Urban Governance in Western Australia

Searching for the

Room to Manoeuvre

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Declaration

Aspects of this thesis have been included in the following research publications, conference proceedings and commissioned reports. The research was undertaken by the author and remains original unless otherwise acknowledged.

Research Articles


Conference Papers


Commissioned Reports
Greive, S. & Alexander, I. 1995, 'New arrivals in Bridgetown: a report to the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes', Geography Department, University of Western Australia.

Derry, J., Greive, S. & Kaniski, K. 1997, City Housing Tenant Profile, commissioned by City Housing (PICHA Inc.) in respect to the housing and employment characteristics of its residents.*

Greive, S. & Alexander, I. 1997, Mandurah Remanent Bushland Study commissioned by the City of Mandurah.#


Note: A full account of the breakdown of my role in the eleven co-authored papers and commissioned reports was outlined in a temporary addendum and reviewed by the examiners of the thesis.

*Referred to as the PICHA Report in text and in the references

# Referred to as the Mandurah Report in text and in the references
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Chapter One: Introducing the Thesis

'If you like sausages, or if you respect the law, it is best that you don't see how they are made'.

excerpt from Murphy's laws at dixie.aiss.uiuc.edu

1.1 Introduction

This introduction provides an overview of the whole thesis in terms of style, orientation and content. I have tried to make the narrative generally accessible, but at the same time, this is a PhD. thesis so its markers are my primary audience, and they are informed readers. Furthermore, in any PhD. thesis, some explicit discussion of the underlying theories and philosophy is warranted. In turn, this tends to require some use of specialist terminology, particularly when trying to be succinct. In terms of style, what follows is largely a compromise between these concerns and the sheer scope of the whole research exercise.

I am an experienced researcher and I managed this thesis as I would any large research project. I started with two broad objectives focused on learning how decisions are made about shaping the urban fabric. I chose a context, and began to refine the research questions. With the directed help of many, I approached the daunting task of 'mapping the way power is exercised' (Wanna 1991) in respect to how planning and development decisions are made in Western Australia. From the start, the intention was to use a range of historical and contemporary examples to illustrate that a knowledge of how urban development decisions are made can be used to inform strategic interventions.

Western Australia (WA) is a separate State within the Commonwealth Federation of Australia, and its political administrative territory covers the western third of the continent. The current population is approximately 2 million, but the State's metropolitan capital Perth, is home to some 75% of the populace - see Figure 1.1. The next largest urban centre, the City of Bunbury 200 km due south of Perth, has a population approaching 70 000 inclusive of its surrounding small towns.
Although this study of urban governance in Western Australia is an inquiry into how the State's urban development processes are governed, the 'urban' reference should be liberally rather than rigidly interpreted. Put another way, the focus is on the way human settlements are governed and, while this may be considered too broad, it down plays the distinction between town and country, and yet still conveys a sense of the places where people reside. According to Castells (1977:174) 'the “urban” refers not only to a spatial form but also to the social organisation of the processes of reproduction'. Furthermore, towns and cities can be understood as arenas for political contestation where overlays of mutual and conflicting interests are expressed and acted upon (Castells 1978). In the case of Western Australia, the 'urban' qualifier also has a practical appeal, given the distribution of the populace, and the limited numbers of workers engaged in agriculture, mining, and other non urban industries.

The scope of this thesis is broad, and to achieve its ends, it must question many basic assumptions along the way. Several lines of inquiry independently trace the global to local restructuring of social and productive relations all the way down to the level of my own observer participation. Moreover, the recognition that governance includes different social actors and agendas well beyond the formal structures of government adds enormously to the assumed degree of complexity of the whole system governing development. A web of contemporary social theories are drawn on to support this 'broader than planning' interpretation, and these also served to direct and refine the field research. The outcome of these endeavours is a thematic understanding of the special character and nuances of Western Australia's system of urban governance.

Behind this wish to understand the broader dynamics of urban development decisions in Western Australia is a conviction that there are real choices to be made and that some of these are much better than others. Further, the assumption is that a clearer sense of how these sorts of development decisions are made is a necessary first step towards being able to influence such decisions. In later chapters, I use my own involvements in local development processes to illustrate how this knowledge of governance can be used. I draw on six practical situations from city and country settings to illustrate how I have tried to increase the prospects (my room to manoeuvre) for progressive change.
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Western Australia

Figure 1.1 Western Australian – Key Locations
The thesis has six chapters, but these should not be considered as discrete or linear steps towards some proven conclusion. Instead, in the tradition of Hegel (1975), they can be thought of as iterative components with evidence supporting a spiralling argument, which begins and ends with my own developing frame of reference. There are no claims of objectivity, and the process of learning through inquiry is aimed at fostering feedback and innovation rather than absolute or universal truths. As such, the last chapter offers a range of concluding reflections upon the breadth of the study, but no definitive answers. The narrative ends by speculating on some fertile directions for future research - theory and practice - and in this way the learning process continues.

I should also acknowledge here that in respect to the overall style and content of the thesis, I tend to leap into the ideas a little too quickly for some. But this style helps to maintain the momentum for the whole thesis and the supporting evidence is allowed to unfold as the inquiry progresses and becomes more focussed. It is also a reflective piece and, rather than to present a vast array of tables and figures, I have gone to some lengths to craft the empirical research into insightful stories. Nevertheless, the empirical evidence has been intensively and expansively researched by myself, in partnership with other researchers and by students following my directions. To date, this research agenda has yielded five consultancy reports, four conference papers and four research articles - see Declaration.

1.2 Choosing the Subject and Introducing the Self

This project has been an opportunity for me, as a planning practitioner, to reflect on some fundamental questions about the nature of my work. Through observation and experience, these questions have emerged with increasing complexity as I have shifted from one urban planning context to the next over my ten year career. These are questions which primarily concern the nature of planning and development.

Very briefly, what I recognised from my various planning experiences - in Fremantle Western Australia (1981-83), field researching China’s urban development (1985-86), working as a housing specialist in south-east London (1988-89), and as an urban policy analyst in Boston (1990-93) - is that planning is a multi-faceted enterprise which is rarely ever discussed or theorised with due reference to its fuller meaning, deeper complexity and wider application. Instead, many planning texts assume a very narrow definition of planning, predominantly as an activity of the state, and generally with a sectoral or spatial
orientation along the lines of Transport Planning, City Planning, Regional Planning, and so on (for a local example see Hedgcock and Yiftachel eds. 1992).

In seeking to illustrate the possible breadth of the planning enterprise, Safier (1983) identified 17 different planning traditions which, since the turn of the century, have emerged to consolidate themselves with their own discourse, institutional support, and professional profile. These planning traditions range from the well established Town and Country Planning and Regional Planning to those that are comparatively new, such as Environmental Planning and, newer still, Gender Planning. Safier's typology recognises that each of these traditions has an identifiable temporal and spatial origin, positioning them within the broader context of the technical specialisation and institution building that has accompanied the ebb and flow of twentieth century industrial and post-industrial development. In this sense, Safier is implicitly arguing against the possibility of a universal definition for planning (see Faludi 1973) and, in keeping with other contemporary planning theorists (Healey et al 1982; McLoughlin and Huxley 1986; Healey 1992), Safier is in favour of those definitions that are contextually defined. It is this perspective, with its inherently broad understanding of the possible enterprise of planning, which offers a suitable starting point for an inquiry into the machinations of urban governance in Western Australia.

My initial intent to investigate the ways by which urban development decisions are made was not in itself a spontaneous decision. I was already receptive to the idea because I felt that the vastly different regulatory and institutional cultures to which I had been exposed could not be taken for granted. When shifting from one working context to another it became clear that the dominant planning forms, rationales and indeed the subjects were different in very complex yet palpable ways. For example, it was particularly jarring to make the shift from a British bureaucratic culture to one which was more openly political, as was the case in Boston (US). Moreover, these types of differences appeared to create, and be integral to, many of the problems that were frustrating the planning process. At the same time, they were noticeably influencing the actual outcomes. It also became clear that ‘due process’ was rarely observed, particularly in respect to large or somehow important planning initiatives. At times, the procedural deviation was simply a case of neglect, however, in other instances it amounted to purposeful abandonment, with or without some degree of formalised institutional restructuring. As Hall (1980) has concluded, these factors (the
planning means) do influence the outcome (the planning ends) and as such, they warrant critically constructive research.

So, while I was curious about how and why, and by whom, plans and policies are formulated and implemented, it was a short article titled, *The Urban Governance System - Another Unanalysed Abstraction* (Paproski 1993) that served to introduce me to the concept of governance. This attracted my interest because it conceptualised an open ended system of urban development decision making processes that extended far beyond the realms of formalised government and structuralist notions of the state. Here was a framework that had the scope to accommodate the diversity of actors and influences that I had observed variously shaping the outcome of development events. In effect, as a broader social policy framework, governance veritably subsumes the diversity within both planning theory and practice. The nuances of this framework will be discussed later; however at this juncture, it should be noted that Paproski explicitly recognised that urban governance could not be meaningfully analysed outside, or separate from, its concrete social and physical context. In other words, as a focus for study, urban governance is entirely contextually contingent and relies on a concrete situation to give substance, meaning, and normative direction to what, after all, is only an abstraction.

A corollary of these ideas suggests that, in choosing urban governance as a subject, the other aspect of the dilemma is to consider the contextual setting. I chose to examine urban governance in Western Australia for very pragmatic reasons associated with convenience and methodology. In the first instance, Western Australia has been home for my family for several generations. At times we have lived in rural areas, but like the majority of Western Australians we have generally settled in the metropolitan area of Perth, the State’s capital. I also expect to spend most of my life working and living in and around Perth and, therefore, it makes sense that I draw on my existing knowledge and extensive networks to study what I need to know as a planner. Western Australia, extending south, north, and east of Perth, is the place I know and care most about and it is the place where I can most readily access the actor medium of governance.

In terms of method, the intertwined nature of planning and development suggests that since the focus of analysis is on the way planning decisions are made, then logically, the most plausible way to identify both common and divergent themes within the governance
Introducing the Thesis

framework would be to examine a range of different contexts (urban development decisions and outcomes). Western Australia, it seemed to me, was a large enough arena within which to observe a cross section of urban development decisions and outcomes and yet isolated and cohesive enough to get to know many of the actors and to follow some of the play. Moreover, while the focus of analysis is on urban governance, the State as an arena for inquiry seemed a practical choice, given that Crown Land and much of Western Australia's land based economy is regulated at the State rather than Federal level.

Another advantage of the Western Australian setting, is that there is an extensive body of planning and development history (Ogle 1839; Colebatch ed. 1929; Hashuck 1959; Crowley 1971; Bolton 1972; Gentilli ed. 1979; Stannage 1980) which, together with more contemporary studies (Alexander and McManus 1992; Hedgcock and Yiftachel eds. 1992), can be drawn upon to illustrate some of the key features characterising the State's evolving system of urban governance. Spanning the 170 years of European settlement, these histories provide insights on planning decisions and development outcomes through time and across space. Moreover, as a reflection of personal philosophy and obvious attachment to my Western Australian home, underlying this whole research endeavour is the belief that only through recognising the contemporary relevance of the lessons from history can we hope to transcend the mistakes that we may make today.

1.3 Choosing the Method/s

In the tradition of Hegel's (1975) philosophical conundrum, the idea of inquiring into the ways by which urban planning and development decisions are made in Western Australia is a reflection of my frame of reference. In many respects, this also predetermines the choice of methods and of how the results will ultimately be interpreted. There is, however, a way out of Hegel's 'vicious circle' but, for now... the recognition of its influence has a more immediate purpose.

The sheer scope of the inquiry, for example, presupposes an extensive approach in research design. It also suggests that the results be presented in the style of a narrative. How else would it be possible to extrapolate from reality and convey some semblance of an open ended, abstract whole of Western Australia's urban governance system? At the same time, however, the study's inherent recognition of the contextual specificity of planning decisions and development outcomes also relies upon a more detailed analysis of the causal processes
and of specific characteristics within the evolving system of urban governance. In turn, this suggests an intensive and perhaps a more concrete research agenda. As a synthesis then, the line of inquiry seeks both sameness and diversity within the urban governance system and, in so doing, it provokes a combination of what Sayer (1992) has described as extensive and intensive approaches to research design.

Sayer's dichotomy does not necessarily pose any epistemological problems. According to McKendrick (1997), it can be reinterpreted to support the proposition that multi-method research is a viable, and in this case, a logical research alternative. As Sayer concedes, particularly in respect to research with 'wide ranging objectives;

..invariably the best that can be produced is a narrative supported by some results of extensive surveys (or fragments thereof) a few statements about relatively simple constituent elements or events, all informed by abstract theoretical knowledge' (Sayer 1992:250).

Urban governance in this case is the concept that leads the inquiry and, as will become apparent, this abstraction is broad enough to accommodate a wide range of complementary and seemingly competing theoretical perspectives from which to view reality. The more immediate point, however, is that Sayer's remarks succinctly characterise the research and narrative style of this thesis. This is not coincidental. It has to do with a shared philosophical view, that of critical realism, and which in respect to the discussion of contemporary geographical methods, Sayer (1992) is the most prominent contributor (Pratt 1995; McKendrick 1997).

Critical realism has been described as a belief in the existence of reality, tempered by an awareness that the lenses used to examine reality are invariably flawed (Pratt 1995). Irrespective of whether these lenses are physical or abstract constructs, in terms of method the recognition of their irreparable flaws tends to promote a multi-method approach to research. Given the limitations of results derived from any one method, the logical response is to seek other ways of seeing so as to complement and contrast the analytical strengths and weaknesses of them all. With critical realism, therefore, research is never complete and the results can only be considered a contribution to a closer approximation of reality. As Bhaskar (1989) has stressed, critical realism is a self delimited underlabourer. It is not a
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totalising system and there is an explicit recognition that there are limits to the knowledge that it can yield.

The multi-method approach has an obvious bearing on the form and style of the thesis. Most apparent is the absence of a chapter devoted to method. Instead, as part of introducing the whole thesis, this chapter will explain why and then how and, to a certain extent, which frameworks and methods will be applied. Again, this is informed by critical realism, where the belief is that theory, method, and concrete application should be interwoven, because each iteratively informs the other in an ongoing process of research innovation and learning. As a consequence, even in this introduction, theory will rarely be far from the practical illustrations that serve to restate the point and ground it more concretely.

The multi-method approach also presents the practical problem of having to apply, describe, and interpret the results of various intensive and expansive methods. To a certain extent this is overcome by using a narrative style to ‘cut to the chase’ and to avoid the unnecessary details. In turn, this tends to undermine reproducibility in respect to both the research methods and results. However, since each analytical lens is understood to be invariably flawed, critical realism is less concerned with elaborately facilitating the reproduction of errors. Therefore, as a point of departure from rigorous scientific method, critical realists tend to attach less credence to the results from any one method and instead they seek other complementary and contrasting perspectives as they progress through a research process of learning rather than knowing.

As acknowledged earlier, this inquiry draws on several independent planning studies, as well as my ongoing participation and consultations in various urban development activities. As a way of conveying the overall extent of the research agenda, some salient descriptions of the various composite studies, surveys, interviews, and contacts have been inserted throughout the narrative. In addition to the historical research, the various contemporary field studies focus on the changing role of the central city and on what might be termed lifestyle towns in the State’s southwest.

Returning to consider Hegel’s conundrum, it is clear that my choice of method was influenced by the choice of the research question. Critical realism favours this being made explicit, and this is why the choice of the subject was paralleled with an introduction of my
'self'. Moreover, given that an 'idea' is a product of its historical and geographical context, the choice of my research question and the rise of the underlying philosophy - critical realism - both have their origins in the twilight years of the Enlightenment. Objectivist and value-neutral positions are therefore uniformly denied. However, in recognising that there has been a significant shift in the way the world is understood, Hegel's circle appears more as a spiral, with social inquiry over time drawing on significantly different frames of reference, asking different types of questions, and seeking other ways of seeing things.

In practical terms, urban governance in Western Australia is not a subject I would have chosen ten years ago. Rather, as has been acknowledged, this choice is largely a reflection of the cumulative theoretical and practical experiences of this 'planner in the making'. Furthermore, since the inquiry is an ongoing extension of the learning process, the adoption of the multi-method approach serves to facilitate the admission of new knowledge into an expanding frame of reference, and by implication, it offers greater scope for escaping Hegel's vicious circle.

1.4 Theoretical and Philosophical Orientation

It should be clear by now that this is not a conventional hyper-deductive study. There is no formalised hypothesis and the task for this research is to convince rather than to prove. The approach must be expansive to accommodate the breadth of the research, yet at times be intensive enough to support adequately a range of more specific arguments. The analysis is given direction by a framework derived from Paproski's conception of urban governance systems, where the focus is on the broader 'who', 'how' and 'why' of urban development decisions. The conceptual framework will be gradually refined and given normative direction over the course of this chapter and into the next. Increasingly, the contextual specificity of Western Australia's system of urban governance will be refined through the use of historical and contemporary exemplars - as discussed in Chapters Three, Four and Five.

Although there is no one central hypothesis, the main purpose or objective of the research is to learn how to operate effectively within Western Australia's system of urban governance. This objective, as broad as it is, will be progressively refined and given normative direction over the course of this and later chapters. For now, however, it is important to recognise that this objective alludes to the active nature of the inquiry, in that the research seeks not
only understanding but also some prospect for change. In this sense, what amounts to a study of the social processes underlying urban geography is explicitly coupled with the notion of agency in two complementary ways. Firstly, the analysis is informed by an evolving theoretical and contextual understanding of the agency-structure interface in processes of social change. Secondly, this understanding is developed to inform my position and direction - observer participation - within the practical planning situations described in Chapters Four and Five.

Towards this practical end, Paproski's abstraction is expanded upon and given greater analytical power. On many fronts the analysis will seek to identify and characterise the ideals, processes, and motives that have been, and largely remain, central to the shaping of Western Australia's urban fabric. This is not to propose an impossible quest for a completed model of Western Australia's system of urban governance. Rather, the discussion will draw on a cross section of theoretical perspectives to portray a mosaic of observations and explanations of urban development decisions and outcomes. In turn, these become a foundation for more specific and concrete analyses of contemporary planning problems which again will feed back to inform the framework.

The theoretical explanations of the patterns and processes that fall within the broad dimensions of the urban governance framework may include both social and technical theories. For example, in explaining these social processes, insights will be derived from such contrasting perspectives as regulation theory (Lipietz 1987), actor oriented theory (Long and Long 1992), and growth coalition theory (Logan and Molotch 1987). These competing paradigms pose no 'either or' dilemma (McKendrick 1997). They are complementary in that each adds to the explanatory power of the others. In a similar way, analytical techniques based on environmental or market economic perspectives are not necessarily contradictory. They can be used in combination, and perhaps comparatively, to more fully describe and understand particular aspects of a social and physical context.

The three aforementioned social theories will be outlined shortly. Together, they conceptually describe governance as the actor medium regulating both social and productive relations. In mature capitalist societies, this involves the articulation of old and new and spatially concurrent regimes of capital accumulation which, when deconstructed, reveal overlapping coalitions of individual actors mobilised around competing potentials for
growth. These social theories add depth to the analysis of urban development decisions and outcomes, and help to avoid what Bhaskar (1989) has termed 'actualism'. This is the view that asserts the reality of things and events, yet denies the existence of the underlying processes and structures that determine how things and events come to be.

As Collier (1994:6) stresses:

in going beyond appearances, knowledge may be not only what appears, but of underlying structures, which endure longer than those appearances, and generate them or make them possible.

In other words, a succession of urban development decisions and outcomes should not be seen as cause and effect, but as an expression of underlying processes and structures.

The intent to reveal the underlying nature of social processes through the integration of competing theoretical perspectives within the Humanities and Social Sciences, is also a preoccupation of the post-Modernists. Deconstructionists within this tradition, such as Foucault (1980) and Derrida (1977), guard against claims of objectivity and focus on the tyranny of knowledge discourses, recognising that the imposition of definitions within them is a reflection of dominant power relations. Weighted with idealism, these arguments stress the importance of semiotics and of how other versions of reality (human meanings) are overlaid by dominant social constructions. According to Pratt (1995) the 'critical' attachment to realism is informed by these ideas. However, critical realism is less anthropocentric and differs epistemologically from post-Modernism in that it envisages a reality that is separate from language, while recognising that it is only conditionally accessible to us through language (Pratt 1995).

The main deficiencies of critical realism are that it tends toward economic reductionism and is inadequately equipped to deal with problems associated with culture and language (Pratt 1995). Nevertheless, since critical realism makes no claims to be a totalising system (Bhaskar 1989), these types of limitations can be addressed. Importantly, they can be approached by drawing on concepts and techniques that have been fleshed out within post-Modernism. For example, the community power relations dialogue is a rich source of theoretical insight (Forester 1989; Healey 1992; Wanna 1991) and deconstruction techniques and discourse analysis offer useful analytical tools.
Arguing along similar lines, McKendrick (1997) quotes from Lawson who reminds us that;

an appreciation of the social construction of knowledge should not, however, close off techniques of inquiry, only objectivist and value-neutral epistemological positions' (Lawson 1995:452).

The main point, however, is that in seeking to expand rather than limit the analytical power of the urban governance framework, critical realism can accommodate ideas from epistemologically contrasting post-Modern positions. Moreover, with origins within the philosophy of science, it is also directly compatible with the historical materialist roots common to both regulation and growth coalition perspectives.

1.5 Urban Governance - Theoretical Beginnings

A review of the recent interpretations of the term ‘governance’ suggests a convergence of attempts to redefine planning away from the previously dominant planning discourses founded on Modernist understandings of the role of the state and the nature of social change. The term ‘urban governance’ poses a similar challenge to discourses more specifically associated with city and metropolitan planning. A common thread in this stream of challenges involves a more explicit acknowledgment of the fragmented nature of state and society. Moreover, there is an explicit recognition of the potential for conflict rather than consensus inherent within the nature of development. Together, these ideas have been widely debated among planning practitioners and theorists for over 30 years, and increasingly they have usurped what had been termed the ‘dominant (Modernist) problematic’ (Ramirez 1981). Immediately relevant titles reflecting this trend include Barlow’s (1992) examination of international trends towards the institutional fragmentation of metropolitan planning authorities, and Berry and Rumley’s (1992) discussion of the fragmented nature of Western Australian metropolitan government in the context of the traditional conflicts between three levels of government under federalism (Sawer 1956).

As a replacement for the centralist underpinnings of Modernist urban planning, urban governance is essentially a broader social policy framework for understanding urban development. In addition to recognising both social fragmentation and conflict, urban governance also spans a broader policy agenda and may include such issues as housing, employment, infrastructure, health, environment and welfare. By implication, within this broader policy agenda, institutionalised land use planning would, for example, be
understood as only one of many possible planning responses, as a means or a tool, rather than a totalising end in itself. In a similar manner, different 'planning traditions' (Safier 1983:108) such as Social Planning, Environmental Planning, and Transport Planning, would all fall within an urban governance perspective, as contextually defined.

With such a potentially broad policy agenda, the distinction between what can be defined as particularly 'urban' within the governance framework must also remain characteristically blurred. At first this may seem at odds with the recent literature which includes such titles as Urban Governance, Metropolitan Governance, and Environmental Governance. These subject distinctions, however, should be understood as pragmatic and utilitarian rather than rigidly defined. This relates to another common theme within the governance literature which stresses the importance of inter-governmental relations. Indeed, it would seem from the literature that many, if not most writers, view inter-governmental relations as the central concern of governance (Cassella 1983, Van der Wusten ed. 1992). Logically then, given that the ideal of inter-governmental relations is to span both vertical and horizontal divisions of government, any attempt to rigidly apply administrative, sectoral or spatial divisions within the governance framework would be conceptually irreconcilable with its analytical intent and value.

The challenge then is to construct a conceptual understanding of governance, as a framework appropriate to the task of directing research into the 'who', 'how', and 'why' of decisions made in the context of Western Australian urban and regional development. I call this framework 'urban governance', and it is my own conceptual construction albeit inspired by the work of Paproski (1993), Wanna (1991), Low (1994), McLoughlin (1993), Birkland (1994), Forester (1989), and other contributors to the community power dialogue. What these writers are arguing, as distinct from writers centred on inter-governmental relations, is for a more diffuse focus on the exercise of power which extends well beyond the formal institutional structures of government. From this perspective, the built environment, the social fabric of towns and cities, and the people, places and lines of communication between them, are legacies of the exercise of power in all its manifestations (Gramsci 1971, Lefebvre 1991). In the tradition of Foucault, the assumption here is that power cannot be reduced to the practices of the state, for power does not arise from any central point. Rather, it exists and is reflected in the social practices of everyday life (Silverman 1989).
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In concrete terms therefore, governance spans both the formal and informal tentacles of government and is thoroughly embedded within the shifting milieu of social organisation. According to Paproski (1993), governance is the 'social embodiment of policy' (and I add) through to implementation. In this context, the actor medium would include formalised government policy forums, public and private institutions, segments of the media, recognised individual spokespersons and special interest lobby groups, as well as private, professional and community elements of civil society down to the individual household. And as a useful totalising reference, governance may be defined as spatially and temporally overlapping 'systems of socio-cultural, political, and economic interactions among the various actors of the public and private institutions of civil society' (Paproski 1993:1). Very recently, Gleeson and Low (2000) have argued the same line specifically in relation to defining urban governance in Australia.

In Chapter Two, these definitional concepts are fleshed out in a discussion which focuses on the transition from planning to governance. The importance of this transition cannot be overstated. By the mid 1980s, the Marxist and post-Modern critiques of narrow Modernist planning theory (ideology) had left planning without any theorised prospect for progressive change (Healey et al 1982). In the 1990s, however, critical social theory seeks to extend the analysis beyond this impasse (Schuурman 1993) and to offer some prospect for progressive change - albeit at the margins. As Aberbach and Rockman (1992) argue, governance does not matter unless there is a difference between good and bad governance and some prospect for improvement. So, although Chapter Two focuses on explaining and contextually illustrating the transition from planning to governance, it also begins an ongoing reflective and contextually grounded exploration of the room to manoeuvre in planning to achieve progressive change.

An important argument within Chapter Two is the idea that planning is both broader and much less deterministic than is commonly theorised. Planning is broader in terms of the potential diversity of its contextually defined substance, agenda and actor medium, and it is less deterministic and more chaotic, which is a reflection of the diffusion of power and authority over time and through space. In a paper first presented at the Institute of Australian Geographers Conference 1993, McLoughlin, when he spoke of 'planning as peripheral rather than central to the decision making process' (McLoughlin 1995:1). The whole thrust of McLoughlin's argument was that;
...if we are to have democratic debate...informed action in the city...and a better communal understanding of "what is going on out there" (Stilwell 1992:14) and of what could and should be done, we must decentre the planning discourse (taught in the majority of Australian planning schools) and replace it with spatial political economy (McLoughlin 1995:1).

The limitations and failures of Modernist planning theory and practice have been well documented - internally within the history of planning disasters (Hall 1980; Hedgcock and Yiftachel eds. 1992) and externally through Marxist and post-Modern critiques of planning ideology (Castells 1977; Harvey 1989; Huxley 1992). As part of Chapter Two, the implications of core arguments within these critiques, together with the specifics of McLoughlin's concerns, are contextually illustrated in a study of Perth's metropolitan planning. This exemplar (Alexander and Greive 1997) draws on interviews and historical evidence and reflects on a deconstructive analysis of the origin and changing nature of metropolitan planning in Perth. Most importantly, this study reveals that something other than formal metropolitan planning has been forging urban development decisions in and around metropolitan Perth - involving other actors (who), other methods (how), and for other reasons (why).

While providing an immediately relevant illustration of the planning to governance transition, this exemplar also begins to add to the body of empirical evidence supporting broader arguments within the thesis. Among the stories underlying the evolution of Perth's metropolitan planning there are also threads of recurring themes. As argued in Chapter Three, these recurring themes reflect the very nature of Western Australia's predominantly land based economy, the role and character of dominant actors, as well as other aspects of the cultural, economic and political relationships underpinning Western Australia's development history.

As a contrasting perspective, governance offers a conceptual framework broad enough to accommodate the potential scope of the other 'whos', 'hows' and 'whys' of planning decisions and development outcomes. An important assumption, however, is that this scope can be significantly narrowed by a consideration of the material substance (the what) of planning in its time and place context. So, while Chapter Two theorises a diversity of agents and coalitions of interests exercising power through metropolitan scale development decisions, in later chapters, the historical and contemporary exemplars highlight certain
similar development patterns and processes amid the apparent chaos of contextually specific social and physical diversity.

Underpinning many of these recurring patterns and processes, the relationship between land, state and society appears to dominate all manner of Western Australian development contexts and the way they are socially and spatially ordered - governance. Moreover, it is argued that the dominance of this land, state and society relationship in shaping the nature and character Western Australia’s urban governance system is fairly distinctive, limited primarily to Australia and few other regions of the New World and that, compared to these, it is possibly the most extreme.

In an expansive review of Western Australia’s other planning and development history, Chapter Three re-examines the nature and character of the State’s emerging spatial political economy and parallels this with an analysis of the evolving system of urban governance. Although the substance of this chapter does serve as a backbone for the whole thesis, as a point of departure from McLoughlin (1995), spatial political economy is not by itself considered a suitable replacement paradigm for planning (Huxley 1997). Its contribution to the governance framework is that it provides the necessary materialist foundation as a starting point for contextual analysis. On its own, however, spatial political economy is poorly equipped to prescribe solutions or to consider how it is that they may be implemented. In other words planning or its replacement, governance, relies on more than just problem identification and recognition of the social and physical constraints. Negotiated technical and political solutions as well as more direct strategies for action are also essential. As is discussed in Chapter Two, confirmed in Chapter Three, and practically illustrated in Chapters Four and Five, attempts to promote or restrict urban change involve not only an analysis of the exercise of power, but also an understanding of how it may be altered and manipulated.

1.6 Governance and Regulation

Although it is allied with the continuing refinement of Marxist analyses of capital accumulation, regulation theory stems more specifically from a consideration of contemporary social and economic restructuring processes (Lipietz 1987). As its origins suggest, the analytical strength of regulation theory is in identifying and explaining
elemental social, economic and political processes within and between changing modes of development.

While not denying the importance of necessary tendencies towards uneven development, regulation theory focuses principally on the non necessary relations that determine which specific periods and places see what kinds of accumulation and economic growth (Painter and Goodwin 1995:337).

In contributing to the explanation of processes underpinning urban governance, regulation theory has the conceptual flexibility to ‘develop a historically and geographically grounded account of capitalist development’ (Painter and Goodwin 1995:337). Moreover, as regulation theory takes as a given the uneven nature of development, it is the distinctive economic, cultural and institutional arrangements together with spatial differentiation that become the focus for concrete research.

Regulation theory is highly relevant in theorising governance because it focuses on explaining the changing nature of productive and social relations which are inextricably linked to the changing form and character of governance. Paproski understates the prospect for this change when he says that;

the character of governance varies and changes through processes involving the exercise of power and authority with the inherent aim of reinforcing legitimacy of the existing power and authority of structures, particularly through selective delivery and distribution of goods and services to the individual and groupings within society (Paproski, 1993:1).

Rather, in the face of broader social economic restructuring, the evidence is that the tendency and capacity of existing power structures to reproduce themselves is undermined, rendering them more vulnerable or, conversely, more receptive to change.

Chapter Three demonstrates this repeatedly in a re-examination of the ebb and flow of Western Australia’s development history. This ‘other’ history draws on regulation and growth coalition theory to describe and explain recurring patterns and processes within the nature and character of development since the beginning of European settlement. Broadly tracing the path of the developing spatial political economy from 1829 to 1990, Chapter Three highlights the reconfiguration of different coalitions of place-tied actors, aligning themselves to different modes of development (predominantly land and land based resource
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oriented) and acting as titled and untitled planners to facilitate and maximise growth through significantly different institutional arrangements, organisational structures, ideologies, policies and practices. It is also worth noting here that Chapters Four and Five build on the analysis in Chapter Three. They offer a more detailed examination of the same kinds of processes currently transforming the development context, both in central Perth and among lifestyle towns of the State’s southwest. In turn, the changing nature of development in these areas, particularly in respect to the changing social-spatial patterns of production and consumption, renders them opportune study sites for observing processes underpinning the changing nature and character of governance.

Just as governance emerges from a post-structural understanding of the nature of state and society, both regulation and growth coalition theories stem from the ongoing post-structural treatment of Marxist critiques of capital accumulation. Regulation theorists are principally concerned with explaining the deep character shifts observable in the restructuring of productive and social relations in mature capitalist nations. Early theorists described modes of regulating capital accumulation and distribution, which served to stabilise the conditions necessary for reproduction, within territories and nation-states (Lipietz 1987). The social regulations that serve to secure the integrity and cohesion of the accumulation process are conceptualised as diffuse overlays of regulatory controls expressed in the form of supporting organisational systems, laws, procedures and conventions, behaviour norms, and cultural conventions.

Much of this literature has focussed on the changing relationship between the regime of accumulation and the mode of social regulation as the two basic components in a mode of development (Le Heron 1993). The restructuring of the regime of accumulation has generally been interpreted as the shift from Fordism, in which mass production was matched with mass consumption, towards a system based on flexible specialisation and market led production. The terms, ‘Fordism’ and ‘flexible specialisation’ can be understood as metaphors which recognise and characterise the sea change in global economic activity (Harvey 1989), discernible through a comparison of past and present production systems and the corollaries in the social organisation of mature capitalist societies.

Nowadays, theorists are less concerned with defending the conceptual integrity of the contrasting Fordist and flexible specialisation modes of development. Instead, they reflect
on a more diffuse array of less deterministic and more contextually specific mechanisms which are revealed, during processes of restructuring, as regulating the social-spatial order fundamental to the process of capital accumulation. Moreover, in recognising the ebb and flow of regulatory processes through time and across space (Painter and Goodwin 1995), it becomes apparent that regulation theory has the capacity to examine development history predating Fordism.

Nevertheless, in grounding this theoretical perspective in the Western Australian context, it is important to recognise that it was not until the post war Fordist years that the State experienced a sustained period of rapid growth. Even by 1891, the European population was less than 50,000, and while the population did surge during the gold rush era (1893-1910), the State's population was only 282,114 in 1911. There were also major disruptions during the Great Depression and the two World Wars. As a consequence, although the evolution of Fordist and Taylorist principles in industrial production began with the twentieth century, in Western Australia it was not until the 1950s that the absorption of these forms of 'rational Modernist' influences transferred into broader social and economic reproduction on the ground.

In urban areas, the emergence of the eight hour work day and the separation of employment from residential areas through land use zoning are examples of the kind of social regulatory mechanisms that have been described as reflecting Fordist social-spatial patterns of development. Similarly in rural areas, the Fordist metaphor would include the rise of 'factory farms' characterised by the increasing standardisation of farm practices, infrastructure and service provisions (Lawrence 1995). Australia's particular style of Fordist development has been described as 'bastardised Keynesianism' (Tickell and Peck 1992) in reference to the traditionally high degree of direct State involvement, and earlier colonial paternalism, which also tended to emphasise Keynesian style programmed uniformity. The larger point in all of this, however, is that until quite recently Western Australia was virtually a clean slate in terms of town and country development and, perhaps more so than elsewhere, the legacies of a Fordist style pattern of development were indelibly etched upon the social and physical landscape.

What makes regulation theory such a fertile area for research is the notion of a potentially unlimited diversity of productive and social relation couplings, with presumably some
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combinations being better than others (Tickell and Peck 1992). Although early regulation theorists imagined the prospect of 'choice' in development decisions as stemming from the two way global-national interface (Lipietz 1987), the current literature also contemplates the choices arising from the local-global, the local-national, and indeed the local-local interface (Painter and Goodwin 1995). To be succinct, governance is the actor medium through which the exercise of power gives rise to regulation. However, as Tickell and Peck (1992) suggest, there is no guarantee that the choices forged will sustain a period of stability where processes of capital accumulation and social reproduction are satisfactorily facilitated. In other words, actions, strategies, and structures which are implicitly or explicitly oriented to facilitate growth may also end in localised failure or systemic crisis (Hay 1995).

With this prospect in mind, regulation theorists are particularly interested in examining the corollary forms of social regulation which are integral in facilitating or retarding the sea change apparent in the restructuring of contemporary productive and social relations. Chapters Four and Five provide the opportunity to examine these restructuring processes in more detail, ultimately with a view to developing a contextual understanding of the room to manoeuvre towards progressive change. In Chapter Four, the first part of the analysis focusses on the changing role of Perth's central city where it is argued, along the lines of Lepani (1994), that more than before central Perth is a now a meeting place, with the social and physical fabric transformed to facilitate new 'Global City' (Sassen 1991) patterns of production and consumption. Similarly in Chapter Five, the first part of the analysis explains the emergence of lifestyle led development centres among rural towns in the southwest of Western Australia (Greive and Tonts 1996) where the reconstituted rurality is characterised by diversification, commodification, and contestation of the countryside.

In both exemplars, there is evidence of new and reconfigured civil, private and governmental actors engaging in qualitatively different enterprises. At the agency-structure interface, governance begets regulation through the exercise of power and, in central Perth, this becomes evident in the interwoven stories behind the restructuring of the Perth City Council (PCC) and the creation of the East Perth Redevelopment Authority (EPRA), as well as in the expansion of mixed use zoning and the introduction of weekend trading. Similarly in Bridgetown in the State’s southwest, the influx of lifestyle seekers who are investing in natural, recreational and, in some cases, in the area's new agricultural potential are all integral to the processes which are dramatically reshaping the local political economy. The
formation of the Bridgetown Ratepayers Association, the emergence of environmental and heritage organisations (formal and informal civil actors), and heightened levels of political contestation over development issues, are all indicative of the changing character of governance, shifting power relations, and new institutional and regulatory arrangements.

To be effective, these new forms of social regulation must not only complement the immediate needs of new forms of production and consumption, but they must also negotiate the social and physical legacies of the past to optimise existing conditions for reproduction and growth. In practice, this would include the articulation of old (often entrenched) and new forms of regulated production systems, labour, property and commodity markets, as well as old and new forms of physical and social space, and the integration of the political dimension with these concurrent social-spatial orders.

While these conceptions still harbour vestiges of structural determinism, they are an acknowledgment, within a neo-Marxist framework, of complex ensembles of numerous interrelated elements in a tangled, open and contestable hierarchy. Furthermore, there is a recognition of greater autonomy in the way nation-states connect with the global economy, and the way national-local systems interface through social and economic regulatory practices. There are, as Harvey (1989) suggests, choices as to how localities insert themselves within the global economy.

From a regulation perspective therefore, urban governance is essentially concerned with the ways in which localities, operating within established modes of accumulation and, more particularly, with entrenched modes of distribution, insert and articulate themselves within national and global systems. As with the physical and built fabric of cities and places, the social fabric also reflects the legacies of the past. Articulating these legacies, given the shifting dynamics of the global economy, suggests not the 'invisible hand of capitalism' maintaining stable conditions for accumulation and reproduction, but rather the result of the interaction of diverse and relatively autonomous national (Schuurman 1993), regional and localised regimes of accumulation.

The contribution that regulation theory offers to the urban governance framework, is a materialist foundation for analysis that is flexible enough to accommodate diffuse ensembles of contextually specific mechanisms and processes. While its strength may be in
understanding the interface between nation-states and the global economy, it also has the capacity to conceptualise 'the production of place, through instruments such as land use regulation, urban service provision, financial transfers, and the institutions of sub-national governments themselves' (Low 1994:459).

Far from being unwittingly caught up in wider changes, such accounts depict the local state as playing an active (if not always deliberate) role in forging new social, economic and cultural relations at both the local and the global level (Hall and Hubbard 1996:161).

Conceptually, regulation theory is a top down approach and its strength is at the meso level of analysis in examining how structures are transformed as they articulate with each other to produce historical and geographic variability. Although this perspective does accommodate a sense of both evolution and radical change, regulation theory still tends to be overly deterministic, and it is better complemented with a lower level of abstraction to facilitate inquiry into the way access to power and resources is achieved or restricted through agency.

1.7 Governance and Actor Oriented Theory

Early approaches to agency, or actor oriented theory, postulated decision outcomes as emanating from the competing rationales held by different types of social actors, who are initially identified and characterised through positivist reductionary methods (see Hall 1980 for an example). These attempts to apply the tenets of game theory to social analysis failed to accommodate the prospect of multiple players exhibiting and accessing differing forms of power, or the potential for the game rules to be changed, by accident, or toward some greater purpose.

By contrast, the essence of more recent formulations of actor oriented theory rests on the deconstruction of such rarefied notions as world systems, nation-states, sub-national institutions, social classes, social movements, and the like. Stripped down, these social constructs reveal individual actors and their (re)actions to everyday life. This is not to suggest that the course of development is decided through individual choice, but rather that decisions are made by individual actors operating in concert at the interface of social structure. Paraphrasing Marx, as Tom Burns does to illustrate what he means by actor systems dynamics, 'men make their history within certain constraints, which are themselves largely the products of human action' (Burns 1986:7).
The definition of what constitutes a social actor is contested within actor oriented theory. Broadly, however, social actors or agents encompass not only individuals, but also social groups, networks, alliances, organisations (churches, corporations etc.), as well as government agencies and nations, all of which have some capacity to make collective decisions and to act collectively as one. Actors or social agents process data, evaluate, make decisions (albeit with incomplete knowledge), and act purposefully in and on the world around them. Based on this definition, social class would be not be defined as an agent since it is an abstract concept and thus not capable of social action (Long and Long 1992). Furthermore, the notion of fixed character typologies for actors is a dubious one because field observations confirm that 'actors often assume different roles, simultaneously and sequentially' (Pratt 1995:71). In other words, planners and developers are also members of the general public, they may even be resident activists, just as a politician may be a land developer or financier (Ambrose 1977). Similarly, institutional actors also have concurrent roles, positions and identities, some of which are more pervasive and resilient than others.

For the urban governance framework, actor oriented theory contributes a perspective that is useful in two very important ways. Firstly it directs empirical research into understanding how it is that development decisions are actually made by actors; and secondly it conceptualises the possibility for strategic (re)actions in shaping policy and development outcomes. In respect to the first point, the lower level of social abstraction inherent within actor oriented theory allows for inquiry into the evolution of different scales of regulatory regimes. For urban governance, the local-national interface and the local-global interface are ripe for inquiry, as too are the interactions of agents within and between localities. The main point is, however, that through observing the formation and reproduction of different forms and levels of social regulation, social actors will be found to exercise a broad rather than a narrow range of responses - in keeping with, irrespective of, or in protest against - their structural positions within regulatory regimes.

In turn, this relates to the other important contribution that actor oriented theory provides for urban governance. That is, the theorised possibility for human innovation within context, acting on the context, and towards changing the context (Burns 1986:6). Herein lies the normative heart of the urban governance framework, its analytical intent. In common with other frameworks within the governance stream, the ultimate purpose behind this exercise in
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Social inquiry is to investigate the potential for innovation in shaping urban policy and development outcomes. In this way, actor oriented theory contributes a perspective that transcends the often bleak yet insightful structural determinism inherent within the materialist roots of Marxist inspired regulation and growth coalition theories. As Collier reminds, 'no event or action exists before it occurs or is done, but its agent and or patient always does' (Collier 1994:9).

Actor oriented theory also adds to the conceptual flexibility of the urban governance framework by effectively softening the distinction between theory and practice, and between abstract concept and concrete research. Once the creation and reformation of social structures, such as the laws, institutional organisations and social conventions that govern the nature of urban development, are all understood to be the work of real actors - institutional or individual, civil, private, governmental and/or combinations thereof - their actions can be observed directly and indirectly. Indeed some can be asked to explain their opinions and motivations. Moreover, as places exist as actor networks overlaying actor networks (Massey 1991), contemplation of the theorised actor medium among the diversity of Western Australia's urban development contexts suggests an enormous pool of potential research subjects. This is particularly so with the necessary inclusion of those social actors integral to the State's articulation with national and global political economies. In turn, this brings into focus the earlier assumption that the potential scope of the actor medium could be significantly narrowed by a consideration of the material substance (the what) of planning in its time and place context - an issue to be taken up shortly.

Observing and accessing the actor medium of urban governance is therefore a critical component of the inquiry. As it transpired, this involved undertaking several different 'real' research projects, assuming multiple observer participant roles, along with conducting several large scale community questionnaires and many formal and informal interviews. Bearing in mind that any Western Australian urban development decision-outcome process would hold potential interest, the research was, from the start, opportunistically oriented. Consequently, aside from the desire to present a range of illustrative examples, the choice of which urban development context to examine was largely a reflection of those situations where the actor medium could be most readily observed and accessed.
Not surprisingly perhaps, as the field research progressed, this approach blended both actor oriented and regulation theory perspectives. That is to say, the ‘hot spots’ for urban development in contemporary Western Australia (central Perth and southwest lifestyle towns) were also found to be the focus of major institutional and regulatory change, as well as heightened levels of political contestation and media coverage. It was the intensity of the socio-economic restructuring, apparent in the nature of development in these areas, that gave direction to the research and the field work actually began in response to ‘real’ questions, faced by ‘real’ actors (community, governmental and corporate agents) concerned about their positions and appropriate (re)actions to the changes taking and reshaping place.

1.8 Governance and Growth Coalitions

‘The question of who governs or rules has to be asked in conjunction with the equally central question - for what?’ (Logan and Molotch 1987:55). Aside from some preliminary comments referring to the dominance of the land based economy this question has been purposely side-stepped until now. The ideas about growth coalitions first championed by Molotch (1976) are more akin to a strong thesis, than a body of theory of the same far reaching extent as actor oriented and regulation theories. Nonetheless, as is argued in Chapter Three, in the Western Australia context, ideas concerned with the formation of broad based growth coalitions, particularly those allied to land development, are of central importance. Furthermore, this material direction offers a practical way to narrow the research focus, and to draw together the different ideas and approaches already discussed.

The dominance of the State’s land based economy emerged as a serious consideration almost as soon as I began to think about applying Paproski’s conception of urban governance to Western Australia. Bearing in mind that I had been absent from Western Australia for almost ten years, I noticed, in the few months before this inquiry officially started, that I seemed to be participating in an inordinate number of conversations centred around the property market. Moreover, considering that I had seen first hand the rise and fall of the property markets in Boston (US) and before that in London during the 1980s, to find Perth comparatively obsessed with the property market in the 1990s was indeed notable.

On my return, one of the first questions my friends were keen to ask was where, not whether, I was intending to buy my own home. In a State where more than 70% of all
households are owner-occupiers or purchasers, I had forgotten about the strong expectation of home ownership. Answering 'not me' also carried an extra stigma because, more often than not, I seemed to be talking to someone directly connected to the real estate or construction industries. This was not a recent trend; rather I was noticing, as a visitor might, some ingrained cultural oddity. Was this, I began to think, the result of a simple combination of large tracts of undeveloped land, a relatively recent European settlement history and domestic markets too small to support much in the way of alternative industries?

I also thought about how several of my old friends had followed their fathers into property and construction related businesses. My own father spent much of his 47 career years financing all kinds of property acquisitions and developments - including home mortgages, residential, commercial, and industrial construction, farm sales and leases - as well as government backed large scale resource development schemes. He worked for the Rural and Industries (R&I) Bank of Western Australia, which was then a State owned quasi-independent bank that quite tellingly was almost entirely oriented to such land based investments.

Taking this ethnographic line a little further and reflecting upon my overseas planning experiences, this perspective begins to answer the question as to why it is that the Royal Australian Planning Institute (RAPI) has for so long rigorously defended such a narrow subdivision oriented view of the planning enterprise (McLoughlin 1994). With particular reference to Western Australia, Patsy Healey, during her stay as a visiting scholar, was similarly puzzled by the apparent subdivision focus, and Peter Newman, a local planning commentator, has aptly described Western Australia's Ministry Of Planning as the 'Department For Vacant Lots' (pers. comm. 1994). In other words, when talk turns to planning, perhaps more so than elsewhere, in Western Australia, land seems to be the focus of attention.

As an alternative history of planning and development in Western Australia, Chapter Three provides the substance for this 'dominant land based economy' argument. The narrative identifies and broadly describes recurring themes - social and physical patterns - within a deconstructed history of Western Australia's urban development. Urban governance is presented as a dynamic overlay of social spatial orders with 'other' planners employing 'other' means to achieve 'other' ends, beyond the Modernist paradigm, which are revealed
as primarily concerned with controlling the distribution of the State’s land and land based resources.

Endorsed by the British Government, the foundation of Western Australia was from the start a privately financed land speculation scheme (Cameron 1981). The subdivision began almost immediately with relatively larger parcels of better quality land being granted to the first investor settlers on very generous terms. Since then, as Chapter Three argues, this process has continued with the subdivision of relatively smaller and poorer quality land parcels sold or leased for higher prices to successive waves of migrant settlers. Ostensibly, the process is regulated by the state (State), and results in the extraction and transfer of an economic surplus from the newer settlers to the advantage of the state and the more established landowning-development interests. For these profits to be fully realised, however, and for the hardships and risks to be deemed worthwhile, it would be essential for the colony to continue to grow rapidly, because land by itself, undeveloped and disconnected from consumer and investment markets is, even nowadays, worth very little. As a consequence, from the very beginning, the state and the larger and most established private investors shared a common interest in promoting the growth potential of the settlement.

From a regulation theory perspective, the state’s role in maintaining a stabilised land tenure and subdivision process involves not only the creation of an appropriate legislative framework but would also entail attracting land investment through infrastructure provision, marketing, technical assistance and a broad spectrum of complementary social regulating mechanisms. By providing these allied land regulatory services, the state benefits through direct sales and leasing payments and various fees, royalties and taxes. Ironically, these regulations, standards and conventions, are essential in the process of commodifying land in respect to its availability for sale or lease on the open market. In this sense, the notion of a free market in property is a contradiction in terms. Agricultural and mining industries also rely on the state regulating the subdivision of land through freehold ownership, leasing and licensing arrangements. So yes, ‘this tendency to use land and government activity to make money was not invented in nineteenth-century America, nor did it end there’ (Logan and Molotch 1987:55).
The original growth machine concept (Molotch 1976) focused on the combination of larger property owning interests, local construction firms, and the local state. These local actors may have their own specific agendas but they share a common pecuniary interest in promoting growth as a way of increasing ‘their’ property values, expanding ‘their’ customer-ratepayer base and directly increasing ‘their’ profits and revenues. These elites:

use their growth consensus to eliminate any alternative vision of the purpose of local government or the meaning of community...(they) use their time and money to participate in local affairs...[and they] have most to gain or lose in land use decisions (Logan and Molotch 1987:62).

They are predominantly place-tied actors, with a direct material interest in the locality where their capital is embedded. Having invested in a locality, they actively promote an image of growth and position themselves to benefit directly from the growth. According to Logan and Molotch (1987) what sets these growth machine actors apart from other local residents is that they benefit primarily from increasing exchange rather than amenity values. Moreover, it is through the actions of these growth machine agents that places, locales and cities are in competition with each other. They compete for trade, employment, immigration, public revenues and private capital, but, most directly, they seek increasing property values.

