PARADISE PLANNED
Community Formation and the
Master Planned Estate

GABRIELLE GWYTHERTH
Doctor of Philosophy

School of Social and Human Sciences
University of Western Sydney

Doctoral Thesis
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[Signature]

Gwendolyn Gwynder
SYNOPSIS

This thesis examines the relationship between the master planned estate and the process of community formation. Using qualitative case studies of two contemporary greenfield developments on Sydney’s fringe, Harrington Park and Garden Gates, it examines how the strategic planning of greenfield housing estates and the incorporation of social and physical infrastructure influences the development of community identity, social connectivity and social capital. The concept of social capital is employed to examine the relationship between the communitarian and economic interests that underpin the emergent social structure of the master planned community (MPC). The MPC is the most intensive form of planned estate in terms of both capital investment and planning outcomes.

The contemporary MPC has a long trajectory in terms of modernist utopian place-making. Using a dialectical framework comprising the relationship between the state, communitarianism and urban planning thought over the past 200 years, the thesis weaves together an historical analysis of utopian place-making with contemporary notions informing the MPC.

A further interest of the thesis is the extent to which the MPC has influenced the recent socio-spatial restructuring of Sydney’s suburban fringe. Consequently the thesis investigates the implication of the MPC for social exclusion and the opportunity it offers for the realisation of people’s identity and their integration into forms of community.

The thesis concludes by presenting a theory of the master planned community, from the ‘real life data’ gathered in the course of the research.
Acknowledgements:

I wish to acknowledge all those who have supported and encouraged me in this thesis and contributed to the development of my understanding of urban processes and social life.

Most importantly I would like to thank Michael Bounds, my primary supervisor and mentor. His advice, wisdom and enthusiastic support for the project he initiated with Kevin Alker from Landcom, eased the path to thesis conclusion. Special thanks also to Kevin Alker, a true believer in community, and to Brendan Gleeson, my associate supervisor, who although engaged in demanding positions over the four years, was always available to offer sound advice.

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INTRODUCTION: Paradise Planned: Community Formation and the Master Planned Estate

1.1 Research Enquiry

The focus of this study is the formation of ‘community’ in contemporary greenfield master planned estates. The project is cast against the historical backdrop of modern utopian place-making, and the idea that a particular permutation of urban design, infrastructure and social programs can produce an ideal of community: of connectivity, social support and social identity. A further ambition of contemporary urban residential design is the marketable idea of securing a physical and social space.

In the first instance the study involves investigating the historical global and local metropolitan forces prompting the formation and character of community within planned residential estates, and more particularly the ‘master planned community’ (MPC), the most intensive form of contemporary planned estate in terms of both capital investment and planning outcomes. This form of residential development is also referred to in the development industry as a ‘fully planned community’. An important aspect of this form of development is the interplay between the three relevant agencies influencing the process of utopian place-making over the past two hundred years: the planner-developer, the state and the resident group. Following on from this, the study considers the determinants – physical and social – of the MPC, and the degree to which the community form envisaged by the planner-developer is actually brought to fruition. It reflects on the motivations of residents seeking such a place, including the notion of security – physical, social and economic. The study reflects on the extent to which the MPC facilitates collective and individual identities and social networks, and the role social capital plays in constituting the social space of the estate.

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1 This term is used by the Australian development corporations Delfin Lend Lease and Bradcorp.
A secondary interest which derives directly from the fieldwork, is the degree to which the MPC can effect metropolitan socio-spatial differentiation, particularly as it presents on Sydney’s (sub)urban fringe. Within Sydney’s western suburbs, the MPC appears to be effecting a socio-spatial landscape of higher income enclaves within and next to more moderate income and even declining areas. In providing ‘sanctuaries’ for middle income households, the MPC is one of the forces shifting the more traditional pattern of first home and lower income residential development on Sydney’s urban fringe.

1.2 Research Design

The research took a primarily qualitative approach to the investigation of community formation and character in greenfield master planned estates. In the first instance it involved a review of the literature surrounding utopian place-making, community theories, community development practices and the more contemporary concept of social capital, as well as a study of documents and artefacts informing the contemporary practice of residential development, particularly on greenfield estates.

An investigation of the manifestation of the master planned estate was undertaken through a comparative case study of two planned estates on Sydney’s south-west fringe during 2001 to 2003. Both estates are located within the local government area of Camden, and commenced development during the early 1990s (see location map Appendix 1). The first estate is the privately developed Harrington Park, which at the time of the fieldwork presented as a model form of ‘master planned community’ (see estate plan, Appendices 2 and 8).

The second estate, Garden Gates, is a ‘planned’ infill estate developed by the New South Wales State Government land agency, Landcom (see estate location and plan Appendices 3 and 4). Although the estate’s development incorporated some of the aspects of the master planned community, in particular a community development program, it was more in keeping with conventional suburban developments.
The fieldwork was conducted specifically to elicit the varying development practices undertaken in each estate, the manner of relationship which developed between the developer (and the developer’s agents) and the residents, particularly as it informed the expectations and reality of life within each estate, and ultimately the form or characteristics of community which presented within each estate.

Data was collected primarily through:

- observing the development practices within each estate, with an intensive participant observation phase conducted over a three month period in 2001-2002, to observe the practices of the community development organisation contracted to operate in both estates,
- semi-structured interviews during 2002 and 2003 with estate residents, developers and community and development officers from the local council,
- a resident survey administered to each estate in late 2003, and
- a comparison of Australian Bureau of Statistics data from the 1996 and 2001 Census of Population and Housing

1.3 Sydney’s Socio-Spatial Character: An Historical Perspective

The socio-spatial structure of post-industrial cities is the outcome of many interrelated forces. Of particular relevance is the development of new status groups responding to the economic restructuring resulting from the global flow of capital and ideas, new communication technologies, and the growth in educational opportunities and qualification requirements. These status groups manifest in differentiating consumption patterns, aspirations and social values.

Sydney has always been Australia’s most internationally oriented city since its colonial inception (Fagan 2000). Unsurprisingly, the increasingly intense nature of globalisation since the mid 1970s has impacted on Sydney’s economic and social landscape. Although the information and finance industries of the city’s core now symbolise ‘global Sydney’, the impact of the current phase of globalisation was initially apparent in the deindustrialisation of the outer ring suburbs during the 1970s;
a situation which had major consequences for the newly built public housing estates, particularly in Sydney’s south-west (Fagan 2000).

Within contemporary Sydney, the producer services industries of the ‘new economy’ are concentrated in the urban core, and radiate out along a north-west metropolitan corridor through Chatswood towards the middle ring suburb of North Ryde, and down a southern corridor towards Sydney’s international airport at Mascot (O’Connor, Stimson and Daly (2001). The urban core contains some 30 per cent of Sydney’s total employment in financial and business services (Fagan 2000: 160). In more general terms, however, only 10 per cent of businesses are located in the urban core, while the outer suburbs’ share is nearly twice that level (O’Connor et. al. 2001). Nevertheless, there is a disparity in the nature of businesses between the core and periphery. For instance, while in the city core the globally oriented finance and insurance sector, property and business services, wholesale trade and community, cultural and recreational services predominate, the businesses which predominate in middle and outer metropolitan areas span the local / global, industrial / post-industrial divide. These businesses are located in manufacturing, construction, wholesale, retail, communications, transport, and property and business services (O’Connor et. al. 2001).

Add to this an array of government departments and agencies and educational facilities, as well as business and industrial parks which accommodate the headquarters of a number of multi-national corporations, and it becomes apparent that Sydney’s outer metropolitan area contains a much more diverse, albeit uneven network of local and global businesses and employment opportunities than the contemporary ‘Global City’ thesis, with its emphasis on the urban core, presents. No longer do Sydney’s outer metropolitan areas act as mere dormitory suburbs supplying the city core and inner industrial suburbs with workers. The ‘money-go-round’ of the local economy creates its own network of local jobs. For instance, in the outer south-western local government area of Camden (which provides the fieldwork setting for this thesis) located some 50 kilometres from Sydney’s central business district, 26 per cent of residents have jobs within the local area. A further 39 per cent have jobs
within Sydney's western suburbs, while only 35 per cent have jobs throughout the rest of Sydney, including Sydney's CBD (ABS 1996 Census data cited in Patterson Britton 2000: 96). Figures such as these indicate that 'local' economies matter.

The research identifies some of the forces effecting socio-spatial differentiation within Sydney, and more specifically on Sydney's urban fringe. A fairly substantial body of research has been undertaken on the process of middle-income, status group formation in the inner urban areas of global cities, a process invariably described as 'gentrification' (see for instance Logan 1985; Butler 1997; Robson and Butler 2001; Ley 1996; Smith 1996). Of specific interest in this research project, however, is the nature of middle-income status group formation in new residential developments on Sydney's urban fringe, particularly through the growing number of master planned estates.

*The Development of Sydney's Outer Suburbs*

The history of urban fringe development within Sydney can be seen to have passed through five general phases, each of which has left its mark on the culture and psyche of contemporary fringe development. These phases comprise: classic suburban *embourgeoisement* of the nineteenth century; rapid working class suburbanisation, particularly following World War II; the construction of public housing estates during the 1960s and 70s; the rise of multiculturalism and the concentration of (non-European) migrant groups from the mid-1970s; and finally, a new era of *embourgeoisement* from the late 1980s.

Most urban theorists view the nineteenth century phenomena of the modern suburb as a bourgeois reaction to the chaos of the young industrial city (Fischer 1976, Savage and Warde 1993). However, tracing the origins of the suburb back to the eighteenth century, Fishman (1996: 24) views the development of the bourgeois suburb as not only a refuge from the physically threatening elements of the industrial city, but also from the “discordant elements in bourgeois society itself”. Thus, reaching its pinnacle in the late nineteenth century, the bourgeois suburb became the location where
Victorian-family values and its strict moral code of prudishness, sobriety, thrift, duty and conformity could be enforced and protected. Although this ‘Victorian’ pattern of urban development was reproduced in the young Australia, the bourgeois flight to the suburbs, particularly within Sydney, was also of a pragmatic nature; to escape the sewerage and squalor of the city core. The development of public transport and improved roads from the 1870s onwards, enabled middle and higher income groups to move away from the poor sanitation and squalor to the abundance of land in the outer suburbs of Paddington, Randwick, Hunters Hill, St Leonards and later Strathfield, Bondi and Mosman (Canon 1975). The early bourgeois suburb of the English speaking world was an expression of self-segregation and inequality (Savage and Warde 1993; Fishman 1996). Prior to World War I, those who could afford to move out, did so. However this pattern of suburban development was later interrupted (Burchell 2003).

After World War II, while the wealthier classes consolidated their hold on what are now the inner ring suburbs of Sydney, particularly to the east of the central business district and north of the Harbour and Parramatta River, the abundance of cheap land, state subsidised infrastructure (Davison 1993) and government policies of homeownership, encouraged the workers’ great migration west. As Burchell (2003: 17) describes it:

> With their hastily married brides, soldiers back from the war set themselves up in the fibro cottages of these new suburbs, treading the dusty unmade roads to the shops or cycling to work, waiting patiently for the amenities to catch up with them.

Nevertheless, this was a period in which first-home buyers were able to secure their own version of the ‘Australian Dream’, by securing a block of land and a new home, often owner-built, on the urban fringe. Suburban subdivisions of low income, relatively austere single, detached dwellings which predominated in the Sydney’s western suburbs following World War II continued to be supported from the 1970s, by the New South Wales Land Commission’s land banking and property development programs. One of the main objectives of the early land commission was to ensure a supply of ‘lower priced land’ than was believed could be achieved
through private enterprise (Troy 1978: 18). This goal was to be realized through more efficient coordination of land servicing; economies of scale; reducing the rate of inflation in land; and the idea that a public authority, unlike a private developer, could operate with a small or no profit margin (Troy 1978).

The desire for ownership of a single dwelling home on a separate block of land underpinned the suburban form, and to this day remains a substantial Australian cultural goal (Stretton 1989). However, the speed with which these highly-mortgaged, low income estates were developed and the lack of government planning and will to decentralise amenities like hospitals and universities, led to what were dubbed ‘suburbs without services’ (Spearritt and DeMarco 1988: 66).

From the 1960s onwards, large tracts of greenfield land were turned over to “aesthetically depressing”, socially disadvantaged public housing estates (Spearritt and DeMarco 1988: 67). The structural residualisation of the public housing sector from the 1980s onwards, laid the path in the 1990s for the development of areas of economic disadvantage, social dislocation and exclusion. The image of the public housing estate as the “suburb of broken homes and poverty” (Weekend Australian 14.11.81 cited Powell 1993: 9), continues to influence the public perception of life in Sydney’s western suburbs.

Although migration has always been an influence on Sydney’s urban fabric, from the 1970s onwards, as gentrification began to impact on property prices in the inner suburbs, Sydney’s western suburbs became the settling place for a new era of non-European migrant, leading to new forms of urban diversity (Gleeson and Low 2000). These groups consisted mainly of refugees, people escaping poverty and family reunion applicants (chain migration), particularly from Asia, the Middle East and to a lesser extent South America (Burnley 2001). During this period, long settled, white working-class suburbs, particularly around railway lines and migrant hostels experienced aesthetic and cultural (although generally not economic) transformation. Western Sydney remains the most popular settling place for new migrants to Australia. They are drawn to the area by family reunion, access to cheaper private and
public housing and to areas offering ethno-cultural familiarity, opportunity and networks.

Since the mid 1980s, however, the pattern of residential development on Sydney’s urban fringe has changed from that of the more established but stagnating industrial suburbs of Sydney’s west. No longer are new fringe developments characterised by economically mixed groups of low and lower-middle income residents, and less affluent first home-buyers fulfilling their ‘dream’. Rather, new residential developments are increasingly characterised by more affluent, middle-income, second and third home buyers (Cornish and Kelly 2001: 21) have found that, where prior to 1977, 53.8 per cent of first home buyers purchased a new home, generally on the urban fringe, by 1999 this figure had fallen to just over 16 per cent.

This pattern was also noted by the National Housing and Locational Choice Survey undertaken for the National Housing Strategy, which found that by 1992 only 40 per cent of households on the urban fringe were first home buyers, with 44 per cent ‘changeover’ homebuyers (Johnson 2000: 108). Further, in a report to Landcom in 1997 on the level of resident satisfaction in five of their new estates, BIS Shrapnel (1997: ii) noted that:

Increasingly, the first home buyer, the former major buyer of fringe area residential land (including land and housing packages) is being supplanted by the second and subsequent home buyer. Three of the five Landcom estates surveyed were dominated by second and subsequent home buyers.

The restructuring of the socio-economic character on the urban fringe has also been identified in research undertaken by Baum, Stimson, O’Connor, Mullins and Davis (1999) on communities of economic and social ‘opportunity and vulnerability’. This research categorised four of Sydney’s most outer ring local government areas - Camden, Hawkesbury, Penrith and Wollondilly - as suburbs of expansion and opportunity. This cluster was ranked second (out of nine) in communities of opportunity, behind the northern and eastern suburbs which were more predictably categorised as a cluster of global economy / high income opportunity. By
comparison, large tracts of Sydney’s western and south-western suburbs, which comprised the outer ring suburbs of 10 to 20 years ago, including Auburn and Fairfield, and Bankstown, Blacktown, Liverpool and Parramatta are deemed by the study as communities of vulnerability, and at best for the latter group communities of marginal opportunity. (This study is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6: Background to the Case Study.)

Research undertaken by the Urban Frontier’s Program using the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage², reveals that although Greater Western Sydney (at 998 on the index) is more ‘disadvantaged’ compared to the Sydney Statistical Division area (i.1027), the urban fringe local government areas of Baulkham Hills (i.1128), Blue Mountains (i.1071), Camden (i.1051) and Hawkesbury (i.1036) are actually more ‘advantaged’ (see Table 1.1).

Conversely, the older, industrial suburbs of Fairfield (i.905), Auburn (i.932) and Liverpool (i.956) are the most disadvantaged of the local government areas (LGAs) in Greater Western Sydney (Gleeson, Holloway and Randolph 2002: 74).

**Table 1.1: Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage Scores for Local Government Areas in Greater Western Sydney, 1996.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Government Area</th>
<th>Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage 1996</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baulkham Hills *</td>
<td>1,128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacktown</td>
<td>964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Mountains *</td>
<td>1,071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairfield</td>
<td>905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawkesbury *</td>
<td>1,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holroyd</td>
<td>982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parramatta</td>
<td>1,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penrith *</td>
<td>1,009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² These figures estimate the level of disadvantage, based on an index created by the ABS based on data from the 1996 Census of Population and Housing. In essence, the lower the score the more disadvantage the area.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WSROC</th>
<th>996</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camden *</td>
<td>1,051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbeltown</td>
<td>964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Western Sydney</td>
<td>998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney Statistical Division</td>
<td>1,027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>1,007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: *Western Sydney Social Profile: UFP and WSROC using ABS 1998 – Australia in Profile: A Regional Analysis, Cat No. 2032.0*)

* Indicated local government areas located on Sydney’s western fringe.

Savage, Barlow, Dickens and Fielding (1992) argue that middle-income areas tend to increase in value faster than those in working class areas. They note that,

> Not everyone makes equal amounts of money out of homeownership. It all depends on geographical location, length of time in owner-occupation, the value of dwellings purchased and dates of purchase and sale. But – and this is the crucial point – the middle classes are generally more likely to be in situations where returns can be achieved. ... Their greater income and longer history in owner-occupation also allow them to occupy more expensive housing which tends to inflate in price more (Savage *et al.* 1992: 90).

This situation has traditionally been reflected in Sydney’s housing market, with the middle and higher income eastern and northern suburbs, and more recently the gentrified inner ring suburbs experiencing greater price rises earlier in the property cycle, than the outer suburbs which lag behind on both counts.

From an economic perspective, the MPC is a way of creating a determinedly ‘middle class’ suburb out of what has generally been considered over the past 50 years, as a lower income area and a fitting place for the first-home buyer. However, in order to attract the higher income, second and third home buyer, the new residential development needs to offer more than the standard, infrastructure-poor subdivision of the past. Hence, to establish market differentiation and consumer appeal, the developer endeavours to include additional soft and hard infrastructure (often through the mechanism of Community Title) along with quality design and finishes. This process of ‘value adding’ adds further to the cost of developing each block of land and increases the acquisition barrier to those less well off.
Paralleling recent research into gentrification, which indicates that inner urban ‘gentrifiers’ are rarely returning to the city from the suburbs, but rather are “city dwellers remaining within the city” (Butler 1997: 37; Ley 1996), the residents of these new middle-income estates are suburban dwellers remaining on the urban fringe. People living in Harrington Park and Garden Gates, for instance, have generally moved there from suburban areas nearby. From a social perspective this suggests the importance of embodied dispositions and resources of the habitus, the internalised “principles that generate practices” (Bourdieu 1990: 76). People are predisposed to congregate where and with whom they feel most comfortable (Gans 1972); they are attracted to and feel most rewarded (or secure) by social systems that play by a similar set of rules. Consequently, the thesis examines the nature of some of the forces driving the changing socio-spatial character of residential development on the urban fringe, particularly as it is enacted through the growing number of ‘master planned communities’.

1.4 Background to Thesis

The research undertaken for this thesis came about through the association between Associate Professor Michael Bounds, of the University of Western Sydney, and Kevin Alker, General Manager Urban Development, Landcom, the property development arm of the New South Wales Government. At the time Landcom was interested in how ‘community’, and more specifically social capital, could be developed in master planned estates, and offered to fund PhD research into the subject. This thesis is the outcome.

However, as is usually the case, the path to thesis conclusion was not smooth. For a start, a property developer’s notion and appreciation of community is bound to be different to that of a sociologist’s. And to some extent this proved to be the case. The relatively new concept of social capital at that time, particularly amongst policy makers, was also problematic. Social capital in social policy circles tends to present as a rather straightforward concept, comprising the notions of trust, reciprocity and community networks. Amongst social researchers, however, the concept is more
problematic. In fact, academic debate on what it actually is, how it can be ‘created’, and how best to quantify it continues.

In addition, Landcom was committed to a social agenda of ‘balanced’ community and the commendable idea of affordable housing. Urban studies since the Chicago School, however, have illustrated that property and housing is a field of conflict, of invasion and succession, and of uneven development. Consequently, there was a potential problem between the normative approach of a government agency acting under policy direction, and the theoretical approach of the PhD researcher. Ultimately, most of these issues were sorted out through discussion, particularly in the early days, and the rest through the relatively lengthy research timeframe which witnessed Landcom staff come and go, leaving me generally to my own devices.

1.5 ‘Paradise Planned’

The title of this thesis references two texts. The first is to John Milton’s literature classic, *Paradise Lost* (1667 edition), which examines the creation and fall of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. Book X in particular refers to Adam and Eve, searching hand in hand for a new place to rest, having lost their former garden paradise. “The world was all before them, where to choose?” In the late modern ‘risk society’, the contemporary seeking out of utopia resonates with this original search.

The second reference is to the expression “our little piece of paradise”, which was how one contented resident of Harrington Park described her estate. In qualitative studies the researcher usually has the advantage of informants, and the pearls of wisdom and insight which frequently drop from their lips. Generally one, sometimes more of these pearls encapsulate the many themes of the study. ‘Our little piece of paradise’ appears to summarise the experience of many of the residents I spoke to in Harrington Park. The expression elicits the notions of security, satisfaction and spatial separation. It also raises the questions, if this is paradise, what went before it? How was this paradise created, how is it maintained and what hope is there of this paradise lasting?
1.6 Thesis Structure

The thesis comprises four parts. Part I presents the theoretical framework of the thesis, a task which incorporates a review of theoretical concepts and of the relevant literature. Part II discusses methodological issues, the research design and research process, before providing background information needed to support the following empirical chapters. Part III comprises these empirical chapters and sets about detailing and analysing data captured through the comparative case study of Harrington Park and Garden Gates.

The final section of the thesis provides an interpretation of the empirical and research data. It draws conclusions as to the character of the MPC and the dynamics which contribute to its contemporary character. It concludes by attempting a tentative theory of the ‘master planned community’.
PART I: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK and REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The following three chapters present the theoretical framework informing the thesis, with each chapter drawing extensively on the historical and contemporary literature pertaining to the subject matter. The first chapter, Chapter 2: Utopian Place-Making: Correlating the State, Communitarianism and Urban Planning and Design, weaves together an historical analysis of utopian place-making. It explores the relationship between the state's shifting interests, authority and involvement in the modern Western capitalist society, the influence of the modern urban planning movement, and the effect of varying notions of communitarianism. As a philosophy, communitarianism emphasises the primacy of community rather than the individual or the state. and in this regard the duties and obligations of the citizen assume the same degree of importance as the citizen's rights. Each of the above facets have, in turn, informed the contemporary urban development phenomenon, the master planned community.

The subsequent two chapters raise issues which are of particular significance to the character of the contemporary MPC. The first of these is the MPC's role in assisting the creation of a particular 'social space' (Bourdieu 1984) through which social status and social reproduction can be accomplished. This investigation is undertaken in Chapter 3: Social Capital and the Constitution of Social Space. The concept of social capital, which informs the neo-communitarian movement, has particular relevance to the MPC and the constitution of the social space.

The third chapter, Chapter 4: The Community Question, examines varying concepts of 'community'. A particular notion of the concept informs the principal theoretical and marketable features of the MPC. Although in promotional material relating to the MPC the idea of community appears to be quite normative, the notion behind the promotion and pamphlets involves the planner-developer’s belief (regardless of underlying motives) that community is more than a physical space; that it involves
the formation of social connectivity and interpersonal ties that provide support, a sense of belonging and social identity. The purpose of this chapter is to raise questions as to the degree to which ‘community’ can effect social exclusivity and socio-spatial differentiation. Bauman (2001: 148) for instance, argues that the communal unity which communitarian shelters generate promises security and simplicity, yet it “rests on division, segregation and keeping of distance”. The contemporary MPC, particularly on the urban fringe, presents primarily as a mechanism for certain middle-income households to differentiate their social and physical space from other suburban areas.

Status Groups

The term ‘middle class’, when used in the thesis, is done so guardedly. The term is not a particularly useful theoretical or practical descriptor of resident groups within master planned estates, and particularly those under study. Rather, such estates appear capable of comprising residents of somewhat disparate ‘class’ backgrounds, life experiences and to some degree ethnicity, educational attainment, occupation, and cultural capital, notably in regard to speech enunciation and articulation. These factors make it difficult to consider the resident group as constituting or acting as a ‘class’ in the classical sense, although the resurrection of the concept of ‘housing classes’ may have some resonance. Rex and Moore (1967) defined ‘housing classes’ not solely on an individual’s access or ownership of capital created through the labour market, but by the degrees of access to housing.

Rather, the Weberian notion of ‘status group’ based on a common income, lifestyle accomplishments (involving consumer choice and ability), social views and values seems to be the more pertinent descriptor. The term ‘status group’ acknowledges that a degree of residential differentiation on socio-economic grounds is relevant to the experience of the MPC. Although a common set of social and economic interests are pursued through the MPC, the contribution of communitarianism seems to make this pursuit more analogous with a ‘new social movement’, rather than as class action.
The middle-income households that constitute the MPC specifically on the urban fringe of Sydney, tend to comprise two occupationally related groups: the first derive from the white-collar service workers of the ‘new’ middle class, and the second from highly remunerated tradespeople of the ‘new’ petit bourgeoisie. The addition of a second income through the rise in female workforce participation rates (Butler 1997) also plays an important role within both these fractions. This situation, however, appears to place temporal pressures on such households due to the multiple roles of the adult members (see for instance Hochschild 1989). Such pressure underpinned the commonly expressed view of informants, that their household had not only ‘done it hard’, but in terms of government policy, was also most ‘deserving’.

*White Collar Service Workers*

Since the 1950s much has been written about the ‘new’ middle class. Regardless of their orientation to class theory, most theorists would agree that the term ‘new’ middle class essentially refers to the emergence of a group of ‘propertyless’ (in the grand sense) non-manual or ‘white collar’ workers (Giddens 1975), underpinned by the rise of the service industry in both the private and public sector during the twentieth century. This is not to say that there is a consensus on the position of the service worker in the class structure. In fact, as Lash and Urry (1987: 161) have observed:

> Much theoretical labour has been expended on trying to ‘reduce’ these emergent [middle-class] groups either to the side of capital through conceptualising them as functionaries of capital necessitated by its depersonalisation, and / or to the side of labour through seeing them as experiencing proletarianisation.

If there was little theoretical or practical benefit in trying to reduce the ‘new’ middle class into a unitary group with a common set of interests during the period of organised capital, there is even less capacity or reason to do so now. In the global economy, the service sector underpinning the ‘white collar’ worker has become increasingly disparate in terms of skill, status and remuneration, and consequently so has the lifestyle, culture and political orientation of service workers (Berting 1998).
Importantly, certain service workers within the increasingly disparate service sector of advanced economies are being relegated to less secure, low status, low paying jobs. In Reich’s (1993) taxonomy of ‘service workers’ of the global economy, ‘routine producers’ perform repetitive, supervised tasks in a sequence of steps which produce products tradeable in world commerce. This category includes routine supervisory jobs performed by low and middle-level managers involved in repetitive checks on subordinates. Data entry and call centre operators are examples of routine producers within the telematic economy. Although they may work in a global industry, these operators and their supervisors are, in Reich’s (1993: 174) words, “the foot soldiers of the information economy”, and as a glance at the employment section of any metropolitan newspaper will attest, are paid accordingly. Unlike a large proportion of workers in the post-War manufacturing sector, who held ‘middle-earning’ white collar jobs and contributed to the formation of a ‘new middle-class’, routine producers of the global economy tend to congregate in lower-income, dead-end jobs, which contributes to economic polarisation of the workforce (Sassen 1996: 67). A small proportion of employees living in the MPCs on the urban fringe fall into this category. They tend to be female and work part-time. The ‘middling’ income and sense of income security of such households derives from the one-and-a-half and two incomes that comprise them.

A further service category of the global economy is the in-person server. Although these workers are still involved in routine and repetitive tasks, under varying degrees of supervision, they differ from routine producers in that their services “must be provided person-to-person, and thus are not sold worldwide” (Reich 1993: 176). Such service workers include, nurses, hotel workers, retail sales people, secretaries, certain teaching positions, flight attendants, physical therapists and “amongst the fastest growing of all – security guards” (Reich 1993: 176). According to Sassen (1996), one development within the global city which has created an increase in person-to-person service workers, is the supply of low-wage jobs required by high-income gentrification in both its residential and commercial settings. A large proportion of these positions are casual or part-time. Not surprisingly, most in-
person servers are women. This phenomenon has overwhelmingly contributed to the ‘second’ household income.

Reich’s taxonomy of the service industry transcends classic class analysis, by emphasising the value (and power) of knowledge and skills in the new economy, rather than one’s relation to economic capital or labour market position. It has more in common with contemporary class analysis which tends to emphasise lifestyle and consumption ability. The service worker’s relationship to the new economy, based on skill, knowledge and income, is played out both spatially and through the ability to consume particular lifestyles.

*The ‘New’ Petite Bourgeoisie*

Where the classic bourgeois suburbs of Sydney’s east and lower north shore tend now to comprise the owners of traditional (economic) capital along with the owners and manipulators of knowledge, Reich’s (1993) ‘symbolic analysts’; a significant number of middle income residents on the urban fringe are drawn from the ranks of the self-employed: tradespeople, contractors, and other small-business operators which more closely correspond with the traditional *petite bourgeoisie*. Bechhofer and Elliot (1981) have captured the essence of the ‘new’ petite bourgeoisie – the high charging ‘gold’ collar trades workers of the new economy; reliant on their increasingly scarce manual skills, muscle power and business acumen.

Men and women in diverse cultures are drawn to small business because it appears to offer some chances of self-direction, some prospects of self-development. Small seems beautiful, if in contrast to the apparently rigid structures of the society at large, it allows freedom to take immediate and obvious responsibility for your own fate (Bechhofer and Elliott 1981: 196).

The values that the MPC represent appear to be attractive to the self-reliant ideology of this ‘new’ petite bourgeoisie.

A further group of self-employed, however, are the sub-contractors, comprising “courier operators, truck drivers, handyman repairers or car cleaners” (Pusey 2003: 59). According to Pusey, many within this group were once employees but fell victim to the economic restructuring of the 1980s and 90s which left them with the burden
and pressure of self-employment and contract work. One tactic for moderating such work related insecurity is to seek economic, physical and ontological security through the status oriented MPC.

Accordingly, the residents of the new planned estates on the urban fringe of Sydney are not comprised of Friedman’s (2000) ‘turtles’; those people left behind or ‘brutalised’ by the global economy. Nor are they the ‘lions and gazelles’; those people who have best adapted to globalisation and are rewarded by it. Rather, they share many of the characteristics of Friedman’s ‘used-to-bes’, who during the Fordist-period of organised capital, relied on ‘organisational assets’ (Savage et. al. 1992) as well as support from a generous welfare system and industrial arbitration, to maintain their status position. However, in the global era this group has been forced to use alternative strategies, which, according to Savage et. al. (1992) tends to involve the accrual of petty property and cultural assets. This is the basis of the coalescence of interests which has emerged between these middle-income, white-collar service households, and the new petit-bourgeoisie.

With the addition of a second household income, easier access to finance made available since the deregulation of the banking sector in the 1980s (Love 2001), and the preferential tax treatment of the family home, these groups have been able to increase their ownership of petty property, of which housing is currently the most significant. As Savage et. al. (1992: 80) argue, “owner-occupied housing is indeed playing an increasing role in structuring middle-class formation”. However, it is the style, location and type of housing that is important, for both its use value and as an indicator of cultural distinctiveness (Savage et. al. 1992). On the urban fringe, and particularly through the MPC, housing investment is a strategy used by this newly emerging social group to protect it economically through the accumulation of petty property assets, as well as to distinguish it from surrounding low income, socially excluded and ethnically diverse areas.
CHAPTER 2: Utopian Place-Making: Correlating the State, Communitarianism and Urban Planning and Design

They looking back, all th' Eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late thir happie seat,
Wav'd over by that flaming Brand, the Gate
With dreadful Faces throng'd and fierie Armes:
Som natural tears they drop'd, but wip'd them soon;
The World was all before them, where to choose
Thir place of rest, and Providence thir guide:
They hand in hand with wandring steps and slow,
Through Eden took thir solitarie way.

(Paradise Lost: Book X, John Milton, 1667)

2.1 Introduction

The master planned community (MPC) has a long trajectory in the scheme of modernist utopian place-making. This chapter weaves together an historical analysis of utopian place-making with contemporary notions which inform the MPC. Modern utopian place-making is couched within a dialectical framework comprising the influence and inherent contradictions of the economy, the state, communitarian ideas and approaches to urban planning over the past two hundred years. Utopian place-making can be viewed as a reaction to the processes of urbanism, the spatial expression of modern capitalism. Consequently, the chapter commences with a brief consideration of the development of the modern suburb - the ‘bourgeois utopia’ – which is viewed as a reaction to laissez faire capital and the non-interventionist state. It goes on to examine the forces underpinning the development of the modern urban planning movement that developed during the late nineteenth century. This was essentially a reformist movement reacting to the disorder of industrial urbanism. The movement generated the first modern MPCs founded on the Garden City concept.

The early reformist planning movement existed independently of the state. It was not until after the Great Depression that the modern Occidental state started to assume responsibility for social and urban life, and not until after 1945 that it became actively interventionist in the welfare of citizens. The post-War welfare state, coupled with Keynesian economics witnessed the state’s intervention in utopian
place-making and urban planning. Hence, the chapter considers the state sponsored
New Towns, and large, master planned public housing projects following World War
II. This was a period in which the state supported the philosophy of ‘social
citizenship’. This is a philosophy that supports the right of citizens “to share in the
full social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standard
prevailing in society” (T. H. Marshall cited Fraser and Gordon 1994: 92). However,
since the mid 1970s, as an effect of global and local economic restructuring and
consequent political realignment, universal state provision and managerialism which
underpin the philosophy of social citizenship, have been progressively eroded.

Social citizenship as the basis of civil society, has been replaced by ideas of
community, social capital and communitarianism. Meanwhile, social democratic
managerialism, from which state sponsored utopian place making derived, has been
replaced by a form of corporate liberalism. Gleeson and Low (2000: 92) specify three
elements which depict the nature of corporate liberalism (particularly within the
Australian context):

(a) a view of the state itself as a corporation, combining a group of subsidiary
corporations – the departments or agencies; (b) the creation of markets as the
institutional matrix for the delivery of services; and (c) selective enhanced
entrepreneurialism, in which close relations are established with certain
business elites.

It is from this political-economic environment that the contemporary MPC derives.
The MPC is essentially a private forms of utopian place-making developed around
the notion of community. At least in the Australian context it is supported by
government legislation and policies encouraging user pays and self provision. More
specifically, master planning is currently the primary mode of residential
development by Landcom, the New South Wales Government’s property
development agency. At the time of writing, all residential developments on
greenfield and brownfield sites undertaken by Landcom, are master planned for
private ownership and for profit (see ‘About Landcom’ (February 2004) at
www.landcom.nsw.govt.au). Most of these sites are developed in partnership with a
private construction or development company; thus satisfying Gleeson and Low’s
tripartite definition of corporate liberalism as a form of urban governance.
This chapter examines how the contemporary greenfield MPCs on Sydney’s urban fringe have drawn extensively from the Garden City legacy. These estates, however, have also drawn on certain exclusionary elements from the residential developments in the United States termed ‘privatopias’. Consequently, the chapter examines the character of the ‘privatopia’ and parallels are drawn. The chapter concludes by examining the extent to which the aims of utopian place making can be realised.

The purpose of taking an historical approach to this chapter is, in the first instance, to examine the antecedents and trajectory of the contemporary MPC, and secondly to examine the trajectory of utopian place making against changes in the modern institutional framework comprising the state, the economy, and approaches to planning. However, as the preceding comments observe, the urban form is integrally entwined with the mode of social life. Hence, this introduction concludes with an examination of the social experience underpinning the rise of the MPC.

2.1.1 Late Modernity and Utopian Realism

The MPC is a quintessential product of late modernity, promising select groups of future-oriented individuals assurances in their life planning. The MPC seeks to support inhabitants’ life-planning by shoring up future social and economic returns; by supporting inhabitants’ ontological security; and by becoming a major plank in the structuring of their self-identity. In this regard the MPC has aspects of Giddens’s (1990: 154) “models of utopian realism”, which are ways of realising envisaged alternative futures that minimise danger.

Modernity, as Giddens (1990: 7) declares, “is a double edged phenomenon”. The development of modern institutions and rationalist cognitive systems have brought enormous benefits, opportunities and material progress to the inhabitants of the modern world. However, in being “cut loose from its mooring in the reassurance of tradition” (Giddens 1990: 176), an underlying uncertainty and insecurity pervades modern life. In this regard modern life is bound up in the notion of risk (Giddens
The globalising effect of modernisation which increasingly divides the individual’s focus between the local and the global, and the capacity for ever developing communication technology to spew forth continuous, manifold streams of information, has placed increasing pressure on the reflexively oriented, late-modern man.

Reflexive monitoring of action in traditional societies was rooted in a respect for honour, cultural mores, routine and symbols passed on to generations through an oral culture and thus referenced to the past (Giddens 1990). Modernity, however, has released the individual from this provision. Giddens (1990) argues that the constituents of modernity expand the level of time-space distanciation, making it possible to possess cognitive orientations for the past, present and the future. The reflexive nature of the modern individual means that behaviour is constantly examined and revised in the light of knowledge received. Consequently, the modern individual can never be certain that new information received will not lead to behavioural revision, and this in turn leads to uncertainty and insecurity with regard to the individual’s future orientation. At the same time, however, the future orientation that is inherently modern, means that anticipating the future becomes an essential part of the present (Giddens 1990). As Giddens (1991: 5) argues:

The more tradition loses its hold, and the more daily life is reconstituted in terms of the dialectical interplay of the local and the global, the more individuals are forced to negotiate lifestyle choices among a diversity of options. … Reflexively organised life-planning, which normally presumes consideration of risks as filtered through contact with expert knowledge, becomes a central feature of the structure of self-identity.

Risk in this regard refers to the assessment of the exposure to hazards that occurs in the course of the reflexive individual’s future life planning (Giddens 1999). Giddens makes the distinction between two kinds of risks: external risks, or threats from nature and the natural course of life, which predominated in traditional society but which continue through to the present; and manufactured risk “created by the very impact of our developing knowledge upon the world” (Giddens 1999: 26). This form of risk pertains to self-inflicted environmental risks, such as global warming and environmental degradation, but also to other areas of life which were once bound by
traditional customs and norms, for instance marriage, family and communities. The manufactured risk that pertains to these social institutions underpins the neo-communitarian concern for the breakdown of modern society discussed in subsequent chapters.

Although the down side of being released from the ‘fixities’ of tradition is the insecurity which derives from such risk assessment, the upside is the condition of excitement and adventure. Giddens (1999: 23) argues that the “positive embrace of risk is the very source of that energy which creates wealth in a modern economy”. Hence risk is a source of the ‘mobilising dynamic’ of modern society, but also of imbedded insecurity. Although reflexive life planning triggers insecurity, it also seeks to ameliorate the anguish related to the insecurity. Seeking security in housing and neighbourhood is one way people seek to ameliorate such anguish. As Halter (1998: 92) explains, “the ‘fear of fear’ is causing consumers to focus on personal safety, which, in turn, creates new realities for residential development and the strategies necessary for the positioning and marketing of master-planned communities”.

According to Giddens (1990; 1994), rather than being a contradiction in terms, utopian realism presents as a balance between utopic ideals and critical realism which seeks to minimise high-consequence risks through actual ideas and strategies. Such a model, argues Giddens (1990: 156), must be “sociologically sensitive - alert to the immanent institutional transformations” of modernity. It must be concerned with both an ‘emancipatory politics’ involving the politics of inequality, and a ‘life politics’ involving self-actualisation. It must mould a form of ‘the good society’, albeit one that is neither limited to “the sphere of the nation-state nor to only one of the institutional dimensions of modernity” (Giddens 1990: 156).

Although the intent of the MPC is to model ‘the good society’, its current manifestation has the potential to fail this final point, as the form of utopia it hopes to realise is based on spatial and social differentiation. Even with the best intentions of community place-making by planner-developers and inhabitants, the tendency
towards exclusionary practices has consequences for the goal of equality implied by the dimension of emancipatory politics.

Conversely, the promotion of utopian place-making by society’s informal sector lies within the realm of ‘life politics’ with its focus on self-actualisation through a communitarian orientation that attempts to bridge the void produced by ‘productivism’. Giddens (1994: 247) refers to ‘productivism’ as “an ethos where work is autonomous and where mechanisms of economic development substitute for personal growth, for the goal of living a happy life in harmony with others”. I would not go as far as to say that the communitarian orientation of the MPC – in its ideal form - attempts to replace productivism. Rather it provides a parallel orientation whereby personal growth through a form of social solidarity has a moderating influence on the lure of economic growth, a phenomenon which Hamilton (2003b) refers to as the western world’s ‘growth fetish’.

2.2 The Modernist Project of Utopian Place-Making: An Historical Approach

2.2.1. The Bourgeois Utopia

Suburbanisation is the process of population dispersal, away from the city centre to the wider metropolis (Savage and Warde 1993). Fishman (1996) traces the origins of the suburb back to the eighteenth century, where the development of the bourgeois suburb was not only a refuge from the physically threatening elements of the industrial city, but also from the “discordant elements in bourgeois society itself” (Fishman 1996: 24). Reaching its pinnacle in the late nineteenth century, the bourgeois suburb became the location where Victorian-family values and its strict moral code of prudishness, sobriety, thrift, duty and conformity could be enforced and protected. The gendered suburb was used to separate the liberal public world of male power, production and laissez faire economics from the private life of the family. As Fishman (1996: 24) argues, suburbia reflected “the alienation of the middle classes from the urban-industrial world they themselves were creating”.

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The suburban form then, was the manifestation of the values and choices of the powerful groups within the Victorian city. In other industrial cities, however, particularly on the European continent and in South-America, the bourgeoisie remained within the urban core and made it their own, while ever improving transport systems were used to move industry and its workers to the suburbs. That is,

In continental cities massive governmental intervention – the nineteenth-century versions of urban renewal – opened the possibility of reshaping the urban core for bourgeois uses. In England and the United States, laissez-faire urban economics turned the core into a tangle of competing uses. Only the periphery was sufficiently undefined to permit innovation. … In this Darwinian struggle for urban space, the bourgeoisie sought not only land for their commercial and industrial enterprises but also land for their dreams: their visions of the ideal middle class home (Fishman 1996: 30).

Hence, the dialectic of government intervention versus laissez-faire economics shaped the industrial urban form.

The Bourgeois Utopia as a Partial Paradise

Although the term ‘bourgeois utopia’, captures the “triumphant assertion of middle-class values”, it was at most according to Fishman (1996: 24) “a partial paradise”, because it was based on the principle of exclusion.

Work was excluded from the family residence; middle-class villas were segregated from working-class housing; the greenery of suburbia stood in contrast to a grey, polluted urban environment. Middle-class women were especially affected by the new suburban dichotomy of work and family life. The new environment supposedly exalted their role in the family, but it also segregated them from the world of power and productivity. This self-segregation soon enveloped all aspects of bourgeois culture (Fishman 1996: 24).

This estrangement of the bourgeois character has similarities with aspects of Marx’s (1954) notion of the alienated worker and more specifically the estrangement of the worker from their human essence or ‘species-life’. That is, the fractured relationship of the worker to the end product, caused by the appropriation of the end product, the lack of control over the production process and the lack of realised creativity, was dehumanising and consequently disrupted the worker’s ‘species-life’, as well as causing the worker to be estranged from others (McLellan 1975). Although the male
bourgeois character was in no way materially impoverished by his social position and relation to production as was the proletariat, the self-imposed spatial, cultural and gender based exclusions deriving from the bourgeois suburb can be seen to be disruptive of the ‘species-life’, estranging bourgeois individuals from their true selves and from others. Ironically, as pointed out by Fishman, this alienation derived from the very world which they were complicit in constructing.

The suburb as a site of consumption

Prior to industrialisation, wealth and status were primary displayed through the interrelation of conspicuous leisure and consumption. According to Thornstein Veblen (1953), whose treatise *Theory of the Leisure Class* was the first major contribution to the literature on consumption,

Cultivation of the aesthetic faculty requires time and application, and the demands made upon the gentleman in this direction therefore tend to change his life of leisure into a more or less arduous application to the business of learning how to live a life of ostensible leisure in a becoming way. Closely related to the requirement that the gentleman must consume freely and of the right kind of goods, there is the requirement that he know how to consume them in a seemly manner (Veblen cited Corrigan 1997: 24).

Conspicuous consumption rather than leisure, however, was more suited to the industrial city, where one had to impress more strangers than within the stratified, rural community (Corrigan 1997). As cities developed, conspicuous consumption took over from conspicuous leisure as the chief means of demonstrating wealth and claiming status. Moreover, as conspicuous consumption could be practiced by anyone with wealth, it became the strategy of the emerging bourgeoisie (Corrigan 1997). The bourgeois suburb was the ideal site for exercising conspicuous consumption. The 'pre-modern' middle class home combined work and residence within or close to the city core. However, while the industrial city continued as a place of production, the ‘utopian’ suburb developed as a site of consumption (Fishman 1996).
Suburbs are no longer a distinctly bourgeois phenomenon. With the prosperity and rapid suburbanisation following World War II, particularly in Australia and the United States, lower income households were able to emulate the values and lifestyle of the bourgeois suburb (Savage, Warde and Ward 2003). Suburban growth placed pressure on the function of the bourgeois suburb which until 1945 essentially served the urban core. These later suburban developments incorporated industrial and commercial areas that were serviced by adjoining residential areas. New urbanist developments (discussed in more detail below) advocate mixing residential and commercial usages, so that the suburb becomes an integrated site of consumption and production. However, strict zoning regulations, particularly in Australia, have hampered the uptake of this approach. Essentially the contemporary suburb remains a site of competitive consumption in terms of home ownership, but also lifestyle goods and services.

2.2.2 Modern Town Planning and the Garden City

Contemporary town planning developed out of the late nineteenth century social reform movement which was concerned at the loss of ‘intrinsic’ community and the decline in living standards resulting from the process of rapid industrial urbanisation (Garnaut 2000; Sandercock 1977). This was a period in which the state’s primary focus was on assisting the course of laissez-faire economics, rather than in resource allocation. Unlike the more radical reform philosophers of the period, the early ‘utopian’ town planners did not advocate returning to pre-industrial values through abandoning industrial technology and the capitalist system. Rather, they sought to ‘quarantine’ the technology (by separating it from residential areas) but to leave untouched the economic structure and means of production… Their models were the new towns and villages and garden suburbs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Their theorist was Ebenezer Howard, clerk, farmer, court reporter and inventor, and author in 1902 of Garden Cities of Tomorrow (Sandercock 1977: 13).

Residential planning has followed an intertwining path with local community discourse since Ebenezer Howard developed the Garden City concept in the 1880-
90s. Howard’s motivation involved “philanthropic attempts to produce better living conditions” (Finnegan 1998: 39). Consequently, the Garden City was designed around two guiding principles: the idea of sustainability — environmental, economic and social; and an early model of communitarianism. This model involved the residents being responsible for the social life of their town, and as trust-holders or members of a cooperative, paying land rent to a central fund to operate their community services.

Hence, the Garden City concept was as much about social reform as it was about providing space in which the principles of modern urban design could develop. In fact the underlying motive of Howard’s Garden City ‘experiment’ was to establish “a higher and better form of industrial life” (Howard 1946: 138). Accordingly, the Garden City incorporated three elements: physical design, an economic plan and a social program. Few planners since Howard have been so bold. As Sandercock has noted the radical economic and social aspects of Howard’s model were not taken up by later new town disciples. She explains,

That was not surprising given the class background of those who joined for example the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association, a group that purported to speak in the name of the urban poor but drew its membership from the middle and upper classes and directed its appeal to ‘influential people’(Sandercock 1977: 13).

Not surprisingly, one of the prevailing features common to planned towns following Howard’s Garden City, is their predisposition to house upper and middle-income residents, even in those estates where a socio-economic mix was originally intended. Take for instance the north American ‘garden suburb’ of Radburn, commenced in 1928 by Clarence Stein and Henry Wright. Despite the planner-developers’ hope for a social mix, by 1934 three in five families were drawn from middle executive ranks, and blue-collar workers were entirely absent (Hall 1996). Such a situation arises from the very motives which underpin the new town movement from earliest times: combating the urban ills of over-crowding, poverty and crime through environmental determinism establishing physical and social order; but also, importantly, from the need to gain investor backing for such developments.
Environmental Determinism

As an advocate of environmental determinism, Howard believed that physical planning could determine social behaviour. For instance he believed that a police presence in the Garden City would be minimal because “there being but one landlord, and this the community, it will not be difficult to prevent the creation of those surroundings which make the intervention of the police so frequently necessary (Howard 1946: 88). Mumford (1970: 490-1) provides an insight into the link between the idea of environmental determinism and community development, explaining that:

Instead of trusting to the mere massing of population to produce the necessary social concentration and social drama, we must now seek these results through deliberate community planning and closer regional linkages. The words are jargon; but the importance of their meaning should not be missed.

The doctrine of environmental determinism has been a tenet of town planning since the movement’s inception, becoming particularly influential in informing planned suburbs for working class people.

The early Australian urban planner, R. F. Irvine, was a particular advocate of the doctrine. A critic of the “street and lane life” of the inner city, he argued in his 1913 report to parliament on the condition of workers’ housing, that “decent family life” required both a large front and back yard, such as only garden suburb could provide (Irvine cited Hoskins 1994: 5). Daceyville, the government-funded demonstration suburb started just prior to World War I, embodied the doctrine. Built next to Kensington on Sydney’s south-eastern fringe, the suburb provided skilled workers and lower-middle income households with rental housing. One of the main features of the suburb was the merging of private and public spaces through the lack of fencing; a mechanism used to facilitate community. According to Hoskins (1994: 10) “such a strategy depended on the maintenance of private gardens by residents. One disorderly house and garden could undermine the effect of the whole streetscape”. An orderly landscape was maintained through leases which specified that gardens had to be maintained to the satisfaction of the landlord, the State Government’s Housing Board, as well as state funded garden competitions (Hoskins 1994).
If providing a sense of identity was a positive outcome of such environmental determinism, the doctrine proved less successful in keeping children off the streets and curbing certain anti-social behaviour, particularly amongst injured soldiers returning from the war. After the Depression the suburb went into decline. "Partitioning of space and the end of the organised landscape enhancement of the gardening competitions symbolised the end of community, shared space and identity" (Hoskins 1994: 17) That social behaviour is determined by planning alone, rather than an outcome of a number of variables including resident self selection, individual behaviour and social positioning is logically flawed. Yet in more recent years the idea has experienced a resurgence through the new urbanist movement.

**Scale and the Notion of Neighbourhood**

One of the most robust deterministic planning principles since Howard, was the concept of the neighbourhood. Reflecting the scale of the rural village, the neighbourhood was a device to encourage a sense of community within the urban setting. In his historical study of neighbourhood planning Silver (1985) notes that between 1880 and 1920, the neighbourhood plan was used to revamp the idea of the city. ‘Settlement’ social workers attempted to transfer small town, community oriented lifestyles to urban neighbourhoods, albeit underpinned by middle-class values and protective associations.

From the 1920s the social planner Clarence Perry’s ‘Five Block Plan’ incorporating the neighbourhood unit became popular (Silver 1985). The *raison d’être* for the plan was essentially socio-cultural, that is to encourage a sense of community (Talen 1999). Even as early as the late 1920s Perry believed that “the ‘automobile menace’ had made the definition of such a neighbourhood unit imperative” (Hall 1996: 126). Some seventy years later the new urbanist movement essentially derived from the same concern.
The neighbourhood unit involves developing a neighbourhood around a civic centre, generally involving a school and community centre and a civic space. For Perry, this civic space also had a symbolic purpose:

The square itself will be an appropriate location for a flagpole, a memorial monument, a bandstand, or an ornamental fountain. In the common life of the neighbourhood it will function as the place of local celebrations (Perry cited Hall 1988: 126).

The neighbourhood would comprise a mixed development of 1,000 to 2,000 households, “and furnished with the facilities necessary for the full development of the life of the neighbourhood” (Sandercock 1977: 14) including a retail and education precinct and recreational facilities. With ramifications for contemporary urban outcomes in Australia, Sandercock (1977) notes that the neighbourhood unit concept affirmed the idea of low density, which had become the overriding principle of planning in both Britain and the United States by 1910.

The neighbourhood unit complete with civic ‘celebratory’ space (often comprising a lake, rotunda and park), continues to have relevance in contemporary suburban design (McManus 1994, Richards 1990). Lend Lease, the Australian based multinational property development corporation, has incorporated the neighbourhood unit into its master plan for the ADI ‘new town’ site at St Mary’s, 50 kilometres west of Sydney’s central business district.

Each [of the four mixed-use villages] will be comprised of three discrete but interconnected neighbourhoods. These will each have a centrally located public square as a focal point.... The Village Centres will be within walking distance for most residents, and will be focused on a part of public square. They will become bustling, energetic public places and promote a sense of ‘belonging’ and security within each village community (Lend Lease 1996: 11)

Other planner-developers, however, have rejected the notion of the neighbourhood arguing that it restricts choice and opportunities. For instance, according to the architect Llewelyn-Davies (1972), one of the original design principles of Milton Keynes was the notion of ‘opportunity and freedom of choice’.

This has profound implications for design. It leads to the rejection of the ‘neighbourhood unit’ – so long an established component of every plan. It means that the plan should provide for people to exercise choice between alternative schools, shops, work-locations and services of every kind. It rejects
planning based on defined catchment areas, in favour of widely overlapping areas of service, from widely distributed nodal points (Llewelyn-Davies 1972: 105).

Similarly, the idea of opportunity and freedom of choice tends to run counter to the design principles of the residential master planned estate which tends to be oriented to a defined catchment. The legacy of the neighbourhood unit, however, is the importance human scale plays in planning residential districts.

*Radburn Principles and Pedestrian Oriented Development*

A further influential deterministic planning principle since it was first applied to the North American new town of Radburn, is the concept of pedestrian oriented development (POD), a localised form of transit oriented development. Such developments essentially preference pedestrian mobility over mechanical mobility by creating pedestrian-friendly street networks which directly connect local destinations. Much of the appeal of the POD is that the urban village created “can have a local feel and interaction associated with centuries of tradition in villages”, while remaining part of the wider urban landscape of diversity and opportunity (Newman and Kenworthy 1992: 50).

Stein and Wrights’ plan for Radburn involved a synthesis of Garden City, neighbourhood unit and POD principles. The design, according to Mumford (1970: 437),

> consistently abandoned the corridor avenue lined with houses, that divorced the functions of domestic living from the noise and traffic of the street, and that provided a continuous belt of park spaces within the residential super-blocks, instead of placing the park on the outskirts. Each superblock was planned in relation to a school, a playground, and a swimming pool; open spaces were treated as part of the original cost of the development. By means of footpaths with underpasses and bridges one can walk from one part of the community to another without encountering a motor car.

In all Stein was involved in three ‘Radburn’ towns with Radburn being the first. Chatham Village (1932) in Pittsburgh and Baldwin Hills Village (1941) in Los Angeles followed. While Hall (1996) notes that both villages were financial
successes, he goes on to detail the extent to which the planning principles and the reality deviated in order to provide a degree of community sustainability.

At Baldwin Hills, the planners significantly modified the layout, substituting collective vehicle courts for the cul-de-sac, and throwing some of the three linked central open spaces – vast enough, to be sure – into private enclosed space, thus saving maintenance costs. But the shopping centre and three childcare centres disappeared in budget cuts, and a second phase was never started; worst irony of all, though the project was at first racially integrated, after a decade many white families left complaining of problem families; in the 1970s a rescue group converted the development from rental housing to condominiums, banned children under eighteen, and – final ignominy – renamed it the Village Green. Today, after nightfall motor-bike patrols guard the estate, making mockery of the very qualities it was designed to protect (Hall 1996: 128).

Perceptively Hall (1996: 127) notes that “there seems to be some kind of general law in planning history that the first time is the best. … Radburn is the best Radburn layout”. This being the case, Australia’s State Housing Authorities’ adoption of Radburn principles in public housing estates, particularly in Sydney’s western suburbs during the 1960s and 70s (discussed below), must represent the worst.

2.2.3 New Towns and the State

Although the earliest ‘new towns’ of the English speaking nations were essentially the product of private planner-developers using private finance, the increasing activity of the state in social life following the Depression years witnessed the state become involved in the ‘new town’ movement. From a politico-economic perspective, “the Great Slump destroyed economic liberalism for half a century” (Hobsbawm 1995: 94). The ideology of free trade was replaced with the political pragmatics of national self-protection. This meant that Western governments had to give priority to domestic social considerations, lest radicalism break out within certain poorer sectors of the citizenry. Their attempt to ‘organise capital’ (Lash and Urry 1987) involved a two pronged approach: the deployment of Keynesian economic policy to eliminate mass unemployment, and particularly after World War II, the installation of modern welfare programs providing universal economic security (Hobsbawm 1995). Providing decent mass housing and improving the urban
environment were important planks of this program. Hall (1996), however, nicely captures the paradox of the state’s appropriation of Arcadian planning ideas.

The vision of these anarchist pioneers [Howard, Geddes and the other early protagonist planners] was not merely of an alternative built form, but of an alternative society, neither capitalistic nor bureaucratic-socialistic: a society based on voluntary co-operation among men and women, working and living in small self-governing commonwealths... When however the time at last came for their ideals to be translated into bricks and mortar, the irony was that more often than not - this happened through the agency of state bureaucracies, which they would have hated (Hall 1996: 3).

The British Experience

Essentially the British new towns were the state’s ‘overspill’ solution to dysfunctional metropolitan growth, particularly following World War II. The New Town Act of 1946 established the necessary administrative and financial structures for the new town program, including the formation of development corporations. These corporations were responsible for the micro-planning and development of the towns, and once the development was completed, they would hand over their ‘assets’ to the applicable local government.

Most of the new towns involved a mix of public and private development. Rather than being commuter suburbs new towns were designed to be relatively self-contained in regard to employment opportunities and cultural and recreational facilities. Consequently they were planned to be of a certain ‘sustainable’ size, generally over 25,000 people. The neighbourhood unit was utilised to ensure a human scale to the developments. By way of example of the ambitions the state developers held for the new towns, the six goals of the original master plan (1970) for Milton Keynes included: opportunity and freedom of choice for residents; easy movement, access and communication; demographic balance and variety; an aesthetically attractive city; public awareness and participation; and an efficient and imaginative use of social and physical resources (Milton Keynes Development Corporation cited Finnegan 1998: 27).
The British new towns have had mixed success. Finnegan (1998) for instance describes the Milton Keynes experience as both a utopian and Garden City tale and “a story of universal significance, recounting the ability of human creativity and planning to bring about not just the good life but the good life in cities (Finnegan 1998: 40). On the other hand she recounts descriptions of the town as a soulless, cultureless concrete jungle, and cites a newspaper columnist who uses this imagery to depict the then leader of the Opposition as faceless and nondescript: “If Tony Blair was a place, he’d be Milton Keynes” (Independent 4 July 1996 p. 5 cited Finnegan 1998: 42).

In his more general review of the British new town program, Thompson (1976) believes that the new towns were generally successful in creating communities in which people were happy to live. “Studies of residents’ opinions show that the overwhelming majority think they are better off living in the new towns than in their previous locations, and objective studies confirm the view” (Thompson 1976: 32). The primary deficiencies of the new towns appeared to revolve around the lack of comprehensive services and facilities, particularly for the elderly and young mothers, and the lack of suitable housing for single, young people. The lack of innovative social infrastructure was in stark contrast with the innovative nature of the physical infrastructure. This deficiency, according to Thompson (1976: 34), presented as a failure to exploit “the full opportunities presented to plan and develop a wholly new community”.

*The Australian Experience*

Although Australia has its share of ‘new towns’, Canberra being the most prominent success and the Orange-Bathurst scheme the most prominent failure (Stannage 1996), the new town movement here was not as strong as in Britain. The greatest influence of Howard’s Garden City concept was felt within the garden suburbs prior to World War I such as the Daceyville project discussed above and the now heritage listed Haberfield in Sydney’s inner west, and within public housing estates following World War II (Freestone 1988). These public estates differed from the new towns as
they were primarily constructed as residential, dormitory suburbs. Nevertheless, the idea that through good design and aesthetic, one can plan for an ideal form of community remained the fundamental tenet of such developments.

After World War II, a spate of planned public housing estates were built around the country to take advantage of Fordist manufacturing plants. This was in keeping with the state’s Keynesian-welfarist agenda. In his ethno-historical study of the new town of Elizabeth on Adelaide’s urban fringe, Peel (1995) explores the centrally planned model of community development that relies on the built form and social mix of lower and middle income households to generate community life. Consequently, although the estate was primarily developed by the South Australian Housing Trust to house workers from the adjoining car manufacturing plants, provision was also made for middle class settlement. The community development agenda which underpinned the centralist model was based on middle class civic leadership. However, the limited middle class that eventually settled in Elizabeth did not produce the form of community the Housing Trust had planned for. In part this was because the middle class which moved in, according to Peel (1995: 87),

was based on small scale proprietorship or qualification and the ownership of a modest, standard-design bungalow. Elizabeth’s leading citizens were not people who could easily dominate a city, especially one ruled by the state housing authority and multinational firms.

Nevertheless, Peel argues that a form of community did develop in Elizabeth, although not necessarily of the kind envisaged by the bureaucrats’ plan.

Both Brennan’s (1973) study of the public housing estate of Green Valley on Sydney’s urban fringe and Bryson and Thompson’s (1972) study of ‘Newtown’ in Melbourne, also reveal the bureaucratic, ‘middle class’ idea of community. In each of these centrally planned estates it appears that physical planning, social programs and bureaucratically held ideas of community did not match the reality of life on these estates. This is not to say that community sentiment did not develop. It is just that like in Elizabeth, the form the community took did not necessarily match the bureaucrats’ ideal. Although ideally the new towns were intended to incorporate a
social mix, the notion that middle income households would facilitate community formation has tended to underpin the practice of community development in both state and privately built master planned estates, and continues to do so. The idea behind this is that the exemplar of ‘middle class’ values and ideals will assist the lower social ranks to at least maintain a degree of social order, if not actually to aspire to a middle income lifestyle. Thus, contemporary notions of urban community are premised on a particular representation of middle income households’ values, norms and ideals.

**Sydney’s Radburn Estates**

Of particular relevance to this argument is the ongoing legacy of the public housing ‘Radburn’ estates of Sydney’s south-west, including the estates in Airds, Claymore, Macquarie Fields and Minto. Built during the 1970s these public housing estates were planned around the original Radburn scheme of pedestrian oriented, low density housing fronting community commons and public gardens. However, in the actual manifestation the vast open spaces became vacant ‘no-man’s land’, so that where the front of dwellings in the original Radburn overlooked tended greens, in the public housing estates of Sydney’s west they overlooked uninspiring dustbowls. Further, as the dwellings within these estates appeared to have been built back-to-front, residents and visitors were forced to utilise the rear door as the main entrance. The estates’ walkways and rear lanes doubled as haunts for bored youth looking for trouble and as receptacles for burnt-out cars, rubbish and discarded furniture. From time to time certain streets within the estates have been labelled ‘no-go’ zones for police, the fire brigade and taxis after being attacked by mobs (Toohey 2002).

Numerous community renewal initiatives have been instigated since the early 1990s, including aesthetic upgrades, reversing the aspect of houses in Airds and Macquarie Fields to provided them with an identifiable, attractive entrance, and enclosing some of the commons to provide more private and less public (wasted) space. Community development schemes such as community gardens, an Intensive Tenancy Management program, and the ‘Hill’ project in Minto, have had some success in
developing neighbourly co-operation and trust (Department of Housing 2000). Ironically, however, the most ‘successful’ initiative appears to be the redevelopment of the most problematic sites for private housing. This has occurred most recently in the Villawood (renamed Hamilton Grove) and Minto estates.

The failure of Sydney’s Radburn public housing estates supports Hall’s (1996) contention that there is no ‘best’ residential planning model. Rather, residential developments need to take into consideration the political, environmental, economic and social context, and a plan tailored to reflect the local milieu. Such a critical approach to residential planning should deviate from the social deterministic and prescriptive view of planning towards a critical reflection on planning motivations, prospective resident requirements, and a multifaceted assessment of development outcomes, that also considers the relationship between human action and the local social structure. To some extent planning needs to be indeterminate to allow space for the incoming residents to have input into the developing community (Llewelyn-Davies 1976). Hence, the perspective necessarily involves a degree of resident or public participation in a form of ‘collaborative planning’ (McManus 1994). As urban planning has externalities for adjoining areas, the approach in turn requires a critical interpretation and analysis of community views. Most importantly, however, in keeping with the modern process of reflexive life planning, urban planning needs “to permit a variety of futures” (Llewelyn-Davies 1976: 106).

2.2.4 The New Urbanism

The idea that contemporary notions of urban community are premised on a particular representation of ‘middle class’ values, norms and ideals is most fully recognised in the ultra urban design movement, the new urbanism. Designed to enhance social connectivity in urban life, new urbanism emphasises local association through density (Calthorpe 1993). Community development is promoted through ‘walkability’ which encourages passive social contact, and mixed land use which encourages an active street life. The emphasises is placed on “public rather than private space” (Walmsley 2000: 13). Thus more than an architectural movement,
new urbanism is underpinned by a social doctrine of communitarianism and the belief that “improved design creates improved behaviour” (Talen 1999: 1362). The belief that site design and physical characteristics of a development can play a role in fostering or inhibiting social interaction and neighbourliness is common to all of the utopian design movements since the Garden City. However, as Gans (1963: 194) rightly notes, “this belief is open to serious question. It fails to recognise some of the more important, but non-physical, causes of human behaviour…. Ways of life are determined principally by economic and social conditions, not by architectural schemes”.

More specifically, the principles of new urbanism as developed by town planners Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk (Steuteville 1999), incorporate the neighbourhood around a discernible centre, with most dwellings located within a five minute walk of this centre. Mixed zoning ensures a variety of dwelling types with small ancillary buildings permitted within the back yard for use as a rental unit or work place, row houses and apartments. Parking lots and garage doors rarely front the street and parking is relegated to the rear of buildings. Small playgrounds and the primary school are within easy walk of all dwellings. Larger commercial and retail uses are located at the edge of the neighbourhood, and streets within the neighbourhood form a connected network providing a variety of pedestrian and vehicular routes to any destination, thus dispersing traffic. Streets are relatively narrow and shaded by rows of trees which assist in slowing down vehicular movements. Prominent sites in the neighbourhood centre are reserved for civic buildings, providing sites for community meetings, education, religion or cultural activities. Finally, the neighbourhood is organised to be self governing, thus completing the socio-political / physical nexus. A formal association is convened to debate and decide on matters of maintenance, security and physical change. In order to function, such community organisations require a degree of value consensus (Kenny 1999), as well as certain skills in organisational proficiency; skills which are more likely to be found amongst educated and middle income households.
Some 150 communities have been built in the United States utilising new urbanist principles (Lurz 2000), including Seaside, the earliest example, master planned in 1981 by Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and developed by Robert Davis (Davis 2001), and the less salubrious Celebration, which was master planned by Robert Stern and Jacquelin Robertson built by the Disney Corporation (Audirac 2000).

_Spatially Determined Communalism_

Underpinning the design principles of new urbanism is the social doctrine of a strong, supportive, close-knit community. New urbanists are strong advocates of environmental determinism, promoting the idea that physical design can promote an active social life and a sense of community. Talen (1999: 1361) explains that, the protagonists of new urbanism

> stress the conviction that the built environment can create a ‘sense of community’, grounded in the idea that private communication networks are simply no substitute for real neighbourhoods, and that a reformulated philosophy about how we build communities will overcome our current civic deficits, build social capital and revive a community spirit which is currently lost.

