Ideology, legitimacy and values in practice : reconceptualising professionalism in town planning

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Summary: *Ideology, Legitimacy and Values in Practice: Reconceptualising Professionalism in Town Planning*

This research investigates the changing nature of the profession of town planning in a context of increased doubt over expert knowledge and judgments, as public controversies have increasingly illustrated. It situates this within the context of change in the public sector and the increased importance of managerialist targets, and the context of substantial policy changes in planning in the UK. This raises questions of whether the planning profession's legitimacy to practice, and professional values are altered by these ideological changes.

Underpinned by Laclau and Mouffe's (1983) concept of hegemonic discourse, which allows for daily work to be situated within wider political struggles, it uses two qualitative case studies to investigate the different constructions of professional practice in different activities: a public inquiry and a regeneration project. The choice of these activities was based upon my previous research, from which emerged a perceived split between the value and skills of the development control side of planning and the forward looking/regeneration side. The former was constructed in general terms as bureaucratic and procedural, the latter as creative and imaginative.

This thesis illustrates that professional action in both case studies is largely the same, despite the indications of the previous research, and that professionalism remains a meaningful concept in the context of change and managerialism. However, the discourses of legitimacy which underpinned development control and regeneration were different. The development control officers' discourse of legitimacy is part of a welfare/consensus ideological discourse

and the regeneration officers' discourse of legitimacy is underpinned by third way ideology. From this emerge four issues: the conflicting concepts of the public and of communities; problems with the third way ideology, issues around professional accountability and its relationship with representative and participatory forms of democracy, and the state of town planning as a profession.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Professional Legitimacy in Postmodern Times?

The image of a professional has changed much since the imagined halcyon days of the 1950s. The traditional concept of an educated and knowledgeable man, working altruistically for the good of society is much maligned and widely discredited. Both academically and publicly this notion has been challenged, with recent years marking almost a crisis point. Scandals about those in public office and their use of information, including 'faulty' intelligence about Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction, to the MMR vaccine, and 'postcode lotteries' for cancer treatment drugs all raise questions about whose interests are really being served and on what factual bases these judgements are being made. Now, who can legitimately know what, and on what grounds or in whose interests they can use or implement this knowledge is in question. Knowledge, and its professional use is no longer separate from issues of politics, money and power, or beyond the realm of lay challenge.

This leads to questions about the position and actions of all 'experts'. It is this general backdrop which is the context for considering the action and legitimacy of planning professionals in contemporary society. These challenges facing the planning profession can be seen in four further dimensions. These are: postmodern academic ideas which destabilise the concept of knowledge as objective; the changes in local government, the sector where the majority of planning is situated; policy and professional institute changes relating to planning; and finally my previous research in this area. The latter may seem out of place here, but as will be explained below, both flows from the wider context and shapes the aims of the research. These are situated within the above-described societal and academic mood,

not as a direct result of it alone, but nonetheless a product of this climate. It is from this that the aims of the research emerge.

Supporting this general societal mood are ideas within academic and theoretical discussions. Frequently cited as a 'postmodern' turn, challenges to reason and rationality have been raised in numerous guises. The term, originating from critiques of art and architecture, has permeated social sciences to generally mean a challenge to pre-given fixed concepts, and metanarratives and a belief in 'whiggish' notions of progress (see Jencks, 1986 for discussions around aesthetics, and Appignanesi and Garratt, 1995, for an excellent general introduction to these ideas). Ideas of impartiality or neutrality have been accused of simply being the voices of the powerful, and in so doing, claims to solid foundations of value free knowledge have been undermined. This is set alongside a poststructuralist concept of language which claims the link between signified (thing) and signifier (word) is arbitrary. This further undermines any stability or universality of meaning, conceptually removing the possibility of objectivity from knowledge. Instead, knowledge and power are seen as necessarily implying each other (Foucault, 1980) rather than distinct entities with only possibly a supporting relationship. To know something is to hold power over its being and construction, and to have power is the power of knowledge and definition. Although this may seem far removed from daily practice for most professionals, it is key to the limits and possibilities to their conceptualisation.

In addition, the idea of 'risk society' (Beck, 1992) adds to the climate of uncertainty and difference generated by this debate. It describes a world in which events such as climate change, the possibility of nuclear or chemical warfare and natural disasters put beyond

human control the capability of managing our circumstances, and thus changing the certainties of life. This positions experts as impotent in face of the challenges and risks of high modernity. There are not accepted professional solutions to all these problems, and even where knowledge exists, its implementation is reliant on political will. This further complicates a time of mistrust and uncertainty.

Issues raised in this context are about knowledge, and the power to exercise knowledge, and its use in changing people's lives. If knowledge's positivist base has been eroded, and public servants and governments are no longer seen as working in the public interest, the possibility of professional work seems in grave danger. The use of stable expert knowledge for the good of a homogenous society becomes an impossibility, as both the concept of this sort of knowledge, and this sort of society are clearly open to the above described challenges. This therefore raises questions about what sort of professional practice, if any, is possible in this context. This is further complicated in relation to the planning profession by the specific context in which planning largely operates, namely that of local government.

1.2 Changes in the local government context

Over the last sixty years, the organisation and authority of local government has changed considerably. Since the 1980s, there has been a trend towards devaluing the institution, in terms of status and responsibilities (cf Stewart and Stoker, 1995) with local councils being positioned as irrelevant and bureaucratic. Alongside the abolition of metropolitan counties and the GLC, financial and decision making power was weakened in the remaining authorities from the Thatcher era onwards. This is part of a wider backdrop of economic liberalisation and deregulation.

Although not reversing what went before, the New Labour governments from 1997 onwards have been marked as setting a 'modernising agenda' in local government (Martin, 2002). This can be see as containing two contradictory impulses. The first is an increase in central monitoring and setting of performance targets. The establishment of the best value regime (HMSO, 1999) can be seen as legislating for managerialism. This is a system of auditing the performance of departments of local authorities, to ensure they are achieving the "best value for money". Service provision or professional goals are secondary to management and performance targets, in turn moving the goalposts in what counts as success. Unlike its predecessor, Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT), this does not necessarily mean the cheapest option, but rather the most effective. Also unlike CCT, it extends to all services of local government. This extension of the audit culture to all areas of local government can be seen as in sharp contrast to the other major government policy on local government; that of promotion of well-being (HMSO, 2000) and an increasingly collaborative partnership based style of working (Geddes & Martin, 2000). The focus here is on decentralisation, and renewed emphasis on communities, dubbed the 'new localism'. These two contradictory elements are combined to make the *new* local government:

> "The new agenda powerfully combines an emphasis on cultural change (reflecting the rise of new managerialism) with a rhetoric on community (and, particularly, of community leadership) to begin to produce 'modern; local government'- a modernised local welfare state. The language used is one *that automatically defines those who take a different view as 'old fashioned'-* paternalist at best and merely self interested at worst" (Cochrane, 2004, p485, emphasis added)

Both these aspects present a different challenge to the notion of professionalism; both potentially removing their power in opposite directions. An emphasis on community involvement and leadership suggests that the public's voice is paramount in the shaping of the local environment. No longer should a professional planner be designing and deciding on what happens in their area; this is up to the local community, with the role of the local authority being to steer or lead this process. In contrast, managerialism and performance regimes centralise what should be done spatially in any given area, removing power from the professional. It is a direct challenge to the culture of "the semi-autonomous profession of local welfare (from social work to planning, teaching to finance)" (Cochrane, 2004, p487). To be modernised these cultures need to be replaced with dynamic, community focused management. Any denial of these created 'realities' situates the professional as an anachronism. These changes are positioned within this wider context of uncertainly and mistrust. The need to modernise can be seen as both an attempt to regain public support and a challenge to the possibility of professional work.

1.3 Planning Changes: Government Policy and the RTPI

Even more specific to planning are changes directly affecting it as an activity and concept. These can be divided into two categories, both of which are important to consider. The first are changes in government policy and legislation pertaining to planning. The second are changes within the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), planning's professional accrediting body.

The last five years have encompassed much policy debate surrounding planning, including the introduction of new legislation, the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (HMSO,

2004). In the lead-up to this act, there was much controversial debate about what it would encompass, including the removal of rights to partake in appeals for those without a propertied interest. However, the final Act was much less radical but did include a statutory duty (rather than purpose) for planning to promote sustainable development. Structurally, it altered the previous system of development plans to the universal adoption of Local Development Frameworks, levelling the tiers of planning to two nationally; regional and local, putting the former beyond direct democratic control, apart from in London where there is an extra level of government to the rest of England. Alongside this, Planning Policy Guidance note (PPG) 1 (ODPM, 2005), on the general aims and objectives of planning, was revised to Planning Policy Statement PPS 1, stating planning's main aim as delivering sustainable development. This generally supported the idea in the Act. The notion of 'planning for sustainable communities' is key to both of these, and supported by the findings of the Egan Review (ODPM, 2004a) into the skills needed for the creation and maintenance of said sustainable communities. In the foreword alone, the word community is used twenty times. Despite PPS1 describing planning as "operating in the *public interest* through a system of plan preparation and control over the development and use of land" (ODPM, 2005, *The Government's objectives for the planning system,* paragraph 2, emphasis added) the rest of the document focuses on the interest of communities.

In addition to these documents, the Barker Review (HM Treasury, 2004) on the supply of housing presents a different angle in the debate around planning's purpose. The focus here is on planning as negative and inhibiting, stopping houses being built and land coming forward for houses to be built. The image created of planning is one of regulation and bureaucracy, rather than creating sustainable communities or working in the public good.

Alongside the government redefinitions of planning is that of the RTPI: its *New Vision*. More of an ongoing debate than a single document, this centres around revitalising planning as a "spatial", "sustainable" "integrative" and "inclusive" activity which is both "value-driven" and "action-oriented" (RTPI, 1999). The implications and meanings of this are discussed in more detail in the following chapter, but what is important, by way of background, is that this consisted of a significant rethink of the purpose of *professional* planning and the education needed for practitioners. It both rises to the challenges of the context of uncertainty and creates more instability for the concept of a planning professional.

1.4 Trained Monkeys or Visionary Regenerators?

It is within this specific context that my own previous research (McClymont, 2003), the foundation for this project, was situated. As the above should clearly indicate, the meaning of the town planning profession is neither stable nor obvious. It was on this basis that my previous research was undertaken. Its aims were to explore whether there was a dominant discourse of planning professionalism amongst practitioners and policymakers working currently in planning in Britain; whether the concept of being a professional was still relevant, and if so, what it meant in light of the above described context. This aimed to be as wide as possible, both in terms of subjects and approach, investigating how planning as a profession was constructed, what skills, attributes and values were assigned to it, and whether this varied between different actors. After eighteen qualitative interviews, with a range of planners and policy makers in the private, public and voluntary sectors, the research found that there was a generally held belief in the importance of the planning profession, and that it still was possible and relevant in today's context. In addition, the majority of

interviewees expressed this in terms of a split between the skills and value of development control and forward or regeneration based planning. This defined development control as bureaucratic rule following, devoid of skills and imagination, whereas forward or regeneration planning was defined as creative, visionary and aspirational. This research developed understanding about the contemporary position and meaning of planning in the current context. It suggested that despite the above context, there was perceived value in having a planning *profession* and this was still both a meaningful and practically 'real' entity.

However, it led to more questions than answers, especially surrounding this divide between the different aspects of planning practice. Although there has been a longstanding debate about whether development control was a secondary or 'Cinderella' part of planning (see Booth, 2003 for example), this research indicates that it has gone further than this. Development control was positioned in opposition to forward or regeneration planning, one being what the other was *not*. They were explicitly positioned antithetically. All the negative connotations of planning were cited as part of development control in general, such as bureaucratic, rule bounded and stifling of the imagination. This was in contrast to forward looking, and regenerating planning activities. These were imagined as epitomising what planning could be, visionary, creative and engaging. What was negative and unwanted was the popular image of planning, articulated as monolithic bureaucracy in the guise of development control. What was wanted, on the other hand, was what planning was seen as having the potential to be, creative, exciting and future oriented. This illustrates the possibility of professional planning in the above described context. As modernised local government necessitates, old-style bureaucratic welfare professions are anachronisms (Cochrane, 2004). Visionary leadership, engaging with communities and championing

'sustainable' development is more fitting to these new times. However, the importance of this articulated divide in the context of change and questioned legitimacy raises more questions. There are issues about how the concept of a professional fits within managerialism, diminishing public trust and the wider discrediting of positivist knowledge which are yet to be answered. In addition, what this articulated divide between development control and forward or regeneration planning actually amounts to in practice is unclear, as this is an under-researched area.

Overall, this research (McClymont, 2003) provided a specific angle from which to explore the state of the planning profession, and consider what the future may hold for it. It indicated that despite a context of change and questioned accountability, there is a continued belief that the planning profession has a purpose, at least from those within it, in its widest definition. However, what this planning profession actually is, how it can operate, what values it is built upon, and what purpose or whose interests it should serve is not evident. It is from this context and with the wish to explore these issues that the aims of this research are established.

1.5 Aims of the Research

It is from this four-fold background that the aim and objectives of this research emerge. In general, the focus is to further investigate this development control: forward/regeneration planning split which emerged from my previous research in light of the policy (and professional) changes stated above, and consider the implications this has for planning as a whole, both theoretically and practically. This therefore related planning practice to political ideology, and aims to explore the relationship between them. Attendant with this central

aim are the following objectives. The research endeavours to further explore the possibility of reconceptualising professionalism in this context, and more specifically the planning profession. It will investigate the importance of the concept of legitimacy in professional planning work. The effect that policy changes have in altering professional practice, and in turn what professional practice contributes to policy debates are important issue when considering the basis for the perceived divide between development control and forward or regeneration planning. The research intends to contribute to debates about planning policy, and the wider social policy arena in which these are situated. These provide the links between ideology and practice. Related to these two aspects is the wish to investigate whether a profession, any profession, especially a public sector one, can be successfully reconceptualised *and* practiced as anything other than a negative controlling force of power/knowledge. The importance of public sector professionals relates both to planning which is largely practiced as such, but also to the notion of mistrust in public service which is central to this context. These objectives all overlap with each other and with the main research aim. The research wishes to explore the impact of policy and politics on professional practice, and the potential for this to aid or inhibit overcoming mistrust and flux. It wishes to analyse further the concept of trust in relation to policy and (the potential for) professional practice. All these are to be mediated through the perceived divide in planning practice between the regulatory and future oriented aspects of the activity.