Referring to the urban specificity of the growth machine concept outlined by Logan and Molotch (1987) in the early stages of their work (see page 49), Cox and Mair (1989) in their review point out that in the latter part of the text, 'locality', 'place' and 'territory' all too easily (ie un-theorised) come to replace 'the urban'. This is an important point to clarify because, in terms of theorising the 'urban' governance and, in practice, when undertaking the empirical research, this inquiry avoids the assumption of an urban specificity, and as such, it does sometimes refer to 'locality', 'place', and 'territory' interchangeably with 'urban'. This follows an earlier commitment to avoid the rigid application of spatial and sectoral definitions, which is also consistent with the adoption of a 'soft' state and society theoretical divide.

Field observations and interviews among dominant place-tied actors in Western Australia also highlight this ambiguity. For example, bureaucrats operating at different scales of state administration tend to refer to formal place and locality boundaries much more so than
capital or civil actors. Furthermore, it is clear that many individual, as well as institutional, actors are in various ways - personally, culturally, legally, politically, financially, etc - tied to multiple places. These places may in turn be part of broader overlays of the same specific location or site, whether it is a home or some other form of place tied (embedded) investment. Something akin to growth machines may therefore exist as spatially and temporally concurrent coalitions of place-tied actors within and between shires, towns, cities, regions, and certainly in Western Australia’s case, at the level of the State.

As if following a critical realist approach to research, Logan and Molotch (1987) accommodate the feedback from their own empirical studies and expand on the original growth machine concept to add a broader layer of political and economic complexity to their argument. In the latter stages of their book, they describe growth coalitions which include both primary and secondary place-tied actors materially aligned to the prospect of growth. Included among the secondary tier of these 'place entrepreneurs' are local newspapers, public utilities, banks, and even universities. Cox and Mair (1989) seem to have had difficulty in accepting the potential breadth of these coalitions. However, more recent perspectives (Wanna 1991; Low 1994; Goetz and Clark 1993; Hall and Hubbard 1996) adopt the same broad view and seek to understand the distributional impacts of these growth coalition dynamics. Moreover, as will become apparent, highlighting the potential breadth of these distributional impacts in relation to the land based economy in Western Australia proves to be critically important in understanding the distinctive nature and character of the State’s system of urban governance.

This inquiry, therefore, both draws on and contributes to the most recent ideas within the literature on growth coalitions. In Western Australia, from the very start of European settlement, among the many histories since, and nowadays from a selection of contemporary examples of town and country development, there is ample evidence to support the notion of locality based growth coalitions. Chapters Three, Four and Five present this evidence. However, the investigations also yield a broader array of actors, as well as a greater political and economic complexity underpinning the power relations within each urban development context. Within this complexity - ie urban governance - there are indeed patterns or recurring themes, and arguably among these the pro-growth mantra appears the most ubiquitous.
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The main arguments fleshed out in Chapter Two complement this growth coalition perspective in two important ways. Firstly, by contrasting the ideology of Modernist planning with its own history many 'other' planners and 'other' planning agendas can be identified and, locally there are strong links to the way power is exercised in a property owning democracy. Secondly, the whole impetus for growth is linked back to a re-interpretation of humanity's place in nature, whereby growth is understood as a process of replication, and cities are recognised as a product of ongoing human environmental modification exhibiting a characteristic morphology - a hierarchy of uneven clusters (Maske et al 1995). Although it avoids the traps implicit within Social Darwinism, this view underscores the idea that the quest for growth is not limited to the habits of humans, but rather reflects genetic survival in the evolution of life as understood within the new ecology framework (Zimmerer 1994).

The overlays of development patterns described in Chapter Three demonstrate how different configurations of labour, capital and resources are harnessed by slightly different coalitions of place-tied actors to produce the characteristic morphology of human settlements in Western Australia. The availability of vast 'unoccupied' land can be thought of as an environmental condition which both allows for and fosters relatively dispersed patterns of growth. Furthermore, in keeping with other self organising systems within Nature's chaos, Western Australia's development history also supports the idea that the morphology of towns and cities is a product of local actions without any centralised intelligence (Maske et al 1995).

1.9 Chapter Summary - Anticipating the Linkages

This chapter began by outlining the nature of the subject, which was followed by a discussion of the study's methodological and philosophical orientation. Urban governance was introduced as a framework for analysing the 'who', 'how' and 'why' of urban development. The framework was in turn developed from a combination of three complementary theoretical perspectives which considered individual and institutional social actors, their potential to form place-tied coalitions, and how these articulate within national and global regimes of accumulation. The inquiry was also presented as a process of learning and, rather than providing a detailed account of the debates within the literature, empirical grounding and contingent interpretations were given priority.
Western Australia was introduced as the context to observe the processes of governing development, and also to ponder the prospect for progressive innovation. The capital city, Perth, and lifestyle towns of the State’s southwest were identified as suitable sites for contemporary inquiry. Currently, they are the focus of development and controversy and, on several levels, I was able to gain access to the actor medium to observe and directly participate in the decision making processes.

The whole governance perspective recognises that these development decisions are by no means limited to the prerogatives of the state or any central planning authority, and one of the main tasks for Chapter Two is to make this understanding explicit. In so doing, Chapter Two also serves to navigate beyond the impasse in planning and development theory (Healey et al 1982; Schuurman 1993) by anticipating a much greater potential for progressive innovation. However, part of this greater scope for progressive change lies in the acknowledgment that it’s not so much ‘them’ as ‘us’ who are ultimately responsible for making development decisions.

As has been outlined, Chapter Three takes up the threads of the governance perspective and grounds it in an analysis of the evolution of Western Australia’s land based economy. At different times and spatial scales, broad coalitions of place-tied actors will be shown to have exhibited a wide, rather than narrow range, of options as they pursued the opportunities for growth presented in the ebb and flow of contrasting accumulation regimes. A prevailing pattern to emerge involves the potential for an unhealthy alliance between the state and the largest and most established private land holders. This coalition of interests both promotes land speculation and relies on a steady supply of new arrivals (immigrants) buying into the ‘land racket’ (Sandercock 1977). By tracing this pattern through a range of its various guises over time and across space, many of ‘us’, rather than a few of ‘them’, are revealed to be directly benefitting and tacitly supporting this land focused mode of development.

One of two contemporary examples of the pyramid selling of property in Western Australia is analysed in detail in Chapter Four and involves a wave of new inner city apartments being sold to offshore buyers who pay a premium above what the local market would consider reasonable. Again, there are some questionable public-private sector relationships and a broad range of local beneficiaries, as well as some significant losses among central Perth’s poorer residents. To give both contextual depth and direction to the analysis, data drawn
Introducing the Thesis

from a range of recent surveys and interviews are used to describe and explain the residential, commercial and political developments currently transforming Perth's city centre. From this understanding of the new *meeting place* role of the urban core, the discussion turns to consider the room to manoeuvre for low income housing in Perth. This second aspect of the discussion draws on my strategic planning experience with the Perth Inner City Housing Association (PICHA), and it describes how a non-profit community housing provider attempts to reposition itself within this new context and to maintain its socially progressive agenda.

The other detailed study is presented in Chapter Five, which focuses on the contemporary restructuring of rural towns in the southwest. Bridgetown (Greive and Tonts 1996) and Mandurah (Greive and Alexander 1997), are used as examples to explore the room to manoeuvre in maximising growth while maintaining environmental-aesthetic values, together with an agricultural future. The emergent lifestyle development pattern in these areas is supporting a new round of land speculation, with larger rural lots being subdivided into relatively expensive five acre (2 ha) hobby farms purchased by under-informed outsiders. Again there are false promises and, in respect to the administration of the subdivision process, there is more evidence of unhealthy alliances between the local state, and the largest and most established property owners.

In keeping with the two main research objectives, the thesis provides a thematic understanding of how power is being exercised under the hegemony of Western Australia's own style of property owning democracy. Within this understanding, the more detailed inquiries reveal a network of links that make it difficult to distinguish between 'us' as speculator victim, and 'them' as speculating perpetrator. This, then, is the character of Western Australia's system of urban governance, one that is fundamentally linked to the nature and character of its evolving land based political economy. In pursuing the second research objective, this understanding of Western Australia's urban governance becomes the starting point for critically informed manoeuvring towards progressive change.
In Chapter Six, the main arguments from each chapter are reiterated and reflected upon. Although my approach is original and more specific to Western Australia, I find that in many respects I am in agreement with Gleeson and Low (2000) when they say:

our intention is to explain the historical purpose of planning in Australia and the nature of the diverse recent changes that have both reshaped and threatened this purpose. We argue for a political view of planning as a form of urban governance. We argue that Australian planning can be renewed through the articulation of a new set of political-ethical ideals. This renewed vision for planning must reassert the justification for spatial regulation while opening itself once again to the ideal of social justice and ecological sustainability (Gleeson and Low 2000:1-2).

Figure 1.2 Snap Shots
Introducing the Thesis

Figure 1.3 Thesis Structure

Chapter One
Introduces the thesis

Chapter Two
Three different ways to explain the transition from urban planning to urban governance

Chapter Three
Historical overview of governance and development in Western Australia

Chapter Four
Central city restructuring
Is there room for affordable housing?

Chapter Six
Conclusions for now...

Chapter Five
Lifestyle development
Managing environmental, aesthetic and agricultural conflicts
Chapter Two: The Transition from Urban Planning to Urban Governance

2.1 Introduction

Chapter One began by outlining the nature of the subject, which was followed by a discussion of the study's methodological and philosophical orientation. Urban governance was introduced as a framework for analysing the 'who', 'how' and 'why' of urban development. The framework was in turn developed from a combination of three complementary theoretical perspectives which considered individual and institutional social actors, their potential to form place-tied coalitions, and how these articulate within national and global regimes of accumulation. The inquiry was also presented as a process of learning and, rather than a detailed account of the debates within the literature, empirical grounding and contingent interpretations were given priority.

Before using the urban governance framework in Chapters Three, Four and Five to inquire into the way urban development decisions are made, the first objective of this chapter is to debunk any remaining centralist notions of planning by tracing the theoretical transition from urban planning to urban governance. The second objective is to theorise some prospect for progressive intervention. The difficulty here, however, is that this has not been done before, certainly not to the same 'in practice' extent, and never in the context of Western Australia. Furthermore, as one of the pioneers has emphasised, there is no likelihood of an all embracing synthesis, only a recognition that certain arrangements of theoretical 'windows' can offer useful insights in navigating through complex social relations towards some desired ends (Wanna 1991).

In tackling these objectives, the false centrality of institutionalised planning and titled planners is exposed through three very different approaches, or windows:

- **Planning Theory and the Exercise of Power**: presents an abridged explanation of the paradigm shift in the way that urban planning has been theorised over the last thirty years. The new definitions are informed by a re-assessment of urban history. Modernist inspired urban planning is revealed as a comparatively centralist style of social-spatial organisation, which was first fostered, and then rendered obsolete by increasing political

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1 To clarify, the focus is on theories of planning rather than for or in planning (Thomas 1979). The latter are technical theories from the social and physical sciences used in planning practice, while the former are contrasting explanations of what it is that planning broadly does, who does it and how.
and economic diversity. This argument is then illustrated with an update of Sandercock’s (1975) assessment of the role of institutionalised planning in relation to [Western] Australia’s fundamental economic resource. From this governance perspective, Western Australia’s urban planning agenda, its institutional form and the orientation and skills of its bureaucrats are all understood to reflect the exercise of power within a property owning democracy.

- **Urban Morphology and Governance;** in focussing on urban processes, as most of this inquiry does, and in wishing to compensate for the tendency to overlook the tangible results of these processes, a reconsideration of urban morphology through a synthesis of Marxism and nature’s chaos begins with the idea of urbanism as an ecological process (Harvey 1997). From this perspective, the physical evidence of urban development suggests that something other than centralist planning has been shaping the urban fabric. Ideas from nature’s chaos also suggest a much greater potential for change and, hence, for progressive human innovation and adaptation.

- **Planning Practice and Urban Governance In Perth;** a dialogue between an international icon of Modernist planning (Prof. Gordon Stephenson) and a locally well known planning critic with a neo-Marxist inclination (Dr. Ian Alexander2) is drawn on to consider some fundamental questions of theory and practice. In a post-Modern way, Perth’s Modernist planning history is confronted with its neo-Marxist critique and along the way stories, of industrial development, transport policy and inner city redevelopment are interwoven revealing the nature of underlaying dynamics.

Although these sections are treated as discrete discussions, they highlight the complexity of urban development at different scales of human endeavour. They also contribute critical insights towards theorising the room to manoeuvre for progressive intervention. For example, recognising that the nature and institutional form of planning at both the State and local government level is itself a reflection of the exercise of power, serves to highlight the importance of this narrow band of work in the broader context of a ‘property owning democracy’ (Sandercock 1975). In other words, it reminds us of what the role of institutional planners and planning in Western Australia is largely all about - the articulation

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2 Like many community activists these days, Ian is not keen on the neo-Marxist reference, however, there is no disputing that he remains critically influenced by his readings from the 1970s during the academic ascendancy of Marxism.
The Transition from Urban Planning to Urban Governance

and mediation of an evolving selection of competing land rights and usages. Importantly, this is by no means the same as planning better towns and cities.

Realising what the actual role of institutionalised planning is, in each particular context, must surely be the first step towards better outcomes. This is what Dente (1990) meant when he discusses 'how to avoid errors of the third type' whereby the right solution is offered for the wrong problem. The apparent ambiguity between the theorised role of planning and observable planning practice is also closely linked with the prospect of 'other' planning actors employing 'other' planning means to achieve 'other' urban development agendas (see Hall 1980). In turn, these contradictions can be traced back to questionable assumptions fundamental to Modernist notions of social change (Ramirez 1981). One of the main assumptions placed titled planners at the centre of the decision making process, and this served to externalise what would otherwise be key actors and factors (McLoughlin 1994).

In keeping with the critical realist approach promoting theoretical reflection supported by practical illustration, the re-examination of Gordon Stephenson's role as Perth's first metropolitan planner provides a ready opportunity for these Modernist assumptions to be tested. They can be examined in context and contrasted with neo-Marxist and other post-Modern theories. In turn, there are direct implications for learning how to operate within Western Australia's system of urban governance. Most directly this dialogue suggests a continual need to question 'the received wisdom' from so called planning authorities, the media and other established and vested interests. Furthermore, it suggests that, in combination with technical competence, a contextually refined sense of both high and low politics\(^3\) is indispensable. This is particularly so in relation to mobilising people and resources in opposition to prevailing inequities, and outmoded ideas and cultural practices.

The irony in Stephenson's puzzlement at the political economic content in contemporary planning discourse is that he was, in practice, very aware of the need to be politically astute in formulating and proposing plans (Alexander and Greive 1997). In his autobiography there are several stories illustrating the politics of and in planning and, in the case of

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\(^3\) Refers to the distinction between party and electoral (high) politics, versus personal (low) politics such as nepotism and parochialism.
Western Australia, it is clear he and Alistair Hepburn (the then State Planning Commissioner) consciously worked with the media to build support for their proposals (Stephenson 1992). Unfortunately, this kind of theoretical denial is more than ironic. In effect it meant that the capacity for Modernist inspired urban planning to learn from its mistakes was lost with its contradictory history. Instead, as many have since argued, Modernist planning theory served as a legitimising ideology which claimed consensus when there was conflict, objectivity when there were personal interest, and correct procedures when they were rarely followed (Healey et al. 1982, Beauregard 1990). Furthermore, there was never even an assumed need to learn from mistakes because, implicit within the top down Modernist planning method was the belief that the planning expert got it right the first and every time (Hall 1992).

As Stephenson recalls, one of the first and most significant of his proposals was to extend Perth’s metropolitan area by some 4 000 sq km. In 1953, that amounted to a four-fold increase in the size of Perth’s existing statistical area. However, a reconsideration of Perth’s urban morphology - more explicitly framed by time and space - points to recurring patterns and themes beyond the claims of Modernist planning. As Chapter Three describes, Western Australians have never short changed themselves in respect to land. For many, land was the prime motivation to endure the hardships of emigration. So, although Stephenson continued the tradition of larger rather than smaller tracts of land set aside for growth, this was a pattern established by the first settlers over a hundred years earlier. In keeping with this pattern, the expansion of the railway network early in the last century opened up vast areas for rural development, but it was the massive highway construction since the 1960s that facilitated the urban sprawl anticipated by Stephenson’s extension of the metropolitan boundaries.

The ways that particular things like structures (such as political administrative territories, built environments, fixed networks of social relations) precipitate out of fluid social processes and the form these things assume have a powerful influence upon the way that social processes can operate. Moreover, different fixed forms have been precipitated out of different historical moments and assume qualities reflective of social processes at work in particular times and places (Harvey 1997:21).
Figure 2.1   Growing Perth
Source: Joondalup Régional Centre Plan, a report by Professor Stephenson 1977.
Nowadays, Perth has possibly the most extensive road network per capita in the world (Newman and Kenworthy 1989) and its urban sprawl consumes some 550,000 hectares. The bigger point, however, is it was not Stephenson, nor any one of the metropolitan planners that followed who created this situation. Rather, it stems more from a combination of a vast land, which is in the process of being settled by predominantly European emigrants lured by the prospect of land that is neither accessible nor valuable until it is connected by transport links to investor and consumer markets. In this sense, political economy is linked with urban form, and the recurring pattern of more, rather than less, land is understood to reflect how people in this part of the world live out their lives.

This line of argument reflects the promise of a possible integration between human geography and the new ecology framework being developed from principles within nature’s chaos.

The orientation shared by human geography and new ecology includes a greater appreciation of historical (non cyclical time), the function of spatial scale (spatial dependency), and differential perceptions of environments and environmental change (Zimmerer 1994:109).

From this viewpoint, more explicitly framed by time and space, the local interpretation of Modernist planning and architecture was not really so very special. It was an old way of doing business - land speculation - albeit with ‘modern’ smoke and mirrors. And again, the implications are that, at different times and places, it is not some few who dictate these patterns in human settlement, rather, those who are ultimately responsible are also among the many who both consciously and unconsciously follow.

Perhaps the most exciting idea from the new ecology is the recognition of a much greater potential for adaptation and therefore for human innovation and environmental modification. Although the complex patterns found to recur in nature’s chaos correspond with the idea of growth as process of replication, even tiny changes in the formula have the potential to be replicated at different temporal and spatial scales to produce great sweeping changes. The new ecology also accents disequilibria, instability, and even chaotic fluctuations (Zimmerer 1994), as do regulation theory and other post-Modern perspectives in human geography (Gregory 1994). Moreover, the sobering thought in all of this is that there is no guarantee of survival - social, economic, political or biological - and every right choice counts.
In combination then, these three very different perspectives argue that planning is both bigger and smaller than is commonly theorised. As suggested in Chapter One, it is bigger in terms of its contextually defined substance, agenda and actor medium, and it is smaller in terms of its diluted power and authority. This then begins to approximate the nature of urban governance and of how urban decisions are made, which is necessarily a dynamic understanding, albeit characterised by some prevailing themes. So, although this discussion does serve to explain the theoretical transition from planning to governance, the overall shift in awareness is that it is a theorised ‘us’, not a ‘them’, who are ultimately responsible for and in the position to influence the course of events.

This understanding was largely obscured in orthodox Marxist analysis because of the reductionism in theorising class politics. But the work of Althusser (1970), and Castells (1977, 1978) did much to rectify the situation, and since 1978, Norman Long, a Marxist anthropologist reporting from the field was never far from this line of thinking (Long 1990). It is, after all, an essentially anthropological perspective which recognises that power does not emanate from any central point, but rather is expressed in the everyday practices of our lives (Silverman 1989). The whole thrust here is that we, as residents, employees and employers, parents, neighbours, consumers and the rest of whom we may be, are necessarily integral to how our cities develop. In short, the responsibility is ours.

Importantly though, this does not mean we are all equally responsible or powerful. That would be a flawed pluralist argument and contrary to the analytical intent of this whole inquiry. From the outset, a basic assumption was that the study of governance is a study of ‘how power is exercised in a community’ with an implied certainty that it was/is not evenly distributed (Wanna 1991). For example, in later chapters the analysis demonstrates how, on many fronts, the largest and most established of the land holders in Western Australia have the most influence about how the land based economy is formally regulated and culturally enshrined. In Chapter Three, key dynamics within the land based economy are linked to shifting coalitions of mutual and competing interests. Among them, dominant place tied actors are shown to have used their local knowledge to position themselves favourably within the local economy’s articulation with national and international regimes of accumulation, as they changed over time and through space. In Chapters Four and Five, the contemporary arrangement of these patterns and themes are discussed in the context of central Perth and in the lifestyle towns of the southwest respectively.
As was described in Chapter One, this inquiry's second objective, and indeed the main reason for seeking to understand - map - the way power is exercised in communities, is to maximise the potential to influence change. For planners, as agents of change, this understanding is an essential aspect of the 'useable knowledge' (Low 1989) which is necessary to navigate the social and physical limits on the way to some desired ends, equates with 'the more, the better'. The assumption here is the room to manoeuvre expands with knowledge both ordinary and professional (technical and political) and, in this way, the knowledge required to plan is never complete.

2.2 Planning Theory and the Exercise of Power

Since this section starts to trace the theoretical transition from urban planning to urban governance, it could have been titled: What is this process called urban planning and how has it been misunderstood? Here, the concept of urban planning will be deconstructed to highlight the dramatic changes in the way it has been theorised. But this analysis also recognises this shift is itself framed by a dramatically changing context. Planning theory understood this way is a small subset of social theory, with constituent theories no more than reflections upon past and present social practices borne of particular historical conditions. The important question then becomes; which particular historical and geographical conditions have precipitated these changes in theorising planning?

In Cities Of Tomorrow, Hall (1988) illustrates the changing nature of the relationship between broader social change and urban planning over the course of twentieth century urbanisation. Given the much discussed impasse between urban planning theory and practice, this work has been aptly described as 'nothing less than a history of the ideology and practice of urban planning through this century' (Jones and Woodward 1983:9). The disjuncture between urban planning theory and practice is plain to see, and as many have contended the main split occurred in the 1970s (Healey et al. 1982, Beauregard 1990), externally with the Marxist critiques and internally when the results of Modernist planning proved to be considerably less than its own protagonists had hoped for (Booth 1993).

The change can be characterised thus: in 1955, the typical newly graduated planner was at the drawing board, producing a diagram of desired land uses; in 1965, he/she was analysing computer output of traffic patterns; in 1975, the same person was talking late night with community groups, in an attempt to organise against the hostile forces in the world outside. It was a remarkable inversion of roles (Hall 1992:334).
Hall’s own frame of reference also changed considerably over the period.

Planning is concerned with deliberately achieving some objective, and it proceeds by assembling actions into some orderly sequence (Hall 1975:4).

Planning in practice, however well managed, is therefore a long way from the tidy sequences of the theorists, it involves the basic difficulty, even the impossibility of conflicting values which cannot be fully resolved by rational discussion or by calculation; the clash of organised pressure groups and the defence of vested interests; and the inevitable confusions that arise from the complex relationships between decisions at the different scales at different points in time (Hall 1992:18).

By 1992, Hall’s definition of planning in an urban context broadly corresponded with the ideas on urban governance introduced in Chapter One where, as a useful totalising reference, governance was defined as; \textit{spatially and temporally overlapping systems of social-cultural, political and economic interactions among the various actors of the public and private institutions of civil society} (Paproski 1993). In effect, the theoretical shift from urban planning to urban governance parallels the apparent inversion of the theorised role for institutionalised planners and planning. This in turn reflects the thirty year transition from centralist, consensus, and rationalist positions, to those which recognise diversity and conflict (Huxley 1992). Furthermore, while the many histories of planning failures provide an abundance of practical lessons, the bigger realisation is that a science led path to urban and regional progress can no longer be assumed (Kunstler 1993).

In its broader context, Modernist ideology emerged in the final stages of the period of Enlightenment, with origins among the reformist movements of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It paralleled the ascendancy of rationalism and science, against the demise of mysticism and tradition. But, as early as 1947 in reference to the crisis in Modernism, Rene Gueuron was writing:

\begin{quote}
We are at the point of conceiving that this civilisation that the moderns have become so infatuated, does not occupy a privileged position in the history of the world and may easily encounter the same fate as has be-fallen so many others’ (Rene Gueuron cited in Willis 1975:vii).
\end{quote}

Within the Western Australian system of urban governance, the elevated position and the special difficulties associated with land use governance will be discussed shortly, but for now, it is worth making clear the distinction between urban planning in the broader sense (ie. urban governance) compared to the much narrower Modernist interpretation. To
acknowledge, for example, that cities are simply human settlements implies urban planning is no more than an expression of social spatial order within and between human settlements. Viewed this way, the history of urban planning begins with the history of man and society. And if, in planning, the development outcome is necessarily expressed in physical terms, then the history of planning would logically begin with the archaeological evidence of those modifications to early man's physical environment. This would include evidence of nomadic and semi-permanent settlements and, together with new and ancient cities, these would all reflect humanity's changing social spatial organisation through time.

Modernist planning discourse has a lot to answer for in respect to the untenably narrow interpretations of urban history. During the 1970s in particular, 'most planners and architects could not see beyond the horizon of Modernist architecture' and since then, however, the 'paradigm shift has reasserted the value of ideas from previous centuries' (Jones and Woodward 1983:6). As the following quotes progressively demonstrate, a wealth of knowledge lay buried beneath contradictory facts and semantics. For example, if indeed urban history viewed through the Modernist lens recognises urban planning prior to the twentieth century it was among the civic designed cities of Greek (800-600 BC) and later, Roman civilisations:

The Greeks insisted on a coordination of all urban forms. Religious foundations, housing, public spaces and construction, social structure, constitutional and social forms, estate regulation, trading centres and military techniques were all recognised as necessary components of the city, and the Greeks undertook their development in an active conscious way (Metraux 1978:1-2).

There were even earlier examples of urban planning in the cities of the Harappan civilisation (2154-1864 BC) in India, and in the following quote it is of interest to see how such archaeological evidence is approached and filtered by the Modernist perspective.

The Harappan urban form,...have more or less gridiron layouts that cannot just happen - in direct contrast to organic growth, it must be consciously determined and applied to the chosen site. This action does not necessarily amount to town planning, with all the implications of this crucial term....Nevertheless there is enough evidence in the carefully organised relationships between the parts of these Harappan cities to accept they were the result of very early, if not the earliest, deliberate town planning process (Morris 1972:15-16), emphasis added.
Figure 2.2 Grid-like and Planned?
Source: Morris (1972: 17)

Figure 2.3 Organic Form and Apparently Unplanned?
Source: Morris (1972: 9)
In his book *The History of the Urban Form*, it appears Morris, an architect planner, was at pains to follow a 'planned versus organic' distinction between urban forms. Supposedly, 'grid-like streets' and 'rectilinear building layouts' typify the former, and uncontrolled growth the latter. Had this not been such an important distinction for Morris, the cities of the earlier Sumerian civilisation (3 000 BC), with their 'layouts designed to encourage natural ventilation and privacy' and with 'houses with highly civilised room arrangements', could have been defined as planned. But instead, 'they represent the results of a long evolutionary process, grouped together in layouts that have 'grown out of the conditions of the primitive village, and are not layed out on any system of town planning' (Morris 1972:8).

As Section 2.3 will explain more thoroughly, this distinction between planned versus organic development actually corresponds with a central versus de-centralised exercise of power. Furthermore, the historical experience is that even the most centralist regimes will evolve or be overlayed by contrasting social spatial orders, and together over time these manifest a characteristically organic urban morphology (Batty and Longley 1994). Have you seen Salonika or Rome lately?: the years have not been kind to the Classical Greek or Roman orders and the cities appear decidedly organic. In other words, given enough time, the overlays of even very centralist social spatial orders will produce an organic urban morphology.

More explicitly framed by time and space, Modernist inspired urban planning and development can therefore be understood as a centralist style of social organisation which, not coincidently, paralleled the rise of the nation state, and streamlined uniformity in production techniques (Lipietz 1987). In the new urban production centres, the Modernist project was supported by a strong human reformist ideology that became increasingly rational and scientific. Over the period 1950-1980, it generated characteristic physical forms (town and country developments) as part of a continuing process of humanity, consciously and unconsciously, modifying its environment as it pursued growth and prosperity.

The idea that urban planning emerged at the turn of the century in Britain, and was paralleled by similar ‘awakenings’ in other parts of industrial Europe and the US was not only culturally arrogant but, also critically misleading. Modernist planning theory in this
sense is ideology, and such a belief has shrouded the essentially political process of planning under a cover of technical mysticism. Furthermore, while this technical veneer legitimised the professional and institutional developments in planning, it also served to narrowly define and compartmentalise the planning agenda. The Marxist critiques during the 1970s reminded urban planning that its role was not self delineated, but rather, shaped by its broader historical material context. Understanding which particular elements of the context have brought about these changes in planning is therefore central to the problematic.

The following quote largely captures these concerns:

The 10,000 or so people who work in the British local 'planning office' and bear or seek the letters MRTPI - Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute - after their name are only a small, albeit influential group among those who are in fact 'the planners'... In land use planning what was once the absolute prerogative of the rich and powerful - the land owning church, gentry, and nobility - is now hedged about by customs and public laws, and indeed much land has now been acquired for public housing and institutional uses. As an increasingly diverse professional group, the MRTPIs see one of their roles as the safeguarding of the mysteries of the craft, in part through approving training courses for planners (Hall J. 1982:3).

The same could be said about RAPI - the Royal Australian Planning Institute - but more tellingly, John Hall is pointing to the significance of the link between the emerging role of titled land use planners, and trends towards increasing land fragmentation and commodification. Together with increasing technical specialisation and institutional development, these trends, although not confined to the twentieth century, have risen over the past 150 years to become prominent integral processes within urbanisation.

Strangely, this idea that the role of today's state or local government based planner in Australia largely emanates from the need for added sophistication in the regulation of an increasingly diverse and fragmented property market, did not sit well with the planning theorists attending a conference in Melbourne. 'Planning was more than regulation checking by bureaucrats' insisted Margo Huxley and Ian Winter. It is, but what Jeremy Dawkins was arguing, was that this considerably narrower - land use planning - role in a property owning democracy was nevertheless very important and needed to be performed by somebody appropriately trained and institutionally equipped.

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4 The conference (July 1995) was held in honour of the late Brian McLoughlin, a leading planning theorist.
While he made his presentation, the prop Dawkins held was a book that described China's newly acquired rules and guidelines for regulating the newly opened land and property markets. Developed by American consultants working for the Chinese government, the book covered such topics as ownership and leasing arrangements, development rights and responsibilities, together with authorising agencies and guidelines for lodging appeals and resolving disputes. As the Chinese have been learning since 1979, once they began to encourage private investment, the regulation of land and property development became a much more complicated process (Greive 1989).

In the current Western Australian setting, such laws, regulations, social norms and conventions are administered by a complex arrangement of all three levels of government including the political apparatus and the judiciary. This institutional matrix covers most of the formal actors and influences in what can best be described as 'land use governance' (Bollens 1993), which includes overlays of private, commercial and community sector interests, coalescing and competing across time and spatial scales. In such a context, to be effective in pursuing an innovative urban development agenda a local government based actor, perhaps the town planner, would require a sophisticated understanding of how power is exercised (Wanna 1991). This role, therefore, would not just entail following policy and procedures (ie. what should happen?) rather, it would also recognise the 'who', 'how', and 'why' of what is actually happening, and be able to strategise accordingly within those limits. In addition, in recognising the indispensable but under-theorised value of competent technical skills, this narrow land use planning role begins to be seen for what it is, a very complex and important role, which ought to be theorised as such.

Sandercock (1975) is worth quoting at length from the conclusion of her book Cities for Sale where she neatly surmises the nature of politics and planning under Australia's 'property owning democracy'. Written more than twenty years ago, the political economic perspective in Cities for Sale identified and, went some way to explain, several key processes that have since been subject to more detailed theoretical reflection. Land was aptly identified as the 'fundamental economic resource' but, without such conceptions as broad based growth coalitions, or insights from regulation theory, or the community power debates, the fuller implications of her analysis remain to be made explicit.

5 By now it should be recognised it need not be the town planner at all, but any other, in this case, nominally based local government actor, seeking to influence urban development outcomes by drawing on whatever institutional and personal resources they are willing and able to muster.
Planners themselves, while not often espousing radical social values, have attempted to regulate through zoning and subdivision control the worst abuses of a free market and its consequences for urban growth. Their failure has been due in part to the failure of their ideas, but more to the inadequate political support which planning has received...This failure of political support stems from the nature of politics in a property-owning democracy. The structure of political power has been and is such to protect property owners and to pamper ruling interests. This business, rural, conservative bias; with vested interests in protecting existing property and privileges; and real estate and land speculation; and local councils whose main aim is to attract as much development as possible, preferably private than public because of rateable values...

Whenever they have deemed it necessary, then, property owners have been able to use the political institutions of the state to prevent encroachments on their property rights by planning legislation or regulations. This form of action was used especially before the World War II. Since then they have been able to manipulate the planning process itself to make gains from property ownership and to use political institutions to support the national hobby of land speculation (Sandercock 1975:15-16).

If, as Sandercock is saying, in respect to land speculation bigger private interests do it, the state does it, and, if indeed it is the ‘national hobby’, then is it not an unrealistic expectation for planning to be above and somehow separate from the politics and ideals of broader society? This was one of the unrealistic expectations that Modernist planning gave itself through its own discourse which, as Sandercock’s work exemplifies, was subject to intense critique all through the 1970s and into the 80s.

It may also be that planning in Australia has become a tool of land owning interests. However, in a nation full of home owners [actual or aspiring], that would include a majority of the population. As she surveyed the political and economic limits of planning in a ‘property owning democracy’ Sandercock clearly understood this point, but a more explicitly post-Modern perspective yields a significantly different interpretation of where responsibility, power and authority ultimately lies.

Working backwards from the understanding that ‘space is hegemonic or infused with the knowledge and power of the ruling classes’ Lefebvre (1991), the implication is that the
landscape, and indeed all the social and physical patterns of human settlement are, in one form or another, a reflection of hegemonic interests. In turn, this argument counters the notion that there is, and has been, a 'lack of control over the fundamental economic resource' (Sandercock 1975:217) because, by definition, hegemonic interests would determine the appropriate form, nature and character of the planning controls. Put another way, whether the state intervenes in the market or not, there is, nonetheless, intervention (Preteceille 1982) and this intervention is subject to hegemonic interests.

From this perspective, the implications of post-Modern and post-structural refinements to planning theory start to come into focus. Molotch's (1976) ideas on growth coalitions, for example, highlight more complex - land based economy - linkages between seemingly diverse interests across the state and private sector divide. Similarly, by highlighting how spatially and temporally concurrent regimes of accumulation articulate, overlap and compete, regulation theory serves to counter structural-functional arguments either expousing global or local economic determinism. It is also worth recalling that at the agency-structure interface, the social actors engaged in shaping the urban fabric - knowingly, unconsciously, directly or tacitly - may hold multiple roles and contradictory motives. Together, these theories begin to break down structural and overtly deterministic distinctions between state and society, between and within different institutions, and importantly between the controlling elites and the controlled.

The main implication from this is that something as limited in scope as conventional land use planning could not possibly contain or control the land based economy. Viewed from this governance perspective, land use planning is, by itself, an instrument of hegemony serving to facilitate, rather than to control, land speculation and development. So, as Harrison (1982) has argued about the nature of metropolitan planning in Perth, 'it operates as a punters' guide to land speculation'. Furthermore, a plethora of complementary institutional, cultural, and subliminally infused social norms and conventions, serve to both support and to obscure the strangeness of these practices. For example, many would fail to recognise the mediation of competing Aboriginal, pastoral and mining rights is also a form of land use planning, albeit on a grander scale and through slightly different legislative channels.
Similarly, the State’s Ministry for Lands, currently called the Department Of Land Administration (DOLA), is not widely thought of as a planning agency, because its function to administer the commodification and resource extraction of land is largely taken as a given in a property owning democracy. Importantly, however, compared to other property owning democracies, such as the US and Canada, each of the six States of Australia retain much greater controls over privately held lands. For example, mining rights are retained by the State, and freehold title is more akin to a very good lease. The greater point here, is that all of these constitutional, legislative, and cultural practices are a reflection of overlays of imperfect hegemony.

This power to shape and reshape institutional arrangements, sometimes described as meta power, is observable in the struggles to maintain or change socio-economic systems (Schuurman 1993). But, as Chapter Three illustrates, these struggles are ongoing and the practical translation of hegemonic interests in respect to controlling the land based economy is unavoidably compromised by social and physical legacies, as well as by the spectre of unanticipated futures. In this sense, although there are prevailing themes and patterns in the way systems of governance emerge over time, the hegemony is never absolute or complete and thus, there is in practice the prospect for alternative development paths, and indeed alternative ways for determining those paths.

2.3 Urban Morphology and Governance

As an alternative approach to explaining the theoretical transition from urban planning to urban governance, this section reconsiders the morphology of cities and expands on the idea that cities are tangible products of how humans have lived out their lives for hundreds, and sometimes, thousands of years. From this perspective, Modernist planning and other centralist modes of social-spatial organisation appear as relatively localised and temporary modes of human environmental modification. Most importantly, this perspective also leads to a much greater theorised prospect for human innovation in terms of how we live our lives and modify our environments.

Ideas such as the Concentric Ring and Network City models were once the conceptual ‘meat and potatoes’ of urban geography. However, since the ascendency of Marxist economic theory during the 1970s, the study of process over form has been the catchcry in urban research. With perhaps the limited exception of the Doughnut City model, this situation has
effectively created a theoretical disjuncture between urban social processes and the physical form of cities - past and present. In attempting to confront this apparent neglect, Batty (1995), and others, even David Harvey (1997), have turned to consider concepts from within chaos theory, where man and his 'hive' are thought to conform to patterns found within nature. In this section, insights from the morphology of London and its colony Perth are interwoven to reflect on such ideas as 1) growth as a process of replication, 2) the fundamentally uneven pattern of human settlement, and 3) the possibility of very rapid and systemic change.

The possible integration of human geography with the new ecology framework being developed from principles within nature's chaos has yet to be fully explored. However, the shared orientation includes 'a greater appreciation of historical (non-cyclical) time, the function spatial scale, and the subjectivity of environments and environmental change' (Zimmerer 1994:109). The implications of these ideas in respect to the modelling of urban morphology has been speculated on by Batty and Longley (1994) but, for me, it was the fractal image of London (over page) that inspired my thoughts about a possible synthesis linking urban form and process with intervention.

Fractals are a reflection of self-organising systems, with the same pattern at smaller scales replicated at larger scales. The fractal of London depicts more than two thousand years of human settlement, and it appears to conform to patterns found to recur at different scales within nature's chaos. Like forest fires and epidemics, the morphology of cities seems to follow 'percolating self-affine' patterns of growth. This implies that urban growth will attract more growth, while 'percolation' indicates that the pattern of uneven clusters continues to emanate from the centre as well as the fringe. This pattern is reproduced at different scales, but the 'self-affine' reference indicates that the pattern is reproduced imperfectly and is characterised by a process of decay and/or by a crisis limit in the number of cycles repeated (Schroeder 1991).

It appears to me there are some interesting parallels in this pattern with the way that Marxists theorise capitalist accumulation through the imperfect reproduction of capitalist social and productive relations. The chaos perspective, however, is describing patterns of growth at vastly greater and infinitely smaller time and spatial scales. Many of nature's complex patterns are also not recognisable until they are broken, and in a similar way, the
Fordist metaphor was not attached to a particular pattern of development until it was contrasted with the emergence of a new post-Fordist (flexible specialisation) pattern of development. This too, is in keeping with the notion of self affine patterns of growth. In a chapter titled ‘Contested Cities: social processes and spatial form’, David Harvey (1997) also seems to be incorporating ideas from nature’s chaos when he says:

Why is it that we tend to think of the built environment of cities as somehow or other not being the environment? Where did the separation come from? Again it comes back to the notion that there is a thing called a city, which has various qualities and attributes, that is not part of a process. It seems to me that we have to think of the environment and environmental modification as a fundamental process which we have always been engaged in and will always continue to be engaged in. The environmental modification process then has to be understood as producing certain kinds of structures and things, such as fields, forests and cities. That environmental modification process cannot be separated from the whole question of urban living. There is it appears to me nothing anti-ecological about cities. Why should we think of them that way? When does the built constructed environment end and ‘the natural environment’ begin. Where does society begin and nature end. Go look at a field of wheat and say where nature begins and society ends. You can’t do it.

...Ecological transformations are an inevitable facet of how human beings live their lives and construct their historical geographies. Urbanisation is an ecological process and we desperately need creative ways to think and act on that relation (Harvey 1997:26-27).

Figure 2.4

Figure 2.5
Perth’s metropolitan sprawl

According to Michael Batty:

Maske et al (1995) suggest, quite rightly, that central planning based on instruments such as the green belt policies that have been used to contain London seem to have had little effect on the shape of the metropolis, and that this is consistent with the ways cities are formed from more localised actions without any centralised intelligence (Batty 1995:574).
Beyond the two dimensional limitations of how these sorts of images are understood and measured there is inseparably the dimension of time and, in this respect, London’s fractal is a poor proxy for such a sustained period of human settlement. Literally and metaphorically many of the old bricks are simply not around, while others have been absorbed or buried under successive overlays of social-spatial order. From before the making of the first Roman roads, till the latest round of post-industrial inner city redevelopments, the morphology of metropolitan London has been shaped and reshaped, not least by the Great Fire, the Blitz, post war reconstruction, and the M25 motorway.

Comparatively then, the forty odd year green belt containment of London’s outward growth is a relatively recent and temporary overlay. Moreover, from the ground-up rather than top-down, it is also possible to inquire how it is that recent developments have encroached upon the green belt. Serendipity may play a hand, but in the main each contemporary exception to the green belt policy represents an effectual avoidance of or challenge to its rational intent and institutionalised power. In the Foucaultian sense, reality is constructed from an overlay of stories, and as a reflection of the way power is exercised, some few of these stories are more recognised and therefore more dominant than others, for a time (Foucault 1980). It follows then that planning and development outcomes are the result of an ongoing process of negotiation between competing stories and discourse communities (Healey 1992), with both the social and physical consequences overlaying the old and creating legacies, intended or not, for the future.

When Batty (1995) refers to cities being ‘created from local actions without any centralised intelligence’, he is not denying that there are recognisable global and national patterns of development, only that there are local interpretations of reproducible patterns of growth. For capital to be fully realised it has to be embedded somewhere (Low 1995), and at different temporal and spatial scales the imbeddedness of capital must negotiate unique social and physical parameters, and is necessarily shaped by them. As Batty and Longley (1994) demonstrate, fractal clusters reminiscent of cities can be grown using local rules (environmental conditions) from a single seed marking the origin of development.

In considering London’s fractal, it is clear that it does not follow a radial progression from central CBD to the periphery and, with patterns of growth overlaying slightly different patterns of growth, the city’s morphology appears as an uneven hierarchy of clusters (Maske
et al. 1995). Given the nature of fractals - self replicating patterns apparent at different spatial scales, each fragment of which structurally reflects the whole - the implications are that London’s morphology, reflecting its social and physical development, is formed from overlays of fundamentally uneven social-spatial orders. As a synthesis then, while growth may beget growth, in respect to cities that equates with recurring patterns of uneven growth. Moreover, as chaos theorists point out, in other natural systems these patterns of growth are imperfectly replicated and they will decay or be modified following a predisposed or random crisis (Schroeder 1991).

Towards helping to explain the theoretical transition from urban planning to urban governance, the initial appeal of London’s fractal was that it juxtaposed more than two thousand years of development experience against 40 plus years of Modernist style development control. From this perspective, centralist style planning not only appears fragile and temporary, but the prospects for alternative development outcomes also seem much more likely. So, although the erosion of London’s green belt is not to be celebrated, it is a ready reminder of how cities really grow, and how even during the heyday of Modernist planning, the planning rules were being usurped, avoided or in some other way negotiated. Moreover, while there seem to be some parallels with how urban governance and uneven development have been theorised, the immediate relevance of London’s fractal is that the original seed for Western Australia’s urban development did actually emanate from London.

From a chaos perspective, the original seed for Western Australia’s development would, given enough time and similarly bounded space, generate a similarly uneven pattern of growth clustered around the initial point of settlement. In reality, the seed was planted 170 years ago in the form of the ships arriving with the first 2000 investor settlers and their families and servants. They were instilled with their British heritage, inclusive of the laws, social conventions and technical knowledge of the day, but perhaps more than most, land was their ‘ambition’s fire’ (Cameron 1981). Moreover, as Stannage (1979) has argued, there was a sustained effort to maintain the stratified sense of Britain’s social order which was reflected in the character of Governor Stirling’s personal philosophy and in the cultural heritage of those under his command. Various local writers have emphasised the spatial dimension to this evolving social-spatial order (Gentilli ed. 1979; Pitt Morison and White 1979; Hedgcock and Yiftachel eds. 1992).
From the air, Perth's metropolitan sprawl appears quite different to that of London, not least because it reflects relatively recent European settlement and, importantly because its morphology at this scale is bounded on one side by the Indian Ocean. Nevertheless, an aerial photograph would reveal a hierarchy of uneven clusters around central Perth which, along with other prominent clusters - Fremantle, Cannington and Guilford - were founded within the first two years of settlement. It is also worth noting that the percolation effect is apparent in the latest round of inner city redevelopments which, since the 1980s, have outstripped the urban fringe in terms of capital investment and increasing property values (Greive et al. 1999).

In Batty's quest for a synthesis between mathematical models of urban morphology and contemporary social economic theory, the obvious place to start is with the parallels in understanding cities as combined and uneven social-spatial patterns replicated at different scales of social and physical development. Among Marxists for example, Manuel Castells has argued for a new regional theory to accommodate the pattern of combined and uneven development, while in Harvey's vision, global cities are described as islands of growth and affluence surrounded by a sea of decay. In The End of the Third World, Harris (1987) pointed out the internationalisation of this pattern of development, and as early as 1879 Henry George described this pattern eloquently in Progress and Poverty:

The 'tramp' comes with the locomotive, and the almshouses and prisons are as surely the mark of 'material progress' as the costly dwellings, rich warehouses and magnificent churches. Upon Streets lighted with gas and patrolled by uniformed policemen, beggars wait for the passer-by, and in the shadow of college and library and museum are gathering the more hideous Huns and fiercer Vandals...(George 1879:7).

Marxists explain the essence of this combined and uneven pattern of development as stemming from the fundamental contradiction. This relates directly to the inequitable relationship between Labour and Capital, whereby after all costs have been accounted for, including investment risks and higher wages, Capital still receives something extra in the way of a profit. In contrast to Adam Smith, Marxists argue this surplus is derived from Labour, not Capital, and that the inequity within this primary economic relationship, which is vicariously supported by political and ideological means, permeates every aspect of capitalist society. The fundamental contradiction, therefore, is theorised as being replicated at different social-spatial scales - individuals, communities, localities, nations - throughout
The Transition from Urban Planning to Urban Governance

the accumulation process. Furthermore, it is expressed away from the site of production, as a multitude of secondary contradictions taking the form of various social-spatial inequities, such as those manifesting themselves as civil strife and urban blight:

This association of poverty with progress is the great enigma of our times. It is the central facet from which spring individual...and social difficulties that perplex the world, and with which much statesmanship and philanthropy and education grapple in vain (George 1879:10).

The idea that patterns of growth decay over time, or, that they may be altered through some unfolding or random crisis also has parallels with Marxist economic theory. Contemporary Marxist inspired regulation theory, for example, focuses on social economic restructuring and examines the ongoing modification of institutions, laws, codes, norms and social conventions - that lie exposed - as integrals in the changing pattern of development (Lipietz 1987). Moreover, as can be emphasised thorough Marxist inspired actor oriented theory (Massey 1991), it is the competing and complementary networks of human agents which give rise and demise to the social and physical structures that evoke and sustain patterns of growth. As with chaos theory, spatial and temporal variation is assumed, as is the prospect of radical or crisis change, and these claims override any long term prospect of stability or balance.

As with a top down Marxist perspective, chaos theory at the metropolitan scale projects a certain inevitability in respect to the combined and uneven (inequitable) nature of development. On the ground, however, cities are not the same, and the slight and modifying alternatives in the pattern of uneven development do seem to matter. There is an obvious diversity within the uneven nature of urban development, and it is readily apparent that some cities and localities are significantly better than others in which to live and work. More generally, it is this perspective that has contributed to critical social theory rediscovering its sense of purpose (Schuurman 1993). As the regulation literature describes, not all forms of capital accumulation are viable, even in the short term, and it is clear some forms are more efficient and/or equitable than others (Tickell and Peck 1992).

Although there are certainly lessons for humanity within the patterns of nature's chaos, and also among the particular experiences of other species, it is for humans to decide the moral and ethical codes that underpin the way we interrelate with each other and our respective
environments. This is a critically important point, because as the new ecology discourse emerges there will be some who find nature’s precedents a convenient way to rationalise some less than progressive positions, such as the survival of the economically strong, gender inequality, and the like. This is a bogus interpretation of the new ecology framework, and one that totally ignores its most exciting conceptual contribution, namely the recognition of a much greater potential for adaptation and, therefore, for human innovation in respect to social change and environmental modification.

Although the complex patterns found to recur in nature correspond with the idea of growth as a process of replication, even tiny changes in the formula have the potential to be replicated at different time and spatial scales to produce sweeping changes. Beyond the structural determinism inherent in Marxist analysis, this perspective asserts that at different social-spatial scales, the outcome of individual human endeavour in terms of development is potentially as critical as any other. In other words, within the complex process of development, each particular event, or non event, contributes a legacy in the patterns of growth that follow, and it may be the most incidental or exceptional of these become the most critical in respect to generating alternative patterns of growth (styles of development).

This last point is best explained anecdotally with the story behind the proliferation of street cafes in Metropolitan Perth since 1980. Although they were probably not the first chairs and tables to ever appear on the footpath, those outside Papa Luigi’s in South Terrace Fremantle were the first in Western Australia to be sanctioned by local government. It was a highly unusual move by the Council and it seeded a locally new and very successful style of commercial development. The first legal obstacle involved choosing to ignore the State’s Heath Act which, in principle, regulated against alfresco dining because of the possible nuisances arising from odours and flies. The next major threat to the idea of street cafes came with police concerns over the possibility of visual obstructions causing a hazard to the passing traffic. The City’s then Chief Planner rebuffed the Police claims with the suggestion that the road could be narrowed to slow the traffic and to reassert the needs of pedestrians over cars.

Certainly, there were (and are) several key social and economic conditions that underpin this style of commercial development. The gentrification of Fremantle during the 1980s was
characterised by the in-migration of previously suburban young professionals, which in turn reflected the changing economic role of the city, and the on-going restructuring of capitalist productive and social relations (Lepani 1994). The growth of international tourism was an important factor. So too was the influence of Fremantle’s strong continental heritage, inclusive of a commercial strip dominated by Italian businesses. But the idea of street cafes could not have spread as it did without those initial departures from the previously entrenched pattern of regulating development. Nevertheless, it was the small risk taken by the cafe proprietor that began the whole local story.

From nature, comes the idea that under the right conditions a spark can ignite a forest fire, a prospect that chaos theorists describe as a ‘sensitive dependence upon the initial conditions’ (Gleick 1988). Nowadays, Fremantle has more than twenty street cafes that serve local residents and draw big crowds of recreational shoppers and tourists (Johnson 1997). Street cafes have also emerged in other inner city areas. However, due to stricter regulatory environments they have not developed to the same profuse extent (see Figure 2.6). Moreover, as an illustration that growth is a process of replication, it is telling that most of Perth’s cafes replicate a mistake in the naming of a particular style of Italian coffee that can be traced back to an error propagated by Papa Luigi’s menu in 1981.