Hence, new urbanism is the physical expression of neo-communitarianism. Yet, although Talen (1999) believes that architectural form and site layout can have an effect on the social life of the neighbourhood by increasing the frequency of resident interaction, citing a number of examples to support this, she goes on to argue that ‘non-territorial factors’ play a more considerable role. New urbanism, she contends, needs to recognise its role as an intermediate variable, “whereby the link between sense of community (or some aspects of its definition) and neighbourhood form only occurs if certain threshold effects are in evidence” (Talen 1999: 1368), for instance: the degree of resident homogeneity in particular socioeconomic status, age, gender, stage in the lifecycle and commonality of values; length of residency; presence of children; homeownership; the effect of perceived threats to property values and other ‘crisis communality’; and prestige of an area.
In this regard the multidimensional concept of community is problematic for new urbanists. Community, for instance, includes ideas of both physical propinquity and social propinquity, which fosters the idea of placeless or ‘liberated’ community (Talen 2000), a concept discussed in detail in Chapter 4. By contrast, planning contends itself with community in locale. This invariably leads planners to view community as a manufactured and consequently sustainable artefact or end product, rather than as a process of continual building and renewal. Talen (2000) argues that planners need to free themselves from the quest of community and focus instead on more tangible goals, for instance on design quality, accessible public space and so on. Where planners do concern themselves with community, it should involve the notion of community development, which involves representative citizen participation and strengthening a community’s ‘problem-solving capacity’.

New urbanism remains a controversial mix of design and ideology. Nevertheless, as the frequently cited failure of the Corbusier inspired Pruitt-Igoe project of St Louis (Hall 1988; Corbusier 1971), and the ongoing social and physical decay of western Sydney’s Radburn estates attest, top-down planning for community through design alone, is a tricky business. For one thing, it is difficult to inspire community when other needs of residents, such as employment opportunities, self-esteem and personal capacity, are not being met. These failures, however, along with the deficiencies of many suburban developments, highlight the need for residential planning to integrate local values, cultures, aspirations and lifestyles.

2.3 Contemporary Utopian Place-Making

It is no coincidence that the surge in contemporary utopian place-making from within the private sector from the mid 1980s coincided with the withdrawal of the state from economic ‘managerialism’ (Gleeson and Low 2000). The era of ‘organised capital’ of the post-War Keynesian years was characterised by a managerial state and a general consensus between state, capital and labour. By contrast, the period of ‘disorganised capital’ (Lash and Urry 1987) from the mid 1980s is characterised by the following factors: a shift from state managerialism to state entrepreneurialism incorporating the
philosophy of self-sufficiency and user pays (Gleeson and Low 2000); the
deregulation of national markets; the de-industrialisation of the economy; the
deregulation of the labour force and shift to ‘flexible’ forms of work; and the growth
of global markets supported by the increase in scale of industrial, banking and
commercial enterprises.

An important effect of state withdrawal from managing the economy and social life,
according to Dear (2000), is the shift in the balance of power and activity from the
state toward civil society. Sennett (1998) has noted that one manifestation of this
shift is the contemporary quest for a spatial utopianism, based on communitarian
attachments.

One of the unintended consequences of modern capital is that is has
strengthened the value of place, aroused a longing for community. All the
emotional conditions we have explored in the workplace animate that desire:
the uncertainties of flexibility; the absence of deeply rooted trust and
commitment; the superficiality of teamwork; most of all the spectre of failing
to make something of oneself in the world, to ‘get a life’ through one’s work.
All these conditions impel people to look for some other scene of attachment
and depth (Sennett 1998: 138).

Sennett (1998: 138) goes on to argue that this desire for community is a defensive
reaction, which involves the rejection of outsiders through the “communal
architecture” of the estate walls. This view is supported by Bauman (2001) who
argues that the attraction of the ‘community of communitarian dreams’ relies on the
form of simplification offered by separation of differences. “This kind of communal
unity”, Bauman (2001: 148) argues, “rests on division, segregation and keeping of
distances. These are the virtues figuring most prominently in the advertising leaflets
of communitarian shelters.” Consequently, there is a contradiction between the
collective action intended by neo-communitarianism and the collective action
required by a society needing to gain control over the conditions produced by a
globalised world.

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1 The shift in Landcom’s (the NSW Government’s land agency formed in 1975) function from its
original managerialist role of providing a more orderly system of land release on the urban fringe to its
present corporatised entrepreneurial activity provides a classic example.
2.3.1 The Master Planned Community

A master plan is a mechanism of planning control over an entire project site, underpinned by a particular vision for the completed development. The contemporary MPC is the most capital intensive form of master planned estate. It relies on design features, physical and social infrastructure and community development programs to encourage normative, marketable ideas of community and the good life. Within Australia at least, a particular interpretation of the concept of social capital underpins the vision. In this instance, social capital is understood as social connectivity, neighbourliness, networks of mutual obligations, information flows, and enforceable shared norms (Purdue 2001). Hence, the MPC follows a different paradigm of community development than the ‘welfare’ tradition of the social worker entering the field as an expert, providing individuals and families with material aid and / or counselling (Kenny 1999). Rather, it follows a communitarian tradition in which aspects of individual identification are derived from communal attachments and community is viewed as both a need and a common good (Avineri and de Shalit 1992). As discussed in more detail in the following chapter, social capital, together with economic and cultural capital, can be employed by individuals within a group to create a social space for that group. This is the primary role that social capital plays in the MPC.

*The Master Planned Community and Neo-Communitarianism*

Although there is a long continuity between urban planning and communitarian thinking, elements of which are very much apparent in the work of Howard and Geddes, the ethos of neo-communitarianism, as it is utilised in the contemporary MPC is essentially an urban social movement of middle income households.

As a form of new urban social movement neo-communitarianism is not as overtly active in a political sense, or as narrowly issue based as the service class faction of the *Grands Ensembles* of Paris in the early 1970s (Castells 1983). The neo-liberal consensus ensures it does not have to be. In fact, Castells argues that to survive and prosper, urban social movements must represent more than narrow economic
interests. Neo-communitarianism has successfully established itself in this regard, at the political level through discursive struggle resulting in changes to government policy, and at the local level through the MPC. Consequently, the MPC can be viewed as a ‘terrain of struggle’ (Chouinard and Fincher 1987), through which middle income residents seek to mobilise their ‘class capacity’\(^2\), and at the same time meliorate the conditions of disorganised capital.

*The Character of the Master Planned Community*

Although there is no definitive description of the MPC (Minnery and Bajracharya 1999: 33), typically it is a “large scale, private sector driven, integrated housing development”, generally located on the urban fringe or sizeable urban renewal site. It is developed by “an entrepreneur with a vision backed by financial resources, who takes what some see as all the associated risks to gain all the rewards” (Minnery and Bajracharya 1999: 33). Planner-developers of the MPC are more likely to comply with Logan and Molotch’s (1987) third typology of space entrepreneurs, the ‘structural speculator’, rather than either the ‘serendipitous entrepreneur’ who comes to the position by inheriting property or by some other fortuitous circumstances, or the ‘active speculator’ who tactically positions him / herself in the path of a development trend in a gamble to capture speculative gain. In regard to the structural speculator Logan and Molotch (1987: 30) explain:

Some place entrepreneurs do not rely solely on their capacity to estimate future locational trends; they supplement such intelligence by intervening in that future. These entrepreneurs speculate on their ability to change the relationships of a given place to other places – that is, they attempt to determine the patterns through which others will seek use values from place.

\(^2\) In this context, class capacity refers to the organisational and cultural resources at a class fraction’s disposal. The emphasis here is slightly different (although the consequences are similar) to Chouinard and Fincher’s (1987: 335) use of the term, where class capacity is identified as “the ability of one class to impose its will on other classes”. The concept of class capacity is useful for understanding middle class mobilisation on Sydney’s urban fringe. Lash and Urry (1987: 11) argue that the members of the service class - the “engineer, managers, planners, social workers and so on” - have created ‘space’ for their own class formation. The MPC underpinned by the neo-communitarian ideology and comprising organisational, physical and cultural resource, is a ‘place’ and a ‘space’ through which class formation can occur.
In other words structural speculators set about structuring a market. The planner-developers of the MPCs operating in western Sydney exemplify this approach by structuring markets based on the insecurities of middle-income, mainstream residents of the area. Through harnessing residents fears, locational advantages and the development parameters of the local state these developers seek to create differential land values within the region.

Within Australia, the local state underpins this form of development by applying more stringent environmental and infrastructure (both physical and social) standards, and by enforcing policies of user pays, higher densities, more appealing aesthetics and wholistic planning. That Camden Council, for instance, requires all new residential developments within its precinct to be master-planned reveals the contingent and mediatory role of the ‘local state’ in the development of ‘class capacities’ (Chouinard and Fincher 1987). Accordingly, the MPC symbolises the confluence of neo-liberal ideology, between the developer, the resident and the state. This is an ideology which privileges the private sphere – the sphere of domestic arrangements and communitarianism - over the interventionist state.

In turn, MPCs can bring certain benefits to both the private and public sectors. A local government area, for instance, can gain an enhanced image through orderly growth and additional infrastructure. This is particularly important for local government areas expected to cope with rapid growth on a restricted (rate pegged) budget. Halter (1998: 3) notes that “today, most municipalities will not or cannot fund the cost of added infrastructure and social value systems that they have been bestowed upon their development concepts in the past”. This has led to increasing pressure being placed on the private sector to fund the provision of infrastructure and services, particularly through Section 94 provisions of the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979) and bear the burden of state based development costs (Neutze 1995). The higher standards of development required by the state has witnessed a shift in the role of local government away from infrastructure provision towards negotiating the standards and facilities developers are expected to provide (Minnery and Bajracharya 1999).
2.3.2 Common Interest Developments and the rise of the ‘Privatopia’ in the U.S.

The MPC in the United States has taken a slightly different trajectory to that of either Great Britain or Australia (McKenzie 1994: 7). Although elements of the utopianism of Howard’s Garden City are evident, most forms of MPC in the United States have and continue to be developed by private corporations utilising the instrument of the common interest development (CID). Such developments are privately owned, intensively planned, relatively self-contained communities which are managed through a homeowners’ association, with its mandatory membership, constitution and regulations.

The original CIDs, of which New York’s Gramercy Park was the first to be formed in 1831, were used to create luxurious enclaves for affluent residents (McKenzie 1994, Barton and Silverman 1994). These exclusive estates were closed off from the surrounding streets by gates and fencing. Restrictive covenants stipulated land use, resident behaviour, particularly in regard to alcohol use, and those races and religions deemed acceptable to the development (Barton and Silverman 1994). From the 1900s, as these developments grew in size, developers established homeowners’ associations to manage the common property and enforce covenant restrictions.

From the 1960s a new generation of CIDs began to emerge. Paralleling contemporary urban environmental factors in Sydney, in an environment of rising land prices and increasing densities, ‘community builders’ utilised the model to build ‘quality’ developments for middle-income households (McKenzie 1994). To counteract the density issue and to entice the market, these estates offered recreational open spaces and other common facilities such as swimming pools, golf courses, parks, private beaches, recreation rooms, security gates and guards. These facilities necessitated common ownership arrangements and consequently a system of ongoing maintenance and management. The homeowners’ association was the regulatory instrument of choice. This form of ‘private government’ suited both the developers who had no desire for ongoing management issues once the development was
completed, and municipal governments that did not wish to take on the responsibility and expense of such private infrastructure (McKenzie 1994; Barton and Silverman 1994).

Since embracing middle-income households in the 1960s, rather than merely the elite, the rise of CID s has been quite phenomenal. According to McKenzie (1994: 11), where in 1964 there were fewer than 500 homeowner associations, by 1980 there were 55,000 and by 1992 150,000 associations ‘privately governing’ an estimated 32 million Americans, or approximately 12% of the population. Over this period, most of these CIDs have been built in the sunbelt – California and Florida - where new residential construction was able to occur on a large scale. Hence, CID’s have left their mark on the urban landscape of the late twentieth century.

The ‘Privatopia’

McKenzie (1994) coined the term ‘privatopia’, to capture two quite contradictory concepts underpinning the character of contemporary CIDs in the United States. The first concept involves certain utopian aspects of Howard’s Garden City. McKenzie (1994: 12) refers to CIDs as “third-generation descendants of Howard’s utopian garden city idea”. This seeking out of a spatial utopia is mixed with what McKenzie describes as ‘privatism’, a term which suggests the “enlisting of private energies to improve the performance of tasks that would remain in some sense public” (Donahue cited McKenzie 1994: 179). More specifically, CIDs reflect a form of privatisation through the total enclosure and conversion of large tracts of undeveloped land to private residential real estate with private facilities. The ‘self sufficiency’ of CIDs supported by their homeowners’ associations can be viewed as a private takeover of certain local government functions. And further, the ‘full-scale community development’ required of CIDs exposes the privatisation of the urban planning process. That is, urban planning is driven by private corporations accountable only to their shareholders, and later by homeowners’ associations accountable to its membership, rather than by the policy directions and avenues of protest supported by a democratically elected government (McKenzie 1994).
Although homeowners’ associations are formerly established to manage a development’s private infrastructure and enforce covenant restrictions (Dear 2000), their unofficial purpose is the protection of property values. The zealousness with which this task is undertaken affects the broader community by encouraging spatial differentiation along economic and social lines. Restrictive covenants are used to ‘mandate’ certain lifestyles – through design standards, aesthetic prescription and behavioural restrictions - which appeal to a target group, but which inevitably exclude other groups deemed undesirable. As a result, most of the suburban privatopias are “home-owning, homogeneous, and largely white” (Danielson cited McKenzie 1994: 57; see also The Economist 2001). These ‘bourgeois utopias’, as Harvey (2000: 148) describes them, “undermine concepts of citizenship, social belonging, and mutual support” (Harvey 2000: 150; Ward 1998).

This zealousness also impinges on the freedom and civil liberties of a development’s residents. These restrictions are, in the main, ones that residents seem prepared to trade off. Richard Louv, who studied Rancho Bernardo for his book *America II*, describes the following restrictions supported by the Bernardo homeowners’ association:

Even vegetable gardens are frowned upon – though some people do grow tiny ones out of their neighbours’ view. Fences, hedges, or walls require approval, and may not be more than three feet tall. Signs, other than for-sale signs, are prohibited. Trees must be kept trimmed and may not grow above the level of the roof, which must be covered with red tiles. Residents are not allowed to park recreational vehicles or boats in their driveway… One village, designed for seniors, prohibits grandchildren from using the recreation centre, and home visitation by grandchildren is strictly limited (Louv cited McKenzie 1994: 13).

McKenzie (1994: 15) describes an incident in Houston, Texas, where a home owners association “took a woman to court for keeping a dog in violation of the rules of her CID. The association won, but she kept the dog anyway. The judge sent her to jail for contempt of court”.

Barton and Silverman (1994) note that the ‘private governments’ which preside over these rules and regulations, are somewhat less than democratic. For instance, both the associations’ constitutions and the restrictive covenants underpinning CIDs are
created by the developers, and in the developers’ interest, well before the first
residents move in. Further, CIDs disenfranchise renters who are ineligible to be
members of homeowners’ associations. Barton and Silverman (1994: 17) have also
noted that rather than increasing a sense of shared responsibility and reciprocity –
cornerstones to creating a utopian form of community - the professionalisation of
maintenance required by the associations actually undermined the ‘self-help
activities’, traditional for many home buyers in the United States. This tendency also
risked creating financial difficulties for less well-off and first-time homebuyers.
Ironically, the structure and punitive practices of the associations challenge the
realisation of utopia, so that what is left is, as Marin (1984: 240) explains it, is a
‘collective fantasy’ of the utopic ideal.

2.3.3 ‘Privatopias’ – the Australian Experience

Like many north American fashions and social patterns, there has been a lag between
the ‘privatopian’ experience of the United States and Australia. Although aspects of
the Garden City ideal have been embraced with relish by both private and public
planner-developers in Australia over the past 100 years, the ‘privatism’ characteristic
of the CIDs in the United States has not been as prominent a factor (Bandy, Lister
and Atkinson 2003).

Although Australia has utilised a form of homeowners’ associations in the form of a
body corporate since the 1960s\(^1\), these have been constituted to manage the common
property of strata plans, with the principal task of ensuring resident compatibility
within dense living space, rather than supporting exclusive developments through

\(^1\) The original Strata Titles Act in NSW was enacted in 1960. The Act is administered by the Strata
Titles Commission of NSW. Strata Title refers to the division of airspace, whereby ownership for
individual parts of the building is allocated separate title, plus a title for common property. Common
property consists of all land and building other than that which is included in any strata lot. A separate
Certificate of Title for the common property is issued in the name of the Body Corporate. The Body
Corporate at law, is a separate legal identity by registration of a strata plan. Its powers, duties and
functions are those confined or imposed on it by the Act and its by-laws. The Council of the Body
Corporate, which consists of elected property owners, manages the maintenance of the common
property in the Strata Plan. Importantly, prospective purchasers and renters are not subject to the
approval by the other occupants in the building, and an independent tribunal is available to settle
disputes.
exclusionary practices. This is not to say that some strata developments do not enforce a strict code of uniform aesthetic and resident behaviour. However, as the ‘six pack’\(^4\) (Lewis 1999) unit blocks which proliferated throughout Sydney during the 1960s and 70s indicate, this is usually not the case. Rather, Australia’s strata title acts were enacted, in part, to protect those people who wished to own an individual apartment within a building whilst avoiding the imposition of a particular lifestyle (Gunther 1992). This later aspect was one of the primary defects of Company Title, the original mechanism for dividing up airspace.

The contemporary developments which most closely reflect the CID’s of American origin tend to occur under community titles legislation. In NSW, the *Community Land Development Act* (1989), and associated *Community Land Management Act* (1989) were enacted to assist with the development and management of conventional residential subdivisions which also included a component of common property. Community title developments take many forms. Small developments may involve cluster housing around common open space, for instance a private park or common driveway. Larger developments, for instance the gated security estate, may involve shared recreational, sporting and security facilities, roadways and even agricultural land (the latter being reminiscent of the pre-industrial ‘village common’, phased out ironically enough, with the passing of enclosure laws). In this way community land developments, or ‘Community Schemes’ fill the void between conventional subdivisions of land and strata subdivisions. Importantly, community title legislation allows for the development of ‘planned communities’ where land and facilities, particularly recreational facilities are shared.

Community schemes necessitate the incorporation of Community Associations, and depending on the size of the development, also Precinct and Neighbourhood Associations. Property owners automatically and compulsorily gain membership of the association. These associations manage the common property and services, and uphold the bylaws outlined in their community management statement. Such bylaws

\(^4\) “Blocky boxes of two or three storeys on concrete stilts over a carpark, built as near as possible to the boundaries” which took over tracts of suburbia during the 1960s (Lewis 1999: 90).
can include controlling the use of community property, controlling or preserving the ‘essence’ of the theme of the development, guidelines for architectural style and landscaping, restrictions on noise levels, keeping of pets and the hanging of washing, as well as obligations on proprietors not to interfere with the quiet enjoyment of others. Overt discrimination “based on race or creed, or on ethnic or socio-economic grouping” is specifically prohibited by Schedule 2, Clause 5(c) of the Community Land Development Act 1989. However, both the associations’ bylaws and the developers’ restrictive covenants can combine to ‘encourage’ a distinctive character, through design standards, aesthetic prescription and behavioural restrictions, targeted to appeal to specific social groups.

Developments utilising Community Title are on the increase in Australia, particularly in regard to medium density developments promoting lifestyle through resort style facilities, as well as gated estates. It is, however, hard to see the gated estate becoming a common form of greenfield development in Sydney’s outer western suburbs. Reflecting on the attitude of Harrington Park and Garden Gates residents in this study, it seems the extent to which people would be willing to take direct responsibility for the upkeep of estate roads, street lighting and other community facilities is limited.

Master planned communities utilising conventional subdivision mechanisms differ from developments which incorporate Community Title, as they have no facility to establish a legally binding homeowners’ association to maintain estate standards and property values. Although conventional subdivision developments use restrictive covenants to provide a particular theme, standard or aesthetic, they must rely on more subtle forms of community organization, through precinct committees, community groups, and the pressure of community norms, to assist with the maintenance of development ‘standards’ and property values. In the ideal form, these processes coalesce in a ‘community compact’ between the planner-developer and residents. This compact is a broad agreement as to the primary development goals and the dominant value system or common social code which is intended to operate within the estate. Hence the MPC, as development practice, involves a certain dynamism
between planner-developers and residents in the establishment of the compact. This reflects Logan and Molotch’s (1987: 39) observation that:

Residents’ organisational efforts are greatly enhanced when their cause is joined by at least a portion of the entrepreneurial sector, just as the entrepreneurs’ goals are facilitated when residents become part of the development consensus. Efforts to achieve such effective coalitions mobilise the full range of instruments of communication, education, and social control.

The concept of the ‘community compact’ is explored in more detail in the fieldwork chapters.

2.4 Conclusion

The primary purpose of this chapter was to explore the trajectory of modern utopian place-making in consideration of the varying relationship between the state, the development of modern urban planning and design, and social movements deriving from civil society, in particular communitarianism. The themes of the state, planning, and communitarianism recur throughout this thesis. They are significant because, as this chapter suggests, the various manifestations of modern utopian place-making over the past two hundred years has been contingent on their varying influence and interrelationship. As Dear (2000: 125) argues, the “urban form is the consequence of the tensions and contradictions that beset the interaction of state and civil society... Urban outcomes vary according to whose star (state or civil society) is in the ascendant during successive periods”.

It follows then, that the contemporary form of utopian place making – the master planned community – is moulded in effect by the changed dynamic between the state and sectors of civil society. The change in focus of the state in the era of ‘disorganised capitalism’ towards re-positioning nations to take advantage of the global market, has provided for space for civil society to reassert itself.

One instance of the current ascendancy of civil society is the joining of communitarian interests with the master planner-developer, in the project of securing private residential environments for certain precariously positioned middle-income
groups. Contemporary notions of urban community underpin this project. Such notions, however, are premised on a particular representation of middle-income values, norms and ideals.
CHAPTER 3: Social Capital and the Constitution of Social Space

It has a good community feel, people brought together by the school and park and things like the annual arts festival put on by the Association. (39 year old male resident of Telegraph Hill: Butler and Robson 2001: 2150)

3.1 Introduction

Since the early 1990s, the concept of social capital has been gaining increasing application within academic, political and public policy discourses. However, until recently the discourse, within Australia at least, has generally been confined to social policy and somewhat faddish political rhetoric, rather than empirical and theoretical examination (Winter 2000a; Stone and Hughes 2002). The discrepancy between the politico-policy discourse and theoretical development is largely responsible for the complex array of divergent views, perspectives and applications that now characterise the concept’s use.

The purpose of this chapter is to establish the utility of social capital to the thesis. Detailed examination of the various origins of social capital and subsequent debates over its theoretical character have been undertaken by Edwards and Foley 1998; Portes 1998; Sandefur and Laumann 1998; Winter 2000b; Fine 2001; Castle 2002; Spies-Butcher 2002 and Stone and Hughes 2002.

Following Lin (2001), however, the three principles that underpin the concept of social capital in this thesis are:

1. that social capital is an asset or resource of social networks,
2. that individuals invest in social relations and networks with expected returns and
3. that they do so with an appreciation for the partially fungible or convertible nature of this form of capital.

These principles support the definition of social capital as socio-structural resources that individuals rationally activate in order to produce social and economic benefits. Further, they facilitate an analysis of those aspects of social networks which assist
social mobility, social reproduction and status, and they enable an analysis of the relationship between collective social action and social mobility which is a significant aspect of the contemporary master planned community.

**Social Capital Amongst Middle-Income Groups**

Butler and Robson’s (2001) approach to social capital in their study of ‘Social capital, Gentrification and Neighbourhood Change in London’, informs the use of the concept in this study. Butler and Robson note that, particularly in Britain, social capital has tended to be used to study the disadvantaged and socially excluded, and to explore and account for mechanisms of economic and social marginalisation. Hence, the focus has been on improving the stock of social capital amongst impoverished groups. They go on to argue, however, that

current empirical research into the middle class gentrification of inner London requires us to approach the issue of social capital from a very different position. Our analysis reveals that amongst those groups which have been engaged in ‘remaking’ various inner urban neighbourhoods – none of whom can be thought of as excluded in any sense – issues of social capital are of central importance (Butler and Robson 2001: 2145).

Butler and Robson’s qualitative study compares three neighbourhoods in south London which are undergoing varying degrees of gentrification; Telegraph Hill, Battersea and Brixton. They hypothesise that rather than gentrification being a homogenous process, gentrified neighbourhoods have distinctive characteristics which can be understood in terms of the differential deployment of cultural, social and economic capital by their middle class residents.

For instance, they found that Telegraph Hill exhibited the most extensive social capital, through the careful cultivation of networks “with the aim of maintaining and reproducing the area’s prosperity and sense of itself, than elsewhere in the study” (Butler and Robson 2001: 2149). Battersea’s middle class community, which has a higher proportion of single, professional people, was based more on high levels of economic and cultural capital rather than social capital. Although social networks were high, Butler and Robson (2001: 2155) argue that the area’s new symbolic identity “has been achieved more by the weight of number of economic and cultural
Brixton was the more culturally and ethnically diverse of the neighbourhoods under study. Social and cultural diversity was apparently an attractive feature to the new middle-income residents who lived there. However, as Butler and Robson (2001: 2156) note, “there appears to be something of a gulf between a widely circulated rhetorical preference for multicultural experience and people’s actual social networks and connections”. They refer to this as a ‘tectonic’ phenomenon, as the “social groups or ‘plates’ overlap or run parallel to one another without much in the way of integrated experience in the area’s social and cultural institutions” (Butler and Robson 2001: 2157). Consequently, there appeared to be little cohesion amongst middle class residents in Brixton.

Butler and Robson (2001: 2161) conclude that the middle class community in Battersea can be considered as a class in itself (based on a set of objective conditions), in Telegraph Hill as a class for itself (the subjective mastering of the objective conditions), “and in Brixton, where social capital is both least apparent and desired, as neither”. Importantly, the social networks underpinning Butler and Robson’s interpretation of social capital are, at least in part, concerned with producing an economic advantage (‘prosperity’) for those network members. Butler and Robson’s study is of great relevance to the research, for revealing the way particular status groups at the local area level use resources to alter and dominate the physical and social space.

Butler and Robson’s approach to social capital is informed by Bourdieu’s model of the composition and volume of capital (discussed in detail below) in that social capital is theoretically reintegrated into an analysis of its relations with other pertinent forms of economic and cultural capital. Consequently their interest is in the dynamics between these forms of capital in the transformation of the three inner London localities by middle-income status groups.
3.2 The Deployment of Social Capital

3.2.1 Social Capital and Social Space

Following Bourdieu (1984) and Butler and Robson (2001), the utility of social capital to the theoretical framework of the thesis is its efficacy, together with the other forms of capital – economic and cultural – in constituting social space. This perspective derives primarily from Bourdieu’s (1984) explanation of ‘three-dimensional social space’, comprising the ‘volume of capital’, the ‘composition of capital’ and changes in these two properties over time. Bourdieu’s conceptualisation of social space is not dissimilar to Giddens’s (1975) early explanation of distinct social groupings based on variations in people’s market situations, which forms the basis of his theory on class structuration. According to Giddens, class structuration is maintained through two processes: through a process of ‘mediate structuration’, whereby different groups close off entry to others in a process of social closure; and secondly, through a process of ‘proximate structuration’, whereby social differences are reaffirmed by maintaining physical and social separation.

Weber, Bourdieu and the Forms of Capital Comprising Social Space

The idea that assets or resources can be acquired from social networks - social capital - provides an element that seems otherwise lacking in the ‘classical’ theories of capital, with their two related but distinct elements – the exploited surplus value of workers, and the investment of capitalists in the commodity cycle (Lin 2001). Weber’s thoughts on the complex role different forms of capital play in social stratification was one of the first attempts to augment the classic economistic perspective. Under Weber’s (1964) tripartite model of stratification involving class, status and party, although economic capital is the major determinant of class, other intricate forces also come to bear. From the 1960s social theorists augmented Weber’s stratification model to incorporate forms of capital other than the purely economic. These theorists were particularly interested in human capital or the store of a person’s skills and capabilities.

In the 1970s, during an examination of the cultural consumption of the French
bourgeoisie, Bourdieu (1984) developed a ‘total volume and structure of capital’ thesis, that incorporated the “overall value of capital, understood as the set of actually useable resources and powers - economic capital, cultural capital and also social capital” (Bourdieu 1984: 114). Fowler (1997: 31) notes that “these clearly echo Weber’s categories of party, status and class, although, unlike Weber, Bourdieu argues that in modernity these are not accidentally connected but – over time – are necessarily linked”.

Bourdieu’s ‘volume and structure of capital’ thesis is rooted in the pluralistic stratification system developed by Weber. For Weber, modern capitalism is not a law-governed system framed by class struggle as presented by Marx, but a rational mode of social organisation in the pursuit of specific goals and ends. In this view, modern capitalist society comprises a pluralist structure, where one’s ‘class situation’ is contingent on what can be offered in the market. Hence, skills, credentials and qualifications, generally under recognised in Marxist accounts, comprise forms of assets.

Importantly for the development of social capital theory deriving from Bourdieu, Weber (1964: 424-5) argues that “in principle control over different combinations of consumers goods, means of production, investments, capital funds or marketable abilities constitute class statuses which are different with each variation and combination”. In such a stratification system then, class situation ultimately reflects ‘market situation’ (Swingewood 2000: 105). Presenting a class situation as a market situation diminishes the significance of both class antagonism and the prospect of class unity - a class for itself - underpinning Marxist class theory, and opens the way to examine other manifestations of resource accumulation as well as social movements. One of these, for instance, is the way in which the ‘positively privileged’ acquisition class, made up primarily of entrepreneurs (merchants, shipowners, industrial and agricultural entrepreneurs, bankers and financiers), “tends to insure the security of its economic position by exercising influence on the economic policy of political bodies and other groups” (Weber 1964: 426) – a form of social capital no less.
Social Capital

Following Weber, Bourdieu (1984, 1986) developed the concept of social capital to examine the economic advantages accrued by people belonging to certain social groups or networks. He defined social capital as “the sum of resources, actual and virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu cited Narayan and Cassidy 2001: 59). Bourdieu claimed that it was necessary to construct social capital to show how,

... high-society socialising is, for certain people, whose power and authority are based on social capital, their principal occupation. An enterprise based on social capital has to ensure its own reproduction through a specific form of labour (inaugurating monuments, chairing charities, etc.) that presupposes professional skills, and therefore an apprenticeship, and an expenditure of time and energy (Bourdieu 1993: 33).

Hence social capital, according to Bourdieu (1993: 33), enables the analysis of how the resources imbued in certain ‘connections’, for instance the “publishers’ cocktail parties”, can be converted, through “social labour”, into economic capital. Thus, the concept of social capital provides the “means of grasping the function of institutions such as clubs, or quite simply the family, the main site of the accumulation and transmission of that kind of capital” (Bourdieu 1993: 32). In this regard, social capital is endowed with a fungible element. That is, “social labour” allows for the conversion of one kind of capital into another, not withstanding the struggle over the rate of exchange between the various kinds - cultural, intellectual, economic (Bourdieu 1993: 33).

Cultural Capital

Social capital holds a relatively minor position in contrast to the other forms of capital within Bourdieu’s theoretical and empirical work. In regard to Bourdieu’s concept of ‘three-dimensional social space’, the idea of cultural capital is the more conceptually developed. Cultural capital was a fundamental concept in Bourdieu’s early work on the reproduction of capitalist class relations through pedagogic
institutions (see for instance Bourdieu and Passeron 1977), and the conceptual foundation of his most controversial and widely read work (Jenkins 1992), La Distinction (1984). Bourdieu developed the concept of cultural capital in the early 1960s,

to account for the fact that, after controlling for class origins, students from more cultured families have not only higher rates of academic success but exhibit different modes and patterns of cultural consumption and expression in a wide gamut of domains (Bourdieu cited Wacquant 1992: 219).

In his later work Bourdieu (1986: 242) described three forms of cultural capital: the embodied state, “in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body”, otherwise known as culture and cultivation; the objectified state, “in the form of cultural goods”; and the institutionalised state, for instance educational qualifications.

The domestic transmission of cultural capital, particularly in the embodied and objectified states rather than the institutionalised, is of particular relevance to the thesis. The construction of social space by residents of the MPC is motivated in part by the socialisation of children through a geographical neighbourhood, which supports the development of their market capacity. Further, the opulent house located within the prestigious estate creates a form of cultural capital in the objectified state. Savage et al. (1992: 94) link this strategy of petty property ownership with the “investment of cultural capital in housing” through the exhibition of specific cultural tastes and values. Importantly, as Harvey (1989: 120) notes, once the neighbourhood and community are recognised as places of social reproduction, “this form of social awareness becomes the basis for political action” and “community-consciousness replaces class consciousness (of the Marxian sort) as the springboard for action and the locus of social conflict”.

Translation Social Space to Physical Space

One of the more pertinent aspects of Bourdieu’s work on social capital, is the way he positions it as one of the differentiating elements of social, and ultimately physical space. According to Bourdieu (1998: 6),

61
Social space is constructed in such a way that agents or groups are distributed in it according to their position in statistical distributions based on the two principles of differentiation which, in the most advanced societies, such as the United States, Japan, or France, are undoubtedly the most efficient: economic capital and cultural capital. It follows that all agents are located in this space in such a way that the closer they are to one another in those two dimensions, the more they have in common; and the more remote they are from one another, the less they have in common. Spatial distances on paper are equivalent to social distances.

Moreover, each space of social positions corresponds with a class of habitus. Although Bourdieu here cites economic and cultural capital as the most efficient elements of differentiation, other forms of capital, in particular social capital and linguistic capital, a sub-category of cultural capital, are also determining properties (Bourdieu 1999; Schinkel and Tacq 2004).

Ultimately social space translates into physical space, at least partially, because “an agent’s positions in social space is expressed in the site of physical space where the agent is situated” (Bourdieu 1999: 124). The ability of an individual or group to appropriate physical space depends on the capital possessed.

Capital makes it possible to keep undesirable persons and things at a distance at the same time that it brings closer desirable persons and things (made desirable, among other things, by their richness in capital), thereby minimising the necessary expense (notably in time) in appropriating them. Proximity in physical space allows the proximity in social space to deliver all its effects by facilitating or fostering the accumulation of social capital and, more precisely, by allowing uninterrupted benefits from the meetings at once fortuitous and foreseeable that come from frequenting well-frequented sites (Bourdieu 1999: 127).

Social closure, a concept initially devised by Weber (1946) to describe the exclusion of certain people from membership of status groups, for instance through the action of confining marriage to those within the status group, is integral to the accrual of social capital within both Bourdieu and James Coleman’s work. However, while in Coleman’s (1990) work, discussed in more detail below, closure of social networks is important for the emergence and maintenance of norms, in Bourdieu’s work similar positions in social and physical space brings about closure, which then assists in the reproduction of that social space. Bourdieu’s use of the concept is closer to
Parkin’s (1974), who considered social closure as an aspect of the distribution of power between classes. Hence for Bourdieu (1999: 128-9),

Certain spaces, and in particular the most closed and most ‘select’, require not only economic and cultural capital, but social capital as well. They procure social capital, and symbolic capital, by the *club effect* that comes from the long-term gathering together (in chic neighbourhoods or luxury homes) of people and things which are different from the vast majority and have in common the fact that they are not common, that is, the fact that they exclude everyone who does not present the desired attributes or who presents (at least) one undesirable attribute. The exclusion may be legal (through a type of *numerus clausus*) or de facto (the inevitable feeling of exclusion will deprive the intruder of certain profits associated with belonging).

The implication here is that social capital is “a means for a particular social group to retain their exclusiveness by forming tight bonds with others similar to themselves” (Li, Savage and Pickles 2002: 4). Hence, social capital is one element in the development of *status groups*, which Weber (1946: 186) notes “are normally communities”.

### 3.2.2 Correlating Communitarian and Economic Interests in the MPC

More specifically, the utility of social capital to the thesis lies in examining the relationship between communitarian interests and economic interests that underpins the social structure of the master planned community. The domain that represents this relationship is depicted in Figure 3.1 below. The sphere to the left of the venn diagram represents communitarian interests, and encompasses the notions of developing social networks and social support including friendships, establishing certain group norms, for instance, neighbourliness, lawn maintenance and creating a socially and physically secure environment.

The sphere to the right represents residents’ economic interests, in particular security of housing investment, and life chances that a better neighbourhood might provide to the household. These two entities of the MPC are integrally entwined. The relationship between community and housing investment is indicated by the convergence of the two spheres.
The diagram, however, is limited by its two-dimensionality. Consequently, the relationship between community and housing investment in the MPC is perhaps better depicted through the analogy of a spinning coin, whereby property values and housing consumption is 'heads' and community is 'tails'. Each aspect can be individually examined, and at different times one or other of these aspects may appear more significant in the formation of new housing developments, but importantly, as with the coin, one aspect cannot effectively be split from the other. The two sides comprise the whole.

3.3 Social Capital as Praxis

The following section considers specific aspects of social capital which assist in analysing the relationship between communitarian and economic interests. In so doing it draws from the three primary theoretical perspectives of social capital: the social stratification perspective; the collective or communitarian perspective; and
network theory. Bourdieu is the originating theorist of the social stratification perspective, which is described in some detail above.

The second and most widely recognised is the collective or communitarian perspective which views social capital as the social resources and support produced by social connections and collectivities. Following Coleman (1988, 1990), the resource-producing elements which are most commonly referred to in the communitarian perspective involve social norms, trust, reciprocity and social networks. Although these interrelated elements originated with Coleman’s conceptual development, they were brought to prominence through Putnam’s study on civic engagement in Italy (Putnam 1993) and his more recent work on the perceived decline of civic engagement in the United States of America (Putnam 1995, 2001).

The third and often overlooked perspective on social capital derives from sociometry and network analysis (see for instance Wall, Ferrazzi and Schryer 1998; Wellman and Berkowitz 1988: 15). Within this perspective, social capital is conceptualised as the potential resources founded on participation in social networks. Warde and Tampubolon (2002: 177) make the point that “in the past, the network approach operated independently of debates about social capital, and it was only the popularity of the latter conception in the 1990s that produced some apparent convergence of interest.” It is debatable, however, whether network theory has gained much by the convergence, as it either defines the term so widely it loses conceptual clarity, or uses the term in place of existing network concepts. For instance, in her article on the value of social capital to employers and employees, the network theorist, Erickson (2001: 127) notes that, “this paper defines social capital in the widest sense as the useful aspects of social networks” (my italics), that is “good networks”. And Frank and Wellman (1999) invariably refer to social capital as ‘network capital’ to indicate the social support provided by ties and networks.

On the other hand social capital theory has gained much by introducing aspects of network theory, particularly in regard to the concept of ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ ties.
developed by Granovetter (1973), and brought to prominence by Putnam. Table 3.1 provides a summary of these perspectives and contributing theorists.

Table 3.1: Perspective and Contributors to the Development of Social Capital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective</th>
<th>Theorist</th>
<th>Theoretical and Conceptual Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Stratification</td>
<td>Pierre Bourdieu – originating theorist</td>
<td>Three Dimensional Social Space comprising the total volume and composition of capital - economic, cultural and social – and the relationship between these. Social capital enables the analysis of how the resources imbued in certain ‘social connections’ can be converted, through ‘social labour’, into economic capital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Glen Loury - originating theorist</td>
<td>Developed the concept of social capital to provide a social aspect to more orthodox labour economic theories of racial income inequality. For instance he concluded that young black workers had reduced employment opportunities because their poorer social connections were less able to provide them with information about job openings (Loury 1987). Loury’s work was instrumental in Coleman’s development of the concept. See for instance Coleman (1990: 301).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tim Butler and Garry Robson</td>
<td>Expanded on the role of social capital in the creating of social space, particularly in gentrifying neighbourhoods (Butler and Robson 2001)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Communitarian (Collective Action)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theorist</th>
<th>Contributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Coleman – originating theorist</td>
<td>Developed as an extension of Coleman’s (1988, 1990) theoretical explorations on social exchange. His interest in social capital was in regard to the social resources produced through social relations. Social capital is discernible in the utility and value of certain elements of social structure, for instance, social norms, obligations, expectations, trust and communication capability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Putnam – Most widely cited and influential theorist of social capital</td>
<td>Defined social capital as features of social organisations, such as networks, norms and trust, that facilitate actions and cooperation for mutual benefit. Equated social capital with levels of engagement in civil society. Progressed the idea of collective nature of social capital. Introduced Granovetter’s work on bridging (weak) and bonding (strong) ties into social capital theory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eva Cox – introduced the concept into Australian public policy discourse in 1995 (see Cox 1995; Cox and Caldwell 2000)</td>
<td>Defined social capital as the processes between people that facilitate networks, norms and social trust and facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit. Argued that the state has a role in supporting notions of social trust and cooperation and developing social capital.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Network Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theorist</th>
<th>Contributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barry Wellman</td>
<td>Referred to social capital as ‘network capital’ to indicate the social support provided by ties and networks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ronald S. Burt</td>
<td>Developed structural hole theory in the 1980s and more recently used this theory to refute the argument that social closure increased access to social capital resources, and that social capital was more likely to be created through spanning structural holes (see for instance Burt 2001)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The aspects of social capital which assist in analysing the relationship between communitarian and economic interests comprise the notion of purposively generated norms of obligation and social trust, particularly as derived from the communitarian perspective; social connectivity and networks, the efficacy of social capital in child rearing, and the efficacy of social capital in community development.
3.3.1 Purposively Generated Norms of Obligation

Social norms, and more specifically norms of obligation which underpin the ideas of trust and reciprocity, are a fundamental element of the communitarian perspective of social capital. For Coleman (1990: 306) social norms create obligations and expectations so that,

If A does something for B and trusts B to reciprocate in the future, this establishes an expectation in A and an obligation on the part of B to keep the trust. This obligation can be conceived of as a 'credit slip' held by A to be redeemed by some performance by B. If A holds a large number of these credit slips from a number persons with whom he has relations, then the analogy to financial capital is direct.

Hence, for the social capital literature that followed Coleman, the two elements of social structure which underpin this concept of social capital are the level of trustworthiness, “which means that the obligations will be repaid” (Coleman 1990: 306), and the store of obligations created which require reciprocating.

Unfortunately, in much of the social capital literature, the concept of social norms is divorced from both its philosophical foundation and sociological illumination, which incorporate the notions of obligation, social pressure, deviance and sanction, rather than the notions of trust and reciprocity. For instance, utilising H. L. Hart’s formulation of norms / laws of obligation, Ullmann-Margalit (1977: 12-13) argues that:

1. Norms are conceived and spoken of as imposing obligations when the general demand for conformity is insistent and the social pressure brought to bear upon those who deviate or threaten to deviate is great.

2. The norms supported by a serious pressure are thought important because they are believed to be necessary to the maintenance of social life or some highly prized feature of it.

3. It is generally recognised that the conduct required by these norms may, while benefiting others, conflict with what the person who owes the duty may wish to do.
With the exception of Coleman himself, the notions of social pressure, sanctions and power have been largely subjugated by the ideas of trust and reciprocity. Coleman (1990), though, writes extensively on the 'effective sanction' in the development of social norms, and his ideas on intergenerational closure (discussed later in the chapter) indicate his concern for the disappearance of social control within the family and community structures (Portes 1998). It is the centrality of family and community which underpins the esteem with which the neo-communitarian movement holds Coleman's work.

Norms are generated or maintained to protect against negative externalities, as well as to perform positive services. The establishment and maintenance of purposely generated social norms within the master planned community are of particular relevance in the thesis. Such norms are "purposively generated, in that those persons who initiate or help maintain a norm see themselves as benefiting from its being observed or harmed by its being violated" (Coleman 1990: 242). Norms are more likely to be nurtured in closed (or dense) rather than open social networks, due to the increased efficacy of the collective sanction. The norm of garden maintenance, neighbourliness (involving respect and reciprocity) are examples of such norms and are discussed in more detail in the fieldwork chapters of the thesis.

At a more general level, Coleman provides the example of a social system which contains a hierarchy of status groups, in which members of mid-ranking groups conform to the norms of the next higher group, while maintaining the norms of their own group. This aspirational action has exclusionary motives. That is, aspirational actions that involve norm compliance act to exclude those lower groups by increasing the social space between the groups. This provides one explanation behind the seemingly 'aspirational' intentions of certain middle income groups which cohabit within master planned communities on Sydney's urban fringe (Burchell 2003, Davies 2002).
3.3.2 Trust

According to Fukuyama (1999: 49), “trust is a key by-product of the cooperative social norms that constitute social capital”. It is probably the most frequently mentioned ‘resource’ of social capital within the communitarian perspective.¹ Ofte (1999: 47) defines trust as “the belief concerning the action that is to be expected from others... [It] is the belief that others, through their action or inaction, will contribute to my/our well-being and refrain from inflicting damage upon me/us”. As a plank of its social program, communitarianism views trust as the ability for people to be relied on to honour norms of reciprocity, avoid opportunistic behaviour, and keep commitments (Fukuyama 1999). The presence of such trust means that “groups will form more readily, and those that do form will be able to achieve common purposes more efficiently” (Fukuyama 1999: 49).

Within the communitarian perspective, trust is most often mentioned in the context of declining levels within society (Stone 2001; Ofte 1999), in an adjunct to Putnam’s (1995) observed decline in civic engagement. However, a more useful way of considering the so called ‘declining’ levels of trust in contemporary western society is through the concept of the ‘trust gap’ (Ofte 1999). The trust gap is the discrepancy between trust afforded and trust required. So rather than assuming that individuals are trusting less in real terms, the expectations that they must trust more may be the issue. This perspective relies on Giddens’s (1990: 33) observation that “trust is related to absence in time and in space”. The conditioning underpinning trust here is the “lack of full information” (Giddens 1990: 33), a condition that can only increase with the continuing compression of time and space produced by developments in communication technology.

The relevance of trust in the thesis is in regard to the rationale and process of building communities of mutual trust. Misztal (1996: 92) makes the point that the importance of trust means that its absence is not merely mistrust, but angst and

¹ For instance, the broad ranging text on social capital, Social Capital and Public Policy in Australia (Winter (ed.) 2000) lists some 64 citations of ‘trust’ (and 3 of distrust) in the index, compared to 6 mentions of norms, and 6 of reciprocity.
dread. Hence, there is a connection between trust and a sense of ontological and personal security. Giddens (1990: 34-35) argues that security may be defined as, “a situation in which a specific set of dangers is counteracted or minimised. The experience of security usually rests upon a balance of trust and acceptable risk”. As explored in more detail later in the thesis, the master planned estate promises a secure environment, reducing the angst many residents experienced in prior residential situations. One of the primary ways that this occurs is through the social homogeneity such estates encourage, particularly in the initial stages of the development. The commonality between residents, in terms of life experience and demographics, supports the rapid development of trust between residents.

3.3.3 Social Networks

Within social capital theory a social network is viewed as a resource system (Wallman 1984). Nodes (individuals, groups and embedded networks) within the wider social network act as both keepers and mobilisers of resources (Wallman 1984). The ties that link the nodes act as paths for the distribution and conversion of material and non-material resources. This notion of nodes and ties forms the structural parameters of social norms.

Bridging and Bonding Ties

Ties can be of a bonding nature (a strong tie) producing a cluster of relations, and of a bridging nature (a weak tie), which tend to link clusters within and between networks (Granovetter 1973, see also Jacobs 1965: 144, who refers to bridging ties as ‘hop-and-skip’ relationships). Although strong social ties, involving time, emotional intensity and reciprocity are intuitively believed to be of greater personal utility, and weak ties denounced as generative of alienation, network analysts have noted that weak ties which bridge two clusters, are more likely to deliver certain resources to actors than the strong binding ties within clusters (Granovetter 1973, Putnam 1993 and 2001). This is because “whatever is to be diffused can reach a larger number of people, and traverse greater social distance (i.e. path length) when passed through weak ties rather than strong” (Granovetter 1973: 1366).
Although Putnam (1993; 2001) brought the idea of bonding and bridging ties to prominence, these concepts derive from network analysis and more particularly Granovetter’s (1973) work on the cohesive power of weak ties. According to Granovetter (1973: 1263), a bridging tie is a line in a network which provides the only path between two points. ... A strong tie can be a bridge, therefore, only if neither party to it has any other strong ties, unlikely in a social network of any size (though possible in a small group). Weak ties suffer no such restriction, though they are certainly not automatically bridges. What is important, rather, is that all bridges are weak ties (Granovetter 1973: 1364).

In other words, weak ties link members of different status groups.

Importantly to the social capital discourse and the argument for increasing social connectivity, Granovetter hypothesised that a community becomes fragmented where there are dense clusters and weak ties but no bridging ties. He went on to suggest that, “the more local bridges in a community and the greater their degree, the more cohesive the community and the more capable of acting in concert” (Granovetter 1973: 1376). He suggested that the two common sources of weak ties at the community level were formal organisations and work settings. This has important ramifications for community development programs in the master planned community. It suggests that the aim of such programs should be to encourage local bridging ties, perhaps through community groups and events, which link local nodes of common bonds. This approach contrasts with early social capital research within the communitarian paradigm, which tended to be concerned with bonding ties (particularly within the community development sphere) following Coleman’s social closure arguments.

More recent literature has tended to distinguish between resources emanating from strong ties and those from weak ties. Putnam (2001: 22) argues that,

Of all the dimensions along which forms of social capital vary, perhaps most important is the distinction between bridging (or inclusive) and bonding (or exclusive).... Bonding social capital is good for undergirding specific reciprocity and mobilising solidarity. ... Bridging networks, by contrast, are
better for linkage to external assets and for information diffusion. That is, bonding ties tend to provide ongoing, social and psychological support and reciprocal arrangements. They reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneity. Bridging ties, on the other hand, establish access to external resources and information.

**Structural Hole Theory**

A further contribution made by network theory to the concept of social capital is in regard to structural hole theory developed by Burt (1997; 2001). Interestingly, structural hole theory refutes the social closure / network closure argument proposed by both Coleman and Bourdieu, in their accounts of social closure. According to Burt (1997), structural hole theory defines social capital in terms of the information and control advantages of being the broker in relations between people otherwise disconnected in social structure. The disconnected people stand on opposite sides of a hole in social structure. The structural hole is an opportunity to broker the flow of information between people and control the form of projects that bring together people from opposite sides of the hole.

Within the MPC the community developer contracted by the developer spans structural holes between residents and neighbourhood groups, and between the developer and residents, and is therefore in the formal position to act as the community broker. In this regard, the community developer, who tends to act as the planner-developer’s proxy, is in a powerful position to control the form of community which develops. This is discussed in Chapter 8, Crafting the Master Planned Community.

Spanning structural holes has a number of benefits to the bridging agent. For instance, the more structural holes an agent can span, the richer the information benefits of the network to that agent. Further, bridging puts the brokering agent in a position to specify in whose interests the bridge serves or benefits, hence there are control benefits. There are also ‘referral’ benefits. For instance, as the bridging agent’s network becomes more diverse, the agent becomes a valuable contact for inclusion in other people’s networks, and further the bridging agents is more likely to
be a candidate for inclusion in new opportunities.

3.3.4 The Efficacy of Social Capital in Child Development

The family, and by extension the cognitive and social development of children, was one of the earliest areas of social capital research. It was particularly concerned with two main aspects: social capital within the family, that is, the relationship between parents and offspring that advantages the development of offspring; and following Coleman’s (1990) theory on intergenerational closure (discussed further in Chapter 7: Seeking Utopia), social capital between family groups, particularly within the school community and the neighbourhood.

*Intergenerational Closure*

Coleman (1988) developed his concept of ‘social capital’ through studying the reproduction of human capital within the family. He found that human capital is more likely to be reproduced in an environment rich in social capital. Within the family social capital is created through the relations between the parents and their children, and particularly through the enforcement of expectations and social norms. As discussed above, norms are an attempt to guide social behaviour. Sanctions, whether actioned or merely threatened, provide social norms with rigour, steering members of a group towards acceptable behaviour in an attempt to “limit external effects or encourage positive ones” (Coleman 1988: s105). Importantly, Coleman argues that effective norms are more likely to be nurtured in closed social networks than open networks, due to the increased efficacy of the collective sanction. For instance, adults are more likely to be successful in imposing norms and obligations on their children in a social structure which incorporates intergenerational closure, such as the neighbourhood or the school network. This social structure is represented in Figure 3.2.

In this diagram friendly relationships exist between parent (P1) and their child (C1), between parent (P2) and their child (C2), between the children (C1 and C2) and between parents (P1 and P2). When the parents discuss their children’s activities,
they tend to come to a consensus about acceptable standards and sanctions. With this in mind they place obligations on and monitor their own child while monitoring the behaviour of the other parent’s child. This process is then strengthened by the children’s monitoring of each others behaviour, and the ramifications of their friend on behaving outside the ‘norm’. Hence, “the existence of intergenerational closure provides a quantity of social capital available to each parent in raising his children – not only in matters related to school but in other matters as well” (Coleman 1988: s107).

Figure 3.2: Intergenerational closure supporting norms imposed by parents on children.

![Diagram showing intergenerational closure]

Source: Interpreted from Coleman 1988: s107

However, where there is no relationship between parents P1 and P2, that is a social structure without closure, a child’s withdrawal from an obligation can only be effectively sanctioned by the person to whom the obligation is owed, the parent. This structure weakens the sanctioning effect.

Supporting Coleman’s theory of intergenerational closure, studies into social capital have found that students in networks with more closure were less likely to drop out of high school (Carbonaro 1998). Using data from the National Educational Longitudinal Study of public schools in the United States, McNeal (1999) found that parental involvement with their child was a salient factor in explaining educational outcomes. In a similar study Powel and Parcel (1999) found that parental aspirations for their child to obtain higher levels of education, along with the child’s own enjoyment of reading are strong predictors of higher maths and reading assessment scores. One particularly relevant study found that neighbourhood characteristics
more so than family or school-related factors were more likely to predict educational outcomes of children (Ainsworth 2002).

Butler and Robson (2001) found that in the gentrifying suburb of Telegraph Hill, an area which exhibited high levels of social and cultural capital, education was the most important ‘conduit’ for social reproduction and the constitution of social space. They note that a child’s *habitus*

is formed partly by the experience of schooling, but is essentially nurtured and sustained through the careful construction and implementation of educational strategies in the household. These are reinforced by the presence of like-minded households which are interconnected by strong social and personal friendship networks in which stored cultural capital is realised as neighbourhood social capital in expectations for their children and school and non-school activities in which they engage (Butler and Robson 2001: 2158).

This aspect of interconnected households producing a degree of intergenerational closure has direct relevance to the securing of educational and social outcomes for offspring within the MPC. The question, however, is not so much whether social capital is relevant to educational outcomes, but whether it is believed by resident parents to be the case.

3.3.5 The Efficacy of Social Capital in Community Development and Cohesion

The concept of social capital has been applied to an array of ‘community’ oriented areas, following Putnam’s work on the recent decline (from a peak in the 1950s) of civic engagement and community in the United States. Studies have since been undertaken on the role of social capital in crime and delinquency prevention (Bursik 1999; Hagan, Merkens and Boehnke 1995); the state’s role in building social capital at the community level (Warner 1999; Wilson 1997; Mayer 2003); the contribution of social capital to the health and wellbeing of a community (Morrow 1999; Baum, Palmer, Modra, Murray and Bush 2000; Lochner, Kawachi and Kennedy 1999; Muntaner, Lynch and Smith 2000); and community development at the neighbourhood level, which is generally taken to mean either civic engagement and volunteerism (Portney and Berry 1997; Potapchuk, Crocker and Schechter 1997; Calthorpe and Fulton 2001) or network mobilisation to solve local problems and

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In Australia, Onyx and Bullen’s (2000; Bullen and Onyx 1998) ‘Five Communities Study’\(^2\) was the first to attempt to establish the measurability of social capital at the local community level. The study detected eight distinct elements which appeared to define social capital within local communities. These elements measure two distinct aspects of social capital. The ‘arenas’ of social capital measures the extent and density of social networks within the local communities, and the ‘capacity building blocks’ measures the operationalisation of social capital. See Table 3.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘Arenas’ of Social Capital</th>
<th>Capacity Building Blocks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. participation in local community</td>
<td>5. pro-activity in a social context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. neighbourhood connections</td>
<td>6. feelings of trust and safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. family and friends connections</td>
<td>7. tolerance of diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. work connections</td>
<td>8. value of life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Onyx and Bullen (2000)

Onyx and Bullen (2000: 130) concluded that social capital has both empirical as well as theoretical coherence and that “it is a concept that holds great potential in understanding the capacity for communities to develop solutions to their economic and social problems”. However, statistical measurements do not necessarily unveil the underlying complexities of social capital within a community. Nor do they necessarily indicate the quality of social relations, norms, reciprocity and trust. This point was recognised in the Adelaide Health Development and Social Capital Project (Baum, Palmer, Modra, Murray and Bush 2000), which used a mixed methodological approach involving questionnaires, in-depth interviews and case studies, to explore the extent of social interactions and relationships in a community as indicators of health.

\(^2\) Narellan, where part of the fieldwork for this thesis was conducted, was one of the five areas surveyed for this study.
Noting the difficulty in developing valid quantitative indicators for social capital, Coleman (1990: 305-6) argues that “its current value lies primarily in its usefulness for qualitative analyses of social systems and for those quantitative analyses that employ qualitative indicators”. It is interesting then, that so few empirical studies, particularly at the community level have used qualitative methods. Two studies which have, however, include Walklate’s (1998) research on the connection between trust and crime in a neighbourhood and Schulman and Anderson’s (1999) study on the structure of ‘paternalistic social capital’ in a southern United States textile town. This latter study explored the effect of the textile firm’s restructuring on the community’s social capital, concluding that social capital is a context dependent form of power that can be created, accumulated and also destroyed by changes in the social structure of the group or community (Schulman and Anderson 1999, Potapchuk et.al. 1997).

3.4 Neo-communitarianism and the Social Capital Connection

As Spies-Butcher (2002: 174) notes, “social capital has inherited much of its power from communitarian and civic republican debates.”. The link between social capital and neo-communitarianism rests in the idea of public good - incorporating ideas of trust, reciprocity and civil participation supported by social norms. Thus neo-communitarianism utilises Coleman’s notion of social capital, with its emphasis on social norms which encourage obligations, expectations and trust. Re-establishing and maintaining a common set of social norms, underpinned by coercive pressure, is fundamental to neo-communitarian thinking (see for instance Etzioni 1995 and 1996a) (see the following chapter on Community for a more extensive discussion on neo-communitarianism).

The dramatic shift in social norms and values during the 1960s, referred to by Fukuyama (1999) as ‘the great disruption’, is viewed by neo-communitarians as the result of a shift in the balance towards rampant individualism over social order maintained by norms (Etzioni 1995; 1996a). Of most concern are changes in values
related to “reproduction, the family, and relations between the sexes” (Fukuyama 1999: 36). Consequently, neo-communitarianism seeks to rebuild social order through the processes of shared norms and cooperation, rather than through political mobilisation which advances social and economic rights. As norms are more likely to be sustained and reproduced within closed systems, communitarianism directs its efforts towards the family, the education system (the local school), and the local community (Pahl 1998).

### 3.5 Social Capital and the neo-Liberal Discourse

Reflecting the rational choice origins of the more influential collective action / communitarian perspective of social capital, outside of the academy the concept has tended to be colonised by neo-liberal discourse (Baum et. al. 2000; Fine 2001; Spies-Butcher 2002). This situation has influenced the conceptual development of social capital and the way it is used in policy prescriptions. As Baum et. al. (2000: 252) note:

> The interest in social capital has occurred within a political context dominated by economic rationalism, neo-liberalism and consequent changes to the role and working of the public sector. It has been a time in which social policy considerations have been heavily overshadowed by economic objectives which aim to reduce government spending.

Foucault (1977: 27) observed that discourses are intimately linked to the forms that power takes in society, arguing that “power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations”. Under the influence of neo-liberalism, a particular communitarian view of social capital, one which emphasises civic engagement and a normative view of community stressing reciprocity and trust, has become the prominent account.

Neo-liberalism, with a lineage deriving from the liberalism of the late 18th and early 19th century, is the convergence of politico-economic thought, which views the (global) free market as being the appropriate mechanism for organising economic and social life. An effective, functioning market demands minimal state intervention.
Commencing with the rise of the New Right economies of the North Atlantic during 1980s, particularly under the political stewardship of Margaret Thatcher (U.K. Prime Minister 1979-90) and Ronald Reagan (U.S. President: 1980-8) (Krieger 1986) and supported by the theories of Hayek (1981), neo-liberalism reached a peak in the late 1980s – 1990s with the hegemony of left-of-centre parties. The protagonists here were initially the Hawke / Keating Labor Governments in Australia, followed by the Democrat President Bill Clinton in the United States, and the Labour Prime Minister, Tony Blair, with his ‘social-ism’ mission in the United Kingdom. Prior to this, particularly amongst the traditionally labour oriented parties and particularly following World War II, left-of-centre politics tended to view the interventionist state as being the appropriate mechanism for organising economic and social life and restraining the destructive urges of the market. In the neo-liberal paradigm, however, civil society – the sphere of societal self-organisation in democratic, capitalist society that lies outside the market and the state (Hall 1998) - is assigned this restraining role.

It can be argued that Coleman (1990: 321) inadvertently prompted the neo-liberal take-up of the concept when he argued that “official sources of support in times of need (government aid of various sorts)” depreciates social capital, by making people less dependent on one another. In the neo-liberal era of weakened nation states, welfare reform, privatisation of public assets and user-pays, social capital has become a policy metaphor for ‘local community’ and ‘self-help’ (Forrest and Kearns 2001: 2138). It is a powerful discourse, adopted at all levels from global institutions such as the World Bank, the first of the major NGOs to embrace and promote the concept (see for instance Narayan 1999; Dolfsma and Dannreuther 2003), to national Governments (see for instance Blair 1998; Jones and Smyth 1999), state departments (see for instance Productivity Commission 2003), conservative think-tanks, ‘grass roots’ social enterprises and non profit organisations (Lyons 2000; Stewart-Weeks 2000). The ‘McClure Report’ (McClure 2000) into welfare reform undertake for the Australian Federal Government, for instance, notes that:

By building their social capital (through stronger networks, trust and shared values), communities can offer individuals more opportunities for economic
and social participation (McClure 2000: 45).

Assisting individuals and communities to create ‘social capital’ as the way out of their disadvantage has become a primary policy objective. As Tony Blair (1998:2) has argued, “we can only realise ourselves as individuals in a thriving civil society, comprising strong families and civic institutions buttressed by intelligent government”. He goes on to argue that “this Third Way\(^3\) … will build its prosperity on human and social capital” (Blair 1998: 20) - a policy perspective which preferences an individual’s actions over social structure in which the an individual finds him or herself in.

In an insight into the process of incorporating social capital into neo-liberal discourse, Fine (2001: 79) notes that Coleman’s work has “opened the way for a disguised, and hence more palatable form for rational choice to thrive and prosper”.

More critically van Staveren (2003: 421) argues that:

> Given the problems in the analysis of social capital, it is worrying to see that the concept has found its way to policy makers. The main policy message appears to be that governments can leave part of poverty reduction policy making to civil society initiatives, substituting public goods and regulatory policies with services provided by the poor, drawing on their labour in community groups, networks, and associations, and in particular drawing on poor women’s unpaid labour in households and communities.

The adoption of social capital by the politico-policy discourse has taken a theoretical concept and turned it into a politico-social program. Social capital is not an ‘egalitarian’ resource, but is differentially accumulated and activated.

### 3.6 Conclusion

Butler and Robson’s (2001) study of three gentrifying suburbs in inner London reveals the potential of the relationship between economic, cultural and social capital to constitute social space. They found, for instance, that with its homogeneous population of middle class professionals, Telegraph Hill exhibited strong stocks of

\(^3\) The idea underpinning the ‘Third Way’ is the somewhat contradictory promise of combining the efficiency of free-market capitalism with the old-fashioned security and solidarity associated with the welfare state.
realisable social and cultural capital, and lower levels of economic capital, at least relative to the other areas. The stocks of social capital arose primarily from networks centred on the primary school and the resident’s association, the latter of which was particularly successful in bringing the resident population together for social and cultural events including lobbying the local council for resources. Consequently, the relationship between social and cultural capital produced strong networks which enabled the local community to successfully pursue improvements to the local environmental and institutional infrastructure. As Butler and Robson (2001: 2151) describe it, in Telegraph Hill,

enlightened self interest and community action – in a general atmosphere of well-developed civic-mindedness – fuse in cycles of collective social activity in which the area continually benefits from the fruits of a sustained engagement with the ‘intermediate’ local authority institutions through which resources can be accessed.

Alternately, in ‘upper middle class’ Battersea economic capital predominated in the gentrification process by “enabling competitive access to an increasingly desirable and expensive stock of housing and an exclusive circuit of schooling centres on private provision” (Butler and Robson 2001: 2159). Although social capital in the form of access to information was evident, particularly in regard to jobs, the area had not developed the cohesive social networks that were evident in Telegraph Hill. The commonality of purpose in upgrading the area was dependent on access to economic capital.

Although the third area of Brixton exhibited relatively high levels of economic and cultural capital, its culturally diverse population appeared to undermine the development of social capital. The area showed little social cohesion. Rather, deriving from its high level of cultural capital, Brixton’s gentrification ‘cachet’ was as a “post-modernist mecca” promoting “fashionable alternative cultural forms and lifestyles” (Butler and Robson 2001: 2160).

Two aspects of Butler and Robson’s study are of particular relevance to the theoretical framework of the thesis. The first is that the differential deployment of
cultural, social and economic capital constitutes social spaces of varying character and capacity. Secondly, and more specifically, the form of community exhibited in Telegraph Hill, with its social cohesion and high levels of social capital and community capacity, reflects the idealised nature of the master planned community, with its promotion of communitarian interests to secure social and economic assets, and to differentiate it from other residential areas.

As established by Butler and Robson (2001), the coalescence of communitarian and economic interests can be mobilised to create social and physical space for the promotion of social mobility and status. A specific interpretation of social capital is employed in the thesis to elucidate this relationship between communitarian and economic interest – a relationship that is fundamental to the socio-economic structure of the MPC. This interpretation views social capital as both a constituent element of social space following Bourdieu (1984), and as socio-structural resources that individuals rationally activate to produce social and economic benefits. Consequently, it also draws on the concepts of social norms, networks, social and intergenerational closure and trust from Coleman (1990) and Putnam’s (1993) interpretation of social capital.
CHAPTER 4: The Community Question

Personal participation in the activities of a geographical community adds incalculably to the fullness of life.  (Osborn 1945: 119)

4.1 Introduction

One of the principal theoretical and marketable features of the master planned estate is a particular vision of ‘community’ (Johnson 1997). Developers’ promotional material proclaims: “Be part of a community”\(^1\); “This will encourage people to talk to one another and establish a real community spirit”\(^2\); “The quality of lifestyle at Glenmore Park promotes real community spirit, encouraging neighbours to get to know each other, to take time for a chat over the fence, or to catch up for a BBQ”\(^3\); “Building community by working together”\(^4\).

This vision of community is place based, somewhat static but with the promise of social connectivity and interpersonal ties that provide support, a sense of belonging and social identity. The manifestation of community which actually eventuates is a product of many influences including: the planner-developer’s ideological framework and commitment to the vision of the development; regulations, policies and political contingencies of the local state; and the desire for the incoming residents to express their social power as a group. This desire in turn is contingent on wider social and economic opportunities and constraints, such as access to cheap housing finance, public infrastructure and employment opportunities, or perhaps as a reaction to migrant settlement patterns and the process of urban invasion and succession which may follow. The territorial, structural and sentimental elements of community, expressed in this instance through the housing estate, can be viewed as a ‘field’ (Bourdieu 1990) through which a group’s interests can be fostered and consolidated.