1.6 Structure of thesis

To do this, the thesis is set out in the following structure. The next chapter reviews the literature about the concept and sociology of professionals, and about the planning profession, the latter also considering work about the purpose and values of planning. This

explores current attempts at reconceptualising professions, especially public sector professions, and considers how this can both frame and be interrogated in this research. Chapter Three situates the research epistemologically, seeing it as within a wide, anti-positivist qualitative tradition, and influenced by discourse theory. This approach ties into, and further explores academic ideas which have led to the questioning of stable value free knowledge. Through this approach it analyses changes in policy and ideology in Britain in the past sixty years, situating the changing role of public sector professionals within this. This section uses these two aspects, and issues raised in the previous chapter, to draw up one of the fundamentals to the conceptual framework which steers this research; discourses of professional legitimacy. Chapter Four focuses on methodology and research strategy, drawing the ideas from the two previous chapters into a multi-layered conceptual framework, from which two sets of research questions are drawn up. These in turn consider professional operation, legitimacy and ideological rearticulation. Chapters Five and Six provide details of the fieldwork undertaken; the first is a case study of a public inquiry and the related development control work, and the second is a regeneration partnership working in a deprived outer urban area. These two case studies present the different extremes of the divide between forward and control planning. In Chapter Seven, they are then compared in light of the literature review and in terms of the concepts of modes of professional operation and legitimacy. This analysis illustrates that the differences between development control and regeneration planners are not in their modes of professional operation, rather in the ideological discourse of legitimacy on which they draw to justify this operation. In addition, wider differences emerge between public and private sector planners, than between development control and forward or regeneration officers. It also considers the possibility of remaking professionalism in this current context of change. Chapter Eight provides the

conclusion to the thesis. It comments on the wider issues that this thesis aims to address, such as accountability, democracy and loss of trust and the concept of the public or community. In addition, it considers further new understandings of professions and highlights flaws in the Third Way political ideology.

Chapter Two: Sociology of the Professions, and the Planning Profession

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide a review of the literature on professions: how they are formed, why they are formed, and their role in society. Within this, the literature on the planning profession is reviewed. It also tackles these general themes, but in addition covers the issue of who or what planning is for, which ties into wider debates in planning theory; implying subsequently what planning practitioners should do and how and why. This is also part of a wider debate about the role of public sector professionals, in a context of local government change.

Before so doing, a clarification is necessary. As the previous chapter has illustrated, and the following two chapters develop further, the standpoint of this research is anti-positivist, and influenced by poststructuralist ideas. This means any given profession is not viewed as a 'real' and pregiven entity. However, as it is a term examined and researched within the literature, and as such has become a concept which has developed meaning, 'existence' and hence interest for further research, especially because of the gaps in the literature that this chapter makes clear. Moreover, as the term is commonly used in planning practice and beyond, it 'exists' beyond the literature and beyond theory, however contradictory and contested its usage may be. This therefore makes it something researchable, but in need of further conceptualisation.

The literature is diffuse and varied in theoretical perspective, and limited in extent, with discussions of professions generally spanning post war Anglo- American sociology, hence

the literature examined here is largely Anglo-American. This is more by necessity than choice; this being the only material available in English. As the empirical work and the political context of this study is England, this is not problematic, but still worth noting as it illustrates the cultural specificity and assumed relevance of this work. The topic is academically informed by ideas also relevant to the sociology of occupations, theories of knowledge, class theories and discussions of the nature and extent of modernity. With specific reference to debates about the planning profession, these are also academically informed by concepts of the public and communities, and the nature of the society for which planners plan. In brief, discussion about the planning profession is part of the discussion about the purpose and possibilities of planning.

There is fairly little theoretical writing about the planning profession. Debates about the purpose and style of planning practice are so closely related to this as to be considered here relevant. Issues about whether professionalism necessarily depoliticises planning as a movement and ideal, and how the public can and should be conceptualised are included as specific issues. By using the same approach to view the general and specific literature, problems with each can be rendered visible. There are concepts from general discussions about professions which inform debates within planning, and planning issues which can critique wider ideas about professions. This is seen below.

This chapter is structured by two cross-cutting devices. The first divides the literature, both general to professions and specific to planning, into three eras. These are referred to as traditional, critique and new. As the following sections illustrate, the literature contained within each of these is not unified nor deliberately aiming to be part of the named paradigm,

instead, these are tools by which the general changes in ideas about professionals can be seen with greater clarity. They are used to conceptually bring together general ideas and discussions specific to planning and provide a useful backdrop for the aims of this study. The second device is to examine the concept of a profession in terms of four key themes. These are values, occupational control, knowledge and skills, and trust and accountability. They are intrinsically linked, but different aspects assume greater importance in each era and in different authors' works. The categories are influenced by, but aim to be a development on, Thomas & Healey's (1991) approach. Again, these are a structuring device to add clarity to this review, rather than something more widely established. The precise meaning of each is established more clearly when discussed in relation to the literature. Each theme relates to how the professional is seen as holding the ability to practice, and how this practice is legitimate. In some arguments the focus is on the values which a profession uphold, in others it is about how entry to the given occupation is controlled. The way in which each one is articulated has implications of how the others can be construed. The chapter follows the first device for its structure and draws upon the second for its analysis.

2.2 Traditional approaches to professionals

This tranche of literature is so called as it consists of the original sociological thinking on the professions, and is largely used as the point of departure by all other studies. It consists of two very different approaches, both of which will be considered here, first generally, then in relation to planning.

2.2.1 The Neo-functionalist approach

This presents professionals as altruistic purveyors of specialist knowledge, focusing on the general rather than specific professions or professionals. In relation to the four themes outlined above, the main focus is on values from which the nature of the other three naturally follow. In relation to the planning profession, this is also the case, but immediately potential problems with this conceptualisation emerge. Most literature in the planning profession begins with this traditional understanding, taking it as a foundation rather than developing it in detail.

Durkheim's (1957) work *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* defines the professions as the base of morality and communal values in modern society. Industrialisation, he claims, which requires the division of labour, leads to the breaking down of traditional forms of social organisation and moral based communities. The only way to rectify this situation is for moral communities, in the guise of professional organisations, to form. Professions have the unique situation of being a key tenet of modern society but also necessarily collective. This is as their form of knowledge; namely specialist scientific knowledge is a product of modern society, but the teaching and regulating of this has to be done collectively. This provides collective mores as opposed to the rampant individualism of the rest of modern society. In a similar vein, Tawney (1921) describes the collective organisation of professions as a bastion of collective morality in an individualistic society. He recommends the increase of professional associations as a countervailing force to the increasing individualism. This places the central theme in this literature as being about professional values. The professionals' knowledge and skills and their style of occupational control form the basis for their work, and provide the countervailing forces of collective good in modernity; these are a

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given rather than the point of discussion. Accountability and trust are assumed to flow axiomatically from the other three, and are not part of the debate. Professions work with, rather than against, the state, although providing the tonic to potential anomie. Their different moral order helps to prevent the given social arrangements from disintegrating, rather than painting a radically different and challenging concept of society. The state requires, and hence licences their practice.

Largely influenced by Durkheim, Talcott Parsons (1954) agrees with this general understanding of professions, but considers their actual work, and not just their organisational form, as being in the collective interest. He compares the professional community with the business community to illustrate that despite their similarity in organisational forms, professions are based upon collective interest, the general or public good, and not self interest. The notion of altruism is key here. Unlike business which organises collectively to attain the best for its members, professions organise collectively to promote and increase the good of all society. They serve a greater good than themselves. Their role is to apply abstract scientific knowledge to social situations and problems. It is this inference, the cognitive action between 'diagnosing' and 'treating', which is the professional act (cf Macdonald, 1995). Although, this cognitive action is vital to a traditional concept of the professional, its use as a concept is not limited to this. It provides a handy summary of the professional act, which is still meaningful beyond the functionalist paradigm. Using knowledge or experience, however theorised, to make decisions within a certain discipline remains constant in the definition of a professional. However, the other aspects which surround this, change its meaning and values significantly. In short, traditional professions are collective organisations whose members use academic knowledge in practical

solutions for the good of society. As this is largely a more detailed development of Durkheim's ideas, the four themes of a profession still hold the same positions and relative importance. This is also the case with their relationship to the state.

Also part of the traditional view are 'traits' theories of professionalism (Millerson, 1964). The aims of these are to create an ideal type professional, to which all other occupations wanting professional status can aspire. These simply are a collection and condensation from wider literature, of all the traits of professions. Millerson (1964) identified twenty-three elements from twenty-one authors to form a 'checklist' of professionalism: communal organisations, altruism, and practical use of abstract knowledge were some of the most commonly cited traits. This way of looking at professionals lacks the theoretical clarity of Parsons and Durkheim's work despite presenting a similar overall notion of what a profession is. Without having a broader theory of society, the list of traits becomes the self-description of a profession, and can be infinitely extended or made to fit most occupations. Although its aim is to reassert the notion that professions are something more than just occupations, this actually undermines the division between a profession and an occupation. This attempts to cover all aspects which comprise a professional by dividing them into traits, and as the above criticisms indicate, does so without much considered focus. However, also in common with the neo-functionalist traditional concept of a profession, this approach lacks explicit consideration of issues of trust and accountability; they are not considered as issues.

However, this functionalist paradigm has been largely discredited in all sociological studies (Baert, 1998) and one which later authors in this field explicitly attack. Criticism of

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functionalism centre around the problem of 'functional unity'. In short, this is a belief that all parts of society are the same in as much as the impact of an institutionalised concept such as the family, or a profession, will mean substantively the same thing to all people regardless of issues such as power relations, class, gender, ethnicity, and nationality. Society is viewed as neutral, not structured by power relations, and the categories it displays are viewed as eternal and real. Both the functionalist and the trait approaches take the category 'profession' for granted, and see it as a fixed end-point to which all suitable organisations should aspire. It does not account for differences within or between professions, or for historical differences. This becomes explicit in the consideration of the planning profession, and public sector professions more generally. These criticisms of the functionalist approach to social inquiry link into the general rejection, or at least questioning of, positivist conceptions of knowledge as stated in the previous chapter and developed further in the next chapter. Issues leading from this, questioning knowledge and skills of professionals become important in new theorising about professionals, as does the issue of trust and accountability. However, it is the lack of consideration of the issue of power which leads to the major critique of this notion of professionalism which the next section details.

2.2.2 Symbolic Interactionism

The second traditional approach, symbolic interactionism, provides a different understanding of professions through its focus on interactions and refusal to make wider inferences about society from this. The social is understood situationally, through the acting of persons, their taking of roles, and the mutual playing out and creating of meaning. Insight from this approach has been taken by many later studies in terms of their methodological approach, as is seen in later sections. This approach is contemporary with the studies of

Parsons and Millerson and is part of the work of the Chicago School of symbolic interactionism. This approach to sociological study is strongly influenced by psychology, centring on the individual as key to society and the study thereof. The methodology is a form of ethnography, and meaning is derived from individual behaviour. By drawing wider societal conclusions, the theory would be removed from the empirical: this is antithetical to this approach. Symbolic interactionism approaches professions, not as taken for granted 'real' entities, but investigates how they are determined and (re)constructed by those who are engaged with them, in both lay and professional roles.

Everett Hughes' (1958) work *Men and Their Work* provides a prime example of this. His focus is on the interactions between professional and lay people, seeing their situation as one of "co-operative interdependence"(Dingwall, 1983; p4). Professions do not hold their status because of altruistic usage of academic knowledge in a practical setting for the good of the public. Their mandate is situationally derived; they are 'playing' the knower, the expert, as the other plays the layperson. His work is focused on these interactions, and does not draw wider principles of social order from them. In this, the four themes of professionalism are all situationally enacted, and their meaning is only created in the doing of the professional act. They are all still of importance in the making and maintaining of a profession, but all can only exist in action so are actively (re)created in any given situation. The symbolic interactionist approach does not allow for further meaning or value to be attached to this observation which simultaneously make it useful and open to criticism. It is a useful, open methodological approach which avoids the flaws of taking for granted a specific meaning of a professional, then attempting to investigate, define and theorise that specific definition. The criticisms of it are that this is all that it does; it makes no wider critical or normative

points about its subject of investigation, so limiting relevance to the events observed themselves. It is clear that the relationships between the state and professionals will affect this situational context, but, to reiterate, central to this approach is its lack of wider theorising.

The openness of this approach has allowed for its continued usage and much of the literature discussed below in both planning and generally draw upon it methodologically. Worthy of specific note here are the work of Svensson (1990) and Freidson (1983).

Freidson's (1983) study of medicine uses a phenomenological approach which is influenced by Hughes' symbolic interactionism. He stresses the importance of specificity, and ushers moves away from attempts to find one theory of professionalism. What is important in this field for Freidson is looking for meaningful differences between professions and other occupations, and seeing how these differences are 'played out', both by those on the inside and outside.

Svensson (1990) describes the different uses of knowledge in the professions of architecture and psychology using case studies. She examines the use professional/scientific knowledge, tacit/experiential knowledge in the two professions, and compares their importance with the influence of bureaucratic rules. Her work does not elaborate a greater theory of society but is thoroughly based in action. This emphasises the importance of observing practice, considering how professionals operate on a daily basis. This in itself is of value, and something which needs consideration in any study of professionals.

2.2.3 Traditional Planning Professionalism

As a post war reconstruction project, town planning saw itself as a prime example of an, albeit new, traditional profession. Through applying rational principles of corrective action to space, the right planning solution to problems of overcrowding, slums, or urban sprawl could be implemented (cf McLoughlin, 1969). This work was done by professionally accredited planners, working in the interests of the public. Planning was a discrete discipline, despite those entering it coming from a range of built environment backgrounds. The concept of planning was articulated as a public good, akin to health, law and education, so therefore planners too were professions working altruistically in the interests of all.

As public sector professionals, the link with implementing governmental agendas is more developed in planning than in non-public sector professions. Planners worked harmoniously with the aims of government: they were unified in their framing of the problem and its solution. However, their professional status gave them technical independence from the government, so they were presented as pursuing the 'correct' course of action, rather than an ideological one (Cullingworth & Nadin, 2001; p355-356). This illustrates the mutual importance of the relationship between the state and professionals which is discussed in more detail in the next chapter in light of the theoretical framework for this research. However, at this point it is important to consider how the relationship between democracy and expertise in defining the general good in planning begins to question the traditional concept of a professional. When dealing with a specific spatial activity, the practical content of what being altruistic, or the morals of society actually amounts to becomes important. It is not enough to say that professional values are a collective alternative to those of capitalism, a focus on outcomes and on power is needed. In an activity which impacts upon

local land use and people's lives so directly and visibly, this challenge was first voiced around issues of public participation.