The immediate point in all this is that the prospect for alternative paths, ideally towards some progressive change, exist at every level of social abstraction but, given the uneven nature of development, it is also an ongoing search at the margins. Just as the inequity inherent within the fundamental contradiction is imperfectly replicated throughout the development process, so too conceptually is the space for progressive change (in autocratic societies the space may be narrow, but when change comes it tends to be more radical and abrupt). Still within the Marxist theoretical stream, and as early as McDougall (1982), this ‘room to manoeuvre’ was anticipated as stemming from the contradictions inherent within processes of capital accumulation. The key perspective from chaos, however, is that at different temporal and spatial scales the replication of even small changes can manifest as major shifts. The Feminist, Green and Animal Liberation movements are all contemporary examples of major shifts (on-going) in the way humans modify their social and ecological environments. Furthermore, the true expression of these movements is not in any of the grand proclamations, rather it manifests in the small changes in the every day practices of how vast numbers of people live out their lives: therein lies the revolution.
Seventeen years after the first chairs were put on the pavement, Fremantle has Perth's most intensive concentration of street-side cafes.

With a more recent cafe history, the cafe strip in Leederville is noticeably less lush. The temporary look of the deck chairs and milk crate tables is a survival technique in a more harsh regulatory environment.

In the Town of Subiaco protective walls and awnings not only limit the risk of odours and flies, but also the appeal of street-side cafes.

Throughout Western Australia, cafes make and customers as for, a milky Macchiato rather than the traditional 'stained with milk' style.
As Harvey says:

We should not wait upon some great political revolution to tell us how to reorganise our cities in a socialist or eco-feminist or some other way. No, what we have to do is work on the nature of social relations within cities. If there is going to be a revolution, it is going to be a long revolution, located within the urban process... Here I think again, community mobilisation and the transformation of militant particularism have a vital role to play, enabling us to find universal concerns that exist within the realm of differences (Harvey 1997:26-27).

Of course, when Harvey talks about a 'long' revolution, it must be remembered that in keeping with the same chaos paradigm, the subjectivity of the position begs the question, long for whom? Certainly it is too long for those who have urgent and basic needs right now, but there is no denying the massive changes that have transpired over the past 100 or 4000 years of urban settlement. We are all part of ongoing revolutions whether we are aware of them or not.

The critical point here is that what may appear as a small gain towards some progressive ends may in fact be integral to a watershed of change. In later chapters, stories from the field explain some seemingly small positive achievements against the direction of dominant power relations. In Chapter Four, the work of many individuals channelled through the Perth Inner City Housing Association (PICHA) over a five year period yielded several new and improved housing developments with a small net gain in the number of affordable housing opportunities. The effort is great and the net gain is small, but these developments also serve to consolidate Picha's economic and political positioning, and increase its capacity to do more. In Chapter Five, some prominent examples of inappropriate development among lifestyle towns of the State's southwest have become a catalyst for a major rethink, on many levels, as to how future developments will be designed, managed, approved and consumed. Nevertheless, in any one lifestyle development context, this shift may appear as a relatively minor modification, such as the preservation of a few trees. In other words, the major consequences of a multiplicity of such local decisions may only become apparent much later.

This is a very important perspective for any purposeful agent of change, however, there are both positive and negative implications. On the positive side, if we all move in the same
Chapter Two

direction, we can get there very quickly. But, it may also be that the negative consequences of our endeavours do not become apparent until it’s too late. The massive land clearance in Western Australia and the ‘time bomb’ of rising salinity levels (Conacher and Sala 1999) is just one of many local examples of this hidden momentum factor. Within the regulation literature, Colin Hay (1995:390) argues the same line with the concept of ‘tipping points’. These are moments of decisive intervention or non-intervention in reference to maintaining growth (Stasis), resolving or exacerbating contradictions (Failures) which threaten growth, and systemic breakdown (Crisis). The ‘tipping point’ distinction between types 1 and 2 refer to decisive and intentional interventions, versus unintended yet ultimately decisive interventions.

Figure 2.7  Tipping Points (Hay 1995:390)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjectively-perceived contradictions</th>
<th>Moment of intervention</th>
<th>Moment of indecisive or non-intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unperceived contradictions</td>
<td>Tipping Point 1 (butterfly effect)</td>
<td>Failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of contradictions</td>
<td>Tipping Point 2 (butterfly effect)</td>
<td>Stasis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The new momenta have to start from somewhere, and whether it involves saving a few trees or developing a couple of units of affordable housing, a big shift can be achieved through a series of seemingly minor adaptations.
The Transition from Urban Planning to Urban Governance

Figure 2.8 Affordable Housing in Central Perth

Figure 2.9 Subdivisions with Trees
2.4 Planning Practice and Urban Governance in Perth

In section 2.2, cities were described as organic and created from overlays of consecutive centralised and decentralised forms of social spatial order. From this perspective, Modernist planning and other centralist means of social spatial organisation appear as relatively localised and temporary modes of human environmental modification. Through recognising that the organic form of cities is a product of complex patterns replicated at different time and spatial scales, the insights from nature's chaos presented in section 2.3 also served to reinforce the idea that 'many rather than some few' are responsible for how cities develop. In turn, these understandings were fundamental in theorising the prospect of very rapid and systemic change.

In this section, the discussion turns to consider the arrival of Modernist metropolitan planning in Western Australia. This narrower focus allows for an in-situ grounding of several important theoretical points raised earlier. The centrality of the planner is questioned and, there is more evidence of recurring patterns and themes in the way that decisions are made about development. For example, the land and transport nexus again rises to the fore. Moreover, this position of hindsight facilitates a comparison of the relative decisive significance of planning interventions - in keeping with, or in contrast to, entrenched patterns of development.

The discussion draws on a three-way dialogue between myself, Dr Ian Alexander and Professor Gordon Stephenson, which was structured with the intention of practically illustrating the distinction between urban planning and urban governance. Locally, both Stephenson and Alexander are important participants and commentators in past and present metropolitan planning initiatives in Perth. A 'governance' interpretation of the dialogue between these contrasting Modernist and political economic perspectives leads to the conclusion that something other than formal 'institutionalised' planning has been forging development decisions - other actors (who), other methods (how), and for other reasons (why).

This dialogue has been published as an article in Urban Policy & Research (Alexander and Greive 1997) and this section is a shortened version. The advantage of Alexanders's contribution was that the stories from the field could be embellished by drawing on his experience of monitoring and participating in planning issues in Perth. So, in addition to
providing an immediately and locally relevant illustration of the planning to governance transition, this exemplar also contributes to the body of empirical evidence supporting broader arguments within the thesis. Among the stories underlying the evolution of Perth's metropolitan planning experience, there are also threads of recurring themes. As is argued in Chapter Three, these recurring themes reflect the very nature of Western Australia's predominantly land based economy; encompassing the role and character of dominant actors, and other aspects of the cultural, economic, and political relationships underpinning the State's development history.

The interview with Stephenson took place in 1995 in Perth, Western Australia, where more than 40 years previously, he started work as the State's consultant metropolitan planner. Stephenson has been described by Hugh Stretton (1992) as a 'humane Modernist, who has been right for sixty years about the main design and planning problems of twentieth century cities'. The approach to interviewing Stephenson was as an icon of Modernism who, through this interview, could provide a personal account of his thoughts and actions during the expansionist years of Modernist planning in Western Australia.

Chronologically, after a brief introduction to Professor Stephenson, the interview started by probing into the beginnings of formal metropolitan planning in Perth, and then proceeded to question the centrality of planners, the notion of planning consensus, and the relevance of Modernist planning methods and solutions in a post-Modern era. Along the way, stories of industrial development and transport policy were interwoven. Tapping into Stephenson's experience brings to mind Forester's (1989) ideas about planners as 'knowledge vessels', but the lessons from Stephenson's past are from the twilight years of the great visionaries of Modernist planning, at a time when science was more revered.

 Credentials of an Icon
Professor Gordon Stephenson's international reputation as an architect planner and educator spans over sixty years and three continents. His early accomplishments include key roles in the reconstruction of Britain's war damaged cities, and the planning of Stevenage which was the first of the post-war British New Towns. He was a graduate of the Liverpool University School of Architecture, where he also taught, and later became the fourth Lever Professor of Civic Design (1948-53). For those six years Stephenson was editor of the prestigious British Town Planning Review. He also trained under Le Corbusier in Paris and secured a
Masters Degree in City Planning from the School of Architecture at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology). Among his mentors and peers were the great modern planning philosophers, Sir Patrick Abercrombie, Lewis Mumford and Patrick Geddes.

Stephenson first came to Western Australia in 1953 as a consultant. He and Alistair Hepburn (the new Planning Commissioner) were appointed by the State Liberal-Country Party coalition government to prepare Perth's first Metropolitan Plan. This plan sought to accommodate Perth's anticipated population growth and the associated industrial development for the next thirty years (see Stephenson and Hepburn 1955; Pitt Morison and White 1979; Carr 1979; Webb 1979). The plan was published in 1955 and supported by statutory planning legislation under the Metropolitan Regional Scheme of 1963. The metropolitan development strategy it encompassed was overlayed by the Corridor Plan in 1970, and, more recently, by the METROPLAN in 1990 (Yiftachel and Hedgcock 1992).

After his planning consultancy in Perth, Stephenson was to head for the United States where he had been invited to become Chair of the prestigious MIT School of Architecture and Planning in Boston. But, because of alleged Communist sympathies, he was refused entry into the US. This was the early 1950s and McCarthyism was at its zenith. (Stephenson's 1992 autobiography On a Human Scale, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, tells the full story). Stephenson's reputation was such that he was soon offered an alternative position as Foundation Professor at Toronto University's School of Regional Planning.

After five years in Toronto, Stephenson returned to Perth to become Foundation Professor of Architecture for the University of Western Australia. He was also the consultant planner for the much admired campus and has since designed campuses in Australia, Canada, Ireland and Singapore and was involved in the planning of the Sydney Law Courts, Canberra's Civic Town Centre and the neighbourhood of Charnwood, and Victoria Square, Christchurch. Throughout his long career, Stephenson remained a practitioner, guiding planning and design for housing, public buildings, town centres, new towns, central cities and metropolitan regions.

Aged 87 when interviewed, Stephenson continued to write, counsel and comment on planning issues until his death in 1996. He was often a thorn in the side of Governments - particularly those of the economic rationalist persuasion. The interview focussed on
metropolitan planning in Perth, past and present, and this gave Stephenson the chance to personally reflect on the Modernist position and on current ‘post-Modern’ developments.

**Origins of Metropolitan Planning in Perth**

Despite the lack of any statutory metropolitan land use planning prior to Stephenson’s arrival in the early 1950s, strategic planning was taking place in any event. This was linked to a decision involving the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and the WA Government to locate an oil refinery in Perth. The decision resulted from nationalisation of BP’s oil operations in Iran, and was only finalised after a ‘bidding-war’ with Victoria. It was a decision of enormous consequence for the growth of the Perth metropolitan region since it was to precipitate the development of an industrial complex and a New Town south of Perth in Kwinana. As Neglie (1984) has argued, it was these developments that led to a more formal approach to metropolitan planning in Perth. Stephenson put it this way:

> BP saw they needed a new town, and then there was the question of water supply, the pipeline, and the roads, and so he [Russell Dumas, WA Director for Works at the time] “saw that a regional plan was required” and that is how regional planning came into being.

He went on to say that BP ‘laid it down that they did not want a company town, they wanted at least as many houses for non-BP people’. The WA McLarty Liberal Government of the day was so anxious to secure the company that it readily agreed to this demand. The State Housing Commission started construction of Kwinana New Town (for a projected 30,000 population) in 1952. This planning effort had considerable input from WA’s first prominent female planner, Margaret Fielmann, who was given the task of designing the New Town, albeit within the parameters that were largely predetermined by the BP-State Government negotiations.

Some faltering efforts towards metropolitan planning in Perth had been made in the 1930s, with the creation and subsequent Report of the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission (Stokes and Hill 1992:113). But this report, which focussed on strategic questions such as metropolitan transport, had no means of implementation. By contrast, BP’s industrial initiatives led to quick decisions from the State Government towards planning the industrial and new town development at Kwinana (which had flat land next to a readily developed deep-water port). These decisions were in turn complemented at the metropolitan level by

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6 Subsequently British Petroleum or BP
Stephenson's arrival in 1953 and his 1955 Regional Planning Report and the 1963 legislation to set up the Metropolitan Town Planning Scheme.

Stephenson's experience, therefore, confirmed that the formalisation of metropolitan planning in Perth was a by-product of the needs of capital which, at that time, were being met through industrial development in WA. This underlines the importance of the planning system as a facilitator rather than an instigator of growth and development (see Harvey 1982, 1989; Harman 1986; Alexander 1987; Yiftachel 1991; Hedgcock and Yiftachel 1992; McLoughlin 1992).

The Centrality of the Planner

The idea that planners may have been more important and influential in the 1950s than in the 1990s stems from the argument made by the late Brian McLoughlin (1994) 'that planners are peripheral rather than central to the decision making process about urban issues'. Chief among McLoughlin's concerns was the observation that many planning schools in Australia perpetuate an idea of the 'centrality of the planner' which contradicts the everyday working experiences of planners. In first presenting these ideas to the 1993 Institute of Australian Geographers, McLoughlin was arguing for a much broader perspective from which to understand the way urban development decisions are made. As noted earlier, Stephenson's appointment was, by itself, part of a plan initially defined by a few State Government Officials in negotiation with BP's corporate and industrial planners.

For McLoughlin, not only does the narrow 'central decision maker' perspective limit the understanding of 'what really is going on out there', it also suggests that any planner, planning institution, or approach to planning, which implicitly adopted this narrow perspective as a starting point would be frustrated by seemingly external social actors and influences. There is no doubt that McLoughlin's assertions stand true today. However, from the interview and from historical evidence it appears things were somewhat different in Stephenson's case.

How many planners, for example, have been met on arrival to their new post by a Senior State Government Minister, the Acting Town Planning Commissioner and the Town Clerk of the city, and then given a full-blown civic reception the following day? Stephenson was
one and, even before his arrival, newspaper articles highlighted his eminence and the importance of his role as metropolitan planner. On the day prior to Stephenson's arrival (10.11.53), *The West Australian* editorial proclaimed under its page 2 editorial ‘D-Day for the City’ that Stephenson was clearly very important for the Government's agenda and the process of preparing the metropolitan plan was duly afforded a high priority. However, Stephenson was seen as the expert and so although he was dependent upon the government's support at all levels, he also possessed an independent status. This in turn was intimately associated with his technical knowledge, stemming from a series of highly regarded academic credentials and his association with high profile planning successes. Moreover, the local interpretation of his British and international expert status was promoted by the government officials who had hired him, by the local press who lauded him, and by a public who had come to anticipate economic and social progress through science and technology.

Stephenson himself was overwhelmed and embarrassed by the attention and notoriety that his arrival had created. However, as shown below, he was to use this status to help persuade the public of the wisdom of his plans. Nevertheless, he was always aware that others were in the planning business too; indeed, he saw it as his job to 'try to take into account everybody else's plans'.

It is important to note this was the early 1950s in a somewhat parochial city manifesting a distinct cultural cringe. Nevertheless, by comparison, even the most senior of today's State planners are virtually invisible. They are sheltered from the press and the public by the Westminster tradition that restricts direct media access to public servants. Nowadays, more than ever, the public is kept informed by a cadre of public relations people who are explicitly hired to 'massage' the apparent problems away (Commission On Government, Report 4, 1996). The press secretaries also direct any positive limelight onto the State Premier, the Minister for Planning and other elected officials.

By contrast, Stephenson was not bound by these public service conventions. He called his own press conferences, and he and Hepburn regularly presented their planning opinions in public forums. In this light then, reconsidering McLoughlin's argument, it would seem that although Stephenson was not the 'central decision maker', he did wield considerable influence, and certainly more so than the average planner today. But Stephenson's experience was, after all, exceptional.
Chapter Two

Consensus?

Yiftachel and Alexander (1995) contend that planning is a more contested terrain in the 1990s than it was forty years ago. Stephenson agrees, but then as chief planner forty years ago he was able to gain ready access to the media in his quest for public support for planning. Significantly, he notes ‘there was an “understanding” that anything that might produce the “wrong reaction” would not be published’. Indeed, there had been such ‘wrong’ reactions, as revealed in Paul O’Donnell’s letter to editor (The Western Australian 23.2.53) in which he correctly anticipated the ‘industrial effluvia drifting across the town [Kwinana]’ and the risk to ‘the sea, our main amenity’. Even so, there may have been more public agreement in the 1950s with the idea of ‘progress’ and ‘development’ as being good by definition:

Science had delivered a cavalcade of practical improvements that inspired a widespread optimism. Industry and technology would lead the way to utopia - and utopia seemed to be scheduled to arrive with the 20th Century (Kunstler 1993:60).

In a letter to the editor (The West Australian 25.2.53), Angus of Nedlands responds to O’Donnell’s concerns in this way:

I have my doubts about a modern refinery being so wasteful as to pollute the air with sulphur dioxide. In recent years our State Government has gathered several qualified experts in the fields of town planning, engineering, industrial chemistry and fuel technology. These men have all had years of overseas industrial experience and are now attached to our Government Departments. Are they not better able to advise on such matters...?

Figure 2.10 Kwinana Today
Another technical solution of the day - particularly in the US - was freeways. The Stephenson plan incorporated a network of arterial roads, which had been upgraded to freeway status by the time of the 1963 Metropolitan Scheme. But public and State support for development was selective. For example, Stephenson's 1955 recommendations for two railways to the north of the city were omitted from the 1963 Metropolitan Region Scheme. The road planners and other vested interests were determined that planning should prioritise roads and freeways (McManus 1993; Smith 1985). Indeed, even as Stephenson arrived there was pressure from business interests to replace the existing railways running to the west of the city.

With Professor Stephenson's arrival, the question of the city railway has come into the news... If, however Professor Stephenson, and Mr Hepburn should decide that Perth and the metropolitan area would gain if there were no railway installations west of Perth central station, their views would almost certainly command a good deal of public support. A southern railway link with Fremantle and Kwinana would cater for goods traffic, no doubt bulk cargo will be handled at Kwinana and private bus services would have no difficulty in taking over what survives of railway passenger business between Perth and Fremantle. In time, the central station could be moved to give the city still more elbow room (emphasis added, The West Australian 13.1.53).

When the first link of the inner city freeway system (the Kwinana Freeway) was constructed in the 1960s, pamphlets published by the Main Roads Department (MRD) 1966 argued that freeways were essential for purposes of movement and accessibility across a growing metropolis:

Freeways represent a major innovation in road design to facilitate the safe movement of large volumes of traffic at relatively high speeds...they provide rapid and convenient accessibility between different parts of the [metropolitan] area...the impact of an orderly traffic system in a modern community is apparent at all levels.

The progress of the city was seen to be symbolised by the Kwinana Freeway project: Perth had 'arrived' in the motor car age under the 'guidance' of US traffic consultants De Leuw Cather. As late as 1979, this attitude towards progress and the car is aptly summarised by the words of then Premier, Sir Charles Court (1979:90):

People whose pockets once jingled with bus and tram fares now jingle with car keys.
Many in the community did not question this received wisdom, this ‘manufactured consent’ (Herman and Chomsky 1988). But others did: even if there had been more agreement about planning’s agenda in the 1950s and 60s than there is today, there were still also many who disagreed. For example, far from isolated Perth, planners such as Lewis Mumford (1961:G48) were arguing strongly against the impact of unrestrained freeway building on cities such as Los Angeles:

the multiple-lane expressway and parking lot have almost completely eaten away the living tissue of the city.

Echoing this critique, a group of local planners in Perth put a strong case against the idea of a freeway along the city’s river foreshore (Denford 1968). This eventually led to the downgrading of the proposal, a point returned to below. Later, according to Seddon and Ravine (1986:83) one of Perth’s ‘most passionate environmental debates’ occurred over the extensive reclamation that the Mounts Bay interchange involved. There was also a community furore at the way in which the Kwinana Freeway cut off residential areas in South Perth from Swan River beaches. Further south, at Rockingham, the local road board was greatly annoyed that the industrial area and New Town were to be hived off and given their own local government status (*The West Australian* 23.9.53).

Overall then, the idea that there was more community consensus on planning matters in the 1950s than is the case today cannot be substantiated. Closer examination of the records shows that in Perth there were expressions of disquiet in the community over various planning matters. In some instances this led to plans being modified: in other words, the state’s planning agenda could be challenged.

**Modernist Planning in a Post-Modern Context**

Stephenson laments the preoccupation of planning with zoning questions:

I think it [planning] has been reduced in principle to a kind of zoning control, people fight over trivia wondering whether it’s the right colour or not.

He also believed that this approach is too restrictive on people, instead of ‘encouraging them to do the right thing’. Interestingly, he cites the City of Fremantle as an exception: here as has been shown by de Villiers (1992), planning has been approached in a framework of
policy and negotiation rather than through rigid statutory control. In this sense, Stephenson has broken with the Modernist tradition, since Fremantle’s initiatives can be understood as part of a less structured ‘post-Modern’ approach characterised by more community involvement, albeit more selective than inclusive (Hedgcock, Hillier and Wood 1991).

Figure 2.11  Stephenson's Style of Arterial Road

Figure 2.12  Freeway Designs After Stephenson
Moreover, it would be even harder to reconcile the central decision maker perspective with the more recent attempts in Fremantle to open up the planning process further by allowing for direct public participation in Planning Committee meetings. As de Villiers has since remarked, 'the result of these open committee meetings has been that planning decisions have become more random and less predictable, and that difficult or somewhat unpopular initiatives just won't get through' (pers. comm. 1995). While this may be true, it may also be the case that planning decisions under this planning system are more widely accepted as being in the public interest as suggested by Ted Mack in his address in Fremantle (12.10.96).

There is a bigger paradox in Stephenson’s concerns about planning becoming trivialised. Stephenson was quite proud of the fact that Perth’s first Metropolitan Planning Scheme was achieved with just a handful of planners, some of whom were learning their skills on the job. Stephenson also concurs with Hedgcock and Yiftachel (1992) that the past 40 years has witnessed a major expansion of Western Australia’s planning institutions, as well as a tremendous growth in the number of planning professionals. The paradox is that these developments have emerged just as planning’s influence has declined (Yiftachel 1989). From a broader perspective, this much discussed ‘crisis in planning’ (Healey et al. 1982) is also matched by the ‘impasse’ in Development Studies, which similarly parallels the demise of the whole Modernist project (Schuurman 1993). It would be unfair, then, to suggest that more planners and more planning legislation actually achieves less. Instead, as Stephenson recognises, the nature of society has changed and so too has the nature of metropolitan planning.

Upon reflection, much of Stephenson’s experience, as in the case of Perth’s Metropolitan Planning Scheme, began with a relatively ‘clean slate’ with reference to both the physical and institutional setting. Nowadays, Perth’s planners are confronted with the added complexity associated with planning redevelopments in existing communities, and within an increasingly fragmented institutional context. Moreover, the emerging body of literature on urban and metropolitan governance testifies to the international recognition of these trends (Barlow 1992; Paproiski 1993; Birkland 1994). By contrast, in the 1950s Western Australia’s institutional setting was so undeveloped that Stephenson says he could ‘walk down the corridor and chat with the people responsible...and you settled it verbally’.
As he laments:

Everything was much simpler...to make a decision, you did not have to set up a committee, that produced a fat report that other people dissected and disagreed with in parts.

The suggestion is, that if ever there was a time for 'one grand vision' for metropolitan planning in Perth, that time has passed, and nowadays, planners can attune themselves to contesting smaller issues, among a diversity of competing institutional, community and capital interests. As a consequence, planning through negotiation is superseding planning through regulation and, following Fremantle's lead, other local councils are reorienting towards a system involving site (context) specific negotiated development approvals. The City of Perth's turn towards emphasising mixed-use zoning is a recent example (BOMA 1994).

Although this approach is recognised within the State Planning Commission, it is also clear that the State's Planning Appeal System lags behind these local innovations in terms of both flexibility and public scrutiny (Johnson 1994). Importantly too, this trend towards 'planning by negotiation' has an undeniable economic foundation, which Harvey (1989) characterised as the 'shift from Fordist uniformity to more flexible modes of accumulation'. From this perspective, then, the emphasis on zoning can be understood as a cultural and administrative remnant from the previously dominant regime of production and, therefore, largely out of step with the new logic of capital.

Lessons From Stephenson

The interview, together with historical evidence showed that Stepenson's claims, as well as those by Yiftachel and Alexander (1995), overstate the degree of planning consensus that existed in Perth prior to the 1960s. Instead, the suggestion is that in the immediate post war period - characterised by industrial growth and an expanding middle class - there was a greater faith in a rational and science led path to development. But, as nowadays, for those who were somehow disadvantaged by the urban developments during the 1950s there was never any consensus. The residents of South Perth, the Shire of Rockingham, and those who objected to the Kwinana industrial site were voices of discontent from that period.
The evidence also points to the influence of dominant private sector interests, as well as, selective media coverage in support of such interests. On the day that Stephenson arrived, for example, the editorial in *The West Australian* argued for the removal of all railways west of central Perth and for the passengers to be serviced by private bus companies. The Freeway construction since the 1960s reflects the continuation of this influence. Indeed, as Chapter Three elaborates, broader coalitions of private transport, land development and media interests evolve as a strong theme within the complex pattern of Western Australia’s development.

In this context, whether Stephenson’s interventions to create a public bus service from the hodge-podge of private companies amounted to a ‘tipping effect’ is difficult to say, however, it was arguably his greatest contribution to Perth’s Metropolitan planning. Although it was largely an organisational rather than physical development, it was achieved and maintained for over forty years despite the efforts of various powerful interests. Moreover, in contrast to his other lasting ideas, such as the massive expansion of the metropolitan boundaries, it represented a more significant departure from previously entrenched patterns of development.

Post-Modern contentions, which are deeply critical of the belief in rational and objective knowledge, also stem from the observation that some of the scientific solutions from the past have come to be recognised as part of the problem. The site of Kwinana, and the Freeway construction since are two of many local examples. However, if science is less revered than it was, it is also with certainty applied more often in arguing contrasting points of view. There are now many more experts inside and outside of the planning profession and the state bureaucracy in general. *Upon closer expectation there was never a time for ‘one grand vision’ for metropolitan planning in Perth*, only a constructed idea that there was. Furthermore, now that the veneer of planning’s technical mysticism has faded, contemporary planners can attune themselves to contesting smaller issues among a diversity of competing community, institutional and capital interests.

As the story behind the site of Kwinana revealed, the idea of planning by negotiation is not entirely new. Perhaps what is new, is that today there is more scope for more local issues and diverse interests to be considered within a more openly negotiated planning process. But, as a final note of caution to those who are facilitating this process, it must be
remembered Stephenson’s experience was exceptional. As such, it does not provide a readily transferable model for contemporary planners who are largely operating from a considerably lower position of influence in a more complex world.

2.5 Chapter Two Summary - Navigating the Impasse

In addition to explaining the conceptual transition from urban planning to urban governance, each of the three perspectives offered in this chapter have contributed various insights towards contemplating the room to manoeuvre beyond the impasse in planning and development theory. In each section, the growth of cities was portrayed as the result of a multitude of local decisions without any centralised intelligence. This argument shifted responsibility for development decisions away from a ‘theorised few to a theorised many’ among the complex interdependencies of global to local dynamics and the practices of everyday living. But this was not a pluralist argument. Rather, there were, and are, patterns and themes in the way power is exercised in the community, with structural tendencies, and patterns of inequity and uneven growth.

The Modernist notion of planners being central to the decision making process has been debunked through a fuller appreciation of the historiography of cities at different scales of reference. The nature and character of planning institutions and the role of professional planners is now understood to reflect a broader and more diffuse exercise of power - governance. In contrast to urban governance, Modernist inspired urban planning was given a contextual specificity - predominantly confined to the advanced capitalist nations since the turn of the century. In retrospect, it was a relatively centralist and temporary style of social spatial order that in practice was breaking down into something else, even as its ideology continued to subsume others by constructing and iconising its own history.

The narrow confines of Modernist planning history served to obscure what the actual role of institutional planning was, and is, among the diversity of life world planning contexts. In Western Australia, as in other parts of Australia, the peculiar subdivision orientation to the whole planning agenda was linked to its special role within a property owning democracy. In this sense, and as a point departure from Sandercock (1975), there is no expectation for urban planning to do anything other than facilitate the land development and construction process. As has recently been critically said of Neutze’s view (1996), there can be no realistic separation of urban planning from the broader property development industry
because they are part and parcel of the same thing (Day 1997). In turn, this understanding begins to reveal many ‘other’ actors and institutional arrangements within the broader land based economy - ‘other’ planners engaged in ‘other’ planning processes.

Some of the diversity of these ‘other’ planners with ‘other’ planning agendas was revealed in the stories from Professor Gordon Stephenson. In Western Australia, it was international industrial capital in negotiation with a few key State government actors that first defined the need for metropolitan planning in Perth. Since then, much of what was proposed has been overlayed by successive planning initiatives that have encouraged a considerably expanded urban sprawl associated with a vastly expanded highway and freeway system. Together with the land development industry, the State’s Main Roads Department in conjunction with the private transport lobby, were all identified as powerful interests in shaping Western Australia’s urban social and physical fabric.

Stephenson’s memories, together with various newspaper stories from the time, indicate that these metropolitan developments were neither consensus driven nor objectively scientific. Moreover, considering these same developments on a grander time and spatial scale reveals certain themes reflecting the links between land development, transport infrastructure and a continuing quest for more growth. In real estate terms, land disconnected from consumer and investor markets is not worth very much, and therefore, in terms of facilitating Western Australia’s gigantic land sale, roads were, and are, preferable to rail, and private transport was, and is, preferable to public transport, since they facilitate a more dispersed and fragmented pattern of settlement.

Conceding that development decisions are made by a diffuse many, rather than a central few, is an essential first step towards recognising that the scope for progressive change extends beyond marginal improvements. Under the right conditions, a small change among many has the potential to manifest a great momentum of change. Social actions become social movements when actors (individual or institutional) change their ways - perhaps to avert or respond to a perceived or actual crisis - and the nature and character of the changes can somehow become complementary and self reinforcing.
The tipping effect was introduced as a powerful concept that linked the prospect of very rapid and systemic change, together with the possibility for strategic intervention. To be clear, Hay (1995) explicitly put together concepts from Regulation Theory with principles from nature's chaos to theorise critically informed progressive intervention with the potential for major shifts in the way that humans organise their lives and hives. This intervention could be in response to, or in avoidance of, systemic crisis or more local failure and, although the intervention is decisive by definition, it may not have been intentional. As described earlier, the tipping effect recognises that momenta of social change must start from somewhere and, in turn, these will be redirected through other decisive actions and non-actions, in a process that involves replication, adaptation and radical change.

Almost 15 years after Halla (1985:51) described the room to manoeuvre as 'a poorly documented concept', it remains so. Nevertheless, 'the essence of the room to manoeuvre', according to Safier (1983), 'was the analysis of the experiences and reflections on the constraints, possibilities, and self realisation of planning as a significant contribution to urban development and well being'. This definition still holds, but beyond the confines of professional planners and planning institutions, the bigger prospect for progressive change calls for the room to manoeuvre to be exercised in the everyday practices of all of our lives. As we now understand, titled planners and formal planning institutions are not central to the decision making process, so we ought not to not be relying on them to plan better cities. Rather, we can take some of that responsibility ourselves, and part of that is to remain vigilant as to 'who really plans and for what purposes' (McLoughlin and Huxley 1986).

To become conscious of the social and physical problems that we face as a community, State, Nation, and World does not mean that we all have to agree on all issues all of the time. This is what Harvey (1997) was referring to in respect to the potential for both militant particularism and broader social movements to bring about progressive change. Specifically, Harvey's advice was 'not to wait for the revolution'. As individuals, within our various work, living and recreational pursuits we are able to change the way that we modify our environments. The room to manoeuvre is integral to the everyday practice of living and working and, at its most basic, it is simply strategic thinking by all sorts of social actors trying to achieve some desired ends by skilfully negotiating the shifting physical and social limits. In this way, we are each able do our progressive bit, but not necessarily on all issues, in every situation.
Among planning theorists the calls are for a reconstruction of how planning is understood, as well as recognition of a new move to embrace a social reformist outlook. According to Gleeson and Low (2000:4):

The idea of planning has therefore somehow to be subsumed by politics and governance without losing the noble ideals to which the forebears of planning aspired.

According to Fainstein (2000:472) this shift:

Representing a move from a purely critical perspective that characterised much theory in the 1970s and 1980s to one that again offers a promise of a better life. Where as reaction to technocracy and positivism shaped planning theory of that period, more recent planning thought has responded to the challenge of post-Modernism.

In particular, these writers are advocates of a post Marxist framework that keeps alive the prospect of a better world. In the next chapter, an overview of Western Australia’s historical development since European settlement serves to contextualise and ground the two fold argument; that human settlements are a product of a diffuse exercise of power (urban governance), and yet, there are patterns and themes in the way development decisions transpire. It is the particular nuances of these patterns and themes that are indicative of the distinctive way power is exercised. Furthermore, as argued in Chapter One, this understanding is fundamental to pursuing progressive aims from a position of relative powerlessness.
Chapter Three: The Evolution of the Economy, the Primacy of Land, and the Emergence of Growth Coalitions.

3.1 Introduction

Somewhat ambitiously, this chapter spans the history of Western Australia’s planning and development from the beginning of European settlement. The analysis focuses on the interrelationships between the changing modes of development and the particular character of different ensembles of dominant actors who have consciously, and sometimes implicitly, participated in shaping the course of development. In seeking to weave together a broad contextual understanding of the who, the how and the why of development decisions, this chapter draws on concepts from regulation theory (Lipietz 1987), loosely adapted (Jessop 1995), together with ideas about growth coalitions (Logan and Molotch 1987). In particular the narrative subtly introduces the notion of regulation as omni-present, which is in keeping with the more recent conceptualisations (Goodwin, Duncan, and Halford 1993; Hay and Jessop 1995).

Local historians examining different aspects of Western Australia’s development history have provided much of the substance and detail of the narrative that I use to convey my arguments. In many instances, key findings that were tangential to the original focus of their research provide, in combination, the starting point for this analysis. To me it appears that time and again, local writers examining a particular period of Western Australia’s development find evidence of coalitions of place-tied actors - both inside and outside the state bureaucracy - who were actively involved in speculative land development schemes, which were either implicitly deceitful or blatantly corrupt. Very broadly, the contribution that this particular configuration of arguments will add to the body of knowledge, is that these were (not only) historical examples of duped investors and state sponsored land speculation, rather, they can be more usefully recognised as recurring features that are characteristic of Western Australia’s dominant mode of development.

A central component of this argument is that the mainstay of Western Australia’s developing economy has always been the promise of the wealth that access to large tracts of good quality land can provide. And, that this promise has been symptomatically (if not
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systematically) propagated, bolstered, and otherwise purposefully manipulated in order to attract the necessary external labour and capital. The origins of this pattern of development began fairly distinctively, 170 years ago, when a coalition of British Government and private sector interests founded a land investment scheme on the banks of the Swan River on the south-west coast of Australia. It was the first such Crown sponsored free settlement initiative for over 70 years, it was to be financed by private capital, and it began a massive land alienation process which ultimately involved some 2.6 million square kilometres.

Over the course of the discussion consistent themes emerge and, with their slight contextually specific adaptations, these portray a predominantly land based economy that is regulated at the State level, ostensibly by an ensemble of locally dominant actors. These actors will be shown to be purposeful in their pursuit of economic growth, yet subject to both physical and social constraints, as they strive to successfully negotiate their place within national and international regimes of capital accumulation.

Building on the governance perspective developed in the prior chapters, these actors are now recognised as planners participating where they can to promote and shape the form, nature, and direction of development. Moreover, as this interpretation of planning history will illustrate, these ‘other’ planners have continued to shape the nature of development on many more fronts than is commonly acknowledged in much of the local planning discourse. Decisions such as those associated with the initial colonisation process, the introduction of convicts, the creation of the wheat belt, and the urban infrastructure improvements at the turn of the century, are all viewed as legitimate expressions of strategic planning activities. Furthermore, long before the legislative framework for Town Planning was created in 1928, these ‘other’ planners will be shown to have guided the development of town sites, and urban subdivisions, and otherwise regulated the built environment through the use of land use zoning codes, subdivision requirements and similar such legislative controls and normalising social conventions.

The narrative begins with a fairly detailed account of the first years of the developing Swan River Colony. This serves to introduce many of the themes which are to be carried forth in later, but less detailed, accounts of the important periods within Western Australia’s path of development. Unavoidably, this broad brush approach will gloss over many important details, some critical to the unfolding of events. Nevertheless, as will be argued, what
emerges is a broader understanding of the distinctive nature of development in Western Australia, as well as, a more comprehensive appreciation of the who, the how, and the why of development decisions.

Throughout the discussion, the analysis seeks to highlight evidence of the 'other' planners who were shaping events by their conscious actions and re-actions. This reveals that development decisions are by no means limited to the prerogatives of the formalised tentacles of Government. Instead, it will be shown that a very broad ensemble of social actors - individuals, corporations, institutions, and the like - are involved in shaping the course of development. Predominantly they are place-tied actors who have already invested in the state’s greater land development scheme, and who, by their conscious decisions and direct actions, by their unconscious and tacit approvals and through their expressions of protest, formulated and participated in Western Australia's system of urban governance.

Beyond dispensing with contrived distinctions which obscure a broader understanding of the nature of planning and development, the contemporary relevance of this chapter is that it highlights and explains the pivotal and ongoing local relationship between land, state and society. This relationship, as central as it is, was only touched on by the Commission On Government’s (COG) investigation of the potential for systemic government corruption in Western Australia. Compared with the COG’s (1996) published results, this chapter describes a much broader and more entrenched potential for corruption, especially in relation to land, involving a large part of the existing population - with the distinction between ‘us’ as victim and ‘them’ as perpetrator tightly intermeshed. In effect, COG’s brief, as broad as it was, did not extend far enough beyond the formalised tentacles of government to implicate many of the key actors of the growth coalition at the State level, nor any of its place/space defined subsidiaries.

To be clear, perhaps more so than elsewhere, the land based economy in Western Australia includes the construction and real estate industries, as well as the mining and agricultural sectors. These are in turn supported by the transport sector, as well as finance, insurance, legal and government services. Less obviously perhaps, the land based economy is also directly and tacitly supported by the media, telecommunication, tourism, and education sectors, and even a cursory examination of Western Australia’s manufacturing sector will show that its largest corporate entities are predominantly involved in the secondary
processing of land based resources - minerals and energy. In effect, Western Australia’s 1.8 million people are all engaged, by degrees, in the extraction and distribution of the land generated wealth that its 2.6 million kilometres provide in its articulation with national and international regimes of capital accumulation.

3.2 A Particular Model of Colonial Development

The colonisation and white settlement of Western Australia marked the beginning of an economy and society based on immigration and the regulation, subdivision, sale and tenure of land. In 1829, the subdivision of Western Australia (known at that time as the Swan River Colony) began with relatively larger parcels of better quality rural land being granted to the first investor settlers on very generous terms. The process has continued with the subdivision of relatively smaller and poorer quality land parcels, sold for higher prices to successive waves of migrant settlers. Ostensibly this process is regulated by the state, and results in the extraction and transfer of an economic surplus from the newer settlers, to the advantage of the state and the more established landowning/development interests. An inner city example of this trend is the exorbitantly priced strata titled apartments which, since the mid 1980s, have been actively encouraged by the state, developed by private interests, and eventually sold to Asian investors. Similarly, on the suburban fringe, the state now promotes small 200 m² house and land packages in areas shunned by established locals, which are developed by mass home builders to be sold to the lower end of the first-time home buyer market, many of whom are recently arrived immigrants.

As a crude generalisation characterising the historical development of Western Australia’s economy, this premise identifies the 'primacy of land' as a foundation for a relatively unique and modern mode of capital accumulation. Followers of the Canadian philosopher Harold Innis draw parallels between Canada and Australia in terms of a distinct form of British colonialism, based on pioneering the rural settlement of territory defined as unoccupied. As Innis (1972) identified, where the British did recognise existing 'civilisations' such as in India and China, the path of development focused on trade rather than territorial expansion through British migration and settlement. This perspective lays the foundation for understanding the emergence of a particular model of development which was largely confined to Australia, Canada, and to a lesser extent Africa, and the west coast of the USA. In highlighting the character of this particular model of development, Angus (1993) makes the following distinction:
while previously 'civilised' societies were colonised, reorganised and exploited through a British military-administrative class aligned with an indigenous elite, 'savage' societies were subjected to genocide, slavery and/or removal and confinement. Their populations have been largely displaced (read alienated from the land) and replaced by European immigration, which in itself cannot be discussed apart from the class and ethnic/national exploitation that motivated it (Angus 1993:18).

As a function of what Soja (1989) has termed the triad of time, space and society, the model of development in both Australia and Canada fostered a particular elevated role of the state in respect to the development and regulation of the economy's primary resource - land. In the case of Western Australia, the British Admiralty was able, and eventually willing to finance the first fleet, establish the colonial administration, and maintain regular communication and supply lines. Cameron's (1975) archival research confirms that the Admiralty's prime motivation to invest was Captain Stirling's glowing account of the potential for rural settlement, and the bureaucratic and public support his claims engendered. Unlike the penal settlement origins of Australia's east coast, and unlike the pilgrim refugee settlements on America's east coast, the settlement of Western Australia was from the outset a state endorsed land investment initiative, albeit spurred on by the threat of French expansionism. The state would maintain control, but the investment risks were to be borne by private interests.

Prior to Captain Stirling's survey of the Swan River area in April 1827, there had been at least 40 known visits to Western Australia by European ships, predominantly French, British and Dutch, dating back to Dirk Hartog's landing in 1616. In contrast to the bleak accounts from these previous landings, Stirling found both fresh water and fertile soils, and misread the landscape to anticipate much more. After a short 13 day survey, with much of the time devoted to exploring an area (Upper Swan) now recognised as the best arable land on the south-west coastal plain, Stirling was convinced that he had discovered the best land with the greatest natural attractions that he had ever seen. This promising discovery, its subsequent promotion in the British press, and Stirling's persistent attempts to encourage and lead a land investment settlement scheme, preferably through a Crown sponsored colonisation initiative, is covered with all the appropriate historical detail in Cameron's (1975) original thesis.
Although it was not the central focus of his research, Cameron is quite explicit in understanding that Stirling's discovery and ideas on pioneering a land settlement scheme, found favour among Colonial Office bureaucrats and the general public at a particular time in British history, that was contextually conducive to the acceptance of such ideas. The appeal of an opportunity to colonise a new free settlement on the Swan River, was for a moment, a 'safety valve' for a Britain in the midst of tremendous rural and industrial upheaval which, together with the end of the Napoleonic wars, resulted in chronic underemployment, widespread poverty, and social unrest. Under these conditions, middle class investors, and those less affluent but with some limited means, skill or trade, were prepared to face the risks and hardships that migration to the other side of the world would entail. Similarly, the demise of Stirling's own family fortune during this period suggests a basis for his motivations in earnestly pursuing the Swan River settlement as a commercial venture (Cameron 1981:13).

Also a sign of the times was the introduction of land regulations to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land (later Tasmania) which encouraged large scale agricultural production and amounted to a direct reversal of the policies favouring the agricultural self sufficiency of ex-convicts and small scale settlers. Indeed, such were the conditions in Britain that, while migration had once been discouraged, in the 1820s it was encouraged. At this time, Australia's colonies came to be seen, politically and publicly, not as a dumping ground for convicts but rather as an investment opportunity for those who could command a good stock of labour. As this labour would be drawn from among the surplus poor, the processes of colonisation would allay financial and political burdens within Britain, and create new consumer markets for the export of manufactured goods. Shipping and labour recruitment agents were also among the most enthusiastic promoters of the Swan River Colony. In drawing these factors together, the commercial initiatives, the policy shifts, and the ideas they reflect, all allude to the point made by Angus (1993) that the timing and form of the colonising process, cannot be understood in isolation from the class and ethnic/national contexts that motivated it.

3.3 Establishing the Colonial Order

Upon Stirling's return to Western Australia in 1829, as the newly appointed Lieutenant Governor, the establishment of the colonial administration heralded a new social and spatial order for the pre-existing human settlement and landscape. All of Australia west of
longitude 129 East was annexed and declared property of the Crown. The laws applicable to the land, were the existing laws of England. The broader intent of these laws, many of which originated from feudal times, promoted property rights over the rights of individuals. On the second voyage, along with the first investor settlers, Stirling also carried the Admiralty's instructions on how to subdivide and distribute the land. According to Poole (1979:220) these instructions which included land use allocations and provisions for public buildings and roads within networks of towns, constituted Western Australia's first town planning guidelines. More fundamentally, however, for the new colonial order, these developments institutionally and culturally enshrined the 'ownership of land' which in effect was an imposed social regulating concept hitherto unknown to the Aboriginal people already occupying the land.

To be clear, Aboriginals were alienated from the land through a process of colonial invasion and occupation. Their pre-existing social values, laws, cultural norms and practices, which embraced a characteristic spatial order, were usurped by the new colonial administration, supported by the weight of the Empire's capital, technology, ideology, and force of arms. However, the colonising process was incremental and, for the first 60 years, barely extended beyond the main settlements in the south-west (Green 1981). Even today, the legacy of 40 000 years of Aboriginal spatial order can still be observed in the multitude of Aboriginal place names on Western Australian maps, in the institutional recognition and demarcation of sacred sites, in the vegetation structure of 'natural' environs, and in the apparent preference and avoidance of certain areas by Aboriginals living in contemporary society (Bolton 1981). In short, the colonial and contemporary Western Australian social and spatial order exists as an incomplete and contested overlay on the previous Aboriginal social and spatial order.

The naval officers and other officials under Governor Stirling's command and patronage formed the first bureaucracy, and their efforts and persuasions in response to the social and physical environment would be instrumental in shaping the new colonial order. They were agents of the Crown administrating the vast 'unoccupied' lands of Western Australia. For these duties, they received additional compensation in the form of land grants and salary. Stirling's First Officer, Septimus Roe, was for example appointed the Surveyor General responsible for surveying the colony and preparing the base maps from which to organise the division, sale and tenure of land. As Stannage (1979:13) points out, the large estates developed and held by these officer-bureaucrat farmers testifies to the extent to which they
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prospered from their positions. This is not to suggest that these administrators were unsuitably qualified, or that they were brazenly corrupt, but rather it highlights their privileged relationship in establishing and organising the colonising mode of development. So, while all matters of official correspondence were channelled through to the Colonial Secretary's Office in London, it was also clear that Stirling and Roe had 'comparative freedom in the granting and subdivision of land' (Poole 1979:221).

Drawing directly from and complementing Cameron's (1975) research, Stannage (1979) is more forthright in arguing from the same quotes, that this administrative discretion was used by Stirling and his associates to further their own commercial interests.

He took fine land near the town of Guildford. He was also granted over 50 000 acres in the south-west, and several smaller properties...In time his business dealings were severely criticised by many colonists: The name Stirling appears in so many places on the Maps...that people...begin to suspect they have been duped by a company of mere speculators. Cameron (1975) quoting from the Swan River Guardian, 5 January 1897.

In time too his rapaciousness won him the censure of the Imperial Government. But he profited greatly from his speculation (Stannage 1979:13).

According to the original instructions from the Colonial Office, the size of the land grants offered to the investor settlers was to be calculated on the number of indentured servants they brought with them, and the amount of capital they could invest. This formula, and the way it was administered and abused, was to prove seriously debilitating for the colony's growth. Under the grant conditions, the land had to be improved for the title to be maintained. From the start, those who had access to more capital would be granted more land and, since the ownership of stock and farm equipment could satisfy the land improvement stipulations, larger investors tended to prefer pastoral activities over agriculture as a way of securing larger land grant entitlements. Given that the intent of the grant regulations was to encourage improvements to the land and to minimise speculation, the paradox was that the relatively high costs associated with fixed capital investment - land clearance, road construction, and fencing - were neglected by the investors in order to qualify for more land.

As with the Senior Officers, the colony's leading settlers were men of means, affluent and well connected (Stannage 1979). However, and this is a key point, for the profits to be
realised and the risks and hardships made worthwhile, it would be essential for the colony to
grow rapidly. Land by itself, undeveloped and disconnected from consumer and investor
markets is even now worth very little. As a consequence, from the earliest beginnings of the
colony’s foundation, the officer-bureaucrats and the investor settlers would share a common
interest in promoting the further growth potential of the settlement. Indeed, given the less
than glowing reality of the colony’s agricultural potential, Stirling can rightfully be
considered Western Australia’s first ‘land boomer’. Moreover, under his patronage there
emerged a coalition of pro-growth interests formed between the state bureaucracy and the
settlement’s larger and more established land owners. As Stannage describes it;

Many of the earlier settlers of Perth held official positions which were salaried or
which allowed for the collection of fees. Others held government contracts of various
kinds. Still others held honorary positions such as magistrates. All were dependent
upon the good will and patronage of Stirling and his senior officials, though some like
the Samsons and the Tanners, grew affluent enough to stand outside the immediate and
compelling influence of the governing group (Stannage 1979:14).

This coalition fostered an economy based on land and land resource development which in
turn was dependent upon immigration and external capital.

One of the central themes developed in this chapter is that a similarly oriented, but
considerably broader, coalition of pro-growth interests exists today. In effect what is being
added to Cameron’s thesis, is that what he uncovered was not so much a historic example of
duped investors and state sponsored land speculation, but rather that for Western Australia it
was the beginning of ‘business as usual’. In later chapters, when the discussion turns to the
analysis of contemporary case studies, empirical evidence will also point to the existence of
more localised but similarly oriented pro-growth coalitions. But for now, it is necessary to
clarify some key aspects of the parallel historical development of the economy and the
accompanying growth coalitions at the State level.

Those who are familiar with Western Australia may be wondering how these ideas tie in
with the dominant features of the historical portrayal of the State’s developing economy.
Foremost among these development phases are: the 1890s Gold Rush, the development of a
viable agricultural sector, post war industrial expansion and, since the 1960s continued

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1 In reference to the overly optimistic claims made by property speculators during the 1880s in
Melbourne, as described by Cannon (1966) in his book The Land Boomers.
mineral resource development (Webb and Web 1993; Bolton 1972; Harman and Head 1981). Leaving aside industrial development for the moment, it is readily apparent that both rural and mineral development hinges on the state regulating the division of land through freehold ownership, leasing and licensing arrangements. In essence, these economic activities are dependent upon the subdivision of land or, more conceptually, the subdivision of space, which I am arguing is the central interest of the state and a broad coalition of private sector interests. From a regulatory theory perspective, the state's role in maintaining a stabilised land tenure and sub-division process involves not only the creation of an appropriate legislative framework but also entails encouraging land investment through infrastructure provision, marketing and technical assistance, and the development of a broad spectrum of complementary social regulating mechanisms.