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\(^1\) ‘A Lifestyle for a Lifetime’, Woodlands Estate, Shellharbour Promotional Material (Landcom)
\(^2\) ‘The neighbourhood you’ve been waiting for’, Spring Hill Village, Promotional material (Landco Developers)
\(^3\) ‘Glenmore Park: Lensworth’, Promotional Brochure 2002. (Lensworth)
\(^4\) Greenway Park Estate Community Newsletter No. 1 June 2003 (Landcom and Australand)
The interest of community to the thesis then, is essentially the relationship between community formation, the creation of social space and competition over urban resources. In the first instance the chapter investigates the notion of community with reference to the theoretical and research-based literature, with the intention of drawing out those aspects and manifestations of the concept which appear to be relevant to the social structure and manifestations of community within the master planned estate. It then proceeds to examine relevant community case studies which inform aspects of community formation, structure and action which are applicable to the master planned estate.

4.2 Perspectives on Community Theory

The following section examines aspects and perspectives on community theory that provide a framework for analysing community formation in planned housing estates. In the first instance it examines Campbell’s tripartite model of community, in order to locate aspects of community relevant to community formation in housing estates. It then proceeds to examine other community theories and paradigms through the ‘community question’ – a narrative of community lost, found and liberated, before viewing community formation through a conflict perspective.

4.2.1 Campbell’s Tripartite Model of Community

Like social capital, the concept of community is multi-dimensional which makes the task of defining it difficult and contentious (Bell and Newby 1971, Hunter 1975; Wild 1981). As Campbell (2000: 22) has argued “we do not know – and certainly cannot agree on - what the necessary and sufficient conditions of community are”. In his investigation into “the nature of social groups”, Hillery (1968: 4) identified 94 various definitions of community within the literature. Conversely, Stacey (1969) disparaged the entire concept as a ‘non-concept’, preferring to study the ‘social system’. Hunter (1975: 538) argued, however, that the flexibility provided by the non-consensual nature of ‘community’ is in fact “valuable in providing a common whetstone on which to sharpen the cutting edge of competing ideas”.

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Rather than *defining* community, Campbell (2000: 23) has devised a *community framework* comprising three, interrelated meta-elements or primary themes which capture the multidimensionality of the concept: social structure, space and sentiment (see figure 4.1). Campbell (2000: 24) explains that “within the non-overlapping space of each circle stands a collection of definitions, methodological approaches and empirical studies that take the circle’s theme as their primary referent”. The overlapping areas indicate where community notions encompass two or more themes.

**Figure 4.1: Tripartite Model of Community**

With reference to this model, *social structure* incorporates the size and membership of a communal group and the nature and organisation of the social bonds that define it. This sphere takes into account the three classic sociological approaches to community: the ‘affection’ perspective of community, which follows Tönnies’s notion of the reciprocal, binding sentiment of *gemeinschaft*; the conflict approach following Marx and Weber, which views community relations as the product of
struggle, inequality, domination and in regard to the latter theorist, closure; and the functionalist approach following Durkheim, the urban ecology approach of the Chicago School, and later Parsons. In this perspective, the social bonding agents of community are based on functional interdependence (Campbell 2000).

The element of *space* incorporates the physical, temporal and social site of community. Even today, community is frequently associated with a physical space – a place. One of the primary social goals of urban planning, particularly in the guise of the master planned estate, is the development of a sense of community deriving from place. According to Campbell (2000: 34) Tönnies was the first modern theorist to ‘conflate’ space and community "by explicitly but also uncritically incorporating the idea of place in his gemeinschaft / gesellschaft classificatory scheme".

Three aspects of place are relevant to Tönnies’s model of *Gemeinschaft*. Firstly, the theory of *Gemeinschaft* starts from the assumption of perfect unity of human will: of blood, locality and mind (Tönnies 1955). Secondly, community can only form where there is “proximity of habitation” (Tönnies cited Campbell 2000: 34) between community members, producing a “community of physical life” (Tönnies 1955: 48). And the third aspect relates to the historical connection or ‘rootedness’ community members have to the place which infuses membership with loyalty, and a spiritual or metaphysical connectedness. The geographically isolated village perhaps comes closer than any other social arrangement to this ideal type of community. However, the corollary of this perspective is that “where rootedness does not exist, as in the socially transitory and geographically dispersed environment of the city, community also does not exist” (Campbell 2000: 35).

According to Campbell, confusing the relationship between space and community - ‘proximity of heart and habitation’ - locked Tönnies into a vision of community that could not be extended beyond a single, simple spatial conception. However, Tönnies was identifying an historical and organisational archetype. Subsequent interpretations of his work have tended to emphasise the spatial boundedness of his theories, as Campbell does, when in fact it is the motivation to form social bonds, and the
psycho-social-emotional nature of the communal relationship that is perhaps the more significant aspect of his work.

For Tönnies (1955), *Gemeinschaft* is the true form of community, held together through the unity of human will. Where separation does occur relations are supported by “well-defined habits of reunion and sacred customs” (Tönnies 1955: 49), paralleling Durkheim’s (1976) notion of the ‘effervescent gathering’. Conversely, *Gesellschaft* is a mode of relating, whereby the will of blood, of locality and of mind are transformed into a ‘rational will’ supported by contractual arrangements (Tönnies 1955). Even where individuals live together, they are essentially independent of each other. Hence, *Gesellschaft* represents the society of contractual arrangements, social institutions and discontinuous relationships typically found in the Occidental city (Cohen 1989, Hillery 1968, Weber 1958). This, according to Tönnies (1955) enables the individual to deal with the size and agglomeration of urban social life and consequently the frequent, fleeting relations and lack of common goals this social structure generates.

Pahl (1970) referred to community ties based on ‘rational will’ as ‘communities of limited liability’, because such ties were reduced to negotiable commodities. In turn, the motivation which underpins such communal ties means that people can also readily move on “leaving their mistakes behind them” (Pahl 1970: 103). Such action, however, is infinitely more difficult where community ties are based on the ‘unity of human wills’, whether that be of blood, locality or mind (Tönnies 1955).

The social ecology of the Chicago School interpreted the link between community and space, viewing space as a causal element in the construction and ongoing character of community (Campbell 2000). Burgess’ concentric zone model of urban form postulated that as cities expanded successive waves of ‘invasion’ pushed residents out of their neighbourhoods into adjoining areas, leading to a change in urban form, and competition between different communities (Savage and Warde 1993).
In presenting a theory on the ‘community without propinquity’, Webber (1963) liberated the idea of community from geographical space, and opened the way for considering social space in the formation of community. Webber argued that technological advances provided the break with geographic propinquity, so that “never before have men been able to maintain intimate and continuing contact with others across thousand of miles; never has intimacy been so independent of spatial propinquity” (Webber 1963: 43). The idea of ‘liberating’ community from place is discussed in the following section.

The common element of sentiment incorporates the ideational, experiential and symbolic nature of community. This includes both cognitive and social-psychological experiences. Tönnies theory of Gemeinschaft incorporated the aspect of community as meaningful experience through the idea of ‘unity of mind’ which produced the ‘supreme’ form of community, the “community of mental life” (Tönnies 1955: 48). Walter Firey argued in 1945 that communities and neighbourhoods were not just spatially ‘delimited’ geographical areas, but were also “at times a symbol for certain cultural values that have become associated with a certain spatial area” (Firey cited Campbell 2000: 47).

In more recent years community studies have been increasingly concerned with the symbolic interpretation and construction of community. For instance, rather than analysing community “as a structure of institutions capable of objective definition and description”, Cohen (1989: 20) examines community by capturing members’ experience of it. He replaces the structural, geographically determined concepts of community boundary with a theory of symbolic boundary, arguing that, whether or not its structural boundaries remain intact, the reality of community lies in its members’ perception of the vitality of its culture. People construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of meaning, and a referent of their identity (Cohen 1989: 118).

This symbolic approach to community focuses on a community’s culture, that is, those artefacts, values, and behaviour that provides a community and its members with a specific identity.
Although Campbell’s Tripartite Model of Community supports disparate and dynamic manifestations of community, the notions of *commonality* and *boundary* which are integral to the concept of community, are merely implied by the framework rather than being explicit. Commonality and boundary apply to a multitude of community aspects including shared territory, social relations, language, identity, ritual, interest and experience. Importantly, they are inherently oppositional and exclusionary. The oppositional aspect of community imbues its use with a political element, an aspect supported by Weber’s idea of ‘community closure’ (*Schliessung der Gemeinschaft*), or the monopolisation of economic, political, and / or social advantages by the community members (Neuwirth 1969).

Campbell’s model of community is particularly useful when applied to community formation within the master planned community. The framework enables the three elements of community – social structure, sentiments and space, with ‘space’ comprising an interplay between social space and physical space, to be considered separately, as well as in relation to each other. For instance, it supports the examination of the influence social structure has on creating a particular social space, and how the physical place establishes a differentiating social identity, upon which community sentiment is based.

4.2.2 The ‘Community Question’: Community Lost, Found or Liberated

The essence of the ‘Community Question’ rests in the “manner in which the organisation and content of primary and interpersonal ties are affected by large-scale division of labour associated with modern urban society” (Tsai and Sigelman 1982: 579). Most of the theoretical work on community since Tönnies has reflected concerns in regard to the nature and quality of communal bonds in industrial society, a concern which has been strongly influenced by the rural-urban continuum explicated by Frankenberg (1966) in his classic treatise, *Communities in Britain: Social Life in Town and Country.*
According to Wellman (1979), the 'community question' discourse can be divided into three main arguments: the 'community lost' perspective, the earliest and still the most pervasive sociological perspective which has recently been revived through neo-communitarian discourse (Durkheim 1949, Tönnies 1955; Nisbet 1969, Etzioni 1994); the 'community saved' perspective, which was an optimistic response to the Lost argument based in empirical examination during the 1950s and 60s (Hunter 1975); and the 'community liberated' view, which has developed out of "the analytic juxtaposition of the Lost and Saved arguments" (Wellman 1979).

**Community Lost**

Resting on the assumption that strong primary ties naturally occur in "densely knit, self-contained solidarities", the 'community lost' perspective argues that the contractual arrangements supporting the division of labour of modern society has weakened communal solidarities (Wellman 1979: 1204). This perspective has its intellectual roots in Durkheim's (1949) explanation of the shift from mechanical to organic solidarity and Tönnies's (1955) *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* dichotomy discussed above.

According to Durkheim, social 'solidarity', is maintained in industrial society, not by the uniform characteristics produced by geographic proximity – the basis of mechanical solidarity, but by the very differences produced by the industrial division of labour. These differences necessitate a system of interdependence. Urban inhabitants need to "engage in and maintain the relationships on which they depended for their economic, social, and emotional or spiritual well-being" (Campbell 2000: 36).

**The neo-Communitarian Movement and Responsive Communitarianism**

Through its call to community, the neo-communitarian movement is the latest expression of the community lost perspective. Although over time ideas of communitarianism have embraced many positions on the political spectrum, each has in common the notion that aspects of individual identification and behaviour are
derived from our communal attachments (Gutmann 1992; Avineri and de-Shalit 1992). This idea is the foundation of prominent neo-communitarian groups including Responsive Communitarianism in the United States and the United Kingdom Communitarian Forum established in the early 1990s (Henderson and Salmon 1998).

Since the early 1980s, the essential argument of Responsive Communitarianism has been “that people are not the free-standing individuals that libertarians, laissez-faire conservatives, and classical liberals assume, but members of social groups that deeply influence their behaviour” (Etzioni 1994: 493). Responsive Communitarianism views the central failing of modern society as the “weakening of traditional and associational ties” (Sites 1998: 57). Thus, traditional, “authentic community” has been replaced by “partial or distorted communities” marked by alienation (Etzioni 1996b: 1). This explanation is rhetorically contextualised against the backdrop of a perceived ‘crisis of values’ in the English speaking world, as exhibited by “rising crime, the dismemberment of the family, drug abuse and corruption in politics” (Etzioni cited Anderson and Davey, 1995: 21), and the increasing ‘tribalisation’ of society (Etzioni 1994). The Communitarian Platform expresses this crisis of values as a “society that increasingly threatens to become normless, self-centred, and driven by greed, special interests, and an unabashed quest for power” (cited Etzioni 1998: 44).

While the moral conservatism that underpins the neo-communitarian program appears to have general support from contemporary community planners, particularly planner-developers, it is criticised by certain theorists of contemporary life. For instance, while acknowledging the “brittleness and transience of bonds” in contemporary society Bauman (2000: 170) argues that:

Sociologically speaking, communitarianism is an all-too-expectable reaction to the accelerating ‘liquefaction’ of modern life, a reaction first and foremost to the one aspect of life felt perhaps as the most vexing and annoying among its numerous painful consequences - the deepening imbalance between individual freedom and security. Supplies of security provision shrink fast, while the volume of individual responsibilities (assigned if not exercised in practice) grows on a scale unprecedented for the post-war generations. A most salient aspect of the vanishing act performed by old securities is the new fragility of
human bonds. The brittleness and transience of bonds may be an unavoidable price for individuals’ right to pursue their individual goals, and yet it cannot but be, simultaneously, a most formidable obstacle to pursue them effectively - and to the courage needed to pursue them. This is also a paradox - one rooted deeply in the nature of life under liquid modernity.

Henderson and Salmon (1998: 23) contend that criticism of communitarianism derives not so much from the values of reciprocity, solidarity, good neighbourliness and mutuality, which “today few [people] would take exception to”, but to the moralistic tone with which these values are approached. That is, communitarians are more likely to emphasise responsibilities of community members rather than their rights, and much of this finds a voice through crime prevention schemes (Henderson and Salmon 1998), perhaps highlighting the sense of insecurity felt in contemporary western society. For instance,

Etzioni refers to crime watch schemes, and the use of groups who engage in anti-crime patrols.... It is also interesting that the most fully recorded piece of communitarian activity in this country are the citizen’s patrols in Balsall Heath, Birmingham. They began as a local initiative to stamp out prostitution and drug dealing in an inner-city area (Henderson and Salmon 1998: 26).

However, Responsive Communitarianism is not shy about the morality issue. On the contrary they conflate morality with community by promoting the idea of a ‘moral infrastructure’ based on four social institutions: the family, school, local community, and above this the ‘community of communities’, which appears to correspond to the idea of society. Etzioni (1996a: 177) goes on to argue that “one can use the four elements as a checklist to help determine the state of the moral infrastructure of a given society”; thus indicating the concern with which neo-communitarians view the decline in [moral] community.

Community Saved

The ‘community saved’ perspective is a positive response to the pessimistic picture of social disorganisation, isolation, insecurity, breakdown and anomie painted by contenders of the Lost argument. Based on empirical evidence drawn from localised urban studies, the Saved argument contends that primary ties based on propinquity have not “withered away in urban settings”, but have continued to flourish in the city due to the “inherent gregariousness of human nature” (Tsai and Sigelman 1982: 580).
For instance, Young and Willmott (1962) found that the vibrant working class metropolitan borough of Bethnal Green was bound together by kinship, population stability and a neighbourhood based communitarian ethos which provided aid and support. However, Frankenberg (1966) later pointed out that much of the solidarity which emerged from Young and Willmott’s study arose from “the shared poverty and lack of social and geographical mobility of its inhabitants” (Frankenberg 1966: 181).

Some twenty five years on, Hunter (1975) replicated Donald L Foley’s, 1952 Neighbours or Urbanites study into the “loss of community” in urban life, which investigated three dimensions of community: the use of local facilities, the level of informal neighbouring, and the sense of community. Conducted in the same urban area studied by Foley, Hunter (1975: 537) found that:

The latter two did not decline because the area has attracted residents who economically and ideologically ‘value’ the changes which have occurred in the area and the resulting ‘ecological niche’ which the area has come to occupy. It is middle-class, racially integrated and urban. Residents have consciously sought out this area because of these characteristics and have consciously attempted to create community in part through an active local community organisation. Drawing upon Mannheim’s distinction between utopia and ideology, the area is defined as a consciously created ‘ideological community’.

Hence, although the motivation for community formation may have changed over the period, geographically based community appears to have re-formed through resident self-selection, on the premise of a common ideology. In this instance ideological community formed through a process of invasion and succession of urban space. In regard to greenfield developments an ‘ecological niche’ can be produced by the master planned estate, through prudent design and targeted promotion towards the social group likely to ‘economically and ideologically value’ the area.

In a more recent study of community in a new estate on the Adelaide’s urban fringe, Baum (1997) found a vibrant community life in the suburb which was based on common life stage and common experience of fringe dwelling. The residents appeared to be highly satisfied with their housing choice and the rural feel of the suburb. Their enjoyment of the area was enhanced by opportunity to consume a
particular lifestyle. Baum concluded that thoughtful planning and policy formulation involving resident participation was important to developing an active community life on the urban fringe. However, his methodology did not allow for a correlation to be made between the ‘sense of community’ felt by residents, and the form of community or networks which actually existed within the suburb.

Community lost theorists view community spatially; as place dependent. Wellman (2001), however, takes a broader perspective on the utopian ideal of ‘place dependent community’ by talking of social connectivity. He defines ‘community’ as “networks of interpersonal ties that provide sociability, support, information, a sense of belonging, and social identity” (Wellman 2001: 2). Thus he is able to discuss the veracity of community within an historical context. For instance Wellman discusses the ‘door to door community’ or ‘preindustrial connectivity’ of agrarian society, where the community was spatially compact and densely-knit. These mono-network communities were physically and socially bounded and hierarchical. Social class was based on “position within the small community and the access to external resources afforded by the few links to outside” (Wellman 2001: 8). Wellman argues that ‘place-independent communities’ have always existed, particularly for the elite. Technology, however, brought such ‘liberated’ communities to the masses.

According to Wellman (1979: 1206), the arguments of both the ‘lost’ and ‘saved’ perspectives are based on exploring “bounded communal solidarities”. Consequently, both perspectives, confined by arguments about “solidary sentiments and territorial cohesiveness” (Wellman 1979: 1206), have tended to neglect primary relationships and solidary ties within overall social networks of urban life. The perspective of geographic propinquity of both the Lost and Saved arguments has also failed to adequately challenge the utopian conviction in the functionality and quality of relations in a local area or rural village underpinning Gemeinschaft. Konig (1968: 52) argues, for instance, that “the smallness of community is by no means a guarantee that the fact of living together in close proximity will result in direct neighbourhood integration” (see also Stacey 1969: 144). He goes on to explain that,
We have had endlessly repeated assertions concerning the so-called close
neighbourly bonds which allegedly exist in the village as against the town,
whilst no one seems to have asked whether all the people even in a small
village actually know each other; whether perhaps whole categories of people
can sometimes be there and notoriously not know, as in former days the
outsiders, and today the commuters; and whether perhaps there is the
phenomenon of people recognised only by deliberately ignoring them, for in
small village enmities can be very intense indeed and have cruel consequences
(Konig 1968: 69-70).

Providing empirical evidence for Konig’s argument, Putnam (1993) reveals in his
study of civic traditions in modern Italy that the least civic minded communities of
Italy are the traditional villages of the south. Putnam goes on to warn that “the civic
ethos of traditional communities must not be idealised” (Putnam 1993: 114), yet this
is precisely what the Gemeinschaft / Gesellschaft dichotomy has encouraged over the
past one hundred or so years.

**Community Liberated**

In its analysis of the community question, the ‘community liberated’ perspective
abandons the local area as the starting point and instead inquires directly into the
structure and network of primary ties (Wellman 1979; Tsai and Sigelman 1982:
Webber 1963). Hence, the perspective derives from a network analysis approach.
While affirming the prevalence and importance of intimate relationships, the
liberated perspective argues that “most ties are not now organised into densely knit,
tightly bounded solidarities” (Wellman 1979: 1206). Rather, solidarities are replaced
with differentiated networks. Where existing kinship systems and neighbourly
relations present as densely knit, tightly bounded networks (as observed by the
community saved advocates), these apparent solidarities are more likely to be clusters
in an otherwise sparsely knit, loosely bounded network. Hence, rather than
community being ‘lost’ through the development of urban life, community is
‘liberated’ from being restricted to interpersonal affiliations based on geographic
propinquity alone.

As Wellman (1979: 1227) observed during his study of intimate networks of East
Yorkers, however, although these differentiated networks can be seen to be
liberating, for some people who "seek solidarity in tidy, simple hierarchical group structures", differentiated networks can encourage a loss of identity - perceived as a lost sense of community - as it becomes difficult to determine to which group amongst many, they belong. In this regard, the master planned estate may provide a solution to this loss of identity, through attracting a homogenous group of residents, with similar language, culture, life-stage, income, daily struggles, values, experiences and interests.

Although the 'community liberated' perspective derives from network analysis, other social theorists also play down the spatial element of community, or ignore it entirely (Castells 1996; Cohen 1989; Fischer 1976, Gibson 1945, König 1968; Webber 1963, Weber 1958, Urry 2000). They view community as a social phenomena played out through social networks and cultural markers. For instance, König (1968) conceptualised community as a 'global society' encompassing the entirety of social networks, regardless of size. He called for the abandonment of the term Gemeinschaft arguing that the term originally implied a “direct relationship to the common land of the community, and only later came in a ‘transferred’ sense to include all other forms of common life and existence” (König 1968: 15). While not entirely abandoning the element of propinquity, König argued that the primary characteristic of community was the member’s 'consciousness' of the communal relationship, of its limits and differences from other forms of relationships (König 1968: 28). Assuming the functionalist perspective popular at the time, König declared that the utility of community was the formation of the 'socio-cultural personality'.

Refuting the structuralist attempts at conceptualising community as well as the spatial element in entirety, Cohen (1989) argued that people actively 'contrive community' through symbolic markers of commonality, which assert the boundaries of the group. Thus the perceived boundaries of community are relational rather than geographically absolute. This symbolic explanation had notions of 'virtual community' prior to the development of computer-mediated communication (Castells 1996). As Durkheim's (1976) analysis of the totem acknowledges, even geographically based communities require symbolic markers of commonality. In the
corporatist world, symbolic markers of an MPC as a marketable entity may be contrived by the developer in the first instance, but they do not become symbolic markers of commonality until they are embraced by the members that comprise the community – the residents.

4.3 Communities of Interest and the Homophily Principle

The idea of a ‘community of interests’ also attenuates the propinquity view of community. From an historical perspective, Simmel (1955) argued that ‘communities of interest’ first became apparent during the Renaissance:

The period of the Renaissance demonstrated most clearly the power of intellectual and educational interests to bring together in a new community like-minded people from a large variety of different groups. Humanistic interests broke down the medieval isolation of social groups and of estates. They gave to people who represented the most diverse points of view and who often remained faithful to the most diverse occupations, a common interest in ideas and in knowledge (Simmel 1955: 135-6).

According to Webber (1963) the ‘community of interest’, supported by communication technology, reduces the determining significance of place in community formation and sustainability. That is, commonality of interest supported by communication is preferred over propinquity as the catalyst for community development.

As the individual’s interests develop, he is better able to find others who share these interests and with whom he can associate. The communities with which he associates and to which he ‘belongs’ are no longer only the communities of place to which his ancestors were restricted. Americans are becoming more closely tied to various interest communities than to place communities, whether the interest be based on occupational activities, leisure pastimes, social relationships, or intellectual pursuits (Webber 1963: 29).

Although facilitated by technology, ‘communities of interest’ rest on the ‘homophily principle’. McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook (2001: 415) argue that the homophily principle structures network ties of every type, including marriage, friendship, work, advice, support, information transfer, exchange, co-membership, and other types of relationship. The result is that people’s personal networks are homogeneous with regard to many socio-demographic, behavioural, and intrapersonal characteristics.
They note the distinction between two forms of homophily: status homophily, whereby homogeneity rests on stratifying socio-demographic characteristics including ethnicity, gender, education, occupation and income, and value homophily, based on values, attitudes, and beliefs. They go on to add, however, that value homophily is often derivative of social positions themselves.

4.3.1 Homophily and Place Based Community

In the master planned community, status homophily and value homophily are integrally linked, but rather than being derivative of the social space, the values and attitudes residents’ hold are used to delineate the status group, along with other economic characteristics. That is, the status of the resident group derives (in part) from the values and attitudes of the residents, in an attempt to distinguish themselves from proximate status groups. For instance, attitudes towards community held by residents of Harrington Park are used to differentiate the estate from other middle-income estates in the area, conferring the estate from the perspective of both residents and many outsiders, with higher status.

Gans (1972) supports the importance of homogeneity for the development of social relations arguing that, although physical propinquity helps to initiate relationships and plays a role in maintaining less intensive ones, it cannot determine the intensity of relationships. Rather,

this is a function of the characteristics of the people involved. If neighbours are homogeneous and feel themselves to be compatible, there is some likelihood that the relationships will be more intensive than an exchange of greetings. If neighbours are heterogeneous, the relationship is not likely to be intensive, regardless of the degree of propinquity. Propinquity may thus be the initial cause of an intensive positive relationship, but it cannot be the final or sufficient cause (Gans 1972: 125 – original italics).

The ‘Balanced’ Community

Gans (1972: 140), however, has argued that communities have other functions besides sociability and that “planning must therefore concern itself with other values as well”. Although Gans does not appear to be one of its more forceful advocates,
this idea is where the notion of a ‘balanced’ community derives. A balanced community is essentially heterogeneous, with a social mix of ages, cultures and class. In her study of the British new town of Milton Keynes, Finnegan (1998) found little in the way of social interaction or neighbourly interaction. For instance:

Shirley Lambert depicts the difficulty of making friends when ‘everybody comes from such different circumstances’, and, in another tale, ‘we are such a mixture here, and that is why Milton Keynes hasn’t worked (Finnegan 1998: 154).

Although the resident population may have been ‘balanced’, the heterogeneity of the population appeared to discourage interaction.

Proponents, however, argue that the balanced community enriches the lives of inhabitants; promotes tolerance of social and cultural differences; has a broadening influence on children’s education particularly in regard to other cultures, ages and ethnicity; and exposes inhabitants to alternative ways of life (Gans 1972). However, as Schoon (2001), a contemporary advocate of the balanced community thesis acknowledges,

Experience tells us that the socially mixed street or neighbourhood is actually out of balance. It appears to be unstable which explains why it is uncommon. Most people end up using what wealth they have to obtain homes alongside people of broadly similar circumstances. House-builders develop estates with this in mind. Hierarchies form with range registered precisely by house price. Addresses are positional goods. .. (Schoon 2001: 130).

The community Schoon is describing here is the ‘community of limited liability’ discussed above, which is essentially a phenomenon of the middle-class who have a wider range of choices as to where they reside. The community ties this group form become ‘negotiable commodities’ (Pahl 1970: 103). However, Gans (1972: 142) argues that,

Even if the planning or legislating of population heterogeneity could be implemented, which is doubtful at present, it is questionable whether a heterogeneous and balanced community would result in the envisaged way of life. Many other societal conditions would have to alter before such a way of life were possible, notably the present degree of economic and social inequality that now exists in the typical metropolitan population.
Rather than taking the disparaging view of the ‘community of limited liability’, the thesis considers that the residents of the contemporary middle-income master planned estates under study are utilising the relatively limited resources available to them to gain a stake in their local situation, and form the community that is relevant to their lives. Ultimately, all community forms have a large degree of instrumentality underpinning them.

An alternative approach to the idea of homophily as described by McPherson et. al. (2001), is that the desire to be accepted as a member of some group, actually creates similarity through the pressure to conform to the reference group (Cohen 1997). As Cohen argues,

The man who stands alone in holding something dear or in despising some good that others cherish, whether it be a style of art, a political belief, a vocational aspiration, or a way of making money not only suffers a loss of status; he is not likely to hold to his beliefs with much conviction. His beliefs will be uncertain, vacillating, unstable (Cohen 1997: 124).

Hence, even where there was little similarity in the first instance, the desire to fit in with the reference group creates similarity, at the very least at the behavioural level. This is particularly relevant at the neighbourhood level, where the aberrant resident finds it difficult to escape from a dominating local culture as it is fixed to physical space. This situation was apparent with one Harrington Park couple discussed later in the fieldwork chapters. This retired couple felt under pressure to take up gardening after years of cultivating a front bindii patch in their previous neighbourhood, in order to ‘fit in’ with the local culture in Harrington Park.

4.3.2 Fischer’s Subcultural Theory

Fischer’s (1976) subcultural theory argues that urbanism intensifies subcultures through two interrelated processes. In the first instance, the mass of an urban population permits individuals to form a subcultural group which is large enough to support and be supported by social institutions, for instance clubs, newspapers and so. And secondly, the ‘touching’ of these sub-cultural groups often makes the groups ‘recoil’ back into the security of their own subgroup.
Whether the encounter is between blacks and Irish, hard-hats and hippies, or town and gown, people from one subculture often find people in another subculture threatening, offensive, or both. A common reaction is to embrace one's own social world all the more firmly, thus contributing to its further intensification. This is not to deny that there are often positive contacts between groups.... It is, however, the contrast and recoil that intensify and help to define urban subcultures (Fischer 1976: 37-38).

This theory has particular relevance to the essentially homogenous group of residents in the planned estates under study. These estates are physical manifestations of the act of 'recoiling' by many of their residents, from the numerous ethnically derived subcultural groups comprising western Sydney. The act of recoiling in turn underpins the social integration of these communities.

4.4 Community: A Conflict Perspective

According to Weber (1978), community formation (Gemeinschaftsbildung) is a social group's response to competition over limited resources: economic, property, political power and status. The social relationships which form enable the community to consolidate its interests. Weber (1978: 40-1) differentiates between 'communal' (Vergemeinschaftung) and 'associative' (Vergesellschaftung) social relationships, with the former's orientation of social action based on "a subjective feeling of the parties, whether affectual or traditional, that they belong together" (Weber 1978: 40); for instance a religious brotherhood, erotic relationship and a national community. The orientation of social action of associate social relations, however, is based on a "rationally motivated adjustment of interests or a similarly motivated agreement, whether the basis of rational judgment be absolute values or reasons of expediency" (Weber 1978: 40-41).

The development of 'associative' social relations has resonance with community formation in the master planned estate. However as Weber (1978: 41) notes, even a social relationship "which is normally considered primarily communal may involve action on the part of some or even all of the participants which is to an important degree oriented to considerations of expediency". Once such relationships have been formed there is a tendency to monopolise the economic, political and / or social
advantages, in a process of community closure (Schliessung der Gemeinschaft). Bourdieu (1986) recognises this process as forming social capital (discussed in detail in the previous chapter). Such associations, according to Wild (1981: 36), “help to enforce community norms by setting standards and having sanctions against people who break them”. These community norms, in conjunction with financial restrictions in the form of land prices but also housing size, design and other restrictive covenants placed on the property by the developer, place constraints on who is likely to buy into the estate. This process strongly suggests a form of community closure effecting socio-spatial differentiation.

Community Formation and the Process of Gentrification

The relationship between community formation and competition over resources effecting socio-spatial differentiation has been considered in local community studies focussing on the gentrification process (see for instance Butler and Robson 2001; Butler 1997; Logan 1985). Gentrification involves the production of space, usually inner urban space, for consumption by a more affluent class of people than currently occupies the space, resulting in social displacement of the less affluent resident group. As discussed in the previous chapter on Social Capital and the Constitution of Social Space, these studies track the relationship between community formation and the gentrification of certain inner urban areas.

However, a further development in the gentrification literature is the linking of new urbanism (discussed in more detail in Chapter 2: Utopian Place Making) with a form of ‘suburban gentrification’ (Harvey 2000; Schoon 2001; Ley 1996) . For instance, in his study of the embourgeoisement of inner-city and down-town landscapes in large Canadian cities, Ley (1996) argues that,

At the same time, the extension of the new urbanism to the suburbs must confront the principal contradiction in the apparently progressive programme of retrofitting the suburbs. The enhancement of inner-city neighbourhoods through the pursuit of ‘liveability’ and ‘quality of life’ certainly improved the quality of the built environment, but in the absence of public safeguards, also contributed to the displacement of poorer households (Ley 1996: 360).
A parallel process of status group formation is occurring in new residential development on the urban fringe of Sydney through the master planned estate, and more particularly the ‘master planned community’. This process could be referred to as ‘landed gentrification’, as the process generally occurs through the development of ‘greenfield’ sites, which would once have been developed for lower income households.

4.5 Community Studies in New Housing Estates

The following contemporary community case studies comprise aspects which have particular relevance to investigating community formation and efficacy in the contemporary master planned estate.

Richards’ (1990) Study of Community Life in Green Views

In her study of life in Green Views, a new outer suburb of Melbourne, Richards’ (1990) uncovered three common elements which supported a sense of community in the estate: the importance of the family, the ideology of home ownership, and the age and life-cycle of new families. There are a number of parallels between the study of Green Views and the case studies of this thesis. For instance, like both Harrington Park and Garden Gates, Green Views was sold as a prestige, planned development with a number of community facilities. Further,

the estate was historically placed in a period when urban planners stressed ‘community’ and sought to achieve it by ‘seeking to impose an idealised vision of village life on the town dweller’. This was also a period during which land development became both expensive and highly profitable (Richards 1990: 24).

Twenty years on estates are still being ‘historically placed’, and urban planners still stress ‘community’. However, although the residents of Harrington Park and Garden Gates were somewhat naïve of the development process particularly in regard to the relationship between the developer and the public authorities and state regulations, in no way can they be considered “victims to an image of property development” (Richards 1990: 24). Particularly in Harrington Park, residents appeared to be well informed about what they were buying into. And in most instances high expectations had been met and even exceeded in some circumstances. Over time a consensus had
developed between the planner-developer and residents, which I refer to later in the thesis as the ‘community compact’, as to the imaging and positioning of the estate that appears to have provided the estate with a depth that contrasts with the ‘shallow set up’ of Green Views. Eight years after commencement of the development, the residents of Harrington Park believe on the whole that the place is ‘special’. This contrasts with the residents of Green Views, who believed that the developer had reneged on its promise (Richards 1990: 33).


Johnson’s (1997) study investigates the Delfin model of master-planning (see Delfin 1991), which she argues is aimed at regulating diversity by accommodating a narrow range of differences within a set of built forms and carefully targeted household types. The model focuses on urban design, of the neighbourhood and of the house on its block, with little regard for gender differences. The marketing of ‘community’ is derived from the configuration of physical elements within the space. Reminiscent of Jacob’s (1965) criticism of utopian planning movements, Johnson (1997: 107-8) argues that “there is a need to plan for chaos - for flexibility and disorder - rather than for a new order in the suburbs”. She calls for more consultation with women to enable the loosening of the patriarchal Delfin model.

By contrast my own research revealed that the female participants welcomed the ‘order’ of their planned estates as much if not more so than their male partners and other male participants, particularly as they tended to spend more time in the estate with child and community related activities. In Harrington Park in particular, the semi-rural environment, the built aesthetic and the facilities, including the recreational equipment, the walkways, the play groups and the location of the local primary school (within walking distance of much of the estate) provided a seemingly secure, friendly, ordered environment that made the daily round more secure and enjoyable.

^ Delfin Lend Lease is an Australian residential developer which specializes in master planned developments. Former development projects include Wattle Grove and Voyager Point in Sydney’s south-western suburbs.
Stevenson’s (1999) Study of Community Formation and Housing Tenure in ‘Mayfield’

In her study of community formation in the mixed Australian suburb of ‘Mayfield’, Stevenson (1999) found that overall neighbourhood networks were generally strong and that “it was women who played pivotal roles in defining and nurturing the community networks” (Stevenson 1999: 222). Importantly, however, she also found that in all the neighbourhoods comprising the study, renting households were excluded from the local social networks. She notes that,

this view connects, of course, with the belief that because they have a financial stake in the house and the neighbourhood, only home owners will look after their places of residence and care about the area in which they live (Stevenson 1999: 223).

Stevenson goes on to explain that working class home-owners were more likely to develop ‘quasi-primary relationships’ with middle class home-owners in Mayfield, than were the working-class renters. Home ownership was a symbolic and physical marker of social status. Stevenson argues that protecting this status “seemed to be a pivotal factor shaping the boundaries of neighbourhood interaction” (Stevenson 1999: 24). The community exclusion based on housing tenure, and the perception of housing as a symbolic marker of status and community values found by Stevenson reflected the situation found in the thesis case studies of Harrington Park and Garden Gates.

Pusey’s (2003) Study on Community in ‘Middle Australia’

Finally, Pusey’s (2003) study of the experiences of ‘middle Australia’ considered, amongst other issues, the importance of ‘community’ to them. Using a sample of 403 middle Australians from five Australian capital cities, Pusey (2003: 119) posed the question, ‘If you were able to change things a little, in what areas of your life would you most like to concentrate more of your energies?’. The preferences indicate that 47% of the sample chose self improvement, 35% leisure, 29% community and friends, 25% family and 18% work. Pusey (2003: 199) notes that,

These responses resonate strongly with other aspects of the study, suggesting that middle Australians are much more unsentimentally individualistic, and more oriented towards personal challenges and achievement, than our
communitarians and our more passionate joiners might suppose. As we see, about half of our respondents would choose to give more of their time to largely private and individual forms of personal development, education and training. The next most popular category, leisure, is again typically defined as a private form of rest and relaxation from work. Community and friends come third, and still leave us wondering how much of that time would be dedicated to civic work rather than just to convivial interaction with friends and neighbours (Pusey 2003: 119).

Interestingly, more time spent with family ranked below community and friends, but higher than work.

_Civic Community or Personal Community_

According to Pusey (2003: 118), compared to the United States, “Australians, typically, have cooler feelings about community. They are, we surmise much more likely to view the nation and its institutions, and even properly functioning government, as the font of civic values, rather than the community”. I would argue, however that the discrepancy Pusey identifies between Australia and the United States is also about how community manifests, is understood and valued. In Australia, rather than being a civic entity in the societal sense, community appears to be valued more as private resource; hence the degree to which community and friendship are intertwined. Perhaps then, the concept of community should be divided between the idea of _civic community_, and a _personal community_ based primarily on interest.

The civic community is founded on collective identity by either social groups defining themselves, or being defined by a common identity. Members may not know all the members of the community. However, there is a sense of unity brought about by the common identity. It is a ‘sphere’ of social life which lies outside the state and production, but is something less broad than civil society. The personal community derives from a network perspective on community and involves networks of ties defined from the standpoint of a focal individual or sample of focal individuals (Wellman 1981). The personal community structures the individual’s identity through the choice of network peers and the reflected values of these peers (Hirsch
1981), and provides the principal source of interpersonal support and friendship (Wellman 1981).

Such a dichotomy is also useful in the theoretical deployment of social capital. For instance, the notion of civic community enables the deployment of social capital to study civic engagement. Alternately, the mobilisation of social capital by individuals and groups can be studied under the construct of the personal community.

4.6 Conclusion

In the thesis community is understood as a multi-dimensional, dynamic process; not a static entity. This perspective has ramifications for planner-developers who premise the idea of community development in master planned estates on the idea of ‘sustainability’, which implies that a pinnacle of community can be reached and maintained in an ultimate state. McManus (1994) argues that in recent years, in response to ‘soul-less’ suburban sprawl, planner-developers have appropriated the language of community development, but not an understanding of community processes. That is,

whereas social planners generally see community development as a dynamic concept that is always developing, declining or changing in some way, the urban planning emphasis on subdivision design and achieving ‘a sense of community’ is a static concept that undermines the work of community developers (McManus 1994: 16).

At the very least, the image of a liberated community based on ‘interest’ rather than geography, and the process of (sub)urban invasion and succession, are two aspects of modern urban society that ensure that a geographic community cannot remain a static entity, but form and reform.

Where communities manifest geographically in urban settings they are likely to be symbolic communities, in which the place becomes associated with a particular set of values through symbolic and ideational references and cultural artefacts. Common recognition of these symbols and artefacts by community members provides cohesion within the group. The common set of values further bolsters the cohesion. As lifestyle values are likely to reflect life stage, interests, occupation and income, the
ideological community tends to be highly homogenous, which in turn supports the
development of community ties.

**Figure 4.2: Aspects of Community in the Master Planned Community**

**Interrelationship of the three Elements of Community**

in the Master Planned Community

- **Ideological Community:** Homogeneity of life stage, values, interests, income and cultural pursuits. Planner-developer’s own vision + resident self selection → (Community Compact)

- **Social Structure:** Social ties and connectivity, underpinned by social norms and community activity: Personal rather than civic community

- **Sentiment:** Underpinned by symbolic markers and artefact of commonality, identity and group status

- **Space:** Physical (urban design + location imbued by developer’s vision); social (status group); temporal (influences).

Physical and social space establish a differentiating social identity, upon which community sentiment is based → symbolic community

Influence of social structure on the creation of social space

Physical Propinquity

The master planned community supports the development of an ideological community (see Figure 4.2). In the first instance, the planner-developer’s own vision for the completed development is imbued with a set of economic, ideological and lifestyle values which permeates through the design, branding and aesthetic of the estate. The estate is strategically marketed towards a particular market segment which is likely to reflect the values contrived through the symbols and artefacts associated with the estate. Residents who are attracted to the set of values symbolised by the estate self-select. In turn they consciously attempt to create the envisioned community through their own action, and through enticing or compelling other more
recalcitrant residents to do the same. Community norms are established which usurp other values and ways of living. Pressure to assimilate with the dominant local culture creates similarity, at least at the behavioural level. Those residents who react negatively to the dominating local culture are likely to leave. Hence, as with all urban processes, an element of power underpins the process of community formation in the MPC, as the developer and residents create and regularise a dominant local culture in an effort to protect social, cultural and economic assets.
PART II: METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Part II of the thesis comprises two chapters which provide the foundation for the research task and later fieldwork analysis. The first chapter, Chapter 5: Methodology and Research Design, deals with methodological issues. It is particularly concerned with presenting the relationship between the research problem – the formation of ‘community’ within contemporary greenfield master planned estates – and specific research concepts and theoretical perspectives which support the research design. It then proceeds to discuss the research design and fieldwork methods, as well as the problems and issues encountered during the fieldwork phase of the research.

The second chapter, Chapter 6: Background to the Case Study, provides information supporting the following fieldwork chapters comprising Part III of the thesis. This chapter considers aspects of location, development history, social character and demographics.
CHAPTER 5: Methodology and Research Design

Get your hands dirty in the kitchen sink: do not settle for the cosy and derealised experience of the social world fostered by those bureaucratic machineries of survey research that create a huge buffer between the social analyst and the universe he or she claims to dissect. Direct contact with the object not only has the virtue of helping preserve you from the fetishisation of concepts and theories; it will also make you more attentive to the details of research procedures, to the built-in assumptions and consequences of apparently innocuous technical choices that are generally made unthinkingly. (Bourdieu cited Wacquant 1992: 225).

5.1 Introduction

This chapter has two primary purposes. Firstly, it documents the experience of conducting the research. This involves a discussion of relevant historical and personal aspects brought to the research project, the relationship between the theory and methods which underpin the research design; the limitations and parameters of the research design; the process of undertaking the research; and problems which arose during the research process.

Secondly, the chapter forms part of the reflexive process of my research. It embodies the notion that social researchers should be both conscious and critical of their position in relation to the research being conducted, and the realisation that participating in the research project inevitably alters the social phenomenon being studied. One striking instance of this related to the media’s interest in my research on the MPC and Harrington Park in particular.¹ Later in this chapter I reflect on the extent to which this media attention might have influenced residents’ perceptions of community in Harrington Park.

¹ There were probably many reasons for this including Sydney journalists’ appetite for writing about the Sydney property market; as a contemporary instance of the fetishisation of Sydney’s western suburbs; the Fairfax connection; and also the interest of middle income journalists to find out about the so called ‘aspirational’ middle income group on Sydney’s fringe.
5.2 Research History

The research project was a joint initiative of Landcom, the New South Wales Government’s property agency, and the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at the University of Western Sydney. In November 1999, Landcom agreed to fund a three year scholarship to enable the research to be undertaken as part of a PhD. The original project proposal arising from the partnership involved researching strategies for the development of community and social capital in contemporary master planned estates.

At that time Landcom was committed to the development of better, sustainable communities for people to live and work, through design and the provision of physical and social infrastructure. Between 2000 and 2003, the period of the thesis research, Landcom’s development strategies primarily involved master planning brown and greenfield sites into ‘communities’, increasingly in partnership with private developers and house builders.

Landcom – an Historical Note

The original Land Commission was established in 1975 as an initiative of the Whitlam Federal Government. Its purpose was to act as a public land bank with the primary objective of deterring market speculation and fluctuations in land supply, particularly in Sydney’s western suburbs (Forsyth 1999: 35-36 fn). The underlying belief here was that the betterment produced by rezoning land from rural to urban should be captured by the public, and not private property entrepreneurs and speculators (Troy 1978). Other objectives included better coordination of urban development; lower priced land; equitable development, which meant the inclusion of welfare housing in developments; and better cooperation between government agencies on urban development issues (Troy 1978). Over time, however, the provision of affordable, social housing became an increasing priority, resulting in Landcom amalgamating with the NSW Housing Commission to become the Land and Housing Corporation.
In 1993, a change in priority towards a commercial orientation saw Landcom merge with the State’s Property Services Group. It became part of the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning in 1995, as part of the government’s effort to co-ordinate and progress better urban design. Although returning betterment to the public through State coffers was an original purpose of the land commission, Landcom’s profit making ability has become an increasingly important component of the State Government’s budget.

By 2002 Landcom was virtually unrecognisable from the original land commission established 28 years prior. In that year Landcom became a State-Owned Corporation, under the Landcom Corporation Act 2001. Landcom’s primary objective under the Act, is “to be a successful business and, to this end: operate at least as efficiently as any comparable businesses, and, to maximise the net worth of the State’s investment in it” (s6 (1a) i-ii). Hence, the Act has enhanced Landcom’s pecuniary role. Its primary development role, however, is to “implement key government urban development objectives… by taking a leading role in managing strategic and complex development projects which deliver quality urban environments and which, ultimately, create better communities” (Landcom 2002a).

Leading up to corporatisation Landcom underwent a tumultuous time, with restructuring, retrenchments and relocation. As an organisation, Landcom looks and acts differently now to the Landcom I first encountered in 2000. From the observer’s vantage point, the organisation appears to be more market and marketing oriented (see also Landcom 2002b). Although always a professional organisation, there appears to be less of a bureaucratic (public service) feel about it, and more of the ‘go-getter’ attitude of the private developer.

Landcom and the Researcher

In the early days of the research project I had developed a relatively close relationship with some of the development staff at Landcom and attended
operations meetings, field trips and planning workshops, as was the intent of the original research initiative. However, over time, with the pressures that go with organisational restructuring, this relationship became increasingly difficult to maintain. Although this had a downside, for instance I no longer had easy access to Landcom’s higher management levels, it allowed me the freedom to cast the research in a slightly different direction – away from researching best practice in estate development which incorporated normative aspects of community, and an organisational study of Landcom, toward investigating the motivations and processes involved in community formation and the role a master planned community can play in socio-spatial differentiation. Hence, at the most general level the research methodology was redirected from a normative perspective to a (neo-Weberian) conflict perspective.

*A Conflict Perspective*

In contrast to a paradigm which involves a basic set of beliefs or worldview that guides action, perspectives “are not as solidified, or as well unified, as paradigms, although a perspective may share many elements with a paradigm, such as a common set of methodological assumptions or a particular epistemology” (Denzin and Lincoln 2000b: 157). Although both of the above research perspectives – normative and conflict - may be useful in certain contexts, two experiences in particular cause me to be more comfortable with the latter. The first of these relates to my long term involvement with south-west Sydney. Three aspects are particularly relevant here. Firstly, involvement in the local community and employment during the 1990s with a local State Member of Parliament (where I dealt with a wide range of constituent problems and struggles), have provided an understanding of the complex politico-social environment of the region, and the relationship the region has with the rest of Sydney. Secondly, living in the region over such a long period has provided me with the opportunity to observe directly, the subtle and not so subtle demographic and socio-spatial changes that have occurred over the past two decades. Finally, over this period I have witnessed and experienced degrees of
locational disadvantage: in access to jobs, public transport, cultural amenities and educational and health facilities. My experience of south-west Sydney underpins my perspective of the urban as a contested terrain.

The second factor relates to my gender. Although the thesis does not take an overtly feminist perspective, the conflict perspective does in part derive from my feminism. As a female I have experienced many restrictions imposed by patriarchal systems. This has caused me to be particularly aware of and sensitive to power processes.

Gender is only one prism through which power processes can be experienced. Ethnicity, disability and sexuality are others. All social relations are underpinned by power. Power is not stable, but rather shifts from field to field, depending on context, contingencies, timing and tempo. As an urban sociologist I am interested in the power underpinning social processes, how and why urban groups form, and how certain groups assert themselves over others.

5.3 Research Concepts

5.3.1 Researching Phronetically

Of the three intellectual virtues, episteme, techne, and phronesis, Aristotle considered phronesis, the practical, intuitive wisdom that underpins human expertise, to be the most important for exploring the natural and the social world. For Aristotle, phronesis was “a true state, reasoned, and capable of action with regard to things that are good or bad for man” (Aristotle from The Nicomachean Ethics, cited Flyvbjerg 2001: 56).

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2 It is only in recent years, for instance, that Liverpool Hospital obtained a linear accelerator for radiation treatment. Prior to this cancer patients living in the south-west region of Sydney had to travel daily to either Royal Prince Alfred or Westmead Hospitals for treatment.

3 The local social system in Liverpool, where I live, is particularly patriarchal. To some extent this appears to relate to the large number of migrant groups still holding ‘traditional’ social values and gender relations, particularly amongst residents of Italian, Yugoslavian, Greek and Lebanese origin. Apart from the Lebanese, these groups appear to be overly represented amongst the web of local business elite who, in partnership with local Australian Labor Party power brokers, control much of the public life in Liverpool.
The objective of phrnetic research "is to produce input to the ongoing social dialogue and praxis in a society, rather than to generate ultimate, unequivocally verified knowledge" (Flyvbjerg 2001: 139). Hence, it requires the provision of space for a 'polyphony of voices', where no one voice, including the researcher's, claims ultimate authority over a particular social phenomenon. In supporting this view, Bourdieu (1993: 12) argues that, "to enable science to progress, one has to establish communication between opposing theories, which have often been constituted against each other". Such an approach, Flyvbjerg (2001: 139) argues "accords with Aristotle's maxim that in questions of social and political action, one ought to trust more in the public sphere than in science" (Flyvbjerg 2001: 139). Flyvbjerg is advocating for the social researcher to temper the instrumental-rational approach to research, which currently dominates the natural and social sciences, by incorporating the lost art of value-rationality.

With its emphasis on 'public deliberation and praxis' (Flyvbjerg 2001: 129), the notion of researching phrnetically is particularly relevant in social research of urban processes. Phrnetic research is context oriented in that it takes as its reference point the perspective or values of the particular reference group under study. This contrasts with the practice of both 'foundationalism', which premises research on a more generalised set of values that are thought to be universally grounded on the one hand, and 'relativism' which views one set of values as being as good as another (Flyvbjerg 2001), a particular affliction of Post-modern analysis. Foundationalism is particularly common amongst urban professionals. A specific view of the way people should live in urban settings proliferates, particularly amongst urban planners, community developers and architects. This is perhaps the principal deficiency of the New Urbanism, discussed in Chapter 3.
At a general level, validity in phronetic research is gained through the
'community of social sciences' working towards putting a certain interpretation
of a social phenomenon ahead of others. That is,

If a better interpretation demonstrates the previous interpretation to be
'merely' interpretation, this new interpretation remains valid until
another, still better interpretation is produced which can reduce the
previous interpretation to 'merely' interpretation (Flyvbjerg 2001: 131).

The contemporary discourse on the concept of social capital (discussed in detail
in Chapter 3), with all its complexity, contention and incompleteness,
encapsulates the 'in progress' validation process of phronetic research.

Structure and Agency in Phronetic Research

At the more specific level, the validation process of phronetic research is
assisted in part by its ability to focus on the action level, the structure level,
and importantly the relationship between the two. As Flyvbjerg (2001: 137)
argues, this perspective “attempts to transcend the dualism of actor / structure,
hermeneutics / structuralism, and voluntarism, / determinism” that has troubled
social science since its inception. The skill of holding structure and agency in
mind concurrently was referred to by C Wright Mills as the ‘sociological
imagination’. Its importance lies in the fact that “neither the life of an
individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding
both” (Mills 1973: 9).

The idea of structure being part of action, and action being part of structure is
reflected in Bourdieu’s concept of the habitus. According to Bourdieu, habitus
involves “the internalisation of externality and the externalisation of
internality” (cited Flyvbjerg 2001: 138). Following his research on the
relationship between cultural capital and pedagogic action within the French
social class system, Bourdieu has also described it as “the product of
internalisation of the principles of a cultural arbitrary (sic) capable of
perpetuating itself after pedagogic action has ceased and thereby of
perpetuating in practices the principles of the internalised arbitrary” (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977: 31).

*Phronetic Research and Power*

Flyvbjerg (2001) notes that one of the failings of the phronesis tradition going back to Aristotle, was its failure to include explicit considerations of power. He rightly argues that, “in modern society, conflict and power are phenomena constitutive of social and political enquiry” (Flyvbjerg 2001: 3), and that a contemporary phronetic approach is inadequate unless it confronts the analysis of power. He is particularly concerned with the Foucauldian interpretation of power, that “power is always present” (Foucault cited Flyvbjerg 2001: 93); with analysing the strategies and tactics of power struggles; and with investigating the misuse of institutional power particularly through ‘knowledge’ discourses. With regard to the latter, Foucault (1980: 27) argues that,

> power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.

The social researcher is intrinsically part of the power discourse. Moreover, Bourdieu (1993 :10) notes that “the particularity of sociology is that it takes as its object fields of struggle – not only the field of class struggles but the field of scientific struggles itself. And the sociologist occupies a position in these struggles...”. Power and conflict exists within the object of study and the process of that study. Hence the need to research reflexively.

**5.3.2. Researching Reflexively**

The process of validating phronetic research is enhanced by the act of researching ‘reflexively’. Bourdieu’s “signature concern for reflexivity” concerned continually turning “one’s sociological tools upon one’s scientific practice so as to reflect critically on the social conditions and concrete
operations of construction of the object” (Wacquant 2002: 551). In this regard Bourdieu argued that the social research process needed to involve constant questioning and challenging of methodological prescriptions and interdicts; that is a reflexivity that informed practice (Wacquant 1992). Bourdieu even went as far as promoting a ‘sociology of sociology’, or at least the pedagogic basis on which sociology is taught and practised (Bourdieu 1990).

However, reflexivity is more than a process of professional self-monitoring. It involves the notion of awareness of the position and values the researcher brings into the research context; the impact the researcher’s actions may be having on the research context, and the influence the very practice of doing the research may have on the subject under study. Finally, it involves the responsible representation of these aspects of the research project (Fine, Weis, Weseen and Wong 2000). Hence, reflexivity involves ethical practice.

I have found this to be particularly important when interacting with the fieldwork participants. When an individual agrees to be interviewed and observed, they are in effect placing trust in the researcher to interpret their words – their views, values and experiences – the way they intended. That is to say, although after a de-identification process the interview is later analysed and interpreted for academic purposes, in the first instance the participant requires his/her story to be understood from their perspective. Further, an awareness of the effect the research process may have on the participants is crucial. For instance, although questioning residents about their housing history may seem a relatively innocuous task, I found that an individual’s housing history parallels so closely with other aspects of their life stories and identity, that distressing events, such as a difficult childhood, an abusive parent, a divorce, were commonly recalled. Many of the informants reflexively employed their current housing position to redress past negative experiences. It is unlikely that a social researcher would have been offered such intimate details of an informant’s life 50 years or so ago. It accords, however, with the contemporary experience of reflexive life planning.
Research and the Media

An awareness of the effect research outcomes may have on non-participants who are part of the ‘field’, for instance the members of a community, residents of a housing estate, the local council, and so on is also part of the ethical, reflexive approach. Over the period of the research I was interviewed by numerous journalists about Harrington Park, and articles appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald* (for instance Verity 2002), *The Good Weekend* (Hawley 2003), internet sites and Radio National’s *Back Ground Briefing*, *Encounter* and *Life Matters* programs. Some of these articles appeared in the display cabinets of the Harrington Park sales office. Although difficult to assess, I wondered to what extent the media’s interest in the estate, and its singling out of Harrington Park as offering “the perfect lifestyle” (Verity 2002: 9) might actually influence community formation and social identities within the estate. The researcher cannot leave the field untouched.

5.3.3 Researching the Residents and Planners

The guiding methodological principle of the fieldwork analysis lies in the notion that human actions are governed by two forms of consciousness: a *discursive consciousness* arising from the ‘knowledgeability of human agents’ (or ‘reflexive awareness’) and a *practical consciousness* (a pre-reflexive competency), which is integral to the continuity of more habitual activities (Giddens 1991). The actors of primary interest in this study of community are the master planners (and their mediators / agents) and the residents. Analysing the actions of these actors and interpreting meaning involves exploring both the discursive consciousness and the practical consciousness supporting their actions. Hence, the capacity for qualitative research techniques to reveal the social and cultural construction of phenomena renders them the more appropriate research method for the investigation. In practice, interpreting meaning was undertaken at two stages: in the first instance, the actor’s discursive consciousness was examined using semi-structured interview
schedules, survey responses and informal discussions; and at the level of the practical consciousness, through the observation of actions and the examination of artefacts.

5.4 Research Design

5.4.1. A Qualitative Approach

The research design was constructed primarily around qualitative practice, although it also involved a small quantitative survey as part of the triangulation approach discussed below. Qualitative research has the natural setting as the direct source of data, and the researcher is the key instrument. Importantly, it is concerned with process and the way people negotiate meaning, rather than simply outcomes or products (Bogdan and Biklen 1992). In this regard, a qualitative approach supports the primary goal of the thesis which is to tease out the intricate forces behind and meanings associated with the development of community in the master planned estate.

The qualitative researcher employs a set of interpretative practices which “stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning” (Denzin and Lincoln 2000a: 8). Although an array of data collection methods fall within the qualitative approach, the primary methods utilised in this research project include a period of participant observation, semi-structured interviews and the examination of documents and artefacts. These are discussed in detail below.

Although the notion of validity involves an integrated, critical approach to conducting research (Kvale 1996), two particular aspects of the research design have been used to assist the validity of the data and the interpretation of meaning. The first of these is *triangulation*, a procedure that identifies different ways of viewing a phenomenon. According to Flick (2002), the concept of
triangulation was initially used as a strategy for validating results obtained with the individual methods of data collection. More recently however, the focus “has shifted increasingly towards further enriching and completing knowledge and towards transgressing the (always limited) epistemological potentials of the individual method” (Flick 2002: 227). Denzin’s four aspect approach involving triangulation of method which employs a number of multiple methods to study a single phenomenon; investigator triangulation which employs several different researchers and / or evaluators of data; theory triangulation which uses multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data, and data triangulation which uses a variety of data sources, “remains the soundest strategy of theory construction” (Flick 2002: 227).

In this study the research was designed around the use of housing estates as case studies. This approach provided a variety of data sources that were activated through qualitative interviews of residents, community developers and agents of the local state, a period of participant observation of development practices, a resident survey and the examination of artefacts.

With regard to theory triangulation, data analysis was underpinned by a dual theoretical perspective analysing meaning from a symbolic-interactionist perspective, which brings together symbols and observable behaviour in the development of meaning (Denzin 1972), and from neo-Weberian theories of status construction. These two perspectives examine the master planned community as an indicator of status and a component of identity construction.

5.4.2 The Case Study

Selecting the ‘case study’ as the primary structure through which data was collected was intended to ground the research in an actual instance. Although there are limits to the extent to which generalisation can be made from individual case studies, they are an appropriate primary research method which,
when underpinned by theory and prior knowledge, offer data rich in detail from which further hypotheses can be drawn.

Rather than being a methodological choice, the case study is "a choice of what is to be studied" (Stake 2000: 435). It seems fairly straightforward that researching the master planned estate would involve studying one or more examples of the phenomena. After all, unlike other social phenomenon the master planned development is a ‘specific’, ‘bounded’, ‘coherent’ (Stake 2000) geographic space - a place - just made for a case. The idea of the collective case study involves the instrumental study of several cases. In this instance, the instrumental study provides insight into a particular phenomenon, reducing the actual ‘case’ to a supportive role, as a conduit for understanding (Stake 2000). The difficulty arises in decided which ‘cases’ to choose.

In order to understand the processes of community formation, it was decided to investigate the concept of the ‘greenfield’ master planned estate, rather than a site of urban renewal. The nature of the greenfield estate, where previously undeveloped land is turned over for urban development, means that the residents of the new estate have migrated from elsewhere. The area of south-west Sydney was chosen for practical and epistemological reasons. In the first instance, the master planned estates on the fringe of south-west Sydney are in easy reach of where I live, which given the amount of time I spent in the estates, particularly during the participant observation phase assisted the fieldwork process. In the second instance, the juxtaposition of Anglo-oriented, middle and higher income new housing estates on the urban fringe against adjoining more established, lower socio-economic, multi-cultural areas, raised important questions as to the capacity for the master planned estate to effect socio-economic differentiation.
Locating the Estates under Study

Two estates comprised the case study of the phenomenon of master planned estates on the urban fringe: the privately developed, master planned community of Harrington Park (see Appendix 2), and the state developed, master planned infill estate of Garden Gates (see Appendices 3 and 4). These estates were identified for their similarities, as well as a number of important differences which enhanced the comparative nature of the case study. These estates have been chosen for the following reasons.

Table 5.1: Estate Characteristics and Case Study Variables

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<th>Characteristics of Estates Under Study</th>
<th>Case Study Variables and Conditions</th>
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| Harrington Park (HP) and Garden Gates (GG) are examples of contemporary greenfield, master planned developments.  
  • HP is considered a ‘master planned community’  
  • GG is a master planned ‘infill’ estate. | Two master planned estates chosen for comparative purposes, and for the opportunity to reveal fine grain similarities and differences in community formation between the developments |
| HP and GG had similar development time frames, with development commencing in the early 1990s. | The similar time frame enabled a comparison of estate development under similar market and state development conditions. For instance, over the period of development:  
  • Sydney experienced an extended boom in property prices, produced in part by the shortage of vacant land on the urban fringe.  
  • the developments occurred under the State policy of urban consolidation, which required a higher lot yield per hectare, resulting in smaller lot sizes.  
  • the developments occurred under a State Government policy of user pays, in which state based infrastructure and development costs were increasingly passed on to the developer and in turn to |
| HP and GG are located within the same local government area of Camden | Development of each estate commenced under the same local state development conditions, which assisted the examination of the influence of the local state. Of particular relevance was:

- Camden Council’s requirement that all developments within its jurisdiction be ‘master planned’.
- Camden Council’s Section 94 Contribution policy which accepted developers’ contributions in kind. |
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<td>HP and GG were developed for privately owned, single detached dwellings, and have thus tended to attract a similar demographic of predominately middle income residents, many of whom have utilized the estates for housing upgrade (as second and third home buyers).</td>
<td>This condition allowed for an examination of demographic characteristics in regard to community formation and identification.</td>
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| HP and GG were developed by different developers.
- HP was being developed by joint private partnership between the land owner, Mary Fairfax, and the land developer Harpak (and before this Taylor Woodrow).
- GG was being developed by Landcom, the State Government’s government agency. | This condition allowed for a comparison of master plan development ideology and practices. |
| The developers of HP and GG implemented varying intensities of social programming and social infrastructure, and both employed a community development | These conditions allowed for a comparison of community development ideology, practices and outcomes. |
5.4.3. Three Primary Perspectives in the creation of the Master Planned Community

The case study approach facilitates the examination of three primary perspectives or positions involved in the creation of the MPC: the planner-developer, the resident, and the local state (see Figure 5.1). Each perspective forms the framework for examining the forces and relationships underpinning ‘community’ formation on the urban fringe, although emphasis is primarily placed on the relationship between the planner-developer and the resident.

**Figure 5.1: Three perspectives in the creation of the master planned community**

![Diagram of three perspectives](image)

*The Planner-Developer Perspective*

The research takes as its starting point the planner-developer argument, that a form of planned development can modify resident behaviour and influence community development; that is, that a particular form of planning can create a ‘sense of community’. Physical determinism and design principles underpin this argument in conjunction with other practices of the modernist project of urban planning. However, the planner-developer is only one of the agencies involved in establishing the master planned community. The extent to which the planner-developer is able to actually influence the development of community – as sentiment and connectivity – particularly on leaving the field,
is one of the research questions (McManus 1994; Gans 1972). Analysis of the planner-developers’ role in the master planned community was conducted through three primary processes: an examination of contemporary master planning documentation; in depth, interviews with planner-developers, in particular Camden Council planners, developers with Harpak and Landcom and community developers working Harrington Park and Garden Gates Estate; and a three month period of participant observation with the community development organisation employed by both Harpak and Landcom to implement a community development program in the estates.

The Resident Perspective

Although it has been argued that developers do not ‘choose’ the residents (McManus 1994), the idea behind the contemporary master planned community is that the planner-developer consciously and quite aggressively targets a particular segment of the property market, or as Gans (1972) would argue, to actors of a particular predisposition. The second position of the framework, then, is that of the resident. The research explores the level of resident involvement and connectivity within the estate, and the degree to which notions of community and place identification are recognised, valued and activated by residents. Analysis of the residents’ role in creating the master planned community was undertaken primarily through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, observation of community gatherings and activities, and a resident survey.

The Local State Perspective

The local state, and in particular those policies and practices that influence (i.e. both support or inhibit) the developer’s and residents’ ambitions for their MPC, introduces the aspect of public policy in planning. Analysis of the influence of the local state on the creation of master planned communities was conducted in the first instance through interviews with agents of the local state, in particular
local government officers, and through an examination of legislation and policy reports.

5.5 Conducting the Fieldwork and Collecting the Data

Contemporary community case studies tend to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques to explore a particular social phenomenon or problem (see for instance Baum 1997; Finnegan 1998; Forsyth 1999; Stevenson 1999). In this study, data was collected primarily through a participant observation phase with a community development organization working within both the case study estates, semi-structured interviews with estate residents, local government planning officers and developers, a resident questionnaire, interpretation of developers’ planning documentation and promotional material of residential master planned estates as well as relevant local, State and Federal Government policies.

5.5.1 Participant Observation

The fieldwork commenced with a three month period in late 2000, of observing Narellan Community Care (NCC), the community development organisation employed by the planner-developers to ‘develop community’ in both case study estates. This organisation was also involved in community development programs in public housing estates, which afforded the opportunity to expose ideological foundations and potential differences in the practice of community development between lower income public housing and middle income private housing estates.

Denzin defines participant observation as “a field strategy that simultaneously combines document analysis, interviewing of respondents and informants, direct participation and observation, and introspection” (Denzin cited Flick 2002: 139). Although participant observation has been a frequently utilised practice since the Lynd’s (1929) classic study of Middletown, it has fallen out of favour more recently, as technological development has encouraged the
dispersion of social networks and communities of interest. (Research funding has also placed limits on this time consuming technique). As Stacey (1969: 145) rightly argues, although observation remains a relevant technique in the study of a local and invariably partial social system, such locality studies cannot stand on their own. Rather, their relevance arises from being contextualised and analysed against data gathered in other ways and in other fields or locations.

The rationale for undertaking a period of participant observation with NCC was manifold. In the first instance, it secured access to the case study setting over a period of time and to key informants who were able to provide particular points of view and insights (Cernea 1991). It enabled observation of the relationship between the planner-developer and the community developer, as well as the processes and practices the developer instituted to encourage social connectivity and community sentiment within the estates. It enabled observation of residents’ responses to the programs of the NCC and whether the programs enhanced the social resources within the estate. Finally, it assisted in the location of residents for in-depth interviews. Even though the intense period of observation occurred over a three month period, contact was maintained with key informants of the organisation throughout the research.