Before discussing this further, a caveat is necessary. This traditional understanding of the planning profession has been widely rejected within academic circles, but not completely. Some literature assumes that as the occupation of town planning is called a profession and has a professional body/institute, that axiomatically all those doing 'planning' are professionals (Blau et al, 1983, Rodwin, 2000, for example). Also, the arguments for planning as technical are still in existence in an academic arena as Harris (1997) demonstrates. This work is not explicitly promoting the traditional paradigm of professionalism in relation to planning. It is not really engaging in the debate, rather just assuming that the planning profession is a real and universally agreed-upon entity. The relevance of mentioning it here is to illustrate the continuing salience of the notion of planning as a profession. This view also has been found in professional practice: "the ethic of neutrality...is still deeply ingrained in conceptions of the planner's professional role"(Campbell and Marshall, 2000; p302). Planners are still therefore aiming to solve problems that they designate as above or outside politics; this is a problematic position as the following discussion illustrates. In addition, it highlights contradictions in the literature; some see planning as a profession uncritically, whilst others, as discussed below, do not.

2.2.4 Early Problems with the Planning Profession
Despite this continued academic and practice usage, the traditional concept of the planning profession was challenged early on in its inception. As stated above, this challenge centred around how planning could best serve the interests of the public without public consultation,

or some sort of democratic accountability. This illustrates the problems of adapting general theory to specific professions, and the weakness with this theory as discussed above, is brought into clear focus when relating it to a specific public sector profession. It indicates that professionals do not occur naturally, as a functionalist perspective assumes, nor are there simple, free to all occupations rules to follow to unchallengeably become a profession, as a 'traits' based approach would indicate. This challenge first raises the theme of occupational control to the centre of discussion. This is taken up by many authors, developed into a critique, and considered in detail in the next section. Following from this, the joint themes of accountability and trust, and knowledge and skills become important and unsettled. This can be formed into questions about what is it that certain people can *know* that gives them the power to take decision which are not directly democratically *accountable*. This is explored in relation to the relevant planning literature.

In the 1960s challenges were made to the established mainstream of planning which believed that as long as planners were suitably technically trained they would be able to work in the public interest. Planners' ability to know what was best for the future of places without consulting the inhabitants of those places was undermined. Cazenave (1999) provides an interesting account of the challenges to professional status that the increasing importance, supported by the growth of the civil rights movement, of involving a community in the planning of their future raises. His description of different approaches to running welfare schemes, use the "two apparently conflicting American values of science and democracy to secure professional hegemony and thus their reform goods" (Cazenave, 1999, p24). The moves to greater public participation did not involve a deprofessionalisation, because the status and legitimacy of the welfare reformers/planners was not based upon autonomous

knowledge alone, but the almost antithetical value of democracy. This brings to the forefront of the concept of a professional the themes of knowledge and skills, and trust and accountability. It illustrates how they are intimately linked with each other, despite the lack of consideration, or even acknowledgement of the former by the traditional debates outlined above. As the knowledge of the planner is more everyday and less highly codified than that of, for example a doctor or lawyer, it is not remote and beyond the understanding of lay people. This highlights that there is a need for trust in the professional to be using this knowledge and skills in the interests of the public they profess to be serving, rather than the belief that simply by possessing the knowledge they will be so doing. The notion of accountability and democracy therefore temper the professional's ability to practice. In turn, this debate draws attention away from the formerly central issue of professional values.

This paradoxical relationship, balancing the two values of science and democracy is a problem at the heart of the planning profession. It concerns the contradictions between knowledge and skills, and values in professional planning. This raises questions about what is the best spatial environment for the people of a society, and how it can be found. Questioning this raises further questions about whether the 'right' education qualifies one to decide on this, or whether the democratic will of the people provides the 'right' answers. This uneasy balance was enshrined in the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act through the relationship of planning with elected members of local government. The planners were to act on the political instructions of local politicians, creating the correct technically appropriate solution. This in itself is a challenge to the traditional understanding of a professional. Although as already mentioned, and explained in more detail in the following chapter, any given profession necessarily has a relationship with the state, this is usually more

covert than the system of planning committees at local level. However, these issues are further complicated by the issue of public involvement beyond simply the ballot box.

In Britain, the Skeffington report (1969) gained both governmental and professional acceptance of the importance of involving the public in planning (Cullingworth and Nadin, 2001; p356). Its recommendations were for increasing public consultation in plan-making. Its assumption is this: planners should extract the opinions of the public in various ways, and then using their professional skills put this all together to make a plan. This provides a supplemented form of representative democracy, not any form of bottom-up planning. In turn this provides a way for the cohabiting of 'democracy' and 'science' by merging contrary ideals, blurring the boundaries between knowledge and accountability, weakening the former to strengthen the latter. However, by including both, the tension between them remains.

Public participation still holds an odd position in the minds of planners. It is seen as both vital, the core of what planning is about, and as a trivial imposition, something that must be done to meet imposed criteria. These differences are highlighted in the work of Campbell and Marshall (1998, 2002b) illustrating the multiplicity of internal views held within professional planning work. This indicates that the issue is by no means resolved and the negotiation of professional identities and status for those within it as well as those theorising it is complex and contentious.

This debate over the role of public participation in planning raises further questions about the issue from which it emerged, namely serving the public interest. This issue is central to much of planning theory and clearly vital to be borne in mind when investigating the current

nature of the planning profession. This is discussed in more detail in the following two sections, in relation to questions about whether planning *should* be a profession, and how conflicting interests can be represented.

2.3 Critiques of the Traditional Concept

Emerging from the criticisms of functionalism, and complexities of conceptualising a public sector profession is a different body of literature which has here been classified as critique. The majority of this critique is informed by a reading of power into professional operation. Johnson's (1977) *Professions and Power* and Larson's (1977) *The Rise of Professionalism* are the two key works here, embracing neo-Marxist and neo-Weberian perspectives. The approaches are complementary and draw on each other's ideas. The neo-Marxist influence puts questions of power into the discussion of professions, and the neo-Weberian approach critically looks at the organisational structure of professions. They in turn argue that professions reinforce the capitalist and bureaucratic structures of society, emphasising the 'dark' side of an area previously seen only neutrally or positively. They shift the question of sociological inquiry from "'What part do the professions play in the established order of society?' to how do such occupations manage to persuade society to grant them a privileged position?'"(Macdonald, 1995; pxii). The focus shifts from the theme of values to that of occupational control. In a similar vein these critiques have been developed further by use of Foucauldian theory. Although this goes beyond the original critiques conceptually, they are discussed here as their aim is largely the same, unlike the literature classified as 'new' which aims to rehabilitate the concept of a professional in light of these challenges. In planning literature, the major thrust of critique takes the same approach but many authors go one step further, arguing that planning should not be a profession as all this status does is inhibit its

potential radicalism as a movement. As stated below, the literature considered in this section focuses on the issue of occupational control above any of the other themes of professionalism, although Foucauldian approaches do also focus on knowledge.

2.3.1 First Challenges

Johnson (1972; p45) argues that "(a) profession is not an occupation, but a means of controlling an occupation". He argues that the 'traditional' assumption that a professional uses technical academic knowledge altruistically is an attempt to render the decisions that they make apolitical. Professions in capitalist societies are means of controlling certain areas of action and knowledge so only those deemed suitable by a successfully professionalised group can work in that area. Through this control, they can define what the needs of the lay are, and how they are going to be met. This relationship can be mediated by the state, a bargain can be entered into so that the state defines the needs and the given profession has a monopoly in meeting them. Therefore, the purpose of professions is to control entry into the occupation, to ensure, with state guarantee, that their services cannot be provided by anyone else. This is antithetical to the traditional concept of a profession as a counterbalance to modernity and capitalism, suggesting that their state granted licence to operate is a process of mutual support rather than contrasting mores. The question of occupational control evidently becomes crucial, more so than the values upheld by a profession, what they actually know or their accountability and the trust they are held in. This is not to argue that the other themes of professions are not relevant here: it is an attack on the traditional values based assumptions about professions which fuels the critique. In addition, by emphasising occupational control over the knowledge and skills of a profession to be its defining feature, Johnson is critical about this knowledge and skills, this is further

developed by approaches taking a Foucauldian perspective. The whole critique in turn raises issues about accountability and trust. If professionals do not hold and use naturally occurring, value judgement free knowledge in the interests of society, rather, they maintain their own, personal and collegiate status, it is not obvious why they should be trusted or how they are to be held accountable. This all highlights why the issue of who professionals are, and how becoming a professional is controlled are contentious and about power.

Larson (1977) also argues that the traditional assumption of neutrality seen as being key to the professions screens their actual work, and this is reinforced by saying a profession is what a professional claims to do. She argues for specificity in the study of the professions: historically, geographically and both between and within professions. Her work looks at the institutional arrangements and ideologies of professions, and how professionalisation is used as a means of social mobility by a given occupation. Instead of looking at what the professions give to society, the focus here is on what society gives to the professions in terms of status and financial reward. Altruistic work in the public interest is replaced by self-seeking, corporatist bargaining, institutionally bounded groups, the focus shifts from values to occupational control. Professionals are seen as part of, and rewarded by the state, not independently preserving civic values and communal morality.

The insights from both these studies have been used widely, and they are still influential in the later reconceptualisations of professionals dubbed here as new, as well as laying the foundations for Foucauldian critiques described below. As already mentioned, this is where the majority of the literature on the planning profession is positioned.

2.3.2 Later Developments

Witz (1992) combines the neo-Marxist focus on power with a theory of patriarchy to add a feminist analysis to the power structures operating in professionalism. She also is influenced by the neo-Weberian focus on bureaucratic structure, and how these operate in the interests of patriarchy. She argues that professions use tactics of demarcation (cf Larkin, 1983) to support patriarchy by drawing distinctions between related professions which are dominated by women, and in professions between male and female professionals. The idea of demarcation is an important one, as it considers what and who is inside or outside a profession, and so what is constitutive of a particular profession. Witz discusses Parkin's (1979) idea of a "white collar version of manhood"(p104) commenting on the mutual constructing of gender and professional identities, seeing a relationship between the personal and the professional which patriarchy does not acknowledge. Again, this illustrates the importance of occupational control in a way which is not an issue in the 'traditional' paradigm. Who professionals are here is shown to further promulgate and maintain the interests of the powerful over the powerless, in this case in relation to gender relations and patriarchy. The values which the profession proffers to society in general, the knowledge around which it is formed and the means by which it may be held accountable or how trust is maintained in its practice are all of lesser importance in the critical focus of this work, in line with the paradigm in general.

Witz (1992) illustrates that if professions are considered a means of controlling an occupation, what is inside or outside becomes vital. She does this well by using a feminist perspective, but the lines of demarcation are not only drawn between groups along gender lines. Larkin (1983) discusses this notion of subdivision with professions in the field of

medicine, showing the importance of occupational control within professions as well as between the profession and the lay.

Beyond this, the Foucauldian view of a professional supports the neo-Marxist critiques of the traditional view of professions, by focusing on power and occupational control, but goes beyond them. In accordance with the neo-Marxist interpretation, professions do not occur naturally to guard the morals of society, neither they nor their specialist knowledge occur naturally or beyond power relations. It is not just that professions are occupations which use their status and relationship with the state to control the entry into and jurisdiction of their job. Professions create their discipline, as Larson (1990), developing her earlier ideas, argues "only knowers themselves will define what are valid subjects of knowledge and valid criteria of pertinence and truth"(Larson, 1990, p31). This addition to the critique approach to the professions brings to the forefront the issue of knowledge alongside occupational control. As the following discussion of the Foucauldian concept of power/knowledge indicates, controlling an occupation does not only mean guarding entry to profession and use of its knowledge. Knowledge and its control are intimately bound up with each other. The former only exists with the latter. To know something is to be able to define and delimit it, and controlling an area of practice allows the practitioners to know it, as they define it.

Foucault's (1973, 1977) own work is relevant for consideration in relation to professionals' power/knowledge (for a fuller discussion of this concept see, Foucault, 1980). His discussions of criminologists in *Discipline and Punish*, and of psychiatry in *The History of Sexuality* can be seen as directly engaging in the debate on professionalism. The change in the object of punishment from the body to the mind of a criminal rendered knowable the

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discipline of criminology. By defining certain behaviour as normal, and that which it is not as deviant, criminology became possible. Its aim was to uphold, defend and further normality, so defined by themselves. This making of knowledge of normal, or non criminal behaviour, involves the concomitant making of power, the power to rehabilitate and make normal those defined as deviant. The same is the case with psychiatry, power/knowledge is established by the drawing of a divide between madness and sanity, deviant and normal. The main innovation of this approach is not just to see power as negative, but also constructive. Power allows a problem to be defined and its subsequent knowledge can provide a way to solve it. This understanding does not provide a totalising theory of society, it is perhaps more aptly seen as a critical approach to investigating claims made by professionals in their work, and seeing how holding occupational control has shifted over time, how power/knowledge has adapted to maintain its status. Other work applying these ideas includes Nettleton's (1992) analysis of dentistry, and more recent writings by Larson (1990) and Johnson (1993) on the professions generally. Casey and Allen (2004) use Foucault's ideas of power/knowledge to consider professionals' identity in housing in the face of performance regimes. Some of the insights gained from this are discussed further in the next section, again illustrating the productive, rather than simply repressive and limiting, sides of power.

2.3.3 Critique in Planning

In debates about the planning profession, the critique approach has been highly influential. As with the discussion in relation to the traditional concept of the planning profession, this is also developed further when put into the specific context of one profession and wider debates about its purpose and possibilities. Critique itself has become a position, an

understanding of professions and professionals in which occupational control is the central theme.

In planning, Healey and Underwood's (1978) study of London planning authorities draws upon the openness of this approach to investigate how professionals construct their expertise and work. It is one of the few studies of planning professionalism that involved in depth empirical research. It illustrates both the usefulness of the symbolic interactionist approach to studying professions, and therefore shows the link between approaches to professions in general and the planning profession more specifically. Its starting point is that of critique, as occupational control is the key theme by which a profession is considered, rather than viewing professionals as altruistic holders of the morals of society. It is more detailed in considering professional action than the above critical accounts which function more as polemics calling for change. However, they too see professional status as detrimental to the operation of planning practice:

> "So long as idealism and professionalism rather than a concern with the nature and operation of planning as an activity of government dominate planning thought, then the ideas of practitioners who have to make continual resolutions of the contradictions in...planning are likely to remain as varied and confused as we have found them"(Healey and Underwood, 1978; p124).

