Community Property by any person except on a temporary or non-recurring basis.

19.3 Behaviour of owners and occupiers
An owner or occupier of a Lot when on Community Property must be adequately clothed and must not use language or behave in a manner likely to cause offence or embarrassment to the owner or occupier of another Lot or to any person lawfully using Community Property.

19.4 Children playing on Community Property
An owner or occupier of a Lot must not permit any child of whom the owner or occupier has control to:

(a) play on Community Property within a building (areas of Community Property designated as a child’s playground area excepted); or

(b) be or remain on Community Property comprising a car parking area or other area of possible danger or hazard to children

unless accompanied by an adult exercising effective control.

19.5 Storage of flammable liquids and other substances and materials
An owner or occupier of a Lot must not, except with the prior written approval of the Community Association, use or store on the Lot or on Community Property any flammable chemical, liquid or gas or other inflammable material.

19.6 Application of By-law 19.5
By-law 19.5 does not apply to chemicals, liquids, gases or other material used or intended to be used for domestic purposes, or any chemical, liquid, gas or other material in a fuel tank of a motor vehicle or internal combustion engine.

19.7 Keeping of animals
An owner or occupier of a Lot may keep an animal within the Community Parcel without the consent of the Executive Committee so long as, in the opinion of the Executive Committee reasonably held, the owner takes such action as may be
15 Community Association’s right to maintain services

The Community Association may enter a Lot to maintain, repair, alter, add to, increase the capacity of or renew or inspect Private Services, so long as notice has been given under section 60 of the Management Act.

16 Owner and occupier responsible for others

16.1 An owner or occupier of a Lot must take all reasonable steps to ensure that an Authorised Visitor complies with these By-laws as if that Authorised Visitor were an owner of a Lot.

16.2 If an Authorised Visitor does not comply with these By-laws the owner or occupier must withdraw the consent to the Authorised Visitor being on the Community Parcel and request that person to leave the Community Parcel.

17 Aerials and Solar Energy Devices

The owner or occupier of a Lot must not, except with the prior written approval of the Community Association which must be unanimous and in compliance with requirements (if any) of Council, construct, install or attach to the outside of any building on a Lot, the outside of any building containing a Lot or a structure on a Lot:

(a) any television, radio or other aerial or antenna or any other transmitting or receiving device; or

(b) any solar energy collector panels and associated equipment; or

(c) any energy conservation equipment; or

(d) a solar hot water system and associated equipment.

18 Things not in keeping with

The owner or occupier of a Lot must not, except with the prior written approval of the Community Association, construct, install or maintain on or in a Lot any thing that can be seen from outside the Lot, which is not in keeping with the building on or landscaped areas of the Lot.
Appendix 8

May these just be...
Appendix 8

Breakfast Point

A Sense of Place, A Feeling of Belonging
Appendix 8
LAND AND PROPERTY INFORMATION NEW SOUTH WALES - TITLE SEARCH

FOLIO: SP982542

SECOND SCHEDULE (40 NOTIFICATIONS) (CONTINUED)

12 D9270239 RIGHT OF WAY VARIABLE WIDTH (BB) APPURTENANT TO THE
       PART SHOWN SO BENEFITED IN D92808020
13 D9270200 RIGHT OF WAY VARIABLE WIDTH (BB) APPURTENANT TO THE
       PART SHOWN SO BENEFITED IN D92808020
14 D9270200 EASEMENT FOR SERVICES (BB) APPURTENANT TO THE PART
       SHOWN SO BENEFITED IN D92808020
15 D91047145 RESTRICTION(S) ON THE USE OF LAND REFERRED TO AND
       NUMERED (3) IN THE S. 88B INSTRUMENT AFFECTING THE
       PART SHOWN DESIGNATED (6C) IN THE TITLE DIAGRAM
16 D91047145 RESTRICTION(S) ON THE USE OF LAND REFERRED TO AND
       NUMERED (4) IN THE S. 88B INSTRUMENT AFFECTING THE
       PART SHOWN DESIGNATED (40) IN THE TITLE DIAGRAM
17 D91047145 POSITIVE COVENANT REFERRED TO AND NUMERED (6) IN THE
       S. 88B INSTRUMENT AFFECTING THE PART SHOWN DESIGNATED
       (6B) IN THE TITLE DIAGRAM
18 D91047145 POSITIVE COVENANT REFERRED TO AND NUMERED (8) IN THE
       S. 88B INSTRUMENT AFFECTING THE PART SHOWN DESIGNATED
       (8B) IN THE TITLE DIAGRAM
19 D9270347 EASEMENT FOR SERVICES VARIABLE WIDTH APPURTENANT TO
       THE LAND ABOVE DESCRIBED
20 D9270347 EASEMENT FOR ENCROACHMENT APPURTENANT TO THE LAND
       ABOVE DESCRIBED (DOC.1)
21 D9270347 EASEMENT FOR SERVICES APPURTENANT TO THE LAND ABOVE
       DESCRIBED (DOC.1)
22 D9270347 EASEMENT FOR SUPPORT & ATTACHMENT (CC) APPURTENANT
       TO THE PART SHOWN SO BENEFITED IN D92808020
23 A9155922 COVENANT AFFECTING THE PART SHOWN SO BENEFITED IN
       D92808020
24 D9270347 POSITIVE COVENANT AFFECTING THE PART DESIGNATED
       (NC6) REFERRED TO AND NUMERED (6) IN THE S. 88B
       INSTRUMENT AFFECTING THE PART SHOWN SO BENEFITED IN THE
       TITLE DIAGRAM (DOC.1)
25 D9270347 EASEMENT FOR WATER SUPPLY PURPOSES 3 METRE(S) WIDE
       (NC4) AFFECTING THE PART(S) SHOWN SO BENEFITED IN THE
       TITLE DIAGRAM (DOC.1)
26 D9270347 EASEMENT FOR ACCESS AND DRAINAGE PURPOSES VARIABLE
       WIDTH (NC5) AFFECTING THE PART(S) SHOWN SO BENEFITED IN
       THE TITLE DIAGRAM (DOC.1)
27 D910666388 EASEMENT FOR SEWERAGE PURPOSES 2.5 METER(S) WIDE
       AFFECTING THE PART(S) SHOWN SO BENEFITED IN THE TITLE
       DIAGRAM
28 D9270347 EASEMENT FOR ENCROACHMENT (D) APPURTENANT TO THE
       LAND ABOVE DESCRIBED (DOC.G)
29 D9270347 EASEMENT FOR SERVICES (K) THE APPURTENANT TO THE
       LAND ABOVE DESCRIBED (DOC.G)
30 A9279796 EASEMENT FOR ACCESS APPURTENANT TO THE LAND ABOVE