*Limitations of Participant Observation*

Certain limitations of this method of data collection, however, became apparent over the course of the field work. In the first instance not all phenomena were observable, particularly some of the background processes of the organisation. Importantly certain events which occur only occasionally, such as crisis meetings, could only be captured by chance (Flick 2002). It was thus necessary to support the observation with other data collecting methods (Stacey 1969), such as an examination of NCC literature and artefacts, and attending resident meetings and functions to capture such events.
A more practical limitation of the method is the ability to capture and interpret what is heard and observed. Although occasional note taking in the field is possible, copious note taking is not feasible, not least because note taking tends to interrupt the flow of the event, and as notes are being taken down other occurrences tend to be missed. This was particularly important in the organisational setting I was observing, which involved numerous meetings; between the executive and with community workers, property development staff and other external contributors. Audio-taping these meetings was not an option, unlike the one-on-one resident interviews. Therefore, in situ note taking was supported by more extensive note taking immediately following the event to avoid excessive filtering of data.

The most difficult aspects to record and interpret were the underlying motivations and sensitivities of NCC executives. There was a high degree of sensitivity to criticism amongst members of the executive, and outsiders were often categorised as ‘friendlies’ and ‘non-friendlies’, based on their perceived attitude. There was little tolerance for questioning the motives, structure or outcomes of the organisation, which made the task of the participant observer quite difficult. There seemed to be an unspoken expectation that my research could be used by the organisation, to promote its practices in the market place, even though the goals of the social researcher were discussed in detail with the executive prior to starting with the organisation. Flick (2002: 136-7) has observed that:

A main problem here is to define a role for the observer which he or she can take, and which allows him or her to stay in the field or at its edge and observe it at the same time. The more public and unstructured the field is, the easier it will be to take a role that is not conspicuous and does not influence the field. The easier a field is to overlook, the more difficult it is to participate in it without becoming a member.

A degree of tension remained during the my association with the organisation, at least on my part. However, persevering with the task was useful for what it revealed about the organisation, the way it conducted its business and the relationship between the organisation and private property developer.
5.5.2. Semi-Structured, In-depth Interviews

Semi-structured interviews involve the posing of a number of predetermined questions or topics, with the capacity to probe further and wider as required (Berg 1995). Hence the method falls between the *structured interview* which with its closed, preset questions aims to capture precise data to explain behaviour within pre-determined categories, and the *unstructured interview*, which attempts to understand the complex behaviour of members of a group through posing open ended, spontaneous questions which do not impose a priori categorisation (Fontana and Free 2000). The expectation of the semi-structured interview is that the informant’s perspective “is more likely to be expressed in a relatively openly designed interview situation than in a standardized interview or a questionnaire” (Flick 2002: 74). On one hand the semi-structured in-depth interview can provide a rich source of data in regard to an individual’s feelings, views, impression and experiences (Kenyon 1997). However, the *meaning* produced by the interview process “is accomplished at the intersection of the interaction of interviewer and respondent” (Fontana and Free 2000: 664). Hence, the interview is a reflexive process.

The purpose of the interviews was two fold. In the first instance interviews were used to gather information on the master planning / development process. These interviews (formal and informal) were conducted with residential developers, private community developers, local government planning and community development officers and elected representatives. Most of these interviews were undertaken early in the research in 2000 and 2001, in an exploratory gathering of information from different perspectives on the master planning process. Unfortunately I was not able to interview Mary Fairfax, the development protagonist and owner of Harrington Park, as she advised that she did not undertake interviews but would be happy to read the thesis.

A second set of formal, in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with residents of both Harrington Park and Garden Gates in the later part of
2002, with the purpose of understanding the behaviour and experience of residents in the community formation process, and the values, beliefs and practices which underpin their housing choice (see Appendices for resident’s semi-structure interview Schedule).

Locating the Informants

Flick (2002) refers to the form of sampling that underpins semi-structured interviews as ‘theoretical sampling’. That is the ‘sample’ is intended to be a cross section of population rather than being representative of it. “Sampling is finished” according to Flick (2002: 66) “when theoretical saturation has been reached”; that is, when nothing critically new emerges. In the first instance I had intended selecting resident informants through contact made with residents participating in NCC programs during the participant observation phase. I had expected NCC programs to involve a degree of continuity with residents, affording me the opportunity to get to know some of them. However, this was not the case. Contact with residents was often a one-off, and conducted through the Welcome Visit (described in more detail later in the thesis), and at best irregular. This situation raised questions as to the extent to which NCC’s community development programs actually penetrated the local communities.

Consequently, locating informants was made initially through introductions by NCC community workers. Some of these informants were keen supporters of the NCC program and reflected the ideal resident profile of the NCC. Even so they provided enormous insight into community life, values and motivations for moving into the estate which were closely reflected by other resident informants selected through more independent process; through the referral technique known as ‘snowballing’ (Berg 1995: 95) and most successfully through the resident survey.

In all, 30 residents were formally interviewed, 15 from each estate. The interviews occurred between June and December 2002, and each interview took between one and a half and two and a half hours. In most instances the
interviews were conducted in the home of the resident-informant(s). This setting provided a context and environment with which to further understand the informant’s world. It is hardly surprising that the objects which individuals surround themselves with are identifiers of their interests, values, lifestyle and taste. In fact, the array of creative and artistic objects on display belied the external appearance of uniformity of the project home. Residents’ own artwork, exquisite miniature dolls houses complete with handmade furniture, hand painted china dolls, folk art objects, woodworked furniture and pianos reveal the “creative activity of the suburban block” (Edgar 1997: 220). Domestic artefacts, however, are also indicative of more general public trends, commercial fashions and social identities constructed around reference groups, whether direct or constructed (Bott 1959).

Most of the informants seemed to enjoy the interview experience, reflecting on their lives and achievements. On the whole they were extremely house proud and many were keen to show me around their house and garden. This was particularly so of the female informants, who out numbered the male informants. This rapport reflected Bogdan and Biklen’s (1992: 96) remark that “... feminist researchers have commented on the ease with which women informants have opened up to women researchers conducting in-depth interviews” (Bogdan and Biklen 1992: 96).

A number of married couples were interviewed together. These couples tended to reflect the emotional intimacy of Bott’s (1959) ‘contemporary’ couples, drawn from her 1950s study of 20 ‘ordinary’ London families, rather than the ‘traditional’ couples who tended to lead segregated lives. Bott found that ‘contemporary’ couples tended to have the same friends, albeit within a socially and spatially dispersed network. And importantly, the emotional investment in the relationship between contemporary couples was far greater than in ‘traditional’ couples (Bounds 2004). The couples interviewed for this study frequently referred and deferred to each other, confirming that their views were similar and providing a united front. They tended to give each other equal
speaking time, and sometimes completed each other’s sentences. The synthesis of the aspirations of both partners demonstrated the high degree to which their life planning was a reflexive activity.

Recording and Transcribing

The interviews were captured on audio-tape and transcribed verbatim. Even so such transcripts are an artificial construction; a transformation of an oral mode of communication to a written form and a mere snap shot in time (Kvale 1996). It is difficult, for instance, to capture in the written form, the tone, silences and emotion evident on the tapes. And there is no way of knowing if some of the informant’s answers would have been presented differently if asked the following day. Transcriptions take on a solidity that was not part of the process of producing meaning in the original conversation (Kvale 1996).

In case of technology failure, the audiotapes were supported by note taking. These notes were also important for recording metalanguage, informant behaviour, the surroundings and other aspects of the occasion which could not be captured on tape. Even as an efficient typist, transcribing the tapes was an arduous task. However, the rewards for undertaking the task myself were great. In the first instance they facilitated vivid recollection of the interview occasion and this assisted the coding and analysis process. My thoughts, observations and remarks could be noted immediately. And secondly, the process revealed important data which, due to the length and intensity of the interviews, I missed or under emphasised at the time. I was glad I did not have to rely purely on my note taking or memory.

Limits of the Method

This aspect of the fieldwork was perhaps the most successful and enjoyable. The residents in particular were extremely accommodating and friendly, even though on the whole they were extremely busy people. A couple of the informants telephoned me to inform me about something they had thought of
later that they thought I would be interested in. At the end of some of the interviews I asked the informants why they had agreed to participate in the research. The answer was invariably to help me out in an act of reciprocity. Their actions and motivation exemplified their attitude to community. They were invariably generous with their time and openness.

Although as discussed previously, qualitative interviewing is not capable of being representative, it seems plausible that those people who volunteer to participate in such a project are likely to be generous and civic minded. The degree to which the attitude and behaviour of the informants reflects that of other residents within the estate is questionable. This is the reason sourcing other data routes is so important. And in this instance, other data sources, including the resident questionnaire and media stories undertaken in Harrington Park during the course of the research, supported my general impression of the residents I came in contact with.

5.5.3 Quantitative Questionnaire

The purpose of the resident questionnaire was twofold. In the first instance it was intended to collect data which could be used to validate the qualitative data collected through the semi-structured interviews and the observation phase. Secondly, it was a technique used to locate further residents who would participate in semi-structured interviews. As it happened, this was the most effective means of locating interested parties, and it was from this source that most of the male informants were contacted.

The questionnaire (see Appendices) was distributed in October 2002. It consisted of 42 self-completing questions, four of which were open-ended questions requiring some consideration. Questions 1 to 16 collected demographic and housing related data, which in part can be compared with ABS census data in order to validate the sample. Questions 11 and 12 collected information on how residents identified themselves and other residents in regard to socio-economic class. Questions 17 to 28 identified the motivations
and values of residents moving into their estate. Open ended (unprompted) and closed questions were included. Questions 29 to 37 identified residents’ actual experience and satisfaction with living in their estate. Questions 38 to 42 collected data on community sentiment and the level of community participation.

Sample and Distribution Method

The questionnaire was distributed using a modified, stratified random sampling method, whereby older and more recently developed areas of the two estates under study were identified. The ‘development stages’ in each of these areas were then identified, and questionnaires distributed to every second house in half of these development stages. In all 496 questionnaires were distributed, 248 in each estate. In Harrington Park, the questionnaire was distributed through the more established Lakeside Village (coded as HP1) where the first residents moved in some seven years prior, and the more recent Hillside Village (coded as HP2) where some housing is still being constructed, but where the first residents moved in three years ago (See Appendices 2 and 3).

In Garden Gates, the questionnaire was distributed through both the more established section located between Mt Annan Drive and Stenhouse Drive (coded as GG1) where the first residents moved in some seven years ago, and the newer area west of Stenhouse Drive, some of which is still under development (coded as GG2). The first residents moved into this development stage around three years ago.

The questionnaire package was hand delivered to resident’s letterboxes in the selected streets over a three day mid-week period. The package consisted of an information sheet with contact details, the questionnaire, and a stamped, self-addressed return envelope to encourage a substantial return rate.

The questionnaire elicited a 27.2% (n.135) return rate, although there was a greater return rate from Harrington Park (29.4% n.73), than in Garden Gates
(25% n.62). Interestingly, the newer area of Garden Gates (GG2) elicited a return of only 21% while the newer area of Harrington Park (HP2) elicited a return of 34%. In Garden Gates, of those surveys returned 33.9% were completed by males, and 66.1% by females. In Harrington Park, 35.6% of surveys were completed by males, and 64.4% were completed by females.

**Limits of the Method**

The return rate was disappointing and not in line with return rates of similar studies. For instance, Baum (1997) elicited a 75% (n.300) return rate from a distribution of 400 self-completion questionnaires in a similar study of community development in a new housing estate in South Australia. On reflection, the size of the questionnaire at 42 questions, and the number of open-ended questions, “which require most thought and writing” (Oppenheim 1968: 66), probably contributed adversely to the return rate. In this regard it failed Cernea’s (1991: 526) advice to keep such questionnaires ‘late and light’ – ‘short and simple’.

Rather than being representative, the return rate means that the questionnaire data can only be considered indicative of resident attitudes. The research conclusions, however, are not heavily reliant on the data, as the primary data collection method was through qualitative interviews and observation. On the positive side the questionnaire proved to be the most effective way of locating residents who were prepared to spend a couple of hours being interviewed. They were also an effective way of supplementing the male perspective. Male residents were more likely to complete a questionnaire than participate in an interview. Although the open-ended questions probably affected the return rate, they proved to be the most useful in constructing residents’ motivations for moving into the estate.
5.6 Qualitative Research and the Presentation of Knowledge

The qualitative approach to research requires a particular set of techniques with which to provide the presentation of data and knowledge with integrity, plausibility and coherence. Atkinson (1990) refers to this process as the ‘textual construction of reality’, whereby the writing creates a particular view of social reality. He supports this position with the argument that to some degree “all ‘factual’ or authoritative accounts, whether they derive from natural or cultural disciplines, depend on conventions of textuality” (Atkinson 1990: 175).

As a transformative process, the rhetorical technique invariably involves waves of translation, transcription, interpretation, representation and reflection. An interplay of stories, case histories, fragments of reported speech and actions, metaphors and symbols are used to support the rhetorical construction of the social reality. Deciding which stories and quotes to include and which to cut requires ethical consideration and researcher integrity. Including a discussion of the research paradigm and methods employed provides the reader with a background with which to judge the validity of the textual construction.

To use Richardson’s (2000) metaphor, the effective production of qualitative research relies on two lenses: a ‘scientific lens’ through which theories, methodology and methods are devised, and a ‘creative arts lens’ through which findings are presented. The value of this approach, according to Richardson (2000: 937), is that “we see more deeply using two lenses”.

5.7 Conclusion

The primary concern of this study is the formation of ‘community’ in contemporary greenfield master planned estates. The complexity of community formation within the MPC, with the relation between the planner-developer, the local state and the residents, lends itself to a predominantly qualitative approach and multiple modes of data gathering (triangulation) in a process of interpreting meaning. The employment of comparative case studies of two
master planned developments as the fieldwork template, provides the opportunity to access numerous data sources within the field, including the residents, the planner-developers, community developers and council officers, as well as documents and artefacts. By providing “direct contact with the object” (Bourdieu cited Wacquant 1992: 225) the case study approach supports the principal concern of qualitative research, the process of how people negotiate meaning (Bogdan, Biklen and Knopp 1992).

The qualitative approach lends itself to Flyvbjerg’s (2001) notion of phronetic research. This is because the object of phronetic research is to contribute to the ongoing social dialogue surrounding a phenomenon, and to establish communication between contrasting theories (Bourdieu 1993), rather than to establish definitive knowledge and an ultimate theoretical position. In this regard phronetic research encourages a supple, reflexive approach to gathering data and interpreting meaning. Importantly it injects a measure of value-rationality into the instrumental-rational approach to research that currently dominates the natural and social sciences.

Careful methodological planning has produced a rich, in-depth understanding of the ways the different agents of the MPC interpret and construct their world. I was particularly impressed by the enthusiasm and honesty with which informants offered their views, fears, aspirations and personal histories. The approach to the research was confirmed by the willingness of informants endeavoring to secure their world to impart personal and detailed information to the researcher.
CHAPTER 6: Background to the Case Study

But most importantly, we are still a country community that cares, we have not got lost in the multicultural jungle - we have retained old-fashioned Christian values and will stand up for what is right.


6.1 Introduction

This chapter contextualises Harrington Park and Garden Gates spatially, socially, culturally and economically, both within the local government area of Camden as well as the wider Sydney metropolis. It provides a foundation for the following fieldwork chapters, and considers aspects of location, development history, social character and demographic data. Drawing on data from the ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing, and the framework established by Baum, Stimson, O’Connor, Mullins and Davis’ (1999) study on Community, Opportunity and Vulnerability in Australia’s Cities and Towns, it investigates the socio-economic character of Camden in the context of the wider metropolitan area of Sydney.

Visual Description

Harrington Park is an MPC of low density, detached housing constructed on formerly rich pasture land (see master plan, Appendix 8). The estate’s main entrance is impressive, with a wide, curving road stretching past tendered agapanthus gardens, parks and the Lake – the primary aesthetic focus of the estate (see photograph, Appendix 11). Street landscaping, particularly along the main thoroughfares, provides a formal feel, with mature, deciduous trees dominating. The Australian architectural critic Robin Boyd (1960: 78), would have described the look as “a state of clipped artificiality”.

Harrington Park has well-resourced playgrounds, and a green network of walkways, bike trails and picnic grounds. A community hub situated centrally between the three ‘villages’ comprises the Harrington Park Public School, an impressive community
centre (the largest and most profitable in the Camden LGA), basket ball and tennis courts, a cricket ground complete with white picket fence and club house, playgrounds, a childcare centre, and at the time of writing, land for a neighbourhood shopping centre. The larger Narellan Town shopping centre is located within walking distance of the estate.

In the main the homes are large, brick veneered with two and sometimes three garages. Some homes, particularly in the newer sections are master built in the contemporary style: double storied, muted rendered brick, plate glass balconies, and porticoed entry. Most are project homes with features cherry-picked from bygone architectural styles: prim Georgian facades, Victorian fussiness, Queen Ann turrets, Federation finials and the occasional shady, over constructed Californian porch. The houses are anything but austere. Front gardens are meticulous and high-maintenance couch lawns (*Cynodon dactylon*) are pristine.

As the development has progressed, property allotments in Harrington Park have generally become smaller and the dwellings larger, so that in some sections houses sit cheek by jowl. To accommodate the smaller allotments much of the housing is double storey, and standards have been maintained through additional restrictive covenants and pockets of tightly controlled, ‘integrated’ housing on super lots.¹

By comparison, the planned residential estate of Garden Gates is aesthetically more relaxed, and even a little unruly in parts, with its proximity to the native botanical gardens, and extensive use of indigenous vegetation (see map in Appendix 4 and photograph Appendix 11). Households on streets which border Mount Annan Botanic Gardens are required to plant only those species indigenous to the local area to prevent floral contamination of the Gardens. Properties in the older, more established section of Garden Gates, which are less proximate to the botanical

¹"Integrated housing development is a general term for the development of a larger lot to create a group of dwellings (multi unit housing) on separate small lots (averaging about 350 square metres) and to have it planned, designed and assessed as a single development" (Camden Council DCP No. 58, 2003: 46). To enable an IHD, super lot housing sites are sold to a single house builder, who subdivides the land into smaller allotments and builds ‘integrated’ Torrens Title housing. This practice allows the overall development of Harrington Park to abide by the State Government’s strict urban consolidation requirements (15 lots per hectare) while still continuing to release more standard housing lot sizes of between 500 and 700 metres square.
gardens, are more likely to have European style gardens than in the later sections. Reflecting on the suburban penchant for the European garden, Boyd (1960: 76-78) contended that:

Modern Australians have no especially psychopathic fear of the gum or the wattle, but no two trees could have been designed to be less sympathetic to the qualities of tidiness and conformist indecision which are desired in the artificial background. . . . Measured against a fresh green European ideal, the Australian bush presents a slovenly scene. . . . One by one everything that is native has to go, even if one has to hold a hose all evening to keep the English grass green and the daphne alive.

At the time of the fieldwork, the public parks in Garden Gates were not as well maintained as they were in Harrington Park, nor were they as well equipped. Some looked windswept and desolate, although the drought at the time no doubt intensified this appearance. The estate lacks its own ‘community hub’ in the manner of Harrington Park, although the local Mount Annan Public School is situated on the estate’s northern border. A retail / recreational hub consisting of a new shopping mall, fast food outlets, aquatic centre and indoor sport centre, is located a car trip away from Garden Gates, and caters for the suburbs of Mount Annan, Narellan Vale and Curran Hill.

Interestingly, an inverse process of development standard appears to have occurred in Garden Gates compared to Harrington Park. In the latter, general housing quality has increased over the development life of the estate. This, however, appears not to have been the case in Garden Gates, with parts of the newer sections comprising a mixture of predominantly large and prestigious homes, with less prestigious looking homes scattered amongst them. This situation contrasts with the leafy, more impressive appearance of housing in the earlier, more established section of the estate.

6.2 Estate Locations

Harrington Park and Garden Gates are located within the Camden local government area, some six kilometres apart, and approximately 55 kilometres south-west of Sydney’s central business district (see location map: Appendix 1). The estates form part of the Narellan ‘new release’ area, and have the same 2567 Narellan postcode.
Garden Gates is a planned estate located in the suburb of Mount Annan, on the south side of Narellan Road, and west of the M5 motorway, the main highway between Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. The estate is bounded by the Mount Annan Botanical Gardens, Welling Drive and George Caley Reserve. There are numerous entry points into the estate, the main entry being from Mount Annan Drive.

Harrington Park is an MPC bounded by the corner of Camden Valley Way, which links Camden with Liverpool, approximately 15 kilometres to the north-east, and The Northern Road, which links Camden to Penrith, approximately 30 kilometres to the north-west. At the time of the research, both the main and secondary entrances to the estate were off The Northern Road.

The State Rail Authority’s south line bypasses Camden. The railway spur between Camden and Macarthur Station, outlined in the State Planning Authority’s *The New Cities of Campbelltown Camden Appin Structure Plan* (1973), has thus far failed to eventuate. Macarthur Station is a 20 minute car trip from Camden township. It takes approximately 60 minutes to travel by rail from Macarthur to Sydney CBD via Sydney Airport. Local and inter-suburban transport needs are met overwhelmingly by car and patchy private bus services. The recent extension of the M5 motorway has significantly shortened the trip to Sydney CBD and Sydney’s Kingsford Smith Airport, where a number of informants worked.

### 6.3 Development history

#### 6.3.1 Colonial Character and Contemporary Parallels

Camden’s most prominent historical family descended from the controversial John Macarthur, army officer, leader of the Rum Rebellion, recipient of huge land grants between Parramatta and Camden, and ‘father’ of the Australian wool industry. According to legend, Macarthur arrived in the colony in 1789 as a lieutenant with a

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2 On the day of the ABS 2001 Household Census, only 1.9% of employed people in Camden went to work by train (presumably from Campbelltown Station) compared to 8% of people in the Sydney Statistical Division, 0.7% travelled by bus (4.6% Sydney SD), 0.6% by bus and train (2.2% Sydney SD), 1.7% by bicycle or walked (4.3% Sydney SD) and 69.9% by car (57.7% Sydney SD). (ABS 2001)
debt of £500 which by 1800 had been transformed into a £20,000 fortune (Buckley and Wheelwright 1988). Governor King’s assessment of Macarthur was a man dedicated to “making a large fortune, helping his brother-officers to make small ones” (cited Buckley and Wheelwright 1988: 36). Macarthur, it seems, was the original Sydney speculator.

Camden district was originally the ‘fiefdom’ of the Macarthur family, and more particularly of the magnanimous James Macarthur, third surviving son (of four) of John and Elizabeth.³ Camden was named by John Macarthur after the Earl Camden, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, who had facilitated his wool venture through a 10,000 acre land grant in the Cowpastures⁴ of south-west Sydney in 1805. By 1825 Camden Park estate consisted of 27,333 acres, the result of numerous crown grants (Atkinson 1988).

Although the vision for a manor in Camden Park was their father’s, it was James and his older brother William who in 1834 eventually completed the grand Palladian style, stucco homestead. It was, as their father had hoped, a building impressive enough to “be worthy of their position as the doyens of the new nobility of New South Wales” (Clark 1995: 101). In his later years John Macarthur descended into madness and died at Belgenny Farm cottage, on the Camden Park estate on 11 April, 1834. Although most of the estate was sold off for housing in the 1970s, the home and 960 acres remains in the possession of the Macarthur descendents. An open day each September, which raises money for the property’s upkeep, is extraordinarily well patronised by Camden locals. Although privately owned the property has iconic status amongst the Camden community.

James Macarthur is an interesting character. As the overseer of convict labour, and the landlord of tenant farmers, he believed in the idea of local self-sufficiency and positioned himself as “a source – the source – of moral guidance, welfare, discipline and mercy” (Atkinson 1988: xii). Aspects of this patrician attitude are still evident in

³ James was born in Parramatta in 1798. (Clark 1995: 150)
⁴ The area was referred to as the Cowpastures, after the infant colony’s entire herd of cattle (4 cows and 2 bulls) escaped their enclosure in 1788 and were lost. In 1795 a herd of 61 cattle was discovered on the land between the Nepean and Georges rivers – the cow pastures.
‘old’ Camden and surrounding rural properties. Old Camden remains suspicious of the influx of new suburbanites into the Narellan new release area, with their materialism and modernising way of life. This social divide was observed by one informant of Garden Gates who explained:

I like Camden. It’s still a countryfied place. It’s starting to change to the café scenario and it’s modernising. It’s quite clean. But you still see the country bumpkins driving around with their farm clothes on and they think they are very upmarket. But it is slowly changing. (GG9: 11)

Generally, however, the Narellan interlopers enjoy and benefit from the heritage status of ‘old’ Camden.

[What do you like most about Garden Gates?] F: The country feeling about it. And Camden is just down there. (GG2: 8)

Camden is very country. I just love Camden. It’s just so boutique, the restaurants. Everybody walks slower and the shops shut at twelve. It’s just very country. (HP7: 8)

A true Victorian, however, James Macarthur also believed in ‘self improvement’, and set about building schools and encouraging ‘respectable men and women to raise themselves in the world’ (Atkinson 1988: 180). The values of ‘self improvement’ and ‘self help’ remain strong in the Camden district, and even more so amongst the Narellan interlopers. This emerges most notably in the work values held by informants. For instance, Marion, a 42 year old resident of Harrington Park, was a senior executive with a large corporation located in western Sydney. She would get to work by 4.45 each morning in order to be home by 3pm to start her ‘second shift’ (Hochschild 1989) as house-keeper and mother of two children. She had risen to the top of her field through hard work rather than through education. Marion explained:

I know people who have the same position as me in other corporations, and most of them have big degrees attached to their names. But in saying that too, I’ve worked hard and I’ve studied hard, although I haven’t gone and done any tertiary, furthered my tertiary training. But I’m just looking now at getting my degree. (HP7: 2)

Such work hours, however, were not unusual, as these responses indicate:

[Do you work full time or part time?] Part time. [How many hours a week do you work?] About 40 hours. [That’s sounds more like full time. How many hours a week does your husband work?] Oh God, about 70. (GG8: 4 – small business owners)
My husband’s got his set run which is in the city. [That’s a long way to go?] He’s up at two in the morning. [What time does he get home?] On a good day about 2pm and a bad day about 6pm. [That’s a long day] It is, it is, the poor thing. There’s more money in that than in panel beating, let me tell you. (GG7: 2)

M: Don’t mind me. I’ve got to get some red [wine] into me, after a 14 hour day. (HP6: 7 – informant had just arrived home from his small business, when I commenced the interview)

**The Colonial Narrative**

Camden’s colonial narrative provides the district with a distinct identity, differentiating it socially and aesthetically from surrounding suburbs and providing it with an economic base for tourism. The narrative is supported by a number of local institutions. Like most colonial settlements, the names of streets, parks and estates chronicle the public affairs of a handful of prominent colonial English families, including the Macarthurs, the Onslows and the Oxleys. The Camden Museum Cowpastures Heritage Centre (John Street, Camden), employs classic colonial museum practice. That is, the exhibition begins with a small section on the original indigenous inhabitants, followed by an extensive display, romanticising the local colonial life. According to the museum, the early days of the town and surrounding districts comprised networks of close-knit family groups segregated by social divisions of class and religion. At the top of the hierarchy was the Anglican gentry of large landowners, followed by a Methodist middle class of self employed tradesmen, small businessmen and professionals, and finally a Catholic working class of rural labourers, domestic servants, miners, shops assistants and employed tradesmen. According to the museum’s story board (recorded in May 2001),

> Little bad feeling seems to have been associated with these divisions. They created a strong sense of local identity and suspicion of outsiders. This stratification only began to break down after World War II...

when the large estates were broken up and sold off. Although the museum’s narrative ends here, the strong sense of local identity and a degree of suspicion of outsiders remains in Camden.
Camden Council, which has taken the promotional motto ‘Birthplace of the Nation’s Wealth’,\(^5\) is extremely active in preserving the colonial narrative through policies preserving the colonial aesthetic of Camden town centre, as well as through its social policies. For instance, the *Camden Lifestyle Target Plan* (1999) notes that:

The culture, identity and sense of place of the Camden local government area is related to its links with the agricultural, historical and environmental significance of the area. Even though urbanisation is occurring many new residents are choosing Camden because it retains some aesthetic and historical charm. ... Camden’s residents are not necessarily seeking a new cultural identity, but a cultural and social environment which allows the existing identity to be nurtured and emerge to be reflective of their values. (Camden Council 1999: 5)

Interestingly, Camden Council has noted that Landcom’s community development practices in its Narellan new release estates, and Harrington Park’s community identity initiatives “are aimed at creating a local sense of community identification which is independent of Camden Township” (Camden Council 1999: 5). Although a local sense of community has developed to varying degrees in these estates, and particularly so in Harrington Park, the informants of both Garden Gates and Harrington Park also closely identify as part of the Camden community.

### 6.3.2 Contemporary Demographic Character

This section examines the contemporary character of Camden within the wider Sydney context, using the framework of Baum *et. al.*’s (1999) study of community opportunity and vulnerability,\(^6\) and a comparison of 1991 and 2001 ABS Census

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\(^5\) This differs to the motto on Camden Council’s crest which reads ‘Advance to Achieve’.

\(^6\) Baum *et. al.*’s (1999) research utilises 1986 and 1996 ABS census data to rank 240 Statistical Local Areas within Australia’s metropolitan city regions, on a continuum of community opportunity and vulnerability. The key variables were: level of household income, labour force engagement, industry and occupational structure, human capital, population change and mobility, the presence of socially disadvantaged groups and the incidence of housing assistance and housing financial stress. Interestingly, the research ranked four of Sydney’s urban fringe SLAs in the second cluster of greatest community opportunity (out of nine) on the continuum, with a positive mean discriminant score of 90.81. These localities, termed the ‘suburban expansion opportunity cluster’, included Camden (discriminant score 145.83), Penrith (56.84), Wollondilly (54.11) and Hawkesbury (71.30). The only other cluster to receive a higher mean discriminant score of opportunity (at 193.73) was the ‘global economy / high-income opportunity cluster’, which included the inner and middle ring suburbs of Concord, Hunters Hill, Mosman, North Sydney and Woollahra (amongst others), and, notably the outer ring locations of Baulkham Hills and Sutherland Shire. The ‘transitional / gentrifying opportunity cluster’, including the SLAs of Ashfield, Burwood, Marrickville, Randwick, South Sydney, Sydney and interestingly, Blue Mountains, came in third, with a positive mean discriminant
data. Baum et al.'s (1999) study identified clusters of communities across Australia that shared a similar performance over the decade 1986 to 1996 and had similar characteristics at the 1996 census. The research concluded that Sydney's fringe localities of Camden, Penrith, Wollondilly and Hawkesbury are areas of 'suburban expansion', and 'social and economic opportunity'. That is, in reference to other statistical local areas (SLAs), they have a smaller incidence of low-income households, single-parent families and unemployment; strong labour participation rates particularly amongst females; and in regard to occupational structure, a higher proportion of 'in-person service workers' or 'routine production workers' (see Reich 1993). This last aspect in particular contrasts with the 'symbolic analysts' of the more advantaged 'global economy / high-income opportunity cluster', located over an inner urban, northern and eastern suburban Sydney arc.

In order to obtain a feeling for the character of Camden, the section examines birth place, post-school qualification, computer home usage, a comparison of unemployment levels, income levels, occupation, housing form, and housing tenure, and compares the data to the following SLAs:

**Table 6.1: Comparative Statistical Local Areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLA</th>
<th>Location and Character</th>
<th>CLUSTERS: Community of Opportunity and Vulnerability (Baum et al. 1999)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>Outer south-western Sydney (area under study)</td>
<td>Outer suburban expansion opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbelltown</td>
<td>'Established' south-western Sydney SLA. Adjoins east Camden</td>
<td>Suburban marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>'Established' south-western Sydney SLA. Adjoins north Camden</td>
<td>Suburban marginal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Although fringe suburbs, both Campbelltown and Liverpool are considered to be more</td>
<td>established than Camden. Further, both suburbs contain large 1960s style Department</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

score of 45.62, almost half that of the outer suburban expansion opportunity cluster. By comparison those SLAs experiencing the greatest level of community vulnerability were Fairfield (-77.34), Newcastle (-80.95), Cessnock (-122.49) and Greater Lithgow (-154.87).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Type of SLA</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>Middle ring SLA, western Sydney</td>
<td>Vulnerable suburban / social disadvantage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>Middle ring SLA, south-west Sydney</td>
<td>Auburn and Bankstown are established SLAs which have been undergoing rapid socio-cultural change and a degree of economic decline in comparison with other SLAs over the past 10 years. These areas exhibit a relatively high intake of migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds, and relatively high ongoing levels of unemployment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryde</td>
<td>Middle ring SLA, northern Sydney</td>
<td>Global economy / high-income opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Included to compare the profile of a suburb in the middle of Sydney’s high tech arc stretching between Epping and Mascot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woollahra</td>
<td>Eastern Sydney</td>
<td>Global economy / high-income opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Included to provide a comparison between a high income area, where the classic bourgeoisie (captains of industry) tend to live, alongside high earning, new economy, white-collar workers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Mountains</td>
<td>West of Sydney basin</td>
<td>Transitional / gentrifying opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>Inner western Sydney SLA</td>
<td>Transitional / gentrifying opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Blue Mountains and Leichhardt have experienced gentrification over the past decade or more. Gentrification processes classically witness better educated, white collar workers moving into predominantly working class areas. These areas have a lower rate of non-qualification and a higher rates of education and people in management, administration and professional occupations compared to Camden and its surrounds. Included to provide a comparison between classic gentrification and the landed gentrification of sections of outer western Sydney.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In no way is this an exhaustive exploration. It is intended merely to provide an indication of distinguishing features of Camden SLA by comparing demographic data with the adjoining SLAs of Campbelltown and Liverpool and to pertinent localities within the wider Sydney metropolitan area. It is intended to provide a socio-demographic foundation for the following fieldwork chapters.

**Birth place**

Perhaps the most noticeable feature of Camden is its Anglo-Australian orientation. A much higher proportion of Camden residents were born in Australia (79.8%) in 2001 than in the neighbouring Campbelltown (68.5%) and Liverpool (55.6%), and the Sydney statistical division at 62.2% (Table 6.2). Moreover, of those Camden residents born outside Australia, 7.5% were born in either the United Kingdom or New Zealand. In ‘multi-cultural’ Australia, the proportion of residents from an English speaking background sits around 88% in Camden (ABS 2001).

**Table 6.2: Proportion of People Born in Australia: 1991 compared to 2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistical Local Area</th>
<th>% of people born in Australia: 1991 Census</th>
<th>% of people born in Australia: 2001 Census</th>
<th>Change %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbelltown</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>-4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>-10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>-9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>-8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryde</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>-5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woollahra</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>-3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Mountains</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>78.5</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing: Basic Community Profile and Snapshot

Liverpool, Auburn and Bankstown – suburbs which fall within Baum et. al.’s (1999) ‘Vulnerable suburban social disadvantage cluster’ or ‘Suburban marginal cluster’ – show a much larger decline in Australian born residents and an increase in migrant residents than the other SLAs, all of which apart from Campbelltown, are considered by Baum et. al. (1999) to be more advantaged.

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Further in the 2001 Census, the three most common ancestries residents of Camden identified with were: Australian: 18930 people (43.2%), English: 15809 people (36.1%) and; Irish: 4237 people (9.7%) (ABS 2001 – Camden Profile).
**Level of Tertiary Education**

A further indicator of the demographic character of Camden is the level of tertiary education achieved (Table 6.3). The western Sydney SLA’s of Camden, Campbelltown, Liverpool, Auburn and Bankstown show a substantially smaller level of adults holding a bachelor degree compared to the ‘high-income opportunity’ cluster. At 73.4%, Auburn has the highest number of residents with no tertiary qualifications (ABS 2001).

**Table 6.3: Level of Tertiary Education 2001: Proportion holding University Qualification compared to No Qualification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistical Local Area</th>
<th>% of adults with a Bachelor Degree or higher 2001 Census</th>
<th>% of adults with no qualifications 2001 Census</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>63.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbelltown</td>
<td>Lowest 7.2</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>69.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>Highest 73.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>70.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryde</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woollahra</td>
<td>Highest 35.1</td>
<td>Lowest 48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blue Mountains</strong></td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>54.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>48.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SYDNEY SD</strong></td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>61.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing: Basic Community Profile and Snapshot

Camden has a relatively large number of residents (27.5%) with a diploma, trade certificate or other similar qualification, compared for instance to Campbelltown (21.9%), Liverpool (21.9%), Auburn (15.6%) and Leichhardt (18.7%). This is due in part to the relatively large number of self-employed tradespeople and contractors – ‘gold collar workers’. Such tradespeople influence the character of an area. Rather than being traditionally lower income employees, they tend to be self-employed higher income earners, and be upwardly mobile.

**Occupation**

A comparison of occupations (Table 6.4) indicates that there is an under-representation of professionals, managers and administrators and an over representation of labourers in Camden, compared to the ‘global economy / high-income opportunity, and the transitional / gentrifying opportunity SLAs. This
reflects Randolph and Holloway’s (2003: 6) findings that the workforce in western Sydney “is skewed towards tradespersons and intermediate and lower skilled white and blue collar occupations compared to Sydney as a whole”. However, compared to the adjoining SLAs of Campbelltown and Liverpool, Camden has a higher incidence of managers and administrators, professionals, associate professionals and lower incidence of labourers.

**Table 6.4: Comparison of Occupations in 2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLA</th>
<th>Managers &amp; Admin %</th>
<th>Profess %</th>
<th>Assoc Profess.</th>
<th>Trades %</th>
<th>White Collar %</th>
<th>Labourers &amp; related %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbelltown</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryde</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woollahra</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Mounts</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SYDNEY SD</strong></td>
<td><strong>9.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>21.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>11.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>11.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>17.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing: Basic Community Profile and Snapshot

**Median Weekly Individual Income**

The upward mobility of Camden residents is demonstrated by a comparison of 2001 median income levels with 1991 levels. This comparison also highlights the degree to which some SLA’s have stagnated compared to others, for instance Campbelltown compared to Woollahra. Even so, the median weekly income of Camden is much less than that of Woollahra and Leichhardt (Table 6.5). As noted by Randolph and Holloway (2003: 5), not discounting the fact that the older, middle ring suburbs of western Sydney have higher proportions of lower income households, the wider western Sydney region “has only marginally higher proportions of poor households compared to Sydney as a whole”, albeit with notably lower proportions in the highest income ranges.
Table 6.5: Comparison of Median Weekly Individual Income: 1991 – 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistical Local Area</th>
<th>Median Income 1991 Census* ($)</th>
<th>Median Income 2001 Census ($)</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>300-399</td>
<td>400-499</td>
<td>Increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campbelltown</strong></td>
<td><strong>300-399</strong></td>
<td><strong>300-399</strong></td>
<td>No increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>200-299</td>
<td>400-499</td>
<td>Large increase from low base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Auburn</strong></td>
<td><strong>200-299</strong></td>
<td><strong>200-299</strong></td>
<td>No increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>200-299</td>
<td>300-399</td>
<td>Increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ryde</strong></td>
<td><strong>300-399</strong></td>
<td><strong>400-499</strong></td>
<td>Increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woollahra</td>
<td>400-499</td>
<td>700-799</td>
<td>Large increase from high base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blue Mountains</strong></td>
<td><strong>200-299</strong></td>
<td><strong>400-499</strong></td>
<td>Increase from low base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>300-399</td>
<td>600-699</td>
<td>Large increase from medium base</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing: Basic Community Profile and Snapshot

Employment

Median weekly individual income is affected by unemployment levels. As indicated in Table 6.6, the level of unemployment in Camden, at 4.1%, is lower than the Sydney SD (6.1%) and substantially higher than in the adjoining SLA’s of Campbelltown (8.5%) and Liverpool (8.3%).

Table 6.6: Comparison of Unemployment Levels in 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistical Local Area</th>
<th>% of people unemployed at 2001 Census</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campbelltown</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Auburn</strong></td>
<td><strong>Highest</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Blue Mountains</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ryde</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woollahra</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SYDNEY SD</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing: Basic Community Profile and Snapshot

---

8 The ABS notes that the 1991 and 2001 Census income figures are not directly comparable due to differences in methodologies an do not account for inflationary factors.
Housing Form and Tenure

Camden residential development is typified by low density detached housing, but also includes large residential lot development (between 1 and 5 acres) and small farms of market gardens and vineyards, but also tax beneficial hobby farms of deer and alpaca. There is little in the way of medium density, home units, town houses and villas, and no high density. Its low density, semi-rural feel is one of Camden’s primary attractions. A comparison of detached dwellings between the 1991 and 2001 ABS Census highlights the growth of medium density development in the established suburbs of Sydney (Table 6.7).

Table 6.7: Comparison of Detached Dwellings: 1991 – 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistical Local Area</th>
<th>% of Detached Dwellings 1991 Census</th>
<th>% of Detached Dwellings 2001 Census</th>
<th>Change %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>91.5</td>
<td>91.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbelltown</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>-9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>-10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryde</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>-6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woollahra</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Mountains</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>92.4</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>-5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYDNEY SD</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>-4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing: Basic Community Profile and Snapshot

The figures also indicate that Camden has a very high level of detached housing compared to the rest of Sydney.

With regard to housing tenure (Table 6.8), owner occupation is higher in the suburbs than in the inner city. For instance, Woollahra has a rate of 52.8% and Leichhardt 46.9% compared to 76% in Camden. Hence, there appears to be a correlation between housing density (Table 6.8) and owner occupation. That is, the higher the density, the lower the owner occupancy rate.
### Table 6.8: Tenure: Owner Occupation Compared to Rental: 1991 – 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbelltown</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryde</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woollahra</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Mountains</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>76.3</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leichhardt</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>44.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SYDNEY SD</strong></td>
<td><strong>65.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>62.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>28.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>29.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing: Basic Community Profile and Snapshot

The informants of Harrington Park and Garden Gates were particularly sensitive to renters. They believed that renters were less likely to comply with the ‘community compact’ (discussed in detail in the following section). This resident typified the feeling:

> [Before you moved into the estate what expectations did you have of the suburb and have those expectations been met?] Well I thought it would be a nice area. I wanted to come somewhere where people looked after their properties. That was what we were finding down there [in Macquarie Fields]. We were getting a lot of people, even in the houses, renting and that. It was just terrible. Trucks parked in the street, lawns not mowed, gardens not looked after. I just hate that. I just had to get away. (GG3: 10)

In summary, Camden is essentially an Anglo-Christian oriented, semi-rural suburb on the urban fringe. Owner occupation in detached dwellings is the dominant tenure. Household incomes are relatively high compared to the older middle ring suburbs of western Sydney. Occupationally, middle white collar service jobs and small business ownership, particularly in a blue collar industry predominate. Although the area has undergone recent suburban expansion, it has not experienced the socio-cultural upheaval that many of the older middle ring suburbs of western Sydney have experienced over the past decade.

### 6.3.3 Planning the South-west

Most of the rapid growth in suburban development following World War II bypassed Camden. The 1951 County of Cumberland Planning Scheme identified the
neighbouring LGA of Campbelltown as the location for a satellite new town of 30,000 people beyond the Sydney ‘green belt’. Although at that time the planning proposal was not acted upon, population growth in the town continued, from 3,725 in 1947 to 18,701 by 1961. Camden, however, remained a sleepy village of some 6,372 residents by 1961 (Spearritt and Demarco 1988: 136-7).9

In 1968 the Sydney Region Outline Plan proposed five growth corridors to house 1.75 million residents. One of these was a south-western corridor through Campbelltown, Camden and Appin for 460,000 people. A Structure Plan for the proposal was released by the State Planning Authority in 1973. It indicated that each new city was to have its own identity and nominated Campbelltown as the major regional centre. To assist the implementation of this ‘three new cities’ scheme, the State Government took on the role of landowner, planner and developer (Spearritt and Demarco 1988). Over the decade following the release of the Structure Plan, most of the jobs and accelerated residential growth occurred in Campbelltown. However, the Structure Plan placed Camden on the development radar.

The Narellan ‘New Release Area’

Narellan village is located five kilometres north of Camden township, on the Camden Valley Way. Originally an 1811 land grant, the budding township did not have the planning or patronage supporting its early development as did Camden, and was generally little more than an outpost on the highway to Camden. In the 1830s it boasted a small school, a hotel – the Currency Lass – long before the temperance town of Camden had one, but little else (Atkinson 1988). Today, Narellan township continues in a “supportive and complementary role to that of Camden township” (Camden Council 2003a: 3), but also services the retail needs of the surrounding population. The Narellan industrial estate of Smeaton Grange provides Camden with its primary ‘industrial’ site. The gridiron layout of Narellan township consists primarily of unpretentious, single storey housing, much of it built after World War II. It is surrounded by the new release estates of Harrington Park, Currans Hill, Mount

9 By contrast in 1961 Liverpool had a population of 30,874, Penrith 33,049 and Parramatta 104,061 (Spearritt and Demarco 1988: 136-7)
Annan, and Narellan Vale, with their large, brick veneer homes and confusing ‘worm’ road configurations.

The ‘fast tracking’ of the early development of the Narellan new release area led to the repeating of problems common to release areas in western Sydney. According to one local property developer Benjamin Chow, speaking at a local developers’ forum in 1994:

The rezoning of the Narellan area was fast tracked and as a matter of fact, it was so fast tracked we had the council meeting on one evening and then the next day the LEP document was signed by the Council and was hand delivered to the regional manager. I think Steve Martin was still the Department of Planning Regional Manager here and it was signed off by the local member, and by the then Minister for Planning, Bob Carr, on the same day (Chow 1994: 22).

Fast tracking meant that co-ordinated planning between the local council and State Government departments was lacking, and physical and social infrastructure followed well behind the acceleration in population growth. Although the lack of public transport was cited by a number of informants and survey respondents, most of the residents I had contact with in Harrington Park and Garden Gates felt that the area was now well provided for in regard to services and amenities. Residents appeared to be satisfied with the balance between the semi-rural environment and the local amenities, as this small sample of Resident Survey responses to the question ‘what do you most like about living in your estate’ indicate:

Good surroundings, people with similar values, well maintained housing, schools, parks, shops, walks close at hand. (GG1/8)

Close to amenities and the green areas (GG1/10)

Lack of pollution from industrial areas; close proximity to diversified range of shops (GG1/17)

Close to shops, schools and rural area (GG1/20)

Cleanliness, close to M5, well maintained neighbouring homes, close to all amenities including pool. We live in a ‘circuit’, where there is no ‘through’ traffic. (GG1 22)

The surroundings and community and facilities. (GG1/30)
My friends and neighbours and the close proximity to schools and shops.
(GG1/31)

Parks, lake, facilities, community spirit; the surroundings are very pleasant to look at and that makes you want to take advantage of them. (HP1/1)

The landscaping of areas (parks, lake etc). Local facilities. (HP1/5)

Semi-rural location with convenience of close proximity to all the amenities and services we access. The many attractive pathways, lakes etc, where we regularly walk (and feel safe). (HP1/15)

Mount Annan was the first area to be developed in the Narellan new release area in the late 1980s, followed by Currans Hill in the early 1990s. Following the State Planning Authority’s Structure Plan (1973), Landcom was both owner and planner-developer of these estates. The early development followed the usual pattern of Landcom developments during the period, with housing accessibility and affordability being the primary focus. Consequently, the developments comprised low density, detached housing aimed at first home buyers and low income households. Public housing dwellings were scattered throughout the estates, in a shift away from the concentrated efforts of the 1960s and 70s.

One of the first Camden Council community development officers working in the area in the early 1990s described the social character of the estates:

In the beginning Mount Annan and Currans Hill were first home buyers.... Some people moved in from the local area, Campbelltown and still had some networks. But others moved in from Menai and Sutherland. They were first home-buyers and stretched. It was at the time of Homefund\(^\text{10}\). It was a low income, heavily subsidised area, often with one worker in the family. I let them be aware what local services were available, and that they were a part of the older community of Camden... Now the new estates are second and third home buyers. The infrastructure provided by Landcom was used by other developers to make a lot more money. (CW1: 1, 3)

The more recent Landcom developments of Narellan Vale and Garden Gates were directed towards second and third home buyers, as the emphasis within Landcom

\(^{10}\) Homefund was a State Government scheme intended to assist low income households into home ownership through manipulating loan repayment requirements. The recession and unexpectedly high interest rates in the early 1990s pushed many Homefund participants into arrears, resulting in them losing their homes. The scheme was subsequently abandoned.
shifted from land banker and provider of affordable housing (Troy 1978), to a profit oriented enterprise for the State Government.

**Garden Gates**

From Landcom’s perspective\(^{11}\), the Garden Gates development was basically a greenfield, infill site, between their original Mount Annan development and the Mount Annan Botanical Gardens. Commenced in 1995 Landcom employed specific strategies in its planning, in order to attract a higher socio-economic demographic. For instance, rather than being merely an extension of the original Mount Annan development, which catered in the first instance to lower income and first home buyers, Garden Gates was marketed as a distinct ‘estate’ with identifying features and motifs, such as the iron arbours strategically positioned on Mount Annan Drive and in some of the parks within the estate. The estate name of ‘Garden Gates’ was taken from its relative location to the native botanical gardens. Residential lots were sold with a $3,000 garden rebate, and restrictive covenants attached to the title in order to restrict the type of housing built and to help foster housing pride. As one Landcom marketing pamphlet explained:

> Garden Gates Estate has been designed with protective covenants to ensure the right standards in home size, building materials and standard fencing are met. This will create an environment that will reflect the quality surrounds of the estate and protect your investment. Our $3,000 Landscaping Rebate will enable you to establish your new landscaping and gardens to reflect the high standard that already exists in this stunning estate. (‘New Release – Garden Gates Estate: New Prestige Homesite Release’ Landcom sales brochure 2000)

Landcom’s positioning strategies for Garden Gates appears to have met with some success, as one informant described:

> We did look at Currans Hill because it was cheaper. I think in the end it got sold out, and closed earlier than here. It’s different too. Just the trees that [Landcom] planted. It’s just different to here... It’s got to do with the reserves, like it’s open [You mean there aren’t as many trees in Currans Hill?] Yes... They don’t seem to have put as much effort into that sort of thing. That was just the feeling that we got. This just looked nicer. The whole package just looked nicer. The houses looked nicer. There was more effort made with the trees and parks. (GG4: 8)

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\(^{11}\) Landcom Development Meeting 30 April, 2003, Landcom Sales Meeting 18 June 2003.
Although Garden Gates was a planned residential development, compared to Harrington Park its development was more consistent with conventional forms of suburban development. Such developments are less concerned with using urban design and infrastructure to encourage community integration.

**Harrington Park**

The planning of Harrington Park commenced in the late 1980s, with the first residents arriving in 1993. The 789 hectare Harrington Park estate was purchased by the late Sir Warwick Fairfax in 1944 to establish a Poll Hereford stud (Harrington Park 1993). The development proper commenced as a joint venture between the Fairfax family, with Charles Fairfax, the son of Sir Warwick at the helm as General Manager of the Fairfax family business, and the English based international development corporation, Taylor Woodrow.\(^{12}\) When Taylor Woodrow withdrew from Australia to concentrate on its European ventures, a new development company, Harpak Developments Pty Ltd was established to complete the development. This latter corporation kept on most of the local development staff employed by Taylor Woodrow.

Harrington Park is a master planned community. From the outset, Harrington Park was intended to be a prestigious estate, which would “be a benchmark for the future growth of western Sydney” (Harrington Park 1993: 1). The ‘crafting’ of Harrington Park is discussed in detail in Chapter 8, ‘Crafting the MPC’.

**6.4 Demographic Character of Harrington Park and Garden Gates**

The Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001 Census of Population and Housing indicates that in 2001 the demographic characteristics of Harrington Park and Garden Gates were fairly similar. Residents were overwhelmingly Australian born, English speaking and Christian (Table 6.9). They lived in detached housing, and were far more likely to be in owner occupation, at 85.8% in Harrington Park and 88.8% in Garden Gates compared to 62.7% in the Sydney Statistical Division (SD). The

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\(^{12}\) Taylor Woodrows was founded by Lord Taylor of Hadfield in 1921. In 1993 the Group operated with a turnover of $2,500 million and employed 10,000 people. It had been operating in Australia since the late 1950s. (Harrington Park 1993)
median monthly housing loan repayment at $1,400-1,599 was higher than the Sydney SD median at $1,200-1,399. Occupationally, residents were less likely to be professionals (HP 13.8%, GG 16.1%, compared to 21.2% Sydney SD) or labourers (HP 4.5% and GG 3.8%, compared to 6.6% Sydney SD), but more likely to be an associate professional (HP 14.0% and GG 16.7% compared to Sydney SD 11.85%) or in an intermediate clerical position (HP 22.3% and GG 21.0%, compared to Sydney SD 17.2%).

Harrington Park had slightly more residents over the age of 65 years, and less under the age of 15 years than Garden Gates, however, the average resident age, at 29 years in Harrington Park and 28 years in Garden Gates, was younger than the Sydney (SD) average of 34 years. These figures reflect the area’s new suburban status, as Johnston (1971: 45) observes:

Differences in lifestyle and position in the family cycle should also produce residential separation of households because of variations in the type of accommodation required. For families with children, spacious living is usually desirable, free from problems of neighbours and certain aspects of the urban environment. Home ownership is usually preferred by such families as a form of security. Many people outside the family cycle, on the other hand, orient their lives outside the home.

In short, Harrington Park and Garden Gates essentially comprised middle class families of Anglo-Christian mores, occupied in a white collar or service industry and living in a detached dwelling with a substantial mortgage.

### Table 6.9: Demographic Data comparing Harrington Park and Garden Gates with Sydney SD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESTATE / Statistical Division</th>
<th>Harrington Park</th>
<th>Garden Gates</th>
<th>Sydney SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>3,018</td>
<td>1,120</td>
<td>3,997,321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estate Area sq kms</td>
<td>2.8 sq kms</td>
<td>2.0 sq kms</td>
<td>12,144.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B03 Age %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 15 years of age</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 65 years of age</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median age</td>
<td>29 years</td>
<td>28 years</td>
<td>34 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B06 Birth Place %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>82.5</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B08 Language spoken at home %</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English only</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaks other language</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Other languages %**
  - Arabic (including Lebanese): 0.4
  - Italian: 1.3
  - Chinese languages: 0.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B10 Religious Affiliation %</th>
<th>81.4</th>
<th>80.2</th>
<th>67.1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B20 Monthly Housing Loan Repayment %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between $1,000 and 1,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 1,600 and 1,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than $2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Stated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median monthly housing loan repayment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1,400-$1,599</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median weekly rent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$250-$299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median weekly individual income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$500-$599</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median weekly household income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1,200-$1,499</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unemployment rate %</th>
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<th>B23 Non-School Qualification %</th>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma or Certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor Degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced Diploma or Diploma</td>
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<tr>
<td>Certificate</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>B27 Occupation %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers and Administrators</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradespersons and related</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Clerical and Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate Clerical, sales and service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate Prod and Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers and related</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Inadequately described & 0.6 & 1.0 & 0.9 \\
Not stated & 0.9 & 1.0 & 1.2 \\

**B18 Dwelling Structure %**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Separate houses</td>
<td>99.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>63.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi detached and town housing</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flats and apartments</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Owner occupied %**

<p>| | | |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85.8</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>62.7</td>
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**Rented %**

<p>| | | |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>29.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


### 6.4.1 Birth Place

Even though residents of Harrington Park and Garden Gates were predominantly Australian born at 77.2% and 82.5% respectively, this still leaves a substantial minority of residents who were born overseas. The three most cited overseas places of birth in Harrington Park were the United Kingdom (6.3%), New Zealand (1.6%) and Italy (0.6%), followed by USA, South Africa, India, Germany, Philippines and Ireland. No residents indicated they were born in Viet Nam, while 0.5% of residents were born in either Egypt or Lebanon.

The three most cited overseas places of birth in Garden Gates were the United Kingdom (6.7%), New Zealand (2.8%) and Germany (1.1%), followed by Philippines, Malta, South Africa, India, Ireland and Poland. No residents indicated they were they were born in Viet Nam or in the Middle East. These figures indicate that overseas born residents of Harrington Park and Gardens Gates were mainly born in predominantly English speaking countries.

### 6.4.2 Household Income

The median weekly household incomes in the estates (HP $1,200-1,499 and GG $1,500-$1,999) were substantially higher than the Sydney SD ($800-$999) (Chart 6.1).

The discrepancy between the median weekly individual income in Harrington Park at $500-599, and Garden Gates at $600-699 per week, was due to the higher proportion
of households in Garden Gates earning $2,000 or more per week, at 25.5% in Garden Gates compared to 18.4% in Harrington Park.

Chart 6.1: Weekly Household Income in Harrington Park and Garden Gates

![Weekly Household Income Chart]


A slightly higher proportion of households earned less than $399 per week in Harrington Park (4.5%), than in Garden Gates (3.0%), probably due to the number of self-funded retirees in Harrington Park. The proportion of full and part time workers were similar between the estates, and the unemployment rate half that of the Sydney SD (Chart 6.2).

Chart 6.2: Employment Status: Harrington Park, Garden Gates and Sydney SD

![Employment Status Chart]

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing. B22 Selected Characteristics
6.4.2 Education

Adult residents of Garden Gates were more likely to have achieved a higher level of schooling than Harrington Park residents (Chart 6.3), and were more likely to have gained a post-school qualification. Nine per cent of Harrington Park residents had gained a bachelor degree or higher, compared to 12.5% in Garden Gates (ABS 2001). However, as indicated in Chart 3 below, residents of both Harrington Park (38.9%) and Garden Gates (36.8%) were more likely to have left school in Year 10 that the Sydney SD (23.2%), and were less likely to have carried on to Year 12.

Chart 6.3: Highest Level of Schooling Attended

![Highest School Level Completed]


The number of students currently attending non-Government schools was similar to the Sydney SD, although the proportion in Harrington Park was slightly higher at 40.0% compared to Garden Gates (35.3%) and the Sydney SD (36.2%). Informants expected their children to complete schooling to Year 12, recognising that the labour market had become increasingly competitive since the time when they left school. As one informant explained, when asked why she was proposing to send her child to a private high school:

Years ago you could leave school in Year 10, with your school certificate. You could get a pretty good job. These days, if you don’t have your HSC you’d be lucky to get a job at McDonalds, you know. I just want him to have the right
start. We’re only going to have one, so I’ve got the funds and I can do that for him… So just mainly for the opportunities. (HP6: 3)

The expectation, however, that their children would go on to university was not so apparent amongst those informants with school age children.

[And in regard to their career – do you have any ideas what you would like for them?] I’m not overly fussed. Like I don’t push the fact that because they go to a private school I want them to become doctors or lawyers. One wants to do engineering but he doesn’t want to do his HSC. He’d rather get a job with an engineer firm and do it through TAFE. Whereas the other one wants to stay on to year 12 and go on to university… What ever career choice they make I’ll be happy and support them 100 per cent. It’s completely up to them. (HP7: 5)

[What aspirations do you have for your children?] I want them to be happy and do what they want to do. To be happy and don’t hurt anyone. [Do you have any occupational or financial aspirations for them?] I’d like my daughter to be successful in her [sporting field]. As I said to her, I don’t want her to be my age and say I wish I had done that… My son wants to go overseas… I hope that he can do that. But he likes to live and get around. Unless he puts his head down and saves a bit he wont go. But then that’s his fault. But that’s about it. (GG8: 5)

And this from a male informant, one of whose children was unemployed at the time of the interview.

[What aspirations do you have for your children?] That’s a difficult question. To succeed. To own a house, to have a job, to have a family as we did. That’s pretty much it. I don’t expect too much from them. (GG5: 3)

A common thread running through informants’ narratives was that tertiary education was not the only route or even the best route to occupational or financial success. In this regard it was a narrative that contradicted the more widely held view, particularly amongst the middle class, that tertiary education, and even ‘life long’ education, is the corner stone to employment success. One informant, neither of whose two children went on to university, provided an insight into the underrating of the contemporary school-uni-job paradigm.

We employ a lot of uni students at the pub. We have one who finished uni last Christmas and he can’t get a job in his chosen field because he has no experience. Well he can’t get experience until he gets a job. So he is working at the pub. We have Brent who is training to be a dentist. Brent has been studying for five years, and as he says he doesn’t know whether he is going to be able to get a job when he finishes. And we have Matt who just left us last week. Matt is a trained psychologist, but has now gone to work in an office in the city,
because he doesn't like the job that he's trained for. It seems that a lot of them get into study without really knowing if that's what they want to do. But I think that if some of them had 12 months off between school and university, they would grow up a bit more and they would know what they wanted to do. (GG8: 3)

Recent research has indicated that within the new economy, “those without tertiary education generally move into a pattern of training, working and living that is inherently more insecure” (Pusey 2003: 104). Residents of Harrington Park and Garden Gates were conscious of the insecurities of the job market, but believed that the values of hard work and application rather than tertiary education were the foremost ingredients to success, as their own experiences had proven.

6.4.3 Occupational Structure

The ABS Census data indicates that both Harrington Park and Garden Gates have a substantially lower proportion of workers in the professional and labouring fields than the Sydney SD, but a higher proportion in associated professional, trades, advanced clerical and service, and intermediate clerical and service fields (Chart 6.4).

Chart 6.4: Occupational Categories: Harrington Park, Garden Gates and Sydney SD

![Occupational Category Chart]


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Harrington Park has a higher proportion of managers and administrators than Garden Gates, although Garden Gates had a higher proportion of professionals and associate professionals than Harrington Park.

In some ways the demographic character of Garden Gates, and more specifically Harrington Park reflects Richard’s findings in her study of Green Views, where she identified “two typical couples: young people seeking a first home and older couples moving out to a second home” (Richards 1990: 10). The older couples were likely to have blue-collar occupations and describe themselves as working class. The younger couples, however, were more likely to be in higher paid professional and white-collar occupations. They tended to describe themselves as middle class (Gilding 1997).

In Garden Gates and Harrington Park, however, a further group can be added to this catalogue; a younger group of petit-bourgeoisie, earning middle to high incomes as self-employed contractors (for instance owner-drivers) and tradesmen (electricians, plumbers, air conditioning installers). According to Bechhofer and Elliott (1981: 182-3), the petite bourgeoisie,

are neither bourgeois nor proletarians. At the same time it is clear that they are unlike the routine white-collar workers in industry, commerce or public administration and they are different too from the bureaucratised professionals or salaried intelligentsia. The one thing they all have – the crucial thing – is petty productive property, and it is property with which they work themselves. It is their labour and very frequently that of their families and kin, that they mix with this property and though a good many also become the employers of hired labour, the scale of that exploitation is typically very small and is an extension of, rather than a substitute for, their own labour.

Importantly, what these disparate occupational groups have in common is a set of interests based on social values, rather than the classic set of interests based on class. This was alluded to by one informant who was describing the class mix in Harrington Park.

There is a real cross mix of money in Harrington Park. Like you’ve got your young couples that have got huge mortgages, and then you’ve got people like my neighbour next door, she’s a little bit older than me. She sold her other house so that she could live in Harrington Park. She saw it as a good investment. And she’s comfortable. And I’ve got a guy next door, he’s on his own and he is comfortable. Up on the top of the hill there is a retired couple.
And they’re as happy as. At the top of the street you’ve got what they call the prestige houses. They’re like a villa style, with all the parquetry floors and glass cabinets in the kitchen, and all nicely fitted out. They’re all people who have money. So it’s a real mix. I find that people mix really well… There’s no ‘I’m rich, you’re poor’. Everybody just blends in. [Why would that be?] I don’t think people judge. I think if you live in Harrington Park everyone just accepts that you live in Harrington Park. (HP7: 7)

The idea of a common set of social values underpinning common interests is discussed in more detail in the fieldwork chapters that follow.

6.4.4 Class Identification

The Resident Survey (Q11) (see Appendices 6 and 7) indicated that a majority of both Harrington Park (54.79%) and Garden Gates (51.61%) respondents identified with the middle class. However, a good proportion of Harrington Park respondents identified with the working class (16.44%) compared to Garden Gates (9.68%), and less respondents in Harrington Park identified with the upper middle class (9.59%) than in Garden Gates (16.13%). While most respondents nominated one of the class options, a small number nominated more than one class (for instance working class and middle class), and a small number, particularly in Garden Gates, nominated that they did not identify with any class. (Chart 6.5)

**Chart 6.5: The Class which respondents identified with: Harrington Park and Garden Gates**

![Chart 6.5: The Class which respondents identified with: Harrington Park and Garden Gates](chart.png)

Source: Resident Survey (Question 11)
When residents were asked what class they thought most residents of their estate identified with the majority of respondents in both Harrington Park and Garden Gates believed other residents of their estate identified with the middle class (Chart 6.6). A substantial proportion of Harrington Park respondents (28.77%) believed that others in the estate identified with the upper middle class. This was not reflected in the responses from Garden Gates.

**Chart 6.6: The Class respondents thought most other residents identified with: Harrington Park and Garden Gates**

![](chart.png)

Source: Resident Survey (Question 12)

Interestingly, when the results of these two questions are compared in Harrington Park, there is a discrepancy within the working class category and the upper-middle class category (Chart 6.7). That is, although only 9.59% of respondents in Harrington Park self-identified with the upper middle class, 28.77% of respondents thought other residents of Harrington Park identified with the upper middle class. And further, where 16.44% of respondents self-identified with the working class, only 6.85% of respondents thought other residents identified as working class. This anomaly may be due to the greater mix (as discussed above) of blue collar workers ‘done good’, many of whom identified as working class or with no class, and younger white collar workers, who were more likely to identify with the middle class, thus making the social landscape in Harrington Park more difficult to read. It could also be due to the
greater degree of aspiration felt by residents in the estate, even those who personally identified themselves as working or lower middle class.

**Chart 6.7: Harrington Park: Social Class: Comparison of Self Identification and Residents Identification**

![Chart 6.7](image)

Source: Resident Survey Q11 and Q12

Such an anomaly, however, did not present itself in Garden Gates, as indicated in Chart 6.8 below.

**Chart 6.8: Garden Gates: Social Class: Comparison of Self Identification and Residents Identification.**

![Chart 6.8](image)

Source: Resident Survey Q11 and Q12
Informants generally determine their class position around the issues of income, employment status, and avoidance of welfare dependence, but also sometimes around a moral judgement of others, “deadbeats’ (HP3: 2) for instance. Others believed being middle class was to do with being the “basic family. A happily married couple with two children, with a barbeque and a pool in the back yard, and a great big shed” (GG1: 4). Egalitarian ideas underpinned a number of the responses. One of these informants explained that being middle class meant she could “talk to anybody” (GG8: 6).

6.4.5. Political Affiliation

Butler (1997: 152-3) argues that “people’s voting intentions at a general election are probably the best indicator we have of their political orientation and general social consciousness”. Since the early 1990 there has been a sizeable shift in party allegiance on Sydney’s urban fringe, coinciding most prominently with the demise of Paul Keating’s ‘big picture’ Labor Government in 1996. As Don Watson (2002: 728), Keating’s former speechwriter reflects:

The new Australia, plugged into the international economy and information highway, comfortable in their diversity and relatively secure in their job, had endorsed [Keating’s] big picture. The old Australia comprehensively rejected it. Remote from the centre of power and influence, disgruntled and insecure, they bought the reactionary message on offer and demolished the Keating Government.

While across Sydney the Australian Labor Party (ALP) experienced a swing against it of between six and eight per cent in the 1996 Federal Election, the swing was most prominent in the electorates of outer western Sydney For instance, the electorate of Lindsay, centred on Penrith, and the adjoining electorate of Macarthur centred on Camden received a two party preferred swing against the ALP of 11.8% and 11.9% respectively (Australian Electoral Commission www.aec.gov.au/election2001/results). These outer urban electorates comprise high numbers of Friedman’s (2000) vulnerable ‘used to bes’, discussed earlier in the thesis.
A similar voter reaction was apparent in the 2001 ‘Tampa’ election when the Howard Coalition Government’s election campaign played on the Australian electorate’s fear of global insecurity. Although there was a Sydney wide swing against the ALP, this was again most pronounced in Sydney’s western suburbs in seats traditionally held by the ALP (Clark, Humphries and Cameron 2001). Consequently, at the time of writing there is a ‘blue ring’ of Liberal electorates around Sydney including Lindsay, Macquarie and Macarthur.