As well as providing detailed empirical evidence on the daily practice of planners in London in the 1970s, the research provides interesting concepts to use in the investigation of planning practice. That of 'action space', as defined below is worth particular mention:

"that sphere of field of action within which he (sic) has or claims to have the power or right to impose his definition of appropriate action, and hence to influence how decisions are made"(Healey and Underwood, 1978; p90)

This sort of understanding helps link theories about professions with what people actually do and how this has potential to lead to change.

The professionalisation of planners is criticised by Reade (1997), Evans, (1993) and Taylor (1992) as turning the visionary social and political movement of planning into a technocratic bureaucratic activity. They believe to reinstate the purpose of planning into society, and to increase respect for it as an activity and a concept, its associations with professionalism must be lost. Professionalism is seen as a post war consensus corporatist bargain, an alliance of state and practioners; the former giving the latter status and a remit to act, and the latter depoliticising the political decisions of the state through neutral professional conduct by means of technical skills. Their view of a profession is one focused on occupational control, similar to Johnson's (1972) as described above. They see the way this is defined and maintained as becoming antithetical to the values which they believe planning should be promoting. As the post-war consensus was dismantled from the mid 1970s onwards, the bargain remained, but the underlying political philosophy changed. As planning held on to its professional status, it remained part of the state apparatus seemingly rejecting its values for its continued status. This argument is furthered by Tewdwr-Jones (1999), his view being that:

"(t)he commodification of planning control is encouraging planners to take the easy route out, and by concentrating on performance criteria, by being less visionary and by being more pragmatic and administrative"(Tewdwr-Jones, 1999, p143).

He traces the history of planning's negative image as a profession also seeing this divide between professions; bureaucratic controlled occupations as opposed to the earlier visionary ideals of the movement. This article also raises two other issues worthy of note here. The first is the association of this negative, dull "continual source of jokes" (Tewdwr-Jones, 1999, p123) version of planners with development control, and under Thatcher this becoming public sector planning. The second is the issues of professional boundaries. Tewdwr-Jones' definition of planning is narrowed to those aspects of the activity around which the negative images are strongest. This definition of occupational control limits what is considered as professional planning, as is the case with Reade (1997), Evans, (1993) and Taylor (1992)'s views. The implications of this are considered further when examining the methodological approach to this research.

Within planning, the critique of the traditional concept of a professional is continued into the themes of skills and knowledge, without the need for a Foucauldian perspective. As the discussion of the tussle between 'science' and 'democracy' in traditional planning professionalism indicates, the knowledge held by planning professionals is more everyday than that of other more longstanding professionals. The activity of planning engages with everyday life in a way that other professions such as engineering do not. A lay discussion over the benefits of a new housing development in a given area is more imaginable than one over the lengths and materials to be used in the construction of a new bridge. This in itself

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can lead to problems and challenges when a profession is epitomised as controlling an occupation, rather than filling a moral gap in society.

Although planners still value their technical specialist knowledge practitioners find, "defining the nature of that distinctive knowledge and skills proved a virtual impossibility" (Campbell & Marshall, 2002a; p104). This renders them dubious grounds on which to base a profession, any acceptable grounds for occupational control seems to disintegrate. Alongside this, occupational control in planning can be seen as preserving gendered interests, with a high possibility of corruption (Rydin, 1998). This is reinforced by a view that planners are not suitably educated or trained to deal with the environmental issues that their work involves (O'Riordan and Turner, 1983). When the focus on their professional status is shifted from upholding a universally agreed upon societal good to upholding their own status, the basis on which this status has been granted, specialist technical knowledge, can also be brought into question. This is not just a criticism of controlling 'real' knowledge for a specific group interest rather than for society, nor is it as developed as a critique of establishing power/knowledge on a spatial or land use basis. Occupational control of planning as an activity is seen as part of bureaucratisation, rather than the guarding of knowledge or values (Thomas, 1994), further linking the planning profession with the Neo-Weberian side of the critique. Questions about the issues of trust and accountability can therefore be raised, as it is unclear why there is a planning profession at all at this juncture. The denial of a traditional values based understanding of the planning profession brings into question all other tenets of its professionalism. It is from this point of near total deconstruction that the new perspectives, discussed below, begin to emerge.

2.3.4 The Planning Profession and Planning Theory

However, before exploring potential reconceptualisations of professionals, it is necessary to consider Foucauldian perspectives on the planning professions. The approach has not been used directly to analyse the planning profession, but it has been used to theorise planning more generally. To clarify its relevance to professionalism in planning, some of the more general literature on which it is based is discussed. In doing this, it is necessary to situate this discussion within a brief consideration of debates in planning theory more widely.

Yiftachel (1995) illustrates how planning can be used as a tool of repression when outcomes, not processes are looked at. In Israel it is not that Palestinians are legally excluded from the planning system, but planning tools, such as zoning village boundaries are used to limit the growth of their settlements (Khamaisi, 1997, Yiftachel, 2000). This illustrates how rendering an area knowable in planning terms, this being the foundation of a professional's work in Foucaudian terms, creates what is right or wrong, and the effect that this can have and the uses to which it can be put.

For Flyvbjerg and Richardson (2002), "(u)nderstanding how power works is the first prerequisite for action, because action is the exercise of power"(Flyvbjerg and Richardson, 2002, p54). This clearly relates to professional planning practice as it is action orientated. Their work emphasises power as productive and diffused throughout societal practices. As well as presenting a challenge for (professional) action, it questions the status of (professional) knowledge. If the world is not seen as objective, knowable and 'out there', then knowledge cannot simply exist to be learnt. This is especially true for 'subjects' such as planning where the rearticulation of its substance and value should be the central tenet of its

professional endeavour. The potential uses of this theory in this study are commented on further in the next chapter. As with the Foucauldian critiques of professionalism generally, in terms of the themes these studies relate not just to knowledge, but also to questions of the values underlying the operation of power/knowledge.

These Foucauldian-influenced works provide one side of debates within planning theory, focusing on the analytical and critical rather than normative. They are positioned in counterbalance to what has been described as the communicative turn in planning theory (see for example Healey, 1997, Innes, 1995). As opposed to critiquing power in planning, these authors address ways of overcoming such issues, influenced by Habermas' (1984) concept of communicative action. This attempts to redress the normative side of planning theory, presenting possibilities for action and prescriptions of what planning should be about. However, they in turn are challenged by accusations of not addressing issues of power or just outcomes sufficiently (Fainstein, 2003). The practical content of these ideas, where relevant to the planning profession, is discussed below in more detail.

2.4 New Approaches

This section covers the literature which follows in the wake of the critique, but instead of merely adding to it, attempts to reconceptualise professionals. In addition it assesses how the concept and practice stands up to contemporary policy challenges in the context of the doubts and challenges examined in the previous chapter. The focus of these works are disparate in theoretical approach and subject matter, but generally feature accounts of professional's work, as opposed to professionalism generally. There is no one pattern or theoretical influence which they follow, the chosen objects and methods of investigation also

vary. In light of the four themes of professionalism, the issues of trust and accountability, and knowledge and skills are key, and the importance of values begins to be tentatively rehabilitated. These two key issues run closely together, to the level that they almost blur into each other. Without trust, knowledge will be challenged; with trust, knowledge does not need to be questioned. If there is faith in the means by which professionals are held accountable, their skills are valid. This section discusses studies of professions in general and defines what can be seen as new professionalism. After so doing, it highlights some problems with these ideas, and potential answers to them. The question they address is whether within this context of change, challenge and critique, professionalism in general is still possible. It then considers how this has been approached in planning literature, also considering some of the challenges specific to planning which need to be addressed when reconceptualising planning professionalism in light of the critique and context of doubt.

The literature identified as being part of new professionalism shares the following core features. The studies go beyond the challenges of the critique, rather than developing further as the Foucauldian influenced work does. They consider professional, largely public sector, practice, often empirically in light of the practical as well as the theoretical challenges. It centres around addressing managerialism and how professionals can overcome this without losing professional status.

2.4.1 The Challenges of Managerialism

Managerialism is the move in the public sector professions to increased emphasis on financial and performance management, with, for example, increased paperwork and

budgeting being in the remit of headteachers and surgery managers. This clearly has an impact on professional work:

"while professional groups have, of course, always taken independent action to change their own internal practices, the initiative over the past decade clearly lies with the new managerialism and the challenge it poses"(Halford and Exworthy, 1999; p12)

This ties into the context of change within local government described in the previous chapter. Specifically in English local government Causer and Exworthy (1999) take this argument further suggesting the renegotiation of the concept of professionalism saying, "the status and power of professions may come increasingly to depend upon their ability to cast their goals and objectives in appropriate terms"(Causer and Exworthy, 1999; p100). This is supported by Harrison (1999) who argues that managerial decisions in professional fora have more credibility if taken by professionals. This illustrates that in the changing public sector, definitions such as manager and professional are shifting and in need of mutual support to ensure the legitimacy of decisions in different arenas. Managerialism may be seen as simply a change and a threat to professionalism, or at least that there are ways of reconceptualising professionalism which can overcome these challenges. It can be possible to change what professionalism is, without rendering it meaningless.

The role of the individual, their personality and experience in the construction of a professional, and conversely the role of a profession in the creation of the identity of those within it are also part of this reconceptualisation, this response to the challenges. Halford and Leonard (1999) discuss how managerial tasks assigned to professionals mean that they have to personally negotiate the role of manager/professional. They also argue that the

personal dimension of managers' skills present a challenge, as professional attributes were only seen as technical. Elzinga (1990) discusses how tacit knowledge and practice are more important than science in nursing, especially in the patients' view of what makes a good nurse. Professional status is here seen as being mediated through the personality of those within it, and the two things cannot easily be separated. Casey and Allen (2004) illustrate how undertaking a 'professional project of the self' allows housing professionals to reconceptualise their roles within these governmental changes. They may not be able to articulate a unique stock of specialist technical knowledge as a basis for their professionalism, but their actions of creating themselves as a professional compensates for this. They become nodes of policy and personal information, accountable to the people they serve, conceptualised as customers. They sum this up clearly by saying:

> "(w)hilst many have argued that the performance ethos has undermined the status and autonomy of the traditional profession, we have shown how it has presented housing managers with new opportunities to behave in a 'professional' manner. Specifically, technologies of power, such as performance monitoring constituted a productive power that housing managers chose to appropriate for their own individual (as well as systematic) ends, rather than a repressive power that undermined their ability to work as a professional" (Casey and Allen, 2004, p409)

The need to consider the personal dimensions, covered in these studies adds another aspect of difference. Not only are there differences between professions, and between professionals in the same profession but different roles within professions. By changing the focus of the investigation to specific professions and professionals, different themes and issues begin to emerge. In terms of the four main themes, this section illustrating the

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influence of managerialism draws in skills and knowledge and accountability. Performance regimes can be seen as a new version of professional accountability; an attempt to add transparency to local government procedures, bringing back lost trust, although this idea has been significantly criticised (see O'Neill, 2002 for example). The personal management of skills within this context is seen as key to a professional's role.

Hardey's (1999) work about the challenge the internet has brought to doctors in their relations with their patients and their status as professionals comes to a similar conclusion. The internet has allowed all who are able to connect to it the possibility of challenging their doctor's professional judgement. The medical profession's knowledge is no longer so closely controlled. This has involved a rethinking of their relationship with the patient and their use of knowledge, allowing for more discussion on more equal terms. Instead of being the sole guardian of medical expertise, doctors may have to become facilitators of healthcare. This is again a reconceptualisation of professionalism, rather than a denial of it, in light of the challenging context. All these new ideas and observations illustrate that there is also little will to give up the term, and the idea is still of use academically and in practice. However, none attempt to systematically define the action of a professional in this context.

2.4.2 'Network' Professionals

Furbey et al. (2001) attempt to go one step beyond the above authors by trying to reconceptualise professionals more generally. They do provide empirical research from the field of housing, but their argument is more than just a reporting of findings. They acknowledge the managerialist and contextual challenges but instead see them as opportunities:

"the new managerialism is not antithetical to a revised definition of professionalism. Moreover, in current emphasis on 'community and 'social inclusion' there may be particular opportunities for a revised professional project. This 'network' professionalism can appeal to skills, personal qualities and a knowledge that combines the abstract and the concrete"(Furbey et al, 2001; p43)

By a 'network' professional, they mean a person with knowledge and experience of a wide field of all the issues relating to housing. What the professional does not know themselves, they know who does know. They have the ability to interact with all levels of people necessary: community groups, the local authority, voluntary sector organisations and the private sector. A mix of personal skills, education and experience are needed to act professionally. Their knowledge is not omnipotent and right, but listening and facilitating. They diagnose and infer, but from sources other than their own background and education. This illustrates the possibility of professionalism beyond the critiques, that it is not something fixed and unchangeable. This makes a 'new' professionalism.

This, as with the above work, focuses on the themes of accountability and trust, and knowledge and skills. The critique detailed in the last section shifted the focus from values to occupational control which by so doing raised questions about accountability and knowledge. This leaves different challenges if professions are to be reconceptualised, rather than reasserted traditionally. If professions no longer safeguarded the morals of society, why should they be trusted and what did they really know? The idea of facilitation, or network professionals, aims to answer this. As their knowledge can be contributed to, and is no longer held as esoteric and unchallengeable, trust can be restored.

Although this approach does answer much of the challenge of the critique and present a potential rehabilitation for professionals, it is not without difficulties itself. By focusing on issues of accountability and trust, and professional knowledge; by democratising both, it now leaves a gap in relation to the issue of values. If the professional is now a 'network' professional, facilitating processes of change, be it from ill health to well-being, ignorance to education or undeveloped to physically established, they no longer control the process unilaterally. Facilitation endeavours to bring all voices into the process, no longer asserting that the 'expert' knows the right answers to the problem, rather, they can find a way to solve it collaboratively. This should overcome issues of trust and accountability brought about by the critique's challenge that professions are solely means of occupational control. In addition, facilitation provides a professional way through the challenges of managerialism and performance regimes, which themselves are set up as a mechanistic means of accountability, as explained in the previous chapter. Despite the clear benefits of this approach, both for those theorising and practicing professions, the issue of values returns to complicate things. Thus far, the new concept of a profession has dealt with accountability and trust in terms of processes. The 'network' professional democratises their knowledge and power in terms of the process they undergo to get to a decision, but not how this turns into actual outcomes. It is silent about the aim of the profession in terms of outcome. This is an ethical/political gap which is necessarily filled if decisions are to be made, outcomes to be achieved. This is reinforced by the context of managerialism, as performance management targets measure quantitative not qualitative indicators.