For providing these allied land regulatory services, the state benefits through direct sales and lease payments and various administrative fees, royalties, and taxes. However, for these benefits to be fully realised the state must encourage others to invest their money and/or labour in the state's larger enterprise. Stirling's original boosting of Western Australia's less than perfect agricultural potential, and unknown minerals potential, was enough to convince both the Colonial Office and the first settlers to make such an investment. Since then, the mainstay of Western Australia's historical development has been the promise of cheap land with attractive, fertile or mineral rich qualities. Over the course of this chapter, and later among the contemporary case studies, it will be argued that the character of this false - overly optimistic - promise has been replicated and propagated over time by growth coalitions. These coalitions, operate without any centralised intelligence, at different spatial scales - state wide, regional and local - and consist of those elements of the state and private interests already invested in the land based economy. A vision of competing schemes of pyramid selling comes to mind.

3.4 Harsh Realities and New Land Regulations

In reality, the first settlers had come to a virtually barren coastal plain, and the semi-subsistence agriculture yielded barely enough for the colony's inhabitants to survive the first sixty years. According to Fraser's Year Book (1906), some 640 persons arrived in the first year, and 1125 the next. However, with the harsh conditions and the spreading word of unrealised expectations the stream of new settlers soon turned to a trickle. By the mid
1830s, less than 150 new settlers were arriving each year and significant numbers were leaving. It is also noteworthy that newspapers such as the *Sydney Gazette* and the *Colonial Times* (Hobart) were quick to publish negative stories about the Swan River Colony, perhaps reflecting the rivalry among Australian colonies in attracting new settlers. There was, however, no disputing the foundations of these negative stories. The settlers had arrived at the beginning of the winter storms, and they were exposed to gale force winds and driving rain. They were unfamiliar with the nature of the land and farming practices in general and, as many historians have noted, they were totally unprepared for the challenges and isolation that pioneering a new settlement in hostile lands would entail. There were major crop failures and stock losses, and in two prominent cases, large scale settlement initiatives led by investors, Thomas Peel and Colonel Peter Latour, ended in failure and with the loss of life. In the case of Peel’s settlement, further deaths through malnutrition and disease among the indentured servants were only averted by Stirling intervening with public supplies.

Some 40 years later, in contemplating the character of the first settlers, Anthony Trollope elucidates:

> I do not know that there were specially high-minded men, flying from the oppressive rule of an old country, as did the Pilgrim Fathers who were landed from the Mayflower on the shores of Massachusetts; nor that they were gallant daring spirits, going forth with their lives in their hands, in search of exceptional wealth or honour, as so often has been done by Colombuses and Raleighs of the world. They certainly were not deposited on the shore because they were criminals. They seem to have been a homely crew, who found life at home rather too hard, and who allowed themselves to be persuaded that they could better their condition by a voyage across the world...They certainly did not have light work or an easy time in founding the colony of Western Australia (Trollope 1873:559).

From all accounts, the poor agricultural potential of the land, and the unpreparedness of the settlers were fundamental to the problems of the colony. The growing unrest among the Aboriginal people compounded the situation. It is also clear that the manner in which the land was initially subdivided and distributed impeded any prospect of rapid growth and, for this, Stirling’s administration can be fairly assigned responsibility. Less than two years after the Colony’s foundation, all lands on either side of the Swan and Canning rivers had been granted and, with no roads constructed, the waterways were the only means by which land suitable for farming could be accessed.
As surmised in Western Australia’s 1903 Year Book:

Numerous persons indeed left the colony in disgust, but retained immense tracts of land granted to them; so that those who arrived afterwards were unable to obtain land in favourable localities, and the population was in this way thinly scatted over a wide area, the best land being unprofitably locked up (Fraser 1906:12).

The Colonial Administration tried to hide the full extent of the departures from the Colonial Office, but at least half the original grantees left the colony (Cameron 1981:104). When Edward Wakefield, who was perhaps the colony’s biggest critic, described Western Australia ‘as the best example of the worst kind of colonialism’ (Ogle 1939:135), he was referring in particular to the apparent self serving excesses of the Colonial Administration’s role in granting large tracts of land to investors who had neither the capital, labour or skills appropriate to the task of pioneering rural settlement. Wakefield argued that the correct balance of labour, capital and land, together with a system of municipal land rates collected for public improvements would foster a more centralised, consolidated, and productive settlement pattern (Ogle 1839). His criticism of the Western Australian experience in land speculation was influential in the Colonial Office where there were already concerns over the growing number of requests from the colony for more direct assistance.

The Colonial Office was also aware that very little revenue had been raised even though more than one million acres had been distributed among investors in the colony. For these reasons, and despite protests from the colony, sympathetically conveyed by Stirling, the Colonial Office proclaimed the new Rippon Regulations in 1831, raising the minimum sale price of all land sold by the government to 5 shillings per acre, on a par with the price of land in the other colonies of Australia. However, as Ogle (1839) also noted, lands continued to be allotted without purchase up to July 1832, albeit on less favourable terms.

For the Colonial Office, the Rippon Regulations were to serve three purposes: to curtail excessive land speculation; to standardise land sale procedures among the Australian colonies; and to promote the colonies as suitable avenues for absorbing Britain’s excess labour. For the fledgling colony of Western Australia, however, these regulations undermined the colony’s main competitive advantage over the other Australian colonies in attracting new settlers, namely with large land grants on generous terms. Certainly, all the good land in the immediate vicinity of the Swan River had already been distributed but the
new regulations compounded this problem by stifling the incentive for further private exploration. However, while this argument stops short of suggesting that the Rippon Regulations were good for the colony, they did foster a more consolidated settlement pattern and greater land capitalisation together with increased agricultural production. Moreover, while the regulations were unpopular among the settlers, there is little evidence to suggest that the punitive measures were enforced in cases other than those where there was flagrant speculation, absenteeism, or abandonment.

Writers such as Cameron (1975), Pitt Morison (1979), Poole (1979), and Ogle (1839) have generally viewed the Rippon Regulations as a tough and unfortunate policy shift for the new colony which discouraged new settlers, and forced privately held non improved lands (speculative holdings) to revert back to Crown ownership. However, what these writers have tended to overlook is that the high price affixed to government sold land also implicitly served to stabilise and inflate the market price of privately held land. The stream of new settlers had already turned to a trickle before the Rippon Regulations were in place, and even after they came into effect, as both Cameron (1979) and Pitt Morison (1979) acknowledge, anyone arriving in the colony with capital could purchase good quality land available on the private market for 1-2 shillings per acre, which was considerably less than the government price of 5 shillings per acre. To be clear, compared with the amount of alienated land, there was a chronic shortage of both labour and capital in the colony, and under these conditions and in the absence of any price regulation, the value of land would be negligible. In this way, as unpopular as the new regulations were, the holders of land grant titles did benefit, because their property values which were dependent upon the colony’s fragile property market, were hedged against the fall in demand by the state inflating the price and restricting the supply of land.

Compared to the rules and principles guiding the subdivision process during the colony’s first 18 months, the new orientation of the Rippon Regulations broadly supports the argument that land allotments generally became smaller, of poorer quality, and more expensive over time. However, since so little revenue was raised from these regulations (Ogle 1839:136) it appears less obvious as to how the state benefited through this change in land regulation. Nonetheless, the Crown’s agenda towards a unified fee structure which curtailed excessive speculation was implemented, albeit reluctantly by Stirling. Furthermore, while the growth of the Swan River Colony may have slowed because of the
new regulations, there were spin-off growth, consolidation, and productivity benefits anticipated and realised among the other Australian colonies. Over the long term, the local colonial state would also benefit from the new regulations because, if the colony was ever going to grow, something drastic had to transpire to rectify the unproductive way that the land had originally been subdivided. Moreover, as Senior Officers of the local state, Stirling and his cronies could secure their own large estates against the punitive measures of the regulations, and they would benefit from the stabilised and inflated land prices. So, in keeping with the central premise of this Chapter, those that were most disadvantaged by the new regulations were the more recent settlers who were compelled to pay more for less.

Figure 3.1 Early Settlement

In 1840 the Swan River Colony had a European population of 2,311. There were less than 400 homes in Perth and less than 350 in Fremantle (Pitt Morison 1979:19).

A similar pattern of power and privilege was evident in the form and scheduling of the first subdivisions in the initial planning of Perth. In an analysis of the earliest records of the surveying and layout of Perth, which followed a crude form of land use zoning, Pitt Morison (1979) notes that the subdivision and settlement proceeded first with the lots for government officers, followed by other lots on the hill assigned to official persons. Further on down the
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hill, lots were then assigned to government employees and artisans, followed by lots for the early arrivals, doctors and others associated with the establishment. As she concludes, 'the documents throw an interesting light on the origins of the city and indicate that control was maintained almost to a suggestion of some sort of social stratification' (Pitt Morison 1979:14). In looking beyond this coy conclusion, the point being made, is that those who were responsible for administrating the subdivision process were preferential to their own interests in securing both timing and locational advantages. Consequently the emerging spatial order reflected the maintenance of a pre-existing stratified social order.

3.5 The Emerging Character of the Western Australian Growth Coalition

Reflecting on this telling of history, there are a number of important points that are illustrative of the nature and character of the emerging growth coalition. Firstly, the initial colonisation of Western Australia, actually involved thousands of social actors, with some few of these exercising considerably more power than others. Among the most influential of these, were Stirling and the cliques of large scale investors, and the Colonial Office bureaucrats who were conscious of both the potential costs and opportunities of colonial expansion into Western Australia. Shipping agents and labour recruiters were also supportive of the initiative, as were the British newspapers, and in combination these social agents fostered and propagated the 'Swan River Mania' as described by Cameron (1981:51). In reacting to these persuasions, small scale investors also made their commitments, as did parish poor houses, some of which contributed to paying the passage of those who were induced to become indentured servants bound for the new colony.

Those who actually embarked for the Swan River Colony were volunteers who, in aiming to better their relative positions in life, were prepared to risk their lives and fortunes. Each of these respective commitments - reflecting the many aspirations, decisions, and actions - that were instrumental to the colonisation of Western Australia, were based less on facts and more on wishful speculation. This finding, was the cornerstone of Cameron's thesis, and a function of what he termed 'the geography of the mind' (Cameron 1981:xviii). The evidence also suggests that with wider access to better knowledge, there were fewer prospective settlers. The settlers may have been an odd ensemble, and certainly their relative influence ranged from the powerful to the powerless, but arguably the 'quest for more', motivated by hope and often by desperation was also indicative of a common attitude. An attitude, that
may be the essential ingredient, if not the very essence of the pioneer spirit. Hasluck put it this way:

To all those officers on half pay and soldiers on pensions too small to be of much use, the new land offered a challenge again in life that had grown difficult and dull after the excitement of the war. The agrarian revolution and the land enclosures had forced a great number of small yeomen to become no more than farm labourers; to these the prospect of owning their own land again was alluring. The industrial revolution had produced a state of poverty and depression from which numbers wished to escape. The crowded slums of manufacturing cities made an uninhabited and savage wilderness seem infinitely preferable. Gentleman, soldier, farmer, tradesman, poor man, adventurer - the vast new land attracted them all (Hasluck 1959:14).

The promise of good land was the lure for the private investors who would settle and exploit the land. But the settlers were speculators, in that they were investing in the promise - not the reality - of large tracts of good quality productive land. They were seeking more out of life, and they were motivated to risk - speculate - their lives and capital on the promise of the wealth that access to good quality land would provide. In this way a stratified collective of disparate individuals, all subscribing to the same broad idea but acting without any centralised intelligence, came to be part of the land investment scheme that was to be the foundation of the new colony's economy.

3.6 Land Regulation and the Exercise of Power
Cameron’s research established that land, inclusive of its agricultural and minerals potential, was the prime motivation for the founding of the Swan River Colony. Land was then the colony’s fundamental economic resource, and it remains so, for Western Australia and the rest of Australia, as is recognised by contemporary writers (Neutze 1979; Sandercock 1975; Berry and Huxley 1992). However, contrary to what many have concluded, there was never any ‘lack of control over the fundamental economic resource’ Sandercock (1975:217). Rather, as is being argued throughout this Chapter, the regulation of land was/is of central importance to the Crown, the local-state, and a coalition of private interests. Indeed, as early as 1836, when writing his manual for those intending to emigrate to Western Australian, Nathaniel Ogle (1839) warned against the extraordinary and unprincipled powers retained by the Crown and its agents, over privately held land. In the following passage, Ogle quotes from the General Law Of Public Sale 1828 and then expresses his criticisms:
The evolution of the economy, the primacy of land and the emergence of growth coalitions

The crown reserves to itself the right of making and constructing such roads and bridges as may be necessary for public purposes in all lands purchased as above, and also to such indigenous timber, stone, and other materials, the produce of the land, as may be required for making and keeping the said roads and bridges in repair, and for any other public works. The crown further reserves to itself all mines of precious metals... The power invested by the above clause in the government (and consequently in their officials) is far too great, and so undefined as to greatly diminish the value of free tenure of the estate, and, moreover operates as a perpetual and undefined charge on the property...It is not prudent to be thus left at the mercy or caprice of successive governors or officials (Ogle 1839:90).

Although he was a keen promoter of the colony, Ogle, was particularly concerned that the arbitrary exercise of these extraordinary powers increased the prospect of local level corruption, and dissuaded potential investors by adding to the climate of uncertainty. In the Postscript to his book, Ogle was also very critical of the proposed Rippon Regulations whereby the Crown exercised its authority over the local-state with the introduction of an Australia-wide land price and settlement policy. As he writes; 'No one in a sane state would pay his money for such permission, as land in the best situations is to be purchased at a price less than it is sold by the government' (Ogle 1839:295). For over ten years, the Colonial Office pressed on with various attempts to consolidate the colony’s settlement pattern. Some of these Wakefield inspired land tenure policies were adopted, but others were vehemently resisted by the settlers and, more tactfully by Stirling, and his successor Governor Hutt.

The main point, however, is that there were certain controls, but their effective status and implementation was from the very start a contested process. Stirling to a large degree could use his discretionary powers to administer the regulations, and when it became a priority, the Crown was able to foster a more consolidated settlement pattern. The settlers, however, could also use their collective lobbying power and their local knowledge to mitigate and in some cases benefit from the policy changes. As was concluded 40 years later by the Surveyor General John Forrest, the settlers used the opportunities within the new policy measures to reconfigure their estates and 'pick the eyes out' of the best that the land had to offer (Crowley, 1971:143). There was indeed, a precise order to the pattern of agricultural settlement, because '...even now, it is possible to determine the areas settled in the pre-

2 Almost a fifth of the 1.55 million acres that had been granted between 1829 and 1832 was returned to the Crown.
In effect, Sandercock's commonly held view, confuses 'uncontrolled' from what may appear as 'undesirable' outcomes and these, I suggest, tend to reflect not the lack of control but the direction of the control and the intended and unintended consequences. In turn, as is being argued throughout this thesis, the priorities which define the direction of control are the outcome of diverse and competing authorities and interests - the substance of governance - albeit with a general orientation towards a quest for more growth.

From this perspective, the apparent problems associated with the initial subdivisions did not stem from a lack of control, rather they were a reflection of the priorities to expedite the settlement process, and to meet the land investors' sagging expectations for access to large tracts of good quality land. In his research on Stirling's priorities at this juncture (Markey 1977:43) is quite clear that it was the sudden arrival of yet more settlers that spurred on the hasty subdivision process. The subdivision of agricultural land did proceed quickly. However, for this to be achieved it was necessary for the prospective title holders to undertake their own surveys and to report the details. The Surveyor General and his two assistants could never have completed this task with the necessary speed, and greater priorities lay in surveying the town sites of Perth and Fremantle. However, even within this apparent confusion, it would be wrong to interpret the process as uncontrolled because, as has been noted, the overall result was that those who wielded the most local influence laid claim to the largest and best parcels of land.

The subtle nature and form of this control is also apparent from an examination of Perth's first recorded Town Plan which was printed as an insert on the Arrowsmith map Discoveries in Western Australia, published in London 31 May, 1833, from documents supplied to the Colonial Office by the colony's Surveyor General. In her analysis, Pitt Morison (1982) notes that the long rectangular grid pattern, crossed by shorter streets against the contours, was peculiar to Perth among the Australian colonies. It was also reminiscent of the layout of Edinburgh New Town which, as with the name Perth, reflected the Scottish heritage of Stirling, Roe, Mackie, and others among the colony's leading settlers. An even more detailed examination of the Town Plan by Markey (1977:36) reveals that the 'kink' in the otherwise straight St. Georges/Adelaide Terrace was necessary to accommodate the house
and adjacent land owned by none other than John Septimus Roe, the colony’s Surveyor General. Amidst the apparent chaos there were in fact highly specific controls and spatial orders.

3.7 An Exception to the Rule?

This distinction between ‘uncontrolled’ and ‘priorities of control’ interpretations of the nature of land regulation also parallels an earlier discussion. In Chapter Two, this distinction was highlighted as vital for understanding the nature of planning, governance and the exercise of power. From one perspective, the confusion apparent in the processes and outcomes of planning and development tends to be hastily described as uncontrolled, even when there is often an acknowledgment of the prevailing influence of selective interests (see for example Hedgecock and Yiftachel eds. 1992). The other perspective, is more consistent in its structural orientation. So, while it acknowledges the apparent chaos brought about by ignorance and happenstance, it also recognises the general direction of the controlling influences among the competing interests and persuasions. Viewed this second way, the priorities of control apparent in the regulation of land, were in themselves a reflection of the exercise of power. A power, expressed in the orientation and implementation of land regulations which enabled, but did not guarantee, that principal agents of the growth coalition would prosper despite the less than favourable conditions.

One of the exceptions to this pattern - the disaster that befell Thomas Peel - provides a useful illustration of the necessary refinements to this essentially structuralist position. Moreover, Peel’s story again alludes to the dynamics behind the dominant influence of place-tied social actors, which is at the heart of Logan and Molotch’s (1987) ideas on growth coalitions. By most accounts, Thomas Peel was ignorant of farming and devoid of leadership skills (Hasluck 1965). He was, however, the cousin of the Home Secretary, and the land investment scheme that he fronted had lobbied the Colonial Office seeking to be granted the largest and most favourably endowed estate - originally one million hectares, between the Swan and Canning rivers. Unfortunately for Peel, the British Press seized upon this blatant example of nepotism, and they variously described him as corrupt and greedy, and they exposed and politically compromised his benefactor. In the process, the Colonial Office began to renegotiate the terms of the grant agreement, which reduced the size of the estate and toughened the pre-requisites in line with other large scale investment schemes.
This reputation, preceded Peel’s late arrival in the colony, some eight months after the first fleet. By then, the best land had been distributed among Stirling’s associates and other influential agents, who were already in the colony and who were knowledgable in articulating their claims. Against this, Peel’s relative influence had been marginalised through time and space. Stirling had been told to show no preference to Peel and, importantly, Peel had not been in the colony to represent his interests. Consequently, the grant reserved for Peel was smaller, more isolated, and less fertile than he and his backer had been led to believe. The Peel Estate covered 250 000 ha, however it was located to the extreme south of the existing settlement and on the coastal plain characterised by sandy soils and salt marshes.

The situation never improved for Peel. Stirling grew to dislike the man’s constant complaining about the inadequacies of the estate, his mounting stock losses, and the worrying presence of aboriginals. There was also a serious loss of provisions when one of Peel’s three supply ships ran aground in the shallows of Cockburn Sound. More disturbing, however, was that Peel’s incompetence had led to deaths among his servants through starvation and disease. Given the chronically short labour supply, this was a particularly regrettable episode for the new colony. By 1839, the last of the indentured servants had abandoned the estate, and amid this economic ruin, Peel stayed on in the colony and lived a long but simple and disillusioned life. When he died in 1865, there was no obituary and, as Hasluck (1965:242) comments, ‘he is remembered today as an outstanding failure’.

Peel’s story demonstrates that not all of the wealthy and well-connected investors that came to the colony prospered from their experience. Perhaps if Peel had not been so incompetent or unlucky, things would have turned out better. However, there are some key features to his demise that suggest that was more than bad luck and incompetence against him. He was not one of Stirling’s closest associates, and the scale and location of his initial land claim would have severely undermined the prospects of many other investors. Those agents who were pursuing competing claims were also well connected, and it is certain that their complaints were heard by the press and the Colonial Office. Perhaps too, the scale of the ‘greedy’ plan and the glaring nepotism was just too blatant for the British press to ignore so close to an election. In any event, the decline of Peel’s power and influence was spatially reflected in his estate’s inferior location and quality of land. Moreover, as is revealed in Hasluck’s (1965:178-182) detailed account of the exchange of letters surrounding Peel’s
affairs, the outcome was a product of competing networks of agents, consciously influencing decisions where they could, while purposely reacting to emergent unknowns in a bid to maintain and improve their lot in life.

Figure 3.2 Peels Estate - the Proposed versus the Eventual
3.8 Agricultural Development

As an agriculturally based settlement, there were few early successes and it seems that the colony only barely survived its first sixty years. Factors such as the poor soils, unfamiliar growing seasons, noxious weeds, and the chronic shortage of labour all combined to severely hamper agricultural production. Land clearance also proved to be a particularly arduous task. Fortunately for the settlers there were existing tracks and clearings, which had been established by the local Nyoongar people, and these were developed into the first roads, fields, and pastures. The first plantings yielded dismal results but the settlers learned from each other, and gradually they came to terms with the unfamiliar landscape. Wheat showed early promise, as did fine wool as a potential export earner. The harvests in 1834-35 produced a grain surplus, and from that time on, stock numbers steadily increased.

As has been previously discussed, although the settlers did come prepared for mixed farming, the quest for more land, and the orientation of the grant regulations promoted grazing over cropping. Given the difficulty with land clearance, pastoral activities were also much less labour intensive than tillage. In the early years, this trend towards pastoralism was to some extent offset by a scheme introduced by Stirling, whereby the state guaranteed to purchase all wheat grown in the colony for a fixed price. The scheme ended in 1835 and, by 1840, sheep reared for wool and mutton dominated farm investment and production. Open range grazing became the preferred option and Perth based investors also financed flocks managed by squatters, and shepherds on leased land in outer regions, north to Moore River and south between the Arthur, Williams and Gordon rivers. Cattle herds were kept to supplement incomes with meat and dairy produce, and vegetables and grains were also cultivated for subsistence purposes.

Overall then, within the first ten years of settlement, the colony was able to satisfy its immediate needs for food and agricultural produce. Moreover, a system of land tenure had been established, and with the reconfiguration of first agricultural subdivisions, as well as the pastoral expansion beyond the Avon Valley, the foundations for the agricultural based economy had been laid. The land tenure reforms during the early 1840s were particularly important as they created a distinction in the price of government leased land in outer and inner settlement areas. This measure was introduced by the Legislative Council under Governor Hutt (1839-46) to accommodate the needs of open range pastoral activities, as well as to encourage tillage on small lots close to established settlement areas. However, as
was noted earlier, these reforms also allowed the established pastoralists a second chance at securing the best of the colony’s land.

Given the harsh conditions, agricultural subsistence was an achievement for the colony but it fell well short of the initial expectations. The promise of mineral wealth was also not immediately realised and, for sixty years, there was no real economic foundation for the colony’s continued existence. As a consequence, the colony’s population growth stagnated, as did the markets for agricultural produce and land. The colony was heavily reliant on imports, and the dire state of the balance of trade was only slightly mitigated through the export of sandalwood, timber, and some cattle and horses. There was also very little money within the colony, and barter and credit notes formed the basis of economic exchange. Those few settlers who did prosper, were wealthy from the start, and to derive what they could from the lacklustre land they were reliant on harnessing cheap, often indentured labour. As table 3.1 below illustrates, even by 1850, compared to either Victoria or South Australia (which was 7 years younger) Western Australia was considerably less developed and running a trade deficit.

Table 3.1 Western Australia’s Struggling Rural Economy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Western Australia</th>
<th>South Australia</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>5 000</td>
<td>50 000</td>
<td>50 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres Cropped</td>
<td>8 000</td>
<td>50 000</td>
<td>40 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horses</td>
<td>3 000</td>
<td>6 000</td>
<td>17 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>12 000</td>
<td>100 000</td>
<td>400 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>150 000</td>
<td>1 200 000</td>
<td>5 200 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigs</td>
<td>2 500</td>
<td>1 500</td>
<td>6 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imports*</td>
<td>45 000</td>
<td>400 000</td>
<td>500 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports*</td>
<td>35 000</td>
<td>500 000</td>
<td>600 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Pounds Stirling. Source: Colebatch (1929:58)

3.9 Convict Labour - When Subsistence Was Not Enough

That the colony’s survival was dependent upon cheap labour became more apparent during the 1840s when the pastoralists intensified their lobbying efforts to receive transported convicts from Britain. The convict era in Western Australia (1850-1868) is worthy of its
own historical focus (see Hasluck 1959) but for now it is important to recognise that it was a
desperate, if somewhat unpopular, attempt to redress the lack of labour, capital, and
decaying public reserves. As convict transportation to the east coast of Australia had been
curtailed for 15 years, it was an initiative against the tide of the times. However, the
shortage of labour in the colony undermined the pastoralists’ organised efforts to depress
labour costs, and other attempts to import cheap labour had failed. Worse still, such were
the conditions for labourers in the colony, that those who could afford to leave did so, often
departing for the eastern colonies.

From a base population of only 5,000 in 1850, the colony was to receive almost 10,000
convicts over an 18 year period, along with 5,000 assisted immigrants. The capital received
by the colony to accommodate the convicts amounted to 103,666 pounds sterling, or 182
pounds per convict (Appleyard 1981) and as a consequence, the convict era transformed
both the physical and social fabric of the colony. More particularly, it was convict labour
and convict related capital which first developed the colony’s infrastructure, a responsibility
that had been ignored by the first settlers, despite the improvement requirements stipulated
in the initial land grant regulations. The newly arrived convicts built roads, bridges, and
public buildings. They were sturdy constructions, designed by government architects and
engineers, and largely financed by the Crown’s capital tied to the transportation and
settlement of convict labour (Campbell 1979). Ticket-of-leave convicts were also sent to
work on private estates, clearing land, constructing fences, harvesting and undertaking other
labour intensive farm activities. The consolidation of York and Toodyay as agricultural
centres and, thus, the prosperity of the pastoralists, owes much to the efforts of convict
labour.

From a growth coalition perspective, the convict era was a continuation of the trend
whereby the colony’s development was dependant upon the importation of labour and
capital. Its particular distinction, was that the in-migration of labour was forced, rather than
lured by the promise good quality of land. Anthony Trollope (1873) understood this point,
when he mused that for the colony to grow, convicts were the solution when free labour
either would not come, or would choose to leave once the chance arose. Moreover, Trollope
recognised the quorum of local ‘jobbers’ who emerged to benefit and siphon from the pool
of convict labour and capital. According to Stannage (1979:77-84), the principal agents
who encouraged the idea of convict transportation were a small number of the colony’s most
established pastoralists and merchants who were seeking a reserve of cheap labour, as well as expanding domestic markets. They were supported by the newly appointed Governor Fitzgerald (1848-55), and the Imperial Government which was seeking a cheaper solution to Britain's overcrowded gaols.

Although the public debates in the *Perth Gazette* reveal widespread concerns over the prospect of the colony becoming a penal settlement, Stannage (1979) notes that these were somewhat placated by a carefully tailored proposal, communicated by Governor Fitzgerald, to send only a manageable number specially selected convicts. The Pentonville proposal was never wholly sanctioned by the settlers and, given what actually transpired, it amounted to nothing less than the 'old bait and switch' tactic, whereby the number and nature of the convicts arriving, respectively increased and deteriorated over time. It is also important to recognise that the sudden arrival of the Pentonville convicts could conceivably have been challenged and turned back by the Swan River colonists, as was the case dockside in both Melbourne and Sydney in 1849. Instead, as Stannage (1979:83) reports, the arrival of the convicts was met with listless resignation among the majority of the settlers.

Those who were most disadvantaged by the arrival of the convicts were the skilled artisans and free agricultural labourers whose wages declined by up to 60% (*Perth Gazette 19, November*, 1852 quoted in Stannage 1979:96). After the first few years, however, the noticeable increase in crime added to the growing public disdain for the convict presence. The Colonial Administration also encouraged convicts who had earned a conditional pardon to leave the colony, and some 1500 did so, mostly headed for the Victorian Gold Rush. In effect, the local growth coalition was only interested in harnessing the convict labour as long as it was administered and financed by the Crown. The British Government eventually became aware of how the system was being rorted and, in a communique (22 March, 1861 from the House of Commons' Select Committee on Transportation), the comment was 'you are now pumping in 300 men at one end, and getting rid of them at the other' (quoted in Stannage 1979:93). Measures were soon introduced to relieve the excessive costs by concentrating the convict labour in the main settlement areas, while Governor Hampton (1862-68) ensured that they were effectively deployed undertaking fewer but larger public and private construction contracts. In any event, with a surplus of cheap labour already secured by the pastoralists, there were by 1868, when the British Government halted convict transportation, few remaining supporters of the scheme.
Some writers such as Pitt Morison (1979) and Campbell (1979) seem somewhat ambivalent in their assessment of the convict era’s contribution to Western Australia’s development. There is no disputing the increased level of crime and violence. The fact remains, however, that convict tied capital and labour built the roads and bridges, public buildings, and large scale drainage works that had been neglected by the colony’s first free settlers. Government House, the Perth Town Hall, the colony’s first hospital, and the bridge at North Fremantle were all constructed during the convict era. The capital and the skills brought in with the convicts also fostered new businesses supplying and transporting timber, bricks, cement, and quarried stone. In addition, the convicts and the pensioner guard provided a vastly expanded market for local farm produce, which reflected a big leap beyond subsistence level agriculture. Perhaps also signifying the scale of the changes taking place, Perth was constituted a city in September, 1855, along with the appointment of the colony’s first Bishop.

3.10 Consolidation if not Growth 1869-89

Compared to the pace of development during the convict era, the following two decades witnessed relatively modest growth. The colony’s survival was secure but, with population growth mostly limited to natural increase, and with few prospects of attracting external capital, it was again a worrying time for the colony, particularly in comparison to the envious prosperity generated by the Victorian gold rush in south eastern Australia and the subsequent property boom. Nevertheless, it was a period of consolidation. The first rail and telegraph lines were developed, the system of regulating land was overhauled (Crowley 1971) and there was a fourfold increase in the colony’s public revenues (Appleyard 1981).

One of the more ambitious initiatives to gain wide support as way of stimulating the colony’s growth, involved a privately financed rail-led agricultural settlement encompassing a land grant of over one million hectares in the south-west. *The Great Southern Line*, which linked Beverley and Albany (500 km), attracted hundreds of migrants to the colony during its construction. However, very few could be enticed to stay on to pioneer the farmland because by then, no doubt, they knew what it was ‘really’ like. Eventually the Colonial Administration had to buy the line for 1.1 million Pounds Sterling to save it from insolvency. A different kind of pro-growth initiative was aimed at encouraging gold
exploration by offering a reward for anyone posting the discovery of a sizeable deposit. Unfortunately, it was not until 1885 that small and relatively short lived deposits were discovered in the Kimberley district in the far north.

Although these higher profile initiatives failed to boost the colony’s rate of development significantly, they did contribute to a diversifying economy, as did the developing timber industry, and copper mining near Geraldton. Sandalwood and Whale products continued to add to export earnings, while the colony’s depressed wheat production was consumed domestically in competition with cheaper imports. It was wool, however, that dominated the economy in terms of employment and revenues, and by 1889 wool accounted for 77% of the colony’s total export earnings (Appleyard 1981).

Perhaps the most significant developments of this period involved a major overhaul of the administration and regulation of land. The Survey Department was reorganised into the Lands Department, the Torrens system of transferring land titles was introduced in 1874, and crown land regulations were changed to encourage a greater diversity of land classifications. Up until this time, revenues from land had not been separated out from other income sources, nor used for immigration purposes as was the case in the other Australian colonies (Crowley 1971:151). More directly, the new regulations offered pastoralists greater security with longer term leases and this in turn removed the compunction to sell unsurveyed crown lands. Provisions also allowed for deferred purchases in special agricultural areas which were specifically aimed at creating many more opportunities for small scale farmers in southern districts.

Crowley (1971) links the introduction of these ‘revolutionary’ land regulations to the ascendancy within the Lands Department of John Forrest who, after a relatively short and very distinguished period of service, became the colony’s Surveyor General in 1883. As the new regulations ‘installed the principle of no alienation without improvement’, Crowley (1971:171-3), muses that ‘perhaps they came too late for the colony’. However, as we have learned from earlier histories, the principle was in fact explicit even within the very first of the colony’s land grant regulations. More accurately, up until Forrest’s appointment, the existing rules supporting this principle had been effectively resisted by the settlers, particularly among the larger land owning interests, to a point where they had not been actively enforced by any of the colony’s previous Surveyor Generals or Governors.
Crowley's assessment of Forrest's role as Surveyor General (below) is revealing on several fronts:

By the stroke of his pen Forrest could virtually deprive a farmer of his land for failing to improve it, or a pastoralist of his lease for not stocking his property or being late in paying his rent. He could advise the Governor to run a road through the middle of a farm or station for public purposes, or declare a town site where none existed. He could decide a boundary dispute between quarrelling neighbours, and generally act, if he had the mind for it, as the land Czar of Western Australia. His decisions, or those under his authority could be disputed or challenged, or overruled by the Governor, but very few ever were. His position was that by reason of legal authority, prior knowledge of government policy, and day to day acquaintance with the land market could have been used corruptly to further his own and his friends' fortunes. But there is not the slightest evidence he ever did so (Crowley, 1971:164).

Firstly, the previous Surveyor Generals (John Septimus Roe and Malcolm Fraser) enjoyed a similar level of power and authority and arguably, Roe at least, exercised a much greater degree of discretion. Realistically therefore, if Forrest's design and advocacy were instrumental in shepherding through the new regulations - and given that they were in keeping with views on settlement policy long held by the Colonial Office - the main difference in respect of the local acceptance of these regulations was that the pastoralists, who dominated the Legislative Council, were appeased by the prospect of long term leases. They were also 'established' enough not to be troubled by the punitive measures within the improvement requirements. Crowley, also notes that the cautious sentiments expressed by the West Australian were pacified by the provisions which allowed a year long period for public comment, which again from a governance perspective, illustrates how public participation, in one form or another, was always part of the land regulation process.

Secondly if, as Crowley says, the Forrest brothers were honest in their land dealings, it is for certain that they were earlier victims of 'land jobbery'. Their parents were among the Wakefield inspired systematic colonisers who as a consortium in 1840 bought 62,000 acres from Governor Stirling's estate in Australind for 12 457 pounds stirling. In order to help finance his comfortable return to Britain, Stirling was keen to sell his land which, by then, he knew to be infertile and unsuitable for settlement. It is, as Cameron (1981) notes, ironic that the Australind settlement failed in its first year, primarily because it fell victim to very 'land jobbery' that had given credence to the acceptance of Wakefield's ideas within the Colonial Office.
Thirdly, John Forrest and his brother Alexander (government surveyor turned real estate agent) were both investigated for improper land dealings and, that done, were lucky to survive with their reputations only slightly tarnished. Moreover, as other historians have argued, in later years, it appears that John, who married into a land fortune, used his influence to cover his brother's dubious land dealings. According to Stannage (1979), Alexander Forrest benefited opportunistically from pastoral subsidies and suspect mining lease sales, as well as real estate deals in central Perth.

3.11 Gold, then Wheat, and New Urban Priorities.

In 1892, with the discovery of large deposits of gold near Coolgardie 600 km inland, the colony finally delivered on its promise for growth. The state, however, never received any royalties from gold even though the ore was owned and extracted under licence from the Crown and as Stevenson (1976) suggests, the pursuit of 'development seemed to be its own reward even if there were no direct benefits to the state treasury'. What the state gained through the Gold Rush was labour and capital.

With less than 50,000 settlers prior to 1893, the population surged over the next ten years as an estimated 340,000 persons emigrated to Western Australia. Most of them were men, and as Webb (1995:4) points out, of the 200,000 who eventually left, some were rich, but most were poorer than when they arrived. Of those who stayed the vast majority were Victorians, from a State on the south eastern corner of Australia which at the time was suffering through a dire depression in the aftermath of a gold rush and subsequent period of rampant land speculation (Cannon 1966).

There were many important developments during the gold rush years. The colony joined the federation and became a State in 1901, yet importantly, land remained under State rather than Federal control. The dramatic increase in capital, labour and public revenues also facilitated the construction of a deeper harbour in Fremantle, a water pipe line to the gold fields - across what would become the wheat belt - and the expansion of a state rail system. It was also a period of rapid expansion for local government, with major changes in the goldfields, the developing wheat belt, and the metropolitan regions.
For the pro-growth coalitions, the issue became not how to lure people and capital to Western Australia, but rather, how to keep them there. This was an early concern expressed and acted on through various state policies prior to the mass exodus of miners which began 1903. This point is covered by Berry (1995:7-8) who notes an 1891 report which calls for aid to be provided to farmers to increase the farming sector, and the 1893 Homestead Act which offered any man 160 acres of farming land, for free, as long as he lived on and improved the land for seven years. The early harnessing of policies and institutions which anticipated the sliding fortunes of gold and directed investment towards the development of a viable agriculture sector has been linked by Crowley (1971:183-186) to lessons learned on an earlier visit to Canada by John Forrest, the man who would become Western Australia's first Premier. In 1899, on his fact finding trip as the Colony's Commissioner for Lands, John Forrest had observed Canada's post gold rush policies aimed at developing a wheat industry by pioneering frontier lands through new rail head settlements.

As the gold production declined further and became more mechanised, the growing anxiety and intent to hold the population and maintain growth through agricultural development is expressed in the quotes Berry (1995) uncovers from the advertisements placed by Western Australia's State Government in eastern state newspapers:

*droughts unknown, seasons as certain as the sun rise...state agricultural bank the most liberal in the world...every acre well served by existing railways, proposed or under construction (The Australasian, December 25 1909).*

While advertisements like these were misleading, particularly in respect to the Western Australia's fickle and dry climate, the land was very cheap, and the state through its financial aid and infrastructure provisions did provide genuine incentives. The other telling aspect of these advertisements is that they allude to the character and key elements of the State's evolving growth coalition(s). The state's Agricultural Bank was the forerunner to the Rural & Industries Bank of Western Australia (R&I) which would continue the tradition as the state's main finance vehicle for securing both local and international capital for land and land resource development. The heavy reliance on subsidised transport infrastructure - first rail then later roads - would also be an ongoing feature of the state's land sale ethos. Newspapers too, particularly the *West Australian*, would play a key role in manufacturing the appropriate land development imagery, through advertisements and editorial content.
In addition to developing a viable agriculture sector, metropolitan based initiatives at the time also had the expressed intent of holding what remained of the gold rush population growth. Between 1893 and 1903 Perth's population tripled to almost 100,000 and, just as the emerging wheat industry had benefited from the increased local consumer markets, so too had the local merchants, manufacturers, real estate and construction related industries. Articles in the *West Australian* also linked improving the living conditions of Perth to stemming the apparent out-migration of miners. To this extent, the usually conservative *West Australian* promoted the idea of public investment in urban infrastructure and services, particularly in respect to water, sewers and gas. The newspaper also supported the *Greater Perth Movement* towards rationalised local government service provision, and the legislative and institutional developments associated with town planning and public health (Webb 1979:371).

While the development of urban utilities, roads, schools, hospitals, and housing had all been made possible through the gold generated wealth and population growth it was, as Stannage (1979) pointed out, against the sentiments of the rural based land owning constabulary. John Forrest and Alexander Forrest, respectively the State Premier and Perth Mayor during the early 1900s, maintained rural rather than urban predilections, perhaps reflecting their rural upbringing, their careers as pioneering surveyors, and that their main political support emanating from the old pastoralist families. Instead, the impetus for the urban improvements came from the new urban voters who, as a loose coalition of interests, formed an emerging political force to be reckoned with. This coalition spanned the interests of the working and middle classes seeking basic urban services, together with the merchants, contractors and urban property developers who would derive both direct and indirect financial benefit from such public investments.

Stannage (1979) develops the points above with all the appropriate historic detail. However, to bring home the contemporary relevance of this work, later in Chapter Five, I will argue that the political momentum towards a shift from rural to more urban oriented land development, has its parallels in the 1990s among the fast growing lifestyle towns in the State's southwest. More generally though, from a regulatory theory perspective, this telling of history also hints of the possible consequences and ramifications arising from a situation where the entrenched nature and sensibilities of an existing growth coalition become out of step with shifting political and economic imperatives.
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Compared with the State's very effective quest for agricultural development, its response to popular demands for urban infrastructure and services was to prove farcical. The apparent difference in the effectiveness of outcomes between the urban and rural development on many levels suggests that the subsequent opportunity costs incurred by the urban population - mostly new arrivals - was a reflection of policy priorities and the exercise of power, rather than ineffective government. The early harnessing of gold generated labour and capital through the creation of effective rural development policies and institutions clearly demonstrated the State's capacity to attain extremely challenging objectives. While this capacity was within the parameters of the 'business as usual' land sale and development ethos, it more particularly reflected the priorities of the established pastoralists who still held hegemonic control over the distribution of the State's resources.

Rural land holders, both private and State, would benefit from the subdivision and sale of their estates, the value of which would significantly increase with the development of railroads and rural service towns. Not surprisingly, deciding which towns were to have a railway going through, and when, was a highly contested process (Glynn 1975). In other words, the 3 000 plus kilometres of expensive tracks laid prior to 1914, were largely defined by competing growth coalitions, local and state wide, lobbying for their joint and respective interests. In contrast, urban infrastructure projects associated with water, sewerage and gas were poorly funded and administered. The initiative to create one metropolitan government for Perth also floundered without the state's full backing, due to opposition from some local authorities, and the first Town Planning Act (1911) remained a hollow legislative shell (Jones 1979; Berry 1992). Considering the rapid population growth, urban service provisions were totally inadequate, there were claims of corruption, and finally in 1908 a new Perth Mayor with urban and working class sensibilities was elected.

In hindsight, in Western Australia it is unlikely that either wheat farming or more general agriculture production, ever had the capacity to support a large rural population. The poor soils, the lack of water, and the general harshness of the land posed severe limitations despite all the state's efforts. In the metropolitan area, however, the population growth was retained through a diversifying economy that ultimately serviced the mining and developing agricultural industries. While gold and increasingly wheat were to become the main sources of export earnings during the early to mid twentieth century, the centralised government
administration and transport facilities in Perth ensured that it would remain the State's service centre. Moreover, without much in the way of an established urban fabric, the construction of city and suburban developments which accompanied the growing and diversifying economy was in itself a key source of employment, and thus of population attraction and retention. In short, irrespective of the state's rural development objectives, in Perth there was a concentration of population in a developing urban economy, which spawned and acted politically on very different urban priorities.

The absence of an interested State Government was sorely missed in respect to larger urban infrastructure developments. As a consequence Perth suffered, perhaps unnecessarily, through successive outbreaks of water borne diseases, and the inconvenience and cost of private wells. Nevertheless, construction and real estate interests, together with a patchwork of local government authorities established much of Perth's inner city core and surrounding suburbs. By 1914, home ownership was a prerogative of some 40% of the population, and subdivision proposals, which roughly followed the conventions and regulations formulated by Stirling and Roe in the early years, were administered by local authorities and registered with the State's Lands Department (Hedgcock and Yiftachel 1992).

Compared with Sydney or Melbourne, formalised town planning was slow to develop in Perth. However, other institutional and technical developments of the day paralleled those elsewhere in Australia. For example, the Builders and Contractors Association was formed, and the Institute of Architects published conditions for competitive tendering. Rudimentary land use planning was administered by local authorities largely through the Health Act of 1911 and local bylaws. The Health Act also established basic housing standards and devolved responsibilities to local authorities for public sanitary provisions including septic tanks, street drainage and refuse disposal sites. The comfort of Perth's wealthier citizens also improved with the introduction of the telephone and gas lighting.

Together then, the construction of new towns in the goldfields and wheat-belt, the suburban and city centre developments in Perth, and all the railways, roads, and infrastructure between, created a long boom for the construction industry, that slowed but kept on going even through the First World War. The State Government still owned most of the buildings and commissioned most of the construction contracts. However, private business firms from
the eastern states and overseas also needed to build or buy locally based offices and warehouses. Moreover, as White (1979) points out, the streamlined Modernist approach to architecture was not in evidence prior to the 1920s, and building designs tended to be individual and extravagant and, therefore, capital, materials, and labour intensive.

Perth's hinterland was also rich in construction materials. The timber industry supplied sawn lumber, limestone was readily available as cut blocks or for cement, granite was quarried, and local clays made good quality bricks. So, along with the building and transport contractors, engineers, architects, and skilled tradesmen, the suppliers of building materials - predominantly land based resources albeit with some secondary processing - profited greatly.

Not surprisingly the lure of Western Australia's growing economy, particularly in comparison with the depressed eastern states, also attracted a wave of corporate and institutional speculative investors. Among them were overseas based trading banks, insurance companies, and building societies, which together with local merchants and mining magnates, invested heavily in real estate transforming central Perth and its rapidly expanding suburbs.

In retrospect, by 1914 the diversifying economy in Perth and the State was broadly comparable with that of today's. In Perth, the broad based actor network akin to the urban growth coalition described by Logan and Molotch (1987) had effectively expanded upon and usurped the old order. The fact that home ownership was achievable for middle and some working class families extended the electoral and rate-payer base of these coalitions. At the same time, national and international capital actors, interfacing with local elites, added further complexity. Nevertheless, in keeping with the pattern of development, those who had been investing in Western Australia's land based economy for the longest time and to the largest extent, generally profited the most. Generally they sold or leased smaller and/or poorer quality properties for higher prices to the next wave of migrants, be they potential farmers, miners, or home owners.

The migrants brought with them labour and capital, and in one form or the other, these were exchanged to buy or lease into the 'land racket' (Sandercock 1977). Given that the value of the land was enhanced by their investment, and by their presence as consumers, the whole
process resulted in the extraction and transfer of an economic surplus from the newer settlers to the advantage of the state (State) and the more established landowning-development interests. Similarly, merchants, media interests, professional services, and local commodity producers of all types, had a vested interest in promoting population growth, and they too benefited from favourable reports of the land's attractive potential.

3.12 The Group Settlements and Other Examples of Federal-State Relations

Thus far little has been said about federation. However, to reinforce a point made in the last section, it is clear that federalism was a critical factor in expanding upon and usurping Western Australia's pre-existing hegemony through the promotion and consolidation of urban based politics. Through the ballot box, the interests of urban and working class voters, and those of women in general, were all advanced beyond the narrow interests of the rural oriented constabulary.

According to Sawer (1956) the six States joined the federation for different reasons and, although they were conscious of the defence and trade advantages of federation, no State was going to give away their rights over the land, nor the land based resources. Under the Australian Constitution, Crown Land and land regulation in general remains the prerogative of the States. To be clear, it is the States who administer the sale and leasing of land, and it is the States who can claim and negotiate royalties from minerals, timber and other land based resources. Furthermore, in respect to urban governance, it is the State's control over the land based economy that affirms the need to inquire, at the State level, as to how it is that the urban economy articulates with and is articulated within national and global regimes of accumulation.

In other words, the constitution has separated the Nation state from a direct hand in controlling the mainstay of the nation's economy. Not surprisingly, this factor is the source of much of the tension in State and Federal relations. Federalism, however, tends towards centralism and traditionally the Federal Government has used foreign policy associated with trade and immigration as leverage (Sawer 1988) in exercising some control over the land based economy. More recently though, the Federal Government has intervened in the State's administration of land and its resources through policy initiatives associated with environmental and Aboriginal affairs. For example, in 1995 the High Court of Australia
ruled that Federal Native Title legislation, in some instances, overrides State title legislation, and it remains a very controversial issue particularly in respect to mining and pastoral leases.

In another recent example, the first large scale direct federal intervention into urban affairs for over twenty years (Collins 1993) has come through the Building Better Cities Program at a cost of over $100 million in Western Australia alone. If the flagship project for this program in Western Australian is anything to go by, the East Perth Redevelopment Authority has certainly not delivered on the Federal Government’s agenda. After having spent $30 million of federal grants on environmental rehabilitation and infrastructure, the federal government’s commitment for affordable housing was effectively usurped by a new State Government and State Planning Minister (Alexander 1994b). Nor was there any evidence of the three levels of government working together as one, which was another explicit aim of the federally sponsored ‘model’ program. The East Perth redevelopment project will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four, but for now, it and other examples begin to characterise Federal-State relations in respect to the land based economy.

Returning to consider these Federal-State dynamics in the context of Western Australia’s historical development, the Soldiers and Group Settlement Schemes between the wars were again illustrative of the potential for state sponsored land rorts. Both programs were designed by the State Government, but they were supported by the Federal Government with direct funding and through migration policy. The Soldiers Settlements began in 1919 as part of the campaign for ‘a land fit for heroes’, however, it came to an early end (1920-21) because of the obvious unsuitability of many of the soldier farmers. Less than 40% of the 5300 farms were still occupied by 1938 at an estimated cost of 28 million pounds (Young 1985).

The Group Settlement Scheme began in 1921, and in the following year the State’s Premier James Mitchell went to Britain to convince two million potential settlers that there was land and work for all in Western Australia. The scheme organised groups of twenty farming families to clear land and build homes. The individual holdings were then allocated through a ballot. The State was to channel funds to the ‘groupies’ while they developed their farms to the point of generating an income. In practice, however, the groupies were working for pitifully low wages and again, many of the settlers were unsuitable to the task. By 1928
when the scheme ended, some 30% of the 2442 holdings had been abandoned at cost of 8 million pounds to the State (Gabbedy 1988).

The lands that were covered by these schemes were on the north eastern fringe of the wheat-belt out from Geraldton around Bencubbin and Eneabba, and in the tall timber country around Manjimup, Denmark, and Margaret River in the southwest (see Figure 3.3). These lands were marginal which, given the propensity for West Australians to consume land, is the main reason why in the 1920s they were still available for new settlement. It is also worth noting that, in selecting settlements, those locals who did participate in the schemes generally chose wheat-belt areas over southwest forest areas because they were capable of generating an income stream faster than the heavily timbered lands, which were much more labour intensive.

**Figure 3.3  Group Settlement Areas**

Perhaps tellingly, the former estate of Thomas Peel just south of Perth was also included among the Group Settlements. To a cynic this might suggest that the original disaster prone land grant was so bad that 100 years later ‘ya still couldn’t give it away’.
WESTERN AUSTRALIA,

THE LAND OF GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

EMIGRANTS — EMIGRANTS.

EXCEPTIONAL FACILITIES OFFERED.

VAST AND FERTILE TERRITORY.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." — Shakespeare.

Napoleon Bonaparte's ideal of each individual being his own LANDLORD still fascinates, and the Nation's prosperity may be gauged by such a policy.

AVOID THE VISIONARY. BUT DO NOT NEGLECT SOLID FACTS.

OUR ENTENTE CORDIALE EXTENDS TO DESIRABLE SETTLERS.

CHEAP LAND

ON MOST

LIBERAL CONDITIONS.

160 ACRES AS A HOMESTEAD FARM FOR £1. NO RENT.

1,000 Acres under RESIDENCE, from 10s. per acre upwards, 20 years' terms for payment.

A further 1,000 Acres under NON-RESIDENCE Conditions at similar rates.

GRAZING LANDS at from 3s. 9d. per acre.

GARDEN BLOCKS of from 5 to 50 Acres, at £1 per acre, payable in three years.

EASY CONDITIONS OF IMPROVEMENT.

HALF COST OF SURVEY PAID BY STATE.