The Macarthur electorate includes the areas of Camden and Campbelltown. In the 2001 general election, the electorate experienced an 8.65% swing against the ALP. Interestingly, all the Macarthur voting booths (which represent specific geographic areas rather than numbers of votes) within the Camden LGA fell to the Liberal Party, while in Campbelltown, with its more mixed socio-economic character, only 52% of booths fell to the Liberal Party, and the rest to the ALP. More specifically, the Harrington Park booth was won by the Liberal candidate with 70.8% of the vote, two party preferred, and the Mount Annan Booth (which covers Garden Gates) was won by the Liberal Candidate with 63.0% of the vote. (Australian Electoral Commission website). It would thus appear that, at least on Federal issues, the political orientation of Harrington Park and Garden Gates is firmly Liberal.

**Political orientation and general social consciousness**

Most of the informants interviewed indicated that they had voted Liberal at the 2001 Federal Election. When asked why they voted Liberal, most indicated that their family had always voted that way. For instance,

> Always have. I think it was part of my upbringing... (HP1: 2)

> It’s always been a family tradition (HP3: M: 3)

> Because I believe in their policies, and probably more than anything my parents voted Liberal and I think that rubbed off on me. (HP4: F: 3)

But there was also a feeling that the Liberal Party was more likely to support “people who want to get ahead” (HP10: 6). As this informant went on to explain:
I look at Labor and I look at them taking more from the employer with less input. I think that if you work you should be paid, but I don’t believe in not working for what you earn. I believe that if you do overtime you should be compensated. But I don’t believe in these breaks every couple of hours for a smoke. I mean what happened to the 40 hour week. Solid work. (HP10: 6)

This reflects one of the primary values held by Harrington Park residents – the work ethic (discussed in more detail in later chapters). Another couple, who had earlier explained that “you don’t get anywhere without hard work in this world” (HP4 M: 3), voted Liberal because they supported the GST and because of Prime Minister Howard’s handling of the “Boat People incident”...

I think John Howard was right in that. [What aspect of that?] F: Just the fact that you can’t go to another country and expect to jump the queues, I guess. Get in the back door sort of thing. There are other people who wait years to get in, the right way. (HP4: 3)

Rather than being overt racism this couple’s support for Howard’s handling of illegal migration / refugees status appeared to be more a matter of propriety, that migration should be conducted through an orderly system. In this view ‘queue jumpers’ were perceived as a threat to Australia’s social order. It was a view that seemed to be widely held by Harrington Park informants. This was not particularly surprising, as these were people who had moved into an estate seeking social order and propriety.

6.5 Conclusion

In research on *The Experience of Middle Australia*, Pusey (2003: 59) has identified two groups of “angry middle Australians” unreconciled to recent economic reform.\(^{13}\) One of these he terms the ‘improvers’. This group is most likely to be found in older, gentrifying inner western suburbs of Sydney, and are likely to be employed in intermediate white collar occupations: teachers, nurses, human resource officers and so on. Although this group is allegedly ‘angry’, their anger is directed towards “what is happening to Australian society” (Pusey 2003: 60) rather than their own situation. Pusey compares this group with the other angry group he terms the ‘Battlers and Hansonites’. Pusey notes that members of this group are found in the outer western Sydney suburbs.

\(^{13}\) The two ‘reconciled’ groups of the new economy Pusey refers to as the ‘Survivors’ – reconciled working class, and the ‘Globalised North Shore People’ – reconciled middle class. (Pusey 2003: 58)
Some are still employed full-time, most part-time, and many as sub-contractors. They are unreconciled to economic reform and reeling from permanent insecurity in the way of retrenchments, that hit their peak in the recession of 1991.... Over and over we find these workers self-employed in their own business, for example, as courier operators, truck drivers, handyman repairers, or car cleaners; they are doing virtually the same work as before, but as sub-contracted providers for often large companies. They complain of stress, of irregular and long working hours, and of tasks that outstrip either their willingness or capacity to undertake them, or both. One has a strong sense that they feel spatially trapped, typically here in the outer western suburbs of Sydney, and shackled with housing and other costs that give an edge of desperation to their efforts to hang on and scratch for the work they can find and hold. The demands of work will not let them 'cut off from work'. They loathe the invasive pressures, the changing rosters, the irregular hours, and the unpaid overtime.... Everything it seems – even supporting your own kids, as they too typically struggle with entry into the labour market – is experienced as another burden that further endangers what they feel to be their all-too-vulnerable defences... [T]hey, perhaps especially the women, detest politicians, big business, free-loaders, elites, and anyone who seems to be making claims on the 'system' that appear to give them an unfair advantage in the merciless struggle to stay afloat. Reactive, defensive, yet strong, anger is the dominant mood (Pusey 2003: 59-60).

So much of what Pusey has described here is consistent with the accounts provided by the informants I interviewed in Harrington Park and Garden Gates, particularly their self-employment and exacting working hours. The stinginess of the 'system' towards people like themselves and complaints about 'free-loaders' were common themes, although given their working hours this was hardly surprising. However, rather than the glum picture painted by Pusey, most of the informants and residents I met in the course of my fieldwork appeared to be happy, generous people, pleased with their situation, their family and friends, even if they were juggling time, and large mortgages in some instances. Rather than being spatially trapped in the outer western suburbs, most felt a degree of satisfaction and pride in having worked their way into Harrington Park and Garden Gates. They held values and a way of life they were proud of, and worked hard to instil these values in their children. Perhaps this gave them a meaning in life that even economic security cannot. Or perhaps the disparity merely reflects the different research questions being asked by Pusey and myself. When musing about their life circumstances in the context of 'community' rather than the economy, a more contented picture emerges.
PART III: DISCUSSION OF FIELDWORK and EMERGENT THEMES.

The discussion of fieldwork findings incorporates the concept of action deriving from both the Weberian notion of motive (Weber 1964; Campbell 1998) and the Interactionist notion of meaning; both integral elements of their respective action theories. For Weber, understanding an act or symbolic expression takes two forms. Firstly through "direct observational understanding of the subjective meaning of a given act as such, including verbal utterances" (Weber 1964: 94) and secondly through understanding a broader context of meaning in terms of motivationsmaessig. Weber (1964: 98-99) defined motive as "a complex of subjective meaning which seems to the actor himself or to the observer an adequate ground for the conduct in question". And further, "we understand in terms of motive the meaning an actor attached to [the action] ... in that we understand what makes him do this at precisely this moment and in these circumstances" (Weber 1964: 95). Hence, the motive for an act (whether rational or irrational) involves "an understandable sequence", which "can be treated as an explanation of the actual course of behaviour" (Weber 1964: 95). This perspective is capable of including structural and cultural aspects.

Symbolic interactionism considers that "people act on the basis of meanings" (Hewitt 2000: 102). Motive in this theoretical perspective "refers to what people say about their conduct rather than to the forces that shape their impulses" (Hewitt 2000: 103). That is, motives are statements about conduct. Motive then is a self-referencing, verbal phenomena that "exist because people talk about what they do" (Hewitt 2000: 104). This gives rise to the concept of 'motive talk', the requesting and offering of explanations for the reason for a particular action (Hewitt 2000: 154). The meanings produced and manipulated in the intensely social setting of a 'community' renders this theoretical perspective particularly useful, although not necessarily comprehensive in regards to the research questions.

The guiding methodological principle of the fieldwork analysis is two fold. Firstly, it involves the notion of the agent's 'reflexive awareness' and 'continuous monitoring
of the circumstances’ of his / her actions (Giddens 1991). “Such monitoring”, Giddens (1991: 35) explains, “always has discursive features. In other words, agents are normally able, if asked, to provide discursive interpretations of the nature of, and the reasons for, the behaviour in which they engage”. Secondly, it involves the practical consciousness that underpins the agent’s habitual activities. Consequently, the fieldwork chapters are structured around an examination of agents’ actions as well as explanations of these actions, the interpretation of the meanings which motivate agents’ actions, and the examination of associated artefacts.

The discussion of fieldwork and emergent themes has been organised into three chapters. Each begins with a ‘resident’s story’, a short account of a resident’s experience of life in their estate, drawing out some of the emergent themes and ideas relevant to the chapter. The purpose of this is to provide the reader with a more comprehensive, relatively unhindered picture of some of the informants’ values, lifestyle, motivations and housing histories than the shorter quotes within the chapters can provide.

The first fieldwork chapter, Chapter 7: Seeking Utopia, explores some of the factors behind the actor’s search for a utopian life space. This utopia, however, is not of unrealisable, mythological proportions (Marin 1984), but rather, as discussed in Chapter 2: Utopian Place Making, a utopian realism. Giddens (1990: 155) describes utopian realism as a process of risk minimisation through “institutionally immanent possibilities”. This search for utopia is bound up in the future oriented, modernist project of deciding how to live. Giddens (1991) refers to this project as the actor’s ‘reflexively organised life planning’. Hence, the actor’s search for utopia is a reflexive, mediated process, in keeping with the ‘reflexive project of the self’(Giddens 1991: 5). Underpinning this chapter is Giddens (1991: 64) explanation of motives which he argues “are essentially born of anxiety, coupled with the learning processes whereby a sense of ontological security is engendered”.

A primary goal of both the developer and the resident is to create a realisable utopia through the institution of the master planned community. The crafting of the master
planned community is examined in Chapter 8. The form of community realised is necessarily oppositional in nature so as to distinguish it from surrounding areas of vulnerability. Differentiation is sustained through a high degree of internal social solidarity; hence the degree to which master planners strive to ‘develop’ community.

The final fieldwork chapter, Chapter 9: Community in New Housing Estates compares the development of community solidarity and identity in the two estates under study. This is undertaken firstly through an analysis of the community development rituals and estate design features which are employed to facilitate community attachment; that is, those physical and social aspects of the MPC employed to develop community. The success of such rituals can be determined by the degree to which actors embrace their new self identity, as well as the degree of social connectivity. This is followed by an examination of the form of community that emerges in each of the estates. Of particular significance is the development in Harrington Park of a ‘moral’ community, which has become a ‘reflexive, self reinforcing ideology’ for both the developer and a core of residents.
CHAPTER 7: Seeking Utopia

Jenny’s story

Jenny lives in Harrington Park with her husband and four young children in a large, orderly, single storey project home they built three years ago. The house is located in a narrow cul-de-sac, and overlooks a watercourse flanked by parkland and cycle ways. The outlook is attractive and soothing. Occasionally ducks waddle up to forage through the immaculately presented front lawn. Jenny’s husband Paul was at work on the evening that I interviewed her. Paul works afternoon shifts, leaving Jenny to take care of their children of an evening. Although family time is extremely important, work commitments mean they only manage to spend one day each weekend together.

Jenny is a friendly, strong and seemingly proficient woman in her late 20s. She left school in Year 10 to undertake a TAFE course and Paul left school in Year 9 to take up an apprenticeship. This educational background is common amongst residents in Harrington Park, where 50.1% of residents left school before Year 11, 7.8% left in Year 11 and only 34.7% went on to complete Year 12 (compared to 38.6%, 5.0% and 44.4% respectively in the Sydney Statistical Division) (ABS 2001). The couple now both work outside the occupations they originally trained for; Jenny as a part-time sales consultant and Paul as a foreman in a warehouse.

Although the household earns only a middling income ($55,001-65,000), they manage through “sacrifices” (HP9: 5), to send their school age children to a private primary school. Jenny believes that a private education can provide her children with better discipline and with more opportunities, “even though we have to pay for those opportunities” (HP9: 3), than the public system. Jenny’s aspirations for her children are,

Just to be the best that they can be. To always give 110 per cent. And even though what they may be able to achieve may be not what other people perceive would be the right thing for them; as long as they are happy (HP9: 3).
The emphasis rests more upon personal development than educational advantage. The aspirations Jenny has for her children are a reflection of her own values, work ethic and identity. She explains:

We have had to work very hard for what we’ve got. We’ve never been given anything. So everything that we’ve been able to achieve, we’ve been able to achieve together. And not through handouts or inheritance or anything like that. It’s been though sheer blood and guts really (HP9: 3).

This ‘pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps’ imagery is a common one amongst the residents I interviewed in Harrington Park. These residents believe they have arrived in Harrington Park through sheer determination, resourcefulness, sacrifice and hard work. But rather than perceiving themselves as well off or “people with money” who have ridden the crest of property appreciation over the past decade (Love 2001), they perceive themselves as “average Joe Blows” (HP9: 5) – thus identifying more with where they started from, rather than where their social mobility currently positions them. This self-identification was reflected in the Resident Survey, which indicated that 30.1% of Harrington Park respondents identified with either the working class or the lower middle class, compared to only 22.6% in Garden Gates, and 64.4% with the middle or upper middle class compared to 67.7% in Garden Gates.

Jenny grew up in a suburb of Bankstown, in Sydney’s south-west, during a time when an Anglo-Australian culture dominated. She married Paul when she was ‘very young’ and in 1990 the newly married couple moved into a new house in Rosemeadow, a lower income area on the southern outskirts of Campbelltown. This was not a particularly happy experience for the family. Reflecting on this period Jenny explains:

Everything was fine when we first moved there. But as time moved on it was a different crowd of people who moved into that housing commission area and it did give it a bad name. The junk that was left lying around, the lounges, the rubbish… It was common knowledge that there were drug deals that were done in the [shopping centre] toilets. It was actually publicised in the local newspaper, I think the Advertiser, that a 15 year old girl had bashed a security guard in the market place unconscious. And I mean, these are all things that really shouldn’t be happening. Young kids, and I’m talking from as young as 10, roam the streets at 11 o’clock at night. The parents haven’t got a clue where their kids are. I mean, it comes down I guess, to a vicious cycle. They’ve
obviously been born into that sort of environment, and the pattern and the cycle just continues (HP9: 4).

Jenny explains that these days, living in Harrington Park, ....

I don’t have to walk out my front door and have a gentleman, at 9 o’clock in the morning with alcohol and swearing. I don’t feel that my children needed to hear that nor be bought up around that. So that’s a big difference. [In Harrington Park] everybody is out and about doing their bits and pieces. So I think the unemployment issue at the time probably had a lot to do with it over there. Too many people wanting to have everything for free, and ‘the government owes me’. I think that attitude doesn’t achieve anything. You know. And lets face it, a lot of people do feel like that. ‘The government owes them. Why should I work. I’ll just spit out all these children and the government will pay for them’ (HP9: 9).

So when the family moved into Harrington Park, they were looking for a different experience. Although as Jenny explained, she didn’t have overly ambitious expectations of community prior to moving in, she was expecting friendly neighbours and was looking forward to her family participating in the community events organised by the developer. After all, this was one of the developer’s selling points when she and her husband bought their land.

I remember they said they had a Regatta Day, which unfortunately due to liability they can’t do anymore. [Residents] used to build their own rafts and race them on the lake. There again that was the community banding together – and it might not have been one neighbour, it could have been 3 or 4 – and they would get together and design this raft and put it all together and we’d see whose floated and whose sank sort of thing. Now they do billy-carts... And it’s a lot of fun. Harrington Park is really family orientated (HP9: 10).

Jenny waxes lyrical about the friendly atmosphere in Harrington Park. “It doesn’t matter whether they’re young or old; everyone says hello” (HP9: 10). She describes the community as “friendly, helpful and non judgemental” (HP9: 10). Her neighbours are particularly friendly, gathering for street parties and taking turns to hold pasta and curry nights. To Jenny community denotes “a place where everybody is friendly. A place where you are not afraid to ask for help and people be there to help you” (HP9: 9) When I asked her whether this sort of community existed in Rosemeadow, she explained:

No. Not like here. Because you don’t have the community activities like here. It was if you happen to be friendly with one or two neighbours, then that was as big a community as you were going to get. Where at least here, it doesn’t just depend on your street. As I said before with the Market Day, and they’re
not anything extravagant. They had stalls and things and we managed to bump into people. And because my parents live on the other side of Harrington Park they can introduce us to people that we would not have normally met. So your acquaintances become greater, and you have the chance to have friendships with people other than those who live in the street (HP9: 9-10).

It is fair to conclude that the level of community sentiment Jenny is experiencing in Harrington Park has exceeded her expectations.

Jenny sees herself living in the estate for quite some time, in fact she says, “I never want to leave here” (HP9: 6). For now Jenny has found a comfortable niche, with a network of extended family and friends within walking distance. The estate’s physical infrastructure, including the primary school, child care centre, cricket pitch, tennis courts and community centre, provides a level of community ‘self-sufficiency’, which Jenny finds extremely appealing (HP9: 8). The social and physical environment of Harrington Park appears to provide Jenny with a sense of social cohesion and security, which contrasts with the difficulties her family experienced in Rosemeadow.

7. 1 Introduction

During the resident interviews it became apparent that previous housing experiences and future expectations influenced informants’ current ideas on community, their desire to support a particular form of communalism, and the modification of their social self-concept in response to their ‘improved’ environment and position in life. This chapter explores some of the factors which motivate the resident’s quest for a utopian living space. As discussed previously, this utopia is not of unrealisable, mythological proportions (Marin 1984), but rather a utopian realism (Giddens 1990). This search for utopia is bound up in the future oriented, modernist project of betterment and life planning.

The chapter is divided into two sections. Utilising Bentham’s notion of motive in esse and motive in prospect (Campbell 1998), the first section investigates prior events or circumstances which motivate the actor’s current action; the motive in esse. For the residents of new housing estates on Sydney’s south-western fringe, these
events include perceived threats associated with public housing enclaves, including crime, incivility and consequent effects on property values; the perceived undermining of a ‘common way of life’ by new migrant settlement patterns; and the ‘economic failure’ of Sydney’s middle ring suburbs. Hence, it deals with factors which threaten the actor’s ontological, economic and physical security.

The second section investigates those future events or circumstances which motivate the actor’s current action and which support the actor’s life planning: the motive in prospect. For the residents of new housing estates on Sydney’s south-western fringe these interrelated factors comprise housing as a wealth creation strategy; the security promised by the ‘good neighbourhood’; and the expectation of certainty and trust produced by a socially compatible, like minded resident population. Hence, it deals with factors residents are seeking to support their ontological, economic and physical security. To assist the descriptive flow of the chapter supporting data tables have been consigned to Appendix 10.

7.2 Motive in Esse

Most of the motivational prior events and circumstances discussed by informants were associated with the competitive urban process of ‘dominance, invasion and succession’. This ecological perspective of the modern city was first expounded by the Chicago School urban sociologists following World War I (Pahl 1970). The city is very much a contested terrain; a site of conflict and competition. This contestation can be observed at both a macro level, within the city and between cities, particularly in the global era, and at a micro neighbourhood level, within the neighbourhood and between suburbs. For instance, Sydney is widely ‘imagined’ to be socio-spatially divided between the wealthy suburbs of the north and east and the ‘uncultured, poor, bland’ suburbs of Sydney’s west (Burchell 2003; Dowling and Mee 2000; Powell 1993). However, within the neighbourhoods of western Sydney, invasion and succession, of a racial and socio-economic dimension, is just as significant a feature. A more detailed discussion of the socio-spatial character of Sydney is provided in the Introduction to the thesis.
7.2.1 Perceived Sites of Social Disorder

Issues of physical security were of particular concern to the informants of Harrington Park and Garden Gates, and greatly influenced their choice of housing.1 Some of the informants described the relief their new housing situation gave them. The following informants’ explanations were typical.

But I think it’s the safeness of the area and the nicer people. I feel safe here. I still look out and see what people leave out on their front lawn of a night time and think ‘oh I wouldn’t leave that out there’. I’m still paranoid about leaving things out. [Is that from when you were living at Macquarie Fields?] Oh, I wouldn’t leave anything out there, it would be gone. (GG3: F1: 11)

[Do you feel that the estate is a safe place to live?] Yes I wouldn’t hesitate to walk the streets at 12 o’clock at night. I’ve done it many times. I’d be looking behind my back at Padstow. (HP4: F: 12)

The desire for a ‘safe’ community as part of the utopian reality reflects Halter’s (1998) experience in the U.S. He explains that:

In almost all consumer research conducted today, the fear of crime and the desire for safety are the most prominent concerns expressed by most housing consumers. Across the country, consumer surveys confirm that enhanced community security adds both perceived and real value to the community (Halter 1998: 8).

For my informants, however, the idea of a ‘safe’ community extended beyond the hardcore crimes of home burglary, car theft, drug dealing and personal assault. It extended into behaviour which did not necessarily violate a particular law, but which violated their moral and social code of conduct (Muncie 2001). Such ‘social disorder’ included noisy neighbours, speeding cars, barking dogs, raucous youth behaviour, vandalism and even ‘bludging’ on the taxpayer.

Two perceived ‘sites’ of social disorder were particularly prominent amongst the residents interviewed: those containing a dense public housing population, and those incorporating high numbers of non-English speaking migrants. In the ‘experience’ of many of the informants, crime and social disorder coalesce within these two sites.

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1 Further, 15% of Resident Survey respondents in both Harrington Park and Garden Gates cited safety issues as being the main reason for their choice of estate, and 74% of Harrington Park respondents believed that Harrington Park was a safer place to live than surrounding areas (compared to 57% of Garden Gates respondents)
So from where do such ‘experiences’ derive? As indicated in Tables 7.1 and 7.2 (Appendix 10), a high proportion of residents of Harrington Park and Garden Gates migrated there from nearby, more established local government areas, which accommodate large public housing estates and which have tended to bear the brunt of the influx of non-English speaking migrants since the 1970s. Hence, many informants formed their views through direct experience of their changing suburb.

However, experiences are also mediated, particularly through newspapers, radio and television (Powell 1993; Dowling and Mee 2000). For instance, the ongoing coverage of Vietnamese drug activity in Cabramatta, the recent sensational trial coverage of a gang of serial rapists of Lebanese origin living in Bankstown², and the wanton trashing of public housing property (a favourite of commercial current affairs programs) connect the spatial and the social, and define these ‘sites’ as risky and unsafe. Hence, residents also interpret social disorder through mediated experiences.

**Public Housing as a Perceived Site of Social Disorder**

Unlike the inner urban, high-rise public housing estates of Europe and the United States, those built in Sydney’s western suburbs following World War II were primarily low density; villas and bungalows on separate lots amassed to form ‘new towns’ on the city’s edge. They were built to house a mix of low-income working families as well as ‘handicapped’, low-income, single-parent households, and often unemployed (Brennan 1973).

In the decades following their construction, the high rise form of public housing in Europe and the United States was held responsible for the crime, social disorder and apparent lack of community which emanated from them (Graham and Clarke 2001). In fact one study even identified a direct relationship between the number of storeys in the block and the incidence of social problems (Coleman 1985). Such explanations contrasted with structural accounts of a social and economic nature, and the social effects of household poverty, poor educational outcomes and peer pressure. Rather

² I have included this incident because the trials were completed shortly before the resident interviews were conducted, and were directly referred to by a number of informants.
than building form, the Sydney based criminologist and director of the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Don Weatherburn (2001) argues that the primary perpetrator of ‘delinquent-prone’ neighbourhoods is peer influence amongst youth. Such neighbourhoods, according to Weatherburn (2001: 2) “provide more opportunities for social interaction between kids already involved in crime and those rendered susceptible to such involvement as a result of poor or ineffective parenting”. Weatherburn here, is not specifically discussing Department of Housing estates. As Randolph and McPherson (2002: 1) note, “social disadvantage and social exclusion are not the preserve of public housing estates”, but can also be found amongst low income, renting households. The physical and social manifestation of public housing estates, however, makes them easily identifiable. Consequently they tend to encapsulate the image of the socially disadvantaged, socially excluded neighbourhood.

It can be inferred then, that although building form may encourage or discourage social interaction, it is the concentration of poverty stricken households that underpins the perception of social disorder on contemporary public housing estates. Since 1975 the public housing estates of western Sydney have been particularly affected by government policies of residualisation (Randolph and McPherson 2002; Paris, Williams and Stimson 1985). As Paris et al (1985: 107) argue, “access to public housing is increasingly restricted to the poorest groups in Australian society”. So rather than these estates housing a mix of employed and welfare dependent households – the social housing model, they increasingly house welfare dependent households which are more likely to be affected by low social and work skills, language barriers, intergenerational unemployment and social dysfunction.

These sites of social disorder have become threatening places for those informants who experienced them directly. Quotes from the female informants below, for instance, described the intimidation they felt living near the public housing estates in Macquarie Field, compared to their experience of living in Garden Gates.
F1: There was a lot of violence and that down there, and gangs. F2: Not where we were. F1: At the Housing Commission. That was Islanders. That was quiet scary down there. They would often get on and off the train and they were loud. And they would have a go at you and they were drinking. At Campbelltown, you get it with the Aborigines. And they’re drunk and abusive. Here it’s great. F2: They’re all Australians actually. (GG3: 7-8)

One Garden Gates informant has carried forward her childhood experience of living close to a public housing site in Berala (Auburn LGA) to her experience of physical security in her current abode in Garden Gates. Her experience resonates with Weatherburn’s hypothesis on the ‘delinquent-prone’ neighbourhood.

We’ve been walking around [Garden Gates] at night, which I certainly would not have done in Liverpool, and certainly would not do in Berala. We used to when we were younger, but I certainly wouldn’t do it now, walk around at night. I don’t think I’d even walk around during the day in Berala... [So what changed in Berala?] ... Across the road there used to be a paddock that was owned by the Education Department. Until I was about 15 there was always horses and sheep on it. But then they sold it to the Department of Housing, and they put – what’s it called – Housing Commission there. So it tended to go down hill after that, with children running wild around the streets, throwing rocks at cars as they were going past, and all sorts of things. They just weren’t supervised. They were left to run around all hours of the night. (GG4: 13)

One resident of Garden Gates had moved from a small private estate close to the public housing estates of Minto because he felt that the area was deteriorating. The move was motivated by his concern for his family’s welfare and quality of life.

[And what was it about Garden Gates that you liked?] It was a nice new estate. The houses appeared to be of a similar size. Large houses. There were no housing commission problems out here, because it’s away from all that. (GG9: 7)

The purpose here is not to disparage the socially disadvantaged residents of public housing estates. Rather, it is to examine, from the informants’ perspectives, their experiences of living near public housing estates, and to trace how the insecurity and intimidation many of them felt became a motivating factor for relocating into their new estate.

Apart from the physical aspects, there was also an economic aspect to the experience of living next to public housing. That is, informants considered that public housing
has a deleterious effect on surrounding property values. The motivation behind one female informant moving from Rosemeadow to Harrington Park reflects this.

We over capitalised on our first place [in Rosemeadow]. We spent a lot of money on doing it up, back yard, extension and that, and we never made it back. We probably lost 45 grand on that house. So, yeh, we just wanted to build somewhere where we weren’t going to lose any money. [Why did you feel that you wouldn’t lose money here?] To live in Narellan or Camden it was the better end of Campbelltown. (Rosemeadow) was a young area, a lot of Housing Commission. We lived quite close to that. And we just wanted to get out of that. We wanted to be far enough away I suppose from the stigma of Campbelltown (HP6: 5).

The informants of Harrington Park and Garden Gates clearly saw a relationship between low status (‘stigma’), property values and proximity to public housing estates with its concentration of a particular social strata.

**Ethno-cultural Succession as a Perceived Site of Social Disorder**

Perhaps even more than the fear of the effects of social disorder symbolised by the public housing estates, racial tension was an underlying motivation behind the move to Camden, and more specifically Harrington Park and Garden Gates. The process of demographic change in the middle ring suburbs brought about by the influx of ethnic migration, particularly since 1973, is an example of invasion and succession. The effect of this as a motivating factor of resident relocation will be examined using the case of Liverpool.

Liverpool represented the environment informants were trying to move away from: busy, inadequately planned, over developed, ‘smelly’, multi-cultural, dangerous, and highly welfare dependent. The legacy of the Green Valley public housing ‘experiment’ in the 1960s is also significant. A number of informants either grew up in Liverpool, or lived there prior to moving to Camden LGA. All the informants had an opinion on the district, and used it as a reference point with which to compare their current housing location.
Liverpool: A Study of Domination, Invasion and Succession

Located on the banks of the Georges River, Liverpool is located some 40 kilometres south-west of Sydney’s central business district. It is an old town by Australian standards; the first of the Macquarie towns. It was founded in 1810 and named after the Earl of Liverpool, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies at that time (Tan 1985). It seems that the young colony had great expectations of the new settlement. Before this, however, the land was occupied by the Darug people and the neighbouring Tharawal and Gandangara tribes who knew the area as Gunyungalung (Keating 1996).

Liverpool was settled as a farming town and dispatch centre for produce. Initially the route to Sydney was a nautical one, via the Georges River. The long road to Sydney was completed in 1814 using convict road gangs. The four hour trip to Sydney involved 27 bridges and numerous tollgates, the last of which was not removed until 1873. It was with some irony then, that when the only flood free route to Sydney was opened in the early 1990s it was a private (M5) tollway. As Keating (1996: 15) reflects, “Liverpool has long been a town whose fortunes were affected by its relationship to transport routes”.

In 1913 an extensive army base was established at Holsworthy, and in 1914 an internment camp was established in the area to hold male enemy aliens (mainly Germans but also Italians), and a small number of prisoners-of-war. Electricity was not connected until 1925, some 37 years after it was installed in the country town of Tamworth (Barker 1996), and electrification of the railway line did not occur until decades later, indicating the relative importance of the town on the wider political and economic radar. Liverpool has never attracted the level of industry needed to support its population growth, due in part to poor local planning, political self interest, lack of public infrastructure and poor transport access. Since the first land grants in the area in the 1790s, property speculation rather than industry has been one

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1 In fact, one informant now in her late 50s discussed how she used to travel to her first secretarial job in Sydney on the daily steam train from Liverpool. “And when you’d say you lived in Liverpool, people would say oh, you know ‘western suburbs – do you catch the steam train?’ And we actually did catch the steam train. There was one steam train and we used to catch that in the morning. But yeh, it was a good place.” (HP8: 4)
of the drivers of personal wealth accumulation in Liverpool. Today, although there is a degree of social and economic growth in new release areas on the LGA fringe, Liverpool city can be counted amongst the stagnant middle ring suburbs of western Sydney.

A Migrant’s Story

Directly after World War II the population of Liverpool was 12,642 (Spearritt and Demarco 1988: 136-7). This more than doubled in the next 15 years to 30,874 by 1961. This was due to the growth of low income private subdivisions to cater for the post-War housing boom, and the influx of post-War immigrants, particularly from Italy, Malta, Poland and Greece. One of the informants, ‘Maria’ now living in Harrington Park, gave an insight into her experience of migrating from Italy to Liverpool during this period.

[So you were born in Italy?] Yes and I migrated in 1954. We arrived in Erskineville and we lived there for 10 months. And then we moved from there to Prestons (a suburb of Liverpool)... [Was that hard on your family?] Yes. Very hard. Very hard times. My father purchased a property with two of his sisters and their families. We all lived in that three bedroom home. And eventually my father bought them out... He sold that and purchased another property on the Hume Highway at Crossroads. [And you had a market garden there?] Yes. And the house is still there. It was only 5 acres. I was there until I was married at 17. It was tough, very difficult...

There were no boys in the family so the girls had to do the boys’ work at home on the farm and stuff like that. [And did your mum get to learn English?] Well she was always at home. She never went out to work. [Do you think she ever felt a bit isolated?] Ahm... she never complained. She took it that was the way it was, you know. She accepted it, because where we came from in Italy, it was like in a village with farms you know... It was very hard for her, because my father was like a dictator virtually. It was his way or no way. It was very, very hard. (HP10: 1-2)

Green Valley

A further spike in population growth occurred in the late 1960s as the suburbs of the infrastructure poor ‘Green Valley Garden Suburb Housing Project’ were completed (Keating 1996: 197). Much of the private and public housing stock built after World

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4 Between 1960 and 1968 the population of the city of Liverpool increased from 33,000 to 74,000 people (Keating 1996: 199)
War II in Liverpool was made of prefabricated fibro. The material was a substitute for brick and timber, which remained in short supply after the war. Fibro enabled working people to invest in their own home through 'sweat equity'; that is, asset building through one's own physical labour (Powell 1993). However, forty years on much of the housing stock of Liverpool is substandard.

Liverpool had long been a working class town. However, the development of Green Valley brought a notoriety to Liverpool that it had not previously experienced. In 1966 about 60% of the population of Green Valley was under 20 years of age. The mere concentration of youth in the area meant that 'delinquency' was an observable problem, and consequently newsworthy (Powell 1993). The suburb became known as 'Dodge City' (Keating 1996: 202). One Garden Gates informant now in her late 40s who grew up in Liverpool, described her experience of Liverpool’s rapid development during this period.

[What was life like growing up in Liverpool?] It was good, yeh. Liverpool was very much like what Camden is. You knew everybody. That was before Green Valley started. I think I was about 14 or 15 when Green Valley was developed. [So did that change things in Liverpool?] Yeh, a lot more people came into the area... and they brought problems, like they have problems in Campbelltown with Airds and Claymore. People that lived in the city and were more streetwise than most of the kids in Liverpool. [And so you saw a social change from that time?] Yeh. I remember I used to have a friend who went to Liverpool Girls High School. She was tough, but she wouldn’t swear or do anything wrong. She had a fight in the park in Liverpool, and I thought gee I’ve never seen a fight before. It was just not a done thing.

[And what about your impression now?] Ahm, Liverpool is busy. [Do you go there much?] No. It smells. I just find that once you get to the Cross Roads you can really smell the car fumes. It just gets to me. (GG8: 10-11)

**Succession and Socio-Demographic Change in Liverpool**

Since these informants’ youth, the socio-demographic changes in Liverpool have been quite spectacular, and no more so than over the past decade. For instance, in 2001 the population of Liverpool was 154,286, an increase of 57.1% since 1991. Of

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5 Airds and Claymore are public housing estates in the Campbelltown LGA, built during the 1970s.
6 Many of the new public housing residents of Green Valley were relocated from inner city terraces, particularly around Alexandria and Surrey Hills.
this population, only 55.6% of residents were born in Australia, compared to 66.3% in 1991, a decrease of 10.7%; and 50.7% of people spoke only English at home, compared to 65.8% of people in 1991, a decrease of 15.1% (ABS Census 2001). The extent of ethno-cultural change in Liverpool (along with other older suburbs of western Sydney) over the past decade can be appreciated further, when compared with census data from other western Sydney statistical local areas (see Table 7.3 Appendix 10 and Table 6.2 Chapter 6). These figures highlight the extent of these changes in the established, middle-ring suburbs of Liverpool, Auburn and Bankstown, compared to the outlying SLAs of Camden, Campbelltown and Blue Mountains.

One informant was particularly articulate in explaining his observations of the process of suburban succession in Liverpool, and other areas of Sydney. The change he perceived in Ingleburn was one of the motivating circumstance for his move into Garden Gates.

[Do you ever go shopping up at Liverpool?] Occasionally, but not often. [What is your perception of Liverpool?] Ahm, it’s changing, changing like a lot of the suburbs with the influx of different people. In some ways certain areas are being degraded, losing their character, due to the type of people who are taking over the place. [What type of people are taking over the place?] Oh you’re getting different walks of life, different people from different countries, buying up shops and selling their wares. I think its probably degrading – oh not degrading, changing, making the place look bad in some ways.. It hasn’t hit here yet. But obviously it’s happened in Ingleburn. It’s started to change Ingleburn to a Cabramatta type place. And the same thing in Liverpool… Once they get an influx it’s like it changes the outlook of the place. Hurstville is a prime example. It used to be a beautiful place, but it’s changing. It’s going down the tubes the way it is going with all the shops that are around. It makes the area look grubby, dirty, unclean. (GG9: 14)

The Effect of Succession on Physical and Ontological Security

One informant, who had lived all her life in Liverpool prior to moving into Harrington Park, explained that it was her adult daughters that eventually pressured her husband and herself to move.

Liverpool had changed so much, that’s one of the reasons why we wanted to get out… And then one day our daughters had been together and they said, we want you to move. You can’t stay here… And so with the help of our eldest
daughter we were able to build a new house and she helped us financially, and then when we had sold the old house we gave her back the money... It was with her help that we were able to do that. We really wanted to move anyway, and they came up with the idea of how they could help us. So we said, ok. And we went with it. (HP8: 4)

While her daughters felt a degree of physical insecurity on behalf of their parents, for the informant herself, it was more a matter of losing the sense of the familiar that underpinned her ontological security.

[And so you lived in Liverpool all that time until you moved here? How has it changed?] Well the streets have all changed with the traffic and so much traffic, and the type of people that are living there now. Because you’ve got all the you know, different types of ethnic people, and it’s just changed. It has grown, but not in a good way. And the type of shops had changed to cater for them, which is the way things go. (HP8: 5)

The effect of succession on one’s ontological security was effectively demonstrated by ‘Maria’, whose own migratory experience was described earlier.

When I first came to Liverpool I felt that I was the new comer. Out of place because I was Italian. But now going to Liverpool I feel that I’m the Australian and you see all these other ethnic people. I feel sort of different, you know. Like where Westfields is was the school, you know. And now you go there and it is all ethnic. Even the people who own the shops. (HP10: 13)

‘I’m not racist, but...’

The following informants’ explanations of their dislike of going into Liverpool indicates that there are genuine physical and psycho-social fears underpinning their racial intolerance, which makes such intolerance more difficult to combat.

[Do you ever go to Campbelltown?] No. [Or Liverpool?] I go to Liverpool to go shopping, but only because Toys R Us are there. I don’t like it. I could never live at Liverpool, ever. [Why?] It’s a bit dirty. I’m not racist, don’t think I’m racist when I say this, but I just think there is a multitude of nationalities out there. Ahm and I think that you get that at Campbelltown as well. [Why is that a negative for you?] Because I don’t like it. I’m not racist. But they scare me. (GG1: 11)

[So why would you never go to Liverpool?] F: I don’t feel safe there. [What do you think makes it unsafe?] M: Without being racist, the impact of the ethnic community, ahm the attitude of the young people... We’re not racist. But it’s their attitude to you. Like we’re a lower class person. F: That’s like what I said to you about the Lebanese guy that owns the pre-school. He looks down on women because of his race. (GG2: 12-13)
And so now when you go to Liverpool, the influx of new Australians, they're bringing their cultures in but they're not getting the Australian culture. And I think that's happening in a lot of places. So the culture there, I don't want to sound racist in any way, what I'm saying is their cultures come here but they're not changing to take in the culture that Australian society is based on. And I think that's a problem. (GG6: 11)

In his history of Liverpool Keating (1993: 214) noted that:

The story of Liverpool is very much a story of adjustment to change... And there has been a constant need for the local people to redefine their sense of place and identity in relation to the wider context.

Rather than 'adjusting' to change, however, the former residents of Liverpool I interviewed, had decided to redefine their identity by moving out to a seemingly more secure neighbourhood. One informant in particular summed up the sentiment. When I asked her what she like most about the estate, she replied:

A nice standard of people live here. [Why would that be?] Maybe because of the price of the places. I don't know. What I'm seeing – this is going to sound very racist – I think there are a lot of Australians here. (GG3: F1: )

7.2.2 'Value for Money' and the Fibro Legacy

A further motivation underpinning residents' move out to the urban fringe is the legacy of fibro housing in the older, declining suburbs of western Sydney. Following World War II, these suburbs expanded rapidly as a result of the pent up demand for housing. This was a period in which first-home buyers were able to secure their own version of the 'Australian dream' by securing a block of land and a new home in an infrastructure-poor subdivision on the urban fringe. Although not always a full 'quarter acre', housing lots were large by today's standard. The typical house was small, basic (three bedroom, 'L' shaped lounge / dining), austere and probably made of fibro. One informant's account of growing up in Panania7 typifies the post-War housing experience in the suburbs.

[Did your parents own their own home in Panania?] Yep. My father built the house in Panania... He was very good with his hands. [What was it made out of?] It was a fibro house. I think he built most of it himself, either with his father, who was very good with his hands. [Is that the house that your mum still lives in?] Yep. I mean dad extended it all as the family grew. So it's still

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7 Panania is located in the south-west Sydney local government area of Bankstown. When this informant grew up there in the late 50s, early 60s it was a fringe location surrounded by bush
there. [Is it on a big block of land?] It’s a big block of land in these times. It’s a deep block, like the old style houses are. Like 150 foot long. So these days they put duplexes or townhouses on them. (GG9: 7)

While post-War working class housing might have satisfied the aspirations of its occupants at the time, by today’s standards such basic housing demands either extensive renovation or a ‘knock down / rebuild’. Although this is becoming increasingly common, it is an expensive proposition. However, as the above informant alluded, it is more likely that such housing will be demolished to make way for medium density redevelopment. Such ‘redevelopment sites’ attract premium prices, putting them out of the reach of ordinary home buyers. And if a purchaser does go down the route of extensively renovating or rebuilding, in the future they may well end up with medium density next door. Hence, it becomes a more attractive, affordable and secure option to build a large, contemporary home amongst other large, contemporary homes in a new estate on the urban fringe. As these residents of Harrington Park and Garden Gates explained:

F: Well actually we looked around Padstow first, and they were all just old houses, and we thought we’d like a new one... [What is it about building a new house that was so appealing?] M: We found that it wasn’t really any more to build a house that you want, than to buy a house that someone had already built which might meet your needs. It was about the same price. (HP4: 4-5)

But even to buy a built house on an ordinary block, everything had to have work done on it. So we thought we’d have a look [at Harrington Park] and as it worked out, we built a beautiful home, put a pool in, landscaped and came out of it a lot cheaper than if we’d bought something in Silverdale. (HP7: 9)

[And did you look to buy in the Sutherland shire?] M: Yes. But once again, what we paid for this house, in the Sutherland Shire we would have got us an old fibro house which you would have to knock down and renovate. And it would have been out at Engadine or Heathcote. And it’s too far out. .. And here we’ve got a new home with minimal sort of work. (GG2: 4)

One consequence of this ad hoc form of urban consolidation, that is, replacing free standing homes on large blocks with medium density, is that the comparatively cheaper accommodation produced is attractive for rental investors, and draws lower income residents to the area, including certain migrant groups from disadvantaged backgrounds who are caught in a cycle of poverty and unemployment (Badcock and Beer 2000). (Comparative ABS census data in Table 7.4 illustrates this situation see
Appendix 10) Auburn and Bankstown are older, lower-socio-economic middle ring suburbs of western Sydney. In both these statistical local areas the proportion of detached dwellings markedly declined between 1991 and 2001. However, over the same period the proportion of rental occupation substantially increased, and owner occupation decreased. Further, both these areas experienced a dramatic decline in the proportion of Australian born residents. These demographic changes were contrary to those in the outer suburban SLA of Camden over the same period, which experienced a slight increase in the proportion of detached dwelling and owner occupation, no change in the proportion of renters, but a slight decrease in Australian born residents. In 2001 median rent and weekly income in Auburn and Bankstown were substantially lower than in Camden, and unemployment substantially higher.

Hence, such redevelopment effects demographic change and suburban succession. Baum and Hassan (1999) view this as part of the normal ‘filtering process’, which frees up low income housing. They argue further, that ‘renovating’ such housing impedes the filtering process which in turn reduces housing options for lower income families.

One informant, who grew up in Liverpool, explained his experience of this ‘filtering process’:

Those people (new migrant groups) tend to congregate around cheaper housing areas because they can afford that. And they stick together. [And Liverpool’s got cheaper housing?] Well I think it does now. It’s gone that way because it’s becoming older… They’re knocking a lot of the older houses down and building town houses. (GG6: 11)

And when I asked the former informant (GG9) whether he would ever consider moving back to Padstow, where he grew up he explained:

Probably not. It’s changing. [How is it changing?] There’s a lot of problems occurring over there due to the change in people that live there. [How have the people changed?] Just a different style of people. There appears to be more crimes, more bag snatching and things like that. [So who do you think commits those sorts of crimes?] Ahm… the local new people that have come into the area, which have a different attitude in life I suppose. It’s not as safe as it used to be. (GG9: 5)
Baum and Hassan (1999) argue that impeding the filtering process may force first home buyers to rely on new construction on the urban fringe. However in western Sydney, historically the location of lower income and first home buyers many of whom were displaced from the gentrifying inner suburbs (Stimson 1982), the urban fringe is becoming increasingly the locale of middle and higher income earners forced out to the fringe by redevelopment costs and the increase in medium density.

Due to its post-War application, fibro has a poor image. It has become a referential symbol of cheap, aging housing in low income areas. Further, as Barry Humphries alludes to in the foreword to The Fibro Frontier (Pickett 1997), the fibro house hints at dubious moral behaviour:

> There was another kind of house which one never found in the ‘nice’ suburbs. The fibro house – it was rarely called a home. … From the beginning, fibro was always a little ‘déclassé’ and though it is true that there were whole streets of houses in this material… these were not ‘nice’ homes by Melbourne standards for they often had corrugated iron roofing and a Cyclone front fence. Broken toys littered the yard and a pile of empty Victoria Bitter bottles were not seldom stacked up the sidewalk (Humphries cited Pickett 1997: 4).

One Harrington Park resident confirmed Humphries’ depiction, by unwittingly highlighting the detrimental effect on a neighbourhood’s housing standard, and consequently on surrounding property values.

> [Harrington Park] was sold more like a second home buyers’ estate, so that the level of building, what was built, was more substantial. They couldn’t put up a fibro shack. A minimum standard was set, so that you knew what the estate would look like… That was appealing. ..You’re looking at setting a standard so that your investment won’t drop. (HP2: 4)

Fibro is no longer employed in the way it was in the post-War years. It is doubtful that the ‘fibro shack’ would even pass today’s stringent building code. Yet it has left both a physical and symbolic legacy in western Sydney.

### 7.2.3 Tangible Risk Factors and the Threat to Ontological Security

The motives *in esse* for the seeking of utopia were generally related to informants’ individual assessments of local conditions in their prior residential location. Such assessment was made either by personal experience or mediated imagery. Dissatisfaction with former neighbourhoods had both tangible and intangible
foundations. The tangible reasons closely reflected Parkes, Kearns and Atkinsons’ (2002) argument that neighbourhood dissatisfaction is closely associated with housing satisfaction, the general appearance of the neighbourhood, noise, and the perception of crime and unfriendliness. Hence, apart from housing satisfaction, all the other aspects presented informants with tangible risk factors.

When the social environment is no longer consistent and where cultural and social diversity interrupts processes of mutual knowledge and patterns of common behaviour, as has occurred in many of the older, established suburbs of western Sydney over the past few decades, ontological security is threatened and anxiety is produced. However, motives in esse are only part of the motivational consideration.

7.3 Motive in Prospect

The future events or circumstances which appeared to motivate informants’ attempts to secure their world (Bauman 2001) revolved around housing, and more particularly home ownership as an indicator of identity, as a means of controlling the domestic environment, and as a wealth creation strategy; and the ‘nice’ neighbourhood for physical, economic and ontological security.

7.3.1 Housing and Security

[How important is home ownership to you?] I believe that it is very important. It sets you up for a secure future. (HP1: 2)

For the informants of Harrington Park and Garden Gates, security through housing revolved around the idea of home-ownership. There is nothing particularly unique in this. Some 40% of households in each Australian capital city own their dwellings, and between 23-33% are paying off a housing loan (Forster 1999). Australia has had a long relationship with home-ownership; from the 19th Century influx of British migrants seeking the ‘working man’s paradise’, to the bi-partisan political policy, particularly following WWII. As Troy (2000: 717) notes:

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8 Approximately 50% of all dwellings in Australia were owner-occupied in 1891, which by international standards was high (Buckley and Wheelwright 1988: 161).
The policy of home ownership was designed to produce a patriotic, co-operative and cohesive society - one which agreed with Menzies' view of the world, that is: he wanted a docile, compliant society.

However, the relationship between security and home-ownership is multi-faceted. In the first instance, home-ownership forms an integral component of the residents' identity, conferring a moral superiority, and separating them from the less socially and economically successful renters (Henderson 1995). Such an emotional construct incorporates idealised notions of family life, and citizenship. One informant, who owned a house in Harrington Park, explained her experience of becoming a renter after her marriage failed. It provides an insight into the moral inferiority conferred on renters, not least by 'gate-keeping' real estate agents, and the experience of renters as 'second class citizens'.

[What did it feel like to go from home owner to renter?] A bit scabby. When I went to the real estate to ask about rental properties, you definitely got treated like you were a second class citizen. Like you really were like, glared at. And they only give you the list of what they think you can afford... They discriminate, definitely... I'd never been through it before. People had told me that that was what it was like and I'd say you're only imagining things. Because friends that have been through it, it's normally been at a time in their life when they're going through a lot of emotional upheaval. And then they felt awkward having to go in. They felt like they were going into social security to ask for a pension. They said it was really degrading... It was a different experience, especially when I've always paid for everything myself... So yeh, I love owning my own home, and doing it up. (HP7: 8-9)

Conversely, this attitude was typical of Harrington Park informants to renters.

We take a lot of pride in our home and the other people here have the same idea. We lived near a lot of rentals in our old place and quite often they don't take as much care. And we thought that maybe that would change. But it doesn't we still have quite a number of rentals here who don't always look after their place as well, and it can be a little bit frustrating. (HP11: 4)

Home-ownership was part of residents' value system which was passed down from their parents, and was in the process of being handed on to their own children. Home ownership here is the family norm. This is a form of 'social capital' that is rarely discussed. Discussions on the household as a site of social capital usually revolves around its effect on a child's educational attainment (Buchel and Duncan 1998; Powell and Parcel 1999, Carbonaro 1998) and their social and cognitive development.
(Bianchi and Robinson 1997), rather than on the family norms which underpin wealth creation. These informants explained the process of passing on the norm of home-ownership.

[How important to you is home ownership?] I think that it is important. [Why?] I think probably because I was brought up that way. [Your parents owned their own home?] Yes and my in-laws owned their own home. So we just continue on. [Was it hard for your daughters to get into home ownership?] No. no, very easy. The one that has the two little boys, they built a house out on the other side of Narellan and had it paid off in 5 years. She just put everything, all the money went on the house... The other one, they’ve had a couple of places, but they’ve had no problem. (HP8: 5)

We encouraged the girls to build before they were married, and they’ve always had their own homes. [Your parents owned their own homes?] F: yes. (HP3: F: 3)

Apart from the moral and emotional value, home ownership was recognised for its ‘use value’, providing physical security,

The thing is it can’t be taken away from you. You can’t be put out. It’s always been. It’s just my upbringing too. [Your parents owned there own home?] F1. Yes. My father built the house at Lakemba... (GG3: F1: 4)

As well as its economic value, retirement being a particularly common theme.

When you retire, you think even at 60 or 65 years of age, if you’re on a restricted income, you still need to find $350 a week for rent. So what a hole in any investment or pension. So when I retire, I think home ownership will be more important than now. Your goal is to work towards it. (GG2: 4)

The multi-faceted value of home-ownership provided informants with a ‘protective cocoon’, (Badcock and Beer 2000: 4) that was integral to sustaining their ontological security. In this regard housing provides a site of social and material constancy; a spatial context for the daily routine, a place away from surveillance and social scrutiny and a secure base for ongoing identity maintenance (Dupuis and Thorns 1998).

Trading Up and Moving Out – The Housing Career

However, owning a house for many middle income households in Sydney’s west is rarely a static thing (Clark, Deurloo and Dieleman 2003). Clark et.al. (2003) note that the ‘housing career’ (Paris 1993) in the American experience can involve five to
nine moves over the life-course, with relatively stable periods in between moves. They also observe that,

in economically vibrant housing markets with rapidly growing populations and a high level of new construction of dwellings, households move more than in housing markets with a more stable population and lower levels of new constructions of homes (Clark et. al. 2003: 147).

Badcock and Beer (2000: 2) make the disparaging observation that “most people really don’t understand property”. They argue that people tend to believe the illusion that home ownership benefits all equally, and that success on the ‘housing escalator’ is a matter of luck within a housing cohort, or confined to market players who ‘work the cycles’. Savage et. al. (1992) note that geographical location, length of time in owner occupation, access to finance, the value of properties purchased and the timing within the property cycle are important factors to housing success.

All the informants I spoke to used the strategy of ‘trading up’ to create petty property wealth, and although they may not have ‘fully understood property’, the strategy appeared to work successfully for them. Housing here was not just about utility, but was also viewed as an entrepreneurial activity. Maria explained her experience of trading up from poor beginnings, in south-west Sydney over the past 30 years.

(Home ownership) is very important. But you’ve got to do it in stages. The first home we had had two bedrooms, and a laundry and toilet out the back. We had no TV, no radio. [Where was that?] Cabramatta. And from there, before my first child was born, I said to my husband we’re going to need a bath or something when the baby is born, and again he said fine, you go out and have a look. You know what we can afford. So that’s what I did. I saw the agent in Liverpool and we found the house… We sold Cabramatta and bought Liverpool – Edward Street, off Amalfi Street. A weatherboard because we couldn’t afford brick, three bedroom, it had no garage. It wasn’t sewered. But that’s all we could afford. (HP10: 8)

From there the family moved to a one acre block in Camden in order to accommodate their trucking business. They lived there for 16 years before moving three years ago into an impressive house they had built in Harrington Park.

As discussed earlier in the thesis, owner-occupied housing is an important aspect of contemporary middle-class formation (Savage et. al. 1992). However, ‘class
formation' in this instance, revolves around the capturing of cultural assets linked to housing location. Hence,

The growth of owner-occupation and the salience of cultural assets has led to a growing concern to invest in cultural assets in order to provide the kinds of housing that enhance cultural distinctiveness. As a result, developers have begun to produce certain types of housing targeted at key social groups (Savage et. al. 1992: 94).

All but two of the informants⁹ were second or third home buyers. Most of the estates of Camden are positioned as second and third home buying areas by real estate agents, thus alluding to larger more glamorous homes, and an anticipated greater financial return on the ‘housing escalator’. In other words they suggest a more secure investment and social environment. One couple, who moved from the first home buyers’ suburb of St Helens Park in Campbelltown to Garden Gates, explained how they identified with the ‘second home buyer’ disposition and accepted the expert advice of the local real estate agents:

F: One of the real estate guys who came around to give us a valuation on our home he said, don’t buy in this area. He said go over and buy in the Camden area, on the other side of the freeway. [Why did he say that?] F: Because of valuation wise. M: You see, we wanted to take a step up. We were what they call a second home buyer. And we were advised by several real estates, we were lookin’ over at Spring Hill even, but they said no, if you are a second home buyer they recommended staying on this side of Narellan Road, rather than the other side. And that was the real estates. And not knowing the area, you’re guided by what they say. (GG2: 6)

Hence, a relationship is established here between housing security and the distinctive or fashionable neighbourhood.

7.3.2 Security through Neighbourhood

The neighbourhood is where the home’s use, psychic and exchange values are most capable of being exploited. Neighbourhoods are competitive, comparative social markers of status and lifestyle. Even more than this, the neighbourhood “can either influence one’s social position or have it determined for one, according to the type of neighbourhood one inhabits and creates” (Kearns and Parkinson 2001: 2107). The neighbourhood is both a source of opportunity and constraint. It is through the

⁹ Both of these informants were first home buyers in the newer section of Garden Gates, which was developed during the Federal Government’s First Home Buyers’ Grant scheme.
neighbourhood that housing “enhances cultural distinctiveness” (Savage et. al. 1992). The informants of Harrington Park and Garden Gates understood the relationship between housing and neighbourhood well, although some came to this knowledge via the misfortune of over capitalising on their first home. Logan and Molotch (1987) reflect the attitude and practice of Harrington Park and Garden Gates residents, when they argue that, those that can afford to, choose to live

where the character of fellow residents is assured by the costs of living there and the presumed reputeability of people so heavily rewarded by society. They oppose public housing, dense residential development, or any other land-use change that might lower the ‘tone’ of the area. (Logan and Molotch 1987: 120).

On cue, when Claudia Taranto (2002), of Radio National Encounter program asked residents of Harrington Park what they liked most about their estate, they replied:

We really like the look, particularly the style of home and the quality homes and the way people present their homes. We take a lot of pride in our own home. We felt that, we got the impression that other people were doing the same thing. And we really liked that. We felt that values would improve too, the way people present their homes. (R1 cited Taranto 2002)

There are a lot of private houses. We’ve found that where there are a lot of private houses, there’s a better standard of people. That’s why I live here. [CT: What do you mean a better standard of people?] Ah.. There’s no housing commission houses. Like you go around here and there’s no wrecks in people’s gardens. Most people here are just trying to make a living, trying to own their own houses, there’s no vandalism or graffiti around or anything like that. (R4 cited Taranto 2002)

Such responses mirrored those of the residents I interviewed; for instance this explanation from a newly retired couple, who had recently moved into Harrington Park after spending 35 years in Engadine:

M: The children here are very polite. They talk to you. You know? [Why do you think they are like that?] M: Because of the quality of the people. See the houses as you drove in. People take pride in their house. If you take pride in the house, you will take pride in your children. F: I think people may be a middle class type of person in this estate, and you know, that’s the way they bring their children up. They can obviously afford to live in here. A lot of them send their children to private schools. (HP3: 4)

‘Quality’ was a notion frequently referred to by Harrington Park informants. It was a term that implied a ‘pecuniary aesthetic’, and a particular social status derived from
the accrual of social and cultural capital. In turn these attributes were expected to protect their petty property investment. Social and cultural capital within the master planned community in particular, derives from the expectations of residents, that other residents will behave in a similar manner to themselves in terms of sociability (friendliness and consideration), abiding by the restrictive covenants, maintaining gardens, supervising their children’s activities and other such behaviour that goes towards maintaining the impression of being a great community in which to live. Being part of a ‘great community’ not only has social benefits, but translates into the protection of property values.

*Pecuniary Aesthetic and the ‘Lawn Norm’*

In his ‘theory of the leisure class’ Veblen (1953) discussed the idea of certain objects or ‘articles’ adhering to a particular ‘code of pecuniary beauty’. In this regard, beauty was concerned with an object being endowed with ‘pecuniary repute’, rather than being beautiful in the ‘conventional sense’. Such objects, according to Veblen, varied from class to class. The ‘code of pecuniary beauty’ is not dissimilar to Bourdieu’s (1998: 178) consideration of the class consumption of ‘cultural goods’ and the ‘symbolic profits’ which emanate. Symbolic profits derive from symbolic capital. In this regard symbolic capital is “any property (any form of capital whether physical, economic, cultural or social) when it is perceived by social agents endowed with categories of perception which cause them to know it and to recognise it, to give it value” (Bourdieu 1998: 47).

Informants from Harrington Park, more so than in Garden Gates, perhaps because of its proximity to native bush land which defies suburban orderliness and control, strove for a ‘code of pecuniary beauty’. The code incorporated the style and size of housing and maintenance of lawns and gardens, and in terms of the wider development, the presentation of the estate, in particular the lake, the mature deciduous trees reminiscent of an English village rather than a dry, hot Australian settlement, and the maintenance of communal property, parks and gardens. Hence the ‘code of pecuniary beauty’ was a component of the ‘community compact’
(discussed in more detail in the following chapter) between the developer and residents.

[What attracted you to Harrington Park rather than say Garden Gates or Mt Annan?] I think when you drive in, the impression you receive like the lake being there, the overall impression of the first part, early on. Yes, I think it was the overall impression of a prestige estate. (HP1: 3)

[What is it that gives the estate that nice feeling?] I think the lake is a help... And the houses are lovely. And I just felt it was a better area, a better classed area [Do you mean in the way people behave?] Well, I don’t know about that, no. It was just the feeling I had. It was always kept nice, with the trees. And people look after their gardens. But I think the lake was the big thing. (HP8: 6)

One Veblenian ‘article’ which has transcended the centuries to become one of the most potent symbols of pecuniary beauty in Harrington Park, as well as most other prestige suburban estates, is the manicured lawn. While in Veblen’s (1953: 98-99) day the “close cropped lawn” was “to the taste of the well-to-do classes of the Western world”, in contemporary times it remains a discriminating object, albeit a cultural marker of the morally sound, hardworking suburban middle class (Lippard 1997), rather than of the leisure class of the 19th century.

At the neighbourhood level, the ‘code of pecuniary beauty’ relies on the commitment of the community members, to ensure a ‘pecuniary’ return, or ‘symbolic profit’. In this regard, Bourdieu argues that “like a club founded on the active exclusion of undesirable people, the fashionable neighbourhood symbolically consecrates its inhabitants by allowing each one to partake of the capital accumulated by the inhabitants as a whole” (Bourdieu 1999: 129). The social norm of garden maintenance is extremely strong in Harrington Park, and is an example of the effect of social capital at the neighbourhood level. Adherence to such a norm reflects Coleman’s arguments that norms are “purposively generated, in that those persons who initiate or help maintain a norm see themselves as benefiting from its being observed or harmed by its being violated” (Coleman 1990: 242). Pertinent to the neighbourly interactions within a housing estate, Bott (1959: 204) has argued that “gossip is one of the chief means by which norms are stated and re-affirmed.” However ‘social comparison’ within a network (Erickson 1988: 99) and the
expectation of positive outcomes - in this case symbolic profit - are the primary factors underpinning norm compliance in Harrington Park.

The *power* of the ‘lawn norm’ was exemplified in a post-interview discussion I had with the Henrys, a semi-retired couple (HP8) that had recently moved from Liverpool to Harrington Park. Their situation exemplifies the power of social comparison in norm compliance. The day following the formal interview, Mrs Henry telephoned me to explain that she had forgotten to tell me something she thought was really important to the couple’s experience of living in Harrington Park. She explained that when she and her husband moved into the estate, they had to “become gardeners”. When they lived in Liverpool they didn’t really have a garden, just a “bindi patch” for a front yard. When I asked her why they felt they now had to take up gardening, Mrs Henry replied, “to keep up with everybody else” in Harrington Park (HP8: 12).

This experience reflects Robert Putnam’s (1993) own experience of front yard aesthetic. He explains:

> The norm of keeping lawns leaf-free is powerful in my neighbourhood, however, and it Constrains my decision as to whether to spend Saturday afternoon watching TV. This norm is not actually taught in local schools, but neighbours mention it when newcomers move in, and they reinforce it in frequent autumnal chats, as well as by obsessive raking of their own yards. Non-rakers risk being shunned at neighbourhood events, and non-raking is rare. Even though the norm has no legal force, and even though I prefer watching the Buckeyes to raking up leaves, I usually comply with the norm. (Putnam 1993: 171)

For Putnam (1993: 170), this situation is an example of the norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement, which are a “special feature” of social capital. Such ‘norms of common consent’ (Bott 1959), as the Henrys discovered, are learned and sustained through network ties (Wellman 1988), and to a lesser extent sanctions. Where sanctions do occur, they are invariably low-key, for instance being shunned by neighbours. Importantly, conformity to norms of common consent such as the ‘lawn norm’ occurs only if to do so provides an individual benefit (Bott 1959).
According to Putnam (1993), the social capital produced here, can be considered a ‘public good’, although a better term for it might be a group good, as the ‘good’ is neither universally or equally accessible, but held and maintained by the network producing it. On the other hand it produces a private benefit, by allowing the members of the network to profit from the capital accumulated by the collective as a whole (Bourdieu 1999).

The lawn then, as an object of pecuniary beauty, is an identifier of the people that live there. The lawn presents as a ‘moral landscape’ (Lippard 1997), conferring a particular set of values and attitudes on the neighbourhood, signifying it as a ‘good’ neighbourhood, a secure neighbourhood, for which a premium must be paid to enter.

**Passing on the Capital: The Neighbourhood and Intergenerational Security.**

The accumulation and deployment of social, cultural and economic capital through housing position are documented strategies of certain middle income groups (Butler and Robson 2001). For middle income families, however, the importance of housing position is also about intergenerational capital transmission, as a strategy for securing the future of their offspring. Timms (1971: 32) explains the connection between neighbourhood and intergenerational security.

For much of the first ten or eleven years of life much of the individual’s activity is confined to an area within a relatively small radius of his home. In this area he obtains most of his extra-familial social relationships, notably in play-groups. It is more likely than not that his school will be in close proximity and most of his school peers will be neighbours. Many of the adult models to whom he is exposed will also be drawn from his immediate vicinity. Apart from occasional family visits to out-of-neighbourhood friends and relatives and the formalized interaction with his teacher, his adult contacts are primarily with the parents of his play-group friends. There are many opportunities for a neighbourhood effect on the socialization process.

Both Harrington Park and Garden Gates were considered to be good neighbourhoods in which to raise children, not least because they would be mixing with children from families with a similar value system, which incorporated the disciplinary method of boundary setting. It was recognised that “the attitudes of parents are likely to be reinforced by those of other adults in the neighbourhood” (Timms 1971: 33). As this Harrington Park informant explained:
I think teenagers are teenagers, but I still believe that it’s the boundaries that parents set. If you have a younger teenager, if they’re allowed to wander the streets at all hours and the parents don’t know where they are, well naturally they’re the ones that are going to get into trouble. If the parents set the boundaries, I’m not going to say you won’t get some problems, but hopefully that would be limited. That’s what I’m hoping for. [Do you think parents in this estate are more likely to set boundaries?] There again I can only go on the parents that I have met, and the parents that I have met do set their children boundaries. (HP9: 10)

This is an example of the intergenerational transmission of social capital discussed by Coleman (1988, 1990) and examined in Chapter 3 ‘Social Capital and the Constitution of Social Space’. To reiterate, in his research on the reproduction of human capital within the family, Coleman found that human capital is more likely to be reproduced in an environment rich in social capital. Within the family social capital is created through the relations between the parents and their children, and particularly through the enforcement of expectations and social norms. Parents are more likely to be successful in imposing norms and obligations on their children in a social structure which incorporates intergenerational closure by associations such as the neighbourhood or the school network.

Although the parents interviewed in Harrington Park and Garden Gates may not have been entirely aware of the theoretical foundations of their housing choice, they believed that a particular social and physical environment provided their children with better prospects, not least due to the type of families and children they would be socialising with. For instance, one of the expectations this Harrington Park couple had before they moved into the estate was that other families like themselves would move in “so that out kids would have someone to grow up with” (HP4: 8). This has proved to be the case. With regard to their friends in Harrington Park...

F: We all go to the same events. We go away camping with them, things like that. We sometimes go away - my parents have a holiday home - we go up there. [What are the core values you share with them?] F: I’d say keeping it safe for the kids, from strangers, I guess gangs. M: We haven’t had much vandalism around the area. F: Yes, but that would be one of the concerns. Any minor sort of thing that happens around here, people are on to it straight away, so that it doesn’t get out of hand. And that’s important. (HP4: 9)
Underpinning this aspiration then, is the notion of growing up with the right kind of children, from a similar family background.

A further aspect of intergenerational security and neighbourhood pertains to providing children with a physically safe place in which to grow up, to keep them out of harms way, so to speak. The feeling amongst informants was that their particular estate was able to provide an environment that reflected the security of their own suburban childhood. Children could play safely in the street, walk to school and ride bikes with friends on the designated bike paths.

You sort of feel safe here as well. [Safe from what?] Oh, you hear all these stories. I think just for the children and everything. There’s not many strange people around. Or if there are, well we’d be told about it. Because everyone in this street knows one another... Where I grew up it was pretty much the same kind of environment as here really, because we had a really nice estate where we grew up. There was the Georges River down the road and it was lovely. We were all very close to the neighbours as well. (GG7: 6-7)

Interestingly, however, rather than being a wholly positive experience, two informants explained that the seemingly safe environment of Harrington Park actually provided their children with a ‘false sense of security’.

I think in some ways, because you have that social security, sort of awareness of people around you, the children tend to be more, like they’ll stray further, and sometimes they’ll pop off to a friend’s place or whatever without letting me know, and they could be on the other side of the estate, and they tend to think it’s quite ok because it’s a safe area... They don’t have any perception of danger, because it’s marketed as a safe environment. [And the children feel that?] Yes. (HP2: 5)

I think, as I said, there’s a false sense of security here. People feel safe. They feel the community spirit. I mean you do take for granted that estates like this aren’t everywhere. We’re lucky to live here. (HP6: 7)

It appears then that the ‘security’ offered by the MPC can become a reality, although a somewhat ‘sheltered’ reality, disconnected even disengaged to some extent, from the wider social environment. This aspect, however, is the essence of the ‘community’ formed by the MPC.
A further consideration of intergenerational security and neighbourhood is in regard to education, or the pedagogic institution where collective socialisation occurs (Ainsworth 2002) and cultural capital is most effectively acquired by certain class fractions (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977). There are two primary courses of action parents in Harrington Park and Garden Gates take in pursuit of securing educational, social and cultural outcomes for their children, based on different opportunities, constraints, costs and benefits. The first of these is to send their children to non-public schools.