Consideration to this can be found in *Social work and social justice: a manifesto for a new engaged practice* (Jones et al, 2006). This reasserts the values of the profession of social work as being

about social justice and care for the most underprivileged in society, stating

> "the need for a social work committed to social justice and challenging poverty and discrimination is greater than ever. In our view, this remains a project that is worth defending. More than any other welfare state profession, social work seeks to understand the links between 'public issues' and 'private troubles' and seeks to address both. It is for this reason that many who hold power and influence in our society would be delighted to see a demoralised and defeated social work, a social work that is incapable of drawing attention to the miseries and difficulties which beset so many in our society. This alone makes social work worth fighting for."
> (Jones et al, 2006).

This is explicit about values, about what fills the political/ethical into the gap that the new professionalism otherwise has. It is explicit about what basis, in this case the promotion of social justice defined with specificity and clear meaning, outcomes are formed. This is not a reversion to traditional professionalism, claiming altruism and upholding the morals of society based on collegially held specialist knowledge. It acknowledges all the challenges of new professionalism and the current political context, and then radically asserts its professionalism in terms of values. However, as the above discussion should indicate, this is in the minority of the literature. Most authors, in focusing on accountability and knowledge create a gap in terms of values which they leave unfilled and opaque.

2.4.3 Managerialism in Planning

The issues of managerialism, and potential professional rehabilitation in light of the critique are equally as important in planning as they are in general, especially as planning is a largely

public sector profession. Also, these discussions link into other debates about planning practice which do not directly tackle the issue of professionalism. They relate to debates about the purpose of planning and whether it should serve the public, multiple publics or communities. The issues they debate are covered by the four themes of professionalism, increasing their relevance to this discussion. Moreover, the idea of a 'network' professional, although not explicitly articulated in such terms, is present in thinking about the planning profession, as are tentative ways of filling the ethical/political gap present therein.

The increasing managerialism in the public sector has a direct effect on planners' work. The issues discussed in the previous section about the effect this has on public sector employees will affect, obviously, planners in the public sector. Imrie (1999) comments that

> "a potential crisis (is) at the heart of planning...how to justify and maintain (or even repackage) its collectivist heritage and traditions in an emergent socio-political framework which is anti-collectivist, fragmented and single issue oriented"(Imrie, 2002, p114).

This quote illustrates further problems than those outlined in the general literature. The assumption is that it is not just that planners' professional status is challenged by the managerial agenda, but the purpose underlying planning is too. It illustrates how planning, both as a profession and as an activity, cannot be seen in isolation from the wider political and social context of which it is part. This adds to the difficulties which need to be overcome if planning as a profession is to revitalise.

The context of change as outlined in the previous chapter poses much challenge to planning as a profession, described in the literature as a "mismatch between planning as a modern project and the needs and demands of postmodern or new times" (Allmendinger, 2002, p10). He goes on to argue that planning's professional status, given to planners to secure the use of land in the public interest by use of the correct procedures and tools, does not fit the diverse and multiple world of the twenty-first century. Planning's concept of the interests it is working to serve is here criticised from the same anti-functionalist perspective that the traditional understanding of professions are. Society comprises of many, not one, publics, and to act as if this were not the case would be to act in the interests of the dominant group alone.

2.4.4 Facilitation and Diversity

The idea of representing all different voices and not merging them into one 'public interest' finds continued resonance with some current planning theorists. Healey (1997) and Sandercock (1998) both stress the importance of planning engaging with the diversity of voices that make up human society, and argue that any claim to *the* public interest will as a matter of course exclude some, usually already marginalized, voices. They both reiterate that the concept of a public is neither possible nor desirable in contemporary diverse society. Sandercock (1998) sees the modernist planning profession as the vanguard of defending this exclusionary position:

> "In constructing histories of itself, the planning profession is moulding its members' understanding of past struggles and triumphs, and simultaneously creating a contemporary professional culture around those memories, those stories. And in choosing to tell some stories rather than others, a professional identity is shaped,

invested with meaning and then defended. What are the erasures and exclusions implicit in the process of forging a professional identity? What are some of the hidden meanings and practices of planning, its *noir* face?"(Sandercock, 1998, p33, emphasis original)

She continues by criticising the Enlightenment epistemology on which planning knowledge is based, seeing it as excluding other ways of knowing to such an extent that they are ignored and submerged in the spatial decision making process. This basic critical premise is supported by Healey (1997) who sees that "(t)he planning tradition itself has generally been 'trapped' inside a modernist instrumental rationalism for many years, and is only now beginning to escape"(p7). She draws on Habermas' (1984) ideas of communicative action, to attempt to supersede this position. What they both stress is the importance of planners hearing all voices and working in the interests of all communities; "the traditional spatial planner is ...transformed into a kind of knowledge mediator and broker"(Healey, 1997; p309). This idea clearly fits with the concept of professionals as facilitator. Society is seen as made up of different and disparate voices, making impossible a traditional profession who acted as a moral gatekeeper. Instead a professional who harnesses and supports difference, acknowledging different ways of knowing as valid is promoted, most explicitly in Sandercock's (2003) idea of radical postmodern planning practice.

This 'postmodern' context implies the need for a different approach to planning as an activity. From this basis, the question of what planning education should be for is raised by Hendler (1991) and Sandercock (1999), and through different processes of reasoning, they both agree on the salience of teaching questions of values and ethics. For them, therefore,

planning is about applied moral reasoning in diverse situations, the ability to use different types of knowledge ethically, not applying pre-given technical models to different situations. This perceived need to apply moral reasoning to practical situations does two things. First, it suggests that planning should be working for the 'good', not for its own self-interest or continued existence. Second, it suggests that this is not a neutral process conducted through the application of technical skills. It is about engaging in questions of value and doing the best thing. This clearly does not address how this can be undertaken, but does suggest that a re-engagement with issues of values does not necessarily imply a return to the traditional concept of planning professionalism.

Campbell and Marshall (2000) take the consideration of the ethical action needed to be taken by planners a step further. They argue against the notion that planning cannot or should not be looking beyond the different voices of different groups. They maintain that this approach is problematic as it is based upon a notion of rights which derives from self or group interests, not a communitarian one. "The community and the collective are often assumed to be one and the same. They are not"(Campbell and Marshall, 2000). It illustrates the problems with assuming that facilitation is possible as a professional way out of the critique and context of uncertainty and change. There is an assumption within this view that either all voices will be in accord, as long as the right way of listening is found, or that community boundaries are unproblematic, discreet and apolitical. This ignores the way that boundaries are drawn to reify a problem, make it part of that community or country rather than something which has impacts and needs acting upon beyond its naturalised borders (For a discussion of this beyond planning, see Gupta & Ferguson, 2002, Ferguson, 1997). In addition, community identities are contingent and situational (Bauman, 1996), therefore to

reify them for spatial intervention is problematic. In addition, a notion of who planning should serve as being only the sum of the current voices does not account for those without a voice. This would not allow for planning to consider the interests of the natural world or future generations as they cannot be articulated in this frame of reasoning (O'Neill, 2001). The consideration of this further complicates any reassertions of professionalism. As stated in the discussion about new professionalism generally, by focusing on issues of knowledge and accountability, issues of values, still central to the makeup of a profession, are obscured. Professionals may know about diverse interests, the makeup of their cities or regions and how to engage with these divergent voices. They may be held directly accountable by interacting directly with their constituent communities, but akin to the discussion about new professionalism generally, this leaves an ethical/political gap in terms of decision making. The issue of values again returns.

The above discussion has illustrated how debates within the literature about the purpose and possibility of planning directly impact on any possible new theorising of planning as a profession, although there is little direct discussion about this. They further illustrate that focusing on issues of accountability and knowledge; on what professionals do, is at the expense of issues of values, or what professionals achieve. By arguing about the importance of acknowledging differences in society to make planners accountable to and trusted by a wider range of people, and by stating their skills as facilitating discussion and networking between these different groups, what they are aiming to achieve, spatially or within land use, is obscured. This is not to dismiss the importance of issues of diversity and inclusion, but to assert that such discussion only can go so far, still leaving much unsaid.

2.4.5 Reconceptualising Planning Practice

Following from this, the following discusses literature which considers professional practice. This begins to offer some attempts at re-theorising planners' work and the planning profession.

Davidoff's (1963) conception of advocacy planning is chronologically the first argument to suggest that planners should be working directly for those who are underprivileged or disadvantaged. He suggests that all communities should have their own planner who will act as an advocate in promoting and defending their wishes for the future of their area. This argument does not directly engage with the theory of the planning profession, but in making such claims about the purpose and practice of planning, is clearly relevant to the discussion.

Schön's (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner* advises professions in practice by illustrating their use of knowledge in situations with lay people. Although his advice is for professionals beyond just planning, this is his focus and background, hence it is discussed here. It links ideas of who planners should be working for with the concept of a profession. He starts from a perceived diminishing of the trust of professions held by the general public and argues that this can be overcome, not by the strengthening of the knowledge claims of professionals, but by reflective practice. He criticises the technical-rational basis of knowledge, which the traditional conception of professions is based upon seeing professional disciplinary delineations as being created not discovered. This should allow those with the status of professionals to see their knowledge as situational and constructed. They then should use their critical abilities to reflect on how others, those without their education and institutional setting, see the problems with which they are dealing. By seeing professional knowledge as a

framed way of thinking, the professional should endeavour to see how others frame the same situation and work to help those most disadvantaged. This emphasises the importance of the situation, and argues that the concept of the profession only really makes sense within a given context. The focus here is more on knowledge and skills than values, and reasserts the symbolic interactionist idea of the centrality of daily practice.

Forester's (1989) ideas about how planners use information sees their work as extending beyond just that of a community. He argues that

> "despite the fact that planners have little influence on the structure and ownership and power in this society, they can influence the conditions that render citizens able (or unable) to participate (Forester, 1989, p28)

He designates five types of planners, by the way that they each use knowledge, promoting the type he called 'progressive' as this both works in the interests of the disadvantaged and acknowledges the constructs and constraints of power in the capitalist system. This, acknowledging the necessarily political power of knowledge and those who can use it, reasserts the need for the professional theme of values to be at the centre of these debates. This ideas are continued in his later work, examining the personal dimensions of planning work, and the importance of teaching planning theory to trainee practitioners (Forester, 1999, 2004).

Upton (2002) sees "planning as spatial ethics [which] is not only concerned with the agency and legitimacy of state intervention but of any and all actors within civil society"(p257). This implies that planning is central to a moral understanding of, and reasoning in, society. It follows that the planner is fundamental to this, and that values should be at the centre of any

reconceptualisation of professionalism. This links to some of the ideas within the RTPI's *New Vision* (1999). Although less conceptually grounded or politically explicit, the idea that planning is an activity which centres around values and judgements made upon values is key to its argument. This begins to follow the same track as taken by Jones et al. (2006) in relation to social work, although it is more subtle and nebulous. Although a considered reflection rather than a manifesto, Upton states the importance of values to planning practice, and the impossibility of operation without them. For him, planning is not simply about ensuring all voices are heard in process, but about issues of justice and equality in outcome. This move to fill, or construct a coherent way of filling, the ethical political gap is furthered by Campbell's (2006) consideration of "the nature of justice *in* planning" (Campbell, 2006; p4). Although not dealing directly with the concept of the planning professional, this argument goes to the heart of this issue of professional values, stating that planning decisions are fundamentally ethical decisions in questions of social justice.

2.5 Conclusion

The concept of the profession has come far from its functionalist origins, engaged with most theoretical perspectives dominant in modern sociology and still remains a contested and relevant topic of study. No clear picture of what a profession is, or should be, emerges at the conclusion of the review; the only sustained agreement appears to be that a profession is something, and something worthy of investigation; in these many divergent, both complementary and contradictory, ways. This is also the case for the planning profession. The literature around the general area of the purpose and theory of planning practice engages with the four tenets of professionalism, namely values, occupational control,

knowledge and skills, and trust and accountability. It too illustrates that there is still much need for both further empirical research and theorising.

This leaves no obvious theoretical paradigm to follow for the purpose of this study, there is nothing which can be used as a template, that could be used to investigate the current standing and conception of planning. However, out of the most recent work, the renewed interest in the professions provides some interesting ideas, both of engagement with current theories, and with current government policies. In addition, the process of change currently underway in the Royal Town Planning Institute based around the *New Vision* (RTPI, 1999) illustrates that there is institutional will to change, and that the concept of professionalism is something fluid, in practice as well as theory, not fixed, which can be debated. However, despite all the interest in and debate about the potential for a new concept of the planning profession, the review of the literature in this area reveals a substantial lack of empirical research, or anything that draws together these ideas. To explore this further in relation to this research, it is necessary to find an epistemological standpoint and conceptual framework to position this within. This is done in the following chapter.

Chapter Three: Epistemology, Hegemony and Ideology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the theoretical link between the general research area and literature, and the structuring of these ideas into a researchable study. It is necessary to provide a specific analytical framework for this research, and to situate it epistemologically before asking focused research questions. As the discussion below details, the way of investigating an issue is directly related to what that investigation will 'find'. The presumption that the world is simply 'out there', perceived and apprehended in identical ways by all actors, is rejected. This chapter considers the following areas. First, it investigates discourse theory, and the hermeneutic and natural science critical tradition from which it has developed. It then specifies the approach that this study will take, namely Laclau and Mouffe's (1983) concept of discourse and hegemony. It details this approach, considering its influences, key terms and criticisms; then gives examples of how this has been used as the analytical basis of previous studies, and outlines its relevance to researching the changing construction of the town planning profession.

This final point is then expanded and specified to draw up a conceptual framework for this study. In brief, for professions to operate they need to be legitimised by the state. This develops into a mutually beneficial relationship. However, different governments or states have different ideological conceptions of the social, as discourse theory has illuminated. Different professions, or aspects of a profession will be situated inside or outside different state's ideological articulations. This will have implications both for the profession and for the state. The link between the state, and its ideology, and professions is developed from

Chapter Two, and the notion of legitimacy is introduced in some conceptual depth. State ideologies since 1945 are then summarised, from which three discourses of legitimacy are postulated. This provides a framework against which methodological considerations can be explored, research questions formulated and a research strategy developed.

3.2 Discourse theory

"data are produced not collected, and it is the process of production that is fundamentally related to the product" (May, 2002; p3)

This section briefly outlines a genealogy of discourse analysis in social science thought, and the premises on which these epistemological foundations are based. It provides a foundation for the following sections which specify the concepts which will be used to first formulate, then analyse, the issues surrounding planning professionalism which are outlined in Chapters One and Two. It also provides a background for the methodological decisions made in Chapter Four. It does so by first illustrating the grounds on which traditional rational and positivist understandings of society were challenged, then outlines three 'generations' of discourse theory (following Torfing, 2005). It then illustrates how this is relevant to considerations of the changing nature and constructions of the planning profession.