FEE SIMPLE Granted if all Conditions are Complied with.

AGRICULTURAL RAILWAYS being extended in every direction.

AGRICULTURAL BANK ADVANCES LOANS

To Settlers to improve their Holdings and Purchase Stock and Implements generally on Security of Holdings.

EASY RATES OF INTEREST AND LONG TERMS.

Sure Rainfall and Excellent Climate. Natural Grasses and Splendid Fodder Plants abound. Imported Grasses thrive.

Magnificent Markets for all classes of Agricultural Produce.

IMPORTS IN EXCESS OF LOCAL PRODUCTION DURING ONE YEAR, OVER £1,900,000.

ASSISTED PASSAGES TO EMIGRANTS.

FULL PARTICULARS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM

The AGENT-GENERAL for Western Australia, 15 Victoria Street, Westminster, London, and Under Secretary for Lands, Perth, Western Australia.
An excerpt from a letter (22/02/1922) from Florence Burt, of block 670 on the Peel Estate says it all:

You guaranteed employment on arrival, instead of which we were literally fighting for a job for over three weeks. Eventually we were dumped on a pest-ridden swamp unfit for white women and children, and finally the selection which seems to need some explanation, people being under the impression that it is a gift instead of 8 pounds 10 shillings and upwards per acre with 7% interest. The children are hideous sights owing to pests with which we are infested and I myself am a nervous wreck through the unsatisfactory conditions I am living under. If prompt action is not taken, the bulk of the so called settlers (there are no real settlers) will all be lunatics or suicides....

(Oliver 1995:218)

As Murphy and Nile (1990) have detailed, the manipulation of the appropriate imagery in the Western Mail (the rural supplement to The Western Australian newspaper) was also instrumental in aiming to convince potential settlers to leave all that they knew in Britain, to travel to the other side of the world and to begin life as farmers. In photographs of idealised farms, the land appeared cleared when it was densely forested, the meandering streams were painted in, as were the willow trees, and the picturesque farm houses were likely to have been pathetic camp sites. This deceit was conveyed in State sponsored advertisements, as well as in the newspaper's editorial content (Murphy and Nile 1990). The manipulation was not unlike the 'Swan River Mania' fed by the British press 100 years earlier. However, unlike then, the lands which were being boosted this time were known to be marginal. As has been noted, the relationship between tall trees and poor soils in the southwest was recognised within the first few years of colony's foundation.

Western Australia was not the only State to aggressively seek British labour and capital. Between the wars, over 500 000 British migrants came to Australia. Most of them were sponsored under a joint agreement between the Australian Federal Government and Britain involving some 34 million pounds. There was, however, a growing awareness 'in Britain that tax payers were funding Australian speculators and confidence tricksters' (Roe 1995:72). But, like the 1830s post Napoleonic war period, and also during the 1850s with the convict rorts, at higher levels these concerns were dismissed on the basis that 'they take the people' (Roe 1995:72). The British Government and the Australian Federal government effectively turned a blind eye towards the shortcomings of the various State instituted programs. Moreover, it is clear that there were also many private enterprise lobby groups,
individual companies, agents and agencies, and even charitable organisations who participated and prospered directly and indirectly from the hardships of those caught in the migration and land settlement deals.

Originally, each of the States negotiated their own terms under the Empire Settlement Agreement and, as it stood in 1924, when Western Australia’s new Labor government came to power, it was estimated that the immigration scheme negotiated by the former National Party government under Mitchell would cost the State some 3 to 4 million pounds. Moreover, at the time of Mitchell’s promise of work for two million, Western Australia was experiencing high unemployment, particularly among unskilled labourers, primarily as a result of the declines in mining operations. Despite the poverty on Perth’s streets, the land development ethos remained strong. Nevertheless, the excesses of the various rorts were serious enough to be a major focus in the electoral platform of the in-coming State Labor Government;

- Setting up a State Bank to ensure that rural profits were channelled into state enterprise.
- Developing closer settlement along existing railways and water services.
- Establishing an effective land tax.
- Setting up an inquiry into the Group settlements.
- Developing industry, in particular base metal industries, to help curb the emigration of West Australians.

(as summarised in Oliver 1995:240).

As Oliver argues, the new Labor Government had the opportunity to rectify these problems, but in character with the State’s land oriented hegemony, it largely followed established patterns, albeit with more concern for the risk of unemployment. The new Minister for Lands was just as keen on land development as his predecessor and, in April 1925 the Group Settlement scheme was rekindled after having been shutdown during the 1924 election. Lobby groups such as the New Settlers League and the Pioneer Memorial Association (with links to the Pastoral and Graziers Association) also promoted their own forms of youth-labour immigration schemes for isolated farms.

Once the employment situation improved from the low of 1923-24, there was also less local dissension with the immigration schemes. The immigrant labour was largely destined for distant locations, mostly to clear bush under abysmal conditions which the local labourers knew well enough to avoid. In effect, while there were powerful proponents for these
schemes, there was also tacit approval from those who were not negatively affected. The same could be said of both the Federal Australian and British governments. Britain was getting rid of its costly poor, while Australia was gaining a larger domestic market and an expanded tax base, and yet both national governments were far enough removed from the operations not to be politically compromised by the rorts and misdeeds.

Reflecting on some of the 'other' stories behind the rise and decline of the Group Settlements is also illustrative of how such major development initiatives are by no means left to the prerogatives of governments - somehow separate from the rest of society. For example, because of concerns about unemployment, and against the sentiments of powerful rural oriented lobby groups, Mitchell's conservative government suspended the Group Settlement Scheme during the 1924 election. So, even though the concerns over unemployment largely emanated from among Labor's ranks, they registered 'loud' enough to be heard by a conservative government, at least during the election. The incoming Labor Government continued the suspension, but only for a year, before returning to support the land development ethos. Noteworthy too, is that the idea for the Group Settlements actually came from an 'appeal made by unemployed lumpers and miners for free land' (Young 1985:184). Altogether then, the overall political dynamics were by no means as simple as State versus Private interests, nor Capital versus Labour - such is the nature of governance.

The period between the wars also revealed more of the character and direction of the dominant power relations fundamental to the way development is governed in Western Australia. For example, local writers (Webb and Webb 1993; Oliver 1995) have drawn attention to Snooks' thesis (1974) that rural land development was an economic folly and that facilitating production efficiencies in gold mining operations would have been a better investment for the State. What this argument overlooks, however, is that gold was only the lure and that, rather than gold generated revenues, what the State's growth coalitions were seeking was population growth and capital investment facilitating a dispersed pattern of settlement.

Beyond the subdivision and allocation of land, the state provided infrastructure such as roads, railways and water, and cross subsidised services such as schools and postal facilities. The state also supervised farm progress through various financial incentives. Like the programs that created the wheat-belt, the general pattern of settlement within and between
the towns of the southwest all reflect a very centralist planning style of agricultural development. The regular size of the original allotments, the regimes for clearing native vegetation and the standardisation of on-farm practices all contributed to the streamlined uniformity apparent in the rural landscapes. Tickell and Peck (1992) have labelled similar patterns of 'Fordist' development as 'Bastardised Keynesian' development owing to the traditionally high level of government intervention.

3.13 The Coming of Modern Town Planning

In contrast to the central planning apparent in developing the countryside, the Modernist Town Planning movement in Western Australia took another 30-50 years to evolve the same level of formalised government intervention. As mentioned earlier, the first explicit moves towards Modern city planning in Western Australia began at the turn of the century with efforts to stave off the out migration of miners. According to Stokes and Hill (1992) Mayor, Brockman's election speech in 1900 argued for a comprehensive approach to make 'Perth an ideal City and a model municipality'.

William Bold, the Town Clerk for the Perth City Council (1900-1944), was another important figure in the coming of Modern planning in Western Australia. In 1909, he was sent on a tour of Europe and North America to research advances in city administration (Webb 1979). His travels included visiting the World Trade Fair in Chicago, and meeting Ebenezer Howard to discuss ideas on city planning. Upon his return he was instrumental in forming the Town Planning Association, and his expansive report to council was influential for years to come. Perhaps Bold is best remembered for championing the city planning and administration efficiencies associated with the 'Greater Perth Movement', a cause he initiated in 1911.

The Greater Perth Movement failed mainly because the more affluent local authorities saw no advantage in joining poorer local authorities under one unified metropolitan government (Hedgcock 1992). The borders of the Perth City Council reflected these contrasting persuasions up until the 1993 restructuring. Similarly, although there was a major impetus for town improvements - water, sewers, roads - aimed at stemming the post gold rush population decline, there was considerable resistance to introducing additional town planning controls. Not coincidently, the resistance dissipated with the decline of building activity and the onset of the Great Depression. In other words, as a reflection of the exercise
of power, without the support of the development industry the idea of Modern planning controls languished.

In effect, the Modernist Town Planning movement in Western Australia was largely driven by a few key bureaucrats and civil leaders who, in keeping with the innovators of the times, were convinced of the benefits of a rationally planned Modern city. There was also support from the growing numbers of engineers and architects, many of whom had migrated from the eastern states, and who brought with them their experiences and professional expectations for Modern codes of practice. They all participated in Western Australia’s long construction boom, which was interrupted by the First World War, but continued throughout most of the 1920s and peaked in 1927. Tellingly though, there was a noticeable shift from the extravagant individual styles of the gold rush days, towards more the functional lines of Modern design (Stannage 1979).

The big point here, is that in Perth, not only did the introduction of formal Modern Town Planning lag behind other Australian cities but, despite this, the physical influence of the broader Modernist movement was nevertheless increasingly apparent in Perth’s urban form. The residential developments constructed during the 1920s were dormitory suburbs separate from industrial and commercial land uses. The Californian Bungalow became a standardised housing product functionally designed for the nuclear families among the expanding middle class. Steel framed reinforced concrete construction came in 1925, and this and other such technical innovations were counterparts to the increasing specialisation of the work force within and between existing skills and professions. The implication is that, far from being at the forefront of the developing Modern society, in Perth the formation of Modern planning institutions (organisations and regulations) was a reactive and retarded process.

Even with the passing of the *Town Planning and Development Act 1928*, there was little interest among local authorities in going the next step and creating town planning schemes. As the economic downturn became the Great Depression, and then, with the coming of World War II, there was no urgent need for additional development controls. So, by the 1950s, there were only a handful of local authorities that had a formal town planning scheme. Stokes and Hill (1992) have pointed out that the legislation was poorly worded in that it stipulated, after many drafts, that local authorities were ‘empowered’, rather than ‘required’, to adopt a registered town planning scheme. But, again to illustrate the broader
point, it is worth noting that even with the new wording in the Metropolitan Regional Town Planning Scheme Act 1959, which required local authorities to formulate a planning scheme, very few actually complied with the three year deadline. In particular, it was not until 1985 that the Perth City Council had its planning scheme ratified.

To be clear, the contradictions outlined in this telling of the coming of Modern urban planning in Western Australia are described in the local planning discourse (see Gentilli ed. 1979; Pitt Morison and White 1979; Hedgcock and Yiftachel eds. 1992). The account of 'The Evolution of Local Planning' by Berry (1992) is perhaps the most focused and thorough in this regard. As a point of departure, however, I have dwelt on how long it took for the idea of Modern urban planning to be locally transformed into functioning legislation and bureaucracies. By contrasting the level and scope of government interventions in facilitating rural development in the wheat-belt and south-west, I have further argued that institutional capacity in respect to urban planning and development was less a limiting factor and more a symptom of the exercise of power in a property owning democracy.

In central Perth, the complexity of competing interests effectively retarded any prospect of an uncontested single vision how the city 'ought' to develop and, rather than a shortage of skills and interest in shaping the urban fabric, there were too many (from a central planning point of view). Or, as Ken Adam³ has recently said at a developer forum on planning in central Perth, 'planning is what you do when development is off' (20/04/99). Conversely, the centralist planning apparent in developing the countryside, while problematic for different reasons, had fewer actors pushing less contrasting agendas in what were green-field sites for towns and rural settlement.

Several other theoretical points raised in Chapters One and Two can also be grounded at this juncture. For example, given that ninety nine years of planned urban and regional development had preceded the Town Planning and Development Act 1928, and given that there was very little in the way of effective implementation of town planning for another twenty odd years, the implication is that it was not such a important piece of legislation. Arguably, its main importance has rested on its status within the self referencing of the local

³ Ken Adam is a locally well known architect-planner commentator. He was speaking as a panel member at a forum organised by the Perth Inner City Developers Association. The title of the Forum was ‘Does the City Need a Planner or a Plan’.
planning discourse, where it is central to the planning profession's own history and training. This is a practical example of what McLoughlin (1993) meant when he described university courses as still proffering the idea of 'planning as central to the decision making process'. Simply by focusing on a certain set of turn-of-the-century ideas, events and heroes, a profession's history becomes its ideology obscuring its less than effective past or present.

The other side of this argument is that, since formal planning institutions and titled planners are not central to the decision making process, then neither are they principally responsible for the inequities, gaffes, or even the successes. The hierarchical social-spatial orderings observed by Pitt Morison (1979) in Perth's first subdivisions, are for example not markedly different from the exclusionary practices expressed in the planning of affluent suburbs such as of City Beach since the 1950s (Stannage 1979). The minimum size and cost requirements for structures and homes, the very low density subdivisions and the restrictions on construction materials, were all features common to the social-spatial ordering of settlements prior to the advent of Modern Town Planning in Western Australia. The institutionalised preference for double brick construction, and the especially rigid 'R Codes' density restrictions are still standard features in local government planning schemes. From the urban governance perspective, however, these features are less a product of the planning profession and more a reflection of the land based economy, one with perhaps 'the largest brick market in the world' (pers. com. A.Kuan, Equities Analyst, Fidelity Mutual)

3.14 Industrial Development and the Resource Booms
The overall pattern of development during the post WW II period was described in Chapter One as a bastardised Keynesian Fordist model characterised by streamlined uniformity towards maximising production and consumption. For now, however, the key point is that Tickell and Peck (1992) attached the 'bastardised' adjective to the Keynesian model in recognition that the state in Australia had a longer and broader tradition of intervention.

Accordingly, Harman and Head (eds. 1981) recognised that the rise and consolidation of the 'entrepreneurial state' in post war Western Australia was in keeping with trends that emerged in Western Europe and North America during the 'last quarter of the eighteenth century'. They investigated the premise that, in Australia, the regional state ought to be

4 R Codes refers to the grading system of residential densities used in Western Australia as a policy tool for guiding subdivision and strata-title applications towards low density settlement patterns.
Chapter Three

'recognised as an entrepreneur exclusively in its own right, and that this entrepreneurial function has assumed major proportions from increasing levels of investment in public works' (Harman and Head 1982:43). What they concluded was clearly reflected in later book titled *State and Economy in Australia*, and it was a decidedly governance oriented position (Head 1983).

It is simply wrong to imagine that the economic intervention of the state is a modern phenomenon. The separation of the state and economy is an ideological myth not grounded in historical experiences. Rather than simply focusing on increasing levels of state intervention it is more useful to consider state-economy relations in terms of a series of historical phases, in which the forms of intervention have changed in response to numerous factors (Head 1983:3).

As has been described, the ebb and flow of Western Australia's development has been characterised by a combination of state, capital, and civil actors coalescing around different potentials for growth. Each of these potentials has in some way involved attracting external labour and capital through the promotion and exploitation of the land-based economy. Each successful coupling of social and productive relations involved local actors negotiating a viable 'place' within an increasingly global political economy. At different scales of endeavour, there were also many more growth initiatives than there were successes and, frequently, the actual potential for growth proved inferior to what was initially promised.

The focus of this section is to draw out these themes in relation to post war industrial development and the resource booms of the 1960s and 70s. An important example of the links between industrial development and the themes of the land-based economy was discussed earlier in Chapter Two. In Perth, metropolitan planning originated as a local initiative to attract and facilitate foreign industrial capital. Gordon Stephenson was employed as Perth's first metropolitan planner after a deal had been struck between BP industrial planners and several key State politicians and bureaucrats. The jubilant press reports of the day anticipated the surge in growth that would surely follow from the industrial development at Kwinana, and Gordon Stephenson's plan for the three fold expansion of Perth's metropolitan boundaries was a reflection of those expectations. Moreover, it was the promise of the jobs, the prestige of industrial development, and the added technological capacity that justified the large and highly desirable land tracts on the sheltered coast at Cockburn Sound being granted over to private capital.
Clearly, in respect to industrial development, the themes of Western Australia’s land based economy remain highly relevant. So although it was the prospect of the BP oil refinery that initiated the whole Kwinana industrial complex, Cockburn Cement was the next industrial enterprise to develop a site. Both of these enterprises feed into Western Australia’s broader land based economy in terms of their transport and construction links. The same can be said of the other enterprises that have since developed within the Kwinana industrial complex. Whether they are fertiliser manufacturers, pig iron processors, or plant hire enterprises they all in some way reflect the emphasis of the land based economy.

One of the distinctive aspects of the post war period was that it was the longest period of sustained population growth that the State had experienced. The post war baby boom being generated by the domestic population was added to significantly by consecutive waves of migrants from Britain and continental Europe. Australia offered a new start for those seeking to escape the ravages of war. In Western Australia, migrants were employed on infrastructure projects, in housing construction and, in keeping with the past, many were encouraged to pioneer the more distant outposts of agricultural settlement.

To attract the migrants, there was again false optimism, with the booster literature of the day promising well-paid jobs and good quality housing. Not surprisingly, the returning solders readily took up the best of these opportunities. The booster literature also neglected to mention the chronic shortages of building materials which, coupled with the very high rates of household formation, meant that many migrants had to wait years for better quality housing. In the mean time, the conditions in the migrant hostels and the farm-based lodgings were often bleak. In respect to employment, the boosters also exaggerated the quality of the work and wages that migrants could realistically expect. In many instances migrants found that their professional and trade qualifications were not acceptable, and to add insult to injury, those who complained were labelled ‘whingers’.

Although it never amounted to the massive scale of the booster claims, the growth in the manufacturing sector was high by local standards simply because it was expanding from such a small base. Industrial production was fuelled by the growing size and affluence of the population, by the regulated (protected) markets, and by the optimism associated with science and technology. It paralleled the rapid expansion of suburbia, the nuclear family, and an ideology encouraging mass consumption. 'Suburban housing, automobiles and
electrical appliances became the icons of Fordist consumerism, affluence and the long boom...they were the industrial complexes at the heart of Fordist accumulation' (Roobeek 1987:133). Furthermore, in keeping with the broader land-based economy perspective, I would argue that the suburban home and land package was/is the State's most important 'manufactured product'.

In Australia generally, 'The suburban owner occupied home was the container for Fordist mass consumption' (Greig 1995:22). One way to illustrate how the home was and is a focus of consumption and investment is through an examination of contemporary estimates of retail turnover.

Table 3.2 Retail Turnover Estimates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Group</th>
<th>1996-7</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food retailing</td>
<td>5 351.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department stores</td>
<td>1 186.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing and soft good retailing</td>
<td>767.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household good retailing</strong></td>
<td><strong>1 997.1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational good retailing</td>
<td>671.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other retailing *</td>
<td>1 195.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality and services</td>
<td>1 928.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13 097.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*excludes motor vehicle dealers, petrol and tires

Source: ABS Catalogue No. 8501.0

Beyond the enormous consumption of land and resources associated with suburban development, the home and land package is also critically important as an income distribution mechanism. This understanding, however, is largely obscured by the reductionism inherent in defining traditional economic sectors. So, although only about 5% of Western Australia's workforce are directly employed in the home building industry, its significance is associated with the income and employment multipliers in the manufacturing and transport sectors, together with retail/wholesale/warehousing, finance, commerce and government services. In other words, while a brick is a manufactured product and a mortgage is a financial service, they are both primarily destined to build and finance housing. The broader construction industry interfaces with other economic sectors in similar ways but, until very recently, it is the family home that has been the focus of investment for most Australians throughout the post war period. In perspective, 'residential
property (valued at $700 billion) represents the largest single asset market in Australia’ (Somers 1994:71).

The rest of the built environment that extends, services, and complements the residential component is also a major focus of state and private capital investment. Once subdivided, planned, landscaped and constructed, the built environment is approved, serviced, leased, sold, re-furbished, and otherwise maintained on an ongoing basis. The reproduction of Australia’s built environment is a massive undertaking but it is primarily the prerogative of each of the States, and in terms of governance and the exercise of power, this point is often lost in otherwise penetrating analyses.

**Figure 3.5 Increasing Median-Priced Residential Property**

![Graph showing increasing median-priced residential property from 1975 to 2005.]

Source: Real Estate Institute of Western Australia (REIWA) *Market Update* Reports for the June Quarter, 1980 - 2000.
The broader point about Western Australia's industrial development is that the manufacturing sector remains small and closely aligned to the land-based economy in terms of its source materials and end products. Even neglecting a specific reference to the housing component it is still the case that 'manufacturing developed mainly to process local raw materials for local consumption or to service the infrastructure necessary for the exploitation of the natural resources' (Schapper 1966:39). The huge demand for skilled and semi-skilled industrial workers and management never eventuated. Moreover, the manufacturing industries that did emerge during this period were often highly subsidised and protected by nationally regulated markets.

In Western Australia, the pursuit of manufacturing through downstream processing related to resource development - iron, nickel, alumina and gas - was integral to the regional-decentralisation theme throughout the 1960 and 70s (Geography Conference 1966). At the State level, subsidies generally took the form of land and economic infrastructure - utilities (water, electricity, power) and transport services (roads, rail, airports and seaports). There was also major State investment in providing social infrastructure (housing, schools, medical and police). The companies directly benefiting from these subsidies were generally very large and foreign owned (Brown 1981). Furthermore, the cost of subsidising these private initiatives was increasingly financed through foreign loans, borne by the State, albeit in negotiation with the Federal government.

In another form of boosterism, the employment and income multipliers which 'proved' the case for public investment in private ventures in mining and manufacturing were largely put together by the companies themselves (Harman and Head 1982). The media never scrutinised these statistics; they seemed to have believed what they were t(s)old. They were pro-growth stories and the press propagated the myths. Moreover, the positive figures supported the argument, that by forgoing higher royalties, the State would attract further investment and thus more jobs. Nevertheless, by the 1980s after two decades of state subsidised mineral and industrial development, Western Australia had only managed to encourage 'a small specialist metals related manufacturing sector' (Harman 1982:253).

In regional Western Australia the main growth in employment was associated with the transport, infrastructure and service provisions aligned with the development of the mining...
towns and operations, predominantly in the north of the State. Less than 3% of the State’s workforce were actually engaged in mining. Overall, the vast majority of the new jobs were in the expanding public and private service sector concentrated in metropolitan Perth, albeit with direct spin-offs from mining. In central Perth, for example, several mining companies built office towers in the late 1960s and in the early 1970s and these acted to consolidate the city’s orientation as a commercial service centre during a period of declining retail functions (Alexander 1974; Jeffcote 1996).

The main focus of growth, however, was in the suburbs. The development of large scale shopping malls within the sprawling residential suburbs following highway focused growth corridors was a parallel expression of the long boom, the nuclear family, and other aspects accommodated under the Fordist development metaphor. So, although industrial development and the mineral booms were important features of the post war period, in terms of population and employment growth, and the sheer scale of the land consumed, it was the sprawling suburbs which dominated the development agenda.

**Figure 3.6 Suburban Growth**
3.15 Contemporary Growth Coalitions - At the State Level

In 1983 the Labor Party celebrated its first State election win for 28 years. Labor remained in power for ten years under three different premiers; Brian Burke (1983-88); Peter Dowding (1988-89); and Carmen Lawrence (1989-1993). After a series of major scandals Labor lost the 1993 election and, since then, the Liberal Party under Richard Court has maintained a coalition government with the National Party. In this section, the discussion focuses on the shifting nature and character of fairly recent growth coalitions operating at the state level. An outline of the infamous WA Inc. scandal during the time of the Burke and Dowding governments leads into some postulations as to the growth coalition dynamics that have emerged with the current Court government. In each case familiar land based political economy themes come to the fore.

Perhaps the most didactic aspect of the WA Inc. scandal is that it succinctly reveals the culturally ingrained nature of hegemony. It involved the Labor leadership conspiring with local corporate elites; successive land rorts; the improper manipulation of government departments and finance institutions; a complacent and in some cases participatory media; and on many fronts broad public support. The WA Inc. moniker was attached to the scandal as a reference to the government and big business partnerships that prevailed during the Burke and Dowding years. However, as I have argued throughout this chapter, the tentacles of impropriety, as well as the explicit and tacit support, extend well beyond the formal and informal partnerships between political and corporate elites.

A few of the main political figures in the scandal were the Premier, his brother Terry Burke, and the Deputy Premier, David Parker. Alan Bond, Robert HomesàCourt, Dallas Dempster, and John Horgan were all high profile property and mining magnates, while Laurie Connell was known as ‘last resort Laurie’ in reference to his loan sharking activities with the Rothwells Merchant Bank. During the Burke years there was an explicit policy to harness the State’s entrepreneurial skills and resources to maximise the potential for growth. The Western Australian Development Commission (WADC), chaired by Terry Burke who was also the Labor Party’s fund raiser, was specifically set up as an institutional vehicle to facilitate this entrepreneurial agenda. The WADC was to create a revenue stream for the State government from profits generated from its predominantly property related developments.
By the practical end to the WA Inc. a public debt of some $877 million had accrued (O'Brien and Webb eds. 1991). Institutions as diverse as the Teachers Credit Union, the Rural and Industries Bank of Western Australia, the State Government Insurance Organisation, Rothwells Merchant Bank, and the Catholic Archdiocese, had all been implicated and compromised through various improper financial and property dealings. The details of the improprieties were investigated in separate inquiries and Royal Commissions. In addition, to fulfil a pledge made in 1992, the Lawrence Government initiated the Commission on Government (COG) which involved a major examination of the potential for systemic corruption in government. Even so, by focusing on government, rather than on the interface between public, private and civil society, many of the key actors and influences were implicitly excluded from the $3.5 million inquiry. Furthermore, by the time COG’s findings had been publicly released in 1995, the Liberal government was in a strong enough electoral position to be able to ignore its recommendations.

The Planning Committee of the Perth City Council was one of the institutions that escaped closer scrutiny. There were claims made in Western Australia’s Parliament that the membership of the Planning Committee was ‘stacked’ with real estate and development interests and that there was a systemic relaxation of development controls such as height restrictions and parking requirements (see Alexander 1992). The WACD was involved in these dealings and the evidence of the inappropriate and booster led development agenda is still apparent in the form of derelict building sites in the heart of the city some 10 years later. The Westralia Square and Central Park office tower developments resulted in million dollar public debts, and there were several cases of fast tracking planning approvals on large scale developments such as the Burswood Casino.

One of several controversial examples of the unhealthy relationship between big business and government involved the Inquiry Into The Proposed Land Grant At Alkimos To The University of Notre Dame (Report No 24 1992). A primary concern of the inquiry was that the University of Notre Dame (UND) had been apparently guaranteed a land grant by the Deputy Premier. The guarantee was allegedly used by UND and a local entrepreneur (Denis Horgan) to gain bank lending approvals to begin drafting a proposal for a major university campus. The point of contention was that the Deputy Premier did not have the enabling legislation to make such a guarantee. Moreover, while he denied making the guarantee against the word of Denis Horgan, the R&I bank did lend $30 million dollars for the
university proposal without any apparent sureties. The land was never actually vested with either Horgan or UND.

Figure 3.7  Office Tower Mania

Four of Perth’s newest and largest office towers came on to the ‘soft market’ in the aftermath of the 1987 stock market crash – pure speculation.

The scope of the inquiry included questions concerning a $250,000 donation to the Labor Party by Horgan, as well as a $5 million contribution towards the ‘bail-out’ of the failed Rothwell’s Merchant Bank (i.e. last resort Laurie). There was also the subplot of a major residential development which, together with other manipulative land dealings suggests a very different development outcome than what was publicly proposed. The inquiry uncovered that most, if not all, of the 1250 acre Alkimos land grant would not actually be developed as a northern campus for UND. Rather, it was a case of manipulative land speculation where the profits from residential subdivisions would help to finance the purchase of properties in Fremantle as the main and perhaps only campus.

Another way to interpret these events is that they amounted to an elaborate scheme for the Catholic leaning Labor leadership to financially assist the establishment of Australia’s first
Catholic university without directly contributing government funds. As one of memorandums reviewed by the inquiry described, 'friends (Horgan) sold properties in Fremantle to UND and then UND would sell property in Alkimos to friends (Horgan) to develop as residential subdivisions' (Report No 24 1992:99). More to the point, the profits from the Alkimos venture were estimated to be in the hundred of millions, and the inquiry questioned why it was that government would want to forgo that potential by granting the land valued at $10 million to UND. As the land was vested with the WADC, it was even more remarkable that this potential was going to be 'handed over' given that the WADC had an explicit profit driven agenda.

From a land use planning perspective it is worth noting that one of the questions raised during the inquiry was whether any due regard had been given to the actual appropriateness of the Alkimos site as a university campus. The evidence was that the main criteria for choosing the site was that it was a large and contiguous government owned parcel on the edge of the metropolitan area with the potential for residential development.

The changing ownership and property values of the Alkimos land are also revealing. The land was bought in 1973 for $367 900 by a consortium of local speculators. Three years later it was sold to the federally funded Urban Lands Council for $3.04 million. In 1989 the Federal Government was duped again when the WADC purchased the land for $3.45 million. To be clear, the local investors received approximately a 900% return on their investments over three years, while the Federal Government managed less than 9% growth over sixteen years. Table 3.4 (over page) further illustrates the trend towards increasing property values over time. This assumption is built into property valuations (in this case based on a 30% return) which are not only subjective but also routinely manipulated to reflect contrasting buyer and seller positions.

Another politically telling aspect of the inquiry is that the findings were published as a majority report, and that two of the committee members with Labor affiliations including the chairman voiced dissenting views.

With great regret I must indicate that the Member for Maylands, Dr Judy Edwards, MLA, and I feel compelled to tender a minority report, as we believe the methodology of the majority of the Committee to be unreliable and their conclusions are frequently unfounded and wrong.

(Also see footnotes to Table 3.4 over page for evidence of flawed maths in methodology).

5 Which had a charter to buy and reserve land for affordable housing.
The Alkimos inquiry was only one chapter in the broader WA Inc. saga. Several of the main players were gaoled during the 1990s while others faced protracted criminal investigations and subsequent trials. Many of the details are covered in *The Executive State: WA Inc and The Constitution* (O'Brien and Webb eds. 1991). Although the book focuses on the foibles of the Labor government through neo conservative eyes, the collected works also highlight the concentrated and poorly reviewed executive powers of the state(s). As has been argued as far back as Ogle (1839) in Western Australia there was never any lack of power.

O'Brien (1991) also went to some length to describe the structural problem with the media in Western Australia. The role of the *West Australian* newspaper, together with its *Western Mail* rural supplement in uncritically boosting the State's growth potential has been described by others (Stannage 1979; Murphy and Nile 1990). But O'Brien exposed the broader interconnectedness of the media ownership and political affiliations. Two of the major WA Inc. protagonists, Robert HomesaCourt and then later Alan Bond, were major shareholders of Western Australian Newspapers Ptd. Ltd. which includes the community newspapers, Channel Seven and Radio 6PR. The State Government was owner of Radio 61X which featured a weekly ‘Meet the Premier’ slot. Moreover, Brian Burke was a former television journalist and under his reign the Government Media Office became the second largest employer of journalists (O'Brien 1991:80). This is what O'Brien means when he talks of the structural problem with media ownership in Western Australia.

All newspapers produced in Western Australia are tabloids. The format of the *West Australian* allows for the stories to be developed with enough detail to cover the more complex issues, and this factor, together with its daily convenience makes it the State's dominant news source. During the WA Inc. years, however, *The West Australian* was not so much a 'watchdog as a lap dog' (O'Brien 1991:123). The bigger point though, is that the *West Australian* was always a keen supporter of the actors and the ideas that promote the State's growth. As the growth coalition perspective forewarns, newspapers accrue a direct benefit from increasing numbers of readers and advertisers. In particular, *The West Australian* and the community newspapers are dominated by advertisement sections focusing on real estate, home furnishings, and motoring products. In turn, this understanding suggests a deeper structural problem than was envisaged by O'Brien, one that transcends the obvious political biases during the days of WA Inc.
Table 3.3 The Art of Property Valuation

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Valuer</th>
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<th>Hectares</th>
<th>Price Per Hectare</th>
<th>Valuation per Millions</th>
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</thead>
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<td>1025</td>
<td>3 000</td>
<td>3.00</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuer General</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>866</td>
<td>4 000</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Whitman &amp; Co. UND's valuer</td>
<td>1989 Nov</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>14 200</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debenham Tewson Int. LandCorp’s valuer</td>
<td>1990 Feb</td>
<td>1025</td>
<td>29 300</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debenham Tewson</td>
<td>1990 Feb</td>
<td>866</td>
<td>26 600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debenham Tewson</td>
<td>1990 Oct</td>
<td>866</td>
<td>23 900*</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Christopher Whitman</td>
<td>1990 Oct**</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>14 200</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debenham Tewson</td>
<td>1991 Jun</td>
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<td>16 700</td>
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<td>Valuer General</td>
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<td>150</td>
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<td>LandCorp</td>
<td>1991 Oct</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>14 700</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Price per hectare provided by Debenham Tewson International
** Christopher Whitman & Co. advised that the estimate given in November 1989 was equally relevant in October 1990. Net present value is calculated using a 30% rate on investment.
*** Broad hectare value; LandCorp utilised Whitman’s assumptions and in a letter to the Department of Premier and Cabinet calculated that the project has a broad hectare value of $14 million which was 100% more than Whitman’s own valuation in October 1990.

Source: pg 66-67, Inquiry into the Proposed Grant of Land at Alkimos to the University of Notre Dame, Report No 24, 1992
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As I contemplate the character of contemporary growth coalition dynamics it is clear that compared with the halcyon days of the 1980s, the State's real estate market during the 1990s has been relatively flat and increasingly fragmented. Even so, there have been no articles in the *West Australian* that explore such trends. For example, relatively few West Australians would realise that property values have fallen in many outer metropolitan suburbs (Alexander and Greive 1998). In contrast, readers of the *West Australian* would have seen many articles about the success of Perth's inner city redevelopments, and about the lifestyle advantages of semi rural living. In other words, despite, or rather because of, the real estate focus of the *West Australian* it will print only the good news, and that, in turn is a reflection of a broader sense of hegemony.

In today's context, when considering the potential for unhealthy big business and government pro growth alliances, there are many possible avenues to pursue. However, by following the ownership theme of the *West Australian*, together with the observation that road building has emerged as the largest contemporary wave of construction investment, there is indeed at least one big 'smoking gun' that warrants further investigation. Harold Clough is a major shareholder of West Australian Newspapers Pty Ltd. He is also a major financial backer of the State Liberal Party. His company Clough Engineering is one among a handful of large scale construction companies that have benefited the most from the current State Government's emphasis on road construction projects.

**Figure 3.8 Highway Building Rorts**

6 This is my impression after reading *The Western Australian* (purposefully) over a period of five years. For example, many if not most of the substantive articles on the housing market were simply based on contributions from executives representing the Real Estate Institute of Western Australia.
Labor claims coalition bias for Buckeridge

By Wendy Pryer

PLANNING Minister Graham Kierath revealed yesterday that WA building magnate Len Buckeridge was a friend.

But he told the Legislative Assembly that his relationship with Mr. Buckeridge did not mean he got special treatment.

Mr. Kierath was speaking during debate on a Labor Party motion calling on the Government to explain why Mr. Buckeridge got preferential treatment on a range of planning, environmental and contractual processes.

 Labor planning spokeswoman Alannah MacTiernan told the House that Mr. Buckeridge, a Liberal Party donor, was not a player in the construction of Homewest homes before the Court Government took office in 1993. But his company, BGC, now had 32 per cent of that work.

She said BGC had been allowed to build a concrete batching plant next to the Neerabup National Park and local residents in 1993. Competitors had complained that decision gave Mr. Buckeridge an unfair advantage over them because his plant was 6km closer to the building boom in the northern suburbs, saving him about $500,000.

Other claims by Labor of preferential treatment included:

► BGC was allowed to buy 75 per cent of broadacre lots developed by the Government in Caversham at the expense of smaller building companies and taxpayers.

► In 1995, Mr. Buckeridge's non-union company, BAAC, was awarded the $2 million Stateships stevedoring contract.

► The Government took no action over Mr. Buckeridge's breach of Peppermint Grove by-laws which he ignored despite a stop-work order being issued and breaches of City of Swan by-laws where his company built a pipe under the road without approval.

Len Buckeridge is another prominent Liberal and National party supporter whose company has shared in the road construction windfall. Billed as 'Transform WA', the State has allocated four billion dollars to bridge and highway construction projects throughout the Perth metropolitan area. At the same time, the State's Main Roads Department is being privatised, and this has resulted in the larger construction companies being awarded more contracts associated with road planning, administration and maintenance. The whole scenario is made more complex by the political dynamics associated with the coalition government. The Transport Minister(s) with National party affiliations have offered a less obvious target for public concerns about political cronyism.
I raised these concerns with Matt Price the principal Western Australian correspondent for the *Australian* newspaper. We were sitting in our local café having a casual but directed conversation. Matt definitely disagreed with the idea that Clough could be corrupt. Instead, he viewed Clough as a very big player and that ‘around here big players tend to bump into each other’. I never actually used the term corrupt, rather I had asked ‘was this the current style of WA Inc.? I also commented that Clough was a major shareholder of *West Australian* and therefore all the community newspapers, to which Matt added ‘he is on the Board of Directors’. Moreover, this fact clearly jolted Matt’s wife, who had been quietly listening to our conversation, and in a surprised tone she recounted ‘Harold Clough on the Board of Directors of *The West Australian*?!’. It is also ironic, that while the WA Inc. debt was partly paid off through a $50 increase in car registration fees, the Transform WA debt will cost car owners an extra $100 annually.

### 3.16 Chapter Summary and Anticipating the Linkages

As an alternative history of planning and development in Western Australia, this chapter has provided the substance for a dominant land-based economy argument. The narrative has identified and broadly described recurring themes - social and physical patterns - within a deconstructed history of Western Australia’s urban development. Urban governance was depicted as a dynamic overlay of social spatial orders with ‘other’ planners employing ‘other’ means to achieve ‘other’ ends, which are revealed as primarily concerned with controlling the distribution of the State’s land and land based resources.

The overall pattern of development was broadly characterised as a process of subdivision whereby the parcelling and promotion of the land and land based resources was identified to be of central importance to the West Australian political economy. This emphasis on subdivision was portrayed as an extreme case compared with other trading nations and even other Australian States. Somewhat distinctively, the Swan River Colony began as a state endorsed and privately financed land speculation venture. By 1829 the institutional capacity of the Crown was more sophisticated than earlier colonisation initiatives and, importantly, the laws and regulations for commodifying the land arrived at the same time as the first investors.

The first investor settlers granted themselves and their associates the largest and best quality tracts of land. Since then, smaller and poorer quality land parcels have been sold to
consecutive waves of migrants for increasingly higher prices. The net result of this pyramid selling scheme, which is administered by the state, is an economic transfer from the new arrivals to the benefit of state and the largest and most established land holders. Moreover, to maximise these economic benefits, a broad spectrum of established state, civil, and private sector actors, operating at different scales, have sought to attract the necessary external labour and capital.

Whether they were rural settlers, convicts, miners, returned soldiers, post war refugees, those with assisted passage, or the more recent waves of Asian immigrants, the new arrivals have all added to the State's land-based political economy. They all 'needed a roof over their heads', and most aspired to land ownership. Many were lured to Western Australia through false promises. Some were forced here, some came by accident and stayed, while others purposefully came and found what they were looking for. Together, they all contributed to the State's growth as reflected in the expanding property, consumer and labour markets.

As well as identifying patterns and themes in the way that European settlement has evolved in Western Australia, and in contrast to any sense of colonial, national, or global political economic determinism, the role of local actors in translating such influences was emphasised throughout the chapter. Proximity, encompassing local knowledge, experience and local networks proved to be a critical factor towards controlling and manipulating the broader subdivision process. As highlighted in the case of Thomas Peel, even the land development aspirations of the British Prime Minister's own cousin could be successfully deflected by the established local elites.

Other examples implied that neither the British Colonial Office, nor the Australian Federal Government were ever well placed to effectively control Western Australia's land-based economy. The constitution confirms that the land based economy remains under State rather than federal government control. So, although the federal government, like Britain's former colonial administration, has/had the capacity to intervene, the tyranny of distance allowed and allows for more informed local manoeuvring.

In keeping with the governance framework though, it was not just the State government or any local government agency that controlled Western Australia's land based economy. Rather, the power was exercised through overlays of loose coalitions of public, private and
civil sector actors seeking and fostering the potential for growth. The nature and character of this potential for growth has changed over time, but the emphasis on subdivision and the inherent boosterism prevailed, and so did the structural advantages to the largest and most established landowners. Very often, those who administered the process, were the main beneficiaries.

Following the argument of Logan and Molotch (1987), the prospect of growth was identified as a unifying theme for a broad spectrum of place-tied interests. This diverse range of interests includes all those associated with local commerce, manufacturing, services, media and other enterprises which would benefit from an increasing customer base. Different levels of government also benefit from an expanding tax base. In particular, the coalition includes all those who have a vested interest in rising property values, such as finance institutions, real estate agents and property developers, and also the 70% of the current population who live in an owner occupied home. Furthermore, the relationship between rising property values and proximity to expanding consumer and investment markets has over time fostered interests associated with promoting in-migration, communications and transport developments.

None of this implies, though, that there was consensus, or even a conscious awareness of the dynamics that underpin the development decisions made by local individual and institutional actors. Rather, there is a culture of growth, which has evolved under particular historical material conditions, and which is characterised by state facilitated land speculation. Over time this culture has emerged as a property owning democracy with layers of laws, regulations, social conventions and norms that are largely taken for granted. As the concept of a 'property owning democracy' (Sandercock 1975) implies, nowadays it is a broad range of 'us', rather than a few of 'them', who are ultimately responsible for how national and global influences are translated into local developments.

In relation to the overall thesis, and in keeping with the first objective of research, this chapter has broadly described what West Australians do for business. Perhaps more so than elsewhere, land development has been a major focus of development, in part because there was/is less else going on. In linking this understanding with concepts raised in earlier chapters, and in respect to the second research objective, my concern is that some
development choices are better than others, and that we ought to be making them in all the small ways that we can.

So, while the prospects of systemic change and strategic intervention were theorised in Chapter Two, this chapter has described a series of local historical examples of local actors both initiating and responding to dramatic change. The European settlement of the Swan River Colony, the impact of convict-tied labour and capital, the Gold Rush, postwar industrial development, together with suburbanisation and highway construction were all examples of rapid and systemic change. There were also many important innovations and strategic interventions - moments of decisive action and non-action, or 'tipping points'. The decision to create an export wheat industry through the development of a network of railways and service towns was a massive and very purposeful undertaking. The sewer and water system improvements prior to WWI were also important capacity building developments, as was the planning associated with Kwinana.

It would be difficult, however, to define these developments and interventions as categorically progressive. The local Aboriginal populations have been decimated. Indigenous cultures and encompassing elaborate social-spatial orders have been usurped, and the contestation goes on. In terms of the environment, there have also been many negative impacts. The wheat-belt developments have created a massive salinity problem which threatens to undermine the long term agricultural potential of vast areas. Similarly, Cockburn Sound is polluted by effluent from the Kwinana industrial complex. More generally, many uniquely Western Australian species have become extinct or are imminently threatened as a result of European settlement.

What Chapter Two offered in recognition of this 'progress' dilemma was an understanding that progressive directions were ultimately subjective, contingent, and contextually defined. One of the refinements that Chapter Three adds to this perspective is that although serendipity plays a hand, sustained periods of growth tend to arise from situations whereby the promise of growth is complemented by an appropriate mix of material resources and social organisation. Or put another way, images can sell but not maintain, the potential for growth.
In the chapters to come, the patterns and themes developed in this chapter become the 'givens' for analysis of contemporary dynamics and the prospects for strategic intervention. The scale of analysis is reduced allowing for a more detailed examination of the motives and actions of local level actors engaged in urban development processes. Both Chapters Four and Five span the post war years until the end of the 1990s, and the analysis of the current round of socio-economic restructuring becomes the basis for contextually defining the direction for my own attempts at progressive intervention.

I will no longer use the expression 'other planners' because, at this stage, that argument has been grounded by 170 years of other planning experiences that completely subsumes any claims of centrality by titled planners. Instead, the various institutional and individual actors identified within the social milieu as shaping human settlement in the city centre and in the southwest should be understood as focal points for social inquiry. As the chaos perspective in Chapter Two helped to explain, there are many more actors and influences which do their bit at different temporal and spatial scales than I can possibly reference. What I have done is to flesh-out some of the more prominent and prevailing patterns and themes in the ways power is exercised over development since European settlement. In the next chapter, I take this perspective into the field, to both analyse the city centre context and to consider the prospects for progressive intervention.

One last point is that although the narrative has sought to ground the theories and concepts raised in earlier chapters, the critical realist approach to research maintains that this is an ongoing dialogue. In other words, the process of learning rather than knowing continues, with different historical and contemporary experiences feeding back to stimulate theoretical refinements and paradigm shifts. What I have sought to create is a historically informed and conceptually rich platform from which to undertake contemporary inquiries into Western Australian planning and development processes.
Swan Rivage Apartments

While the world is hoping in vain for "World Order", there is something
closer to what you would call the "City of Tomorrow" in Perth.

I find Perth the most beautiful city of Australia, the Attica "Sensational"
(meaning "Very Sensible", an ancient
description of the city of Athens)
This is reflected in the nature of the people, Per's yet to see a more amiable,
fundamental, optimistic Australian, even in the face of adversity. And a cool
achieve.

The heart of the city of Perth, its
squares, the traffic rationale and the
shopping location turned its planners,
consider the community.

There's always something new
happening in Perth to suit my
As a result, I am pleased to see that a
ew, "Perth Topaz", Perth response now
even as well as its growth and looks
to with the most audacious architectural ideas.

The latest one in the Swan River
Building, a Vertical Villa Village. This
Building will set the standard of urban
residential living.

It will make the Esplanade one of
the most desired residential addresses
in Australia.

Swan Rivage is a collection, organic,
looking high-rise that has, for me, a "dine
aesthetic appearance.

That's why I placed it - maybe a bit
irrationally, in the center of my "Perth
Triptych". To me, it's in my mind, and
to my eyes. It dominates so much
height and volume on the Perth skyline.

I intend its central position to accent and
take the eye to a new-build, modern
life-
style. Its reinforced sophistication is to
suit the growth and structure, its fascinating
ruddying rhythms and plantations of the
are a veritable visual "Midnight in Paris"
The feeling of "Vendome" is even
more than a match for the best hotel
so, the French Riviera, Florida or the
Gold Coast.

A fitting theme for "Perth Rivage",
whether you already arrived.

Charles Billow
Chapter Four: The Changing Role of the City Centre: is there Room for Affordable Housing?

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the urban governance framework was contextually grounded through a re-consideration of Western Australia's urban planning and development history. The ebb and flow of development was portrayed as the work of individual and institutional actors, manoeuvring within the limits of the land based political economy, as it articulates with national and global regimes of accumulation. In the first part of this chapter, the same analytical approach is drawn on to consider the changing nature and character of developments in central Perth. Once this contextual setting has been described, the latter part of the chapter goes on to explore some prospects for progressive intervention. In this way, as outlined in Chapter One, an integrative geographical approach to urban analysis becomes the foundation for informed participation and strategic (re)action.

As the chapter progresses, an explanation of post war developments in central Perth is followed by a more detailed analysis of contemporary restructuring processes. The field research at this level of inquiry identifies many key actors and trends, a palimpsest of social and physical legacies, and a new range of urban issues and prospects. With the aid of concepts from the Global City literature (Sassen 1991), data drawn from several empirical studies serves to describe the residential, commercial and political developments currently transforming central Perth. A rigid interpretation of the global city model would probably underestimate the relevance of this literature in respect to Perth's 'third tier' status (see White 1998). However, like other globally connected cities with a strong commercial and administrative core, and in contrast to Edge City predictions (Garreau 1991), Perth's city centre has since the early 1980s experienced a sustained period of growth.

The large scale office towers constructed during the 1980s in the central areas of Australia's largest metropolitan cities signified a new era of capital investment which continues to fundamentally alter the productive and social composition of the urban core. These urban transformations have given rise to new issues or 'stakes', which create new spaces for conflict, and increased levels of political contestation. In Perth, as they witness the
unfolding of new forms of social-spatial order, many commentators, some of whom are active in shaping events, point [paradoxically] to the causal influence of global restructuring. Instead, and in keeping with the literature on urban governance and regulation (Tickell and Peck 1992; Goodwin, Duncan and Halford 1993; Low 1994; Hay and Jessop 1995), I will first take up the argument that central Perth's particular place within the emerging global economy is by no means a one way global to local dominated process.

An overview of the comparative changes in the nature and form of commercial and residential developments in central Perth highlights several key trends which appear consistent with the national and international literature on Global Cities (Sassen 1991; Low 1995). Some important local anomalies are also explained and, as the developments unfold, it appears that more than before central Perth is now a meeting place along the lines described by Castells (1989) and Lepani (1994). In terms of production, the centre of Perth has emerged as a locus of public and private information exchange settings and facilities, accommodating the generation and movement of ideas - higher order meetings, negotiations, conferences, education and training. There has also been a decline in back-office staff and operations, as typified by resource aligned companies relocating their survey and support crews to the commercial and industrial parks adjacent to the airport. In terms of consumption, there has been a pronounced expansion of residential, hospitality, and recreational infrastructure and service provisions, along with a growing work force catering for increasing numbers of commercial travellers and tourists (Jeffcote 1996; Welch 1996).

This new emphasis in central Perth as a meeting place also parallels the recent changes described in Melbourne by Reynolds and Porter (1998), and in Sydney by Daly (1998). Moreover, as they speculate on the wider metropolitan implications for infrastructure, these writers note the shift away from the sprawling dormitory suburbs, nuclear families, and stable employment patterns that have been taken as givens in much of Australia's post war urban development. By contrast, the current focus on mixed use central city developments, new styles of compact and flexible forms of housing, and the rising prevalence of contract employment, are all features of post-Fordist development as described in the literature on global cities. What this particular study adds to the literature is an empirical grounding of the regulation, actor network, and growth coalition perspectives, as they relate to the local translation of global city trends in central Perth.
To be clear, at this practical level of inquiry, many of the prominent individual and institutional actors in the central city focussed growth coalition will be shown to be both influential and influenced by ongoing processes of social and economic restructuring. In turn these processes create conflict. The conflicts arise as new orders overlay the old, and as new ensembles of dominant place-tied actors reconfigure, and are themselves reconfigured, to facilitate the sea change in contemporary processes of capital accumulation. For example, the existing local government area boundaries were changed dramatically in 1993 as part of a State Government initiative to restructure the Perth City Council (PCC). This change effectively excised central Perth from 85% of its pre-existing residential constituencies and, in so doing, realigned the city’s administration with State and dominant commercial sector interests.

Similarly, under the legitimising banner ‘Cities For People’, new and reconfigured capital and public sector actors have funded and approved new developments that physically and socially replace the institutional, residential and recreational spaces that once served Perth’s lower income households. Furthermore, a closer examination of the current emphasis on residential development highlights the blurred public-private interface, the high degree of state intervention, and greater spatial social-economic polarisation (Low 1995).