Much has been made recently of a declining public school sector. Prior to the 1990s a relatively steady proportion of between 20 and 25 per cent of pupils attended non-government schools in Australia (Sullivan, Maley and Warby 1997). However, during the 1990s this figure began to climb so that by 1998, some 27% of primary and 35% of secondary students were attending a non-government school (ABS 2000: 266). Table 7.5 (Appendix 10) indicates the proportion of students in Harrington Park and Garden Gates who were attending a non-government school in 2001, compared to the Sydney statistical division.

Although the figures for Garden Gates generally reflects the Sydney statistical division, the proportion of students attending a non-government school in Harrington Park is substantially higher, particularly amongst secondary school students. Of those informants whose children attended a non-government school, all the schools were located within the Camden local government area. A number of informants, particularly those who had migrated from a lower-income area, were disillusioned with the public school sector. Jenny’s experience (her story began this chapter) exemplified the sentiment:

[Did you send your child to the local public school at Rosemeadow?] No. I was an out of area placement. Rosemeadow Public School was classed as a disadvantage school. I mean with schools, unfortunately, it comes down to parents talk… And the parents weren’t painting a very nice picture. They were virtually saying that if your child was gifted and very academic, well I’m sorry but we can’t really cater for you. But if you were a problem child, with behavioural problems, well yep we can help you. I wasn’t looking for a school
like that. I was looking for a school that could help everybody, that wasn’t
targeting just one particular demographic. (HP9: 9)

Jenny’s children now attended a local private Christian school, because she felt that:
the private school was able to offer them more opportunities, even though we
have to pay for those opportunities… We make sacrifices so that our children
can go to a private school… Nevertheless, we still thought they were better
opportunities. And the discipline was a big factor. (HP9: 2)

One Harrington Park informant’s endorsement of the non-government school
experience highlights the structure effect of intergenerational closure at the school
level.

My son turns 15 in March. He is growing up and I have not had one problem
with him. He’s got really nice friends, and the parents of those friends. None of
the boys might have wealthy parents, but their parents have obviously sent
their children to private schools because they want their child to have a good
education. And they’re great kids. They’re not disrespectful. And I think the
school has a lot to do with the fact that my son is growing up to be a really nice
young man… Whereas I look at my girlfriends who have put their children
through the state system and they’re just having nightmares. Terrible. (HP7: 5)

However, while attending a non-government school is one strategy parents use to
help secure future opportunities for their children, other parents “based on the
knowledge about the opportunities and constraints which they face” (Devine 1998:
25) undertake a different course of action. Their strategy involves locating to a
‘better’ higher-income neighbourhood, from which the local government school
draws its student population. In this strategy there is a trade-off between a more
expensive house in a higher-income area (meaning a larger mortgage) and a private
school education.

I’m not happy with the public school system. If we go to Tassie, they’ll
definitely be going to a private school. [Why is that?] Because we can
definitely afford it, as we wont have a mortgage there. We have looked at
Macarthur Anglican, but up here we have to think about how we are going to
spend the money. (GG11: 2)

Those informant parents that sent their children to the local public school were
actively supportive of their children’s educational development. This was noted by
one young informant of Garden Gates who did not as yet have children.

People around here are very interested in their children. They’re interested in
giving them the best lifestyle they can possible afford. [Do you think that is
different to other places?] It is different to other places. Definitely... I don’t necessarily think that it’s linked to money because there are certainly a lot of people around here who can’t afford a lot of things for their children... They seem to think that education is pretty important. There is a lot of support for the school. And the school is very, very involved in the community. (GG4: 12)

It has been well documented (Robson and Butler 2001; Konig 1968; Coleman 1990; Timms 1971; Sampson, Morenoff and Earls 1999) that parental attitudes to education “show marked neighbourhood variations”, and that parental interest in a child’s education is probably “the most potent variable in the dynamic of school achievement” (Timms 1971: 33). Where a private school education is not an affordable option, the next best strategy involves moving to a neighbourhood where other parents take as great an interest in their children’s education and future opportunities.

In summary, the neighbourhood is a significant site of socio, cultural and economic reproduction. It is a site of educating and socialising of children, of socially differentiating cultural mores and behaviour, and a signifier of social prestige and status. It is a place for the development of inter-family social networks (Savage and Warde 1993).

**Neighbourhood and ontological security**

‘Family values of years gone by’ is a common theme amongst greenfield planner-developers in western Sydney. These developers know their market well. Most of the residents I interviewed in Harrington Park and Garden Gates were motivated invariably to find either a neighbourhood that was reminiscent of their own childhood where they had felt a sense of belonging, or an earlier mythical, more secure time which denoted a more traditional set of family and community values (even if at the end of the day many could not actually practice the values). Halter (1998) clarifies the connection between contemporary lifestyles and the phenomenon of ‘looking back’.

Today, all people, including children, are facing more and more demands that pull them away from home. Yet many consumers, especially the aging boomers, clearly want life the way it used to be. They are searching for a place to come home to that offers not just shelter, but a true sense of belonging. For
many, this desire to belong is not filled by the country club, the health club, or the neighbourhood clubhouse. Instead, this is a broader desire to feel good about a place, and more important to feel a part of it (Halter 1998: 5).

Reflecting Halter’s observation, one Harrington Park resident reminisced:

Where I grew up in Marrickville you’d get home from school, run inside, get your gear off, change and be out the front playing cricket and eating iceblocks with your friends. And do’in all that sort of stuff. To have that for my son now, 25 years on, it’s just fantastic. And like, yes he has a play station, yes he likes to watch TV. But if you gave him the opportunity to play with his friends instead of that, he’d be out there in a flash... In the summer we don’t get them in until 8 o’clock, 9 o’clock at night. They’re out playing cricket, football, they’re riding their skate board. Because we’re not scared to let them do it. (HP6: 2-3)

And from another Garden Gates resident who grew up in Lakemba in the 1950s:

[In Garden Gates] if something happens and we need help, we just have to yell ‘help’, and somebody will come to help us. And we go for a walk sometimes, and we’ll say ‘hello’, and I’ll say ‘gee your gardens...’ and just chatting to the people and everything. I think it’s just the friendliness. I feel part of the place. It’s a bit like, as I say, when I was growing up you felt part of the neighbourhood. (GG3: 12: F1)

Interestingly, both Marrickville and Lakemba have undergone dramatic socio-cultural changes since these informants lived there. According to Giddens (1993), ontological security originates with the trust relationships developed in early childhood, and is maintained by a framework of continuity of self-identity, routines and the constancy of social and material environments. Hence there is a direct link here between the desire to feel good about a place and to feel a part of it, and maintaining a framework of ontological security.

7.4 Conclusion – Delineating Social and Physical Space

Harrington Park residents, more so than those in Garden Gates, were very conscious of delineating their estate from other areas of western Sydney. This delineation incorporated social and physical aspects. Social aspects revolved around a status group of employed, hardworking, home-owning, community oriented, respectful residents. Physical aspects included the style of housing and estate design, the semi-rural atmosphere (as opposed for instance to the over developed, ‘smelly’ Liverpool) and, interestingly, the M5 freeway. Buying on ‘the other side of the freeway’ was a
common refrain in both Harrington Park and Garden Gates, as Jenny (her story introduced this chapter) explained:

There is a definite difference between the Camden side of the freeway and the Campbelltown side. I think the large amounts of housing commission make a big difference. And having experienced that for myself, with living within a kilometre of Rosemeadow for eight years, was able to see the difference from when we first moved there. (HP9: 4)

The following informants explained their perception of Harrington Park in social space:

[How do you feel about living in the western suburbs of Sydney?] I wouldn’t call this the western suburbs. It’s more rural. I wouldn’t live in the western suburbs. [Why not?] Well they’re a different type of person. (HP5: F: 7 This couple migrated from the St George area to live near their grandchildren who also lived in Harrington Park.)

[Do you feel part of western Sydney living in Harrington Park?] No. I always think of it as country. Camden is very country. I just love Camden. It’s just so boutique, the restaurants. Everybody walks slower and the shops shut at 12. And it’s just very country. (HP7: 8 A long time resident of south-west Sydney)

One retired couple (HP3) who had recently moved into Harrington Park after living in Engadine, in Sydney’s south for 35 years, explained how on travelling to Liverpool to do some shopping they had felt very uncomfortable with the ‘ethnics’ there. They explained that before they bought their home in Harrington Park, they spent a couple of hours drinking coffee in a café in the local Narellan shopping centre to check out whether there were many migrants. They explained that moving from Engadine, they didn’t know the area very well, and didn’t want to move into “a suburb full of Asians” (HP3: 11).

The ‘utopia’ which the informants were seeking was a community ‘for itself’; a power community (Harvey 2000: 240). Harvey describes such communities as inevitably exclusionary and fragmentary of the wider society, and there appears to be some truth in this. However, given the broader economic and socio-political structure within which residents lived but had little if any control over, the planned estate of Garden Gates, and even more so the MPC of Harrington Park, offered residents a sense of coherence and social order, and a degree of control over their physical and social environment. Moreover, the MPC appeared to offer residents a sense of active
engagement, rules of belonging and a code of behaviour which provide an anchor for communal and consequently individual identity, and the feeling of predictability from which residents could conduct their life planning.
CHAPTER 8: Crafting the Master Planned Community

Stacey and Glenn’s Story

Stacey and Glenn have lived in their substantial, double storey, brick veneer house in Harrington Park for four years. Internally the house appears surprisingly spacious, in part because it is quite sparsely furnished, but also because it is so disturbingly clean. The formal lounge room houses a large billiard table – a common sight in Harrington Park. The kitchen overlooks a large family room where on the evening I interviewed the couple, *Bart* was blaring annoyingly from the television. Meals appear to be consumed at the breakfast bar rather than at the formerly fashionable square dining table in the adjoining dining room.

In her mid thirties, Stacey is friendly, energetic and confident, and could probably be intimidating under certain circumstances. Although she described her household as being ‘chaotic’, she actually appears to be quite in control of her domestic, social and business arrangements. She likes to chat, although her language skills tend to draw attention to her lack of education and her ‘working class’ roots. (Her father was a builder and father-in-law a railway workshop worker.) Stacey left school in Year 10 and went into office administration. Her husband left school in Year 9 to take up employment with a tradesman. Glenn is a good looking man in a ‘Manpower’ sort of way. He talks to me with over-familiarity, the way tradesmen do, peppering his sentences with my name. Like his wife, he appears confident about his social position, and content with his lifestyle.

The couple are financially successful, earning over $150,000 a year from their small business. ‘Hard work’ seems to be their core value. It is a value that has been passed on to them from their own parents, and one which they hope to pass on to their young son. As Stacey puts it:

I want him to learn to do a decent day’s work for a decent day’s pay. We were both brought up that way. Nothing we’ve got was ever handed to us. We worked bloody hard for everything (F: HP6: 3).
Prior to buying the business they worked for others, gaining the skills and experience they would need to run their own business. The material success their hard work has brought them seems to underpin the confidence they have in their lifestyle, values and outlook.

Stacey and Glenn moved from Rosemeadow, where they had lived for 7 years, to Harrington Park “mainly because of the financial growth” (F: HP6: 5). As Stacey explains:

Although it would cost us a bit at the start, if later we wanted to move on we knew we would have made enough on the house. We could either go near the water or move somewhere where we really wanted to live if it didn’t work out here, and still not have lost money. Because we over capitalised on our first place. We spent a lot of money on doing it up, back yard, extension and that, and we never made it back. We probably lost 45 grand on that house. So yeh, we just wanted to build somewhere where we weren’t going to lose any money…. Although we never had any problems at Rosemeadow, and we were happy for the seven years we lived there, it just got to a point where we outgrew it. It was a young area, a lot of housing commission. We lived quite close to that. And we just wanted to get out of that. We wanted to be far enough away I suppose from the stigma of Campbelltown.(HP: 5)

Being on the ‘right side of the freeway’ was the most commonly cited attraction amongst the residents I spoke to in both Harrington Park and Garden Gates. Beyond this, it was the “the scheme, the final big picture outlook” of Harrington Park that attracted the couple to buy in. As Stacey explains it “looked pretty inviting. So we jumped in head first” (F: HP6: 6). Stacey also nominated the attraction of the restrictive covenants.

We thought they were fantastic. [Why were they fantastic?] I just like the idea of, I mean money talks. If people have to put money up they’re pretty serious about it. Our solicitor tried to stop the sale twice, because of the covenants. [Why did he try to stop the sale?] Oh, he just thought it was ridiculous. Our solicitor is in Marrickville, an old guy, old school, no idea about new estates, never did any conveyancing in this area before, and he said ‘This is crazy. How can they tell you not to put normal concrete in. Who do they think they are? Why do you have to pay this bond? And rah rah rah..’ And we just said look its cool. (F: HP6: 7)

Three years on Stacey nominates ‘community spirit’ and friendly neighbours as the things she now likes most about Harrington Park. Each year, together with a
neighbour, she organises the street’s Christmas party. Last year 70 people turned up. Stacey also nominates the aesthetics of the estate, and the social values this implies:

It’s just nice to see clean streets, nice gardens. To be able to go for a walk and admire people’s homes rather than go hmmm, when are they going to get rid of that bomb, you know. It’s just a totally different living on a day to day basis, as it is with just living in the suburbs. (F: HP6: 10)

However, Stacey feels that the degree of community feeling leads to a false sense of security amongst the residents. She explains, “There’s a false sense of community. People feel safe. They feel the community spirit. I mean you do take for granted that. Estates like this aren’t everywhere.” (F: HP6: 7).

Unlike a number of the residents I interviewed in Harrington Park, the couple believe that the residents rather than the council should be financially responsible for the upkeep of the estate, and enthusiastically supported the developer’s proposed security and maintenance scheme (The scheme failed to gain enough resident support to make it viable.)

It would be nice if they could get the security maintenance and the park maintenance up to speed. They’re talk’n about the residents putting in levies. [Would you do that?] Oh definitely. From word go we signed the papers and sent it in, because I mean its lovely to have the wetlands, the parks, the lake, but somebody has to maintain it. Who’s going to maintain it? Nobody is going to maintain it for free. The Council aren’t going to maintain it more than what they’re doing, which is nothing as far as I’m concerned. I mean, someone threw an Otto bin over the bridge, and it was there for what – 6 or 8 weeks. Well, 15 calls were made to the Council before someone fished it out. (F: HP6: 8). [Glenn] If someone couldn’t afford a dollar a day to maintain the estate, well they shouldn’t be here. Seriously, I mean what’s $7 or $10 a week? (M: HP6: 8)

Overall however, the couple are extremely satisfied with their housing choice and feel ‘lucky’ to be living in the estate.

[Glenn]: My sum up Gabrielle, I don’t think I’d like to be living anywhere else, to be honest. I’m very happy. [Stacey]: Yep. We love this estate. [Glenn]: I get around Sydney everywhere and I don’t think there is another place like it. We’re just happy. Pretty much everything makes me happy here. (HP6: 8)

Perhaps even more than his wife, Glenn appears most content with his life in Harrington Park.
8.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the ‘crafting’ of the master planned community: the ideological foundations of the planner-developer, and the attempts to promote notions of ‘community’ through estate design, physical and social infrastructure and community development practices. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section examines the position of the planner-developer in the crafting of the MPC, with specific attention given to Harrington Park as the archetypal form of MPC. More specifically it examines the impetus for the estate’s development, the ideological foundation of the planner-developer, strategic goals, influence of the local state and aspects of the plan’s implementation. The second section is a case study of the community development organisation contracted by the developers of both Harrington Park and Garden Gates, to execute a specific program of community development. The case study follows a period of participant observation of the organisation and its practices.

In their examination of master planned communities in South East Queensland, Minnery and Bajracharya (1999) contend that

Master planned communities are characterised as being large scale, private sector driven, integrated housing developments on ‘greenfield’ suburban sites. The impetus for development comes from an entrepreneur with a vision backed by financial resources, who takes what some see as all the associated risks to gain all the rewards. MPCs usually integrate a mix of housing types, open space and recreation facilities, commercial and service facilities, and sometimes employment opportunities. (Minnery and Bajracharya 1999: 33)

When applied to the Sydney scenario, however, some of these characteristics require some qualification. For instance, recent inner-city urban renewal projects in Sydney indicate that ‘greenfield’ suburban sites are not the only settings for the MPC. Further, while ideally there is an integration of housing types, ‘greenfield’ MPCs in Sydney’s outer suburbs are likely to accommodate sizeable detached bungalows,

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1 For instance Victoria Park, Zetland, master planned and master developed by Landcom on a 24.5 hectare site and on completion (in 2007) incorporating some 2,400 dwellings and 170,000 square metres of commercial and retail space; and Kings Bay, Fivedock, a joint venture between Landcom and Kings Bay Developments (St. Hilliers / IPOH), with a site size of 4.25 hectares and incorporating 267 dwellings.
rather than a housing mix. Further, while MPCs on Sydney’s ‘greenfield’ sites tend to integrate some retail space in a ‘town centre’, commercial space and extensive employment opportunities are generally not a feature. In this regard MPCs differ from the ‘new towns’ of British origin.

Although, as Minnery and Bajracharya (1999: 34) note, “there is no standard definition of master planned communities”, the criteria used to define the MPC for the purpose of this research are:

- comprehensive planning over a large scale, bounded site: A bounded site is more significant than nominating a particular area size, as an implied criterion of the MPC is that it can be differentiated from surrounding development.
- multiphase development program, primarily of a residential nature but inclusive of complementary land use mix (Schmitz and Bookout 1998), thus tying together home, educational, retail, commercial, recreational facilities and social organisations.
- strategic concept or vision: the development is ‘crafted’ to reflect a specific image with the intention of appealing to a certain sector(s) of the housing market, and usually incorporating an appeal to a particular set of values. For instance, Lensworth, the planner-developer of Glenmore Park, an MPC some 50 kilometres west of Sydney central business district, claims that its “aim is to maintain traditional lifestyle values while providing the benefits of modern technology and urban design” (Lensworth 2002 – my italics).
- development under the control of a master developer, although the development itself can be undertaken as a joint venture, or with various sector partners over the life of the project.
- Implementation of the strategic concept through the inclusion of physical and social infrastructure (hard and soft infrastructure).

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2 For instance, Glenmore Park, Penrith master planned and developed by Lensworth and Harrington Park, Narellan, master planned and developed by Taylor-Woodrow.
The Community Compact

One final feature of the MPC which differentiates it from other forms of residential development is the formation of a ‘community compact’ between the planner-developer and residents. This compact is a broad agreement as to the primary development goal and the dominant value system or common social code which is intended to operate within the estate. The common development goal in Harrington Park, for instance, was the establishment of a community oriented, prestige estate in south-west Sydney. Hence prospective purchasers were implored to “help make Harrington Park one of the most prestigious locations in Australia” (Harrington Park 2002c). The common social code comprises both legally sanctioned restrictive covenants as specified by the planner-developer and which underpins the ‘code of pecuniary beauty’ discussed in the previous chapter, and informal covenants as to the way residents will generally conduct themselves, that is the ‘community ethic’, which is discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

An example of such conduct in Harrington Park was the communal practices of friendliness and neighbourly support. Of course other forms of social aggregations possess a common code. However, the MPC as a development practice involves a certain dynamism between planner-developers and residents in the establishment of the code, which is more apparent than in other forms of residential development. In the instance of Harrington Park this was quite overt, particularly in the early days, as this resident explained:

[Did the salesman sell any aspect of community back then?] F: Yes, yes. That was really big. [What would he say?] F: Just the community spirit I guess. Growing it together. Like starting off you know.. (HP4: F: 5)

The idea of a community building compact between the planner-developer and residents is also evident in Newbury, a Landcom Mirvac joint MPC venture located in western Sydney. As one recent developer’s advertorial explains:

Most credit however, must go to the Newbury residents themselves, who have embraced their new home with enthusiasm, and will ensure their budding community blooms (Urban Home 2003: 5).
A further aspect of the community compact is the support the planner-developer may seek from certain local public sector institutions to support the ideological and practical aspects of the compact. Such a relationship, where it exists, concerns compact legitimation and ideological closure. In Harrington Park for instance, the local public school has become an integral component of its community compact. A reciprocal arrangement of community information dissemination and cross fertilisation of community development initiatives and community values exists between the developer and the local primary school located in the heart of the estate. An article in the developer’s Harrington Park Press (Harrington Park 2002a: 2) highlights the entwining of public and private sector interests in the estate:

Here at Harrington Park we are very lucky to have our own Public School, which celebrates a very successful six months. The school is forging ahead, with most structures and organisations up and operating well. … Community participation has been excellent. At our recent Billy Cart Derby Day, families from the newly formed P & C Committee sold drinks and ice creams… raising over $1,000 towards school projects.

A further example is in regard to the Aurora Adult Residential Community, located on Queensland’s Gold coast. In one edition of Aurora Highlights (Aurora Developments 2003: 2), an article appears by Peta-Kaye Croft, the local State Member for Broadwater, complete with photo. This example is an exercise of state legitimisation of a controversial development, and of reciprocal support between the private developer and a State Member of Parliament.

8.2 Crafting Harrington Park

8.2.1 Impetus and Vision for MPC Development

Since town planning originated as a physical reform movement in the late 1800s in response to the problems of the industrialised city (Sandercock 1977), planners have brought their values, “whether explicit or implicit”, to their development projects (Pahl 1970: 128). The master planned estate in particular, with its antecedents in the Garden City movement has tended to be underpinned by utopian expectations that the development would produce a better way of life. Nowadays, particular notions of social status, civility and communalism are the social objectives underpinning the contemporary MPC. At one level this notion involves an anti-urban, “romanticized
concept of the traditional village community” (Bounds 2000: 455); of social interaction, communality, reciprocity and security which translate into a form of social harmony (Pahl 1970). However, at another more rationalist level, it involves the adherence by its residents to a set of developer determined social standards. These standards implicitly include notions of civil behaviour, abiding with estate regulations and social norms, pride in housing, neatness and pride in the estate.

The Fairfax family and Taylor-Woodrow, the original partners in the development of Harrington Park, have been particularly successful in propagating their vision of the estate through the regular reciting of the official narrative. The narrative is conveyed through the sales office display, sales brochures, resident meetings, and promotional videos. For instance, the narrator on the promotional video explains:

The vision of Harrington Park belongs to the late Sir Warwick Fairfax who purchased the land in the 1940s. His dream was to develop the area into a special suburb - a high quality affordable estate, like no other in Australia. That dream has been carried on over the past decade by Lady Mary Fairfax and the development team in creating a strong and thriving community... It is this commitment to quality that will ensure Harrington Park continues to be a unique master planned community... The tradition of Harrington Park, the vision of Sir Warwick Fairfax and the dedication of Lady Mary Fairfax and the development team, have created a truly magnificent estate. (Harrington Park 2002c)

A number of Harrington Park residents spontaneously provided me with a version of the narrative. This informant’s retelling captures the essence of the Fairfax vision, while highlighting the degree to which the ideology has been absorbed by some residents:

A lot of people still talk about Lady Fairfax and Sir Warwick Fairfax. Like he’s been dead for years. They still talk about Lady Fairfax, like it was her dream. A lot of people talk about that she wanted this estate built and the story goes – there’s nothing like ‘the legend goes’, she designed it, that she told the developers how she wanted everything to be. That it had to have landscaped gardens. That it had to have parks. And she wanted it to be a place where people were proud of their homes. And that it had to be a closed estate, like the fact that it’s not open to main roads. It’s just, I don’t know what it is about Harrington Park. Even people that come to visit say ‘it’s a wonderful place to live, you’re just so lucky’. And I think, I don’t know whether it is luck, but you know, we decided to live here. And we love it. And we love staying home. We’ve become real homebodies. We just enjoy sitting out the back or going for
a walk... I probably live in a bit of a fantasy world too. Everything has to be perfect, which probably isn’t good [laughing]. (HP7: 11)

Even though the informant is conscious of the narrative’s ‘construction’, there is a ‘fantastical’ fusion here between the Fairfax’s vision and the resident’s own experience of living in the estate. That is, the narrative has been absorbed by the resident, shaping her reality. Investment return aside, the impetus for the estate’s development is relatively unique by Australian standards, although not necessarily so in the United States, as Gans explains of Levittown:

William Levitt’s goals were to build another profitable development and a better community, more comprehensively planned in advance and more completely stocked with public facilities (Gans 1969: 5-6.) ... Levitt also wanted a reputation for building the best possible communities (Gans 1969: 9).

The Fairfax vision of “a superior suburban environment” (Harrington Park 1993: 4), however, is classically utopian; aspiring to a mythical era of community and family values, as elucidated in the promotional material:

Residents feel that they not only have a new home but a safe neighbourhood where the family values of years gone by can be enjoyed again. (Harrington Park 2002c, Promotional video)

Fittingly then, the estate is reminiscent of the English village in aesthetic and design of its neighbourhood precincts, parks and gardens, the mature deciduous trees\(^3\) lining the wide footpaths, the charming ever-green cricket oval resplendent with white picket fence, and the architecture of many of the houses, in particular the mini-mansion accommodating the developer’s office.

As discussed in the following sections, the social doctrine of Harrington Park incorporates gentrifying middle class values, of Anglo-Christian mores and communitarian values. ‘Gentrifying’ in this instance elicits notions of social and economic self-improvement, rather than merely the consumption practices of the much disparaged ‘aspirational’ middle class (see for instance Hamilton 2003). The Fairfax vision can be interpreted as paternalistic, an impression supported by the

\(^3\) Harrington Park houses its own “vast tree nursery” in which the developer grows its own deciduous trees. They can be planted at an advanced stage, rather than as seedlings. According to the HP promotional video, thousands of mature trees and shrubs have been produced by the nursery and planted throughout the estate. (Harrington Park 2002c)
location of the planner-developer's head-office on the estate for the duration of the development, rather than merely constructing a site office, as is more usually the case for such developments (Richards 1990). Hence, the developer performs an overseeing role that goes beyond the physical development.

Producng Communitarian Shelters and Seducing the Consumer

McManus (1994) has pointed out that there is a general difference in the perception of community between social planners, who view community in terms of the dynamic concept of 'community development', and urban planners who focus on a static 'sense of community'. In this regard, McManus (1994: 16) argues, A 'sense of community' is a noun. It is something that can be possessed, achieved and marketed. It is something that many urban planners believe they can give people. Presented in this way, it is disempowering for residents and promotes the commodification of 'community'.

The planner-developer of Harrington Park, however, contradicts this bifurcation. That is, from the development's earliest days, the dynamic aspect of community development has been integral to the marketing of the estate. From the earliest land sales community was marketed as a joint partnership between the developer and the resident. It was a process, as discussed above, of "growing it together" (HP4: 5). The seeming success of selling the developer/resident relationship in the early days encouraged an intensification of the community development program as the development proceeded. Terry Goldacre of Harpak has explained the process of integrating community developers into the project:

When we started Harrington Park we knew that if we were going to build a strong community and get involved in and address people issues, the human side of the development, we needed people with those specialist skills to do that. It was just coincidentally at that time that I bumped into the new minister of the Narellan Uniting Church, and I began talking to him about it. Ahm and I found out that they were a church that saw their role as providing community support, not necessarily on a religious basis. Their focus was really more on providing maximum social benefit in a growing, a developing area. And they had the people with the necessary skills, so we thought well, the more we spoke the more we had in common, so we decided to team up (Goldacre cited Taranto 2002).
In this instance, the developer’s appeal to community is as much about targeting a specific ‘psychographic’ as a ‘demographic’ (Schmitz and Bookout 1998). Consequently, when the last of the tables and chairs are put away, the streamers torn from the ceiling, the garbage put out for collection and the doors of the community centre locked, the community development program remains a successful marketing device with which to seduce the consumer / resident. Little wonder that the Harrington Park community facilitator is so at ease clarifying the relationship between community development and marketing:

The developers would say that 25 per cent of their sales come from people in the community bringing friends, neighbours or past associates or in fact reselling themselves, buying and upgrading themselves. And that’s fairly significant. And so just from a commercial point of view when they say how much they would spend on marketing or sales and advertising - to get a 25 per cent of the market what they have to spend in developing community to get that is fairly small. So they reckon that’s a darn good investment. And just anecdotally, people tell them that’s why they come here. They want a safe place to bring up their kids and feel like they belong somewhere. And I think that in a way we’ve been able to help the community find that for themselves (Ford cited Taranto 2002).

What is being marketed then, is a type of ‘neo-communitarian shelter’, with its promise of protecting its inhabitants from the uncertainties of contemporary life through the ‘simplifying’ of their life (Bauman 2001). Simplification in this instance is produced by social and cultural homogeneity, and security of petty property assets. However, according to Bauman (2001: 148):

The simplification on offer can only be attained by the separation of differences: by reducing the probability of their meeting and narrowing the extent of communication. This kind of communal unity rests on division, segregation and keeping of distance. These are the virtues figuring most prominently in the advertising leaflets of communitarian shelters.

At a more structural level, the relationship between the production of communitarian shelters, their marketing and ultimate consumption, reflects Baudrillard’s (1998) conceptualisation of consumption in the ‘postmodern’ society. Baudrillard argues that rather than viewing consumption as a means of merely consuming objects as a process of enjoyment or self-fulfilment, consumption should be examined as a code or language, the manipulation of which is used to differentiate, although not necessarily through the need to satisfy needs of prestige. In this regard,
"consumption is a structure (or Durkheimian social fact) that is external to and coercive over individuals. While it can and does take the form of a structural organisation, a collective phenomenon, a morality, it is above all else a coded system of signs" (Ritzer 1998: 15), which individuals are coerced into using. Hence for Baudrillard (1998: 92-93):

Conformity is not status equalisation, the conscious homogenisation of the group (each individual aligning himself with the others), but the fact of having the same code in common, of sharing the same signs which make all the members of that group different from a particular other group. It is the difference from the other group which creates the parity (rather than the conformity) of the members of a group. Consensus is established differentially, and the effect of conformity is merely the result of this.

Although its antecedence lies with the modernist planning movement, the MPC is very much a product of the ‘postmodern’ consumer society.

We have reached the point where ‘consumption’ has grasped the whole of life; where all activities are sequenced in the same combinatorial mode; where the schedule of gratification is outlined in advanced, one hour at a time; and where the ‘environment’ is complete, completely climatised, furnished, and culturalized. (Baudrillard 1994: 366)

Hence, the MPC is the synthesis of consumption and communal desire.

8.2.2 Constructing the MPC

This section briefly explores more applied matters, of design and infrastructure, in regard to the ‘construction’ of Harrington Park. Although the development’s physical design cannot be considered ‘new urbanist’, the social doctrine which motivates each is similar. This is the conviction that “the built environment can create a ‘sense of community’… that a reformulated philosophy about how we build communities will overcome our current civic deficits, build social capital and revive a community spirit which is currently lost (Talen 1999: 1361). Such a doctrine necessitates the development of a master plan, a planning control device over an entire project site, underpinned by a particular vision for the completed project.

The Master Plan

The master plan for Harrington Park was prepared well before the first mound of dirt was turned in Lakeside Village, the first of the three villages comprising the estate.
The master plan provided the overall framework for the development, and specified the major components including:

- Resident precincts
- Civic precinct incorporating a new Camden Council chambers
- Community precincts
- Wetland corridor
- Neighbourhood retail centre
- Links to future residential development
- Multi-use public reserve system
- Pedestrian network
- Primary school site
- Flood and water quality control management
- Structured and unstructured recreation facilities
- Primary road structure (Taylor Woodrow and Fairfax 1993: 3)

The plan was not, however, so inflexible that it could not take into account contingencies in regard to the housing market, residents’ needs, government policy, and so on. For instance, the developer’s original plan incorporated two public school sites although the State Government eventually built only one.

The master plan incorporated three conceptual villages comprising some 2000 housing lots: Lakeside Village, Hillside Village, and Park Haven Village, the latter of which was in the process of being developed during the research for this thesis. These villages were designed utilising a modified neighbourhood unit concept, in that each street was to be built within convenient walking distance of a central public area, generally a park. Civic facilities – inclusive of the public school, community centre, sports facilities and clubhouse, a preschool and shopping centre (to be completed in 2004), were located in a central community hub, within walking distance of much of the estate.

The village concept is intended to separate the estate’s resident population into smaller social units to facilitate interaction and community identity. In practice the way this appears to operate is that the division sets up a degree of tension between the villages. One long term couple of Lakeside Village explained the tension.

[Is there more than one community on the estate?] F: Definitely... there is like this side of the lake (Lakeside Village) and that side of the lake (Hillside
Village). [And how do they differ?] F: I think ahm, that that side is richer. .. Don’t you think that there is a this side and that side? M: Yes. F: I’ve got lots of friends over there, and it’s not like with them. But you hear people say, ‘I live in Hillside’ and they go ‘oh.. that side!’. M: A lot of people have moved from this side to that side. [And why have they done that?] M: I guess like any time you build a house, there’s always things afterwards that don’t quite suit. F: They might have upgraded too. M: Yes... I think it’s known to be a class above here. F: We used to joke and say Harrington Park Heights is the other side now. [And they’re a class above you because... their homes are more expensive?] M: I guess so.. They are paying more for a smaller block. F: But they’re buying the reputation that we built on this side. (HP4: 11-12)

This tension should not be over-emphasised. Nevertheless, it was recognised by the community facilitator, who explained that he expected these two villages, which currently “look on each other with suspicion”, to find they have more in common when the ‘Over 55s’ section opens up in Park Haven Village.⁴

The villages are separated by striking ‘avenues’ with such pertinent names as Fairwater Drive, Royal George Drive and Harrington Parkway. While these main thoroughfares are wide and tree lined, the secondary, residential streets, particularly in the more recently developed parts, are quite narrow. In fact, the narrowness of some streets was the primary grievance amongst residents informants and participants of the Resident Survey.⁵ The estate is dissected by a sequence of lakes, wetlands and parklands. The parks are interspersed with public artworks⁶ and fitness stations,⁷ and an extensive network of cycle paths is woven through the estate. Hence, the open spaces incorporated aesthetic, physical and social elements in an effort to encourage passive and active social interaction, as well as community pride. Conversely, at the time of the master plan’s implementation in Harrington Park, the open spaces of the public housing estates of South-west Sydney were coming under intense scrutiny. Such “unused” space was referred to as ‘waste spaces’ (Hassell

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⁴ Meeting with David Ford, 7/09/02 2pm – 4pm at HP
⁵ 16.4% of respondents to the HP Resident Survey most commonly cited narrow roads as the main negative feature of the estate. This compares with 26.0% of respondents who cited ‘nothing’.
⁶ “The artwork depicts local fauna, flora and the history of the area…. To take a walk or ride your bike around the cycleway is now both healthy and educational” (Harrington Park Press 2002d. Vol. 9 p. 2).
⁷ “The team at Harrington Park have always been keen to encourage the outdoor lifestyles. Fitness stations are located around the lake to further enhance this. Each fitness station displays a unique set of instructions outlining the correct use of the equipment thus maximizing potential benefits to your health and fitness regime” (Harrington Park Press 2002d. Vol. 9 p. 2)
1997: 26), and much of it was resumed for further housing during the subsequent refurbishment of these Radburn estates. Of course such spaces were not actually unused. On the contrary, they were well used as dumping grounds, canvases for graffiti, meeting places for bored youth and intoxicated groups, and other activities deemed unsavoury. This signifies that without a degree of neighbourhood or community pride, and without adequate upkeep, such open space becomes a liability.

The Harrington Park residents interviewed were keenly aware of the master planning of their estate. The master plan was much touted during the marketing phase. A large model of the plan was on permanent display in the developer’s office, and the ‘benefits’ of the master planning concept were continually reinforced during new resident dinners and so forth. For some informants there was a correlation between the master plan and attracting ‘quality’ residents, like themselves:

[When you talk about ‘the quality’, are you talking about the physical quality of the estate or the quality of the people?] M: A bit of both. I think they’ve done a wonderful job of planning this. And they’re bringing in the right type of people into this environment. [What do you mean by this? Are they actually stopping some people from moving in?] M: No. They’re not discriminatory. F: They are in some ways as far as what you can have in the estate. Like my daughter can’t move in here because her husband is a truck mechanic and you can’t have trucks in here. So things like that. Basically you wont see old cars in front yards, and I think there are quite a few rules and regulations. (HP3: 4)

When I asked what they liked most about the estate, this resident explained:

The parks, the lakes. The way they’ve landscaped it. The incredible amount of effort that they’ve put into planning. And the people, like when you walk around. The people always say hello. (HP7: 10)

One informant believed the appeal of master planning lay with the self-sufficiency that it produced in the estate. This self-sufficiency then created a community feel.

They’ve now got their own primary school and soon they will have their own childcare centre. And they’ve got cricket nets, and soon they will have tennis courts. So they’ve been very self sufficient, very community I feel. (HP6: 8)

These responses indicate that the social doctrine underpinning the desire to design has some validity. For other residents, the master plan provided a degree of security, in terms of property investment and in the routine of daily life:

You go into the office and you see the master plan on the board and they tell you exactly where the community centre is going to be, where the school is
going to be, where the shops are going to be. There are no surprises in regard to a day care centre being built next door and things like that. It is all so well planned out... Quite often your expectations are exceeded because of the level of the standard they are doing it at. Like when you look at the community centre, it is not just a brick building with a couple of doors and windows... It exceeded all people's expectations, and now they are currently doing the oval and tennis courts next to the school. And they are landscaping all of that and they are using all advanced trees... Like my sister who lives in Kellyville bought into a cul-de-sac and within two years the land at the end of the cul-de-sac was turned into medium density... They thought it was going to be a park... That just hasn't happened here. (HP1: 5)

I looked at their community project, or the whole, the overall plan of the estate. [The master plan?] Yes, the master plan. I liked that. [Was it different to other estates you looked at?] I don't think any of the other places we looked at had a complete master plan, like a long term plan of what the community would look like and be like. (HP2: 3)

While the master plan is a macro approach to community design, micro approaches were also used in the crafting of Harrington Park. These micro approaches related to building and design codes and restrictive covenants.

**Building Controls and Restrictive Covenants**

The design and style of housing in Harrington Park was controlled by the planner-developer in two ways. Firstly, the developer itself built a number of prestige houses on particularly visible sites, for instance on corner lots and fronting main avenues. This is a common development practice used to boost the value and status of greenfield estates. Landcom used it extensively in its Garden Gates estate. In Harrington Park the practice established the estate's theme as well as setting the quality benchmark for the estate's housing. Secondly the developer produced a strict set of Building Controls for speculative, project and owner builders. Before a home could be built at Harrington Park it had to comply with the estate's Building Controls and be approved by the developer. These controls were quite exacting, covering matters from site planning, solar access and energy efficiency; to the appearance of the built form including front staggering and garage set backs; materials used; and landscaping, fencing, antenna placement, water tanks and letter box details.

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8 Some of the controls were direct requirements of Camden Council.
As block sizes have contracted and environmental issues become increasingly salient, those developments which pay attention to the style and amenity of housing improve the liveability for residents, which then has ramifications for the quality and cost of such a development. However, in Harrington Park, while some regulations were laudable, such as the solar access requirements....

The design of the home must result in at least 3 hours of sunlight between 9am and 3pm on June 21st to the living zone windows and principal private open space of the dwelling and any adjacent dwelling (Harrington Park 2002b: 10).

others appear to be somewhat pedantic; for instance:

Garage doors must be tilt-up or contemporary slimline or sectional doors. Roller doors will not be allowed (Harrington Park 2002b: 17).

No portion of the driveway is to be uncoloured concrete (Harrington Park 2002b: 18).

Each dwelling is to have a letterbox. The letterbox will need to be in harmony with the proposed dwelling, it will need to be approved by the Developers of Harrington Park (Harrington Park 2002b: 22).

However, as the following citations demonstrate, most of the Harrington Park residents interviewed welcomed the developer’s strict control over building standards, linking this directly with the protection of their property values.

A minimum standard was set, so that you knew what the estate would look like. [And that was appealing?] Yes, that was appealing. [Why was that so appealing?] I suppose investment. You’re looking at buying a block of land and building on it, so you are looking at quite a bit of capital and that’s ultimately got to give you a return later in life. Your looking at setting a standard so that your investment won’t drop. (HP2: 4)

F: Yes, there are a few rules and regulations in here. But we don’t mind those at all.. M: Yes, it’s very nice to build a lovely home, but you must have the front landscaped within three months. Again, if you don’t have the right individuals coming in, and we’re talking middle class and up, then you know, they can’t afford to do it.. If that’s a restriction then you are being discriminatory in that sense, but you are keeping the quality of the estate. (HP3: 5)

F: Actually another thing that we liked was that they were maintaining a really high standard. Like you had to submit your plans to them as well. Your house had to be of a certain standard or quality sort of thing. [And why was that so appealing?] F: Well, it was just going to maintain the value of our house. And
knowing that next door wasn’t going to be a dog box, or fibro, that there was going to be a standard. M: Even to the extent that we had to get the colour of our fence approved. F: They only had a few colours of fences… [What other restrictions were there on the house?] F: The percentage of brick used… M: The larger the block the bigger the house you had to have. The restrictions were like an inch or two thick. F: You had to have your driveway and gardens done within three month. And that said to us too, and this may sound snobbish, but the people who were buying in here obviously have the money to do it straight away, or at least have budgeted for it. (HP4: 6)

The aesthetic quality of housing is consistently high in Harrington Park which in part reflects the stringent building codes in place. Housing pride and garden maintenance, discussed elsewhere, are also contributing factors to the estate’s particular aesthetic.

8.2.3 Development and the Local State

Apart from social and cultural elements, such residential differentiation then also has a ‘physical’ manifestation which must be physically produced. In this regard, the relationships between property developers and the state must also be considered. Although I would generally agree with Harvey’s (1989: 121) claim that “financial and governmental institutions are hierarchically ordered by authority relations broadly consistent with the support of the capitalist order”, the relationship between the state and developers, planners, financiers and other agents are quite complex. At times the state appears to work in the interests of the developer, but at other times it does not. Chouinard and Fincher (1987) attempt to explain this complexity through a ‘conjunctural analysis’ that explains the way social relations and contingent historical conditions combine to produce particular forms of the state at a given time and place. They argue that this approach demonstrates “both the causal significance of class conflict and capitalist competition in limiting possible forms of the state, and the role of geographic variations in contingent conditions in determining forms of struggle over state development and policy outcomes” (Chouinard and Fincher 1987: 330).

Control over the production process of residential location by the state, developers and financial institutions limits, to some extent, the choice of potential residents. This choice may be limited further through the mechanism of the market. However, the
market mechanism also allows prospective residents to influence the production process, through financially supporting particular locations and forms of development, albeit some social groups having more power to affect particular forms of production than others. Hence, such residential differentiation as may be effected by the master planned community involves an interplay between the developer, the state and social groups.

For instance, Camden Council is not only supportive of the master planning concept, it has made it a requirement for all residential developments throughout the local government area, under Clause 21 of Camden Council’s Local Environment Plan 46. It is one of only a handful of Sydney based councils to do this during the period of the research. ⑨

**Master Planning and Development Control**

During the late 1980s, Camden Council was presented with the challenge of turning large tracts of rural land into residential development. Until then, the council had managed to maintain the area’s highly valued semi-rural atmosphere. Through stringent Development Control Plans (DCP) it had fended off some of the more ghastly medium density developments which had contaminated the adjoining local government areas of Liverpool and later Campbelltown. Through its exacting DCP instruments it managed to survive the Dual Occupancy scourge of the early 1990s virtually unscathed, not least by reducing the profitability of such developments. In the 1990s, master planning was intended to protect the comparatively prestigious image of Camden, provide amenity and establish coherence and consistency between developments within the new release area, particularly within Narellan.

Although Camden Council’s master planning requirements are principally physically and design oriented, involving such development aspects as lot alignment, building

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⑨ CW4 – discussion with Camden Council Place Manager (Narellan) - 7/3/01 Most councils in Sydney use the DCP instrument to control such developments.
set back, housing integration, building type and road orientation, social infrastructure is also a consideration. As a social planner from Camden Council explained:

At the master plan stage we input into the design layout to make sure there is a community centre, that there are links with walkways, making sure that there is cycle ways connecting things to ensure that people will hop on a bike or walk to the shops. How do we get the school in there? It’s about how the physical design can support the social infrastructure. (CW3: 4)

One of Camden Council’s place managers clarified Council’s role as acting “as a broker to get some of these facilities” (CW4: 2), thus supporting Jones (1993: 42) claim that:

Local government in urban areas helps communities to cope with the frequent lack of co-ordination between the many powerful and specialised State and Federal departments controlling urban areas through a plethora of different programs and policies.

The place management method adopted by Camden Council was intended to break through the ‘silos’ approach that typifies contemporary state bureaucracy. Council’s master planning requirements, along with the more recent replacement of its Planning Department with an Outcomes Department, were intended to facilitate a more integrated, amenities oriented approach to development. The physical and procedural environment such an approach has facilitated, however, has also assisted the planner-developers’ ability to develop ‘prestige’, estates in the area, such as Harrington Park, by capturing the external benefits of this public investment. Hence, as Gleeson and Randolph (2002: 21) argue,

Far from being simple testimonies to the rewards for individual effort and thrift, these ‘landscapes of self-reliance’ are in fact heavily dependent upon public subsidies and public endeavour for their creation and maintenance.

Camden Council’s approach to development highlights the local state’s contribution to the MPC, through supporting the shape and ideals of such communities

‘Post-materialist Politics’

While Camden Council’s development control strategies over the past two decades have been relatively successful in establishing quality estates and differentiating it from adjoining LGAs, it has greatly influenced the area’s demographic and left it
deprived of low income accommodation. One of council’s social planners explained the ramifications of this:

There are no flats in Camden so you won’t see that thing of working your way up like you do in Campbelltown where there is low income housing. You have to work your way up to get into Camden and Narellan. You have a lot of people who can’t afford to live here. We need to get more affordable accommodation in the area. There is some cheaper housing in Wollondilly. [Are the councillors aware of these social issues in Camden?] The councillors are not really aware of the social problems connected to development. They tend to be either for or against development, and concerned about environmental issues. (CW3: 4)

When I asked one council officer whether Camden Council had an affordable housing policy,10 he replied, “not that I’m aware of. I doubt that in Camden it would be politically acceptable, but don’t quote me on that” (CW10: 1). Such a reading of the political environment in Camden reflects a ‘post materialist politics’, which is “the domination of issue politics in Western countries, which makes the old ideas of [class based] party identification irrelevant” (Jones 1993: 43 my italics). In this regard, quality-of-life issues, in particular the environment (built and natural), have become the principal matters of local political struggle.11 This is exemplified in the trust this Harrington Park resident has placed in Camden Council’s ability to keep the area semi-rural, and village like.

Well Camden Council is particularly good I think, in that they’ve kept this area nothing higher than two storeys and they try to keep as much rural area as they can. They liken it as being an historic, country area. It will be a long while before they are able to build it out… I was watching a TV interview the other week from people living in Blair Athol12 [housing estate], and the original

10 Although this was a general discussion about low income housing comparative to surrounding areas, particularly Campbelltown, affordable housing generally refers to a housing expenditure-to-income ratio of between 25% to 30% of income (Hulchanski 1995). The question about housing affordability was asked as a way of gauging local political perceptions on housing.
11 In Camden this was evident in the local protests against the proposal to build a $120 million aluminum extrusion plant in Smeaton Grange, a light, clean industrial precinct in Narellan. The plant was to create approximately 210 jobs. Camden Council objected to Capral’s Development Application on ‘environmental’ grounds, and requested that the NSW hold a Commission of Inquiry into the proposal. On 11 April 2003, Capral advised the Commission that it was withdrawing its DA, and would shift the plant to Ipswich or off-shore.
12 The Blair Athol blunder made it onto the front page of The Sydney Morning Herald: Today, however, ‘Blair Athol [House] is strangled by an instant suburb of two-storey brick homes with painted gables and a big-box German Aldi Supermarket… Under [Campbelltown] Council’s nose, Lucas & Tait crammed oversized homes onto small lots, bending the flexibility of a naïve Development Control Plan to choke off the heritage house. [Campbelltown] Council has just completed a post-occupancy inspection report of the new suburb, also called Blair Athol. It concluded that measures in that 1994 plan to protect Blair Athol House… had been
home Blair Athol [Historical House] is right on top [of the hill], and Campbeltown Councillors said, we booed. We didn’t take [the aesthetic of the historic house] into consideration. Camden Council is a much better, organised rural council. (HP3: 5)

However, the performance of Camden Council does not have unanimous support amongst other residents of Harrington Park. Most of the residents I spoke to were concerned with the way council was currently maintaining those parts of the estate handed over by the developer. The feeling was that residents had paid a premium to get into the estate, and so council was obliged to maintain it to the standard that the developer set. Maintenance issues were linked to property values, status and quality of life.

We’ve seen evidence in other estates that when the developer starts to leave, the parks don’t quite look the same and they aren’t kept to the same standard. It sounds a bit snobby in a way, but when you pay the sort of money people are now paying to get in here, their expectations are that much higher. (HP10: 9)

Decreasing maintenance standards stirred residents to mobilise against the council, as this informant explained:

Because once the developer is supposed to move out onto the next stage council is supposed to take over. And that was a problem. [So does the council look after your area now?] Yes. [Did the maintenance drop off?] It did drop off and a lot of residents complained bitterly, until we got action. [And what was the action, from Council or the Developer?] Ah, from both I think because we complained to both until we got action. And yes, they do a reasonable job now. (HP2: 5)

Although the relationship between council officers and the developer of Harrington Park has at times been difficult, particularly in regard to council approval of the Harrington Park Lake, the quality of the development clearly corresponds with the council’s vision for the area.

Section 94 Contributions

Prior to the 1950s, developers in New South Wales provided allotments in their subdivision with few services other than a graded road access. Responsibility for services basically rested with the local council and other government authorities. Hence, subdivisions usually occurred well in advance of the provision of services.

*undermined* by the developer, having an ‘adverse impact on the significant of the Heritage Item’ (Knox 2002: 1).
By the late 1950s, however, developers were required to pay a substantial proportion of the capital costs of servicing their allotments, as well as provide new urban infrastructure (Neutze 1995). Following intense developer lobbying, the State Government formulated the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* (1979) NSW which, under Section 94,\(^\text{13}\) required developers to continue to contribute to physical infrastructure and the dedication of open space, but regulated the practice of loading developers with exorbitant costs, and provided them with an avenue of appeal (Neutze 1995).

Based on concerns expressed by western Sydney councils that they could no longer “bear the costs and keep up with the provision of facilities in the rapidly growing development areas at the fringe” (Lang 1990: 92-93), an inquiry into Section 94 in 1989 laid the way for requiring developers to contribute to social infrastructure such as community centres, child care centres and other such community facilities. Councils were also able to accept Section 94 contributions of a material public benefit (that is, ‘in-kind’), as well as through land or money. However some councils, including Camden, found this latter aspect quite difficult to implement. As Peter Icklow of Monarch Homes, the developer of the Cascades estate in Narellan Vale, explained:

> Another major problem with the provision of public facilities from Section 94 contributions, is although our money was paid, Council was not ready to spend it. This is only now being worked out four years later, and the residents are furious that they have been deprived of such simple facilities as a playground for all that time, because Council was not ready. We offered to build these facilities in lieu of S94 contributions, but that was disallowed and put in the too

\(^{13}\)Section 94 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 (NSW)

(2) If a consent authority is satisfied that a development, the subject of a development application or of an application for a complying development certificate, will or is likely to require the provision of or increase the demand for public amenities and public services within the area, the consent authority may grant consent to that application subject to a condition requiring:

(a) the dedication of land free of cost, or

(b) the payment of a monetary contribution or both.

(3a) If a consent authority has, at any time, whether before or after the date of commencement of this Part, provided public amenities or public services within the area in preparation for or to facilitate the carrying out of development in the area, and

(3b) Development, the subject of development application or of an application for a complying development certificate, will, if carried out, benefit from the provision of those public amenities or public services, the local authority may grant consent to the application subject to a condition requiring the payment of a monetary contribution towards recoupment of the cost of providing the public amenities or public services. (Division 6; (1) EPA 1979 No. 203: NSW Government)
hard basket. Only now, following resident action, has Council conceded that we can build some of these facilities in lieu. These matters could have been resolved at the start (Icklow 1994: 20).

It appears that the company’s next development, the gated estate of Macquarie Links in the neighbouring Campelltown LGA, with its inclusion of community title facilities, was a solution to providing community facilities after the difficulties it experienced in more standard developments.

In general, however, the provision of Section 94 has had a number of important implications for greenfield developments, particularly within western Sydney. The first of these is in relation to the quality of estates being built. Once developers were able to contribute a portion of their Section 94 in-kind, they were able to use the funds in a way that enhanced and differentiated their developments. At Harrington Park, for instance, the developer used Section 94 funds in the construction of a community centre which was of a substantially superior size and standard than council-built centres in adjoining suburbs. This centre was then used to promote the estate’s ‘community’ life. In-kind contributions also helped to fund the development of high quality parks, innovative play equipment, and community development programs. Hence, although Section 94 contributions were used to develop physical and social infrastructure within Harrington Park, they also assisted in creating a ‘quality’ estate. The use of Section 94 contributions in the development of social infrastructure has facilitated the promotion of residential estates and subdivisions as ‘communities’.

A second implication then, is the pressure placed on council budgets to maintain the community facilities to the same standard as did the developer during the promotional stage of the development. As noted above, when the quality of park maintenance dropped in Harrington Park following Camden Council taking up responsibility for their upkeep, residents were outraged and lobbied to have the quality of maintenance preserved. As council’s funds are finite, any extra spending on maintaining Harrington Park’s infrastructure must necessarily be drawn from other areas. Hence there is a struggle over the spatial allocation of local public funds.
A further implication of this application of Section 94 contributions is in regard to the direct pressure such levies place on the cost of new housing, as the costs are inevitably passed on to the buyer of the developed property (Neutze 1995; Lang 1990). However, more subtle pressure also arises from the ‘quality’ development such levies enable. Housing lots in estates such as Harrington Park are marketed at a premium. Hence, rather than supporting the construction of ‘public’ infrastructure, Section 94 has become a device for certain status groups to access scarce urban resources.

8.2.4 A Cultural Consensus

A cultural consensus existed between Camden Council and the development vision for Harrington Park. This consensus was oriented towards Camden’s semi-rural ambience, its colonial heritage, an Anglo-Australian way of life and encouraging the settlement of families of ‘middle means’. These factors continue to be employed in an attempt to distinguish the ‘community’ of Camden from adjoining local government areas. This reflects Chouinard and Fincher’s (1987: 341) argument that “relations in production and reproduction are the primary conditions affecting the causal process of state formation at the local level”. Control over planning matters, particularly through the method of master planning, is one way of forging a distinctive socio-cultural identity for Camden. In this regard the local state can be seen to constitute “a concrete terrain of class conflict” (Chouinard and Fincher 1987: 341).

However, while this cultural consensus existed, at a micro-level the relationship between council officers and the Harrington Park developer involved a degree of tension. This is hardly surprising. The official role of council officers is to implement council policy and comply with relevant State Government legislation. Notwithstanding this, the factions which exist within the council enable officers to “push their personal planning or environment barrows” (Icklow 1994: 19). Moreover, council officers are accustomed to being in a command position over the progress of developments. However, their power and resources may appear to be threatened in the rarefied, pressured atmosphere which arises in the rush to develop
new release areas. Conversely, the role of the property developer is to add value and to extract a profit. Their goals are bound to collide with those of the council, particularly in regard to pressure applied in gaining development consent, the use of public money to support the superior ‘private’ facilities incorporated into the MPC, and disputes over the expenditure of Section 94 contributions. Hence, the MPC itself is a terrain of struggle within and against the local state.

8.3 Community Development in the MPC

Calthorpe and Fulton (2001) establish the master planner’s cognitive link between the physical design of neighbourhoods, the development of social capital and the communitarian ethos arguing that,

Just as important as the physical context, and a complement to it, is the social, economic, and cultural networks that spring up in a neighbourhood setting. These are the networks of daily life that produce what sociologists call “social capital”” (Calthorpe and Fulton 2001: 33).

8.3.1 Narellan Community Care – A Case Study

During the summer of 2000 - 2001 I spent three months observing the operations of Narellan Community Care (NCC), a social purpose enterprise operating on the urban fringe of Sydney’s South-west. Narellan Community Care was the innovation of Pastor Tony Ackland\(^\text{14}\), the founder of the Narellan Uniting Church. Ackland was a slim built man in his early 40s who, although quietly spoken, exuded activity. At our first\(^\text{15}\) and subsequent meetings he wore secular clothing and an unlikely crop of freshly streaked blond hair. He possessed the accessories of any business man: late model, top of the range executive sedan, notebook computer and a micro-sized mobile phone on which he frequently received and returned text messages to congregation members and others within his pastoral care.

Ackland was an intensely self-reflective man, concerned about his image, how he was perceived and how his ‘prophetic’\(^\text{16}\) vision was being received. At our first

\(^{14}\) The names of the organisation’s employees have been changed.

\(^{15}\) Management Team Meeting, 27 November 2000

\(^{16}\) The first time I heard Ackland describe himself as a prophet, I was quite confronted by his use of such a term. As a Catholic my experience of prophets was restricted to the seers of the Old Testament.
encounter Ackland expressed his concern that I understand his 'vision' for his church, as well as NCC’s secular philosophy of community development, prior to observing their operation. Ackland’s concerns proved to be warranted. At the time of writing Ackland was no longer the pastoral leader of the Narellan Uniting Church and NCC, and both organisations were struggling to come to terms with his legacy. The purpose and operation of NCC was inexorably bound up with Ackland’s self-image, his personal ambitions and his vision for his church.

Over the preceding 10 years Ackland had built an active Uniting Church congregation of about 40 people. He was unconcerned about the relatively small size of the congregation even though it was situated in one of the fastest growing areas of Sydney. This was because his vision for ‘community’ extended beyond a traditional church congregation to encompass the local secular community as well. His pastoral care activities reflected this vision. According to Ackland, the mission of the Narellan Uniting Church was ‘community’. Importantly, the church acted as a core organisation through which community within the local area could be activated. This was undertaken through the church’s three functional roles - to serve, to witness and to worship. The serving role was undertaken predominantly through the social purpose enterprise of NCC, as well as Lifeline Macarthur and the church’s sport centre. The witness role is not overtly evangelical, but occurs through the presence of people acting in communion or fellowship. Although one aspect of worship was undertaken at Sunday services, Ackland viewed worship as being the ‘celebration of the whole of life’. Consequently, it occurs whenever ‘community’ - even in secular guise - is manifest. Hence, for instance, worship can occur through the communal use of the Church’s sports centre. Ackland’s is a liberated, almost secular theology.

However, within the Uniting Church, prophecy is one of the recognisable ‘gifts of ministry’ (Wesley Uniting Church Castle Hill ‘Mission Statement’ 1998). As outlined in Ephesians, when he ascended into heaven, Christ allotted gifts. “And to some, his gift was that they should be apostles; to some, prophets; to some evangelists; to some, pastors and teachers.” (Ephesians 4: 11-12).

17 Management Team Meeting 27 November, 2000
18 ibid.
19 ibid.
20 The sports centre was itself a social entrepreneurial project. The capital of around $3 million, was borrowed from the Uniting Church Synod, with operating costs and loan repayments expected to be met through customer’s fees.
22 Meeting at NUC’s Indoor Sports Centre 29 November, 2000.
Nonetheless, with its emphasis on the public sphere of community, it provided a real alternative to the ‘prosperity gospel’ touted by many contemporary Christian churches. Although Ackland’s version did not correspond with these fundamentalist churches’ “theological endorsement of private enterprise capitalism” (McGillion 2000: 12), it was, nevertheless firmly positioned in the camp of entrepreneurial Christianity; hence, the ease with which Narellan Uniting Church expanded its mission by venturing into the realm of the social purpose enterprise through the NCC venture.

The fundamental belief underpinning NCC’s approach to community development was that the support, interaction, care and assistance provided by an inclusive, strong community, reduces the need for more traditional forms of welfare support, which try to solve the problem once social impairment has already occurred. A community that is empowered with initiative, ideas and ‘spirit’, to use Ackland’s expression, will be able to work out innovative solutions to its own social problems.

**A Social Purpose Enterprise**

Social purpose enterprises are community or welfare organisations which are underpinned by commercial values and methods, rather than the ‘voluntary’ ethos of charitable welfare providers (Clarke 2000). That is, rather than building networks of like-minded volunteers and seeking out donations, social purpose enterprises use a commercial ethos to “mobilise and combine resources provided by the government, the free market, non-profit organisations, and the community” (Wallace 1999: 155) to enhance local economies and expand their missions. Thus, there is a blurring of business, community and welfare sector boundaries. Although an agent of change, rather than being concerned with the broader issues of economic and social restructuring of the new economy, social entrepreneurs are concerned with resolving social problems directly at the coalface. Purdue (2001: 2215) lists the entrepreneurial qualities of the social entrepreneur as “an ability to cope with risk and uncertainty; creativity in solving problems through divergent thinking; highly competitive, yet collaborative, efficiency in use of available resources”. However, within the ‘contract
culture' a macro-political dimension is replaced with consideration for day-to-day micro-political positioning and skirmishes.

Narellan Community Care was such a social purpose enterprise. It used a mixed entrepreneurial model of private and government contracts, customer charges and consultancy fees to support the ‘serving’ arm of the Narellan Uniting Church. At the time of the fieldwork, Ackland was the Director of the organisation, and David Ford and Peter Moran - both practical, thoughtful men - completed the management team. Each man brought a unique perspective to the organisation that provided the team with a potency greater than the sum of the individuals.

Narellan Community Care was initially contracted by Landcom in the mid 1990s, to foster a sense of community in its ‘socially isolated’, private housing estates within the Narellan new release area. According to Ford, Landcom had become cynical of the approach to community development being undertaken by community workers employed by Camden Council using Landcom’s Section 94 contributions. He explained that the welfare service approach of the council identified and dealt with problems in the housing estates, rather than assisting the development of self-sustaining community infrastructure and a sense of identity and belonging. However, discussions with one of the original Narellan community development workers employed by Camden Council indicate that the work they undertook in the new release areas, which at that time covered a different demographic of lower income, public housing and first home buying residents, was not dissimilar to the practices of NCC.24

This original program incorporated a welcome initiative, events such as carols by candlelight, and the formation of community organisations, for instance a sewing group, play group and so on. When Section 94 contributions could be made in-kind, Landcom contracted NCC to operate a community development program. The difference between the NCC and Camden Council’s Section 94 funded community development programs was that the NCC program also provided opportunities for

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23 Interview with David Ford 23 March 2000.
24 Interview with Camden Council community development worker 24 November 2000
Landcom to promote itself.\textsuperscript{25} Hence the NCC program provided Landcom with more ‘bang for its buck’. At the time of writing Landcom were utilising the program in a number of its greenfield, master planned joint developments, particularly in its flagship Newbury estate in Stanhope Gardens\textsuperscript{26}, located in Sydney’s north-west sector.

Following suit, Taylor-Woodrow (Australia) Pty Ltd contracted NCC shortly after development commenced in Harrington Park. Its task was to develop a ‘sense of community’ in the young estate, using a “community empowerment model”, which according to Ford, involved a “holistic approach to urban development”.\textsuperscript{27} That is, NCC was to act as a community ‘broker’ or ‘facilitator’ between the developer and residents, and to a lesser extent the local council, statutory bodies, community service organisations and other developers.\textsuperscript{28} The community empowerment model was designed to encourage residents to identify with and to take an active interest in their local area. Consequently, according to Ford, it was about community capacity building, rather than creating service dependency (Wallace 1999). With his background in human resources, Ford was fond of using such language as “inducting new residents into the community”,\textsuperscript{29} as one would induct a new employee.

\textit{Ideological Foundations}

At the time of the fieldwork the primary focus for NCC was developing community in private housing estates. However, its work within the public housing estates provided it with a legitimacy within the contemporary practice of social enterprise which tended to be ‘welfare’ focused, as well as within sections of the Uniting Church, not least the local congregation. Welfare work in socially excluded, poverty stricken public housing estates may be more rewarding, as the fruits of its labour

\textsuperscript{25} According to NCC Management, Landcom only paid NCC for the Welcome Initiative and Events Management, they also received NCC’s services as a broker between Council, other developers and community groups, free advice on community development, and other public relations benefits. (NCC Management Team Meeting 27 November 2000)

\textsuperscript{26} The project is a $600m joint greenfield development between Landcom and Mirvac. The development is over a 157 hectare site, which will eventually contain 1,800 homes (www.Landcom.nsw.govt.au).

\textsuperscript{27} Ford cited interview conducted 23 March 2000.

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{29} Ford cited interview 23 March 2000.
were more obvious. Further, such welfare work is more likely to correspond with a popular conception of legitimate social purpose, rather than throwing money and resources at middle-income housing estates.

Ackland and Ford were aware of this conjecture, and frequently sought to justify their activities in the middle income estates. They spoke frequently of the need to increase social capital in these estates, by which they appeared to mean social interaction and support. They believed that by strengthening community relationships at the local level, middle income residents, particularly teenagers, would be less likely to fall into anti-social behaviour and criminality. By “empowering” government and business leaders to put money into community development, issues could be prevented from turning into a welfare problem. That is, “if you look after the community end, so less money is spent at the welfare end”.

Ackland spoke of Harrington Park as a disadvantaged, dysfunctional community. The poverty here, however, was not economic, but a “poverty of social relationships”. Strong communities would save young people from the downward spiral of criminality and poverty. This local solution to structural social problems is a principal tenet of the contemporary social enterprise movement, and contrasts with the bureaucratic solutions of the welfare system.

In this first instance, Ackland and Ford’s neo-communitarian argument draws on the aspect of ‘social closure’ integral to Coleman’s (1990) theory of social capital, in which social norms are more likely to be reproduced where a network has closure, or at least ‘density’ (Lin 2001). Norm reproduction is greater in a network which exhibits closure, according to Coleman, because of the greater leveragability of sanctions on aberrant behaviour. Hence, in a ‘dense’ middle class community, the sanctioning effect is likely to discourage teenagers from getting involved in anti-social behaviour, and criminality. However, ‘socio-spatial selection’ has long been a middle class technique of social reproduction. As discussed earlier in the thesis, the

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30 Discussion with Ackland, 25 January, 2001
32 Discussion with Ackland, 25 January, 2001

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very conception of the modern suburb was bourgeois, as those that could afford to retreat from the grime, crime and squalor of the industrial city did so. Government assistance supporting socio-spatial selection of middle income households may well be greeted enthusiastically by its recipients, but would do little to assist those on low incomes, with less capacity for social mobility or suburban selection.

Secondly, the argument draws on the idea of a dense network providing the socio-structural resources of trust and reciprocity, which an individual is able to mobilise when needed rather than relying on some form of state based welfare service. At the local community level, at least in Harrington Park, the type of reciprocal arrangements between residents tended to be confined, as one locally active resident explained, to “occasionally borrowing something, picking up a child from school, minding the house when we’re away, and that’s about all” (HP1: 14). Other types of domestic assistance requiring more commitment, such as long term child minding, moving house and financial assistance were more likely to be garnered from extended family members, particularly retired parents. A few residents in Harrington Park, even those who appeared to be well integrated into the community, preferred to hire help when they needed assistance, for instance in regard to holiday and after school care, boarding pets when away, assistance with garden maintenance and so on. Chart 8.1 below indicates the people resident respondents were most likely to approach for such domestic assistance. The results indicate that in both Harrington Park and Garden Gates, where NCC’s community development program was highly developed, extended family was far more likely to be approached for assistance than neighbours or friends.
Chart 8.1: People most likely to be approached for day to day domestic assistance in Harrington Park and Garden Gates

Source: Resident Survey: Harrington Park and Garden Gates. Question 42. Who are you most likely to approach for help with such things as child minding, emergency help, moving house, minding pets whilst away?