3.2.1 Criticisms of Positivism

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, this research rejects a notion of the world, and especially social phenomena, as being readily researchable in pregiven, universally agreed

upon categories and identities. This stems from critiques of the general presumption of positivist social science and epistemology. The assumptions behind transferring certain natural science concepts of knowledge and ways of undertaking research in the social sciences have been largely refuted due to their inappropriateness and lack of actual objectivity in their studies. It is summarised aptly by Baert (1998) in the below quote:

> "positivism has been criticized from very different corners: by hermeneutics for ignoring the meaningful dimensions of social life, by critical theory for clinging on to a mistaken distinction between facts and values, and by realists for an erroneous concept of scientific explanation"(Baert, 1998, p181)

He continues to say that these criticisms are so severe and wide ranging that positivist social science and epistemology "are not any longer viable positions" (Baert, 1998, p181).

Dismissing this approach leads to an acceptance that the world is not 'out there' to be counted, observed and relayed back to the world of academia, with the only possible rupture in this smooth reflection being bad presentation or sloppiness. There are no 'brute facts' (Hughes, 1990) lying around waiting to be collected. What is 'found' will depend on what was looked for, and how this was undertaken. These tie into the deconstruction of stable, positivist knowledge, as discussed in Chapter One, which form part of the basis of the contemporary context of uncertainty and challenge for the concept of a professional.

This is informed further by feminist critiques of traditional rationalist positivist epistemologies (for example Stanley and Wise, 1990, Harding, 1991, Gavey, 1997, Weedon, 1987, Scott, 1996). In brief, these critiques argue that positivist rational epistemology; the

seeing of the world of 'things' as accessible beyond and without their contextualised meanings, reproduces power relationships in society, specifically that of patriarchy, by reinforcing the way of knowing and seeing the world which supports its ontology. This way of knowing validates some 'experiences' above others, those which can be counted and standardised, are given greater value than those which cannot. It hides the fact that choices are made *a priori* about what to investigate or not to investigate, and this will shape what is found. Chapter Four considers the practical methodological implications of this epistemological position at greater length, as this makes more sense to consider after the posing of research questions.

Criticisms of this position are discussed in more detail below with regard to Laclau and Mouffe's theory of hegemonic discourse, as many of the points levelled against post-positivist social science are also levelled against discourse theory. In general, this loss of an explicitly neutral standpoint from which to observe and interpret social reality, has led to accusations of a relativist impasse, floating in a society of undefinability and moral neutrality.

However, this does not have to be the case. Rather, it presents a challenge to reinterpret and rearticulate meaning and values in a post-foundationalist context. As the above cited feminist critiques identify, the supposed moral neutrality of positivist rationalism was a (patriarchal, imperialist) fallacy, so any nostalgic hankering back to the moral simplicity of this era is also fatally flawed.

3.2.2 The Use of Discourse Theory

This is where discourse theory provides an alternative approach.

> "[T]he work of discursive analysis is to discover those rules and conventions which structure the production of meaning in particular contexts; investigating why and how these systems of meaning change; and how social agents come to identify themselves in discursive terms" (Howarth, 1998, p281)

Notwithstanding the vast array of ideas which may be classified under the heading of discourse theory, the approach is one which looks for meanings and their construction within and by the structure of language. It can provide a way out of the impasses of relativism that a rejection of positivist epistemology could bring, as what is key to all discourse theory is an engagement with how meaning is constructed and made real;

> "[d]iscourses are not confined to an inner realm of mental phenomena, but are those frameworks of meaning which constitute the intersubjective rules of social life" (Howarth, 1998, p274).

Discourse theory is a broad theoretical and methodological tool which looks at how meanings are produced, reproduced and/or transformed, by use of words, spoken or written and, in some cases social practices. It is always an ongoing process, a critical way of looking, not a searching for an end. To discuss this in further detail, Torfing's (2005) three generations of discourse theory are used.

The first is linguistic or textual discourse analysis in which there is "no attempt...to link the analysis of discourse with the analysis of politics and power struggles" (Torfing, 2005; p6).

Meaning is derived from close analysis of the text, written or spoken, with issues of grammar and sentence construction being key facets. The second generation of discourse analysis sees its subject as sets of social practices, Fairclough's (1995) *Critical Discourse Analysis* being a prime example, but "tends to reduce discourse to a linguistic mediation of the events that are produced by the causal powers and mechanisms embedded in the independently existing structure of society" (Torfing, 2005; p7). Into this category Torfing puts the early work of Foucault as he maintains distinctions between the discursive and non-discursive.

The third generation removes this division: "(d)iscourse no longer refers to a particular part of the overall social system, but is taken to be coterminous with the social"(Torfing, 2005; p8). This concept of discourse is influenced by the works of Lacan, Kristeva, Barthes, Wittgenstein, Rorty, Gramsci, and Luhmann. The writings of Laclau & Mouffe are the pinnacle of this, as they "have attempted to translate the different theoretical insights into a coherent framework that can serve as a starting point of social and political analysis" (Torfing, 2005; p9). The detail of their theory is discussed further in more depth in the following section.

It is clear from the discussion of the literature in the previous chapter that planning and professions hold much potential for discursive investigation into their meanings and political positioning. As stated above, it provides a new way of looking at the social and how meanings are constructed within it. The literature review illustrates that this has not been previously undertaken in this field, which increases the challenge and originality of such research. To specify this further, it is necessary to provide more detail about the terms and background of the specific perspective which will be used.

"The concept of hegemony...will provide us with an anchorage from which contemporary struggles are thinkable in their specificity" (Laclau & Mouffe, 1983[2000 edition], p3)

The preceding section has discussed the nature of discourse theory in general. The aim of this, and the succeeding section, is to clarify and justify the precise interpretation of discourse theory used in this study. Laclau and Mouffe's concept of hegemonic discourse provides, as the previous section claimed, a coherent framework for analysis based on philosophically diverse foundations. This section first examines further the influences on this theory, it then defines the key terminology to be taken from their theorising for use in this research. It next considers criticisms of this approach, and the approach of this sort of discourse theory more generally. It looks at examples of the employment of these theoretical principles in other social research, then finally makes clear the relevance of this theoretical framework to the research area of this project.

3.2.3.1 History

As the above description of three generations of discourse theory illustrates, Laclau and Mouffe's work builds upon wide and varied influences to provide a new and empirically relevant perspective on theorising through discourse. This sections identifies two main areas of influence on their ideas; namely debates in Marxism, especially the work of Gramsci, and Lacanian notions of discourse.

Laclau and Mouffe follow contemporary debates within Marxist thought, rejecting much of what had preceded Gramsci as reductionist and epiphemonenalistic, seeing them as denying the political, as in both these modes that all political action is reduced to economic interests. For them, Gramsci's view that, "the transformation of the ruling class into a state, rather than the seizure of economic power, is seen as the highest moment in the political struggle for hegemony" (Torfing, 1999, p27), is key. It is largely this idea from which they base their concept of hegemony.

To further overcome the economically essentialist problems of epiphenomenalism and reductionism, and to take Gramsci's concept of hegemony to a further level, they employ a neo-Lacanian post-structuralist concept of discourse. Instead of seeing classes as the fundamental, economically constructed reality of society, they see class positions as dominant interpellations of the social, constructed by and in discourse. This refers back to the concept of discourse outlined above, and needs further theoretical explanation, before the use of this theory to social research can be argued.

Lacanian concepts of discourse emerge from psychoanalytical theory, surrounded by a structuring myth of child development into language, which accounts for the possibility and inescapability of discourse and the persistence and meanings of gender difference (Lacan, 1977, Mitchell and Rose, 1984). Although attempts have been made to use this structuring myth for analysis in planning theory (Gunder & Hillier, 2004), this only plays a (necessary) background in my approach. What is key, however, is what this implies about the relationship between words and the things they signify. Following Saussure, the relationship between a word (a sign) and the thing it refers to (the signified) is arbitrary and imperfect.

To be rendered thinkable, a thing has to be differentiated from other things, but it can never be completely so, as it needs their otherness to allow it to be itself. It is impossible to discuss or comprehend the world apart from through language, which automatically creates an insurmountable distance between things and their meanings. The meaning in language is incompleteable and unfixable. *Words* never completely fit *things*:

> 'the word 'quarters' thing, it tears it out of the embedment in its concrete context, it treats its component parts as entities with autonomous existence: we speak about colour, form, shape etc...as if they possessed self sufficient being"(Zizek, 1992; p51)

The divides that are made by words render things knowable, but because they are incomplete, and incompleteable, this relationship between a word and the concrete entity which it represents can never be more than arbitrary. This does not refute the existence of things beyond thought, but the possibility of understanding or communicating them without attaching meaning to them:

> "What is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive condition of emergence"(Laclau & Mouffe, 1983; p108).

This theoretical position also draws upon Derrida's view that the 'centre' in western metaphysics; that which all meaning is structured around, is turned into an absence in the poststructuralist turn, which leads to this above unfixity of meaning, hence discourse is everything, "a differentials system in which the absence of a transcendental signified, in terms of a privileged centre, extends the play of signification infinitely" (Torfing, 1999, p40).

This allows for the emergence of the term 'undecideability', the lack of stable meaning in anything:

> "there is no permanent, objective feature to be named by the name in question as the object only exists as the retroactive effect of the act of naming"(Torfing, 1999, p50)

This all may seem quite distant from an investigation into the changing role and construction of town planning as a profession. However, as the quote used to begin this section illustrates, Laclau and Mouffe's ideas are primarily for use to interpret 'real life' political and social struggles, not simply for academic ontological reflection. They provide a way of analysis and subsequently challenging dominant ideological discourse which purport that their articulation of 'how the world is', is natural. This is illustrated well by the following quotations:

> "Ideology constructs the real world in terms of a set of fully constituted essences and tends to deny that these essences are contingent results of political decisions taken in an undecidable terrain."(Torfing, 1999; p116)

> "no matter how successful a particular political project's discourse might be in dominating a discursive field, it can never in principle completely articulate all elements, as there will always be forces against which it will be defined"(Howarth, 2000, p103)

This illustrates how as the relationship between a word and a thing is imperfect, meaning can always be challenged and changed by an alternative articulation. Before outlining criticisms

of this theory, and how it has been used in previous research, it is necessary to define the key terms, both which have been already used and will be used throughout this thesis.

3.2.3.2 General Terms

This section further elaborates Laclau and Mouffe's work, by presenting some of their key concepts, namely antagonism, logics of equivalence and difference, and hegemony, and defining how they shall be used in this research. These terms are interdependent, and the definition of each is part of the definition of the others, as they work together to form the foundations of this conceptualisation of the world. This chapter does not attempt to fully classify and define their work, but illustrate further its use in planning research and clarify some concepts which will be drawn back upon in later writing, both in this section, the following chapter and the analysis and conclusions. Before discussing the key concepts stated above, the following quote helps clarify some of the terms employed to define these concepts:

> "we will call *articulation* any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice. The structured totality resulting from the articulatory practice we will call *discourse*. The differential positions, insofar as they appear articulated within a discourse we will call *moments*. By contrast, we will call *element* any difference that is not discursively articulated" (Laclau and Mouffe, 1983; p104, emphasis in original)

To explain this further, the quote used above, and reproduced below will be examined in detail:

"no matter how successful a particular political project's *discourse* might be in dominating a discursive field, it can never in principle completely *articulate* all *elements*, as there will always be forces against which it will be defined" (Howarth, 2000, p103, emphasis added)

The term discourse refers to the overall message of the political project, its total interpretation of a situation or event or phenomena. Articulation is the action of creating and broadcasting this discourse, linking together certain meanings at the expense of others. An element is one feature which the discourse seeks to articulate. If it is successful in doing this, it will become a moment. To give an example right-wing reactionary discourse about people seeking asylum may tie together elements of who these people are; what their religion and political beliefs are; articulating them into moments of 'mad mullahs' and 'fundamentalist terrorists'. In addition elements about a welfare/benefits system can be articulated into a moment around creating 'scroungers' and taxing those who work in 'decent jobs'. These together, and with other moments, can be articulated into a discourse of illegal immigrants, funded from the taxes of hardworking families, who pose a political, economic, physical and cultural threat to 'our nation'. From this example, it should also be possible to see how the unfixability of meanings can be used to articulate these elements into different moments which would produce a different discourse.

Having defined these terms, it is now necessary to move on to define the three central concepts of Laclau and Mouffe's theory. The caveat that these definitions are not a complete and rigorous definition and critical analysis of Laclau and Mouffe's work, simply clarification of the theoretical concepts will be used in this research.

3.2.3.3 *Logics of Equivalence and Difference*

The concepts of logics of equivalence and difference follows quite clearly from the above discussion about articulations, elements, moments and discourse. A logic of equivalence is the discursive articulation of moments, linking together different things to make a positive totality. A logic of difference is what this is not. It is the anti-moments, it is what is taken and denied from an element as it is articulated into a logic of equivalence; what it is, is what the other thing is not. It is a negative rather than a positive identity. Drawing on the previous example, English society may be articulated as hard working, Christian and non-randomly violent in a logic of equivalence. The asylum seeker's identity would be one which was other than this, a negative identity created in a logic of difference; not hardworking, not Christian etcetera. As said above, these are open to challenge as "neither the conditions of total equivalence nor those of total differential objectivity are ever fully achieved"(Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, p129) as there is always a necessary relationship between the 'inside' and 'outside' which can challenge any given position. In addition, "construction of a different system of equivalents which establishes social division on a new basis"(Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; p176) is possible. The prime divide could be rearticulated between Muslims and non-Muslims, with a logic of equivalence being adherence to all aspects of Islam, and all others despite their nationality or work status attaining the negative identity of difference.

3.2.3.4 *Antagonisms*

Antagonisms are the points of conflict between different logics of equivalence and difference, fundamentally about the redefinition of identity. They are struggles over articulations and attempts to stabilise meanings. It is clear that the examples of the two different logics of equivalence in the above section could not happily coexist as they have

hugely different implications for (social) policy and the structure of politics. Antagonisms are the fight over fixing of meanings and identities. The existence and actions of one will not let the other one's construction of identity exist. If people are treated differently in a given country because of their immigration status, their identity as part of the shared Muslim brotherhood is denied as they are not given equal rights to Muslims with a different immigration status. An antagonism is when these conflicts come to a head, as the below quote indicates (in a somewhat counterintuitive way):

> "it is because a peasant *cannot* be a peasant that an antagonism exists with the landowner expelling him from the land"(Laclau and Mouffe, 1983, p125)

The action of the landowner removes the peasant's identity by reinforcing their own; they own the land so can do what they like with it. Being removed from the land, the peasant can no longer be a peasant as the identity of peasant is one of being on the land. The possibility of antagonisms arise from the fact that identity of subjects and things are never totally fixed and whole. A peasant is not a fixed identity, it is a position made possible by, or denied by, certain logics of equivalence and difference. Not all logics of equivalence and difference provoke antagonisms at the same time or in the same place. Their rearticulation to alter what they include/exclude will provoke antagonism when identities are threatened. The possibility of such articulated logics becoming a (dominant) discourse depends of the success or failure of a struggle around an antagonism.