Against this backdrop, a narrower focus on housing in central Perth in the 1990s also allows for an *in-situ* examination of contemporary restructuring processes. Adding new dimensions to the emerging ‘meeting place’ role of the city, the modification of Perth as a place to live and recreate has also been paralleled by major shifts in the form and character of urban governance. All three levels of government have been directly involved but, as the stakes have changed so too have the organisational structures and corporate cultures, as well as the skills and orientation of the public, private and inter-intra governmental actors. In other words, in the context of broader social economic restructuring, the capacity of existing power structures to reproduce themselves is undermined rendering them more vulnerable or, conversely, more receptive to change (Hay 1995). In addition to the restructuring of the PCC, other prominent examples of these transformations have included the creation of the East Perth Redevelopment Authority (EPRA), and the shifting fortunes of a ‘quango’ called Inner City Living. It is also clear that the new and reconfigured capital and civil actors are engaged in significantly different enterprises.
The intensity of this restructuring and, in particular, the sense of uncertainty that it brings, has created many opportunities to observe and experience the transformations. I was able to cultivate many useful contacts over the five years of active research and, while I witnessed the physical and institutional developments unfold, I was also privy to the opinions of many of the key decision makers as they sought to exercise their power. From these vantage points, the actor network of Western Australia's urban governance has 'flesh and blood'. Furthermore, through this ethnographic approach it was possible to see that, among the sound ideas and policies, there were/are also egos and prejudices, as well as personal missions and vendettas. These, together with happenstance and misunderstanding, created many unintended consequences.

In reconnecting with the personalities within Western Australia's system of urban governance, I had some good contacts to begin with, and my network expanded from them. Douglas (1985) refers to such sources of contacts as the 'mother lode'. For example, my cousin, Reg Withers, was the Lord Mayor of Perth just prior to its restructuring. He is a Liberal party stalwart, and he was a strong advocate for restructuring the Council, and for privatising its services. I met with him several times during 1993/4 and those discussions gave me a fair indication of some of the coming events. Two of my closest friends had also been instrumental in transforming their father's suburban based housing and land development company, to become Perth's leading inner city housing developer. With different ensembles of partners, they have amassed a very diverse residential and commercial portfolio (Fini Group) and, through them, I was exposed to many insightful stories and contacts. A photograph of their annual Christmas party would be a good approximation for the face of urban governance in Western Australia. As one of the brothers has remarked, 'we don't have relationships with government departments, but we do with many of the people inside (and outside) of them'.

As outlined in Chapter One, becoming familiar with the actors and dynamics behind the ebb and flow of urban development was only the first objective of my broader research agenda. The second objective was to use this knowledge (of urban governance in Western Australia) to explore the potential for influencing progressive development outcomes. In the context of central Perth, informed by my practical and theoretical understanding of the changing role of the city, the second part of this chapter turns to consider my experiences of the room to manoeuvre for low income housing in central Perth. Much of this part of the discussion will
draw on my strategic planning experience with the Perth Inner City Housing Association (PICHA), and it describes how a non-profit community housing provider attempts to reposition itself within the new context and to maintain its socially progressive agenda.

Of course, the very idea that inner city affordable housing is progressive cannot by itself be taken for granted, rather it has to be understood as contingently progressive within the current context. So, for example, in the 1970s, as the desirability of living in central Perth declined, the idea of developing affordable housing in the urban core would have been paramount to advocating the building of slums. This what happened, as a state sponsored practice in Perth, and more so in many other Anglo-American cities during that period (Muchnick 1970; Schwartz 1981; Adams 2000). By contrast, in the 1990s, central Perth is once again seen by the affluent as a desirable place to live, and the very limited number of affordable housing options that remain are fast disappearing. Moreover, this loss of affordable housing in central Perth is not just occurring through commercial attrition. In many cases, it is the result of both implicit and explicit government policy (Alexander 1994b; Greive, Jeffcote, and Welch 1999).

Opposing these contemporary trends, the quest to increase the supply of affordable housing in central Perth is therefore a challenge to the direction of dominant power relations, as expressed in everyday practices. These in turn reflect the shifting aspirations of coalitions of commercial and political interests, constrained and assisted by administrative and legislative conventions, and of entrenched cultural norms and expectations – i.e. social regulation. The field research sought to reveal the dynamics behind and between these factors and, as the inquiry progressed different overlays of actors and structures were examined, with the aim of maximising the room to manoeuvre within the local system of urban governance. As anticipated in Chapter One, how the objective of increasing the supply of affordable housing was to be achieved was very much dependant upon how these sorts of development decisions were made - from policy to practice and back again - and then recognising at every level how, when, and where it is that these decisions can be progressively influenced.

This affordable housing agenda was aligned with that of the Perth Inner City Housing Association ( PICHA). My first contact with PICHA was in November 1993 when I met the Executive Officer and several of the Directors. Through these contacts, I was able to meet
many of the remaining inner city welfare groups associated with shelter housing, migrant services, youth workers, church affiliates and various other community organisations. With PICH A, I was/am an actor directly involved in the development process, and our Development Committee is an ‘in-industry’ body of professionals with its own extensive network of contacts. So, just as I could draw on resources and contacts through my research position at the University, others could draw on their own particular set of resources to assist in some way with PICH A’s mission.

Part of my contribution to PICH A was to develop a broader understanding of the global to local dynamics underpinning the changing city context. In addition to my own direct involvements, I also sponsored and encouraged others to assist with the broader inner city research agenda. For example, I encouraged Nick Welch and Richard Je ff cote who were two Honours students to research around the issues of inner city housing and central city restructuring (Welch 1996; Je ff cote 1996). They each had their own particular research angles, but they were coordinated under a common theme - the changing ‘meeting place’ role of the city - and their work resulted in a joint article, with myself as the principal writer (Greive, Je ff cote and Welch 1999). I also led a PICH A-sponsored research project to survey some 70 tenants in respect to their past housing and employment profiles. In that project, I was neither the principal writer or field researcher, but the study and report followed my line of inquiry and it complemented the same central city ‘meeting place’ theme (PICH A 1997).

As actor oriented theory reminds us, these relationships and my various actor ‘hats’ all overlap. I was never going to be a detached nor an objective observer, for the concerns covered are central to how I live out my working and social life. At the beginning of my research I engaged in many formal interviews (Douglas 1985; Jenkins 1996), but my overall approach is best described as a process of learning through immersion and continuing dialogue.

From this position, drawing on both top down and bottom up perspectives, I was essentially reflecting on the two fold idea that; a) globalisation as defined in the global city model, does not necessarily follow from the economic internationalisation of large cities and, b) increased social polarisation is not an enviable result of increased global competition. I was able to see and hear how local actors negotiated various social and physical legacies to respond to specific opportunities and dilemmas posed by the emerging global economy,
however, it was also clear that the tendency towards greater socio-economic polarisation was as much a reflection of the nuances of those local development choices.

Figure 4.1 Metropolitan Perth - showing central Perth, Fremantle, Garden City and Karrinyup Shopping Areas
Figure 4.2  Distribution of New Housing Developments in Central Perth

East Perth Redevelopment Authority
750 Units Completed out of Total 1500 Units

- Aproximate Location of New Housing Developments

Source: Greive et al 2000:18
Figure 4.3  New Housing Forms:

Paragon CBD apartments pre-selling from just $162,000.

A Paragon CBD apartment puts Perth literally at your doorstep. Restaurants, cafes, theatres, movie houses, and shops surround you. You can walk to work or the river or Kings Park.

Paragon CBD is located between the Hay Street Mall and King Street, so you couldn't find a more central location. You can invest in this unique inner-city lifestyle from as little as $162,000, with an average price of $275,000.

One and two bedroom Paragon CBD apartments are now pre-selling. There is a choice of exclusive, beautifully appointed floor plans all featuring designer kitchens and bathrooms. The apartments also have complete building security and tenants have access to a fully equipped fitness centre.

DISPLAY APARTMENTS ARE NOW OPEN noon to 3pm everyday Hay St, next to Central Park.

To get a real feel for the apartments and city life, come and visit our display apartments or talk to Kevin Driscoll of Colliers Jardine on 0412 600 500 or 9261 6666.

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Walk in the same, walk to work. Walk to town.

A short walk from everything.

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4.2 Central City Transformations 1945-90

As was explained in Chapter Three, Perth's place in the global economy is largely a function of its role as the administrative, communications, and service centre facilitating the exploitation and development of Western Australia's predominantly land based economy. This by itself is a key yet often over looked point. Because Western Australia's 2.5 million square kilometres are largely administered at the State rather than Federal level, Perth retains its prominence despite the centralising tendencies envisaged within the literature on global cities (Harvey 1989). Corporate headquarters may want to locate in Sydney or Melbourne, but Perth is where access to one third of Australia's land and land based resources are negotiated politically and economically between higher level public and private sector actors. Moreover, Perth, if not central Perth, is where the enterprise logistics are largely organised and equipped. As a consequence, Perth is an important and relatively large and centralised city and, by world standards, it is globally well connected on many levels - economically and culturally - and well serviced in terms of transport and communications.

Table 4.1 Distribution of Corporate Headquarters for the Mining Industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>No of Head Offices</th>
<th>% National Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darwin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobart</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16% of head offices are not located in capital cities; source (O'Connor and Kershaw 1999).

1945-80

In the immediate post war period, central Perth was characterised by a diversity of land use activities, including government and professional offices and retailing, as well as significant residential and manufacturing components. By 1980 however, in keeping with many other Western cities, the urban core had experienced considerable social and economic restructuring (Law 1988:168). Trends in common with other city centres included the loss of manufacturing, the out migration of inner city residents and a relative decline in retailing. Perth's economy was never as dependant upon manufacturing as either Sydney's or
Melbourne's, but much of it was centred in and around the urban core. The city's landscape was dramatically transformed as businesses closed or relocated to industrial estates in outer metropolitan areas or off shore.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, road construction, infrastructure, and commercial developments also led to many home demolitions and conversions. This was particularly the case in East Perth where the generally poor quality housing, set amidst decaying warehouse and industrial scapes, saw depreciating rents. This setting also reflected the decline in city based blue-collar jobs, particularly those associated with manufacturing and public transport. And, as the older working class families moved out there were few replacements, creating blighted areas with a high proportion of the cash and absolute poor - predominantly the elderly, new immigrants, underemployed youth, and Aboriginals (Alexander 1974). Most of Perth's few remaining affluent residents lived on the west side of the city, on St.Georges Terrace and further up the hill on Mount Street (Stannage 1979). By the 1970s, however, many of the grand old homes on St.Georges Terrace had also been demolished or converted to commercial usage, and this process continued through the 1980s replacing most of what remained of the older residential buildings in the CBD.

While the central areas of many Australian and international cities were continuing to decline during the 1970s (Law 1988), Perth was kept afloat by the mineral booms and their flow-on effects to the commercial and public sectors. Developments such as Mount Newman House and Hamersley House changed Perth's skyline, as well as the workforce composition of the central area in favour of office activity. The increase in white collar commercial and public service employment offset the decline in the city's blue collar workforce but the new sites of employment were more centralised and served to consolidate the CBD rather than the fringe areas of the central city. Perth also retained its primacy as the State's highest order retail centre, however, it is no longer as dominant as it once was. With the out-migration of the city's resident population, competition from suburban shopping centres (e.g. Garden City and Karrinyup) intensified and, with increasing rents, many small independent retailers were forced to close.
1980-90

The expansion of commercial development associated with Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate (FIRE sectors) in the 1970s, accelerated during the 1980s as Australian markets became increasingly deregulated. The massive inflow of foreign capital, especially from south-east Asia, saw investment in Australian urban real estate almost triple between 1986 and 1988 to approach $15 billion (Berry and Huxley 1992). The central areas of Australia’s capital cities received the bulk of this finance (Stimson 1995). Driven by the promise of high returns, public and private investors viewed the office tower as ‘a massive oil derrick turned upside down, drilling the sky for fees, commissions and taxes’ (Stern 1996:8).

Yet even with the increase in floor space, there was no corresponding increase in full time employment numbers for the central city. There are more part time workers but, tellingly, the amount of office space per worker increased (Jeffcote 1996). Typically, larger individual offices, meeting places and conference settings have replaced the typing pool arrangement. These are the environs of a new professional class of idea generators and negotiators, usually highly paid and variously described as the internationally oriented urban elites. They contrast with the person-to-person service workers who may share the same socio-cultural background, but live more vicariously on lower wages with less job security in the cafes and restaurants that have become the forums for the ‘power breakfasts’ and business lunches.

As in the larger financial hubs, the roaring 1980s were characterised by extravagance and a rampant ‘more is more’ attitude. Market research was simply promotional material - see the report for the Q.V.I office tower for example - and in Perth the three newest and largest office towers all came onto the market around the same time, in the aftermath of the 1987 stock market crash. By 1992, the amount of office floor space was double that of 1980 (Yiftachel 1993) and, as Low and Moser (1991) have explained - following Harvey’s Limits of Capital argument - the folly of the over build was entirely predictable. The anticipated high returns never eventuated and Perth endured the highest office vacancy rate of all Australia’s depressed commercial markets (Jeffcote 1996).
As described in Chapter Three (3.16) there was no shortage of corruption either. There was systemic corruption within the PCC, particularly in the Planning Committee stacked with real estate and commercial interests (Alexander 1992). At the State level the situation was even worse and, by the close of the decade, the former Liberal and Labor Premiers were in prison, along with several of Western Australia’s most powerful business leaders. The bankruptcy and jailing of Alan Bond, and the forced sale of his office tower were indicative of the over-leveraged 1980s.

If the new office towers in Perth were largely in keeping with the pattern of development elsewhere, the gentrification and revitalisation of central Perth’s residential and tourism sectors seems to have been rather slow to develop. In keeping with central Melbourne and Sydney, in contrast to London, New York or Boston, and despite several earlier planning initiatives, it was not until the 1990s that central Perth saw any significant additions to its residential component. Although Perth is certainly smaller and less ‘globally connected’ than these other cities, the evidence suggests that, during the 1980s, the absence of new housing in central Perth was attributable to the inability of local actors to successfully negotiate local limitations, particularly those posed by entrenched and non compatible legislative, administrative, and cultural practices – i.e. social regulation.

The lack of existing residential services (supermarkets, laundrettes, etc.) and the declining population, together with the rigid zoning regulations, environmental contamination, urban blight, and highway divided neighbourhoods, were common features in inner cities reflecting the negative aspects of the social and physical legacies of previous regimes of accumulation. In Perth, however, the combination of these factors proved insurmountable for the smaller-scale private developers and it was only after sustained local, State and Federal government intervention that the first of the 1980s style residential developments began construction in 1990.

What central Perth missed during the 1980s were the large scale mixed use housing and commercial developments akin to the nature and form of Battery Park (New York), Canary Wharf (London) and, to some extent, Darling Harbour (Sydney). These developments were characterised by an adjacent CBD location, water frontages, and easy access to airports and conference centres. In other cities these types of development paralleled the expansion of the FIRE sectors. They were financed on the basis of the spiralling commercial rents, and the anticipated increase in housing demand generated by an inflow of suburban raised young
adults (childless Baby Boomers) seeking ready access to the expanding employment market and social meeting amenities of the urban core. Perth was lucky to have avoided the excesses of these developments. Elsewhere they were financial disasters because they were so large and so long in being developed that they too came on the market post 1987, into a period of declining demand and returns (Fainstein 1994).

It was not until 1986 that there were sustained attempts by local actors to foster life in the city, as had been the case elsewhere, nationally and internationally and most notably in Fremantle, Perth’s port city, as early as 1980. An indication of this new interest was series of nine published reports supporting different and competing schemes for revitalising central Perth. According to Page (1993), these were effectively manipulated to legitimise the particular views of various arrangements of powerful corporate and State government interests. Bringing residential life back into the city centre was an old idea that had been around since at least the early 1970s, but in Perth it was not until the late 1980s that its time came.

Figure 4.4 Residential Building Approvals and Office Vacancy Rates in Central Perth 1989-96

Source: Greive et al 1999:229
The excesses of the commercial over-build became apparent in the high vacancy rates, and these were compounded by trends towards corporate downsizing and middle management retrenchments. To maintain property values, commercial property holders became very active in supporting the idea of residential conversions and mixed use zoning and, through the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA\textsuperscript{1}), they lobbied accordingly. In a separate initiative, a collective of city oriented professionals, academics, and private sector 'influentials', arguing a range of progressive to opportunist positions, formed 'City Vision' and, ostensibly they worked towards the ideal of bringing life back into the city. City Vision also had direct links with progressives within the State Labor Government and, while they were arguing a different agenda from BOMA, there was a growing belief that major changes were needed within the PCC. In the face of this public criticism, the PCC's position was that it recognised that revitalisation was both necessary and desirable and that the PCC was in the best position to plan for Perth's future.

\textit{1990s}

In 1993, the new State Liberal Government, with a certain degree of public support - albeit manipulated - acted to restructure the PCC. It was this initiative that created the present boundaries for central Perth, thus establishing a city with a population of some 5 500 surrounded by three new towns with a combined population of around 75 000. As well as separating the city's commercial heart from the influence of suburban voters, the restructuring process also elevated the State's role in managing and planning the city centre, and increased the lobbying power of commercial interests over residential. It is also worth noting that Melbourne and Sydney experienced restructuring of their respective city centre local governments during the 1980s and into the nineties and, although the character of the boundary changes were different, the outcome in terms of the reassertion of State and larger scale commercial interests in local government appears to be the same.

As if to sign post the rising importance of the city centre, the State Premier has come to be personally identified with Perth's revitalisation initiatives (Business News 06.10.93). Foremost among his initiatives was the public launch of 'Perth: A City for People' which was similar to Melbourne's "Postcode 3000" and designed to increase the city's residential and recreational appeal. In Perth, the emphasis was on infrastructure improvements which, together with the greening of street-scapes, and the creation of historic precincts, were

\textsuperscript{1} Now known as the Property Council of Australia.
designed to lift the image of the city centre, to enhance the new residential and tourism developments, and to complement the new recreation orientation of retail and commercial services. According to a PCC insider, however, many of these initiatives were pirated from the idea pool of the previous Council's administration.

Figure 4.5 Premiers Personal Project

Business News 06/10/93 (p7).

By Bruce Lawson

The Premier told Business News the new plaza won't be built in a "bridge style".

The whole redevelopment of Perth's centre has become very much a personal project of the Premier's.

He sees the city as an entertainment centre and a seven-days-and-nights-a-week tourist attraction.

'City is Premier's personal project'

"Mr. Court seems to be the only premier we have come across with a grasp of town planning issues," says Northbridge Business Association president Sam Rogers.

"That's where he'll leave his mark.

"He's doing to tourism what his father did for iron ore."

The existence of the wide swathe of railway tracks through the centre of Perth is seen as a major obstruction to city development.

Because the line is on an old lake, sinking it below ground level is a problem. Building over it seems a better option.

Recently the Premier told a group of Northbridge business people that the government wants to create more links between Northbridge and the rest of the city.

"King Street is starting to come together as a north-south pedestrian link and landscaping is about to happen," he says.

"We have to work out a way to get it straight across into Northbridge — and that's in the (master) plan.

"We have to rethink the whole area where the bus station is.

"And the Cultural Centre needs to be improved considerably, the area made safer at night and tied in more effectively across the rail line."
Among the newer wave of developments, the distinction between residential and commercial accommodation has become increasingly difficult to define. For example, the international hotel chain, Travel Lodge, has recently developed 120 strata titled apartments that will be managed as fully serviced apartments – now under the Saville hotel chain. Part of the former PCC depot site on James Street has also become a 'Hotel of Apartments' involving some 90 of the 250 strata titled units. It was developed by Fini Group, and it reflects the company's own restructuring away from its suburban roots as a home builder to a central city address, with a diverse inner city residential and commercial development portfolio.

As some 80% of the city's new housing stock is rented and, given that there is little difference in the internal layout and physical structure, the distinction between the new hotels, fully serviced apartments, and permanent housing is nowadays only a function of management and tenure arrangements, and these can vary considerably even within the same development. This is indicative of a new flexibility in the way that the city's housing is being tenured and managed in order to capture changing customer and investor demands. Although this does undermine the market for traditional style hotels, they too have changed in that through strata titling the development risk is borne by a greater number of smaller scale investors.

Figure 4.6 A Hotel of Apartments
Housing Focus

As early as 1983, East Perth had been mooted by the new State Labor administration as a site for extensive redevelopment. Support from Labor’s right focussed on the land development potential while, on the Left, union and community affiliates were encouraged by the prospect of a significant affordable housing component. The idea was refined over several years. However it languished as a concept plan, largely due to the high cost anticipated for the site’s environmental rehabilitation. There was also the difficulty associated with negotiating settlement terms with the many land holders, including 17 different government instrumentalities. The local press were very supportive, as were private developers, but at an estimated cost of $100 million and with no potential for short term profits, it was not until the Federal Labor government introduced the Building Better Cities Program (BBCP) in 1990 that there was any real prospect for financial backing.

As Badcock (1993) notes, BBCP was the first Federal intervention into city centres for over 20 years but, in contrast to Whitlam’s anti-poverty programs, the new policy thrust was explicitly aligned with building better competitive and gateway cities for channelling and absorbing international investment. As a ready to go model promoting consolidated mixed use housing and commercial development, the proposal was readily absorbed under BBCP. In 1991 with the passing of State legislation, the East Perth Redevelopment Authority was created with the powers to resume and regulate the sub-division and redevelopment of the 20 hectare site. The original concept plan, which has changed considerably, included a high-tech industry-education component, conference facilities, and a central commercial-recreational hub surrounded by 3 000 housing units. Although there was no formalised agreement, a notional figure of 1 000 units within the village was publicly discussed as being reserved as affordable housing.

The project was espoused as a working partnership between the three tiers of government. However, there was only ever one high level joint meeting and, from then on, the PCC was made clear of its ‘Cinderella’ position. Moreover, with the election of the Liberal-National State Government in 1993, State and Federal relations quickly soured, particularly with respect to the affordable housing component. As the housing market continued its decline and as other inner city housing developments came on stream, concerns raised by several potential investors resulted in Homeswest (the State’s Public Housing Developer) being publicly ousted from having any direct involvement with the project.
The project has now been down-scaled to 1 500 housing units, with corresponding decreases in housing densities and increases in per unit land costs. Several commentators have since labelled project elitist, and drew press attention to the threat of losing the affordable housing component (The West Australian, 11.02.95). There was, however, no loud public outcry, and it was not uncommon to hear sentiments that openly opposed the idea of the undeserving poor being subsidised to live in what was rapidly becoming a highly desirable and expensive area. It was not until August 1995, one month before a Federal funded BBCP review, that a new agreement on affordable housing was reached. At that time it was said publicly that 50 units would be reserved for affordable housing, and it was also around then that construction started on the first of the new homes on the EPRA site.

Meanwhile, in a separate initiative which was an off-shoot from City Vision, the Inner City Housing Task Force, comprised of Local and State government officials, set out forty practical recommendations towards encouraging inner city housing development. This report received considerable press attention which served to engender wider public support. In response the PCC, in conjunction with the State and Federal Labor governments, sponsored the creation of a quango called Inner City Living in 1991.

Inner City Living was staffed by public servants who, in their promotion of inner city housing, were to provide technical and marketing assistance to members of the newly formed Inner City Developers Association, as well as to other would be developers. In practise, this included contracting an architect to assess the potential for residential conversions among the stock of central city commercial buildings, as well as conducting market studies among potential inner city residents. Staff directly assisted developers to ‘trouble shoot’ their planning negotiations with various government instrumentalities, including the PCC. In a later initiative, a consultant was hired to identify all relevant regulations and fee structures which acted to restrain inner city housing development. The recommend changes were formatted to facilitate direct amendments to existing legislative and policy documents.

As can be seen from Figure 4.4 a sustained trend towards inner city housing development began in 1990. One of the first of the new wave of developments was the Railway Institute on Wellington Street, which included a restored heritage building adjoined by 46 low income residential units. Homeswest was the developer, and the project was sensitively designed as a model for Perth’s future mixed use housing developments. Since then, more
than 3000 units have been issued building permits on more than 60 city centre sites. Importantly, however, a closer examination of this emerging housing stock reveals that in terms of its physical form, household composition and tenure, it is significantly different from previous forms of inner city housing.

Despite all the promotion (often publicly funded) of central Perth as a desirable residential location, the new developments have largely failed to attract the young urban oriented professionals, empty nesters, and early retirees from among Perth’s metropolitan population. This has surprised some commentators. However, it appears that the local market for an urban oriented life style had already been largely absorbed by the redevelopments which occurred throughout the 1980s in Fremantle, Subiaco, and in areas south and immediately north of central Perth. Furthermore, when compared to these other urban centres, the new units in central Perth are relatively expensive to own or rent, and many do not have ready access to super markets, convenience stores, or to the after hours commercial vitality that was evoked to promote the sales.

Many, but not all, of the newer developments have until very recently been promoted and sold directly offshore in Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong. An analysis of the tenant records reveals that the largest component of the new resident population are nationals from southeast Asian countries (80%) and of these, over 50% are students enrolled in English language colleges and centres of higher learning. This segment of the tenant population is concentrated in the cluster of newer residential developments in the south-east end of central Perth (Figure 4.2). Others among the more permanent of the tenant population include young professionals and person-to-person service workers. Typically, these tenants require ready access to jobs specific to the city centre, or to the airport and casino. Generally they live in shared households as two or three singles in order to afford the high rents, and it also appears that many are not originally from Perth. In older developments, the tenants are more permanent, and many are single pensioners - aged and disability.

At the lower end of the housing spectrum, there are a number of trends which are also indicative of the central city’s changing social and physical composition. The new and expensive residential developments have physically replaced much of the older housing stock and, while much of this was under private ownership, it did provide affordable housing options for the city’s predominantly low income residents. Similarly, since the
relaxing of the State’s liquor licensing laws, the temporary and often cheap lodgings offered in the rooms above older style hotels are no longer legally required, and have largely disappeared. The other form of cheap accommodation within the city centre are the new back-packer shared dormitories for budget international travellers, which as a rule do not accept locals.

The results of a survey of the tenants within PICHÁ’s lodging houses indicate that vacancy rates are very low, that what was once temporary housing has taken on an air of permanence, and that the new tenants are younger and more employment oriented (PICHÁ 1997). The work histories among the younger residents indicate that many are employed on a temporary or part time basis and, consequently, their work site and incomes change week by week. Many of the working residents were aligned with the city’s hotel and restaurants, and typically worked ‘behind the scenes’ as kitchens hands, or as cleaners. Others worked as factory hands, often on a casual basis, and were drawn to the city because the centralised public transport provided access to jobs in any of the outer industrial areas.
4.3 Problem Definition

The developments witnessed in Perth since the 1980s amount to a redefined economic role for central Perth, one which emphasises the city centre as a social and productive meeting place. However, contrary to the promotion of Perth: A City For People, it has become more exclusionary and elitist. Furthermore, with few exceptions, the bulk of the state subsidies and resources that have been directed to these redevelopments have accentuated this inequity.

Arguably, because of the way locally dominant actors have responded to emergent trends within the global economy, central Perth cannot reasonably claim to possess the essence of a vibrant multi-dimensional city. In regulation terms, there has not been a successful coupling of productive and social relations. More specifically, there is a two-way economic argument for affordable housing in central Perth. On one hand, commercial travellers, tourists, and empty nesters may be able to ‘bank-roll’ a living city but, without a broader cross section of people and purpose, Perth will not be the lively 24 hour city that the local boosters have been trying to create and sell. On the other hand, currently it is the person-to-person service workers and the repetitive processors (mostly young) who must carry the burden of excessive housing and transport costs to access the lower paying casual and part time jobs created in the new economy.

It is also clear that youth oriented culture, employment and housing facilities are on the decline in the central city. As of January 2000, City Farm, The Verge Gallery, the headquarters for the Artrage Festival, and the Jack Sue Gallery and studios are all under threat of closure. The fact of these prospective closures is paradoxical in that local dominant actors who both promote and benefit from the idea of vitality in the city appear to be undermining that potential through both accident and design. For example, City Farm is an agricultural oriented facility which for over 10 years has been a focus for youth activities within the area administered under the East Perth Redevelopment Authority (EPRA). Although it has been granted a two year reprieve, it is destined to become a car park. Similarly The Verge, which serves as a gallery space for more than twenty young artists, is set to close as soon as the completion of the Northbridge Tunnel allows for the commercial value of the property to be realised by the EPRA. The City of Perth has also announced that it will redevelop the warehouse site that has served as the ‘home’ for the Artrage Festival.
The Changing Role of the City Centre: Is there Room for Affordable Housing?

Figure 4.8  City Farm – Bringing Diversity to East Perth

Figure 4.9  Locking the Doors on the Home of Perth’s Fringe Art - Artrage
The threatened closure of the Jack Sue Gallery is distinctive in that it is a by-product of private speculative manoeuvrings, rather than those of the state. As an interim usage, the current owner had intended to use the site to store art and, in the process, the gallery would close together with the ten working studios, some of which serve as homes for the artists. Fortunately, the irony of the situation was not beyond the landlord and negotiations are in progress towards some temporary compromise. The site will eventually be redeveloped but, for now it offers the perfect example of the larger point, which is that the consumers of urban vitality are effectively displacing its producers in terms of interest and diversity.

These examples of the way that highly creative and employable young people are losing their place within the city centre are only part of the story. Aboriginals in particular, and poorer people in general are experiencing similar displacement pressures. The relocation of the migrant resource centre, to the outer suburb of Mirrabooka is indicative of the broader trend, as is the intensive policing of Russell Square, to ‘move along’ the Aboriginals who have met there for generations. The purpose in highlighting the exclusion of the young creative and employable in the central Perth is primarily aimed at increasing the room to manoeuvre towards progressive intervention. It is simply a strong argument against potentially very conservative sentiments. The recent initiative to create an indigenous and ethnic craft market in Russell Square, which would be managed by an Aboriginal aligned not profit corporation, follows a similar ‘maximising the room to manoeuvre’ strategy (Benson forthcoming).

The main thrusts of the overall argument from this first part of the chapter are firstly that the promise of city centre vitality is the basis of a premium paid on most aspects of the city’s commodification, especially in relation to real estate development. At the same time, these real estate developments are undermining the diversity of people and place that generate the urban vitality. Secondly, those who promote and benefit the most from these redevelopments are largely local actors seeking to maximise the potential for growth which, under the current regime of accumulation, recognises the city centre as a ‘gateway’ to the global economy. In this context, there would be few locally dominant actors who would wantonly displace the young, creative and employable from the city’s cultural and employment opportunities. But this, nevertheless, is what is happening. Furthermore, in the longer term interests of the State’s/City’s growth potential, both the current dynamics and
historical precedents suggest that facilitating the connection between local youth and the
global economy would be a sound basis for progressive intervention.

In the sections that follow, the focus turns from analysis to participation and strategic
(re)action. The approach is to draw on this understanding of the 'urban vitality' paradox
and to use this as a platform to consider the prospects for progressive intervention against,
but not directly opposed to, the dominant direction of power relations. As was described in
Chapter Two, such internal contradictions manifest a structural room to manoeuvre that can
be explored and expanded upon through informed action and further learning. In this way,
an integrative geographical approach to urban analysis becomes the foundation for my own
strategic manoeuvrings within Western Australia’s system of urban governance.

4.4 Making Room for Affordable Housing

My first contact with PICHA (Perth Inner City Housing Association) was in November
1993. I had recently returned to Perth after 10 years abroad and in my search for
employment I saw an advertisement for the position as PICHA’s Community
Development/Communication’s Officer. In the conversations and interviews that followed,
it was important for PICHA that I had both ‘hands on’ and policy experience in housing in
London and Boston. PICHA’s Executive Officer is a Canadian national with considerable
experience with the North American style of non-profit housing development, and it was
refreshing for us to find that common ground. Community housing in Australia is
comparatively underdeveloped, and the idea that non-profit developers could produce up to
a third of all new housing, as is the case in Boston, would be inconceivable to most
Australians.

In pursuing a Ph.D. option I had to forego working for PICHA full time, however, for the
past six years I have continued to participate as a volunteer on the Association’s
Development Committee. This committee includes the Executive Officer, the Development
Specialist and four volunteers. Its main function is to review and direct PICHA’s
development agenda through the recommendations that it makes to the Board of Directors.
This perspective gave direction to several aspects of the field research. Moreover, as the
discussion turns to consider how to encourage more affordable housing within the central
city, my PICHA experience will be used to practically illustrate how contingent opportunities and dilemmas arise and are confronted by strategic (re)actions.

This is an observer-participant position (Kellehear 1993) which will need to be clarified further with more detail concerning PICHA's history and current profile. Once that position has been adequately defined, the stage is set to derive 'room to manoeuvre' insights from a series of anecdotes from PICHA's development agenda. Each of these stories provides an in-situ illustration of how to operate - access power - within Western Australia's system of urban governance. As the stories unfold, it becomes even more apparent that the aim of increasing the supply of affordable housing in the central Perth is contrary to the direction of the dominant power relations and that, without sustained strategic advocacy, those affordable housing options that do remain will surely be lost.

As can be concluded from the previous section, in the 1990s the continuing loss of affordable housing in central Perth was mostly attributable to redevelopments associated with expensive apartment-hotel complexes which have an international orientation in respect to both investor owners and tenants. Nevertheless, they have been predominantly developed by local private and public actors, frequently utilising public resources - administrative, technical, financial, and property. To these same locally dominant actors, affordable housing appears as an opportunity cost in terms of the missed redevelopment potential, and also as a direct threat to their investments by lowering the tone of their neighbourhood. An added difficulty is that these are largely the same actors who dominate urban governance within the central city and who must be appealed to, in one form or another, to turn the tide against the continuing expulsion of low income residents from the city.

Convincing these public, private and civil actors to put aside their usual prejudices and their parochial commercial and political interests, to look past their own exclusionary rhetoric and, to work to make room for affordable housing in the central city is therefore central to PICHA's advocacy position. In other words, short of the revolution which Harvey (1997) has discouraged us from waiting for, progress towards increasing the supply of affordable housing in central Perth will be at the margins. In the discussion that follows, the main focus is on describing and explaining how PICHA has sought to expand its room to manoeuvre towards this progressive change.
The Changing Role of the City Centre: Is there Room for Affordable Housing?

**PICHA**

The Perth Inner City Housing Association is a non-profit community housing association, which emerged from the housing sub-committee of the Perth Inner City Helping Agencies. This body of local community and professional members came together in 1986 out of concern for the increasing numbers of people facing housing crisis as the city's stock of affordable housing declined. The seed idea for the Association was therefore very much a product of its time and place, as is its vision, which is;

> to ensure that a full range of housing types and tenures exist in the inner city, offering a greater choice to people of varied socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds.

While my description of PICHA's organisational history is limited primarily to that which I have experienced since 1993 it occurs to me as, I consider the Association's fourteen year history, that it too was from the start oriented towards growth. What was originally a non-profit corporate board with nine voting members, is now an organisation permanently staffed by six full time and two part employees, as well as various contracted construction, maintenance and administrative professionals. In 1994, three working committees were created to enable new volunteers to be brought in to work for the Association. Against the odds, the housing stock under PICHA's ownership has also grown from the original 45 units over 3 sites, to currently include 153 housing rooms/units over 10 sites. The quality of the stock has also improved significantly.

Perhaps the most obvious sign of PICHA's growth is that its Annual General Meeting, which until 1994 involved no more than nine board and three executive members, is now open to the public with some 60-80 members (staff, volunteers and tenants) in attendance. In recent years the Minister for Planning, the former CEO of the Ministry for Housing in New South Wales and the Mayor of Adelaide have made the opening addresses. Regular attendees include the local State and Federal Members of Parliament, together with representatives from the City of Perth and the Town of Vincent. To be clear, given the deteriorating political and economic environment, which includes conservatives controlling three levels of government, together with an over supplied top end of the housing market creating nervous investors, PICHA's growth has definitely been the result of purposeful, rather than fortuitous, endeavour.
One way to surmise the character of this growth is to recognise that it reflects a shift away from a charity-welfare-benefactor model to one which is more development and advocacy oriented. It would be stretching the point to suggest more than tendencies, but the turn was captured in the words of the previous Executive Officer when he said, 'Sometimes it is hard to see whether we are saving souls or housing them' (PCHA's Annual Report 1994/5). Since then, the focus on development has also fostered a more aggressive approach in pursuing development proposals, seeking funds and resources, and forging partnerships beyond the welfare network. In this sense, PCHA has taken on the advocacy planning approach favoured by American style non-profit developers who, in fathoming the limits of their position, consider networking and political agitation as integral to the development agenda.

The Development Committee with which I am associated came into being soon after the appointment of the Community Development/Communications Officer in February 1994. Its establishment was part of the overall changes that were happening at PCHA, and the first meeting that I attended was an informal discussion about what such a committee might do. By 1996, the committee had grown from three to four regular members to five or six. In addition to PCHA's Executive Officer and the Development Officer, the other members included the Manager of the Strategy Unit for the City of Perth, a Principal of a leading Perth based real estate agency and a senior bureaucrat with the State's Welfare Services. It was also noteworthy that the personnel profile of this committee was not left to chance. They were actively solicited for their involvement as a way of strategically enhancing the PCHA's contact network and resources.

The Grand Hotel Disaster

Midway through 1994, the Grand Hotel site (corner of Wellington and William Streets) was identified as a property with potential for a PCHA redevelopment initiative. The ANZ bank had recently foreclosed upon the property because its former owner the YWCA had been unable to service the mortgage repayments. The belief was that the bank would be looking for a quick sale to recover their debts, and that in turn suggested the prospect of a relatively cheap and well located property appropriate for PCHA's needs.
There were several aspects to the site that made it particularly attractive for PICHA. Firstly the three story former hotel was the right scale and structural configuration to easily facilitate conversion into some sort of low income apartment/lodging house mix. The existing land use zoning was also compatible. The building itself had been recently refurbished and was in excellent condition. Moreover, the refurbishments had been partly financed by a $500 000 grant from the Lotteries Commission and it was felt that there was a strong case to retain the building as a community resource.

The only obvious concern was that the site was in the newly defined tourist precinct on the edge of the cultural precinct. In this specific context it could be speculated that PICHA’s development proposal may not have been looked on favourably. At the time, the State Government, through the Premier’s Department was ‘calling’ for the newly restructured City of Perth to actively ‘spruce up the city’ with a view to attracting more tourists and international capital. PICHA’s proposal, it could be argued, had the potential to undermine the tourist experience through the ‘social problems’ attributable to low income housing tenants.
As the building was to be sold at auction, PICHA moved quickly to alert Homeswest of its attention to prepare a development proposal with the idea that this was a ‘plum’ opportunity for investment in community inner city housing. Homeswest duly indicated their interest in a possible joint venture funding arrangement, with PICHA as the developing and managing agent. Homeswest actually complimented the quality of the overall proposal, as far as they were concerned ‘this was exactly the kind of proposal that they were looking for’. The Lotteries Commission were also contacted to retain their support for affordable housing on the site. However, they would make no further commitment until Homeswest had declared theirs.

The property was passed in at auction when it failed to research the reserve price, with the highest bid at $1.2 million. PICHA’s proposal assumed an offer of $1.35 million and a final cost of $1.45 million and $13 500 as a deposit. It included 9 self contained apartments, and 27 rooms with bathrooms, kitchens, and dining areas on all of the three floors of accommodation. There was also some discussion of appropriate target groups and also about the possibility of innovations in architectural design and tenant management.

The main point though was that, irrespective of how marvellous the site and the proposal may have been, it was sold post-auction to a Singapore based hotel chain for $1.4 million and, certainly quicker than PICHA’s was able to respond. The whole public-community housing funding process is/was just too cumbersome to be effective in making shrewd real estate deals. The need for open and accountable public spending which involved independent valuations together with ratified Homeswest and PICHA board approvals, all runs counter to the prospect of opportune buying. This lesson was confirmed two years later when the unimproved hotel site was again on the market and PICHA was again active in trying to purchase the property. On this occasion, the hotel sold for $1.8 million to a local developer with a view to conversion into a back-packer hostel. The same thing happened a few months later on another site (the Arcadia Hotel) which again involved a local developer and a back-packer conversion.

In terms of the lost development opportunity, and the labour and resources that were channelled into these different manoeuvrings, the loss of Grand Hotel opportunity was a great disappointment, not only for PICHA but also for Homeswest. Interestingly though, three years later as I ponder the implications of these failures, it appears that the
disappointment was great enough to have generated a more savvy outlook in respect to future developments and joint ventures between PICHA and Homeswest. Although it is difficult to be conclusive, it does seem that subsequent negotiations between Homeswest and PICHA have been more streamlined. In particular, PICHA is currently pursing the idea of a ‘pre-approved development fund with Homeswest’, which is a concept that would not have been considered prior to the Grand Hotel disaster.

Somewhat more obliquely, the disappointment also seemed to elicit greater support for the idea of a new lodging house in central Perth, among bureaucrats within the City of Perth and Homeswest. In this sense, the Grand Hotel was an ‘icon failure’ among those public-community-housing actors who were immediately involved. More explicitly, the big lesson in terms of the room to manoeuvre concept, was that what at first appeared to be a totally negative story, seems to have manifested some positive changes. These were largely institutional changes but, as the following exemplars suggest, they foreshadowed a more entrepreneur approach to development, and overtime, there were corresponding increases to PICHA’s affordable housing stock.

**East Perth Redevelopment Authority (EPRA)**

As was discussed earlier, although the original plans to redevelop East Perth envisaged that up to one third of the proposed 3 000 units were to be considered ‘affordable’. In 1995, this was scaled back to 50 units among a total of 1 500. These targets were never rigidly set, and the term ‘affordable’ has remained usefully ambiguous. Yet, despite these trends, and perhaps because of them, PICHA managed to sign a contract with EPRA finalising negotiations for a 35 unit residential development. The following account briefly links together the contextual nuances and strategies that have helped PICHA to reach this point. In this particular case, the room to manoeuvre for PICHA demonstrates an amenable solution to inter-governmental conflict.

The demise of a strong commitment to affordable housing in East Perth paralleled the change of government from Labor to Liberal (conservative) at both the State (1993) and Federal (1996) level. It also coincided with a major re-think (or realisation) of the project’s market potential. In the early 1980s, when various East Perth redevelopment proposals were ‘floated’ (informally put out for comment), the idea was always popular, but there was never any formal market study - on housing price, scale, or mix - just ‘reckonings’ by local real
estate agents. Even so, it is conceivable that an early market study would have been irrelevant given that it took ten years for the first lots to come onto the market. By then the market was virtually saturated by the housing developments that were built on the periphery of the EPRA site (Figure 4.2) ironically, because of the promise of what that site would eventually offer.

**Figure 4.11 Exciting East Perth - Not!**

In 1994 while publicly banning the State’s public housing developer (Homeswest) from the whole EPRA area, the then new Minister For Planning (Richard Lewis) was responding to the voiced concerns of local developers/real estate agents. They were concerned that Homeswest developments would further undermine the softening market. The EPRA was also concerned that it should earn as much as it could from each lot, especially since the radical reduction in densities. Furthermore, on a personal level Richard Lewis, who nowadays is the EPRA chairman, also held the opinion that affordable housing should be confined to cheap land on the suburban fringe (pers com. 1994).

At the federal level, however, the $35 million subsidy to the EPRA may have been spent on environmental clean-ups and infrastructure, but there was a clear expectation of an
affordable housing component as a social benefit that the Federal Government could point to as an achievement. Even with the change of government and the almost immediate abandonment of the Better Cities Program, among some federal bureaucrats as late as 1997 there was still an expectation of an affordable housing component. It was also fair and convenient for them to say, 'there will be no more subsidy from us, because we have already paid for it' (pers. com.1997).

We, on PICH A's Development Committee, watched these dynamics and heard these opinions through our respective networks, which are extensive as they often are in Perth, this village of more than a million. Letters were written, calls were made and PICH A prodded where it could to remind all those who would listen about the affordable housing obligations in East Perth. PICH A was part of a small chorus of voices, which included other community housing affiliates, local and federal Labor politicians, church groups, academics and some media outlets. But the issue did not engender wide public support, and EPRA was 'definitely not just going to give the land away' (pers. com.1997).

Out of this agitation, the minor push and shove of policy formation resulted in an advertised public tender from EPRA seeking expressions of interest for an affordable housing site. Our sources told us that there were only ever two formal proposals received, and that other interested groups were frustrated by the realisation that the site was not going to be free. Even with the $400 000 discount, the $300 000 eventually paid for a 1 247 metre site is relatively expensive by Perth (metro) standards.

From further discussions with EPRA it became clear that PICH A was the only organisation with the capacity - financial, organisational and technical - to take the project on. EPRA's offer of the site, however, came with the proviso that PICH A form a partnership with the other applicant - the Artist Foundation - to plan and manage the development. Our committee believed that there was no real choice here, and that the Artist Foundation were attractive to EPRA in the sense that they were likely to add to the otherwise drab social-cultural fabric of the redevelopment. PICH A partly rationalised its agreement in the knowledge that struggling artists would ordinarily fit within its low income housing ethos. The deal struck was that PICH A would develop and manage the development, which would include 35 units, with 10 of those units reserved for artists, and a 200 metre studio space to
be managed by the Artist Foundation. The other 20 units would follow PICHAs usual tenant allocations.

In a more recent round of equally important manoeuvrings, the projects title and control became the focus of attention. The total development cost will be $850 000 of which, $300000 has been contributed by Homeswest, and $200 000 is bank financed with PICHAs as the mortgage holder with its own $200 000 equity stake. The main problem was that Homeswest expected to be included as a joint venture on the title and, while PICHAs would entertain this idea in respect to equity in the building, the prospect of Homeswest as a partner on the title of the land would not be considered. Instead, to placate Homeswest and EPRA concerns, PICHAs willingly signed the contract with a clause inserted to maintain the site as an affordable housing development - in perpetuity. What was far more important for PICHAs was that this stand could also allow the development to be used as security towards financing other affordable housing projects in the future.

Until the construction has been completed and the tenants move in, it is too early to call the project a success. However, reflecting on the process so far, there are several room to manoeuvre insights that may be gleaned. Firstly, negotiating the space for affordable housing in East Perth was always against the direction of the dominant power relations. The space was there, in part because of the remnants of the early affordable housing ideology that were used to generate political support from Labor's Left. That promise was kept alive through over 10 years of low intensity public and inter-governmental agitation. Secondly, PICHAs always recognised that its bargaining position was small so, as it agitated, it only nipped rather than bit some of the hands that might some day feed it. Thirdly, in choosing to make some difficult concessions and not others, it was indeed very helpful to remember that PICHAs larger mission was to increase the supply of affordable housing in central Perth.

The Case For New Lodging Houses

I began to learn about lodging houses while working with the City of Fremantle during the early 1980s. In the United Kingdom they are legally defined as Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs), while in continental Europe they are often described as pensions and frequented by budget travellers. In Boston they were called Boarding Houses, and the agency I worked for counted each room as a Single Room Occupancy unit (SROs). From
this experience I can say that the form of management and structure of this housing model can differ considerably. In the main, however, they are compact living arrangements of separate rooms with some form of shared facilities (cooking, bathroom, living areas), and with generally flexible daily to monthly tenure.

As is the case in many other Anglo-American cities, the number of lodging houses in Perth has been in decline since the 1960s, as have their reputation. They were once a very acceptable form of housing which served as a stepping stone for younger people (predominantly men) seeking employment and a more permanent address. Nowadays, however, they are commonly thought of as slum housing for drunks. Moreover, although there is some recognition of their contribution as an affordable housing option, the gradual disappearance of lodging houses has largely been regarded as a sign of progress.

Currently in central Perth, the number of lodging house rooms is down to less than 150. The most recent loss occurred through the demolitions associated with the Northbridge Tunnel (PICHA 1997). Also among PICA's own portfolio, two lodging houses, Perth Hostel (35 rooms) and Alexander Lodge (25 rooms), are likely to be lost within the next five years. In this context, against these trends, PICA is mounting a campaign to develop more. Importantly though, this campaign had to begin internally because, although PICA owns and managers traditional style lodging houses, the impetus here is for new styles of lodging houses, appropriate for contemporary inner city living, inclusive of new trends in under-served housing markets. What is being envisaged here is a restructured lodging house model for a restructured central city context, and getting that message across is by itself a challenge.

I brought this line of argument from Boston where, during the early 1990s, I was involved in that city's initiative to build 1000 lodging-house rooms. This initiative was a Mayoral led response to the increasing need and decreasing supply of affordable housing in central Boston. Under the global city model, Boston would rank as a 'first tier' city and so, although it experiences the gamut of globalisation processes, its policy responses to counter tendencies towards greater socio-economic polarisation were both informed and forthright. At a practical level, the stimulus for the Thousand Rooms Initiative was the recognition that the combination of fractured families and fragmented employment patterns was creating a large unmet demand among singles for low income flexibly tenured housing.
In Perth, the unmet demand for affordable compact inner city housing, stands in contrast to the oversupply of fully serviced apartments, built since the 1990s, to satisfy the need for flexibly tenured central city housing for the growing legions of corporate travellers. It is clear that affordable housing that was once occupied by low and moderate income households, is being redeveloped and transformed into very expensive housing for the rich (Welch 1996). More specifically, the argument is that new housing models catering for the upper end of the flexibly tenured housing market have been developed in Perth, to a point of over supply, while the new needs of the bottom end of the domestic market have been overlooked.

I say overlooked, because I am also convinced that a well designed and managed housing product serving the needs of the new working poor [underpaid and underemployed] would also be a sound property investment. The research in Boston had demonstrated that, even with that city's very high rents, well managed lodging houses had virtually no vacancies, and with the economies of scale in respect to space, facilities and management costs, they also generated a higher net income stream than similar scale/located buildings divided and rented as conventional apartments. The rental income stream generated by PICHÀ's lodging houses suggests a similar situation in central Perth.

Of course slum lords have never overlooked this point, the small private space that lodging house residents call their own is comparatively expensive. Having, say, three kitchens and bathrooms facilitating fifteen single households is also comparatively cheap to provide and maintain. The big risk to the income stream from lodging houses is from high vacancies and no lease protection, but the Boston research and PICHÀ's recent experience shows that good design and, in particular, good management-tenant relations avoid these problems. On average, PICHÀ has maintained an occupancy rate of greater than 95% with less than 2% rent arrears.

The main attraction of these comparatively expensive rooms is a combination of easy access and communal living. The ready access stems from such factors as the central locations, absence of letting fees and deposits, and the fact that they are usually furnished. Smarter lodging house managers recognise that the better the communal living, the more likely are the temporary residents become permanent. This, in turn, creates a stable and relatively
high income stream (a point somehow overlooked by slum lords), but it also reduces the availability of affordable flexibly tenured housing.

So, while there is a demand for older style lodging houses in central Perth, given the understanding of the changing ‘meeting place’ role of the city, I am arguing that there is also a large and unrecognised demand for new models of lodging houses, designed and managed to support employment, culture and youth. The growth of the ‘back packer’ style hostels demonstrates the high demand for the international oriented version, but the model being advocated here would not only include private rooms, it would also be focused on housing young adults from the suburbs and country areas who are wishing to access the employment and cultural opportunities offered in the central city.