The sort of short term, domestic resources produced at the level of the local, middle income community, while being of day-to-day value to the network’s members, tend not to be the kind of resources which assist life chances. Rather, flexible open networks containing ‘bridges’ (Granovetter 1973) that facilitate information and influence flows (Lyn 2001) are more likely to provide resources and positions which enhance one’s life opportunities. Hence, it is difficult to agree with Ackland and Ford’s ideological argument that spending state money on community development in middle income estates will lessen the impact on the state’s overall welfare budget. This is not to say, however, that community development practices which assist in the production of denser networks at the local level are not valuable to the promotion of personal-identity, friendships, social support and the sharing of domestic resources. It is a question though, of whether the civic or state sector should be responsible for supporting such socio-structural resources, and whether the state sector is actually capable of enhancing such domestic oriented resources.

Finally, as discussed earlier in the thesis, neo-communitarian discourse is concerned with strengthening the civil sector, rather than communities relying on the public (state) sector for guidance and financial support. Communitarianism argues that certain powers and responsibilities should be divested down to the level of the
community in a devolutionary process (Etzioni 1998; Latham 1998). Although certain broad responsibilities remain with the government, others are passed on down to the level of the firm, the local community, the school and the family. Social norms, commonly held values and moral obligations operate to ensure the workability of these groups. It is contradictory to argue then, that a local community, being one element of civil society, should be given the freedom to assume certain responsibilities, directions and roles if on the other hand the public sector remains responsible for funding such a move, with all the bureaucratic processes and control that goes with that.

**The Community Welcome Initiative**

The practice of community development within both the private and public housing estates was incorporated within NCC’s commercial product, the Community Welcome Initiative. This initiative incorporated two practical features: welcoming new residents to the estate with a home visit by a community worker and providing them with a resource package; and organising community events and programs. Underpinning the initiative was the belief (and the selling point) that providing a point of social contact with new residents at the time of their arrival in the estate encouraged greater identification with the area, heightened awareness of local social services, and fostered social connections and community involvement.

While the stated aim of the initiative was to reduce social isolation and develop an empowered, sustainable community, the financial spin-off for developers was that they could market at a premium, a ‘community’, rather than merely another infrastructure-poor housing development amid the suburban sprawl. Significantly, NCC’s activities in both Garden Gates and Harrington Park were paid out of the developers’ marketing and public relations funds, rather than from a separate social infrastructure or community development fund. This indicates the link, from the planner-developer’s perspective, between product placement (marketing) and community development.

Although developing “community infrastructure” (Cornwall 1998: 145) was the basis
of NCC’s community development approach within both the private and public housing estates, there were certain differences in actual practice between the estates. This was due to the disparate socio-demographic character of the estates. For instance, within the public housing estates, a high proportion of residents were financially restricted through welfare dependency and tended to spend a disproportionate amount of time confined to the local area (Ife 1995). Access and capacity to utilise communication technology that is more likely to support a diffuse community, was restricted (Webber 1963). Fewer residents had access to cars, the services of local private bus companies were inadequate and expensive, and schools and the local shopping centre were within walking distance of most residents’ homes.³³ Hence, according to one of NCC’s community development workers who had practiced within both the public and private housing estates, the ‘community’ was more observable in the public housing estate than in the private housing estates of Narellan. This worker explained that in the public housing estate,

… they are so much poorer but there is a higher wealth of community here. There is a higher wealth of people understanding their neighbours and being much more aware of what is happening. (WC6: 3)

The community worker was alluding to the adversity principle of community development, whereby the circumstances of adversity and stigmatisation of an area provides the basis for a common sense of identity and heightens the sense of community (Ife 1995: 119). The worker went on to explain that

Over in Narellan and those areas people, I mean work is an issue, like the fact that people are never home. (WC6: 3)

In Narellan the majority of residents left their homes each day to attend work, school and other social activities, many of which were located outside of their local area. Even the shopping centres were generally a car trip away. These residents had more opportunity to develop communities of interest that are not necessarily tied to the local area (Webber 1963). Similarly, Ife (1995: 188) argues that local community in suburbia is difficult to develop and sustain, as “people commonly relate to groups and structures substantially removed from their local community”. Hence, being more diffuse, the local social systems within the private housing estates are more

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difficult to detect. Moreover, while the residents of the public housing estate were financially poorer they were more likely to have time on their hands. By comparison, according to the community worker, the residents of Narellan were financially richer, but temporally poor. These perceptions in turn shape the actual practice of community development within these estates.

*Community Development in the Private Housing Estates*

Contrary to community development practices within the public housing estate which involved an empowerment, bottom-up approach, and the goal of a self-sustaining community, community development within the middle income estates of Narellan tended to be top-down, with events organised and home visits being undertaken by the NCC team.

This top-down approach to community development contradicts Ife’s (1997: 56) taxonomy, where the community developer acts as a broker or entrepreneur, as ‘anarchistic’ and bottom-up. Ife’s taxonomy, however, tends to classify practices of community development by their relationship to the state. Where the practice of community development is influenced by contractual obligation and accountability to a property developer, it takes on a modified managerial model, thus placing it in the hierarchic, top-down classification.

Reflecting this modified, managerial model, Ackland was sceptical about the practice of volunteering in the middle income housing estates of Harrington Park and Garden Gates. Few of the programs run by NCC in these estates utilised volunteers, although there were exceptions for instance the production of Christmas decorations by the Mt Annan Over 55s, Clean up Australia days, a tree planting day which involved 200 Harrington Park residents, and occasional weed spraying of drains (Harrington Park: 2000). One of Camden Council’s social planners proffered a less sceptical explanation of the recent changes in volunteering culture in Camden:

> I don’t think there are less volunteers. There is a change in how they volunteer. People want to use their skills a lot more. They might want to use their IT skills. They come in and say I’ve got a really short time to do this in and they might want to do it off-site. We need to harness particular skills. There is pressure on long term commitment to services. People are involved in schools
and football clubs and haven’t got the time for any more. The Red Cross is virtually not operating now. They are getting quite old, in their 80s, and there is no one to replace them. Retirees travel a lot these days. They are likely to commit themselves to volunteer, but not every Monday for meals-on-wheels. Some groups don’t have the money to reimburse volunteers costs, and things like petrol is very expensive. Also a lot of volunteering is becoming quite complex. [So there is an increase in specialisation within the volunteer sector?] Yes. With Meals-on-Wheels diets are getting more complex. There is more training required, like Occupational Health and Safety. They need to be aware of all that and people don’t want to do that. They just want to walk in and do it. So we need to think, OK how are we going to over come that little barrier. We recognise that there are a whole lot of people out there who want to volunteer and we’re trying to keep the ethic of volunteering alive. (CW3: 3)

For the ‘time poor’, this explanation indicates an emerging pattern of a short term or event driven commitment to volunteering. Programs requiring regular or ongoing commitment by volunteers appeared less likely to be successful. Interestingly, this change in the pattern of volunteering from a regular commitment to a one off occasion requires the organisational support of a community organisation such as NCC, to facilitate events and harness the community’s latent power and energy. This raises questions in regard to the ongoing funding of such organisations, once the area is built out, and the developers move on.

*The Social Entrepreneur in Harrington Park*

Although Ford was fond of discussing the ‘empowerment model’ underpinning the community development program in Harrington Park, aspects of the actual practice contradicted his musings. Rather than a bottom-up, facilitatory approach of ‘empowering’ residents, practices tended to be top-down, managerial and even controlling. This paradox was driven by the close commercial relationship between the master planner and the community ‘facilitator’, and the need to make the community project a ‘success’. Success in this regard had market implications. The community facilitator perceived himself as a controlling force in the overall success of the MPC, and seemed unconscious of the fact that he was just one actor or force amongst many. This perception seemed to relate to the evangelical Christian philosophy that underpinned his practice. Ford had no formal education in
community development. His ‘feel’ for the field was based on intuition, his professional background in personnel and his Christian evangelicalism.

The structure and function of the Harrington Park Community Association clearly illustrated the paradox of the community facilitator’s community development model and practice (Figure 8.1).

FIGURE 8.1: Relationship Between Harrington Park Resident Group, Community Facilitator and the Developer

The Resident Association was the latest manifestation of the Harrington Park Resident Liaison Group, formed originally at the instigation of the master planner to act “as a connection between the developers and the community” (HP12: 7). According to one of its members, the residents’ group gave residents the opportunity to influence the future development of their estate.

For instance, if the developer is going to build the club house, [Ford] brings the plans to our residents group and we have a look and give our opinion. So we’re sort of like a representation of the community back to the developer. (HP12: 8)

This informant, however, went on to reveal his disillusion with the influence the community facilitator had over the resident group’s activities and decision making ability.

Unfortunately for a long time Ford sort of led the group and we felt that we
were just puppets under him. And ahm, I was feeling very disillusioned, because he would come along and say ‘this is what we are going to do’ blah, blah, blah. And we’d say ok, and go and do it. We’d be the manpower on the day. And ahm, I felt like we didn’t have enough decision making ability and that sort of thing, not enough power. And anyway, back in October [the developers] called for a committee and they decided it would become incorporated. (HP12: 8)

Incorporation of the group was intended to provide it with more autonomy over its direction and decision making. However, some months after its incorporation this still had not occurred. In fact, during one of our last formal discussions the community facilitator explained that for its long term viability the resident association would need to be managed by Camden Council, or be managed by a full-time, paid community facilitator. Under this latter scenario although the community facilitator would be indirectly answerable to the community, the community association would not have direct control over the facilitator’s position or program. The role of residents would be restricted to supporting the community facilitator’s program. According to Ford, direct resident control was not necessary, because a good community facilitator would intrinsically understand the wishes of the community. Hence, it seemed that in the future, as in the past, the Harrington Park ‘Community’ Association would essentially be run by executive decree.

The social entrepreneurial experience – Conclusion

Rather than being an autonomous civic body, the residents group was one means by which the community facilitator could initiate a compact with residents which supported the developer’s vision for the development. This is in keeping with Logan and Molotch’s (1987: 39) observation that “the entrepreneurs’ goals are facilitated when residents become part of the development consensus”. In this instance, the developer gained through a low-cost gathering of residents’ ideas and objections on design and development matters, and dealing with minor problems and conflicts

34 Interview with David Ford 27 September 2002
35 At one HP Resident Group meeting observed, the residents discussed how they could keep those with a ‘vested’ interest off the Board when it eventually Associated. It didn’t seem to occur to them that everyone at that meeting, including the community facilitator who was representing both himself and the developer, had a vested interest. I was not sure who the Board thought such ‘vested’ interests comprised of, and the difference, in this instance, in vested interest and community interest in its narrowest sense.
before they grew into major ones. More importantly the residents’ group was one of the primary channels through which the ‘community ethic’ – the ‘common’ ideology of the developer and residents – was forged. In this way it reflects Logan and Molotch (1987: 39) observation that,

local growth machines may successfully mobilise, through the vehicle of neighbourhood organization, the affectional ties of a residential community, and do so on behalf of exchange goals... Part of the tension of the urban drama consists in this making and unmaking of coalitions among neighbourhood and entrepreneurial actors.

Even though the members of the residents’ group may have desired more autonomy and ‘power’ (HP12), they were nevertheless willing participants in a compact involving a degree of ‘social upgrading of the neighbourhood’, through the close monitoring of the social climate (Logan and Molotch 1987: 144). This was a form of social capital that distinguished Harrington Park from other estates in south-west Sydney (Bourdieu 1984).

At a broader level, the application of the Welcome Initiative throughout Landcom’s greenfield developments is reminiscent of the ‘ready-cut communities’ rolled out in western Sydney by the NSW Housing Commission during the 1960s and 70s (Powell 1993). According to Powell (1993: 75) many of the community facilities and programs planned for these public housing estates were not “realised” because they “depended on the energy and experience of new settlers or local agencies” to service them.

However, the top down, ‘one size fits all’ approach to community development was also a factor. Such an approach has parallels in the private sector MPCs today. For instance, Harrington Park’s comprehensive community development program has been replicated by North West Community Care (a derivative of NCC) in Landcom’s Newbury estate, complete with welcome kits, new residents evenings, ‘Home

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36 Controlling vandalism and hooliganism in the estate was a recurrent topic of discussion at HP resident group meetings. At one meeting it was explained that much of the vandalism (particularly vandalised street signs, domestic letter boxes and ‘porta loos’ in the estate occurred on Saturday nights. There was a suspicion that much of the vandalism was being undertaken by outside groups using the community centre on the weekend. It was discussed that it may be necessary to take a bond from people booking the hall, to cover this sort of vandalism. (Harrington Park Residents Group Meeting 14 April, 2002)
Beautiful Evenings’ to assist residents to ornament their new home (Newbury 2003), newsletters depicting residents’ model stories, a resident group with which the developer can liaise, facilities which “encourage a sense of community” (Urban Home 2003: 3) and the appointment of an “active and effective community development officer” (Urban Home 2003: 3). Such an approach should assist community facilities from becoming moribund, at least in the short term. However, this approach presumes that ‘community’ is mono-conceptual; that people construct ‘community’ in a uniform way; and that community is a static concept, rather than a dynamic, reflexive process. Consequently, community development becomes a commodity, to be literally bought and sold. Moreover, these present-day ‘ready-cut communities’ are destined to appeal to a particular socio-economic group of a similar value system and outlook.

8.4 Conclusion

The planner-developer(s) of Harrington Park appear to have been successful in translating their vision for the MPC community into a reality. The estate has won numerous planning and community awards which, in an example of ‘symbolic violence’ (Bourdieu 1991), are prominently displayed on a billboard at the entrance to the estate. According to Bourdieu (1998: 103), symbolic violence is the violence which extorts submission, which is not perceived as such, based on ‘collective expectations’ or socially inculcated beliefs. Like the theory of magic, the theory of symbolic violence rests on a theory of belief or, more precisely, on a theory of the production of belief, of the work of socialisation necessary to produce agents endowed with the schemes of perception and appreciation that will permit them to perceive and obey the injunctions inscribed in a situation or discourse.

Harrington Park has the reputation, amongst both residents and outsiders, for being a quality estate. For the residents the notion of ‘quality’ is conferred upon both the physical and aesthetic aspects of the estate as well as themselves. Residents

37 For instance, At Newbury (2003) features the Game family who settled in the Newbury from the UK, after the suburb “reminded them of the market town atmosphere back in Hertfordshire (near London) where they came from”. The Game family explain that living in Newbury is “like being on permanent holiday”. It’s a “perfect environment” (Newbury 2003: 3)
38 Awards include the UDIA NSW ‘Master Planned Residential Lifestyle Development Aware 2001.
overwhelmingly believe that there is a greater sense of community in the estate than
in surrounding areas, and most appear to connect with and contribute, albeit to
varying degrees, to the ‘community’. The creation that is Harrington Park is due in
part to the planner-developer’s identification of a particular market niche and to the
development vision. One local developer, speaking at a 1994 MACROC\textsuperscript{39}
Developers’ Forum gave an insight into the motivations of the property developer:
You see, developers are generally in touch with the market. They know what
their customers want a lot more than the Council officers would know. Council
officers unfortunately tend to view the resident’s and other people perhaps in a
negative way because all they get is complaints. They don’t get any positive
feedback. ... From time to time there is strong demand for a bigger lot, or a
strong demand for smaller lot, then when we plan we actually anticipate when
the market changes. We actually design the lot to suit the market, not just to
maximise lot yield (Chow 1994: 22).

The MPC planner-developer, however, goes one step further and incorporates
particular values and an aesthetic to ‘suit their market’.

Translating the vision to a reality is achieved primarily through the establishment of
the ‘community compact’. This compact is a broad agreement as to the common goal
and the dominant value system or common code which is intended to operate within
the estate. The compact comprises both formal restrictive covenants as specified by
the planner-developer and which underpins the ‘code of pecuniary beauty, and
informal covenants as to the way residents are generally expected to conduct
themselves, that is the ‘community ethos’. Hence, the compact involves the
adherence by residents to a set of planner-developer determined standards, including
abiding by the estate regulations and social norms, displaying pride in housing and
pride in the estate, and conducting oneself with communal civility. Although the
community compact involves a certain dynamism between the planner-developers
and residents, they are not necessarily ‘equal’ partners to the compact. The planner-
developer holds the principal position. Residents are self-selecting in the first
instance, and through the planner-developer’s practices, most notably the application
of restrictive covenants and the community development program, residents are
required, in Goffmanesque style, to present a certain image of themselves as

\textsuperscript{39} MACROC – Macarthur Regional Organisation of Councils – of which Camden Council is part.
community members. One aspect of this is resident compliance with the community compact.
CHAPTER 9: Community in New Housing Estates – A Comparative Analysis

Helen’s Story

Helen has lived in Garden Gates for just over a year. The family moved from interstate because of her husband, John’s promotion at work. Originally they hoped to buy a house around Alford’s Point, but were surprised at the high cost of Sydney housing. An internet search of affordable housing directed them towards Camden. After spending a weekend with a real estate agent looking over 30 houses between Picton and Harrington Park, they were finally shown through a new house in Garden Gates. Helen explains “once I saw the area, and saw the Botanical Gardens behind us, we just fell in love with it down here. It’s quiet. It’s peaceful. The only bad thing about it is the smell” (GG11: 6). The great attraction for the family was the semi-rural vista, the trees, open space, and the newly built house they wouldn’t have to repaint or modify.

Twelve months on Helen is very happy with her housing choice. In Garden Gates she has found a level of neighbourly interaction that she was not expecting and had not experienced previously. “We are very lucky”, she says. “We have a great street. We have lots of parties in the street. We have progressive dinners in the street. We are just about to organise a Halloween party” (GG11: 7).

When I asked her how it came about that the street was so friendly, she eagerly took responsibility for this on behalf of herself and her neighbours:

It’s how we’ve made it. Everybody knows everybody else’s kids. Even the ones that don’t have children themselves. There’s a couple in the street; they still know whose kids belong where. [Why do you think that’s come about? Have you felt that before in any other place you lived in?] No. Ahm, I think because we’re all in the same situation. We were all experiencing the same thing, we all moved in at the same time. You know, at the end of a really hard day’s work we’d get out the front and have a wine, and the boys would have a beer, and you know you’d sit out the front and have a chat and reflect on your day’s work… I think you know, we’re all sort of semi in together. We all moved in at the same time. I think it’s the… we’re all down to earth people.

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1 The informant explained, “the smell is the green waste, which is basically towards Eldersleigh. There is a tip and green waste. But apparently that’s going so it won’t be a drama for ever and a day” (GG11: 6).
middle class, apart from Kim who has four kids, she’s got double what the rest of us have got. We’re all friendly and just so easy to get along with. And we’ve actually – Kim and I – we initiate most of the parties. We make the effort to go and include the other people. Like we can have our little things, just the three families, and not worry about everyone else, but we don’t. We actually include everyone else. So at Christmas time it was, we had Kris Kringle for the kids. So we had our street party, which was our Christmas party. When ever there is a birthday party, all the street kids – (laughing) we call them the street kids because they are always out on the street doing something. But I think that a community, a neighbourhood or a street is only what you make it. I mean I could have moved here and not worried about meeting anybody and just did my own thing. And that goes for everybody. But they’re not that way inclined and I wasn’t that way inclined. (GG11: 7-8)

Helen sees herself as the architect of her own destiny. Her explanation reflects Richard’s (1990: 28) findings that those residents of Green Views who were happy with their housing choice, “normally saw this as their own achievement of their own dream, not to be credited to any outside authority, no matter how active a participant it might be in the process of marketing the dream”. Hence one Green Views resident explained: “I don’t think Green Views has been a better way of life. It’s only what we’ve made it” (cited Richards 1990: 29).

Helen is a stay-at-home mother of two primary school children. She regrets her lack of tertiary education. She had wanted to be a teacher, but at the suggestion of her parents had left school at 15 for a job in a bank. It was a period of high unemployment and high interest rates. When the job offer was made, after a successful stint of work experience, her parents advised her, “You don’t look a gift horse in the mouth” (GG11: 3). Consequently, Helen “finished school on the Friday and started at the bank on Monday”. She laments that “now banking is all I know” (GG11: 3).

Helen married young and worked with her husband towards financial security, which now includes homeownership and a rental property. This is the preferred wealth creation path of many ‘ordinary’ Australians, who are more familiar and comfortable with housing investment than the share market (McKnight 2002). The aspiration Helen holds for her own children is that they attend university and get a good job as a way towards financial security. Yet at the same time she does not knock her own
trajectory. “I think the younger you can be when you first buy your house, the better off you’ll be later on in life” (GG11: 5). So she intends “pushing our boys, helping them and pushing them into buying a house as soon as possible. Basically, rent money is dead money. It’s not working for you” (GG11: 6) – unless, of course, it’s other people’s rent money.

The only thing that rankles Helen about Garden Gates is the recent proliferation of double storey homes. A resident herself of a single storey home, she argues “if they want two storeys they should go across to Harrington Park. It’s two storey city over there. But here, it’s predominately single storey” (GG11: 10). When I asked her why Harrington Park had so many double storey homes she remarked, “I suppose that comes down to the perception of people. People who build two storey houses think that they’re much better than people with single storey houses” (GG11: 10-11). As Bauman (2000: 172) contends “the desire to demonise others is based on the ontological uncertainties of those inside”.

Helen’s explanation reflects a widely held feeling of antipathy amongst the informants of Garden Gates towards residents of Harrington Park. Similar feelings of antipathy were not held by the informants of Harrington Park however; although some gave specific reasons for not wanting to build in Garden Gates, including the undulating topography and the number of leaf-dropping eucalyptus trees. Most of the informants of Harrington Park felt not only satisfied with their housing choice, but believed their estate was ‘special’, as were they by reflection. Hence, there was no need to be resentful of others in surrounding estates. Nevertheless, the high level of satisfaction Helen felt with her housing situation was reflected widely amongst the other residents interviewed in both Harrington Park and Garden Gates.

9.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the disparate forms of ‘community’ which had developed in the MPC of Harrington Park and the planned subdivision of Garden Gates. Utilising a micro, interactionist perspective, in the first instance it examines the internal and external processes involved in the community development effort
that are intended to facilitate social connectivity and a collective identity. The second part of the chapter utilises neo-Weberian theories to examine and compare the estates’ community form through the concepts of *neighbouring* and *neighbourhood*.

In general I was surprised at the value virtually all the informants in both Harrington Park and Garden Gates placed on the ‘friendliness’ and ‘community spirit’ they felt existed and helped to nourish within their respective estates. A large proportion of these residents cited these aspects as the thing they liked most about living there. Further, for most of the informants, this experience of neighbourhood social connectivity was either new, or one they associated with their childhood. However, the community form within each estate exhibited certain differences, particularly in regard to the extent and density of local social networks, the degree of estate wide community consciousness and the degree to which respondents shed old identities for new.

Although formal community development practices operated in both estates, albeit to varying degrees and intensity, the community within Harrington Park appeared to be more intensely ‘constructed’ (Hewitt 2000) than that which emerged in Garden Gates. In contrast to Garden Gates, there was no confusion amongst informants over the physical boundary of Harrington Park. It had an obvious formal entry point that would leave no-one confused as to the name of the estate. Visual continuity was maintained through the use of an aesthetic standard; of signage, public gardens, and mature, deciduous street trees. Informants were also conscious of a social boundary. In order to identify and differentiate their estate from surrounding areas informants described Harrington Park as ‘prestigious’, ‘upper of the middle’, ‘quality’, ‘for second home buyers’, ‘bringing the right type of people in’ and a ‘better classed area’. As Cohen (1989: 58) argues, community “boundaries are *relational* rather than *absolute*; that is, they mark the community in relation to other communities”.

Importantly, the informants of Harrington Park identified the estate as their local community.
In Garden Gates, however, informants tended not to distinguish between the estate and the wider suburb of Mt Annan. “I didn’t really know there was a distinction there. I thought that all of Mt Annan was Garden Gates. Am I wrong?” (GG4: 13), asked one informant. Some did not identify with living in an estate called Garden Gates. “I’ve never thought of us as living in Garden Gates. I just think of us as living in Mt Annan” (GG7: 8). One informant did not know he was buying into Garden Gates until his bank manager told him so. He explained, “when we bought the house and we went to our bank manager to get the loan for it, he said ‘is that at Garden Gates?’ And I said ‘where is Garden Gates?’ To me it was just Mt Annan” (GG8: 10). Another informant referred to the gates of the Mt Annan Botanical Gardens as Garden Gates: “We’ve got Garden Gates and the plays that they put on from time to time. It’s fun, isn’t it? [You mean in the Botanic Gardens?] Yep, yep.” (GG5: 6).

Although some of the informants of Garden Gates described the estate using similar imagery as the informants of Harrington Park, for instance “prestigious” (GG9:12) and containing “a nice standard of people” (GG3: 10), overwhelmingly the area was identified by the prodigious number of eucalyptus trees, its rural outlook, its proximity to the botanical gardens and the relaxed feel. No real sense of physical boundary was apparent to informants. Although a relatively unimpressive sign was positioned part way up Mt Annan Drive, identifying the estate’s entry point, it was easy to miss. An attempt at visual continuity was made with the positioning of an iron arbour (described by one informant as a ‘bird cage’) at the estate’s entry point, at roundabouts and in some of the parks. As a symbolic marker, however, it did not appear to be very successful. The symbolic marker which was most successful was the adjoining native Mt Annan Botanical Gardens, from which Garden Gate’s derived its name. Social boundaries were somewhat apparent. Distinctions were made between Garden Gates and ‘old’ Mt Annan which incorporated lower income and public housing, and Campbelltown on ‘the other side of the freeway’. For instance,

I knew guys that lived in Mt Annan, but they were actually in housing commission which is actually dotted throughout the estate. There is no composite building or no units as such. They are just normal houses spotted in around the place. That’s the older section. But this Garden Gates estate is totally different. It’s just new, fresh, larger than life, and I saw some potential
for growth and gain..... I'm not really class racist, if you like. I can get on with the guys down there with the little houses that are falling apart and the paint peeling off the walls and look a little bit grotty from time to time. But that's the way they live and we live differently. (GG5: 7)

And from another informant:

When people ask me where I live I say Camden. And we'd also been told by other people that if you can possibly get into Camden Council as compared to Campbelltown Council you're better off. (GG4: 10)

But again the social distinction was not as palpable as it was in Harrington Park. The estate of Garden Gates tended to blend socially and physically into the surrounding suburbs of the Narellan new release area. And this has had consequences for the development of community there.

Significantly, the sense of community and the actions pertaining to community performance (for instance social interaction, offering assistance and acts of reciprocity) in Garden Gates were more likely to occur at the street level. In Harrington Park, although neighbouring was also high, community identification tended to be estate based and social networks appeared to be more diffusely spread than in Garden Gates.

9.2 Aspects, Rituals and Ceremonies of the Community Project

9.2.1 Selective Homogeneity and Social Familiarity

Due to the contemporary nature of Harrington Park and Garden Gates, the classic length of residency explanation, as expounded by the 'Chicago School' is unlikely to be the key factor facilitating community development (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Reingold 1995). Rather, criteria for resident self-selection generating important elements of commonality are more likely to provide the basis of community (Fava 1956; Baum 1997; Gans 1969). Bauman (2001: 64) refers to this prospect as a community of "the like-minded and the like-behaving; a community of

2 From their classic study on 'Community Attachment in Mass Society', Kasarda and Janowitz's (1974: 336) found that "in six of ten cases, length of residence alone explains a greater percent of variation in local social bonds and community sentiments that do the combined effects of population size, density, social class, and stages in life cycle".
sameness”. This involves a process of self-conscious selection (Hewitt 2000). The process is assisted by the branding and marketing of new estates, which enables prospective residents to readily identify the lifestyle on offer, and in turn, through a reflexive process, the type of resident the estate is likely to attract.

The selection criteria provides the basis of commonality – of identity, common ideology, mode of living, values and objectives (Glass 1948; Greer 1960; Richards 1990). In turn commonality provides the basis for immediate familiarity, and in turn trust and reciprocity. This hypothesis is supported by Stone and Hughes (2002: 20) who found that in their testing of theoretically based measures of social capital, “the more similar attitudes are [in a local area], the higher are reported measures of trust and reciprocity”. This process of immediate familiarity contrasts with a habitual familiarity which develops over time. Hence, new residents are immediately familiar with each other – or importantly, those aspects of life considered relevant by the group. Differences that fall outside the criteria become irrelevant.

For the residents interviewed in Harrington Park, aspects of commonality are based primarily on personal ideology and values particularly in regard to family, respect and friendliness towards others holding similar values, an exacting work ethic and housing pride. (Home ownership is taken as a given). Other aspects, however, include life-stage, household income and politico-social attitudes.

Now that [Harrington Park] is so big [the developers] have these new homeowners dinners. It’s just a really nice way to meet people with similar circumstances. And people connect. It’s really amazing. (HP11: 11)

Social contact is good with the children. It’s built in that I look after their children and they look after mine. You know what sort of people are living around you. (HP2: 4)

M: When you’re building you meet a lot of people and they’re going through the same thing. And you get to have a lot of things in common at that point. And they’re pretty much like around the same age, or pretty much going through the same stage in their life, whether this is their second, third, fourth or their dream home or what ever, so you’ve got a lot of things in common as well. And most of them are nice people, really nice people. F: Genuine people. M: Not that I get to see much of them these days, because I’m work’n. (HP6: 11)
F: The people. [How do you describe the people?] F: Our group is friendly. Yeh, they’re friendly. M: Similar to us I guess. F: Yes, similar to us. [And how’s that?] F: They’re middle class F: They do the same sort of things...

(HP4: 9)

Conversely, one Harrington Park respondent in her 60s felt a lack of social connectivity with her neighbours, because of a lack of things in common:

I was a bit disappointed that the neighbours are young with babies and because of that they don’t have much in common with us. The family opposite us are working people. Yes, being young parents they are mostly busy with their children. For me this is a bit of a draw back. If I had older neighbours I would socialise more with them. No-one has come in to have a cup of tea yet. We haven’t been invited to have a cup of tea next door. Whereas where we used to be they were older and we used to have that sort of interaction. (HP5: 7)

In his study of Woodcroft, Baum (1997: 24) also noted that the establishment of social bonds in the new estate was supported by “a feeling that everyone had a lot in common”. One resident in particular considered the area was so friendly because:

…… everybody is in the same boat, they are trying to get their garden going and just get their houses established and they are always out in the garden.
(Resident cited Baum 1997: 24).

This ‘same boat’ metaphor has currency, being referred to by residents in Richards’s (1990: 47) study of the new housing estate of Green Views, as well as a resident I interviewed in one of the hyper-neighbouring streets of Garden Gates:

Probably one of the best things has been the neighbours. Everybody comes in and introduces themselves, and nobody gives you the evil eye here. I suppose because everybody is in the same boat, everybody is setting up house, probably for the first time. They are all similar ages to us. (GG4: 2);

And a long term resident of Harrington Park explaining what motivated her to introduce herself to neighbours in the early days of the estate:

And you knew that nobody else knew anyone else as well. If you know what I mean. You’re all in the same boat. [So when someone new moved into the street, you would go and say hello?] F: Yes. (HP4: 8)

The importance of the self-conscious selection is that it provides the resident “with a set of similar others who can support or be perceived as supporting the person’s definitions of self” (Hewitt 2000: 123). The social identity formed through this selection process, provides residents with a sense of (perceived) continuity and integration. Hence, in modern society, residents’ common values and domiciliary
interests provide a unifying experience, and a foundation for the early development of community.

9.2.2 The Function of Rituals and Ceremonies in the Community Project

Commonality alone, however, is merely the starting point of the community project. Although most of the informants had anticipated friendly neighbours with similar lifestyles and values, as well as a smattering of community events (this was part of the marketing pitch), many of the informants, particularly in Harrington Park, were surprised at the level of community sentiment they experienced after actually moving in.

One phase of the construction of a modern community involves legitimising rituals and ceremonies. In the case of the MPC, such rituals are particularly intense during the initial stage of entry into the estate. Some of these are formal rituals, initiatives of the developer, while others are more casually instigated by other residents.

Developer Initiated Rituals and the Community Ethic

In the past, the ‘welcome’ to new estates was more likely to be an informal affair, undertaken by neighbours and external actors like home delivery vendors hoping to sign new residents up for delivery of milk, bread, soft drink and the like. Gans (1969: 45) for instance, explains how at first in Levittown, “the constant callers were a bother, but when the moving in chores were over, the salesmen became social intermediaries, telling people about their neighbours and pointing out the one with similar backgrounds or interests.” Alternately churches played a role in welcome parties and events (Denington 1972). The development corporations of the British New Towns, however, provided a more formal program of welcoming new residents:

Welcome parties are arranged by the development corporation for groups of new arrivals at which corporation members and officers – the chairman, members and officers of the local council and leading members of various societies – are present to talk about the town and answer questions. Each corporation’s social relations department helps new residents’ associations, or social clubs, to find their feet. (Denington 1972: 147)
The welcome rituals employed by the developers of Harrington Park and Garden Gates closely reflected the British New Town experience.

Formal rituals are more comprehensive in Harrington Park than in Garden Gates. Although Harrington Park is not a total institution, the comprehensive nature of the community development rituals there has certain aspects in common with Goffman’s (1968) reflections on institutional ceremonies, not least the idea the such ceremonies encourage the ‘staff and inmates’/ developer and residents, “to express unity, solidarity, and joint commitment to the institution rather than differences between the two levels” (Goffman 1968: 90). In Harrington Park, the developer’s rituals help to promote a common ideology and set of interests between the residents and the developer, while defining the difference between ‘inmates’ (residents) of the estate and outsiders. The dynamics of this common ideology, or ‘community ethic’ was illuminated by one couple interviewed:

[So you had this salesman and he was selling you the lake?] F: Yes, and I think he sold the bike tracks... [Did he sell any aspect of community back then?] F: Yes, yes. That was really big. [What would he say?] F: Just the community spirit I guess. Growing it together. Like starting off you know. [And was that appealing?] F: Yeh. That was appealing, don’t you think? M: We found very early in the piece, that you become friends with people who weren’t necessarily your next door neighbours, just through community events. And we’re still good friends with those people. (HP4: 5)

The community ethic is a further component of the ‘community compact’. The rituals which support the community ethic and help in ‘growing the community together’ include the welcome visit, orientation evenings, community events, and the community newsletter.

The Welcome Visit

As discussed in the previous chapter, the developers of both Harrington Park and Garden Gates placed much value on their ‘Welcome Initiative’, as a way of establishing social networks and links within new estates. The Welcome Initiative involved a home visit by a community worker and a welcome package. The underlying assumption is that residents of new estates, in contrast to those moving
into established areas, feel quite isolated, and therefore cut-off from social resources.

Terry Goldacre, Chief Executive Officer of Harpak explained this conjecture:

In an established community there are established networks and links, and in any one street various groups of neighbours get to know each other, and if one person moves out and a new person moves in, then the neighbourhood generally fairly quickly re-establishes those links, because there is only one new person coming in. But in an estate like this, everybody is new, everybody who is living here is moving in. And they generally all move into a stage at about the same time. (Goldacre cited Taranto 2002)

Goldacre presumes here, that people entering an established neighbourhood are more likely to promptly establish community links than in a new neighbourhood.

However, this is not necessarily the case, and people who are undergoing the similar adversities of building a house and settling into a new estate are more likely to get to know neighbours out of either emotional or physical necessity. Goldacre goes on to explain the developer’s facilitating role in initiating residents to the MPC:

And we found in the past that if we’re not the catalyst for forming those links or support in a community, they tend not to happen. So what we can do is be a catalyst just really to get people to get to know each other. Then they take over. If we do that properly then once those links are established and the community is established then we can withdraw and nobody notices that we’re leaving. (Goldacre cited Taranto 2002)

Here the planner-developer’s idea of acting as a ‘catalyst’ contrasts with Helen’s perception of community being the result solely of resident’s initiatives. For Helen, it’s “only what you make it” (GG11: 8 – see Helen’s Story above), rather than the input of the planner-developer. Further, Goldacre bases his community development strategies on the belief that if done right, a community will be made sustainable and the developer can withdraw without anybody noticing; thus revealing his belief that community is a stable, rather than static entity. However, as indicated in Chapter 7 ‘Seeking Utopia’, urban communities are not only dynamic, but are constantly under pressure from the processes of invasion and succession.

Landcom has a similar view of the facilitatory role of the Welcome Initiative, as explained by Rudy Fest, Landcom’s Manager of Marketing and Sales Services:

We decided we could fill a real community need by helping people feel more at home quicker than usual. We go way beyond the simple welcome and hospitality and provide all that nitty gritty, practical information that you’re often left to discover for yourself...The Welcome Initiative follows a simple
concept. A person is employed to take a welcome kit to new residents in estates
Landcom has developed. The kits contain items like a copy of the Yellow
Pages, local bus and train timetables, services information from the local
council, and information about shopping and recreational facilities in the
district. (Fest cited Landcom 1999: 6)

By contrast, the welcome hamper presented to new residents of Harrington Park also
included bottles of wine, and tee-shirts and caps imprinted with the Harrington Park
logo - the Harrington Park uniform no less. One enthusiastic recipient of the hamper
explained:

When you move in there you get a Welcome Pack. It gives you a list of people
who live in Harrington Park that are electricians and beauticians and
hairdressers. [Have you used any of these local contractors?] For electrical
work... and I think the pest control guy was local. But there was just heaps.
Even Narellan community information was in there... [So you got a lot out of
that pack?] Oh yeh. And the shit. I won’t wear it. My son does. He loves it. [Do
you see people wearing them?] Yeh. You do. You see them wearing them and
you think God love ‘em. They’re happy (laughing). [They’re proud of
Harrington Park?] Oh yes. You can just tell. Some people are just incredibly
proud like of their house, their gardens, where they live... And to live there
with the lake and everything else, you should be proud. (HP7: 12)

While most of the informants of Garden Gates and Harrington Park were quite
positive about the Welcome Initiative, even the more sceptical recipients thought
there was some benefit in the experience.

[Did you receive a welcome visit when you moved in here?] Yes. [Did they
bring a hamper?] Yes they did. [How did you feel about that?] I thought that it
wasn’t necessary, but it was a nice touch. Then again I guess that brings you
into the community spirit. It makes you feel part of something. And to think
that somebody has taken a few minutes out of their day to say ‘hi, how are you.
Welcome to the neighbourhood. These are the things that we have available. If
we can help you please ring us on this number’. [What do you mean by it
wasn’t necessary?] Well ahm... I didn’t move into this estate just to receive a
hamper with a couple of bottles of wine in it, or a hat and a tee-shirt in it. I
don’t think that it would have sold any more blocks of land by doing it. But I
guess it was a nice touch. (HP9: 11)

However, one male informant of Garden Gates seemed quite perplexed by the
experience:

[When you moved in here three years ago do you remember getting a Welcome
Visit and a welcome package?] We got a welcome visit from Landcom. I think
the lady came around or contacted us. [What did you think about that?] Mmm.
I don’t know. I wasn’t involved much. Me’ wife was involved in it more. I
think it was alright. It was like something you didn’t really want. I’m not sure what it was all about. I haven’t come across that scenario before. (GG9: 11)

Interestingly, with the contemporary, and somewhat contrived Welcome Initiative, it was the welcome package which informants were more likely to remember and respond to, than the actual visit. The one off visit appeared to be merely the support act to the actual package which could be put in a cupboard and dragged out when needed. And perhaps the clinking of glasses full of Harrington Park wine is a more memorable occasion than flicking through the Yellow Pages which was part of the pack in Garden Gates.

**Resident Orientation Evenings**

A further initiation ritual is the resident orientation evening, held each quarter for newly arrived residents of Harrington Park (although not Garden Gates). The event is low key and friendly, involving pre-dinner drinks, barbecue and an ‘orientation’ address by the community developer. On the night that I attended, members of the Harrington Park Residents Association were also present. They mingled with new residents, making them feel welcome. Mixing the old with the new appeared to work well.

About 70 people attended on this particularly cold and blustery evening. They seemed a friendly bunch, happy to chat and move about. There were a couple of young babies in prams, half a dozen toddlers and quite a few primary school children racing around. There were a couple of older couples (retired or nearing retirement age) and a few younger couples in their 20s, but the majority of new residents seemed to be in their 30s and 40s.

Towards the end of the meal, the community developer got to his feet, welcomed the new residents and introduced the members of the Harrington Park Residents Association. He went on to explain that Harrington Park was something ‘special’. That unlike most other estates in Sydney it was master planned, and importantly, unlike most developers, Harpak was located on the actual estate and so was in touch

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3 Sunday 19 May, 2002 from 6pm, Harrington Park Community Centre

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with the needs of new residents.\textsuperscript{4} He detailed the history of the estate’s development, and how Lady Fairfax had wanted to develop a special estate to honour the wishes of her late husband. A message of significance and meaning was presented to an eager audience. Even I, an outsider and non-resident, was impressed with the moment.

The community developer then explained how his experience in personnel underpinned his approach to community development. For instance, he explained, when someone starts in a new job, to make the transition to the new work place easier they are given an orientation of the organisation and are ‘buddied up’ with someone who can lend them support. In the same way then, new residents of Harrington Park are welcomed and oriented with a visit by the estate’s community worker. The community developer then went on to explain the role of the estate’s community association, particularly that it was not just about maintaining property values, but about developing community, particularly once the developer had moved on. This account highlights the community developer’s perspective of community in Harrington Park, as a formal institution albeit of a civic nature.

\textit{Community Events}

The Welcome Visit and Orientation Evenings are supported by other estate wide, unifying ‘get-togethers’ (Goffman 1968). Community events, such as market days, billy-cart races, kite flying competitions, jazz concerts, tree planting days and Christmas parties, have both a symbolic and dynamic element. Symbolically, these are unifying events which keep the residents faithful to the ‘community’ ideology of the developer. The dynamic element involves providing a field through which social connectivity may occur. For instance, one of the rules for participating in a Harrington Park Regatta Race Day required that the street event “be crewed by residents (of any age) living in the same street” (Harrington Park 2001: 1).

\textsuperscript{4} While not perhaps being the norm, the development arrangements of Harrington Park is also not unique. For instance, Richards notes that “Green Views was sold as a planned development, the provision of at least some facilities was heavily publicized, and the developer was very visible” (1990: 24). Similarly, the ideas of ‘prestige’ and ‘specialness’ was also promulgated by the developer. “The developer attempted from the start to create a ‘special’ image for Green Views, and to maintain a presence there” (1990: 25).
For some informants however, the fact of having such events within their estate is more important than the actual attendance, reflecting the idea of an ‘imagined community’ rather than a ‘real’ one. One informant, for instance, explained that the thing she like most about Harrington Park was the “community spirit”, and the fact that they have events down by the lake. Neither she nor her husband, however, had the time to attend such events, “because we’re pretty busy… but they seem to have a lot down there” (F: HP6: 9). In general, however, the events appear to be well regarded and attended by residents, and seem to produce quite tangible outcomes in regard to community identity and social connectivity, particularly in Harrington Park where they are held more regularly and promoted more proficiently.

Data from the resident survey\(^5\) (Table 9.1) indicates that approximately two thirds of respondents had attended at least one community event in the past 12 months, although there was a higher participation rate at community events in Harrington Park (68.5%), than Garden Gates (59.7%). Interestingly 23.4% of male respondents overall had attended more than three events over the past 12 months, compared to only 6.8% of female respondents. Of these male respondents, 4.8% were from Garden Gates, compared to 38.5% from Harrington Park.

**Table 9.1: Number of formal community events participated in over the past 12 months by estate and by gender.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Events</th>
<th>Garden Gates %</th>
<th>Harrington Park %</th>
<th>Total Female %</th>
<th>Total Male %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 Events</td>
<td>40.32</td>
<td>31.50</td>
<td>35.23</td>
<td>36.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Event</td>
<td>25.81</td>
<td>27.40</td>
<td>30.68</td>
<td>19.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Events</td>
<td>24.19</td>
<td>12.33</td>
<td>18.18</td>
<td>17.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Events</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td>8.22</td>
<td>9.09</td>
<td>4.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 3 Events</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>20.55</td>
<td>6.82</td>
<td>23.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Garden Gates and Harrington Park Resident Survey (2002)

The community events, particularly in Harrington Park, are fondly remembered by longer term residents, whose tales of the ‘good old days’ take on mythical proportions and help to sustain more contemporary attempts as the estate population

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\(^5\) As discussed in detail in Chapter 5 Methodology and Research Design, the disappointing return rate means that findings are considered to be indicative rather than representative.
increases. In the early days of Harrington Park, Lady Fairfax performed the role of ‘Lady of the Manor’, attending events and providing ‘needy’ residents with decorating advice.

[So you used to go to the early parties?] F: Yeh, they were great. M: No expense was spared. Its probably not so much these days, but in those days, there were events put on all the time. [What events?] M: Dinners. F: Lady Fairfax used to come a lot back then. More than she does now. [So she took an actual interest?] F: Yes, we’d be eating prawns on toast. It was very nice. That was in the early days. That’s when there wouldn’t even have been 100 people. She even sent us a Christmas Card. [How did that make you feel?] F: Oh, on a list. No, it was good. Wasn’t it? It was very nice... She had a night down there where her and her decorator came out and tried to give people hints about how to do their homes up. [Did you go to that?] F: Yes. [Were there any good hints?] F: Yeh... M: I think it was more scheduled towards her huge apartment. F: I just remember his leopard skin shoes. It was great. We had a really good night. M: And once again you got fed. F: I remember her saying about mirrors that they make a room look bigger, and that’s why I put that mirror up over there. They had lots of good hints of how to do things. But like he said, ‘don’t go and buy your cushions from Target’ and things like that. But I said, that’s all we can afford (laughing). (HP4: 8)

Even though this couple was able to reflect with great humour on the pretentiousness and paternalistic nature of these events, they were still special (as indicated not least by the joy in the retelling), conveying a sense of distinctiveness and common identity amongst the residents. The retelling of such stories also sets the ‘old timers’ – the frontier residents – apart from the newer residents who received the advantage of their community work, as this couple went on to explain:

M: People are buying the new blocks over there. And they’re more expensive. The blocks are smaller than in other estates. They are paying more for a smaller block. F: But they’re buying the reputation that we built on this side, I guess. (HP4: 12)

Community events in Garden Gates are not as frequent as in Harrington Park, and do not appear to be as well promoted. This was summed up well by one resident:

[Have you heard of Narellan Community Care?] That’s not what Janine does, is it? [She works for them, yes] I have heard of them. I don’t really know what they do. I think they’ve organised one function since we’ve been here, apart from Carols By Candlelight. They had a jumping castle and a sausage sizzle up there at the park. But after I met Janine, which was well and truly after the fact of having this, I did complain that there were not enough flyers out in letter boxes and that type of thing to say hey, Garden Gates estate, come along, sausage sizzle, and free jumping castles for the kids, and a land care pack or a tree, or something like that. (GG1: 13)
However, virtually all the Garden Gates residents I interviewed had attended the performance of Christmas Carols in Mt Annan Botanical Gardens and had enjoyed the experience “[Did you go to the Carols in the Gardens?] M: Yeh. They were good” (GG6: 9) and “The carols were great. We were the last to leave even though it was raining” (GG2: 11). It is difficult to assess, however, the community development outcomes of such one off events, particularly at a time when friends and family gather anyway in a heightened spirit of festivity. Some of the informants had attended with other residents in their streets, while the others attended as a family, and some with extended family from outside the local area. Furthermore, in order to gain maximum corporate exposure for the money spent, Landcom billed the carols as a regional event, drawing an audience from both the Camden and Campbelltown local government area.

Community Newsletters

In describing her idea of ‘community’, one informant of Harrington Park nominated the importance of the community newsletter:

I suppose community means to me probably what Harrington Park is. That fact that it is a community. They have a news letter. People are friendly. They’ve got a lot of support structures within the community. They very much advertise in their brochures all sorts of support functions. [What sort of support?] With their different groups. The senior citizens group, the fishing club, the cricket club, the soccer club. Everything they seem to have developed is all very Harrington Park orientated. (HP7: 11)

In Harrington Park there were two such newsletters. The first, the glossy tabloid style Harrington Park Press, was primarily for the consumption of potential buyers but also local residents. It was published twice a year, and particularly in the early days of the development it was distributed as far afield as Liverpool. The second, Harrington Park Community News, was primarily for the consumption of the residents. It was a smaller newsletter, delivered more regularly, by volunteer

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6 NCC’s own feedback indicated that most of the people who attended the carols did so as a family group rather than as part of a social or community group. When asked on the night why they were there, the answers included: “It’s a good family outing.” “We thought it would be a good family gathering.” And “I live up the coast but I’m visiting my daughter. She lives in Mt Annan. I just think that community things like this are just wonderful. I’ve just got off a plane from LA and I’m jet lagged, but I’m really glad I’m here.” (NCC Management Team Meeting 11 December 2000)
residents\textsuperscript{7}. This newsletter in particular reflects Goffman's (1968: 91) view on the purpose of the 'house organ', which is "to express the official view of the functions of the institution, the staff's theory of human nature, an idealised version of inmate-staff relationships and the stance an ideal convert ought to take". Although it was termed a community newsletter, it was written and produced in entirety by the developer or his agent.

These newsletters were a further device used by the Harrington Park developer to promote and reinforce the 'common ideology' – the community ethic. This is undertaken through promotional information masquerading as local news. Such news includes progress of the development, notification of upcoming community events, reporting on the success of past events, reports on the 'success' of the Harrington Park Foundation and reporting of 'personal' occasions. One such personal occasion reported in the Harrington Park Press, involved welcoming the Brown family to Harrington Park. The report explains:

As they drove around the estate they fell in love with everything they saw. Their excitement grew and they knew this was to be their new home... The infrastructure and master planning of the estate, cycle ways, lake and parklands all contributed to making the Brown family's decision an easy one. ('Harrington Park Welcomes the Residents of it's 1000\textsuperscript{th} Home', Harrington Park 2000: 1)

Such reports support the 'editorial view' (Goffman 1968), in this case the community ethic of the developer. However, other stories are more transparent, for instance:

At Harrington Park we really believe in the importance of community spirit. It is important to feel that you are a part of something, to take ownership of your surroundings and care about them as much as we do...... We believe that it is the generosity of spirit of our neighbours that makes a community. ('The Importance of Community Spirit’ Harrington Park 2002d: 3 – my italics)

The rituals and ceremonies facilitated by the developer (see summary Table 9.2) are an integral component of informants' symbolic conception of the community in Harrington Park. Attendances at community events provide residents with the opportunity to interact with other residents, and hence have practical implications in

\textsuperscript{7} Interview with David Ford 23/3/00
regard to developing connectivity. Importantly, such events also assist residents to embrace a new identity, albeit one which must take account of the developer’s ideology, and to check through their interactions with other residents, that their conduct and identity accords with the general set of values of the wider group. In Garden Gates, where such formal rituals were not nearly as comprehensive, informants appeared to have a more tenuous relationship to the symbolic construction of community within their estate.

Table 9.2: Summary of Developer Initiated Rituals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RITUALS</th>
<th>HARRINGTON PARK</th>
<th>GARDEN GATES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Welcome Initiative       | • Welcome Visit by community worker  
                           | • Resource Folder                                                              | • Welcome Visit by community worker  
                           | • Hamper: bottles of wine, caps and tee-shirts with HP logo                   | • Resource Folder                                                      |
| New Resident Orientation | • BBQ for new residents held quarterly for new home owning residents            |                                                                                |
| Evenings                 |                                                                                 |                                                                                |
| Community Events         | • Held at least bi-monthly, sometimes more frequently. Promoted through the    | • Held less frequently than in Harrington Park. In the past the Carols in the |
|                          | community newsletter, letterbox drops and community information boards.        | Gardens was the big annual event. This however, was more of a ‘regional’     |
|                          | • HP sports teams                                                              | event than an estate event.                                                   |
| Community Newsletter     | • Harrington Park Press  
                           | • Harrington Park Community News                                               |                                                                                |

**Resident Initiated Rituals and Ceremonies**

Residents, particularly at the street level, also instigate community legitimating rituals and ceremonies. Resident initiated rituals have a number of functions. They
convey the important street or estate conventions to new residents within an affable setting. They encourage new residents to embrace the community ethic and abide by the moral order. They can act to support and legitimise the developer initiated rituals, where these are operating. And for the instigators, such rituals are an important legitimising, self-reinforcing display of the community ethic.

The most common, and probably important resident initiated ritual in both Harrington Park and Garden Gates is the neighbourly welcome of new residents. One older couple who had recently moved into Harrington Park were particularly impressed with their street initiation:

People come over and introduce themselves all the time. People from right down here, the end house, and people from across here have come to have a look at my dolls houses and have a cup of tea. Across the road, they were over a couple of hours after we moved in, to see if we wanted anything. [Did you enjoy that?] F: Oooh yes. M: Yes. F: Well it made you feel at home straight away. M: They class this, up to the round about here [gestating with hand to mean the street] as a family. Almost like a commune, you know. Everybody knows everybody and talks to everybody. F: They have their own Christmas Party and things like that. M: It just sort of gives you that lovely warm feeling. (HP3: 5)

The neighbourly welcome also has an important ‘ice breaking’ function, as explained by one informant of Garden Gates, who had previously lived in Liverpool for five years without ever knowing her neighbours.

Within days of our house beginning construction, we met the next door neighbours. I lived at my previous place for five years, and I didn’t know who lived next door. And after you’ve been there for five years, its even harder to break the ice with people you live next door to. What would be the reason after five years of saying hello, if you hadn’t already said it? So here the ice has been broken. I know people’s names. You see them coming home from work and you say hi, hello sort of thing. Yes, so I think that will continue. Definitely. (GG4: 9)

Socialising between neighbours seemed to be quite common amongst the informants of both estates, and particularly those with primary school children. Such socialising took the form of pasta and curry nights, street parties, particularly at Christmas time, or a shared beer out front after a day working their prospective gardens. The latter event in particular was a time to share their housing pride, their gardening skills and
work ethic with neighbours. Such events could also be used to sort out the rules of
the street, like this Garden Gates informant explained:

The only thing that I get really irked about, and I make it known, was if people
park their cars in the street. ... On a weekend especially, when all the kids are
out playing it is very dangerous for people to have their cars parked on the
road. ... [And when you say you make it known - who do you make it known
to?] Oh, I’ll be out there and I’ll be whinging to somebody (laughing), or the
next time I’m actually talking to the person, the offender, like I’m not a cow,
I’m not a bitch, but I really think that you have to let people know, but in a nice
way. Like I wouldn’t go up and bash on the door and say ‘you need to move
your car’. I’d say, ‘your car is parked on the street. It’s so dangerous’. There’s
a lady up the road, and I said to her ‘just imagine if it was your kids and they
walked out in front of the car’. I said, ‘you’d never forgive yourself if that
happened.’ You know and slowly, slowly people are actually not parking their
cars on the street. (GG1: 10)

Hyper-neighbouring

Such ceremonies, however, have a dramaturgical aspect: a ‘front stage’ performance,
requiring impression management and a degree of ‘politeness’ and ‘deorum’; and a
‘back stage’ performance where the actor is able to distance him / her self from the
role. Hence, the backstage self may well contradict the front stage performance
(Goffman 1959). With regard to resident initiated rituals, sometimes such events can
become so frequent and intensive that hyper-neighbouring occurs leaving residents
unable to maintain role distance. That is, the ‘back stage’ self impinges on the ‘front
stage’ role of the good neighbour (Goffman 1959). This difficulty appeared more
common amongst Garden Gates informants, where resident initiated rituals and
ceremonies were more significant to the community project than developer initiated
rituals.

[Do you ever have your neighbours over for dinner?] M: Yeh, heaps of times.
We take it in turns. It became too much at one stage. We began living in each
other’s pockets. [What actually becomes too much? Does it become boring?]
No. When people start expecting, that’s an indication that that relationship
needs a break. You can get to know too much about them. I don’t want to know
certain things. (GG6: 10)

One couple [in the street] had a bit of a falling out, but I think they were just
doing everything together. I spoke to one of them the other day, and I said I
think you can spend too much time with people....F2: We don’t really know
what happened. Do we? F1: No. And I don’t really want to get involved either.
As I said, I want to be friendly with all my neighbours and speak to them all.

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We’ll probably have them over for Christmas, you know, bring a plate and drinks. Just that... Every Saturday night they’re in drinking and carrying on. And that just doesn’t work. It goes alright for a while. But it just doesn’t work in the end. It’s too much. (GG3: 12)

While street oriented events were also common amongst the Harrington Park informants, hyper-neighbouring did not appear as significant. In fact, a number of informants seemed quite circumspect about getting too close to their neighbours. One couple summarized this feeling well:

M: We find that our friends are not our neighbours, because you’ve got too much in common I guess, when they’re your next door neighbour. Whereas, if they are in the next street or across the road or whatever its not quite the same.
F: There is always something to fight about with people next door. M: You’ve got common boundaries. F: The first thing we ever fought about was over the fence, wasn’t it. (HP4: 12)

Yet, this circumspection did not prevent this couple from being active participants in the Harrington Park community, and establishing a strong network of friends within the estate.

We found very early in the piece that you become friends with people who weren’t necessarily your next door neighbours, just through community events. And we’re still good friends with those people. (HP4: 5-6: M)

It may be that the wider social-networks that formal community ceremonies were able to facilitate in Harrington Park, helped residents to avoid the problems of hyper-neighbouring which was so evident in some streets in Garden Gates. ⁸

9.2.3 Estate Design, ‘Walkability’ and Social Connectivity

The dramaturgical aspect is also relevant in regard to estate design providing a front stage for facilitating social connectivity, and in turn a sense of community. Jacobs (1965) theorised about the importance of design aspects in facilitating spontaneous social contact, and in turn a sense of communion and trust. Jacobs’s interest was in preserving features of the traditional inner urban neighbourhood, such as mixed use (local shops, bars and restaurants), wide footpaths, and pocket parks, all of which encourage pedestrianism and provide casual meeting places. The design movement

⁸ The literature does, however, indicate that neighbouring has a causal relationship with class, with neighbouring being more prevalent and desired amongst lower income residents (Forrest and Kearns 2001). The demographic details of residents in the two estates are not wide enough, however, to consider this hypothesis applicable in this case.
new urbanism also argues for pedestrianism as a prerequisite to social connectivity and community development. Like Jacobs, new urbanism posits that pedestrianism can be encouraged through increased housing densities, mixed use and limiting car use (Talen 2000).

Walkability was frequently cited by informants of Harrington Park, and to a lesser extent Garden Gates, as being one of the most important design features through which they could connect with other estate residents. As this Harrington Park resident explained:

[It’s a] wonderful, friendly atmosphere. Like we just say to people, you’ve just got no idea what its like to live there. Just to be able to get out and go for a walk. And you get out and walk around the lake sometimes, and you feel like you are at a resort, like you’re on holidays... People say hello. I’ve never known a place where so many people walk. There are times when there are just dogs everywhere, going around the lake. There is no need to go anywhere. Even if you just want to go for a walk and have a drink, you can take your little esky down, and just sit by the lake and have a drink. (HP7: 12)

Walkability for the informants of Harrington Park involved three facets: a ‘pleasant’ environment or atmosphere (involving the rural vista, the lake in Harrington Park and the aesthetic of ‘quality’ housing and gardens); the ‘safe streets’; and most importantly, the walk ways and bike tracks. Hence, spontaneous social contact occurs in a leisurely fashion, away from the hustle of the city, work places and shopping centres and contrasts with the traditional urban environment presented by Jacobs, and the transit oriented perspective of new urbanism.

I’d heard that everyone [in Harrington Park] was friendly here. [Why would everyone be friendly here?] I don’t know. It’s just when we were looking at the land, you know, and we heard of a few people who had commented that if you walk past people say hello. [Why might that happen here do you think?] Maybe because of the walkways and things, you are passing people on a regular basis. As I said before, because the surroundings are so nice, it does entice you to stay in your own suburb instead of venturing out to find something else. [So it entices you to use the environment?] Yes, its beautiful. Its lovely. Especially in spring and summer, you know, and autumn. They’re beautiful times to go walking. And the kids ride their bikes. And people do. They do say hello. They don’t always stop to have a chat, but just a simple hello. (HP9: 6)

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9 “The surroundings are very pleasant to look at and that makes you want to take advantage of them.” (Resident Survey response to question no. 36, HP1:1)
Design aspects such as walkways, bike paths and parks provide a front stage for the performance of the community project. They entice residents out of their homes (back stage) into the public arena (front stage), where they have the opportunity to become acquainted with people of a similar disposition, undertaking the same activity in a tranquil setting.

However, the ‘evening stroll’ is also a time of collective monitoring in regard to community behaviour. While the monitoring of the courteous and friendly, ‘community’ behaviour by passing residents is one aspect, the monitoring of front gardens is another (Weigert 1994). As this informant explained:

It’s just nice to see clean streets and nice gardens. To be able to go for a walk and admire people’s homes rather than go hmmm, when are they going to get rid of that bomb, you know. (HP6: 10: F)

Lippard (1997: 257) argues that “lawns and yards, like gardens and parks, provide symbolic clues as to who lives here”. She goes on to explain that “horticultural tidiness is close to godliness in those communities that insist garage doors must be closed, houses must be painted certain colours, vegetable gardens do not belong in the front yard, and all lawns must be mowed” (Lippard 1997: 257-258). An insight into the monitoring of front gardens was provided by this informant’s account of visitors’ reaction to her lawn. When they arrived at the house and got out of the car they exclaimed, ‘look at your lawn, I don’t know whether we should stand on it’. The informant went on to explain:

It’s not that good, but it’s soft. And our neighbours said ‘yeh, you should try living next to it’. But it’s their own expectation, not what we place on them. We like to keep it really nice. [What about the other gardens?] Most of them are really nice. We don’t have too many problems in our little vicinity. People are really conscious of it. Like one guy’s got a roller mower and all that. Within about two houses up and across, most of them take a lot of pride in their place, so that is really good. (HP1: 15)

The Harrington Park developer is also implicated in the monitoring of this ‘moral landscape’ (Lippard 1997: 257; Weigert 1994), by organising the annual ‘Sir
Warwick Fairfax Memorial Garden Competition’\textsuperscript{10} which, by one informant’s account involved “quite big prizes to encourage you to do your garden” (HP4: 7), and only releasing home owners’ bonds when front yards are satisfactorily landscaped.

Finally, the ‘evening stroll’ is also a time for basking in the feeling of common achievement. Saying ‘hello’ is not only an act of civil acknowledgement between passers-by, but is also an act of acknowledgement of them having both ‘made it’ into the estate. In this regard it is an active process of reflective self-identity.

\textbf{9.3 The Manifestation of Community in Harrington Park and Garden Gates}

If the rationale behind the practice of residential master planning is the deployment of particular development strategies to facilitate the developer’s vision for the completed project, it follows that the manifestation of the end product should reflect that vision. This section investigates the \textit{form} of community that has emerged in both Harrington Park and Garden Gates. Of particular relevance is Bauman’s (2001) ‘two sources of communalism’ thesis. Bauman separates communities into those with an ‘ethical’ foundation and those with an ‘aesthetical’ one. Such a conceptual apparatus is a contemporary reinterpretation of Tönnies’s \textit{Gemeinschaft} / \textit{Gesselschaft} dichotomy discussed in detail in Chapter 4: ‘The Community Question’.

The ‘aesthetic’ community – the more common of the two – is formed around a pivotal entity or focal point; either an agent, event, interest or cause. Regardless of the focal point, “the common feature of aesthetic communities is the superficial and perfunctory, as well as transient, nature of the bonds emerging between their participants” (Bauman 2001: 71). Unlike the durable bonds of the ‘ethical’ community which are woven from long-term commitments and obligations, the bonds of the ‘aesthetic’ community cause little inconvenience. Actors can opt in and

\textsuperscript{10} “Each year we look to recognise and reward outstanding examples of garden and landscape design throughout the estate. This has proved to be a very popular community event, with original pieces of artwork, donated by Lady (Mary) Fairfax, presented as prizes for the winners at a special luncheon for all entrants” (undated Harrington Park News letter 2001).
out with ease. Hence Bauman (2001: 71) refers to these as ‘bonds without consequences’.

Conversely, the ‘ethical’ community is based on the philosophical proposition that it can ‘make good’ the resources an individual lacks. Bonds are durable, involving “inalienable rights and unshakeable obligations” (Bauman 2001: 72). Importantly, such ‘fraternal’ commitments reaffirm “the rights of every member to communal insurance against the errors and misadventures which are the risks inseparable from individual life” (Bauman 2001: 72). According to Bauman, although these forms of communalism involve two distinct models with unresolvable discrepancies, the contemporary communitarian discourse collapses them together. Their salient contradictions are then presented as philosophical problems, rather than being “depicted as the products of genuine social conflicts that they really are” (Bauman 2001: 73).

This section investigates the manifestation of ‘community’ in Harrington Park and Garden Gates, utilising the conceptual framework of the dichotomous ‘aesthetical’ / ‘ethical’ community. It also utilises the distinction between the act of neighbouring and the physical and symbolic entity of neighbourhood (Forrest and Kearns 2001). Here neighbouring is a practical matter, requiring a degree of local social interaction. It need not involve friendship, but conventionally it is “equated with community, caring, citizenship and responsibility” (Richards 1990: 183), more in line with the ‘ethical’ community, although not absolutely. Conversely, neighbourhood in this instance is a physical and social entity with the ability to be valued by market mechanisms (Forrest and Kearns 2001). Hence,

for some aspiring groups with sufficient resources, the neighbourhood can become the focal point around which coordinated action to achieve a self-conscious class habitus through processes of gentrification is undertaken, so that ‘distinction’ can be maintained in the struggles over status in social space (Kearns and Parkinson 2001: 2107).

This form of neighbourhood utility is broadly consistent with Bauman’s ‘aesthetic’ community.
9.3.1 The Act of Neighbouring

Relatively high levels of neighbouring were apparent in both Harrington Park and Garden Gates\textsuperscript{11}, with most informants undertaking more neighbourly activities in their present estate compared to their previous location. This comes as no surprise as according to the literature, intensive neighbouring is a common feature in the early days of new housing estates, particularly in middle income estates where the incoming residents tends to be of a similar demographic and embarking on common residential pursuits (Fischer 1976). Gans (1969) noted the phenomenon in his study of Levittown, where more than half the incoming residents he interviewed visited their new neighbours more than previously. Gans went on to described how, in becoming a community, Levittown had gone through a ‘typical origin process’. That is:

> The residents had at first associated almost exclusively with their neighbours, but some had then sought more compatible people and activities outside the block and had thereby set in motion the founding of community wide groups” (Gans 1969: 124).

Richards (1990: 183) describes neighbouring as “a positive and committed relationship constructed between neighbours”.

In this section, neighbouring is employed broadly to refer to those social interactions involving trust, reciprocity, obligations, caring and citizenship, that occurs both within the immediate vicinity of the home, which I refer to as \textit{immediate} neighbouring, but also amongst residents within the wider estate, which I refer to as \textit{extended} neighbouring (Lochner, Kawachi and Kennedy 1999).

Although most of the informants valued the neighbouring experience in their estate, informants tended to fall into two categories; those, like Helen, whose story introduces this chapter, who participated in hyper-neighbouring, and those who practiced neighbouring but were conscious of keeping some social distance. As these informants explained:

\textsuperscript{11} The Resident Survey indicated that 50.0% of Garden Gates respondents and 50.7% of Harrington Park respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that they had close social contact with their neighbours.
Everyone seems to be friendly, but we don’t live in each other’s pockets. (GG3: 12)

And again,

F: The people across the road keep an eye on our place, and we keep an eye on theirs. They noticed when we left the garage door open the other night... M: People look after one other, you know, without being in each other’s hip pocket. They keep a watchful eye on what is going on around the place. (HP3: 6).

A mixed metaphor was unwittingly but pertinently made here between the appreciation of the resources produced by social relationships and the fiscal benefits represented by the wallet.