3.2.3.5 *Hegemony*

The concept of hegemony has been partially explained in the above section, with reference to the development of Laclau and Mouffe's theory. This section aims to further this, and

with reference to logics of equivalence and difference, and antagonisms. After doing this, the section moves on to look at criticism of this theory, and how it has been used in previous research and concludes by examining how this is a useful research concept for undertaking research about changes in the planning profession.

Hegemonic discourse is something aimed at by all political strategies, but is impossible to achieve, as meanings can never be finally fixed. It is an attempt to fix meanings of articulated moments together, to make all things uncontestable, to draw all things together: to achieve hegemonic discourse. A hegemonic discourse would be akin to one universal logic of equivalence and difference, so that all identities, positive and negative, were fixed, without room for any antagonism. The possibility of antagonisms, based upon the unfixability of meanings, denies the possibility of hegemony being achieved. Hegemony is the impossible end point of all discursive strategies. It is the fixing of unfixity, deciding on undecidability, the securing of a transcendental signified. It is a necessary, yet impossible aim of all discourses.

3.2.3.6 Criticisms

The criticisms levelled against this theory are largely criticisms levelled against most poststructuralist discursive concepts in general. This section briefly addresses the two interrelated accusations of idealism and relativism (Geras, 1987). Idealism suggests that reality is reduced to concepts. As the preceding sections indicate this accusation would seem problematic as the possibility that real prediscurive 'things' are not accessible is the basis of this theory, not that the things do not exist. The argument is not that discourse replaces things with concepts, rather things are only knowable as concepts.

Relativism is the criticism that denying any solid foundations of meaning leads to all meanings being given equal (moral) worth. In some ways this criticism is harder to answer. It is the case that poststructuralist theories' denial of solid foundations lead to no easy theoretical answer to questions of right and wrong. However, it is not the case that any preceding theories that claimed solid foundations were without challenge of partiality. It was simply the case that these were not acknowledged and universality was unsuccessfully claimed on the basis of a privileged few. The above cited feminist critiques of this provide a strong denial of this possibility. However, this criticism of relativism is largely immaterial to the way in which these theories are being employed in this study. This research does not aim to provide a new normative framework of behaviour for planning professionals, to set out what is right and what is wrong in professional action. It is an analytical examination of ideology and how planning practice is situated within this in the contemporary political climate. The lack of stable definitions strengthens analysis as it does not lead to an approach which undertakes fieldwork with strong categories, trying to fit what is found to them. The questions being asked here are 'how' and 'why' ones, not what should be.

3.2.3.7 Examples in Previous Work

The literature utilising these ideas in a context of critical analysis is still rather limited. This section focuses on four different examples which have put this theoretical perspective to use with differing amounts of success. Examples in Howarth & Torfing (2005) also use the general discursive premise in critical policy analysis, but the focus here remains on Laclau and Mouffe's concepts.

Norval (1994) uses the ideas and concepts outlined above to discuss the changing policies of apartheid governments in South Africa. She illustrates how the drawing of 'white' and 'black' identities necessarily implicates the other one, and hence can never be fixed forever. She sees this as leading to the crisis in government in the 1970s and 1980s which in turn creates the potential for different formations of identity:

> "A crisis...can be described as a situation in which the horror of indetermination has manifested itself. That is, a situation in which the dominant discourse is unable to determine the line of inclusion and exclusion according to which the identity of the social is constituted...(t)he space opened up by a dislocation is thus the space from which we can think the possibility of hegemonic re-articulation"(Norval, 1994, p133-134).

This illustrates the importance of seeing how the articulation of identity is used as a political tool of the dominant or ruling group to maintain their power. Further, it illustrates how alternative rearticulations of the same identity can undermine these attempts.

Bowman's (1994) discussion of differing conceptions of the 'state' of Palestine focuses on the "problem of imagining the nation"(Bowman, 1994, p142) informed by Benedict Anderson's (1983) concept of *Imagined Communities* and framed within the above theoretical perspective. He discusses how different contexts (intellectual diaspora, refugee, under occupation) provoke different antagonisms to the identity of Palestinian rather than a unified shared identity. He also show how that under occupation, Israel's actions necessitate the subordination of class, religious and occupational difference to the unity of Palestinian identity. This illustrates how identity is a political and contextual state, rather than natural or

fixed. What tenets of identity are important in any given situation can create or undermine a political movement. None are naturally more 'real' than others and hence their positioning is an ideological construction.

Salecl (1994) considers identity and nationalism in the former Yugoslavia, using concepts of equivalence and difference to illustrate the success of Milosevic's political programme, stating that he

> "has shown that elements which might have been considered part of a defined ideology can be rearticulated as entailing a totally new meaning"(Salecl, 1994, p215)

This is key to successfully redefining the social and political fields, in this case, after the collapse of Tito's regime. With a similar focus on the make-up of political movements, and the potential to realign all elements, Smith (1994) discusses Rastafari and new social movements. She illustrates the fluidity of these by stating "(t)hrough this weakening of essentiality of these elements (i.e. 'gender', 'race') the entire purpose of each social movement is called into question." (Smith, 1994, p172). This indicates the simultaneous political strength and weakness of fluid identity. 'Realities' can be crumbled in the face of unwanted political positionings, but the new positionings cannot have any more solidity that earlier ones. This further illustrates the importance of how identity and meaning are constructed, showing applied political use of Laclau and Mouffe's theory.

In a more directly applied field, Chambers uses these ideas to illustrate the creation of mutual interconnectedness of meaning of 'heritage' and 'the nation' in the field of tourism. She argues that

"heritage and the nation are not natural phenomena but are constructions, created to reinforce and reflect each other, and crucially, created within relationship of power/knowledge or within discourse"(Chambers, 2005, p242).

She goes on to say

"There is nothing in the mere existence of a building that implies that it should be conceived as an object of *national heritage*. A form is not organically joined with its interpretation or meaning. It is in this sense that the discursive and the nondiscursive are coextensive because it is only through discourse that the nondiscursive (the building, in this example) is apprehended in a particular way (as *national heritage)*". (Chambers, 2005, p250, emphasis original)

This illustrates both the possible use of this theoretical paradigm to concerns of public policy, and its conceptual fit with Foucauldian concepts of power/knowledge. It also shows how policy concepts, such as heritage and the nation, are as fluid and politically constructed as identity.

3.2.3.8 Hegemony and the Planning Profession

This theoretical paradigm provides new insights for researching the changing construction and meaning of the planning profession in the following ways. It allows for the planning profession to be researched without being a priori compartmentalised as a specified thing, seeing its boundaries as fluid, being simultaneously much more and much less than current articulations of it insist. This relates to the open definition of who is a professional used throughout this research, and explained in further detail in the following chapters. It allows

for the meaning of planning to be something greater than itself, part of a wider political project, putting the changes it is undergoing into a context of hegemonising articulations and potential antagonisms. Following this, it allows the research of changes to the planning profession to be part of this political debate. By seeing if and how the planning profession is being rearticulated by a hegemonising discourse, this research hopes to illustrate the failures and flaws within this, to show what else it could be. It can investigate whether the rearticulation of planning, which the context of change can be seen as, is creating antagonisms, and if so what they are and what identities are being threatened by them. For example, planners in the UK could not be planners in the same way as they are now if the 1947 Act was repealed, as the nationalisation of the right to develop land is central to their identity, as without it planning would not be statutorily necessary and therefore an entirely different 'thing'. This is in the same way as being tied to the land was central to the identity of peasant.

To do this, the link between the state and professions needs to be made more explicit, as do state ideologies. In combination, these render explicit different discourses of professional legitimacy; made up of different logics of equivalence which link together moments into a construct of what a planning professional is. These are tabulated below, and then used as the basis for the research questions discussed in the following chapter.

3.3 The Relationship between the State and a Profession

The basic thesis of this section is that the state legitimises a profession and this gives the profession a remit to act. In turn, professions legitimise the state by working to support its conception of society; the way a professional defines the problems in their area can either

reinforce or undermine the hegemonising articulation of the social which a given ideology presents. As the state is not omnipotent and omnipresent, the granting of a licence to operate as a professional opens the potential for action to be taken which is not in line with the state's hegemonising discourse. They can share or challenge the meanings ascribed to various things by the state, furthering or undermining its hegemonic articulations. Their power to do this returns to the first assertion of this section, whether the state has granted them a remit to act or not, and if so, in what form. This is important for planning as the current changes internally and externally to the profession mean that it is potentially a site for antagonisms to develop as its meaning is not fixed. This section develops from Chapter Two's exploration of the literature on professions, illustrating the relationships between professions and the state.

3.3.1 Professional Power and Problem Setting

When professions enter into a regulative bargain with the state they acquire "the potential for defining social reality" (Macdonald, 1995, p8). This means that they are legitimised to control knowledge, to define what a problem is and therefore how it is to be tackled, in the areas they have been granted jurisdiction. This legitimisation gives them the remit to apply academic ideas through means of professional action (cf Svensson, 1990, Macdonald, 1994). Professions legitimise certain types of state as that state legitimises their status as professions with the power/knowledge to act in a defined area. This idea is further emphasised by the following statement: "(n)ot only do professions presume to tell the rest of their society what is good and right for it: they can also set the terms of thinking about problems which fall into their domain"(Dingwall & Lewis, 1983, p5). This idea is supported by writing about the

planning profession itself; "(i)t is the status that society confers on certain types of knowledge and the restrictions placed on access to it that is important"(Rydin, 1998; p163).

3.3.2 Renegotiating Professional Remits

The legitimised monopoly of practice is dependent on the state system, and the state wishing to depoliticise a certain activity, to hand its management outside of what is explicitly its own political choice (cf Larson, 1990, p 25). The granting of remit to practice establishes mechanisms of accountability, validates certain knowledge and skills, allows for the construction and maintenance of occupational control and presupposes certain values. However, this bargain with the state is not permanent: the remit of professional action in any given occupation can be altered or curtailed depending on changing state ideology. For example, in teaching 'the bargain' was altered by the introduction of the national curriculum. Prior to this, teachers controlled "what they teach and how they teach it" (McCulloch et al, 2000, p13). Their legitimacy was altered because the product that the state wanted altered. In the 1940s there was widespread fear, induced by the rise of fascism in Europe, of the state having absolute control over what children were taught. By the 1980s the fear of teachers' autonomy and the wide difference in syllabus and attitude, exemplified by a Thatcherite fear of urban 'loonie leftie' teachers altered the terms and conditions of the freedom to define and create knowledge accorded to teachers. The articulated position of a teacher changed from safeguarding freedom of education to 'indoctrinating' children, as the state assumed that they were challenging rather than supporting its legitimacy. Here, the state withdrew its legitimacy from this concept of the teaching profession, rearticulating it as something needing the guidance of a curriculum to operate within, rather than teaching being about defining what was to be taught. The professional identity of a teacher became a point of

antagonism and was successfully rearticulated by the government of the time to accommodate the constraints of the National Curriculum. Arguably current debates about the role of teaching assistants (for example see Ford, 2006) furthers this antagonism.

As this example illustrates, the power accorded to a profession depends upon the times and the related ideological stance of the state. However, as long as an occupation is legitimised as a profession it has some power. Murphy (1990) argues that the relationship with the state has changed, saying that in modern times there is "a new governing class whose power is based not on the control of the means of production, but on the means of knowing" (p71). This illustrates that the state's power is not absolute and that professions hold positions in which they have the power to challenge the hegemonising articulations of a given ideology. As discussed in detail in the previous chapter, Causer and Exworthy (1999) argue that "the status and power of the profession may come increasingly to depend upon their ability to cast their goals and objectives in appropriate terms", (p100) in considering the increased use of managerialism and targets in the public sector. This illustrates both the importance of discursive constructions and the power of the state to designate the professional's role.

3.3.3 The State: Professional Pact

The pact between state and profession is important in all three major paradigms of sociological thinking about the professions. In the traditional approach, where professions were viewed as altruistic upholders of the morals of society, they were a counterbalance to the dominant form of state, but not an opposition to it. The state relied on professions as otherwise modernity would lead to unstoppable *anomie* (Durkheim, 1957). Their role was to pursue the interests that capitalism alone would not and hence provide some social cement,

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some values other than wealth creation, such as health, education and justice. This is alongside the fact that the view of the knowledge intrinsic to this paradigm is of positivist fact, the professional is a trained individual capable of finding the right solutions through correctly learnt application of veritable fact. This depoliticises these activities, as despite being sanctioned by the state the knowledge used and its application are argued as technically, rather than ideologically, correct. This links back to the arguments detailed in the previous chapter critiquing planning as a profession, because of this depoliticisiation. The profession's ability to act is through the state's legitimisation as the professions form part of its control and ability to govern. The traditional paradigm does not assume that professions exist teleologically and would do so without the state. The knowledge they use is, however, viewed as natural and true and free of contextual distortions. The state sanctions their practice, their ability and aims are not open for scrutiny.

The second paradigm, which forms the critique of this, highlights the *relationship* between state and professions, rejecting notions of the altruistic use of correctly learnt natural facts. By rejecting this part of the traditional paradigm, the position of the professional in society becomes one of occupational control; securing power and status for certain members of society by entering into this relationship of legitimisation with the state. The state legitimises, and hence depoliticises, certain activities by deeming them professional. In return, these groups support the running of the system by removing certain activities from political scrutiny and hence criticism as they have entered their domain rather than that of the state. This critique does not reformulate the way professions are viewed from the first paradigm, it challenges the positivist notion of knowledge on which it is based, and its concomitant altruism. Accepting some of the criticisms in this challenge allows for

professionalism to be reformulated in line with the theoretical perspectives outlined above, as they too are based on the rejection of positivist knowledge.

In contrast, the third, 'new', paradigm is an attempt at reconceptualising the concept of professionalism in light of this critique. There is an acceptance of the criticism of the positivist base of knowledge, and the relationship between what is professional and what is political is less clearly demarcated than the traditional paradigm allows. The status of professions is still legitimised by the state, but the basis for this legitimacy is different than it was in the traditional. This is partly due to the increased focus on public sector professions, as discussed in Chapter Two. 'New' professionals do not claim to have absolute control over natural knowledge, but the skills and ability to provide the 'product' for which the state has legitimised their practice.