Aspects of this argument were first aired at a meeting in 1995 with PICHAs’s Executive Officer who, together with a recent marketing-communications graduate (John Derry), were thinking about applying for research funds for a youth oriented housing initiative. PICHAs’s application would be competing for one of five $50 000 research grants offered by the State’s Department for Family and Children Services. They had a general idea about compact housing for young singles and, from me, they were looking for a methodology and some university aligned research credibility. What transpired was a rationale that anticipated an un recognised housing need among young adults (16-30) seeking to live in the city. This was explicitly linked to a characterisation of the city’s casual and part-time employment market, together with an acknowledgment of the widespread concerns over youth unemployment.

In effect, this was a hypothesis that could be tested through a large scale youth out-reach survey, of the kind being contemplated by my colleagues. The grant application envisaged a research initiative with a central city focus on the relationship between housing, youth and employment. Importantly though, an explicit purpose for this research would be to guide the future design and development of new models of affordable housing appropriate for the restructured central city. It was a genuine research initiative, and one that would add to PICHAs’s strength as an innovative non-profit community housing provider.

In attempting to illustrate the value of the end product of the research, PICHAs’s East Perth artist-studio housing project could have been used as an expensive example of the youth-
employment-culture combination that I was suggesting. At the time, however, I described a youth oriented lodging house with shared office and computer facilities, that was closely integrated with local employment and training opportunities. Once residents adjusted to the employment and social fabric of the city, this transitional form of housing would be offering young people a step up to more permanent housing, or a supportive step down should the need arise. So, while recognising central Perth as an employment centre for certain kinds of 'meeting place' jobs, this perspective also considers the demand for affordable inner city housing in a broader social environment characterised by fractured families and fragmented employment patterns.

In the grant application we hypothesised about the high housing, transport, and time costs associated with suburban youth accessing central city jobs characterised by increasingly fragmented round-the-clock work shifts. As such, the research questions were aligned with the concept of locational disadvantage (Fincher 1991), and the anticipated outcomes would go some way to define the potential market among young adults for affordable inner city housing.

Although this application for funding was ultimately unsuccessful, the line of argument and its importance for PICH A was not lost. The preparation of the grant application had served to re-invigorate our waning convictions within PICH A for the contemporary relevance of lodging houses in central Perth. Furthermore, it served to initiate a research project among PICH A's own residents to firm up some of our base assumptions.

4.5 Chapter Summary

In keeping with Australia's larger capital cities, central Perth has experienced a sustained period of growth since the early 1980s, and this contrasts with the prior 25 years of decline. This investment shift was linked to the emergence of a new economic role for the central city, one which emphasises its function as a social and productive meeting place catering for increasing numbers of corporate travellers and tourists. As described in the global city literature, this new economic role for the central city parallels the restructuring of production systems and new divisions of labour - symbolic analysts, person to person service workers and repetitive processors.
In the first part of the chapter, the field research provided evidence of local actors directly engaged in restructuring processes. Accompanying the physical transformations, there were corresponding changes in the nature and character of urban governance. The most recent manifestation of the ongoing restructuring was reflected in the current wave of inner city residential-hotel complexes, which have been supported by such institutional changes as the creation of the East Perth Redevelopment Authority, the Inner City Housing Developers Association, and greater flexibility in various regulatory controls and fee structuring. Furthermore, it was argued that, under the legitimising banner 'Perth: A City for People', these new and reconfigured capital and public sector actors have funded and approved new developments that physically and socially replace the institutional, residential and recreational spaces that have served Perth's lower income households.

In addition to the greater social-spatial polarisation that this current round of development seems to be creating, the research also highlighted how this new pattern of growth is being unnecessarily compromised. As was learned in Chapter Three, the prospects for long term growth were enhanced when the images used to lure the necessary population and investment - were closely aligned with the actual substance of what was on offer. Conversely, when the promise of growth was found to be false, the growth quickly dissipated until a new pattern emerged. So, although Perth's newest, smallest and most expensive apartments are being sold for a premium based on an image of urban vitality, that vitality has been slow to blossom.

The point was made that although commercial travellers, tourists and empty nesters are able to 'bank roll' a living city, without a broader cross section of people and purpose it is unlikely that central Perth will be the lively 24-hour city that the local boosters have been trying to create and sell. In terms of interest and diversity, the new consumers of urban vitality are displacing its producers, which in principle, would not bode well for any long term pattern of growth. This particular 'vitality' paradox is also associated with several other economic inefficiencies which similarly work to undermine the city's longer term prospects for growth.

Although the central city is the State's most intensive employment market, and while the new meeting place role of the city comes with a new structure of employment, many of those who work in the city cannot afford to live there. With few exceptions, the new inner
city housing, which has been so enthusiastically encouraged by the State, caters only for the top end of the domestic market, together with different segments of the international market. It was also noted that, although the new back packer hostels provide low cost housing options for young people to access the city’s employment and cultural opportunities, there is an explicit discouragement of locals - young or old - in favour of young international travellers.

The broader argument here is two fold; in the first instance, the city centre’s many employment, social gathering, culture, entertainment and recreational offerings are not being accessed by those who need them the most. Poor public transport and declining real wages exacerbate the problem for suburban youth. Secondly, the decline of the diversity among local residents, particularly in relation to the young and creative, is undermining the city’s ‘desired’ sense of vitality. Youth bring energy as they challenge the cultural norms and expectations of previous generations, but the potential of this vitality is being lost in the current rounds of redevelopment. Together then if, as has been argued, there is widespread recognition of the importance of the city centre as the national-global economy conduit, what sane society would knowingly add to the difficulties of its young in accessing the city’s employment and cultural opportunities?

With the ERPA site, all three levels of government recognised the ‘gateway city’ orientation in the new residential, commercial, technological and communication mix. This was explicit in the publicity and nowadays it is to some extent reflected in the developed form. For the most part, however, the affordable housing agenda at the ERPA site was lost, and it was only community agitation that won back a modest affordable housing component. Despite the public subsidies, and despite all the hype about Australia’s global competitive positioning, Perth’s gateway development has largely ignored the needs and aspirations of young Australian adults. Furthermore, 15 years after its planning, and five years into construction, the EPRA site is a long way from exuding any semblance of the vibrant inner city living that it was so intent on creating.

Similarly, arguably the main investment that the City of Perth has directed towards young Australians took the form of the multiple security cameras that record their crimes (see Allen 1996²). In contrast, there are many jobs and constructive activities in the city for

² The original 48 cameras cost $750,000 to install and $200,000 to maintain per year Allen 1994:140
young people, but to access many of them involves prohibitively high transport, time, or housing costs. Nowadays, there are split shifts, three hour shifts, rotating shifts, and on-call shifts, but the aspiring twenty-four hour city does not yet support the housing or transport infrastructure to cater for the diversity of the inner-city work and culture force. So, while there are widespread concerns over youth underemployment, the lost generation, subject to fractured families and fragmented employment have been further disadvantaged by the various local actors who go about redeveloping the central city. Sadly, as accurate as this scenario is, it is not part of anyone’s explicit plan.

Against the direction of the dominant power relations, this two fold ‘vitality’ and ‘youth opportunity’ argument was adopted as a suitable platform to contemplate and expand upon the room to manoeuvre toward increasing the supply of affordable housing in central Perth. The examples from PICHA were used to illustrate how the room to manoeuvre concept could be applied in practical situations. Moreover, this application was explicitly informed through a global to local perspective on development and governance.

With the Grand Hotel site, the main point with this ‘loss’ was that it served to generate a stronger commitment within PICHA and also among key actors within Homeswest and the City of Perth. It was a great opportunity missed, but it has since inspired eminently useful discussions between PICHA and Homeswest about the need for more speed and flexibility in developing joint venture financing proposals. PICHA is currently pursuing the prospect of something like a five year budgeted funding commitment from Homeswest to accommodate the need for quicker (re)actions. This in turn was also part of the general shift towards a more entrepreneurial oriented outlook in the way that PICHA approaches development.

As of February 2000 PICHA finally purchased a site for some sort of new lodging house development. In keeping with contemporary development patterns it was bought from a Perth based Malay investor. Ironically, PICHA had the property valued in 1996 as part of its Grand Hotel recovery actions but again the PICHA and the Homeswest dialogue had been too slow. The building was then leased out to a potential ‘back packer’ operator. However, his development proposals were unable to attract bank financing and so, in mid 1999, PICHA started its negotiations.
4.12 Who’s Missing Out

WA’s youngest unemployed

In WA, 3,542 people aged under 18 receive the current Youth Training Allowance. There are 36,000 YTA recipients in Australia. The payment ranges from $85 a fortnight to $140.80 depending on their parents’ income. The homeless YTA rate is $232.10 a fortnight.

Society pays price for ignoring youth

Scramble for trendy pads has left some searching for beds

The Voice: Thursday, August 14 19

Manfin’s Musing:

I enjoy living in the inner city but there’s far too many prostitutes on the streets.

And there are too many night-clubbers making a racket near my house.

And I’ve had enough of the street kids and the druggies.

And I don’t need gays and ethnics showing their lifestyle in my face!

Don’t get me wrong – I’m a tolerant guy. There’s a place for everyone.

But it’s not gonna be in my inner-city paradise! Tell them all to pizz off!

Ah yes... this is more like it!
On another front, as can be seen from the Figure 4.13, PICHAl’s project in East Perth is very near completion. It has taken PICHAl five years of direct involvement to bring the project this far. The planning and development of the whole EPRA site has spanned 15 years, and so has the expectation for affordable housing. Similarly, the actor medium that encompasses all the incremental development decisions that have been made in all the associated processes reflect the complexity of urban governance. There are indeed recurring patterns and themes in the way development transpires, but again, upon closer inspection it becomes clear that even very centrally planned processes are not in fact centrally planned. Rather they are the result of a multitude of incremental decisions, and over time what at first seem to be small changes, can manifest as large, and it depends upon your perspective which includes how long it is that you watch.

In the next chapter, the structure is similar in that it follows the same global to local political economic interface down to the levels of my observer participation. Just as central Perth has experienced two decades of rapid growth and redevelopment, particular ‘lifestyle’ towns in the State’s southwest have also experienced similar growth and restructuring. Moreover,
with the growth and restructuring came controversy and conflict, and therefore, good opportunities for observing and directly participating in processes of urban governance.

In response to the declines of the 1960s and the 1970s, both chapters describe how coalitions of place-tied actors have reoriented themselves and a multitude of institutional arrangements to accommodate new prospects for population growth and property development. In both chapters, the analysis identifies a paradox in the way that contemporary patterns of development are at risk of undermining longer term prospects for growth. As in this chapter, the paradox described in Chapter Five becomes a platform for considering the inadequacies of social regulation and how this may be addressed through intervention. Most importantly, in keeping with Chapter Three, the analysis focuses on the local interpretation of global processes with the view that there is considerable scope for how actors respond to or protest against their structural positions within regulatory regimes.
Chapter Five: Lifestyle Development: Managing Environmental, Aesthetic and Agricultural Conflicts

5.1 Introduction

The southwest of Western Australia was not an original focus of my inquiries, but it soon became obvious that this region was a focus of a contemporary wave of (re)development activity. Specifically, I was drawn out of Metropolitan Perth by the heightened levels of political contestation reflecting the growing anxieties about the nature and character of developments currently transforming the scenic and accessible countryside. As discussed in the first part of this chapter, these developments are altering the fundamental social and physical composition of the southwest - new economies, new politics, and new physical forms reflecting new ways of living. Just as the *Global City* literature was used in Chapter Four to describe the changing role of the central city, the literature on rural restructuring is a rich source of insight. The Fordist and flexible specialisation metaphors are again helpful in explaining many of the processes behind what Murdoch and Marsden (1994) have termed 'reconstituted rurality'.

The literature on rural restructuring includes trends in farm consolidation as well as changes in broad acre farming practices. But, in reference to the southwest of Western Australia, the most relevant perspectives are those that explain what has been termed 'lifestyle development' and its consequent pattern of farm fragmentation and diversification. Lifestyle-led development is also referred to as 'counter-urbanisation' because it is generally characterised by an influx of formerly urban populations into rural areas (Hugo and Smailes 1992; Selwood et al 1995). However, the advantage of the lifestyle development terminology is that it avoids the implied inevitability of rural to urban migration (Sant and Simons 1993) and indeed the relevance of the rural and urban dichotomy. It also appears that lifestyle led population growth in the southwest, together with the diversification of productive and consumptive relations, are fostering the same kind of politics that Castells (1977) first described in *The Urban Question*.

Over the past five years, I have become directly involved in three different planning and research initiatives aligned with lifestyle development in the southwest. Although each of these exhibits a different set of contextually defined dilemmas, they also share important
similarities. This sameness stems from the fundamental paradox associated with lifestyle development, whereby an area’s main attraction is its undeveloped quality, which is then at risk of becoming overdeveloped, and thereby undermining further growth prospects. In Bridgetown, 250 kilometres south east of Perth, this dilemma manifests as a critical need to preserve the views of the Shire’s distinctive rolling green hills and farm-scapes. In the City of Mandurah, 80 kilometres due south of Perth, the preservation of the natural vegetation has taken on a new level of importance as anxiety about the suburbanisation of this former coastal resort town grows. The third example is a 30 hectare site on the Darling scarp on the eastern fringe of metropolitan Perth. This is planned to be a clustered, strata titled, and permaculture oriented subdivision that I and one of the property owners have been preparing as a development proposal.

Each of these situations has arisen out of ‘commissioned’ research, which created the opportunity for me to both examine and become directly involved in planning and development decisions. In other words, the uncertainty created by the palpable sense of broader socio-economic change has generated questions and research positions that have allowed me to access, observe and participate in development processes. In effect, they present contrasting analytical windows, each providing different yet complementary practical and conceptual insights. For example, the Bridgetown study generated a large body of empirical data, and I could keep returning to the field to inquire along different theoretical lines. The Mandurah study also yielded a large body of empirical data, but the issues were more focused on remnant bushland and land economics, and it was possible to further investigate some of the research questions that first emerged in Bridgetown. At the Darling Scarp site, the emphasis is on physical planning, which provides an opportunity to experience first hand the practical difficulties associated with implementing some of the ideas that have emerged during this process of learning.

Following a similar structure and narrative style as Chapter Four, this chapter will progress from a conceptually broad and global perspective, to one which becomes a practical search for the room to manoeuvre within three different development contexts. Again, this reflects a process of learning about how development decisions are made in practice, and draws upon this knowledge to effectively pursue progressive outcomes. The Bridgetown study proved an ideal vehicle for conceptual analysis, and here it will be used as a heuristic
device, to illustrate and generalise about the emergence of lifestyle development from a
global to local perspective (Greive and Tonts 1996).

Figure 5.1   Southwest Study-sites
It is also worth noting that the idea of merging regulation theory with ideas about growth coalitions and actor oriented theory, as an analytical framework for urban governance, all started with the Bridgetown study. At the suggestion of our mutual supervisor (Roy Jones), I met with Matthew Tonts (at the time a Ph.D. candidate from Curtin University) to discuss a possible joint paper using the Bridgetown case study as a vehicle for conceptual analysis. Mathew is a rural development specialist, and he was particularly interested in drawing on ideas from regulation theory to illustrate how the character and nature of lifestyle development could be linked with the literature on global-local and national-local restructuring. His views on regulation theory, together with mine on growth coalitions emerged as a very useful framework for us both, and we have each used and adapted it in our respective theses'. A subsequent paper, Tonts and Greive (2001) is forthcoming in *Australian Geographical Studies*.

In this chapter, the main discussion starts by tracing the decline of Fordist inspired agricultural practices from the 1950s, through to the depressed 1970s. Then, as the focus narrows to consider contemporary trends in the southwest, a new round of land speculation emerges as the dominant aspect of the new economy. Bridgetown is the main analytical window through which to observe these processes, but insights from other local studies point to similar development patterns and problems. During the 1980s, just as in the central city, certain rural towns in the southwest experienced major increases in real estate investment and property values. The growth of hobby farms, the changing mix of commercial consumption oriented businesses, and the very high values attached to ‘country style’ town cottages were/are all features of this real estate boom.

Although there is evidence of a downturn in the rate of lifestyle development in the southwest, the bubble has not yet burst and, in some highly desirable areas such as Margaret River, the rapid growth continues. As the explanation of lifestyle development in the southwest unfolds, the existing patterns of development are revealed as inherently problematic and, in some areas, there is an immediate need to preserve the remaining social and ecological heritage in order to retain a credible sense of lifestyle advantage. There is also a long-term need to preserve and develop agricultural production in the southwest.
Agricultural production is a necessary complement to current residential, recreational, and tourism needs and, more importantly, its preservation may be essential for a viable post-lifestyle development future. Lifestyle development, therefore, presents a management dilemma, and progressive intervention would logically be defined by some contextually appropriate response to these fundamental problems.

Of course, the main focus of this inquiry is the means by which these management decisions are made. The Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes commissioned the Bridgetown study. It provided a good opportunity to observe some of the internal dynamics of local government to see how that may translate as local governance. For example, the Shire President was also Bridgetown’s most established real estate agent. He was very evidently the driving force on Council and it was he, together with the Deputy Shire Clerk and the Shire Planner who defined the study’s brief. They in turn had the support of most of the councillors, among whom were representatives of the Shire’s oldest families, largest landowners and most prominent commercial operators. So from the start, I was under the impression that I was working for a local growth coalition, similar to those described in North America by Logan and Molotch (1987), and in Australia by Wanna (1991), Caulfield (1991) and Low (1994).

Following the pattern of development described throughout Chapter Three, the fragmentation of land tenure continues in the southwest, and those agents owning or controlling the largest and best tracts of land, are again central to the political and administrative organisation of the subdivision process. These dominant place-tied actors capitalise on their local knowledge, to regulate and operate in the land development process and, on many fronts, they are the ones who gain the most from the new investment. For these actors, more homes on smaller parcels of land translate to higher land values, more construction jobs, more retail and service customers, an increasing rates base, lower per capita infrastructure costs, and higher per capita based State and Federal government subsidies. So, with the Bridgetown study, although the official aim was to characterise the New Arrivals and to find out exactly why they came, it was also clear that a major issue for the local growth coalition was whether the New Arrivals would be willing, or could be persuaded, to buy smaller parcels of land.
As foretold in Chapter Three, another recurring theme from Western Australia’s development history is that New Arrivals tend to buy into a false promise propagated by those already personally and financially invested in the land based economy. In reference to the ‘contested countryside’ for example, a general observation is that many of the conflicts in the southwest are between the New Arrivals and the ‘second’ newest arrivals, and over land sold and administered by the most established residents. Time and again, the promise of an idealised rural lifestyle is compromised by the threat and the reality of over-development eroding the added value of the ‘undeveloped’ place. Moreover, through the regulation framework, Murdoch and Marsden (1994) have usefully re-defined the economic perspective in what is often wrongly interpreted as the conflict between environmental and heritage values on one side, and economic - highest and best use - values on the other. The point is that in lifestyle areas, economic values are intimately bound with heritage and environmental values, and that the countryside itself is being sold on the basis of what it looks and feels like rather than on what it can grow.

Against this backdrop, with local governance clearly oriented to growth through land development, and given the high sensitivity of lifestyle development to over-development, the broader room to manoeuvre question becomes ‘what can be done to save these growth coalitions from themselves?’ Not all is lost, however, as Bridgetown demonstrates. Although there was/is a definite growth through land development ethos, there is also a growing sense of caution enough, for example, to finance and resource the original Bridgetown study. More broadly, there is clearly a shift in thinking occurring, something that regulation theorists describe as a new mode of social regulation. In these and other lifestyle areas, particularly those that have been subject to earlier and more intensive development pressures, the various incremental and contextually specific responses to lifestyle management issues do seem to be fostering a new body of knowledge, and ushering in new laws, regulations, cultural norms and social conventions.

At this practical level of analysis, the juxtaposition of the Bridgetown, Mandurah and Darling Scarp sites illustrates these changing perceptions and the shift towards alternative patterns of development. Mandurah, which has been a favourite coastal holiday destination for people from Perth for over sixty years, has grown from a fishing and resort town of less than 3 000 permanent residents in 1960, to a city of over 23 000 in 1998. Bridgetown, by contrast with only 5 000 residents in 1998, is another 100 kilometres further away and
inland from Perth, and has only noticed the presence of lifestyle seekers since the beginning of the 1980s. But in the 1990s, the local politics in both places have changed dramatically, and so has the make-up of the councils and the demographic profile of the constituencies. Although it was not my original research focus, it may also be that the obvious over-development in Mandurah is like a warning beacon at the gateway to the rest of the southwest, prompting earlier and preventative responses to similar problems in smaller lifestyle centres further south.

So, as per Chapter Four, the narrative starts out with an analysis of the broader socio-economic changes currently transforming local development patterns. Once this contextual setting has been described, the latter part of the chapter goes on to explore some prospects for progressive intervention. Again, these are presented as practical illustrations of the 'room to manoeuvre' concept, as it relates to my own position as a researcher and strategist operating, in this case, among the lifestyle towns of the southwest. In three different settings, the general challenge is to facilitate growth, while maintaining environmental and aesthetic values, and yet somehow to still preserve the potential for agricultural production.

5.2 Rural Restructuring

Since the 1980s, the population growth in a number of rural areas has been one of the most significant developments in the south-west of Western Australia. Decades of out-migration have given way to a rural population turnaround, together with an increase in local economic activity and land development. The population growth is concentrated in the scenic, higher rainfall and coastal areas and at the margins of the commuting zones of the Perth metropolitan area (Hugo and Smailes 1992; Tonts 1993). Recent studies in these areas indicate major consequences for local economies (Greive and Alexander, 1995), the quality of community life (Selwood et al 1995), and for planning policies and the environment (Woolhouse 1995).

The problem with much of this literature is that it is often long on detailed local analysis and short on conceptual clarity. While the studies do provide valuable descriptions of the changes within local communities, they tend to overstate the importance of localities as objects of study in their own right (Newby 1986). As Sant and Simons (1993: 123) argue, 'the study of counterurbanisation should no longer be driven (purely) by population studies'. Alternatively, from a regulation theory perspective, local trends in lifestyle development in
rural areas of Western Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand can be explained in terms of contemporary processes of national and global economic restructuring (Murdoch and Marsden 1994).

In Greive and Tonts (1996) we used Bridgetown as a vehicle to trace, conceptually, the global to local demise of Fordist inspired agricultural development, which was characterised by streamlined uniformity geared towards mass production and mass consumption (McMichael 1994; Gray 1994). As a result of this demise, the local social and economic characteristics of rural areas such as Bridgetown have, in line with processes of global and national economic restructuring, become increasingly differentiated. In contrast to Fordist uniformity, a differentiated countryside is characterised by adjacent and competing land usages which, together with diversifying local economies and social structures, is leading to increasing political contestation at the local level.

As was outlined in Chapter One and variously described in Chapter Three, much of Western Australia's urban and rural development has occurred on a relatively 'clean slate' since the turn of the century, and with generally a high degree of direct State government involvement. This was particularly the case in the southwest, where the Soldier and Group Settlement Programs helped to pioneer the region between the wars, while during the 1950s and 1960s, farm amalgamations, State planned infrastructure developments, and regulated commodity markets, all contributed to the streamlined uniformity so visible in the agricultural landscape. Moreover, the rapid post war growth and the general prosperity experienced in these areas served to consolidate the social structures and cultural norms that supported and entrenched a 'successful' model of agricultural life - one which Tickell and Peck (1992) have described as 'bastardised Keynesian-Fordism'.

In Australia, the restructuring of global finance and commodity markets has been accompanied by new forms of social regulation based upon neo-liberalism, economic rationalism and characterised by a non-interventionist state (Pusey 1991). The ramifications of these trends have included the privatisation of public utilities and services, the prioritisation of international trade and investment, and the devolution (read abandonment) of broader policy responsibilities to local governments (Jones and Tonts 1995). As was noted in Chapter Four, and in keeping with the actions of other State Governments, Western Australia has vigorously followed the Federal Government's 'Competition Policy' ideology,
as it strives to ‘efficiently’ integrate the State’s economy into the new global order. The partial removal of statutory marketing authorities, the out-sourcing of services formerly provided by the State, and the widespread selling of public assets [including the sale of the Rural and Industries Bank of Western Australia], are all indicative of what is often described as deregulation, but which can be more accurately defined as re-regulation (Tickell and Peck 1992).

The effects of these associated regulatory shifts, and the emergence of post-Fordist models of development have been profound for rural Australia. Without stabilised prices and protected markets, and faced with growing international competition, agricultural production in Australia has been under increasing pressure to become more knowledge intensive and flexible if it is to remain viable in a world characterised by increasingly differentiated patterns of consumption. This greater exposure to the vagaries of international markets, plus the increasing cost of capital inputs, rising interest rates and lower commodity prices, have resulted in considerable financial hardship for many family farmers (Jones and Tonts 1995).

These contemporary changes in the production patterns of Australian agriculture are reflected in the changing form and character of the rural landscapes, and in the everyday practices of rural living. In many areas the outcome has been a process of farm amalgamation as smaller, less economically efficient family farmers make way for larger and more flexible operators. These structural changes in agriculture have had considerable impacts on the country towns that service the farming industry. The population losses associated with the changes in agriculture have reduced the demand for local services, eroded local employment opportunities and undermined the viability of social institutions (Lawrence 1995).

In the Shire of Bridgetown, the declining viability of the wool, dairy and orchard industries during the late 1960s and early 1970s (Houghton 1971) was followed by farm amalgamations and increasing mechanisation, as farmers attempted to increase economies of scale in order to remain viable. In turn, these processes resulted in the rapid contraction of the agricultural labour-force and, between 1961 and 1976, the labour-force engaged directly in primary production declined from 505 to 379, a fall of 25 percent. The decline in farm incomes and the reduction in the agricultural labour-force, resulted in the concomitant contraction of the local economy and a loss of population through out-migration. Between
1961 and 1976 the total population living in the Shire of Bridgetown declined from 3,627 to 2,744, a fall of 24.3 percent, a trend comparable with similar rural areas in other parts of Australia (McKenzie 1994).

This pattern of economic and demographic decline in Bridgetown was paralleled by decreasing land and housing prices. The outcome was cheap land and an affordable housing stock, particularly in comparison to the nearby coastal areas of Denmark, Margaret River and Busselton (Greive and Alexander 1995). During this period, farming in the Bridgetown area was still characterised by Fordist uniformity as reflected in the landscape. The agricultural service towns, infrastructure provision, land usage and the clearing of natural forest for broad acre farming all reflect the ‘physical imprint’ of Fordist agriculture. It was the imagery associated with this agricultural landscape, together with affordable land and housing, which has provided Bridgetown with the opportunities for development based upon retirement migration, alternative lifestyles and tourism.

Towards A Differentiated Countryside

Although much of the recent literature on rural restructuring in Australia has emphasised the declining socio-economic sustainability of rural areas (Black et al 2000) evidence from Europe and North America suggests that many rural areas are no longer characterised by uniform agricultural production, but by a more complex assemblage of economic, political and social elements (Marsden et al 1993; Mormont 1990). These areas have expanded their economies in line with a shift towards flexible specialisation, and the growth of hobby farms and small-scale flexible agricultural production has altered long standing production patterns. Rural economies are also being increasingly driven by the consumption of rurality (Marsden et al 1993). Farmstay holidays, rural landscapes, tourism, recreational activities, rural festivals, and new lifestyle options have emerged as important aspects in a shift towards a more differentiated countryside.

Over the past 15 or so years, Bridgetown (Figure 5.2) and the surrounding agricultural region have been noticeably reshaped by a new wave of in-migration, accompanied by changes in the structure of the local economy and increasingly differentiated patterns of land-use and settlement. Between 1976 and 1991, the Shire’s population increased by 20.9 percent from 3,175 to 3,840, primarily through migration from metropolitan Perth (Greive and Alexander 1995). The traditional agricultural landscape of the area, characterised by
open pasture, broad-acre farming and 'rolling green hills' is dotted with fresh evidence of land subdivision and new housing development with some fifty new homes being constructed each year. The new subdivisions expand the fringe of Bridgetown's already dispersed pattern of settlement, while developments within the town's centre indicate growing tourism, leisure and craft-based industries.

Figure 5.2 Bridgetown
The agricultural industry has also experienced a rapid transformation over recent years as farm production becomes increasingly knowledge intensive, diversified and flexible. Together with the remaining beef and sheep properties, a range of smaller scale agricultural activities have emerged in the area including viticulture, timber plantations, marron farms, protea plantations and hydroponic market gardens. Several farms have also established holiday chalets, while others make use of the passing tourist trade through farm tours, recreation activities such as horse rides, and from the roadside sale of farm produce. However, despite the clear signs of increasing farm capitalisation in the form of dams, irrigation systems and pasture improvement programs, it is also apparent that many of the new small 1-20 hectare holdings are left untended, or are not actively farmed.

While this pattern of development is comparable with the findings of a number of other studies indicating the emergence of a differentiated countryside (see Murdoch and Marsden, 1994; Bolton and Chalkley, 1990), there are two significant trends in Bridgetown that cannot be ignored. Firstly, along with farm fragmentation and diversification, and in spite of increasing capitalisation, the volume and value of primary production has remained depressed during the 1980s and 1990s (Greive and Alexander, 1995). Secondly, in line with the population increase, land values have risen dramatically, almost doubling since the mid 1980s. This increase in land values has been most pronounced among the new Special Rural Subdivisions (2-10 hectare lots), the larger 20 hectare rural lots, and the older character homes within the Town. In contrast, land values among the larger beef and sheep farms in outlying areas have remained relatively depressed.

The seemingly paradoxical combination of trends, pointing to a growing population and rising land values against a depressed agricultural sector, is largely the outcome of the commodification of a rural idyll (see Poiner, 1990). Among the New Arrivals interviewed in Bridgetown¹, the physical appearance of the area and the more nebulous benefits of a rural lifestyle were the most common reasons given for making the move from the city. Employment ranked fifth, behind the price of land and the mild climate. In effect, following the decline of agricultural production, Bridgetown as a place to farm is being superseded by Bridgetown as a place to live, recreate and view.

¹ This data is based on interviews conducted with 20 percent (n=73) of households which migrated into the Shire between 1987 and 1994.
Property-led Rural Development

While, for much of this century, Bridgetown's development was based on food and fibre production, since the early 1980s the local economic, social and physical landscape has been transformed by trends in real estate development, together with regionally defined consumer preferences for rural residential and recreational living. Personal interviews conducted in Bridgetown, as with studies undertaken elsewhere in Australia (Smailes and Hugo 1985), indicate that the combination of relatively cheap land, a rural lifestyle and tax incentives for farm capitalisation encouraged some in-migration during the late 1970s. However, the importance of this demographic trend was initially obscured by the continuing out-migration of the agricultural aligned labour-force, and it was not until the 1980s that their net-cumulative effects were recognised in Bridgetown.

During the 1980s, real estate trends in the southwest were also strongly influenced by the same demographic and economic factors that fuelled the overheated property market in the Perth metropolitan area. The key demographic factors influencing the rapid increase in the price of urban real estate included the increasing level of disposable income among retirees, and the growth of double income families among the large 'baby boomer' population entering the housing market in the late 1970s (Hugo 1994). At the same time, lending restrictions on property-related investments were greatly eased by the unprecedented liquidity in finance markets as Australia's banking industry followed global deregulation initiatives and, in 1984, opened to international competition. Moreover, as anticipated by Harvey (1982), the global flow of capital switched more intently to the property market in the years immediately following the 1987 stock market crash (Low 1994). It was the convergence of these interrelated factors which provided the material conditions for urban based populations to exercise their lifestyle choices and, in so doing, take advantage of the cheap, attractive properties offered in the towns of the south-west of Western Australia.

In Bridgetown, the doubling of property values during this period resulted in a corresponding increase in the wealth of a broad spectrum of the Shire's more established property owners, either as home owners or property investor/developers. Vacant 2 500 square metre lots within the town site which sold from $7 000-15 000 in 1986, sold in 1995 from $20 000-30 000. Similarly, a lot with a three bedroom home which sold from $80 000-
90 000 in 1986, sold in 1995 for over $130 000 (Greive and Alexander 1995). As such, established property owners benefited from the direct income derived from subdivision and property sales, as well as from the enhanced borrowing capacity secured against properties with appreciating values. The property market also prospers from the cyclical movement of the new rural consumers, who relocate from urban areas, settle in Bridgetown for five to ten years, and then sell and return to urban areas in response to changing lifestyle needs such as better education and health care services (Greive and Alexander 1995). Once they have invested in Bridgetown’s property market, the new arrivals both contribute to, and benefit from, the increasing land and housing values.

The net economic outcome of this process is an income transfer from the New Arrivals to the advantage of Bridgetown’s more established and larger property and business owning interests. Furthermore, in administering the subdivision of rural land, the local state also benefits from the new arrivals, through the increasing value of unimproved land and through the incremental increase in the number of properties in its rate base. However, owing to the dispersed pattern of settlement, these benefits are often mitigated by the high costs of infrastructure connections, services and utilities and, as a consequence, the local state, along with the town’s larger property owners, share a common interest in promoting higher density subdivisions.

The Contested Countryside

The local political dimension of the shift from Fordism to flexible specialisation in rural Australia has not been the subject of the same kind of focused study as it has in Western Europe (Peck and Tickell 1992) and North America (Wilson 1995). Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest holdovers of Fordist farming ideals and sensibilities among the established local-state and community leadership within rural towns of the south-west. For example, it is clear that the community leadership in Bridgetown, Toodyay (Tonts 1993), Denmark and Peaceful Bay (Selwood et al 1995) all reflect a composite of old farming families and established local commercial interests, who prospered most under Fordist agricultural development and benefited in its wake through opportune property acquisitions.
From interviews conducted in Bridgetown, it would appear that the established community leaders, in coalition with the local state, have a history of presenting a united front against the state government’s retreat from cross-subsidised rural services such as education, health and transport facilities. In recent times, however, political tensions have emanated from more locally defined issues, particularly those associated with land-use and development planning. For example, the largest public attendance at a council meeting in Bridgetown ‘that anyone can remember’, involved the decision to rezone a 25 hectare pastoral block from rural (open farmland) to special residential (2000 square metre lots) usage. The main support for the proposal came from councillors with old farming ties and real estate interests, from within council’s administration, and from commercial interests driven by the prospect of more customers.

The opposition, which included the neighbouring hobby farmers and the town’s environmental lobbyists, was led by a newly elected councillor who had lived in Bridgetown for only 18 months. Although Council’s approval for this subdivision suggests that the community leadership remains out of touch with the ideals and aspirations of the newcomers, the five-four vote indicated that the balance of political power may be changing. Conceptually, the nature and direction of this change is given clarity through the work of Logan and Molotch (1987), whose research on growth coalitions recognises the political and economic links underlying the formation of broad coalitions of state, capital and civil actors allied to promoting or opposing certain types of growth.

The prominence of such development controversies in rural towns of the southwest also highlights the point that social regulation in this realm is both critical to the process of rural adjustment, and is at a level where local actors can exert their influence. As Murdoch and Marsden (1994) argue, the differentiated countryside is also the contested countryside and, in contrast to Fordist uniformity, rural diversification is characterised by adjacent and competing land usages. Furthermore, the contestation involves not only the articulation of new agricultural practices over old, but also the emerging commodification of rurality, whereby the countryside on its own merits now has a traded value, irrespective of the potential income generated from agricultural production.

From this perspective, the ‘contested stakes’ in Bridgetown, as expressed in the controversies over the preservation of rural and environmental aesthetics, stem from the
protection of amenity values, as well as exchange values, and these are reflected in the price differentials of the property market within and between towns of the south-west. Given that rising land values have been the mainstay of the generation of wealth in these areas, the land development stakes are high. Furthermore, while the emergence of a differentiated countryside produces a diversity of competing amenity and exchange values, the local state's capacity to mediate the potential conflicts effectively is undermined by a legacy of outdated regulations and conventions. For example, while the existing planning legislation continues to enshrine uniform patterns of development through zoning regulations, there are few development design guidelines for preserving rural aesthetics. Furthermore, the absence of the right for third party appeals means that there is no legal recourse for anyone other than immediate neighbours to seek protection from a loss of amenity and, thus, the erosion of exchange values.

In Bridgetown the five to ten year cyclical movement of many of the New Arrivals settling into the area and then leaving suggests that everything that the Shire has on offer, in terms of attracting new residents, is being constantly reviewed by newer ex-urban migrants who are making lifestyle choices and investment decisions between the competing towns of the south-west. Compared to other towns, however, Bridgetown's properties are perhaps more vulnerable to the negative impact of new developments. The rural aesthetics, or 'view', which the majority of the New Arrivals hold to be Bridgetown's best feature, is for many residents another part of the landscape with development potential. More than in most other towns of the south-west, the slope of Bridgetown's rolling green hills, together with the lack of shielding vegetation, exposes the new subdivisions to the view of existing residents as they develop, undermining the rural aesthetics which are so central to the area's attractive identity.

5.3 Problem Definition

The discounted significance of local political dynamics in much of the regulationist literature (Tickell and Peck 1992) overlooks the implications of both Harvey's (1989) and Massey's (1991) contention that localities have choices about how they 'locate' themselves within the global economy. In this light, the conflicts between the New Arrivals and Bridgetown's more established residents can be understood as the outcome of a contested process of economic and social adjustment, as rural communities make decisions within the emerging parameters of new modes of development. In effect, while there may be some
scope for communities to choose their own development path, the point highlighted by Tickell and Peck (1992) is that there is also a risk that those choices will undermine rather than stabilise the longer term prospects for growth.

In Bridgetown, the ongoing subdivision and build-out of the rural hinterland threatens to undermine the area’s main lifestyle attractions. As described in the both the local and international literature, this is a typical manifestation of lifestyle development. In the remaining sections of the chapter, I reflect on the prospects for strategic intervention, and again, I draw on my observer-participant experiences to illustrate the 'room to manoeuvre concept' in three different contexts.

In each scenario, I am a researcher with some small opportunity to influence local actor networks towards progressive change. Given the paradox of lifestyle development, the challenge becomes how to facilitate growth, while maintaining aesthetic, ecological, and economic values. As has been explained, in lifestyle areas these seemingly divergent values are tightly interwoven and, furthermore, the promotion of this realisation is necessarily a key aspect of progressive intervention. In other words, the interconnectedness of social, economic and ecological values in lifestyle areas forms a potentially strong platform from which to contemplate the room to manoeuvre.

'Bridgetown A Great Place To Live'

The thought that Logan and Molotch’s (1987) ideas on growth coalitions had relevance in Bridgetown occurred to me during the reconnaissance trip in 1994 for a research contract with the Bridgetown-Greenbushes Shire Council. The research brief was first outlined by the Shire President, who was also the town’s principal real estate agent. The study was to focus on the immediate vicinity of Bridgetown, rather than the rest of the Shire, including the town site of Greenbushes. Our discussions with councillors and key personnel within the administration served to refine the project further, but the two councillors who represented Greenbushes made it clear that they were offended that their town had missed out again.

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2 The conflict of interest between the Shire President’s role as a civic leader versus his role as the town’s real estate agent is highlighted several times in this discussion. My purpose here is to draw attention to the character of this relationship rather than cast false aspersions of corruption and/or deceit.
Ostensibly, the Council wanted to learn more about the characteristics and motives of the New Arrivals who, in recent years had led the Shire’s rapid population growth. However, the stand-out issue among Council’s many questions, seemed to focus on whether the New Arrivals could be persuaded to buy smaller blocks of land. In this way, the main planning dilemma emerged as how to maximise the population growth, and increase property values, while minimising the financial, infrastructure, and land costs [productive, aesthetic and ecological] associated with this style of development.

For those keen on promoting growth, these were legitimate concerns. The preference for five acre (1.25 ha) hobby farms among the New Arrivals meant that suitable land within the immediate Bridgetown area was being rapidly consumed through subdivision. The infrastructure costs associated with such a dispersed pattern of settlement are high for both local government and private developers with access roads, for example, serving too few lots to be cost effective. Furthermore, there were concerns that the recent legislative changes at the State level, which imposed the provision of deep sewerage, would be prohibitively expensive given the nature of Bridgetown’s hilly terrain and lateritic soils. Together, these factors severely undermined the availability of the relatively cheap good quality, attractive land, which was Bridgetown’s main lure for lifestyle led growth.

Although the Council was the main vehicle for coping with such concerns, this is not to say that others who directly benefited from the increasing population, such as commercial and retail service providers, were unaware of the limits to growth. They just seemed less conscious of the day to day ramifications of accommodating the new subdivisions. The various tell-tale issues and conflicts were/are common themes within the local newspapers but, as alluded to earlier, such sentiments and concerns were largely tangential to the experiences and priorities of Bridgetown’s more established residents. For example, prior to 1995, virtually none of the Shire’s elected or senior administrative officials owned or lived on less than 20 acres (5ha). This was certainly the case among those with ‘old farming family’ connections, and also among many of Bridgetown’s more established commercial operators.
Against this background, the research project that I co-supervised with Dr Ian Alexander involved some 25 Third Year Geography students who surveyed the recent arrivals and others within the area to capture a sense of their concerns and sentiments. Altogether the surveys included:

<table>
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<th>Survey results from:</th>
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<tr>
<td>- 73 questionaries from new arrival households in Bridgetown</td>
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<td>- 53 resident shoppers surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 38 interviews with local businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>and multiple interviews with local and regional civil and political leaders, local environmental activists, farmers, and entrepreneurs.</td>
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Demographic Analysis - comparative local/regional census data 1947-91.
- population profile, employment, income statistics

Development Trends - local and regional property market dynamics,
- sales listings, building permits, rates data base, local newspapers, and interviews with local real estate agents and developers.

Sectorial Analysis - mid term economic prognosis
- industry reports, government regional profile reports, shareholder reports, interviews with industry managers, business owners.

Service Role and Image - an assessment
- inventory of main local and regional services, interviews with local service providers as well as, clients, tourists, new arrivals, shoppers and residents.

Although the sign at the town’s entrance beckons visitors with, ‘Welcome to Bridgetown, A Great Place To Live’, a more precise sign would advertise Bridgetown as ‘A Great Place to Look at, But be Quick!’. This alternative slogan implies firstly, that Bridgetown’s quaint rural appeal is at risk of being built-out through over development, and secondly, as our survey results suggest, the New Arrivals do not easily adjust to rural living, in part because the town was/is not as congenial as they had hoped. More specifically, some 65% of the New Arrivals held negative views about the prospect of further growth in Bridgetown, and while many were living on hobby farms of 1-5 ha, over a third of the respondents would have purchased a larger property had there been more choice.

Overall, the contrast between the opinions of the New Arrivals and the pro-growth concerns of the more established residents points to the political shift described earlier. Furthermore, while the survey results do serve to undermine some of the possible alternative development strategies, such as (simply) higher density subdivisions, in other respects they also contribute to the refinement of strategies that are more likely to succeed. Indeed, there were
several key facts and trends borne out by our research that could significantly add to the Council’s room to manoeuvre but, as consultants, a primary problem for us would be how to get that message across.

Finding and expanding our own ‘room to manoeuvre’ towards delivering our progressive message began by acknowledging that our student powered research exercise was not an influential position from which to make recommendations. Our advice would not be binding and, although the scale of the research project generated its own press interest and therefore some additional scope for airing our opinions, the Council was our client and our approach would ethically need to honour that relationship. Much of what the students learned about the town also came from the town’s people, and so any derisive conclusions that were drawn could easily be dismissed unless our opinions ‘rang true’ with those same people. It strikes me that a similar position of power was occupied effectively by the little boy who pointed out that the Emperor had no clothes. The boy’s accusation was only heard because it pointed out what everybody was already thinking.

The report was to be the principal medium for expressing our opinions, but it was also the case that the intent of our various survey and interview questions reflected the flavour of our concerns. I was the principal writer for the report which was to summarise the main findings of the various avenues of the research. So, while I had to do justice to the students’ work, the report’s content and tone were purposely oriented towards expressing our concerns at the way economic and ecological resources were being squandered. Our aim as consultants, was to get the message across to the broader local actor networks that the development path they were taking was unnecessarily self defeating. Furthermore, if our message was ever going to spread, it would have to be palatable for the dominant actors of the growth coalition, as well as those concerned about excessive growth.

The Conclusion to the 50 page report was thus;

Our report has established that the Bridgetown-Greenbushes Shire has a bright future in terms of its demonstrated ability to attract new residents, and a growing tourist trade, at a time when many other areas in rural Western Australia are struggling to survive. However, the Shire cannot afford to be sanguine about the region’s future in view of several key factors.

The positive impact of the New Arrivals on the Shire’s growth and facility is, to some extent, offset by the increasing pressures on the area’s physical and social amenity.
This is particularly apparent in the threat to the rural image of Bridgetown from the continuing subdivision of the slopes surrounding the town.

The 5-10 year cyclical movement among many of the New Arrivals coming into the area, and then leaving, means that all that the Shire has on offer in terms of attracting new residents, is being constantly reviewed by a new wave of counter-urbanists who are making lifestyle choices between competing towns in the Southwest region. The implication is that the growth can only be maximised through the careful consideration of the physical limitations of the area, and the preferences and sensibilities of the lifestyle seekers.

Protection of the environment was the most common point of agreement among the New Arrivals. At first this finding seems to be a common 'feel good' response, and perhaps typical of the kind of response expected among lifestyle seekers in an increasingly environmentally conscious world. This also appears as a major contradiction, in the sense that the New Arrivals are themselves clearly adding to the Shire’s environmental problems. However, our conclusion is that protection of the environment is in fact the most pressing concern among the New Arrivals.

The New Arrivals come to a Shire that has been logged, farmed and mined for over a hundred years. They move into the Shire because the area's physical appearance is attractive, as is the rural lifestyle to which they aspire. Yet, like a new owner of an old character home, once they move in, the New Arrivals soon see through the charm and become aware of the many structural problems. Chief among these are environmental problems. The deteriorating quality of the Blackwood River, and the loss of natural forests soon become apparent, but among the New Arrivals' concerns, the most immediate environmental problem is the erosion of a sense of space, associated with the loss of visual amenity due to the increasing population and related developments.

The conflict between the goals of tourism and forestry is also intensifying. Both lifestyle and jobs, on either side of the fence are at risk, as is the area's natural heritage and recreational amenity. The town's traditional allegiance with the forestry industry is turning with the New Arrivals adding to the environmental consciousness.

The New Arrivals also have some difficulty in settling into the community. They do miss the level of service provisions available to them in the city and, for some, the move will also result in a loss of income. The New Arrivals purposely forego these advantages with the expectation of a better rural lifestyle, one that encompasses more living and recreational space, and a closer friendlier community. While the New Arrivals are able to buy a larger home and property, it takes some time before they feel established within the community, and this is particularly so for those who are without school age children.

The town centre has some attractive aspects, however, it remains a through-town, with most of the traffic passing without stopping. Ensuring a prosperous future for the town, will increasingly rely on Bridgetown's ability to attract a bigger slice of the passing flow of visitors and tourists. This in turn will require a stronger more attractive town identity, which reinforces and promotes the depths of the whole Shire's tourism potential.
Our report never directly challenged the controversial Highland Park subdivision involving some 300 residential half acre (2000m2) residential lots. Instead, the report noted that 'as the proposal was under planning consideration it would be inappropriate to offer further comment', and then immediately followed with...

Development Options
When asked about the degree of consideration that should be given to environmental concerns when planning for the future of the Shire, 89% of the respondents answered, 'total' consideration (45.6%) or 'major' consideration (44.2%). While the remaining (10.2%) of respondents, answered 'moderate' consideration, ignoring the choices of 'minor' or 'no' consideration. In view of this finding, the following development options are put forward, on the basis that the most pressing environmental issue among the New Arrivals is the erosion of a sense of space, associated with the loss of visual amenity due to the increasing population and related developments.

Small Lot Subdivisions.
Given the environmental and infrastructure costs associated with dispersed settlement, small lot deep seweraged subdivisions are the most obvious way to absorb continued growth. Most of the New Arrivals, however, would not want smaller lots for themselves and nor would they want to see anything that looks like an urban subdivision. The demand for small lot developments would primarily come from longer term Bridgetown residents, and perhaps some of the less affluent counter urbanists priced out of the special rural market. In order to maximise the town's long term growth potential, the key would be to select sites which minimise the visual impact from both adjacent and more distant perspectives.

Cluster Developments
An idea new to Western Australia involves the shared ownership and management of 5 ha or more of special rural land combined with a small number of 2,000 sq.m of freehold lots. The lots are clustered in such a way as to minimise infrastructure costs, and so oriented to maximise visual privacy, and to preserve quality agricultural land. The shared ownership of the rural acreage is managed along the same lines as a strata title. While the privacy and ownership integrity will to some extent be compromised, this form of subdivision will appeal to some of the counter urbanist in terms of environmental sensitivity and community aspects.

Moderate Growth
This strategy takes the long view in terms of maximising Bridgetown's development by articulating in subdivision policy guidelines the sensitivities of the future arrivals, including such critical yet 'fuzzy' notions as the preservation of the town's visual amenity. Fremantle City Council has used this approach very effectively over the past 15 years. In the short term, the approach may slow development and is difficult to implement. The main problems stem from the holistic consideration of each subdivision on its own merit, which while adding flexibility exposes the council to criticisms over inconsistency in planning decisions. The main benefit is that it allows for the possibility of better development proposals in the future.
An assembly of succinctly outlined facts and trends supported our conclusions, and together these effectively highlighted the broader socio-economic benefits of appropriately managing lifestyle development. But, in respect to the broader objective of maximising our influence towards encouraging progressive change, I soon realised that the finished report was in fact critically flawed.

The report’s circulation, and therefore its potential to influence, was severely limited by presentation decisions. Unfortunately, the decision to include several colour photos and graphics to convey a more professional look, meant that the report’s reproduction became prohibitively expensive. Less than 20 copies were ever printed. Each of the councillors received a bound copy. One copy was placed in the library, and two copies went to the South West Regional Development Authority, since they had helped to finance the study. More to the point, there was no widespread dissemination of our findings, and there were no big public debates. Our hopes for the report were effectively shelved. In this case, some simple production decisions had compromised rather than significantly enhanced our room to manoeuvre, which is tantamount to a lost opportunity for better development decisions.

I have since followed the Bridgetown story from some ethical distance, and in hindsight, I still wonder whether I could have been less tentative and 'hands off' in my approach to observer participation. My contract with the Council was for less than a year during 1994, so one wonders about the ‘half life’ of my abiding ethical consideration, especially when it seems such a one sided ethical affair. Some months after the report was completed, the controversial decision to allow the Highland Park subdivision was, thankfully, overturned by the Ministry for Planning. As mentioned earlier, the Council’s decision was carried by a narrow 5 to 4 margin, with the Shire President (and real estate agent) casting the deciding vote. It was also clear that there were many dissenting voices within the Shire, including neighbouring residents and environmental groups, and without my ethical concerns I could have directly assisted them with both data and perspective.

I had also taken up the opportunity to meet with the Developer on site. As it turned out we had mutual childhood friends, and in a polite exchange he described his vision for the development. At the time, I heard nothing that inspired my confidence. Apparently he was also employed with the Valuer General’s Department based in Bunbury, the regional centre for the southwest. Like the Forrest brothers a century earlier, he used his position and
associated networks to seek out the opportune buys. The development he envisioned had a suburban character, which is what three hundred half acre lots with covenants for large homes amounts to. Moreover, I was struck by the fact that in passing, he spoke about how much he enjoyed the rural aesthetics of his own twenty hectare property, and yet, there he was trying to convince me that there was a ready market for his style of suburban development, in an area sold on the basis of its large rural blocks with views.