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Hancox Lawyers Drummoyne Office
PRINTED ON 24/2/2014

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Consuming master-planned estates in Australia: The political, social and economic factors that underpin the rise in popularity of master planned estates in Australia

Residents’ Interview

Section 1 Personal Information

Name of Participant/s:

Estate:

Date:

Marital Status:

Age Bracket:

Occupation:

Education:

Residential Tenure:

If working, where is your work location?

Section 2 Participant’s connection to MPEs (Motivation to Buy)

What do you know about the estate? What type of development is it? Did you know this before buying?

Where did you live prior to this estate? How long have you lived on this estate?

How did you hear about this estate?

What persuaded you to move to a master planned estate? When you started thinking about moving house, did you plan to move to a master planned estate? How many MPEs had you inspected prior to purchasing?

How did the price affect your decision to buy?
Section 3 Developer’s Role and Marketing impacts

How do you perceive the estate’s advertisement and how did affect your decision

How did you perceive the developer’s role in the building and / or purchasing process? Did this perception change after settling in the estate?

What information did you receive about the property and management arrangements? Where did the information come from?

Section 4 Participants’ experience with the community (Consuming the MPE)

How important was the location and the name of the estate for you? Do you feel any particular privilege living in this estate? In your opinion, what are the benefits of living in an MPE?

How do you compare your current lifestyle to the one you had in your previous suburb? In other words, what feature/s or special reason encouraged you to opt for this estate?

What do you feel about community in general? What do you expect from the community of the estate? What are some of the characteristic you want to see in this community?

How did you imagine the community before moving here?

Where do your extended family and friends live? How do your family and friends perceive you living here?

How do you make friends on the estate? What common characteristics or values do you share with other people on the estate?

Are you a member of any association or group of residents other than the estate common association and club? If so, what benefits is there for you?

Section 5 Experience with Governance

Do you share any concerns about local government’s proposals, policies or decisions with other residents or groups of residents on the estate? If so, how do you jointly deal with?
Appendix I

How would you describe your experience with self-governance? Do you prefer local
government management or the community association?

How often do you attend the community association meetings, and how satisfied are with
management?

If you had to move again, will you choose another master-planned estate? Why?

Is there anything you would like to add? Do you have any questions?
Consuming master-planned estates in Australia: The political, social and economic factors

Planning Authorities’ Interview

My name is Kamel Taoum, thank you for participating in this interview. This interview is part of my doctoral thesis and is designed to explore the role of governments, developers, buyers and broader social changes in master planned estates.

1. When did you introduce the MPEs concept into your strategic plan?

2. What was the reason behind the strategy?

3. What are the socio economic factors behind the strategy?

4. How often do you receive applications for Master Planned Estates?

5. What was the community response to zoning notifications?

6. What was the ratio between with or against (try to get this through data)?

7. What was the role of property developers?

8. Do you receive any complaints from the public regarding the Master Planned Estates?

Note: these are 'example' questions and the exact wording and order of questions will be refined over coming months.
Appendix 13

Consuming master-planned estates in Australia: The political, social and economic factors

Developer’s interview

My name is Kamel Taoum, thank you for participating in this interview. This interview is part of my doctoral thesis and is designed to explore the role of governments, developers, buyers and broader social changes in master planned estates.

1. What are the factors that led you to develop Master Planned Estates?

2. How hard or easy was the application process?

3. What criteria do you use for writing and applying covenants and restrictions?

4. What is the best marketing tool?

5. How do you select the marketing text? What criteria?

6. How do you rate the buyer’s response?

7. What are the common issues in the deed transfer?

8. What are the common issues after settlement?

9. What do buyers usually ask for in a Master Planned Estate?

10. Where do you rate the price factor?

Note: These are ‘example’ questions and the exact wording and order of questions will be refined over coming months.