Assistance and reciprocity featured highly in informants’ experiences of neighbouring in their new estate:

And we’re all able to help each other out. Pat had couches and she knew that I could sew. I went across there and we spent a couple of weekends re-covering her lounge. Everybody in the street has a little bit to offer. They have something that they can do. David down the road is a pastry cook... If someone is having a birthday party they go and say Dave, can I order a cake from you. That sort of thing. Everyone has a little bit to offer, and we all get together and we use it. We have a beautician in the street, and an electrician. So, its funny how we’ve all clicked. [Do you see that continuing?] Oh look, I definitely think so. (GG1: 8)

When we moved in like this front garden was horrible and one day we took everything out and planted new trees and John next door, we had this big tree in the front, and he said ‘would you like the tree out’. And I said ‘I’d love the tree out’... And he brought out his chainsaw and the neighbours on the other side were over here helping and the complete tree was cut down and we had it all in the front yard here... We went out the next day and this huge tree and everything had been taking away. And we tried to think who would take it away for us. It was the guy three doors down, because we had helped him out with basketball tickets. He and the other neighbour took it away to the tip for us. And I just thought oh wow... It just felt lovely. That’s like a feeling of community. You help each other out if you can. That’s nice. (GG7: 8)

Interestingly, the practice of neighbouring amongst male informants contrasts with the myth that neighbouring is irrelevant to men. Richards (1990: 182) noted that “in societies dominated by men’s breadwinning roles everyone assumed that
breadwinners had bigger things to do [than neighbour].” Yet this was not the case with the a number of male informants of Harrington Park and Garden Gates:

We’ve got more friends here than ever. They’re the type of people that if you’re in trouble, you can ring and say come and look after the kids, and visa-versa. You wouldn’t even think twice about it. (HP4: 9: M)

We’ll all stand up if anybody is in strife. We’re all pretty friendly here. The neighbours have the keys and the code to my alarm. If they want to get in they can. ....[So you would be more likely to ask your neighbours for assistance than your family?] Yes, pretty much. We all pitch in and help out on the weekends and have a beer afterwards. (GG5: 10-11: M)

I fertilised my lawn about 10 weeks ago, and everyone asked what I had done to it because it looked great. And I made up this thing to spread it. Well everyone’s borrowed it. And there are about 6 houses between here and the top of the street that have borrowed it. And it has just gone from house to house. We’re all working together. Don’t be frightened to ask someone to do something... Even the turf roller. I’m the only one in the street with a turf roller. And I just say, come and borrow it. It doesn’t bother me. Its just sitting there. (GG2: 10: M)

One female informant described her husband’s neighbourly activities:

You know, at the end of a really hard day’s work the boys would get out the front and have a beer, and you know they’d sit out the front and have a chat and reflect on the days work. (GG1: 8)

Similarly, although not directly correlative with neighbouring, the Resident Survey indicated that more males in Harrington Park (73.0%) and Garden Gates (61.9%) felt part of the community than their female counterparts (46.8% and 52.38% respectively). The high incidence of community identity amongst males in the survey was probably due in part to the fact that communally active males were more likely to spend the time completing the survey. However, even amongst those residents interviewed, male participation in community activities and their community identification was virtually indistinguishable from females, even those females employed full-time in the domestic arena.

This is not to say, however, that community involvement between genders was necessarily identical. For instance, a common interest in gardening (an indicator of housing pride), maintenance projects and a mutual beer after the day’s toil were the social lubricants in many of the male relationships. The front lawn assumed the
spatial role of both public ‘shed’ and local pub in absentia. Females, however, were more likely to be involved in day-to-day reciprocal arrangements and the emotional work of neighbourliness such as overseeing their children’s friendships and solving disputes between theirs and neighbours children – a particularly problematic aspect of neighbourly relations, particularly within Garden Gates. Hence, although the high degree of male neighbouring was somewhat unexpected, it presented in a particularly masculine way.

In Harrington Park, however, one group of informants who were less likely to be involved with immediate neighbouring were those aged over 60 years. In part this was due to a lack of things in common with their immediate neighbours, as these informants explained:

F: I was a bit disappointed that the neighbours are young with babies and because of that they don’t have much in common with us. The family opposite us are working people. We would have felt lonely if our daughter wasn’t there but because she is we don’t feel lonely. M: When we had a young family we were like that too. Just work and family and that’s it. [They don’t have time to talk?] F: Yes, being young parents they are mostly busy with their children. For me this is a bit of a draw back. If I had older neighbours I would socialise more with them. No-one has come in to have a cup of tea yet. We haven’t been invited to have a cup of tea next door. Where as where we used to be they were older and we used to have that sort of interaction. (HP5: 7)

These informants, however, were not isolated. Rather, they sought out social groups within the wider estate and local area, in this instance the Harrington Park Over 55s, the local Anglican Church and the Camden Probus. Hence, their neighbouring tended to occur within the wider estate, rather than amongst immediate neighbours. The older informants too, tended to have family (adult sons and daughters) living close by. Three retired couples I interviewed had daughters and grandchildren living in the estate. Much of their local socialising revolved around their extended family. (See Figure 9.1: Diagrammatical Representation of Neighbourhood Networks within Harrington Park and Garden Gates, below.)

**Neighbouring Bonds and Length of Tenure**

Although neighbouring was high amongst informants and survey respondents, the long term durability of bonds between neighbours is questionable, not least because
the majority of residents did not intend living in the estates in the long term. That is, only a third of survey respondents saw themselves living in their respective estate for longer than 10 years. Around half of the respondents (54.8% in Harrington Park and 44.4% in Garden Gates) expected to live in the estate for between two and ten years, and interestingly, 11.1% of Garden Gates respondents expected to leave the estate within two years, compared to only 2.7% of Harrington Park respondents. This last set of figures suggests that respondents were more likely to view Garden Gates as a step up the ‘housing career ladder’. One of Helen’s neighbours was planning to move on ‘up’ to Harrington Park, after living in Garden Gates for only twelve months. She explained:

The neighbours across the road, they are actually looking at buying in Harrington Park. They built this house here. Had it valued. They’re going to make a huge amount of money. And they’re going to look at going to Harrington Park, because that’s what they want to do I suppose. It appeals to them more than what it does here. (GG11: 7)

It was clear from the resident interviews that most Harrington Park informants believed they had arrived at the ‘top rung’ of their housing ladder, so to speak, and their next housing move was more likely to be a sideways step due to retirement or a change in circumstances such as work location. As one couple in their 30s explained:

For some people that’s what their aim is. Move in, snap it up at a price, build it, sell it and move on. But we’re here for the long term. That was always our plan, unless we moved in and found burnt out cars in the street, and young kids running amok in the night. But that doesn’t happen. (HP6: 12)

The expectation of living in the area for a long length of time would be more conducive to micro-managing local networks and the local environment, both of which require a greater degree of commitment to the area than would be the case if the resident expected to dip in and out of the social system.

**Neighbouring Dimensions**

A number of interesting discrepancies emerged between Harrington Park and Garden Gates informants in regard to the extent and strength of neighbouring relationships (see Figure 9.1 below).
Figure 9.1: Diagrammatical Representation of Neighbourhood Networks within Harrington Park and Garden Gates

Key

- Street cluster (immediate neighbours): Very strong neighbouring bonds producing hyper-neighbouring
- Street cluster: Strong neighbouring bonds between immediate neighbours
- Street cluster: Weak to no neighbouring bonds between immediate neighbours
- Strong tie linking street clusters in estate
- Weak but observable tie linking street clusters in estate
- Familial tie, often between grandparent household and parent/grandchildren household, but also between sibling households.

For instance, in Garden Gates clusters of strong neighbouring (and hyper-neighbouring) appeared most prominent amongst newer residents and tended to occur between immediate neighbours. In Harrington Park, however, although immediate neighbouring certainly occurred, strong neighbouring was also prominent amongst more established residents and importantly, was more likely to incorporate residents within the wider estate. The higher number of community events attended by Harrington Park appeared to assist this. Consequently, social ties in Harrington Park tended to manifest as local (street based) solidarities embedded in estate wide...
networks. This contrasts with the social ties in Garden Gates, which where they existed, tended to manifest more as local (street based) solidarities. Clearly individual residents' dispositions towards neighbouring and community involvement vary. However, it is possible to express diagrammatically the general structure of these neighbourhood networks.

A further indication of variations in the community fabric is in regard to the correlation between neighbourliness and community sentiment. For instance, although the number of survey respondents who either agreed or strongly agreed that they had close social contact with their neighbours was about the same in each estate at 50%, only 29.5% of Garden Gates respondents thought there was a greater sense of community in their estate than in other areas, compared to 76.8% of Harrington Park respondents.

It seems then, that Harrington Park more than Garden Gates manifests as a symbolic community as well as a practical one. This can be attributed, not least, to the success of the promotion of community through the developer and residents' community ceremonies and rituals. Although for many of the Harrington Park informants, community participation was not the primary reason given for buying into the estate, once there they modelled themselves on other residents around them taking on the community mantle as both an internal sentiment and an external practice. That is, they internalised the role and now continue in its promotion. This has ramifications for the desirability of their neighbourhood.

9.3.2 The Neighbourhood

As discussed previously, the 'home' can be considered a crucial social and cultural marker of social status, a key element of personal identity and a source of ontological security (Kearns and Parkinson 2001). However, the home in isolation is not capable of conveying such values. Rather, it is the house embedded in a particular neighbourhood (which in turn is embedded within a competitive urban system) that endows the 'home' with these attributes. Kearns and Parkinson (2001: 2106) argue that:
Neighbourhoods (as much if not more so than homes themselves) are competitive and inherently comparative entities which are visible and convey social information. One can either influence one's social position or have it determined for one, according to the type of neighbourhood one inhabits and creates.

Although the argument highlights the competitive nature of neighbourhoods, it does not identify the interactive and dynamic relationship between home and neighbourhood values. That is, in consumer societies, the home on one hand acts as a conduit through which a privileged neighbourhood’s social networks, cultural norms, prestige and reputation can be channelled for the exploitation of its residents. Conversely the home located in a deprived neighbourhood of poor reputation, lacks such exploitable attributes and thus constrains its residents’ actions and status. In other words, “the neighbourhood is both a source of opportunity and constraint” (Kearns and Parkinson 2001: 2107).

Conversely, the cultural norms, social and consumption practices, and behaviour of the home’s residents impinge on the attributes of its neighbourhood. Harrington Park informants in particular, were clearly aware of this dynamic and actively asserted their “social-cum-personal identities” (Savage et. al. 1992: 95) by actively embracing the community ethic. Such action reflects the argument that “the commodity status of an area within the larger urban system, combined with its internal organisation, will determine the fortune of a neighbourhood” (Logan and Molotch 1987: 112).

9.4 Conclusion: Aesthetic or Ethical Community?

*Neighbouring* and *neighbourhoods* within Harrington Park and Garden Gates had certain aspects consistent with both the aesthetic and ethical models of communalism (Bauman 2001). For instance, although neighbouring bonds were not uniformly constructed across each estate, they appeared broadly present and even surprisingly strong amongst certain resident clusters. Although these neighbouring bonds were not based on ‘unshakeable obligations’, varying degrees of obligation, trust and reciprocity were clearly evident. Although residents were free to ‘opt in and out’ of neighbourly relations, many of the informants demonstrated an extraordinary sense of ‘fraternalism’, commitment and care for their neighbours which did not
‘evaporate’ at the moment when they were most needed “to compensate for the individual’s lack of resourcefulness or impotence” (Bauman 2001: 71). Hence, many of these *neighbouring* bonds went beyond the transient, ‘carnival’ bonds of the aesthetic community (Bauman 2001). Remnants of the ethical community were present.

This was strongest, however, within Harrington Park where there was also a broad commitment to the neighbourhood’s community ethic (the common ideology of the estate’s residents and the developer). In this instance, to use Kearns and Parkinson’s (2001: 2107) idea, the community ethic is the pivotal entity around which “coordinated action to achieve a self-conscious class habitus” can occur. The community ethic is underpinned by a multi-faceted notion of security involving ontological, physical, financial and social elements.

However, the developer initiated community rituals such as Billy Cart Days, Regattas and Community Dinners could also be viewed merely as ‘experiences’. Participants could bathe in the warmth of the moment, rather than taking the experience home for consumption “in the humdrum routine of day after day” (Bauman 2001: 72). From this perspective Harrington Park also shows aspects of the aesthetic community.

Consequently, Bauman’s community categories are too restrictive to adequately describe and analyse the communities in Harrington Park and Garden Gates. Although Bauman views aesthetic and ethical models of communalism as distinct and having unresolvable discrepancies (as part of his polemic against communitarian shelters), contemporary community life, as Harrington Park and Garden Gates illustrate, can be contradictory and at times paradoxical. Like other contemporary theorists of community, Bauman confuses community, which is inherently bounded and competitive, with the broader aims of a good society.

At the end of the day the informants of both Harrington Park and Garden Gates believed that they were living a life that contributed to the good of society. They
aspired, amongst other things, to self-sufficiency. They believed in hard work and family values. They put themselves out for their neighbours and contributed to their local community. And on the whole they were generous people, particularly given the financial restraints and work hours their households operated under. At the same time, however, the community they were moulding through their opinions and participation correlated with their personal needs. Perhaps to expect more than this is indeed an unreachable utopia.
CONCLUSION: Paradise Reviewed: Towards a Theory of the ‘Master Planned Community’

‘Find a form of association which will defend and protect, with the whole of its joint strength, the person and property of each associate, and under which each of them, uniting himself to all, will obey himself alone, and remain as free as before.’ This is the fundamental problem to which the social contract gives the answer.
(Rousseau 1712-1778 The Social Contract)

10.1 Introduction

The evidence of research on the planned residential estate and the comparison of Harrington Park and Garden Gates support the proposition that master planning makes a difference to the formation of community. The conclusion that follows summarises the arguments made in the preceding text in regard to the relationship between the master planned estate and community formation and argues that the master planned community (MPC) is a major influence in the socio-spatial and electoral restructuring on Sydney’s urban fringe. Secondly it presents a theory of the MPC from the ‘real life data’ gathered in the course of the research (Llewellyn 1998). Although not definitive, such ‘grounded’ theory does offer predictability from the specific consequences and conditions under study, “such that if elsewhere similar conditions obtain, then approximately similar consequences should occur” (Llewellyn 1998: 29). The development of such a theory is intended to reveal the forces prompting the formation and forms of community within planned estates, and in particular the ‘master planned community’, the most intensive form of planned estate in terms of both capital investment and planning outcomes.

10.2 The MPC as a Contemporary Manifestation of Utopian Place-Making

The MPC is the latest manifestation of utopian place-making. It is a sign that the contemporary aspirations of the middle classes have much in common with those of the 19th century. As a form of development, there are however, continuities and differences between the contemporary MPC and the utopian estates based on the Garden City program of the 1890s.
The Garden City movement grew out of the lack of state intervention in planning and urban matters. The state as master-developer of 'new towns' and public housing estates following WWII, was an influential but short lived deviation from the more typical approach to utopian place-making before and since, of private capital and industry developing housing primarily for private consumption. Importantly, while the MPC is a private residential development its emergence, particularly in Australia, is a product of the contemporary state's intervention in planning and development matters. The state's increasingly rigorous development standards in urban design, environmental protection and social and physical infrastructure requirements, zoning regulations, and the passing on of state infrastructure costs to the developer, has encouraged master planning as a development mode.

The realignment of the state's funding priorities since the late 1970s towards user-pays principles, reciprocal obligation welfare schemes, contracting out government services, and the increase in financial support for private service providers over the public, notably in regard to health, transport and education, has laid the social and financial foundation for the development of the essentially private, status oriented form of geographic community.

10.2.1 Security and the MPC

Central to the formation of the contemporary MPC are the ideas of risk and security. Three aspects of security underpin the notion of risk reduction: physical, economic and ontological. The aspect of physical security comprises two elements. The first of these is security of the body; of adults but particularly of children. The idea of feeling safe while strolling around the estate, even after dark which a number of informants did, and in allowing children to play with other children outside the home provides residents with confirmation as to the physical security of their housing choice. Additionally, physical security involves the belief by parents that children can be protected from falling in with a 'gang' (a fear many parents in the study expressed) because they socialize with families holding similar values and parental styles as themselves. The other aspect of physical security involves security of
material goods. The practice of an informal neighbourhood watch, where neighbours keep an eye, and sometimes even a key, on other neighbours’ properties, provides an added sense of material security. These informal and formal neighbourhood watch programs are only made possible by the store of social capital in the ‘collective’ sense, particularly in terms of high levels of trust and connectivity.

The second aspect of security is economic. This derives from the settler’s belief that the master planned estate offers superior maintenance of property values compared to surrounding, more standard residential subdivisions. Three explanations underpin this reasoning. The first involves the constraints placed on housing style and size through the use of restrictive covenants in the planned estate to produce a product of higher social status. This reinforces those income and status groups which find such an estate affordable. The second involves the developer’s practice of value adding in the estate. The extra development capital applied to estate design, aesthetics and community facilities is intended to differentiate the estate from other less enhanced developments, and assist individual property values. The third involves the constitution of the social space through the relationship between economic, cultural and social capital. The settler’s reasoning here is that the master planned estate tends to attract residents with a higher volume of economic, cultural and social capital than surrounding areas. The social space created differentiates the estate from other estates less well endowed with capital – economic, social and cultural, which as a scarce resource offers superior maintenance of property values.

The third aspect of security is ontological. Ontological security involves the idea of identity maintenance and underpins the individual’s life planning. Social order and status attainment are the relevant factors underpinning ontological security. The social order derives from an estate’s formal rules and regulations, informal norms and its disciplined aesthetic. Status attainment is drawn from the impression of an elite estate. Within the master planned estate social order and status attainment coalesce, and it is from these aspects that ontological security derives. The security founded in social order does not come without cost. The price here is the level of social constraint. The obligation of social constraint as the payoff for group benefits
such as the secure environment is the basis of the communitarian ideal. Social constraint for group benefit is the basis from which the most classic ideas of community derive.

The character of the MPC supports the settler’s life-planning by shoring up future social and economic returns; by supporting their ontological security; and by becoming a major plank in the structuring of their self-identity. The MPC reflects Giddens’s (1990) notion of utopian realism, a concept implying the individual’s search for alternative futures that minimise risks, and in turn fear. Importantly, the centrality of security and fear to settlement motivations and the marketing of the MPC tend to play on prospective residents’ security fears. The effect of social segregation offered by the MPC reinforces the perceived relative insecurity of other areas. One of the more foreboding features in this regard, is the gated entry of certain ‘security estates’. Each time the residents of the gated estate of Macquarie Links in Sydney’s south-west drive through the estate’s entrance, their security fears are reinforced by the presence of the imposing black iron gates and sentry box.

10.3 The Spectrum of Residential Planning

The taxonomy of the planned estate can be considered along a spectrum, involving basic physical design and layout at one end, through to an integrated, extensively planned estate incorporating physical and social infrastructure at the other (see Figure 10.1). In the MPC the notion of social infrastructure also incorporates a ‘community compact’, discussed in more detail below. The MPC incorporates more intensive levels of capital expenditure on its physical and social infrastructure, in a process of ‘value adding’, than planned estates relying on physical design and layout alone.
'Value adding' refers here to the additional capital investment in design features and community facilities often absent in more conventional residential developments. Examples of this are ostentatious entry points, artificial lakes, extensive community gardens and open space, bike tracks, generously proportioned community centres, tennis courts, golf courses, community newsletters and community development programs.

As an archetypal MPC, Harrington Park is not necessarily typical of other forms of master planned estates. Its archetypal status, however, reveals the components of the planning model and community development strategies comprising the MPC, from which other planner-developers cherry-pick to suit their target market, local state requirements, and the planner-developer's own ideological position and profit motive.

By comparison the planned 'infill' estate of Garden Gates, was not as 'intensively' developed as Harrington Park, although its development utilised many of the strategies attributed to the archetypal MPC, including status oriented restrictive covenants, aesthetic and design features and community facilities, in particular parks, bike tracks and community development programs. All of these strategies were more moderately applied than in Harrington Park, and this was reflected in the more moderate form of community that had eventuated in Garden Gates at the time of the research.
The intensity of development between the estates showed up in disparities in community formation. Although the idea of ‘community spirit’ and ‘friendliness’ registered highly with informants of both Garden Gates and Harrington Park, community as identity, sentiment and practice appeared to be more intensely constructed and engaged with in Harrington Park. In contrast to Garden Gates, there was no confusion amongst Harrington Park informants over the physical and social boundaries of their estate, and importantly, they were more likely to identify the estate as their local community. Significantly, the sense of community and the actions pertaining to community performance, including social interaction, offering assistance and acts of reciprocity in Garden Gates were more likely to occur at the street level. Whereas in Harrington Park, although neighbouring was also high, community identification tended to be estate based and social networks appeared to be more diffusely spread than in Garden Gates. The comparative case study approach exposed the master-planning strategies underpinning community formation in planned greenfield developments. It also demonstrated the emergence of different levels and forms of connectivity, community identity and sentiment produced by the differing planning approaches of the two estates.

10.4 The MPC and Socio-spatial Restructuring on Sydney’s Urban Fringe

The following section deals specifically with the notion of socio-economic restructuring of Sydney’s suburban fringe. In the case of western Sydney, the MPC appears to attract middle and higher income, electorally sensitive households that would otherwise be scattered throughout the western suburbs. These MPCs are enclaves of industrious, community and family oriented households, employed primarily in middle-income, white-collar occupations, or the owner-operators of small, often blue-collar oriented businesses. The residents have generally grown up in the western suburbs, with many deriving from conservative, ‘aspirational’, working-class households that were keen to pass on their aspirationist values to their children (Burchell 1993)
From relatively meagre beginnings, these residents have been able to ‘pull themselves up by their bootstraps’. It is from this background that many of the new middle income households comprising the MPC on the urban fringe have come to identify with the Australian ‘battler’ stereotype, even when their days of battling are ostensibly over. Politically the residents of the MPC have not necessarily changed their political affiliation, as Labor’s theory of the ‘aspirational class’ suggests (see for instance Burchell 2003: 115-116). Rather, the nature of the MPC encourages a siphoning process, attracting more conservative voters who would otherwise have lived in more Labor oriented areas. The growth of the MPC on Sydney’s urban fringe is altering the electoral landscape.

In a similar fashion the MPC is contributing to socio-spatial change in Sydney’s outer western suburbs. In providing ‘sanctuaries’ for middle income households, the MPC is one of the forces shifting the more traditional pattern of first home and lower income residential development on Sydney’s urban fringe. Rather than upgrading their housing situation within more established areas of Sydney’s outer western suburbs, settlers have been attracted by the status and security offered by the MPC. Following Duany’s (2001) argument as to the positive effects of gentrification, the incursion of higher income developments into generally lower income areas provides these areas with a higher tax base, a more diverse local economy, and the political effectiveness of a middle class; thus improving the quality of life for all of the areas’ residents. However, the MPC is one of many forces shifting the more traditional pattern of first home and lower income residential development on Sydney’s urban fringe. Other forces include the inflated price of Sydney housing, the shortage of vacant land and a shift in life planning interests of younger people.

10.5 Towards a Theory of the ‘Master Planned Community’

Four key themes provide the framework for forming this tentative theory of the master planned community:
1. the relationship between community formation and the planning and development of residential estates. This encompasses the notion of the MPC as an ‘ideological community’, and the development of the community compact,
2. the nexus between community association and economic interests in the MPC,
3. exclusionary attributes of the MPC, and
4. the emergence of organised interest groups and social movements within civil society in response to moral relativism.

10.5.1 Community Formation and Degrees of Planning and Development

This section discusses the association between the constitution of the community which had developed within each estate at the time of the fieldwork and the degree of planning and development undertaken by the planner-developer in each estate. As noted in Chapter 9, the community structure within Harrington Park and Garden Gates exhibited certain differences, particularly in regards to the extent and density of local social networks, the degree of estate wide community consciousness and the degree to which new residents shed old identities for new on settling into the estate. Community relations within Harrington Park were more likely to be estate wide, rather than being atomised and limited to local neighbours, as was the case in Garden Gates.

Although intense neighbouring was evident in both Harrington Park and Garden Gates, particularly in newly released sections but also in more established areas, pockets of hyper-neighbouring appeared more common in Garden Gates, probably due to the lack of easy access to more extensive local networks. Hyper-neighbouring reflects Granovetter’s (1973) notion of bonding ties. As discussed in Chapter 3, a community becomes fragmented where there are dense clusters and weak ties but no bridging ties. Reflecting Granovetter’s argument, hyper-neighbouring is inevitably unsustainable as the pressure of maintaining such close ties places strain on the newly formed neighbourly relationships. In Garden Gates the pressure and social exposure placed on some of the informants in the early days of forming neighbourly ties, caused them to withdraw from such intensive social interaction. Other intense
neighbourly relations identified had ended abruptly due to disputes, often deriving from quarrels amongst the children in the street.

With regard to community identity, Harrington Park residents were much more likely to identify their estate as a community than were residents of Garden Gates. The model of the ‘master plan’, the easily identifiable boundaries, the uniform, identifiable design features and the formal entry points into Harrington Park assisted the physical awareness of community. The community development program, developer’s newsletters and the community compact assisted the cognitive and practical formation of community. Community identity amongst residents of Garden Gates was more likely to be drawn locally from relationships with direct neighbours, or more widely from either Mount Annan, the suburb in which Garden Gates is located, or from the local government area of Camden. Few residents identified Garden Gates as their local community.

A sense of personal renewal on entering their new neighbourhood was evident amongst owner-occupiers of both estates. This feeling was not as strong, however, amongst some of the renters, particularly those who were anticipating a short stay. For the owner-occupiers, not only was moving into their estate a chance to start anew, to reorder the daily round and make new friends and acquaintances, most of the residents were in some sense moving up. For a minority this meant entering the domain of owner occupation for the first time. For most it meant ‘having arrived’ after years of hard work, personal sacrifices and climbing the housing ladder out of some of the lower status areas of western Sydney. It meant moving up into a more expensive and expansive house and into a suburb with greater status.

The early period after arrival is a time in which residents shed old identities for new. In Harrington Park, more so than in Garden Gates, part of this renewed identity involved committing to the estate’s ‘community ethic’ or common code of resident behaviour, forged and maintained by the estate’s planner-developer and the residents. Unlike the development’s restrictive covenants which are legally sanctioned, the informal covenants which comprise the ‘community ethic’ carry social sanctions for aberrant behaviour, for instance, exclusion from social circles and events.
The ‘Community Compact’ and the Ideological Community

The ‘community compact’, of which the ‘community ethic’ is part, is the primary device differentiating the MPC from other planned residential estates. The community compact is a broad agreement between the planner-developer and the residents as to the primary development goal and the dominant value system or common social code which is intended to operate within the estate. The common social code comprises both legally sanctioned restrictive covenants as specified by the planner-developer which underpins the ‘code of pecuniary beauty’, as well as informal covenants as to the way residents will generally conduct themselves, that is the ‘community ethic’. The community compact is shown diagrammatically in Figure 10.2.

FIGURE 10.2: Master Planned Community: Community Compact between Planner-Developer and Residents

As with Rousseau’s (1994) Social Contract, which encompasses the idea of voluntary agreement amongst the social group in order to create a social entity — a civil society — the ‘community compact’ implies the sacrifice of certain rights by the resident-members of the group in order to transform the association into a ‘corporate’
or group entity. As in Rousseau’s formulation of the contract, the resident members of the community compact are active within the corporation, rather than passive as seems increasingly the case in regard to the wider ‘body politic’ or society (see for instance Putnam 1996). The notions of voluntarily agreeing to sacrifice certain individual rights in order to achieve a coherent identity, and the idea of an active membership define the nature of the bond by which the resident group within the MPC is created.

The significance of the community compact is that it provides the framework for a more complete, consciously created ‘ideological community’, of the type which existed in Harrington Park at the time of the research. The idea of an ideological community derives from Hunter (1975), who discussed how particular status groups consciously sought out areas with specific characteristics, and then as residents consciously attempted to create community in part through an active local community organisation. In this explanation there is both a cognitive and practical element underpinning the ideological community.

A further important effect of the ‘community compact’ is that it assists in the development of trust between residents, and between the residents and the developer. In the first instance, the compact minimises the risk of the development not meeting new residents’ expectations, as they are partly responsible for developing their ‘ideological community’. Secondly, homogeneity of lifestyle, aspirations and values which the compact encourages, provides the basis for the development of trust between residents within the MPC. The idea of developing ‘rapid’ trust based on social familiarity is explored in detail in Chapter 9. This process of immediate familiarity as the basis of trust and reciprocity contrasts with explanations of habitual familiarity which develops over time.

Although Garden Gates had elements of the MPC, including physical design features, restrictive covenants, certain facilities and community development strategies with which to differentiate it from surrounding areas, the notion of a community compact appeared to be absent. The development approach to Garden Gates was more typical of conventional suburban development. It took a more
bureaucratic, top down approach to planning and design, incorporating a promotional program to capture a certain segment of the residential market. Even so, residents of Garden Gates appeared on the whole, to be satisfied with their housing choice. This satisfaction was drawn primarily from the social homogeneity and status of the estate.

10.5.2 The Nexus between Community Association and Economic Interests in the Master Planned Community

This section analyses the efficacy of the nexus between community association and economic interests in producing socio-spatial differentiation. As discussed in Chapter 3, the relationship between communitarian and economic interests involves the rational, purposeful pursuit of individual and status group interests. Following Butler and Robson (2001), the concept of social capital, and more specifically the notion that individuals invest in social relations and networks with expected returns, has been employed to examine this relationship. The return expected in this instance is the construction of spaces of socio-economic prosperity on the urban fringe which are differentiated from the more established outer urban areas characterised by relative socio-economic disadvantage.

The very nature of the 'community compact' as it operated in Harrington Park, encapsulates the nexus between community association and economic interests effecting socio-spatial differentiation. In the first instance the primary development goal was to construct a community oriented, prestige estate in south-west Sydney. From the outset prospective purchasers were implored to "help make Harrington Park one of the most prestigious locations in Australia" (Harrington Park 2002c). Given the degree of covenant compliance in terms of prompt landscaping and attention to aesthetic detail, the impressive size and style of housing and the upkeep of private gardens, this was a goal which most residents seem to have taken up with relish.

The nexus is again implicit in the common social goals comprising a 'pecuniary code of beauty' and the 'community ethic'. Apart from legally sanctioned restrictive covenants supporting the 'pecuniary code', a set of social norms underpins both these
aspects of the compact. Some of the social norms are restrictive, for instance the expectation that gardens will be highly maintained, and that cars will be parked in the garage rather than on the road or footpath. Other norms are of a more positive nature, for instance, the norm that residents will generally act with a high degree of civility and even friendliness towards other residents of the estate. This includes the expectation that residents will watch over the safety of children in the estate, that children will be respectful towards adult residents, and that residents will be supportive, at least notionally if not actively, of the formal community rituals and informal social activities held within the estate.

Social Capital and the MPC

The idea of social capital permeates contemporary forms of residential master planning. It is viewed by residential and community developers as the substance and practice of community; hence the connection between the MPC and neo-communitarianism, which is underpinned by the notion of social capital. However, the importance of social capital in the MPC arises from its efficacy in creating social space – a necessary element in the formation of status groups. During a time when community is perceived as a scarce resource, and a goal to be achieved, ‘community’ becomes a resource deployed by both the planner-developer and residents to differentiate one residential area from another. Harrington Park in particular is differentiated from surrounding residential estates by its identity as a real community. The notion gives the estate both substance and status.

The social capital created within the MPC derives from the expectations of residents, that other residents will behave in a similar manner to themselves in terms of sociability (friendliness and consideration), abiding by the restrictive covenants, maintaining gardens, supervising their children’s activities and other such behaviour that goes towards maintaining the impression of the estate being a great community in which to live. In turn, promoting Harrington Park as being a ‘great community’ not only has social benefits, but differentiates and distinguishes Harrington Park from other neighbourhoods within south-west Sydney which in turn assists in the
protection of cultural and petty property assets. As Kearns and Parkinson’s (2001: 2106-7) contend:

Neighbourhoods ... are competitive and inherently comparative entities... One can either influence one’s social position or have it determined for one..., some neighbourhoods suffer negative historical reputations that regeneration efforts cannot shift... On the other hand, for some aspiring groups ... the neighbourhood can become the focal point around which coordinated action to achieve a self-conscious class habitus through processes of gentrification is undertaken, so that ‘distinction’ can be maintained ‘in the struggles over status in social space’.

10.5.3 Social Exclusion and the MPC

The notion of status groups actively working towards distinguishing their neighbourhood raises questions as to the extent to which the MPC can be considered an exclusionary device. There are two primary mechanisms through which the MPC effects a degree of social exclusion. The first of these is through the practice of ‘value adding’ required of this highly planned form of development. To some extent, planner-developers using value adding techniques are responding to changes in the local state’s development requirements. Of direct relevance is the increasing emphasis local councils on the urban fringe place on developer’s Section 94 contributions, made in cash and ‘in-kind’, which contribute to local community infrastructure. (Section 94 contributions are discussed in detail in Chapter 8)

More circuitously, since 1983 successive State Governments in New South Wales have adopted urban consolidation and user pays principles as key elements in urban planning policy (Forster 1999; Smithers and Riera 1985). These policies have affected the way greenfield developers have gone about extracting development profits. Smaller lots in conjunction with larger houses and higher densities have led to greater emphasis on passive and active community spaces. In addition, more exacting environmental standards imposed by the state’s environmental policies and regulatory systems and the passing of public physical infrastructure costs on to the developer have contributed to the increasing cost of developments (Gleeson and Low 2000).
Some residential developers have compensated for the resulting increases in development costs, land values and densities by building ‘quality’ estates, targeted specifically towards middle income households. Community facilities and design features are used to entice this sector of the market. In marketing terms, the planned estate offers a point of difference to other more standard subdivisions, by offering a better standard of product to a section of the market which demands more and is willing to pay more for it (Dennis and Jamal 2001). Where conventional subdivisions market land for housing, the MPC markets a lifestyle.

The additional capital investment, when passed on to the consumer, results in higher purchase prices. This is an overt exclusionary mechanism deriving from income and wealth. A more subtle form of exclusion occurs through design details, ideologically derived aesthetic and the types of facilities ‘added’, which tend to promote a particular lifestyle and set of interests.

The second mechanism through which the MPC effects a degree of social exclusion is through the ‘community compact’. The restrictive covenants, as well as the social norms and community values which underpin the compact are intended to invoke civic virtues and responsibilities which will be quite unappealing to certain groups, who in turn self-exclude from the estate. This form of exclusion relates directly to the idea of homogeneity of the resident population. Both the planner-developer’s ideologically based practices and the community compact encourage a homogenous resident population. The idea of residential homogeneity is not the sole preserve of the MPC. The conditions underpinning the MPC, however, are capable of intensifying the process of homogeneity, which in turn intensifies claims against it of social exclusion.

10.5.4 Civil Society and Social Movements

The development of the MPC has occurred during a period in which the capitalist state has been forced to realign its interests. As the state has become less interventionist in the welfare of citizens and more concerned with global and local
economic restructuring, the ‘reconstitution of social order’, as Fukuyama (1999) argues, rests with elements of civil society.

*Moral Relativism and Communitarianism*

The moral relativism, the idea that “no particular set of values or norms can or ought to be authoritative” which Fukuyama (1999: 282) argues has encroached on contemporary civil society since the early 1960s, encourages social groups based on voluntary social bonds within the society, to exert their will. These social groups form social movements organised through the efforts of multiple individuals acting primarily outside the state and economic spheres in the pursuit of certain social or political goals.

Responsive Communitarianism is an example of a contemporary social movement responding to the moral relativism of contemporary society. Responsive Communitarians view the central failing of modern society as the “weakening of traditional and associational ties” (Sites 1998: 57). They hold that traditional, “authentic community” has been replaced by “partial or distorted communities” marked by alienation (Etzioni 1996a: 1). According to Etzioni (1996a:130), the task of Responsive Communitarians is “to build communities based on open participation, dialogue, and truly shared values”. The structure of the communitarian society is envisaged by Responsive Communitarians as a ‘mosaic’ of communities within a common moral framework.

The growth of the MPC, with its implicit communitarian interests, can be considered a form of social movement, as a specific status group organises to secure its social, moral and economic environment. Moreover, the Communitarian’s ideas on residential communities encourages the idea communities of common cultural background on condition that there are no legally sanctioned grounds restricting segregation, and that other social mechanisms work to enable intercultural encounters and experiences. As Etzioni argues

*A communitarian policy ...would allow people of the same cultural background to choose to live in a neighbourhood that .... share their subculture .... The rationale would be that living with people with whom one shares a*
subculture, an identity, a history, a community, is an important source of identity and psychological support, and fosters bonding and the articulation of the moral voice. . . members of different residential communities would learn to know one another as people in other contexts, especially work (Etzioni 1996a: 216).

The Challenge to Collective and Individual Identities in south-west Sydney

Fukuyama (1999: 281) cites the “principled belief in multiculturalism that goes beyond the toleration of cultural diversity to its active celebration and promotion” as one of the chief drivers of moral relativism. There would appear to be some connection here between the intense celebration and promotion of ethnic diversity within certain suburbs of south-west Sydney, the development of ‘multi-cultural anxiety’ (Burchell 2003: 34) and the considerable uptake of Harrington Park and other planned estates within Camden by homogeneous, Anglo-oriented households.

Forrest and Kearns (2001: 2136) note that, “the proximity of difference” and ‘transgressions at the scale of the neighbourhood’ can be a threat to the social order and a challenge to the collective and individual identities” (Forest and Kearns 2001: 2136). It would appear that outer urban migration patterns, at least within south-west Sydney, are a consequence, to some extent, of the challenges of ‘celebratory’ multiculturalism.

Ultimately it is up to the individual residents of Harrington Park to demonstrate that their concern for moral relativism arising from ‘celebratory’ multiculturalism and their ‘multi-cultural anxiety’ goes beyond merely racial intolerance.¹ There appears, however, to be a role here for both the state and civil society to reduce the social anxieties associated with the recent influx of cultures holding different values, speaking different languages, and establishing facilities and community organisations which threaten more established ways of life within a local community.

‘Multi-cultural anxiety’ is not a necessary pre-requisite for the formation of the MPC, although in globalising, multi-cultural societies it is often an important

¹ All the residents interviewed for this thesis were intensely aware of racial intolerance, and were keen not to have their views portrayed as racist.
motivation. What this particular condition demonstrates, however, is the essential capacity of the MPC to create a space for the formation of a particular style of community which has a ‘sense of security’ at its core. In this instance, security is derived through social order deriving from a common way of life and a common value system, as well as in facilitating a collective community identity from which individual identity derives.

10.6 Conclusion

The master planned community is a form of ‘ideological community’, where status groups consciously seek out an area with specific characteristics which support their attempts to create a particular style of community reflecting their values, culture, aspirations and lifestyle. This form of ideological community is supported in practice by a community compact between residents and between the planner-developer and residents. That is, the community compact is the mechanism by which the resident population, operating as a status group, strive to create and maintain their residential condition.

The community compact, with its amalgam of formal (legal) and informal facets, differentiates the MPC from less intensive forms of planned residential estate. The compact, and the ideology which underpins it, has the capacity to intensify the process of homogeneity amongst residents. The community ethic, which forms part of the community compact, in conjunction with formal community rituals staged by the planner-developer, encourages the development of broad, intra-estate social networks and underpins a more intensive, sustainable sense of community identity than appears to be the case in lesser planned forms of estate.

With regard to Harrington Park, in the socially, economically and ethnically diverse suburbs of Sydney’s greater west, the MPC presents a safe-haven, a secure, harmonious place to live and raise a family, and a spatial mediator of identity construction. To those who can afford it, the MPC provides two spheres of perceived social control and economic security: investment in the tax advantaged family home, which is now large enough to provide individual family members with privacy and
the space to carry out more recreational and work related activities than ever before; and the local neighbourhood which provides a secure environment to live and raise children, as well as social norms and development regulations for the protection of property values.

As Harrington Park and Garden Gates clearly illustrate, contemporary community life can be contradictory and at times paradoxical. While on one hand these estates are infused with community good feelings and degrees of connectivity and reciprocity, this is essentially born out of the desire to create an exclusive social space. The contemporary MPC is a timely reminder that community, which is inherently bounded and competitive, should not be confused with the broader aims of a good society.
### Glossary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Builder-developer</strong></td>
<td>Constructs urban structures in relative isolation to the form of development and social system surrounding it. Profit tends to be the sole motivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Compact</strong></td>
<td>A broad agreement between the planner-developer and the residents as to the primary development goal and the dominant value system or common social code which is intended to operate within the estate. It is the primary device differentiating the master planned community from other less capital intensive forms of planned residential estates. Components of the community compact include the code of pecuniary beauty and the community ethic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Ethic</strong></td>
<td>A common code of community behaviour established between the residents and the developer. It is a component of the ‘community compact’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Development</strong></td>
<td>The establishment of physical and social structures which enable the members of the local community to organise their social life to meet their needs and goals. This encompasses physical, symbolic and social space as well as aspects of behaviour and cognition. The term came into use after WWII to define a movement designed to create better living for the local community through the action of the community members. The fundamental concern of community development is the development of local connectivity and a sense of belonging based on common identification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fully Planned Community</strong></td>
<td>A term used by Delfin Lend Lease and Bradcorp to refer to the ‘master planned community’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gated Community</strong></td>
<td>“Walled or fenced housing developments to which public access is restricted, often guarded using CCTV and/or security personnel, and usually characterised by legal agreements (tenancy or leasehold) which tie the residents to a common code of conduct” (Blandy, Lister and Atkinson 2003: 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household</strong></td>
<td>Domestic group with a focus on residency, economic activities and consumption. Reproduction may be an aspect of the household, but not necessarily.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Local Community

Social system within the estate (encompassing such social institutions as the family, the local school and community/retail centre) or immediate area. It is based on geographic propinquity and artificial boundaries. By their very nature, all local social systems are partial social systems.

Master Plan

A planning control device over an entire project site, underpinned by a particular vision for the completed project.

“A Master plan means that the relationship of all the elements – homesites, quality homes, open space and transport features – will be considered in planning.” (Landcom 2003: 2).

Master Planned Community (MPC)

Master planned residential development, in which the planner-developer incorporates physical and social infrastructure, and other community development strategies, or at the very least has appropriated the language of community development, in an effort to construct a specific notion of community.

The MPC is the most intensive form of master planned estate, in terms of capital expended on both physical and social infrastructure. Less intensive forms of master planned estate tend to be oriented more towards physical infrastructure and amenity, and may be more likely to describe the development as offering ‘total lifestyle’ rather than community (see for instance Landcom’s Woodlands estate promotional material).

Master Planned Estate

A generic term to describe forms of master planned residential developments which concentrate on configurations of physical and social infrastructure, design and amenities to achieve a particular vision. That is, the project vision is supported through physical layout, heavy reliance on covenant-controlled housing and more recently, corporate ‘badging’. Australia has a history of master-planning, including the privately developed Appian Way ‘garden suburb’ project in Burwood in 1903, the 1921 Castlecrag development designed by Walter Burley Griffin, the ‘garden city’ of Canberra, also a Burley Griffin design, and the public housing estates of Western Sydney built during the 1960s and 70s.

Master Planned Housing

Landcom uses this terminology to denote constructed dwellings (in partnership with house builders) in a planned, generally small estate (of around 50 to 100 houses), as opposed to selling vacant lots in a planned estate. (See for instance Landcom’s Domain Gardens (Mt Annan) and Lakeview Heights (Cecil Hills) promotional material) Also known as ‘master planned address’.
Planner-developer

Term is used to qualify 'master plan' developers from builder-developers, who construct urban structures in relative isolation to the form of development and social system surrounding it. The development practice (or at least the development rhetoric) of the planner-developer incorporates a particular vision for the social relations, and perhaps social system that they would like to see produced by their development.

Planning

"An orderly scheme of action to achieve stated objectives in the light of known constraints" (Hall 1996: 241).

Smart Growth

"The philosophy accepts that new housing, businesses, and jobs must be accommodated and that the economy, the community, and the environment must be served and fostered in the process. Smart growth may bring the forces that have been described as 'progrowth' and 'antigrowth' together with a common agenda of community well-being, economic prosperity, and environmental protection... Smart growth recognises the link between quality of life and patterns and practices of development." (Pawlukiewicz 1998: 69)

In recent times there has been a merger between New Urbanist and Smart Growth movements, which has seen New Urbanism either down play and in some instances even drop its social doctrine (see for instance the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) web site at www.cnu.org).

Value Adding

Term used in the thesis to denote community infrastructure – physical and social – incorporated by developers to add value to a particular block of land within the development. Such infrastructure is intended to boost the status of the estate.
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Appendices:

Appendix 1  Sydney Metropolitan Area Location Map indicating Local Government areas of Western Sydney

Appendix 2  Harrington Park: Local Environmental Plan No. 74

Appendix 3  Narellan including Garden Gates Estate, Local Environmental Plan No. 47

Appendix 4  Garden Gates Plan

Appendix 5  Residents' Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

Appendix 6  Resident Survey: Harrington Park

Appendix 7  Resident Survey: Garden Gates

Appendix 8  Harrington Park Master Plan – March 2002


Appendix 10  Data Tables Relating to Chapter 7: Seeking Utopia

Appendix 11  Photographs of Harrington Park and Garden Gates
Appendix 1: Sydney Metropolitan Area indicating LGAs of outer Western Sydney

* Case Study Area within Camden Local Government Area
Appendix 2: Harrington Park: Local Environmental Plan
No. 74  (Source: Camden Council GIS)
Appendix 3: Narellan (including Garden Gates Estate):
Local Environmental Plan No. 47
(Source: Camden Council GIS)
Appendix 4: Garden Gates Estate
(Source: Camden Council GIS)
Appendix 5: Semi-Structure Interview Schedule - Residents

Community Life in Housing Estates of South-west Sydney
Resident Interview Sheet

Date: ___________
Start time: ___________
No. ___________
Finish time: ___________

Part 1: Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult 1 (Participant)</th>
<th>Adult 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex:</strong> Male [ ]</td>
<td>Male [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female [ ]</td>
<td>Female [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age:</strong> 18-30 [ ]</td>
<td>18-30 [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60 [ ]</td>
<td>51-60 [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40 [ ]</td>
<td>31-40 [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-70 [ ]</td>
<td>61-70 [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50 [ ]</td>
<td>41-50 [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70+ [ ]</td>
<td>70+ [ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Current Marital Status:
   - Single [ ]
   - Married [ ]
   - Separated / Divorced and now single [ ]
   - Defacto [ ]
   - Other [ ]

4. Country of Origin

4a Your family’s ancestry

5. Father’s main occupation (when you were 14 years of age)

6. Highest education level attained
   - no education [ ]
   - primary school [ ]
   - year 10 [ ]
   - year 12 [ ]
   - trade certificate [ ]
   - diploma [ ]
   - other TAFE qualification [ ]
   - bachelor degree [ ]
   - higher degree (e.g. masters) [ ]

7. Occupation / employment
   - Is this full [ ] or part-time [ ]
   - Self employed [ ] employee [ ]
   - Is this full [ ] or part-time [ ]
   - Self employed [ ] employee [ ]
8. What suburb do you work (paid employment) in

Adult 1

9. How do you travel to work:
Walk [ ]
Bus [ ]
Train and Bus [ ]
Car [ ]
Other [ ]

Adult 2 (partner)

Walk [ ]
Bus [ ]
Train and bus [ ]
Car [ ]
Other [ ]

10. What are the main tasks involved in the work you undertake?

11. Children   Age   Attends Preschool   Attends Public Sch   Attends Private Sch
Child 1       [ ]   [ ]   [ ]
Child 2       [ ]   [ ]   [ ]
Child 3       [ ]   [ ]   [ ]
Child 4       [ ]   [ ]   [ ]

12. If your children currently attend a public primary school, do you intend sending them to a Public High School [ ] or a Private High School [ ]

12a. What aspirations do you have for your children?

13. What is your annual household income $  
0 - 15,000   [ ]       65,001-75,000   [ ]
15,001-25,000  [ ]      75,001-85,000   [ ]
25,001-35,000  [ ]      85,001-100,000  [ ]
35,001-45,000  [ ]      100,001-125,000  [ ]
45,001-55,000  [ ]      125,001-150,000  [ ]
55,001-65,000  [ ]      Above 150,001   [ ]

13a. How would you describe your household?

14. What social class do you feel you belong to and why?

15. Who did you vote for at the last Federal Election, and why?
### Part 2: Residential History

16. Length of residence in the estate

17. Housing tenure:  
   - Owner [ ]  
   - Private Rental [ ]  
   - Mortgage [ ]  
   - Public Rental [ ]  
   - Other [ ] (please specify) ______________________

18. What suburb(s) / town did you grow up in?

19. Where did you live prior to here and how long did you live there?

20. Did you own or rent this property?

21. How important is owning your own home?

22. How did you hear about this estate?

23. Why did you choose to live in this estate?

24. How long do you see yourself living here? (Where do you anticipate moving to after this time?)

25. Before you moved into the estate what expectations did you have of the suburb and have those expectations been met?

26. What do you like most about the estate?

27. Are there any negative features about the estate?

28. What improvements would you like to see made in the estate?

28a. How does your experience of living in this estate differ from your previous suburb?

### Part 3: Community

29a. What does the term ‘community’ mean to you?

29. What expectations of ‘community’ did you have before moving into the estate?

30. Do you perceive this estate to be a community? (If yes, how would you describe the community to visitors?)

31. Do you feel you are able to trust your neighbours? Do you feel the estate is a safe place to live?
32. Have you participated in any local community activities, for instance, Christmas Lights bus tour; Carols by the Lake, Kite flying festivals over the past 12 months?

33. Have you heard of Narellan / Harrington Park Community Care? Have you had any contact with this organization? (e.g. Welcome Visit?)

34. Are you a member of any associations, clubs or groups? sports clubs; service clubs, mothers associations, children’s school associations, children’s other (e.g. dance school), welfare, political, occupational, religious

(34a Have you heard of the Harrington Park Resident Liaison group?)

35. Have you volunteered your time to a particular organization or community activity in the past 12 months?

36. Has your partner volunteered his / her time to a particular organization or community activity in the past 12 months?

Part 4: Relations with Significant ties and Neighbours

37. Where do the members of your extended family live?

38. How often do you see members of your extended family?

39. What assistance does your extended family give you and what are you able to provide them? (e.g. childminding)

40. Where do most of your friends reside?

41. How did you get to know your closest friends?

42. Who are you most likely to approach for help with such things as child minding, emergency help, moving house, minding your pets...

43. How often do you mix with your immediate neighbours: how regularly do you talk with them? Do you ever participate in neighbourhood activities (street parties, drinks with neighbours..)?

44. How many people in your neighbourhood do you know by name and occupation?

45. Are you aware of any conflict between neighbours in your area?

(Are there any questions you would like to ask me?)
Appendix 6: Resident Survey Harrington Park

COMMUNITY LIFE IN HARRINGTON PARK
Resident Survey

Participation in this questionnaire is voluntary. Information received is confidential and responses will be kept in a secure place.

1. Sex: Male [ ] Female [ ]

2. Age: 18-30 [ ] 51-60 [ ]
   31-40 [ ] 61-70 [ ]
   41-50 [ ] 70+ [ ]

3. Current Marital Status:
   Single [ ]
   Married [ ]
   Separated / Divorced and now single [ ]
   De-facto [ ]
   Other [ ]

4. Country of Birth

5. Highest education level attained
   no education [ ]
   primary school [ ]
   year 10 [ ]
   year 12 [ ]
   diploma or trade certificate [ ]
   other TAFE qualification [ ]
   bachelor degree [ ]
   higher degree [ ]

6. Your occupation and the main task this involves

7. Your partner’s occupation / employment (if applicable)

8. Do your school age children attend public schools [ ] or private schools [ ]

9. What is your religion?

10. What is your annual household income $ 
    0 - 15,000 [ ] 65,001-75,000 [ ]
    15,001-25,000 [ ] 75,001-85,000 [ ]
    25,001-35,000 [ ] 85,001-100,000 [ ]
    35,001-45,000 [ ] 100,001-125,000 [ ]
    45,001-55,000 [ ] 125,001-150,000 [ ]
    55,001-65,000 [ ] Above 150,001 [ ]
11. What social class do you identify with?
- Working class [ ]
- Lower middle class [ ]
- Middle class [ ]
- Upper middle class [ ]
- Upper class [ ]
- None of the above [ ]

12. What social class do you think most of the residents in your estate identify with?
- Working class [ ]
- Lower middle class [ ]
- Middle class [ ]
- Upper middle class [ ]
- Upper class [ ]
- None of the above [ ]

13. How long have you lived in Harrington Park ________________

14. Did you build your current house? Yes [ ] No [ ]

15. Is your house:
- Owned outright [ ]
- Mortgaged [ ]
- Rented (private landlord) [ ]
- Rented (public housing) [ ]

16. What suburb did you live in prior to your current address?

17. What was your main reason for moving into Harrington Park?

How important were the following issues in your decision to live in this estate? Circle one of the numbers from (1) not important – to (5) very important

18. Building standards and housing covenants

not important 1 -------------- 2 -------------- 3 -------------- 4 -------------- 5 very important
19. The quality of surrounding housing
not important 1 ------------ 2 ------------ 3 ------------ 4 ------------ 5 very important

20. Well maintained lawns and gardens
not important 1 ------------ 2 ------------ 3 ------------ 4 ------------ 5 very important

21. To live amongst families with children of a similar age to yours
not important 1 ------------ 2 ------------ 3 ------------ 4 ------------ 5 very important

22. To live amongst neighbours you could be friendly with
not important 1 ------------ 2 ------------ 3 ------------ 4 ------------ 5 very important

23. The facilities in the estate (e.g. parks, community centre, basketball courts, bike tracks...)
not important 1 ------------ 2 ------------ 3 ------------ 4 ------------ 5 very important

24. The community atmosphere / spirit
not important 1 ------------ 2 ------------ 3 ------------ 4 ------------ 5 very important

25. To live close to extended family
not important 1 ------------ 2 ------------ 3 ------------ 4 ------------ 5 very important

26. The semi-rural atmosphere
not important 1 ------------ 2 ------------ 3 ------------ 4 ------------ 5 very important

27. The expectation of a better than average increase in your property value
not important 1 ------------ 2 ------------ 3 ------------ 4 ------------ 5 very important

28. What are some of the characteristics you look for in a community?
29. Harrington Park is more prestigious than most of the other residential estates in South-west Sydney?
Strongly agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Neither agree nor disagree [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly Disagree [ ]

30. The residents of Harrington Park have similar values and outlook to you?
Strongly agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Neither agree nor disagree [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly Disagree [ ]

31. You expect property values to increase more in Harrington Park than in surrounding areas?
Strongly agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Neither agree nor disagree [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly Disagree [ ]

32. You feel that your estate is safer for children than surrounding areas?
Strongly agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Neither agree nor disagree [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly Disagree [ ]

33. You have close social contact with your neighbours?
Strongly agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Neither agree nor disagree [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly Disagree [ ]

34. There is a greater sense of community in Harrington Park than in other areas?
Strongly agree [ ]
Agree [ ]
Neither agree nor disagree [ ]
Disagree [ ]
Strongly Disagree [ ]
35. How long do you see yourself living in the estate from now?

36. What do you like most about living in Harrington Park?

37. Are there any negative features about the estate?

38. Where do most of your friends reside?
Within the estate [ ] Outside of the estate [ ]

39. Do you feel part of the community of Harrington Park?

40. Have you participated in any of the following local community activities over the past 12 months? Please mark [x] as many boxes as you find appropriate.

Carols by Candlelight [ ] Estate Christmas Party [ ]
Resident Information BBQ [ ] Street Christmas Parties [ ]
Billy Cart Derby and Market Day [ ] Kite Flying Festival [ ]
Clean Up Australia Day [ ] Tree Planting Days [ ]
Annual Garden Competition [ ] School P and C Meetings [ ]
Resident Association meetings [ ] Over 55s events [ ]
Neighbourhood Watch [ ] Other (please specify) __________________________

41. Do you belong to any associations, clubs or groups in the area? (please specify)

42. Who are you most likely to approach for help with such things as child minding, emergency help, moving house, minding your pets whilst away ..

Neighbours [ ]
Your family [ ]
Friends in the estate [ ]
Friends outside of the estate [ ]
Other (please specify) ____________________________________________
Appendix 7: Resident Survey Garden Gates

COMMUNITY LIFE IN GARDEN GATES
Resident Survey

Participation in this questionnaire is voluntary. Information received is confidential and responses will be kept in a secure place.

1. Sex: Male [ ]  Female [ ]

2. Age: 18-30 [ ]  51-60 [ ]
          31-40 [ ]  61-70 [ ]
          41-50 [ ]  70+  [ ]

3. Current Marital Status:
   Single [ ]
   Married [ ]
   Separated / Divorced and now single [ ]
   De-facto [ ]
   Other [ ]

4. Country of Birth

5. Highest education level attained
   no education [ ]
   primary school [ ]
   year 10 [ ]
   year 12 [ ]
   diploma or trade certificate [ ]
   other TAFE qualification [ ]
   bachelor degree [ ]
   higher degree [ ]

6. Your occupation and the main task this involves

7. Your partner’s occupation / employment (if applicable)

8. Do your school age children attend public schools [ ] or private schools [ ]

9. What is your religion?

10. What is your annual household income $
    0 - 15,000 [ ]  65,001-75,000 [ ]
    15,001-25,000 [ ]  75,001-85,000 [ ]
    25,001-35,000 [ ]  85,001-100,000 [ ]
    35,001-45,000 [ ]  100,001-125,000 [ ]
    45,001-55,000 [ ]  125,001-150,000 [ ]
    55,001-65,000 [ ]  Above 150,001 [ ]
11. What social class do you identify with?
Working class [ ]
Lower middle class [ ]
Middle class [ ]
Upper middle class [ ]
Upper class [ ]
None of the above [ ]

12. What social class do you think most of the residents in your estate identify with?
Working class [ ]
Lower middle class [ ]
Middle class [ ]
Upper middle class [ ]
Upper class [ ]
None of the above [ ]

13. How long have you lived in Harrington Park ____________________________

14. Did you build your current house? Yes [ ] No [ ]

15. Is your house:
Owned outright [ ]
Mortgaged [ ]
Rented (private landlord) [ ]
Rented (public housing) [ ]

16. What suburb did you live in prior to your current address?

17. What was your main reason for moving into Garden Gates?

How important were the following issues in your decision to live in this estate? Circle one of the numbers from (1) not important – to (5) very important

18. Building standards and housing covenants
not important 1 ------------ 2 ------------ 3 ------------ 4 ------------ 5 very important
19. The quality of surrounding housing
not important 1 2 3 4 5 very important

20. Well maintained lawns and gardens
not important 1 2 3 4 5 very important

21. To live amongst families with children of a similar age to yours
not important 1 2 3 4 5 very important

22. To live amongst neighbours you could be friendly with
not important 1 2 3 4 5 very important

23. The facilities in the estate (e.g. reserves and parks, community centre, basketball courts, bike tracks…)
not important 1 2 3 4 5 very important

24. The community atmosphere / spirit
not important 1 2 3 4 5 very important

25. To live close to extended family
not important 1 2 3 4 5 very important

26. The semi-rural atmosphere and proximity to Botanic Gardens
not important 1 2 3 4 5 very important

27. The expectation of a better than average increase in your property value
not important 1 2 3 4 5 very important

28. What are some of the characteristics you look for in a community?

____________________________________

____________________________________
29. Garden Gates is more prestigious than most of the other residential estates in South-west Sydney?
   Strongly agree [ ]
   Agree [ ]
   Neither agree nor disagree [ ]
   Disagree [ ]
   Strongly Disagree [ ]

30. The residents of Garden Gates have similar values and outlook to you?
   Strongly agree [ ]
   Agree [ ]
   Neither agree nor disagree [ ]
   Disagree [ ]
   Strongly Disagree [ ]

31. You expect property values to increase more in Garden Gates than in surrounding areas?
   Strongly agree [ ]
   Agree [ ]
   Neither agree nor disagree [ ]
   Disagree [ ]
   Strongly Disagree [ ]

32. You feel that your estate is safer for children than surrounding areas?
   Strongly agree [ ]
   Agree [ ]
   Neither agree nor disagree [ ]
   Disagree [ ]
   Strongly Disagree [ ]

33. You have close social contact with your neighbours?
   Strongly agree [ ]
   Agree [ ]
   Neither agree nor disagree [ ]
   Disagree [ ]
   Strongly Disagree [ ]

34. There is a greater sense of community in Garden Gates than in other areas?
   Strongly agree [ ]
   Agree [ ]
   Neither agree nor disagree [ ]
   Disagree [ ]
   Strongly Disagree [ ]
35. How long do you see yourself living in the estate from now? ____________

36. What do you like most about living in Garden Gates? ________________________

37. Are there any negative features about the estate? ________________________

38. Where do most of your friends reside?
   Within the estate [ ]  Outside of the estate [ ]

39. Do you feel part of the community of Garden Gates? ________________________

40. Have you participated in any of the following local community activities over the past 12 months? Please mark [x] as many boxes as you find appropriate.
   Carols in the Botanic Garden [ ]  Neighbourhood Watch [ ]
   Over 55s events [ ]  Street Christmas Parties [ ]
   'Biggest' Morning Tea [ ]  Kite Flying Festival [ ]
   Clean Up Australia Day [ ]  Tree Planting Days [ ]
   Annual Garden Competition [ ]  School P and C Meetings [ ]
   Resident Association meetings [ ]  Other (please specify) ________________________

41. Do you belong to any associations, clubs or groups in the area? (please specify) ________________________

42. Who are you most likely to approach for help with such things as child minding, emergency help, moving house, minding your pets whilst away ..
   Neighbours [ ]
   Your family [ ]
   Friends in the estate [ ]
   Friends outside of the estate [ ]
   Other (please specify) ________________________
Appendix 8: Harrington Park Master Plan – March 2002
(Source: Harpak)
Harrington Park

MASTER PLAN

Lakeside Village
Residential R1
Residential R2 (subject to detail design)

Hillside Village
Residential R1
Residential R2 (subject to detail design)

Park Haven Village
Residential R1
Residential R2 (subject to detail design)

Proposed Preschool Site
Commercial/Neighbourhood Centre
Open Space
Major Pedestrian / Cycle Paths
Existing Vegetation

Avenue and Park Planting
Narellan Creek

Lakes comprising a mix of shallow wetlands and deep, open water zones.
(Refer to designs prepared by Camden Council for details.)

This plan shows existing and proposed development as at the time of publication. Some details are subject to approval and amendment by Camden Council and other Authorities. Future development details are conceptual and may change during design development.

March 2002
New Village off to a Great Start.

Park Haven Village was officially opened with the release of Stage 18 in August. There were 34 lots released for sale with 21 deposits taken in the first 48 hours. Stage 20 was released in October with the same enthusiasm - 42 lots released with 29 deposits taken in the first 48 hours.

Park Haven Village is located in the centre of the estate and will eventually have its own entry off Camden Valley Way. The village will have approximately 900 lots and features the new public school, sporting precinct and, of course, cycleways, playgrounds and picnic areas.

Our next land release is Stage 21 which will be released prior to Christmas with Stage 24 to follow shortly thereafter in February 2002.

To ensure that you don’t miss out, join our priority club and receive information about upcoming land releases prior to their release to the general public.

For further information in this regard please do not hesitate to contact the Harrington Park Sales and Information Office on (02) 4647 3200.

“Harrington Park is an exceptional development.”

Harrington Park Wins Again!

The Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) recently held their prestigious awards ceremony. Harrington Park was the proud winner of the Master Planned Residential Development (NSW) 2001 Award. We are now finalists in the Nationals to be awarded early next year. Fingers crossed!

Harrington Park is no stranger to awards with already 2 State and 2 National Awards to their credit. The 2001 Award again acknowledges the quality of the Harrington Park estate.

The strict criteria by which the estate is judged includes: a high standard of overall design, diversity and interest; choice in housing and an appropriate range of shared community facilities; a sustainable, energy-efficient environment and lifestyle; effective measures to create and sustain the sense of a coherent community; consumer value and satisfaction. Harrington Park continues to remain the leader in these fields with its high standard of Master Planning.

The judges for the UDIA Awards were quoted as saying, “Harrington Park is an exceptional development. It is maturing well to suit changing needs, incorporating improved community and environmental outcomes. The development has been a great initiative, adapting strategies to suit changing household needs.”

Same Team - New Name

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the Harrington Park team. This very dedicated group of staff are now the proud employees of Harpak Developments Pty Ltd - the management company of Harrington Park.

Taylor Woodrow, the developer previously in joint venture with Lady (Mary) Fairfax, has decided to withdraw from Australia entirely, enabling them to concentrate on their business in the UK and USA.

Harpak Developments will now manage the development and will continue the success that Taylor Woodrow started. It is expected that the transition to Harpak Developments will create very few changes across the estate with the exception of name changes to signage, etc. Our team is still based at Harrington Park and residents can continue to call in any time. Like the heading says - same team, new name.
Appendix 10: Data Tables relating to Chapter 7: Seeking Utopia

Table 7.1: Previous residential location (LGA) of Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Government Area</th>
<th>Garden Gates (%)</th>
<th>Harrington Park (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown *</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbelltown +</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairfield *</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool * +</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Highlands</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutherland Shire</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wollondilly</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other western suburbs LGA</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Resident Survey 2002

Note: * indicates LGAs which have experienced a high influx of refugee and family reunion NESB migration from 1973 onwards – mainly from Chile, Vietnam, Cambodia, Lebanon, Afghanistan and Bosnia. (Burnley 2000)
+ indicates LGAs which contain ‘high’ levels of public housing (Randolph and McPherson 2002)

Table 7.2: Proportion of Respondents who moved from adjoining LGAs of Liverpool and Campbelltown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Government Area</th>
<th>Garden Gates (%)</th>
<th>Harrington Park (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campbelltown</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>48.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>42.4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Resident Survey 2002
Table 7.3: Change in the Proportion of people speaking only English at home: 1991 - 2001.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistical Local Area</th>
<th>% of people who spoke only English at home 1991 Census</th>
<th>% of people who spoke only English at home 2001 Census</th>
<th>Change %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbelltown</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>-7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>-15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>-14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bankstown</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>-14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Mountains</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYDNEY SD</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>-5.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS 2001 Census Basic Community Profile and Snapshot

Table 7.4 Demographic Changes in Camden, Auburn and Bankstown 1991-2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic change (%) 1991 – 2001 ABS Census Data</th>
<th>Camden SLA (%)</th>
<th>Auburn SLA (%)</th>
<th>Bankstown SLA (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detached Dwellings</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>-13.5</td>
<td>-11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupation</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>-8.2</td>
<td>-6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental Occupation</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Born</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>-19.3</td>
<td>-13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median weekly rent 2001</td>
<td>$200-$249</td>
<td>$150-$199</td>
<td>$150-$199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median weekly individual income: 2001</td>
<td>$400-$499</td>
<td>$200-$299</td>
<td>$300-$399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median weekly individual income: 1991</td>
<td>$300-$399</td>
<td>$200-$299</td>
<td>$200-299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate (%) 2001</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate (%) 1991</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS 2001 Census Basic Community Profile and Snapshot
Table 7.5: Proportion of Students Attending Government and Private Schools in Harrington Park and Garden Gates, compared to Sydney Statistical Division in 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Harrington Park</th>
<th>Garden Gates</th>
<th>Sydney SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary School</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>64.75</td>
<td>68.24</td>
<td>68.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Government</td>
<td>35.25</td>
<td>31.76</td>
<td>31.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary School</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>50.51</td>
<td>56.34</td>
<td>57.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Government</td>
<td>49.49</td>
<td>43.66</td>
<td>42.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary / Secondary</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>60.03</td>
<td>64.73</td>
<td>63.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Government</td>
<td>39.97</td>
<td>35.27</td>
<td>36.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing. Community Profile
Appendix 11: Photographs:

Harrington Park

Garden Gates