In addition to describing new regimes of accumulation, emergent growth and anti growth coalitions, together with stories about shelved reports and misguided developers there is a least one other important room to manoeuvre lesson from Bridgetown, one which also helps explain why I have relayed these stories in the order that I have. Development is, after all, an ongoing process, and in 1997 the controversial Highland Park proposal was again back on the agenda.

A newly appointed Minister for Planning provided the opportunity for a new appeal by the developer, and this time the appeal was upheld. Even so, it also the case that the current real estate market has deteriorated considerably since 1995, so it may be that the development will falter through bad timing or, because of rejection by the market. The main point though, is that battles over development, are ongoing battles, not wars to end wars. From Chapter Two, came the perspective that development is a product of a multitude of local decisions across time and, that the pattern of human settlement percolates up from the centre as well as expands on the fringe. See Figure 5.6 for a two dimensional representation of the pattern of human settlement.

Figure 5.3 Highland Park – Existing Site
Figure 5.4  GIS a Visual Impact Assessment Tool - the Highland Park example
5.4 Mandurah’s Disappearing Bushland

My first contact with the City of Mandurah was a phone call from the Environmental Planner, who was interested in sponsoring a study of the ecological and social value of Mandurah’s remaining native bushland. On first hearing, it did not seem broad enough for my interests, or that of Ian Alexanders’s UWA Regional Planning class. However, mindful of the lessons from the Bridgetown study, and of the regulation and growth coalition perspectives, I asked about the background to this outwardly environmental question.

I was particularly curious as to why Mandurah, which sold itself (sic) as an aquatic playground, was suddenly so interested in its native bushland. The Environmental Planner’s responses suggested that the heightened level of environmental consciousness evident in Mandurah’s electorate, paralleled those in other lifestyle destinations in the southwest and, therefore, that the project was suitable for us. Apparently, the new Mayor’s electoral platform had focused on the need to protect the Creery Wetlands (an important nesting area for many bird species) from a controversial development proposal. Moreover, his election, along with that of several other environmentally conscious councillors, represented a major philosophical shift in the way that the Council viewed development.

Compared with Bridgetown, Mandurah’s landscape legacy is not a classic example of rural restructuring or the decline of Fordist factory farming. Until the 1970s, Mandurah was little more than a small fishing and resort town only 80 km south of Perth. At that time, the town was surrounded by relatively large tracts of open land which were still available for subdivision because, aside from the water playground assets, the land was of inferior quality and could barely support low intensity pastoral activities. After all, these were same sandy soils, salt lakes, and mosquitoes that had disappointed Thomas Peel, and the Group Settlers, during the 1830s and the 1930s respectively. But in the 1980s, Mandurah’s time had come for rapid urban development.

Although Mandurah has been actively promoted as a holiday destination since at least the 1950s, permanent lifestyle oriented residents only became noticeable during the 1970s, and then, as with Bridgetown, the growth surged during the 1980s and into the 1990s. As has been explained previously, the real estate boom experienced in the different lifestyle towns of the southwest during this period, was fuelled by the same combination of demographic
and global finance trends. Mandurah, with its resort amenities so close to Perth took the brunt of the first waves of the lifestyle led development. Rising from a population of some 3,000 in 1960, to 23,000 in 1998, Mandurah’s population is projected to reach 40,000 by 2010. The spatial expression of this urban expansion, which is also a proxy for Mandurah’s disappearing natural bushland, is illustrated in Figure 5.6. When examining these maps, also note how the pattern of growth over time, follows the ‘percolating growth begets growth’ principle from chaos theory.

Figure 5.5 Resort Town Mandurah
The Incremental Build-Out Of Mandurah

An expression of its disappearing bushland

Source: Greive and Alexander 1997:29
Figure 5.7  Development Vs Lifestyle Aesthetics and Bushland
Against this background, the research brief prepared by the Environmental Planner, called for an assessment of the ecological and social value of Mandurah’s native vegetation, together with a consideration of the social value of the city’s recreational open spaces. As the brief stated: ‘rapid population growth is placing extreme pressure on the natural environment’. So, while in the past the protection of Mandurah’s coastal and estuarine attractions had been the focus of environmental concerns, several recent development controversies had bought wider public attention to the deteriorating quality of Mandurah’s terrestrial environs. As for my own research agenda, the Mandurah project presented an ideal opportunity to examine more closely the interconnectedness of aesthetics and ecology on land prices in lifestyle areas.

The overall research project was very large and actually involved two classes of third year geography students. One class had the responsibility of assessing the ecological or conservation value of the native bushland, while the other considered the social value of Mandurah’s native bushland and open space reserves. With the able assistance of one of the students (Linda Rayner) I wrote the final report which summarised:

Survey results from:
- 350 questionaries from the residents of Mandurah
- 59 questionaries from resident school children
- 62 visitor questionaries
and multiple interviews with local and regional civil and political leaders, local environmental activists, farmers, and entrepreneurs

Mapping products - a citywide coverage of native vegetation derived from aerial photographs, and confirmed by some 200 site visits; a series of maps depicting favoured recreation areas, and favoured areas of remnant vegetation as defined by the household survey; and a series of maps depicting a qualitative assessment of the remnant bushland.

Demographic Analysis-comparative local/regional census data 1950-90. population profile, employment, income statistics

Development Trends - local and regional property market dynamics, sales listings, building permits, rates data base, local newspapers, and interviews with local real estate agents and developers.
Amid all this research there were several key facts and trends that explain and characterise the urgency in Mandurah’s concerns over its disappearing bushland. These findings also outline an economic argument for preserving native bushland in support of ecologically progressive policies and regulations. This room to manoeuvre emerges from a consideration of the report...

**Key Findings and Recommendations:**

- **There are very few areas of high quality natural vegetation remaining in Mandurah.** Most of the remnant vegetation, outside of conservation areas, is fragmented and degraded.

- **Most of this native vegetation is located on private property and is therefore more vulnerable to degradation and/or destruction, and is more difficult to monitor and protect.** Mandurah’s residents’ specific knowledge of remnant bushland areas appears to be limited to immediately local areas, and areas which have received media attention.

- **In contrast, Mandurah’s residents seem to be much more aware of the parks and recreation areas within their residential localities, citywide and within the Peel Region.**

- **There is a high level of awareness and concern regarding the increasing population, and the loss of aesthetic and lifestyle amenity.** The residents have a strong aversion to increased suburbanisation.

- **Concerns over the incremental loss of native bushland have been eclipsed by the more immediate and confronting problems associated with increased suburbanisation.** However, these concerns are inextricably linked. The loss of natural bushland in Mandurah is parallel to the incremental extension of its suburban development.

- **In terms of property values, the economic benefit derived from native vegetation is mainly expressed in the preferences for localities (rather than for individual properties) that have retained their natural aspect.** In other words, for each of Mandurah’s localities there is a collective economic benefit derived from the retention of native vegetation on individual properties.
Chapter Five

- The conclusion drawn from these results is that Mandurah’s Council needs to consider a broader range of policy options which acknowledge bushland’s multi-faceted utility. It is increasingly recognised that environmental amenity, and long term prospects for economic growth in lifestyle regions are closely interrelated.

- In the interests of retaining its identity and life-style appeal, the City should continue to challenge the notion that Mandurah should automatically become an extension of the Perth metropolitan region.

- The City of Mandurah should consider further ways to modify the accepted pattern of suburban development at the expense of native bushland. One option is to negotiate with large private and public owners of land scheduled for future development. These negotiations should seek to protect areas of high-quality remnant bushland through mechanisms such as transferable development rights and selective acquisition of high-quality bushland remnants.

The following recommendations are also offered:

- Incorporate in the Town Planning Scheme provisions that ensure future subdivisions retain a higher proportion of natural bush cover. This report provides data and maps as to where such policies should be directed;

- Include transferable development rights and bushland remnant property acquisition processes in the Town Planning scheme;

- Create and protect corridors of native vegetation between suburban areas through Heritage classifications or provisions in the Town Planning Scheme;

- Set up a Bushland Acquisition Fund within the City Budget and seek State finance of an equivalent to the Metropolitan Region Improvement Tax;

- Work with community groups to raise collective consciousness of the value of natural bushland remnants, and to revegetate residential areas deficient in native vegetation;
• Build in tree-protection covenants to planning or development approvals;

• Encourage cluster development in future semi-rural subdivisions.

These results and recommendations complement and support the direction and detailed environmental management recommendations as set out in the City of Mandurah Bushland Policy draft (May 1996).

Mandurah’s Remnant Bushland Study (1997): a report on the social and ecological value of Mandurah’s disappearing bushland, is a highly relevant report. Although there was never the opportunity to formally present the report, after the reports commissioner left the council just prior its completion, subsequent conversations with the replacement planner put the report back on the agenda - six months later. Its content was discussed at a developers forum convened for the purpose, and as a way of reinforcing the report’s conclusions, I made a point of briefing a major local developer who, at my suggestion, had been invited to address the forum.

The following letter is a copy of the one I wrote to the replacement planner. Together with the table over page, it serves to explain an economic argument for the public protection of native bushland on private land, as an attempt to add to the council’s room to manoeuvre in pursuing such an option. The letter and the underlying approach also serve to illustrate how I sought to expand my own room to manoeuvre, in pursing a progressive agenda from a position of relative powerlessness.
Dear Xxxxxxx,

Enclosed is a disk copy of the Mandurah Report, and further to our conversation regarding the method for Table 3 (p35), I offer the following points for clarification.

**Method**
The listed price from at least five comparable properties were selected for each of the localities listed. These were chosen to reflect the common type/size of properties in each locality. The median price was calculated for 1981 and 1996, and the percentage difference was annualised over the 15 year spread. This relative index was then used to rank the localities from the highest to lowest in terms of increasing property values over time.

The listed prices came from the local newspaper, and although there is a difference between listed and sold prices, it should be noted that this discrepancy [and indeed most others within the comparables] would be largely negated by the averaging techniques described.

**Results**
The actual ranking of the localities - based on increasing property values over time - does not surprise me. Elsewhere in the southwest a premium is paid by the market for a 'getaway feel', and the evidence is that the premium becomes greater as that 'feel' becomes harder to find. I also note that the highest ranked localities have experienced the highest increase in property values in both relative and absolute terms. From a purely economic perspective the results point to the fact that trees, and nowadays native vegetation in particular, directly enhance property values by helping to create, or protect, the appropriate lifestyle image.

Even in lifestyle areas, many real estate veterans have been slow to realise these market dynamics, they are focused on day to day sales and they tend to overlook the bigger longer term pattern. Simply put, however, in Mandurah if water-side properties in areas with protected native vegetation are compared with water-side properties in localities without a native vegetation aspect, the former generally command higher prices, and the difference is becoming greater over time. Remember too, a property purchased in a 'leafy area' may reflect the locality's added value, even if it has no vegetation of its own.

In lifestyle areas, it is also worth noting that developments which have a suburban or metropolitan feel are likely to undermine the value of surrounding properties if not their own. Furthermore, in keeping with how other risks affect property values, bushland which is under imminent threat from development is negatively rather than positively assessed by the market. In other words, particularly in lifestyle areas, there is an economic argument for the public protection of native vegetation on private property.

A further complicating factor is that these changing market dynamics are aesthetic rather than ecologically driven. Rural landscapes, non native vegetation and totems of cultural heritage can also generate the same kind of market response. The general experience, however, is that 'genuine' and 'irreplaceable' qualities become the most highly prized.
I hope these notes adequately explain your queries. Let me know if I can be of any further assistance. I also advise that currently the best way to contact me is by phoning XXX XXXX.

Sincerely

Shane Greive
MSc. Econ. (Urban Development Planning)

Table 5.1 The Change in Real Estate Values by Suburb 1981-1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighbourhood</th>
<th>Property Type</th>
<th>Average Price (Listings) 1981</th>
<th>Average Price (Listings) 1996</th>
<th>Average Annual % Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clifton</td>
<td>1 Acre Block</td>
<td>$28 000</td>
<td>$156 000</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falcon</td>
<td>Standard Block (S.B.)</td>
<td>$12 000</td>
<td>$54 000</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.B. + 3 bd Home</td>
<td>$38 000</td>
<td>$136 000</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madora</td>
<td>S.B. + 3 bd</td>
<td>$42 000</td>
<td>$136 000</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parklands</td>
<td>1 Acre Block</td>
<td>$32 000</td>
<td>$130 000</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawesville</td>
<td>S.B.</td>
<td>$15 000</td>
<td>$50 000</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Remo</td>
<td>S.B.</td>
<td>$18 000</td>
<td>$52 000</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Sands</td>
<td>S.B. + 3 bd Home</td>
<td>$47 000</td>
<td>$138 000</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halls Head</td>
<td>S.B.</td>
<td>$12 000</td>
<td>$35 000</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.B. + 3 bd Home</td>
<td>$42 000</td>
<td>$128 000</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dudley</td>
<td>S.B.</td>
<td>$12 000</td>
<td>$35 000</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coodanup</td>
<td>S.B.</td>
<td>$24 000</td>
<td>$50 000</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S.B. + 3 bd Home</td>
<td>$36 000</td>
<td>$96 000</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The approximate average sale price listings taken from the Western Australian Newspaper mid year 1981 and 1996. Note, not all neighbourhoods were well represented in the source listings during the sample period. These neighbourhoods as well as central Mandurah have been purposefully omitted.
It is difficult to say where things now stand in terms of Mandurah's new found consideration of its terrestrial environs. The research suggested that beyond an informed environmental lobby, much of the concern for Mandurah's native bushland was related to preserving its coastal resort image against the threat of suburbanisation and confluence with Metropolitan Perth. The Peel Regional Development Commission overlook this point with their booster population projections and, in the face of resistance from developers, the Council seems to find it easier to host a national conference on sustainable development (14-16 September 1998) than to act on the principles. Furthermore, when I last spoke to the current Environmental Planner he had just resigned from his job.

In the immediate future, the saving grace for Mandurah may well be that its property market is appears to be 'off the boil'. The initial financial collapse of the Port Bouvard subdivision south of Mandurah, which was totally cleared of all its native vegetation, stands as a testament to the future of large-scale, environmentally insensitive, and suburban oriented subdivisions in lifestyle areas. Furthermore, as a sign of the changing times, an article in the *The Australian* 06/11/98 reports on a national trend away from luxurious and modern style resorts back to the simple small-scale coastal resort experience. An experience which is surely complemented by the authenticity of native bushland, coastal heath, a sense of adventure and some prospect of catching a fish (Selwood et al 1995).

One last point in support of the theme 'its not them its us', I should acknowledge that the 'holier than thou' tone to this Mandurah story contrasts with the fact that my family have maintained some sort of holiday home presence in Mandurah for over 30 years. The first was a holiday shack on a lagoon near the town centre. It was owned by some friends of the family who let us use it during the summer holidays. In the late 1970s that place was sold and redeveloped during the early 1980s as strata titled units. Believing that the property values would continue to rise, my father purchased a block just north of Mandurah with a view to some day building a holiday home. A few years later, he also purchased a strata titled unit in the Atrium (a six story complex of hotel managed apartments) as an investment, and also as a place to stay during off-season periods. The block was sold in 1996 for a sizeable profit and, up until recently, the Atrium has also done well as an investment. These days, however, Mandurah does not greatly appeal to my family as a holiday destination so we rarely go there and, if so, only for the day.
This same ‘its not them its us’ point applies to other more prominent local actors. While Mandurah’s Council was quick to acknowledge that much of the city’s best native bushland is on land held by private developers, there was significantly less acknowledgment of the quality bushland that is at risk from both local and State Government sponsored developments. Good quality bushland is under imminent threat at the new hospital site, the proposed freeway extension and the rail link, and the new sports reserves. Similarly, the Peel Regional Development Commission is promoting an industrial park alongside the Serpentine River, up stream from Mandurah, without any real sense as to what type of industries might want to locate there. More insidiously too, the booster population projections that the Peel Regional Development Commission ‘conjure up’ act as a *fait accompli* in terms of (mis)informing strategies for appropriately managing growth.

Figure 5.8 Mandurah Proudly Growing
5.5 A Clustered Permaculture Development

What troubled me most about both the Bridgetown and Mandurah projects was that, while local actors sought to generate and sell an image of a rural or coastal resort town lifestyle, those same actors were often at the forefront of undermining the substance of that image. It used to be that when you went to Mandurah it still looked and felt like a resort town even if you were in the town centre. Nowadays, the quality of the resort experience is very much dependent upon where specifically in Mandurah you are. Moreover, as was illustrated by the comparative change in property values, those areas that retain the substance of the desirable image saw a much higher rate of appreciation over time.

Similarly, in Bridgetown the new residents paid a premium for old farm cottages, and also for land with a rural or natural appeal. Tellingly, while 72% of the New Arrivals felt that agriculture was important for Bridgetown’s future only 2% actually worked in the agriculture sector. In fact, most derived their incomes from providing urban style services - commercial, professional, retail, tourism, recreation and health, or were employed in construction and real estate. As was pointed out earlier, Bridgetown’s countryside is being
bought and sold on the basis of what it looks like rather than by what it can grow. In other words, rural production is being usurped by rural consumption, and although there is a wish to maintain an agricultural future, the practical substance of this widespread desire is in decline.

With these scenarios in mind, I welcomed the opportunity to become involved in a permaculture oriented subdivision that has as its ethos maintaining and enhancing the integrity of the land. Since late 1997, I have been working on a proposal to strata title some 35 hectares of rural land, by consolidating up to 60 lots in a 5 hectare corner, and managing the rest of the property through a corporate body. It is an alternative approach to lifestyle development, one of many new initiatives termed eco-hamlets that attempt to better define how latter-day humans can interface with the rest of nature. In particular, this approach to rural lifestyle development seeks to complement new forms of rural consumption with new forms of rural production. With permaculture, consumption always feeds back on production.

Figure 5.10   A Nice Site for a Eco-Hamlet

Anonymity was requested.
Together with one of owners of the property, I work towards formulating a new style of development to meet what we believe is a growing demand for ecologically sound lifestyles. Following permaculture principles, this involves a ‘whole cycle of life’ approach to design and management. What is being envisaged is very different from the various 1970s style experiments with communal living. Indeed, the various new eco-hamlet models have been critically informed by the old. The interest among the current owners for a permaculture oriented development goes back to 1976 when they first chose the site. Since then, not only has the local experience shown that communal living is problematic, but current trends in regulatory flexibility have also created new options for strata titling land. In other words, nowadays the prospect of better alternative approaches to rural living is enhanced by both the recognised need for and the legislative capacity to explore new ways to subdivide and manage land (WAPC and AWA 1997).

The owner with whom I work is the project secretary (meaning he deals with much of the executive functions between our various meetings and field excursions) and he is also an expert on permaculture and law. He also has some twenty years experience inquiring into the successes and failures of various alternative local and national models of rural based communal living. For him this is a long-term goal, and our aim is to take the proposal through to completion.

The opportunity to put what I have been learning about lifestyle development into practice, is a chance to apply theoretical alternatives to a specific context. For example, the formulation of an appropriate constitution combined with a more flexible management plan for the whole development is recognised as a critical facet of the planning. The main objective is to invest financial and appropriate technical capital and labour into creating a permaculture development. So far the proposal has generated positive interest among the local council’s administrators who, it seems, are also keen to participate in creating a local model for alternative developments in lifestyle areas.

The proposal has been presented and approved as a concept plan at a meeting with the local council’s senior Planner, Health Surveyor, Engineer and Ranger. The next step will be to ground the concept plan through a more detailed assessment of the site. There are several important features on the site that pose significant limitations and opportunities. The terrain is very steep, the brook that divides the property is a permanent water source which is
subject to Waters and Rivers Commission regulations, and trying to cluster some 60 small lots on 5 ha to minimise visual, noise and privacy concerns is by itself a difficult task. The steep contours provide unobstructed views from all the lots, but there is also the prospect of high earth moving costs any time those contours need to be breached for roads or for buildings. It is also clear that the concept plan will continue to be reshaped as our understanding of these practical issues grows.

In terms of rural production, the land has been unproductive for over twenty years. Prior to that it was a small dairy farm that went out of business with the restructuring of the dairy industry during the early 1970s. The smaller dairy operators in the hills around Perth were forced to out of business when the advent of larger milk trucks meant that larger dairy operators further south became more viable. The land has been cleared of its timber quality trees and yet the mix of open woodland and pasture still conjures up the rural images that mask its unproductively. As with Bridgetown, the restructuring of the rural economy during the 1970s produced the cheap degraded rural land that has sat idle ever since. The current value of the property, like much of rural property in the southwest, is in its speculative potential for residential development and rural consumption.

The idea to foster a permaculture oriented development was conceived before the term permaculture was coined. Bill Mollinson, one of the main proponents of the permaculture movement, visited the site when its purchase was first being contemplated. Since then a large shed has been constructed to facilitate ongoing maintenance, and many fruiting or otherwise productive plants have been grown experimentally. The project will require a major infusion of capital and labour and this is the basis for developing the eco-hamlet. The residential zone is contained on some of the least productive land. It is adjacent to the existing urban infrastructure (road, telephone, electricity), and the buildings will not be visible from neighbouring properties.

There is clearly much to do before this proposal becomes a physical development. Nevertheless, several 'room to manoeuvre' lessons have emerged already. Firstly, although the idea of a clustered permaculture oriented subdivision has been a twinkle in the eyes of the property owners for over twenty years, the time has only recently become right for this kind of development. The negative experience of so many rural lifestyle developments contributing to the loss of the of the rural image, the loss of the natural amenity, and the loss
of agricultural production has begun to feed back in to the consciousness of rural consumers, as well as local administrators and developers. The publication of the Planning for Agricultural and Rural Land Use (WAPC and AWA 1997) is an example of how these lifestyle development issues have been recognised at the State level. The fact that nowadays many of the new rural subdivisions proudly advertise their restrictive covenants on such activities as tree removal is also indicative of this new consciousness. In effect, cultural expectations are reshaped by these negative experiences and this, in turn, prepares people for alternatives.

As we contemplate the market potential for this clustered strata titled subdivision, it would be hard to imagine the same kind of interest twenty, or even ten years ago. The ageing population, particularly among lifestyle seekers, is also contributing to the potential buyer pool as the impracticalities of old age and intensive farm maintenance are realised through experience. The whole discourse around sustainable development is also shaping the market towards this new housing product. In the niche market that we are aiming for, those who will accept the idea of a compost toilet are also likely to accept ideas on recycling and small scale living, as well as restrictions on such issues as pets. ‘Doing more, with less, for longer,’ is an axiom for our market and we believe that, if we maintain these sensibilities, the product will sell well. In this sense, our sustainable development option attempts to link ideology with substance in the design and sales promotion of what would probably be Western Australia’s smallest rural lots. The fact remains that there is so little variety in the property market that there is virtually no competition for this product.

The concern for the preservation of arable land and the pooling of capital and labour are steps in the right direction in respect to rural productivity. The poor reputation of hobby farms, and the less than rapid growth of successful micro-scale agriculture enterprises reflect the need for alternative development options. The clustered and permaculture orientation of the eco-hamlet proposal accommodates efficiencies in infrastructure provision, the recycling of grey water and other household wastes, and at the same time it maximises the amount of arable land. Moreover, the intention is to design an appropriate constitution with the capacity to plan and manage the development in a more holistic way, with both the necessary labour and the capital available to draw on.
In contrast to many hobby farms and rural retreats, and indeed as distinct from Western Australia’s very first rural subdivisions, the eco-hamlet concept is from the outset geared to generating the required labour and capital to invest in agricultural production. It is an attempt to integrate new ways of living with new and ancient ways of farming. For example, the idea of accommodating up to 60 small lots on the property allows for the fact that many residents will not be willing or available to ‘resource’ the land all of the time. Such is the nature of contemporary living patterns, however, that through the strata management committee there is the mechanism to flexibly apportion fees and expenditures in order to maintain the integrity of the property. If necessary, both internal and external labour could be hired, and for those who wanted to extend their holdings through leasing arrangements, or in some other way do something special, it would be possible to negotiate their terms with the corporate body. The main point here is that if this largely degraded rural land is ever going to be productive and ecologically robust, it is going to require a sustained investment of both labour and capital.

The eco hamlet proposal is potentially very controversial. For some neighbouring properties, the notion of 60 new households in the valley is likely to threaten their sense of privacy and rural tranquillity. Similarly, although the council is keen to support ‘alternative’ developments, the minimalist approach to such issues as access roads and parking may well prove to be problematic. Furthermore, in addition to attracting the required investors/participants to this eco hamlet, experience elsewhere suggests that the biggest problem will involve the post development management of the eco-hamlet living experience. In other words, the proposal is an exercise in the room to manoeuvre albeit informed by a growing understanding of the contextual nuances related to the paradox of lifestyle development.

5.6 Chapter Summary
It is clear that over-development in some lifestyle areas has seriously undermined their valued lifestyle qualities, and therefore their privileged niche within the local-global economy. Northern Mandurah, for example, has been transformed into an unwilling extension of metropolitan Perth. The resort town aesthetics have been lost, and the biological diversity within sensitive wetland habitats is under imminent threat. Moreover, while such negative impacts stand as ready reminders to other communities as they go about
negotiating their new development patterns over the old, there is no guarantee that their decisions will be the right ones for the future.

Upon reflection, much of my research agenda in lifestyle areas of the southwest was an exercise in 'how to avoid errors of the second kind - right solution wrong problem'. In Bridgetown, the council ostensibly wanted to know about the New Arrivals - who they were and why they came? - but the key question was whether the New Arrivals could be convinced to buy smaller lot subdivisions. Although these two lines of questioning are intimately connected, the second is much more revealing about the motives behind the study being commissioned. More importantly though, had this agenda been clear from the start, the research would probably have yielded a more direct and stronger negative response from the target population. Similarly, in Mandurah the commissioned study was to focus on concerns over the city's disappearing bushland. However, the basis of much of that concern was found to be more explicitly aligned with increasing suburbanisation. And, to illustrate this key point, as well as development controls and ecological protection, the ameliorating solutions would also include creative urban designs to diminish any sense of a suburban feel among the proposed developments in lifestyle areas.

State and local government responses to the changing political economy in the southwest have included a raft of formal legislative and regulatory changes, as well as an explicit 'experimentation' ethos recognising the need for reform and flexibility. There has also been a pronounced shift in the political make-up and sensibilities of several local authorities in lifestyle areas. Similarly, a range of State government departments are being internally restructured to accommodate the new emphasis on ecological and aesthetic concerns. As a senior policy officer from CALM recently joked, 'we must have taken on all of last year's graduating landscape architects'. The Ministry of Planning has likewise recently taken on a new wave of geographers armed with a new set of landscape and ecological assessment techniques, as well as various communication skills in community consultation and manipulation.

The new regulatory environment has also been essential for accommodating new styles within proposed developments. Local developers are in the midst of creating the next generation of subdivisions, and to varying degrees, innovative developers will seek to identify and respond to changing sensibilities in the lifestyle market, and to propose
developments that push beyond existing regulative parameters. Certainly in the case of the eco-hamlet exemplar, the proposed development has been made easier by the new 'Land Strata Title Legislation (1997)' which solves several key problems associated with financing private ownership and shared-communal management. Moreover, the very existence and promotion of the new legislation has served to open up the buyer market for alternatives in lifestyle development, as well as serving to engender support for such proposals among more conservative authorities.

These changes, nevertheless, do not yet include an explicit recognition of the anti suburban aesthetic and, until that awakening, the planning and development controls will fall short of this contemporary need. More fundamentally, there is still a widespread belief that there is a need to balance economic benefits and the rights of landowners on one side, against ecological, heritage, agricultural production and aesthetics on the other. So, until there is wider recognition that, in lifestyle areas, economic, ecological and rural aesthetic values are all intimately connected, the prospect of formulating appropriate policy responses will be unnecessarily retarded by many of the potential beneficiaries. In other words the growth coalitions within these towns and lifestyle regions can only maximise growth over the long term if they can successfully navigate the paradoxes of lifestyle development.

To bring this point home, such a shift in thinking, would have, for example, a major impact on limiting the scale of compensation claimed by land owners over conservation restrictions. With this shift would come the understanding that, in lifestyle areas, it is the risk of 'over-development' that undermines the value of land. In other words, while the various local and State level planning authorities may be loath to bring about greater restrictions, for fear of voter backlash together with the high cost of compensation, a wider appreciation of the underlying dynamics is a prerequisite for bolder intervention.

Of course, these issues and concerns are only important under the current regime of accumulation. As anticipated in Chapters One and Two, and as historically illustrated in Chapter Three, the ebb and flow of development patterns brings new regulatory needs and new forms of governance. A point taken up in Tonts and Greive (forthcoming 2001) is that destruction begets reconstruction in the on-going process of capital accumulation, and among the constraints that we cumulatively add to future patterns of growth there are also the opportunities. As this chapter has described, lifestyle development in the southwest
grew out of the legacies of the past. The natural bushland was forest, and its clearance made way for Fordist farming landscapes, complete with environmental degradation. These are currently being consumed by lifestyle development with its potential to undermine itself through overdevelopment. What the next period of sustained growth in these areas will manifest only time will tell but, for now, it seems more appropriate to 'milk the cow rather than to kill the pig'.
Chapter Six: Conclusions for Now

I set out to learn how decisions were being made about urban development in Western Australia. The focus was on praxis which, as I went about my investigations, involved a purposeful dialogue between theory and practice. A primary assumption was that a better understanding of how such development decisions were made, would be a necessary precursor to being more able to effectively influence them. Furthermore, as someone who is variously employed in this regard, and who is also personally committed in the social and environmental well being of my homeland, these research objectives were a practical extension of my professional and personal interests.

There was never any claim of objectivity. Instead, the thesis has been presented as a series of intertwined contentions informed by theory, and grounded by historical and contemporary practices. The inquiry was also undertaken as a process of learning rather than knowing and, from the outset, it was acknowledged that there was never going to be a proven conclusion. Rather, the preceding chapters were iterative components with evidence supporting a spiralling argument that began and now, temporarily, ends with my own expanding frame of reference. In turn, the expanded frame of reference provides a more informed platform for further research, learning, and progressive intervention.

The framework which led the study, began with Paproski’s (1993) abstraction of the ‘urban governance system’ and it evolved as my inquiries progressed. Paproski described an open ended system that encouraged an inclusive recognition of the range of individual and institutional actors and influences that were theorised as shaping the urban fabric in a multitude of formal and informal ways. As a broader social policy framework, governance utterly subsumes the reductionism inherent within Modernist inspired planning theory. Gone are the narrow sector and spatial divisions, and the state and society dichotomy, which served only to obscure ‘what is really going on out there’ (McLoughlin 1993).

Paproski’s abstraction was expanded upon and given greater analytical power by drawing on three contrasting social theories that, together, could accommodate global through to local level inquiries into the social processes underpinning urban development. Regulation theory offered an understanding of regimes of accumulation which recognised the room for policy
choices in the way that global, national and local level political economies articulate with each other through a shifting array of laws, institutions, and social conventions. A mismatched arrangement of productive relations and social regulation undermines the potential for growth, and this was theorised as the case, more often than not, in the ebb flow of capitalist accumulation. Various examples of how Western Australia's development history was punctuated by local crises and systemic failures were described in Chapter Three. There were also periods of relative prosperity, as was the case during the gold rush, when the ideology and the actual substance for growth were more closely aligned.

Actor oriented theory offered the governance framework an explicit understanding that policy decisions, institutional organisations, laws, social conventions and other social structures that serve to regulate everyday living are, in the final analysis, the result of individual actors. Not only did this perspective give credence to both historical and contemporary inquiries concerning the motives and opinions of dominant and less powerful actors, but it also helped to theoretically consolidate my position as a participant observer. The concept of 'actor networks' (Massey 1991) was also important in accommodating the idea that the exercise of power is a prerogative of many rather than a few, for 'power does not arise from any central point' (Silverman 1989).

As Western Australia's development history unfolded, it became apparent that vast numbers of local and more distant actors participated without any centralised intelligence to shape the nature and form of human settlement. The individuals among the waves of immigrants were not just powerless pawns. Even the newly freed convicts made choices about whether they would stay in the colony, or go elsewhere, as so many did. Similarly, not all the most powerful actors succeeded as was illustrated by the story of Thomas Peel. Nevertheless, there were dominant patterns and themes within Western Australia's development history, and ideas about growth coalitions (Logan and Molotch 1987) helped to draw them out.

The evidence from the field in Bridgetown, and among my social and professional contacts in Perth, corroborated the contention that the fixation on growth through property development could not be ignored. The idea of coalitions of place-tied actors seeking to improve their lot in life by promoting growth seemed to correspond with my observations of the networks of state, corporate and civil actors operating at the State level, and also among its various place-space defined subsidiaries. The contemporary examples of growth oriented
Conclusions for now

rhetoric and image manipulation, as well as the physical nature of the developments all attest to relevance of this perspective. As Chapter Two argued, this is how power is exercised in a property owning democracy.

From the outset, this theory-practice dialogue in the evolution of the urban governance framework was a reflection of the critical realist approach to this research. Theories which themselves have emerged from reflections on practice were grounded and requalified by the Western Australian development context. As described in Chapter One, urban governance as a focus of study is entirely contextually contingent, and it relies on a concrete situation to give substance, meaning and normatively direction to what, after all, is only an abstraction. The story filled orientation to thesis was the outcome of this approach.

The narrative accommodated the broader scope of the inquiry, and when necessary, the narrower illustrative point. Within the composite of stories there were summations and fragments of surveys, questionaries, long interviews, and other forms of empirical data and analysis. The research agenda was opportunistic in terms of which particular development contexts were examined, and the narrative maintained a reflective rather than empirical orientation. Verification and corroboration of the empirical details within various aggregate studies was primarily left to those who commissioned the original studies, and who after all, were/are in the best position to evaluate the results. So in the case of the Bridgetown and Mandurah studies it was the council administrators and elected officials, as well as interested residents who read and assessed the reports. Similarly, in the survey of PICHAs tenants, the results had to 'ring true' with the Associations own management, tenants, and directors.

Through this expansive and intensive approach to research, it was possible to commence a mapping of the exercise of power in the context of Western Australia's urban development, and also to go some way to illustrating how such knowledge could be used to influence more desirable ends. In Chapter Two, the exercise of power was given some substance and direction during a discussion of the theoretical transition from urban planning to urban governance. In the first of a three part discussion, the re-examination of Modernist planning history served to locate it contextually within the increasing specialisation and institution building which characterised twentieth century capitalist accumulation. The extraordinary land-use and subdivision emphasis within (West) Australia's institutionalised planning was
also recognised as stemming from its distinctive historiography and, in particular, its recent European settlement and large tracts of unoccupied land.

It was argued that the distinctive character of Western Australia’s system of urban governance is very much a reflection of the special nature of its development. In turn, that was described as stemming from an extreme example of a political economy focussed on land and land based resources. The idea from Gramsci (1971) and, more recently, Lefebvre (1991) that the landscape and all the social and physical patterns of human settlement are, in one form or another, a reflection of hegemonic interests implies that there was never any lack of control over the fundamental economic resource. Furthermore, along the lines of Mitchell’s (1995) ‘no such thing as culture’ argument, it was suggested that the pivotal relationship between land, state, and society has fostered, in Western Australia, a particular cultural persuasion that permeates every aspect of its particular style or system of governing development.

In the second part of Chapter Two, the idea of growth as process of replication was a starting point for a synthesis of Marxist economic theory, urban morphology, and patterns within Nature’s chaos. Urbanism was recognised as an ecological process, with complex human settlement patterns capable of very rapid and dramatic changes that can be traced back to minor variances in the growth formula. Both Marxist and Chaos theories view systems as subject to recurrent structural crises, and these are understood as an inability to replicate existing patterns of growth. The concept of ‘tipping points’ (Hay 1995) theorised how particular chance events or purposeful interventions could, under the right conditions, be decisive in fostering or staving off local failures or systemic crisis. Most importantly, it was this perspective that could transcend the seeming insignificance of progressive change at the margins. The new momenta (regressive or progressive) have to start from somewhere, and it may be that they remain imperceptible until they have become critical elements in new patterns of growth.

In the third part of Chapter Two, the theory-practice dialogue reviewed the experiences of Professor Gordon Stephenson as a local illustration of the distinction between urban planning and urban governance. As well as demonstrating how a very eminent planner, during very Modernist times, was actually less than central to the decision making process, this analysis also began to reveal some of the other prominent actors and influences.
the stories, the local media and private transport interests, together with the actions of a few key State Government officials responding to the investment needs of industrial capital, all served to illustrate that the development process was/is neither objective nor consensus driven. Furthermore, the massive expansion of the metropolitan boundaries, and the emphasis on roads and private transport were all understood as facilitating the State's long established, culturally ingrained pattern of land subdivision and development.

In combination, the three different perspectives from Chapter Two argued that planning is both bigger and smaller than is commonly theorised. It is bigger in terms of its contextually defined substance, agenda and actor medium, and it is smaller in terms of its diluted power and authority. This then begins to approximate the nature of urban governance, and of how urban decisions are made, which is necessarily a dynamic understanding, albeit characterised by some prevailing themes. Moreover, although this discussion served to explain the theoretical transition from planning to governance, the overall shift in awareness is that it is a theorised us, not them, who are ultimately responsible and in the position to influence the course of events. This does not imply that we Western Australians are all equally powerful or responsible, only that the development of cities is a product of a multitude of local decisions without any centralised intelligence. It also argued that, locally, the great majority, rather than just a few, are directly implicated in the land-based economy, and that current patterns of development can change very rapidly through decisive actions and shifts in the collective consciousness.

In Chapter Three, the conceptually led and empirically grounded examination of Western Australia's development history began to map the way power has been exercised across the State and among its many space-place defined subsidiaries. The governance framework adopted here combined social theories which accommodated the shifting nuances of Western Australia's articulation with the changing global political economy, together with an understanding of the diverse range of individual and institutional actors who coalesce(d) around the land 'stakes'. The crude development pattern to emerge was that the subdivision of Western Australia began with the first investor settlers being granted the largest and best quality land on very generous terms. Since then, smaller and poorer quality lots have been sold at escalating prices to consecutive waves of migrants buying in to this pyramid selling scheme. This process is ostensibly regulated by the state and results in an economic
transfer from the newer arrivals, with the greatest benefit accruing to the largest and most established land holders, and the state.

The State's role in regulating and facilitating land development includes creating an appropriate legislative framework, encouraging land investment through infrastructure provision, marketing, technical assistance, and a broad spectrum of other complementary social regulating mechanisms. Through providing these allied land regulatory services, the state benefits through direct sales and leasing payments and various fees, royalties and taxes. Paradoxically it is these regulations, standards and conventions that commodify land and create the 'free' market for property. Rural and mineral development also hinge upon the State regulation of the division of land or, more conceptually, the subdivision of space, through freehold ownership, leasing and licensing arrangements. Importantly though, before the benefits of owning or controlling large tracts of land can accrue, there must be others who can be convinced to speculate on the land's potential. At different times and spatial scales, broad coalitions of place-tied actors were shown to exhibit a wide, rather than a narrow, range of options as they pursued the opportunities for growth in the ebb and flow of contrasting accumulation regimes.

For 170 years, Western Australia has been marketed and sold by local state, private, and civil actors as a place to farm, mine, reside and recreate. The emphasis on transport and the preference for roads over rail, and for private over public transport were understood as facilitating the State's great land sale. The importance of this income distribution role of the land based political economy cannot be overstated. Home construction in particular generates the employment and income for vast numbers of Western Australians. They may be involved in the manufacturing, wholesaling, retailing, and transporting of building materials and household furnishings. There are also those who are more directly involved in administrating subdivision processes including State and local level bureaucrats, only a few of whom are titled planners, as well as those involved in the conveyancing and financing of land sales and home purchases. Land clearance and other infrastructure work such as access roads, water, and power services are also very important job generators in terms of both installation and maintenance. By exploring this pattern in a range of historical and contemporary contexts, many of 'us', rather than a few of 'them' have been revealed to be benefiting, participating and implicitly supporting this land focused mode of development.
Another prevailing pattern to emerge involved the potential for an unhealthy alliance between the state and the largest and most established private land holders, which both promotes land speculation, and relies on a steady supply of new arrivals (immigrants) buying into the 'land racket' (Sandercock 1977). It may be that the sale and investment of land requires some degree of boosterism and blind faith, but the pattern is that those who have the most to gain from the land racket are generally those who have the most to say about how it is administered. The history of Western Australia’s planning and development history is riddled with false promises, duped investors, and state sponsored-facilitated property development schemes.

Again, this pattern was found to exist at the state level and, over time, among its various place-space defined subsidiaries. The implications are that the high profile ‘WA Inc.’ corruption scandal during the 1980s, which involved Labor Government officials and several of the State’s most prominent corporate entities, was not so much an exception as the rule. Whether Liberal or Labor, at the State or Local Government levels, the propensity for corruption, opportunism, and manipulative boosterism have been consistent features of Western Australia’s development history. However, the responsibility for this entrenched pattern of development does not just rest with those who where ostensibly in control of the development processes. Certainly, the media, and particularly The West Australian newspaper, have directly contributed to, and benefited from, this boosterism and image manipulation. Financial institutions were also directly involved, and once committed they were locked into protecting their investments by contributing to this false optimism.

This history also served to call to mind that most of us Western Australians are somehow closely involved with the local land racket. For example, in this role, I am a sponsored critic of the land based economy and its governance. But, I am professionally participating in its commodification and production, and I am also a consumer. Most of my family’s wealth has been derived from the land based economy - my father in banking, and his in railways - and we have bought and sold more properties than most middle income people - outside of Canada, the US, or other parts of Australia - would think possible. In effect, as a political economy, we sell smaller and poorer quality shares in Western Australia’s land deal, for increasingly higher prices to successive waves of immigrants and that, basically, is what we as a culture do for business. That being the case, my concern is that we should learn to
improve how we manage our land development business so that we can do it better for longer and with fewer ecological and social disasters.

To try to stop this land focussed growth would be futile because its momentum is bigger than Western Australia’s short European history and, as the implications from chaos theory imply, the impetus for growth is a principle within nature, much bigger and broader than humanity, and possibly bigger than life on earth as it is currently known to us. Nevertheless, we do have choices about how our settlements develop, and we negotiate these choices through our everyday economic, political and cultural practices. So we can try to redirect them, in some instances through direct opposition but more so by conscious incremental steps in a multitude of ways beginning with ourselves, our friends and families.

In keeping with the two main research objectives, Chapters Two and Three provided a thematic understanding of how power is exercised under the hegemony of Western Australia’s own style of property owning democracy. Within this understanding the more detailed inquiries revealed a network of links that made it difficult to distinguish between us as speculator victims, and them as speculating perpetrators. This, then, is the character of Western Australia’s system of urban governance, which is fundamentally linked to the nature and character of its evolving land based political economy. In pursuing the second research objective, this understanding became the starting point for my critically informed manoeuvring towards progressive change.

In the first part of Chapters Four and Five, the discussion drew on the historically grounded governance framework to identify patterns and themes in the way that power is exercised over development. The ebb and flow of capitalist development during Western Australia’s short European history was refocussed to examine, in closer detail, the contemporary restructuring in central Perth, and in life-style areas of the State’s southwest. The intensity of the restructuring processes in these areas was palpable in the political controversies over local planning decisions, the new physical forms of development, and the new and reconfigured institutional arrangements. The initial field studies provided the empirical substance towards understanding the context, identifying the direction of power relations and, ultimately, this would inform progressive intervention and expand my room to manoeuvre.
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In the context of central Perth, the contemporary mode of state encouraged and privately financed property development manifests itself as new modes of residential development. As Chapter Four describes, these are arguably the most expensive and smallest lots and strata titled spaces that the Western Australian growth machine has so far produced. Half of the apartments have been sold to off-shore buyers who pay a premium above what the local market would consider reasonable. In the process, there are questionable public-private sector relationships, a broad range of local beneficiaries, and further disadvantages experienced by central Perth’s poorer residents.

In Chapter Five, the other contemporary example focused on the restructuring of rural towns in the State’s southwest. The emergent lifestyle development pattern in these areas currently supports a round of land speculation characterised by larger rural holdings being subdivided into relatively expensive hobby farms. These are purchased by under informed new arrivals, and again there are many false promises. Moreover, in respect to the administration of the subdivision process, there was further evidence of unhealthy alliances between the local state, and the largest and most established property owners.

In the second part of Chapters Four and Five, the emphasis was on intervention and the shift from analysis to action, or from observer to participation, was marked by a section describing local systemic problems in the changing patterns of development. Chapter Four described how the current wave of inner city development, including the on-going road construction, was rapidly reducing the few remaining affordable housing opportunities in the city. This finding was contrasted with the observation that central Perth is not the lively city living experience that the advertisements for the new luxury housing developments claim. Tourists, commercial travellers, and early retirees are largely consumers, rather than producers, of urban vitality and culture. Paradoxically, their exclusive housing developments undermine the diversity of people and place that would otherwise generate the interest they seek. Similarly, in Chapter Five, the lifestyle seekers are buying into the promise of rural living only to find that they are a part of a settlement pattern that undermines the very environmental and aesthetic qualities they seek.

Once identified, these paradoxes in contemporary development patterns served as a platform to consider the prospects for progressive intervention against, but not directly opposed to, the dominant direction of power relations. In other words, they offered a structural room to
manoeuvre that could be explored and expanded upon through informed action and further learning. These were local contradictions with the potential to unnecessarily undermine or jeopardise existing patterns of growth, and the room to manoeuvre lay in clarifying the paradoxes, the threat to future growth, and then responding appropriately to the associated problems.

In the broader context of the new ‘meeting place’ role of the city, my involvements with PICH A focussed on increasing (or at least maintaining) the supply of affordable inner city housing. Within PICH A, I have been a strong advocate for development initiatives that seek to accommodate youth, culture, and employment. While I recognise the city centre as a home and service centre of critical importance to other segments of the affordable housing market, my particular interest is in connecting suburban youth and young adults with global oriented employment and culture. As I have tried to argue, the implicit barriers to youth accessing the city centre, night and day, are not only inequitable but also contrary to the interests of many of the actors who consciously and unconsciously participate in creating these barriers.

Nowadays within PICH A, there is some commitment to research around and develop a restructured lodging house or some other compact living arrangement for a targeted and perhaps younger market. This commitment recognises that young singles are an underserved market for affordable housing; that numbers of PICH A’s traditional (older) lodgers are on the decline; and that the younger employment and culture emphasis in the proposed development would complement Perth’s role as a centre for employment, communications and recreation. Moreover, the contemporary relevance of a practical facility that sought to confront the widely acknowledged problems of youth under employment and social alienation should be self evident to the various potential funding sources, regulating agencies, civil and private sector partners. In other words, within the central city governance, and beyond, there would be few detractors and considerable moral and tangible support. The bigger point being, that the room to manoeuvre, in this instance, is greatly enhanced by the complementary and multi-dimensional interface between the qualities of the proposed development and the nature of the context. In short, it is a round peg for a round hole.
This level of strategic positioning has been absolutely necessary given that the political environment for an affordable housing agenda in the city has noticeably deteriorated since the early 1990s. The loss of State and National Labor Governments, and the growing elitism within the restructured City of Perth, and within the East Perth Redevelopment Authority, are all unfavourable conditions. Nevertheless, through various means, PICAHA has actually improved its working relationships with all three levels of government. The Association is also bigger and more robust than it was five years ago. It maintains a current operating surplus in the order of $200,000, and its housing cost and management statistics are impressive in terms of public funding accountability. With more members, there are also more resourceful contacts and, on many fronts, PICAHA has consolidated its future for community housing in the city.

Despite this consolidated position, and against the tide of inequity that restricts access for all to central Perth's connection with the global economy, PICAHA's efforts to provide affordable housing options are but small steps in the right direction. A host of other interrelated issues require urgent intervention, such as reducing car dependence while increasing public transport, and shifting from private security paranoia towards a more community based security strategy. Unfortunately, I have no sense of an emerging progressive momentum against these inner city elitist trends, but the conditions for a greatly expanded (State wide) community housing sector may well be in the making - a point taken up shortly.

Compared with the quest for affordable inner city housing, the prospects for maintaining an environmental and agricultural future in lifestyle areas of the southwest seem more likely given what appears to a broad based momentum for change. While my particular involvements have so far yielded mostly frustration, I am nevertheless conscious that the nature and character of my consultancy involvements were all part of a major rethink concerning existing development patterns. The demographic growth, and the desired dispersed pattern of settlement continue to pose environmental and aesthetic problems for future growth. However, the existing political controversies are feeding back to inform new regulatory arrangements as well as new forms of physical development.

Reflecting on the general direction of the lifestyle movement, there were however, several points of concern. For example, I was never entirely convinced that my own involvements
in the southwest actually represented a progressive position. Separating out legitimate ecological and heritage concerns from spurious claims and counter claims among the various controversies was a task unto itself, and it brought to mind the facilitated open debates advocated by Forrester (1989) and Healey (1997). At its worst, my contribution to the commodification of a warped aesthetic interpretation of a bygone rural era, might simply have been playing into the hands of the local growth coalition, peddling elitist and ecologically insensitive ideals. At its best, I was helping to sustain a pattern of development that was less ecologically damaging, less aesthetically imposing, and aimed at preserving an agricultural future.

For some areas, the rethink has come too late. In northern Mandurah, for example, the resort town aesthetics, and the ecological diversity of the wetlands have both been casualties of over development. In other cases, aesthetics have usurped ecology under the guise of protecting environmental and heritage values. At the same time, however, the lobby groups and the various community debates have become more informed and sophisticated, and the type of issues they discuss, and the inventory of tools and measures that communities devise are vastly different from where they were even just 20 years ago.

The lifestyle development revolution is happening on many fronts. Market sensibilities, formal government legislation, institutional restructuring and innovative development proposals, together with new technologies and agricultural practices are all feeding into the broader momentum for change. The regulation theory base to the analysis, also recognised that these local innovations in a local movement are, in turn, part of broader shift in global economic, political, and environmental consciousness translated through different shifting national and international parameters. The Earth Summit, and Agenda 21 agreements, are being ratified at one level, while trends in bushland preservation, permaculture, and intensive niche market farming are happening at another.

Where to From Here
Overall, the impact of my various participant roles in this research agenda has been small in terms of immediate and tangible influences over urban policy and development. Nevertheless, my potential to influence has grown considerably. A broad network of contacts, an appreciation of patterns and themes in Western Australia’s European settlement
history, together with contemporary theories and the practical experiences of a context led research agenda have all helped to consolidate this position.

As a reflection of this expanded room to manoeuvre, the Ministry for Planning, the City of Perth and the Property Council of Australia have in recent months approached me to provide consultancy services. Under the business name *Praxis Solutions*, and together with another student from the Department of Geography, I have led teams of researchers in tackling ethically sound urban questions. We address the consultancy brief and where we can we insert progressive ideas and perspectives. In the process, the learning continues and the opportunities to influence become greater. The main point here, is that a critically informed research agenda does not preclude working for industry. There are spaces, the room to manoeuvre, and with due care they can be expanded upon.

I want to end with an unsourced quote given to me by a friend:

> Like a kind of mandelbrot set, the basically simple structure of the architecture will generate a cohesive pattern, within which an abundance of artistic detail can flourish in many public spaces.


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