In critiques of professionalisation in the planning literature, authors argue against the status of planning as a profession saying that it necessarily depoliticises what is essentially a social movement (see Evans 1993, for example). This criticism is based upon an understanding of professions in the terms of the first two paradigms. The 'new' understanding of a profession challenges this notion. It contains an acceptance that professional action is not neutral and the same action/decision can cause differential outcomes for different sections of society (undermining the notion of functional unity on which the first paradigm is based). If the goals of a profession as a social movement are the same as the state's goals, or at least can be articulated as the same as the state's, licence to practice can be granted. Using the idea of hegemonic discourse it should be possible to see whether the goals of the profession are the same as that of the state, and who has what power in shaping the meaning of planning.

This illustrates that professionals' ability to act are intimately bound up with state sanction. From this it is clear that the form and ideological basis of the state will affect the remit and hence actions of professions. It is now necessary to explore different forms of state ideologies and what sorts and variants of professions they legitimise, and are legitimised by. After doing this, the relation of each to the four tenets of professionalism explored in the previous chapter are detailed. As a caveat, the below presentations of three forms of state ideologies are oversimplifications, and that the state, at any given time, is more internally fragmented and complex than these allow, different parts having different, and even contradictory aims (Jessop, 1990, Foglesong 2003). However, the differences between these three forms of ideology are greater than those within them, so, although acknowledged as relevant; these internal differences are overlooked in the below section. The issue of the state not being monolithic is borne in mind during the later discussion and analysis of these ideas with reference to the case study research.

3.4 Ideology

Before presenting the different forms of state ideology which will be drawn upon in this research, it is necessary to provide a definition of ideology from within the conceptual terms which have been explained in the above sections. The below quote does so succinctly:

> "ideology constructs reality as a part of a totalising horizon of meaning that denies the contingent, precarious and paradoxical character of social identity. The construction of naturalising and universalizing myths and imaginaries is a central part of the hegemonic drive towards ideological totalisation" (Torfing, 2005; p15)

Ideologies are the state's version of reality, of current social meaning, and the way in which problems are conceived and hence tackled. This reaffirms the importance of the link with professions, and how professions both shape and are shaped by ideological attempts at hegemony. It is within a given ideological discourse that professionals are able to operate. It both enables and limits action. This is developed further with reference to the concept of legitimacy, but before so doing, the different political ideologies relevant to this study need to be specified.

This section will look at changes in state ideology in the UK since 1945. This is then used to draw up discourses of professional legitimacy stemming from each of the three periods identified. Although this clearly limits the research to the UK, the approach is transferable internationally. The relevance of this date is not just its common parlance as the beginning of the contemporary era, but also as the foundation of the welfare state which is still largely in place. As planning is overwhelmingly seen as a public sector profession, one, like social work and to a certain extent teaching, it can be argued that it was 'nationalised' in the post war period. Although there have been significant ideological, and some legal, changes since the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act, the basic framework of planning remains the same, making this a good starting point to explore the influence of ideology. It is important to note that planning had an important pre-war history, emerging for Utopian and public health movements of the nineteenth century. Through early twentieth century reforms, it became more established, especially in the cities (see Cullingworth and Nadin, 2001 for a comprehensive account of this). However, 1947 is an appropriate date to place the establishment of the contemporary planning profession, as the system was then brought under uniform state control.

In brief, the postwar period can be seen in three periods: consensus, crisis and post-Thatcher. In each case, the general political climate is discussed, as are the attendant understandings of professionals and underpinnings of professional legitimacy.

However, it is important to note a caveat about the meaning of state in this context. In the literature of the sociology of the professions, there is no agreed-upon definition of the state. Some authors explicitly refer to government and the legislature, some to a wider understanding incorporating society and social mores and others at various points along this spectrum; the state there being wider than parliament and encompassing ruling elites with money and power. For the purpose of this study the term 'state' generally refers to central government, but this does not rule out the relevance of the wider connotations it holds.

3.4.1 'Welfarism' and postwar consensus

In discussing the 1941 National Insurance Act, Page (2004) describes it as underpinned by "a decisive shift towards the principle of universality rather than selectivity" (Page, 2004, p148). This understanding holds true for more than just this act, and defines well the overall mood of the consensus era. The war had allowed ideas of planning and welfare to take hold nationally, not leaving them as a partisan issue (Dearlove & Saunders, 1984). During the 1950s and 1960s the welfare state was managed by both Conservative and Labour governments with little difference in overall outlook and aims. It is important to note that consensus was not about assimilation of all policies between the major parties, but the setting of certain parameters beyond which no-one would go. The two key aspects of these parameters were a corporatist style of governance, direct inclusion of business and the trade unions in policymaking, and a belief in Keynesian welfare policies (Kavanagh & Morris,

1989). Despite the near universal support for these policies, there was never any attempt to involve the public in the running of the welfare state (Leys, 1989). It was established by the politicians and run by the professionals, for the good of the people, but without their direct input.

There was a largely shared belief that this was the best way for society to be run, a fear that letting the market have more free reign would lead straight back to the problems of the 1930s. These decisions were overtly political, but because there was no mainstream vocal opposition to them, not contentious. The welfare state, governed corporately, lay in the realm beyond what was considered appropriate for political debate. This classified the decisions made by professionals working for the welfare state axiomatically as working for the national good and therefore their action was beyond reproach or challenge. Their actions, based on their skills and knowledge, enabled the public to have their rights as citizens fulfilled (cf Marshall, 1963). It was within this context that town planning emerged as a state activity, placing its professionalism in a universalist welfare mould.

The planning system and profession were an integral part of this: "(w)hen the Attlee government established this system in 1947, it was seen as part of a wider system of social and economic planning"(Reade, 1997, p84). The development of land was to be for the good of all citizens rather than simply those who owned it. This good was to be achieved firstly by the legal ruling of nationalising the right to develop land, and secondly the establishment of a national system of planning operated by trained professionals. The legislation created the space for planning practice and the goals for which the legislation was drawn up legitimised this practice. Without the right to develop land being nationalised, the

role of a professional planner would have been very different, as would the role of medical staff without the creation of the NHS. Doctors may have treated the same symptoms, but the range of patients would have been very different, and a concept of national public health would be absent. The goals which they both were now to serve were ones fulfilling the responsibilities created by the granting of citizen rights. The poignancy of this in planning practice is particularly strong. Without an NHS, doctors could still practice the promotion of health, albeit for privat(ised)e paying individuals rather than for the nation. Without the nationalisation of development rights for the good of the whole country, the role and potential practice of a professional planner is less clear.

3.4.2 Crisis and the New Right

The 1970s marked the breakdown of this broad 'consensus' in government. Here is not the place to go into the economic reasons given for this, or any more detail of events, however it is necessary to see how this changes the ideological underpinnings of welfare citizen rights and their related professions.

The role of the welfare state was being re-evaluated from both the right and the left of the political spectrum. It was criticised by the right as providing a culture of dependency, not active citizens. The very meaning of the term citizen is here challenged from the welfare understanding. It is an individualised entrepreneurial person, who actively makes their own destiny. From the left, the welfare state was criticised as not providing the equality which its notion of citizenship was supposedly there to achieve. The claims of citizenship rights may be being met by the welfare state and its professionals, but instead of being redistributive, from rich to poor, the more affluent benefited to a greater extent that the poor (Dearlove &

Saunders, 1984). Feminist arguments about paternalism and control also added to this critique (Rowbotham, 1980).

The dominant challenge was that of the New Right. In her governments, Thatcher attempted to dismantle citizenship rights seeing equity as unnatural, and therefore not an underlying aim (King, 1987). In line with liberal ideas about individualism, it was argued that the subject of welfare professionalism, the collective, was a misnomer. The policy idea of 'rolling back the state' was ideological not economic. It did not cut expenditure, just challenged the notion of welfarism: the providing for a collective universal rights whose aim was for the attainment of equity. It replaced this with the notion of the individual consumer and went about redefining the meaning of citizenship in this way (cf Prior, 1995). However, ideology can change much faster than bureaucracy, and it was not possible to dismantle immediately the multifaceted construct which the welfare state had become (King, 1987). Despite policies such as the 'right to buy' in council housing and compulsory competitive tendering for local authorities, which illustrate this political change of direction, institutions such as council housing, local authority provided school and a free universal health service remained.

This ideological shift left the welfare state professionals open to challenge as their legitimisation was based upon something no longer outside the realm of political scrutiny. The product of universal welfare rights was no longer seen unanimously as a socially good thing, and if, as has been argued, their legitimacy rested upon this, their actions and interventions could become seen as illegitimate. However, the attacks formed more of a challenge to, rather than a dismantling of, the role of these professions. The major themes

of professionalism all needed redefinition. As the welfare state itself had not been removed entirely, its operations were still needed, but it was no longer something which served a homogenous populace with the aim of achieving equality. In addition, the Thatcherite view of society was not held universally. Those who were opposing it were largely supportive of the ideological premises of universal welfare rights, notwithstanding the earlier comments made about left wing challenges to consensus politics. However, the Conservative party finally came out of office in 1997, heralding the end of an era, and a new direction of ideological belief about the composition of society, implicit human nature and the role of governance in responding to these factors.

3.4.3 Post-Thatcher and Third Way Ideology

The third era of postwar ideology is that of the New Labour governments. Self-heralded as rearticulating the gap between left and right and hence making both terms defunct, the Third Way ideology provides a rearticulation of the role of welfare, rather than simply a criticism of it. Although there have been good and convincing arguments made about this ideology and these governments as extensions to the Thatcherite project (Hall, 2003), it is important to consider the terms in which the Third Way defines itself. It sees both postwar Keynesian consensus and Thatcherism as no longer valid and places "great emphasis on creating an active rather than a passive welfare state" (Giddens, 2000, p33) with the attendant notion of citizenship altered likewise. A different interpretation of this is that "new labour has also sought to modify Attlee's citizenship model of the welfare state believing that a more explicitly consumerist ethos is now required" (Page, 2004, p155). This is not a rejection of any concept of welfare, but it is not the post war version. Coterminous with this notion is the following:

"Instead of continuing to regard the centralised state as the principal vehicle for the expression of collective interest, New Labour wants to encourage "localities and neighbourhoods" to take "more responsibility for the decisions that affect their lives" (Brown, 2003q, p267, in Page, 2004, p156)

The change between this and the postwar consensus view of citizenship is much more subtle than between the latter and the new right view. It does not slaughter the social on the altar of the individual, but it does not advocate one-nation universalism seeing this as leading to mediocre homogeneity at best, and dependency at worst. The idea of a 'Stakeholder Society'(Hutton, 1996) is key here. This is a political argument for a version of capitalism in which all are included and quickly became a New Labour buzz word to define their project and used beyond and without Hutton's original intentions. The ideas behind this can still be seen as forming the backbone of the contemporary policy changes outlined in Chapter One, and summarised well by the following definition:

"Stakeholder capitalism is distinguished from the deregulated market by its value system which is reflected in its vocabulary: 'social inclusion, membership, trust, co-operation, long-termism, equality of opportunity, participation, active citizenship, rights and obligations' rather than 'opting out, privatisation, the primacy of individual choice, maximisation of shareholder value and the burden of social costs." (Levitas, 1999 [2005 edition], quoting from Hutton, 1996).

These ideas link back to the debate in planning about who it should be for and how the public can and should be conceptualised, discussed in the previous chapter. These different values and articulations of the make up of society pose different challenges for professionals

working within this society than either of the previous two paradigms do. As Chapter One

detailed, these ideas materialise into policies emphasising 'communities' and 'localism'.

In addition to this changing state context, the position of experts and their relation to

politics is directly questioned:

> "Science and technology used to be seen as outside politics, but this view has
>
> become obsolete. ...Decision making in these contexts cannot be left to the
>
> 'experts', but has to involve politicians and citizens. In short, science and technology
>
> cannot stay outside democratic process. Experts cannot be relied upon automatically
>
> to know what is good for us, nor can they always provide us with unambiguous
>
> truths" (Giddens, 1998, p59).

In many ways this is no different than the belief held throughout this period: states have

always legitimised the expertise that suits their ideological understanding of the world. It

differs, however, in that it is the only paradigm to be explicit about this, the Thatcherite

perspective rejects the need for welfare professionals, rather than saying their expertise is

beyond politics. The bargain is therefore a more temporary one, and one in which there can

be room for more direct state intervention in professional practice. On the other hand, this

allows professionals to enter into the debate, defending their decisions on the

ideological/moral grounds on which they were made. There is less stability and certainty,

but more that can be won. The required product is no longer fixed in the same way. On the

other hand, it has the potential to silence their voice to one of a rule-follower, consigned to

the monotony of implementing government edicts. The role of the active

citizen/community member rhetorically is key to this;

"After years of paternalistic practice, and stoicism by members of the public in face

of lengthy waiting times for treatment, a more active consumerism may have impact

on service providers...(w)hether this will lead to greater inequalities in service use

...is not yet known."(Allsop and Baggott 2004, p41)

As the above expresses, what the impact of this will be is not yet clear. Jordan (2004)

follows a similar line of argument in relation to social services. He argues that the 1970s

social services were inefficient and rigid, and their one-size-fits-all mantra was not responsive

to choice (Jordan, 2004). He continues, arguing that the New Labour reforms

reconceptualise the relationship between the state and people and hence the relationship

between professionals and their clients:

> "the government made it clear that both sides were to be transformed, from
>
> bureaucratic providers and passive recipients to active, tutelary and enabling
>
> counsellors, and to self-responsible, motivated and autonomous agents (Jordan,
>
> 2004, p87)

It is much more difficult to be as conclusive about practice and policy which is current than

that which has passed and been subjected to several years of analysis in the light of

hindsight. However, it is clear that these three periods reflect different ideological views of

the social, leading to different articulations of 'social problems' and their posited solutions.

This leads to different legitimisation bargains with different professional groups in the wish

for certain social products. Third Way ideology is different to what has gone before: a

different analysis of society leads to the need for different solutions. These ideas are

developed further below.

3.5 Legitimacy

This section draws together the theoretical approach with the political ideologies, in light to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two, so as to conceptually frame this research and facilitate the creation of research questions. As the above illustrates, the relationship between the state and professionals is a complex one, which centres around the concept of legitimacy and is subject to constant redefinition. This section endeavours to explain the meaning and potential use of the concept of legitimacy in this study. Legitimacy is considered in relation to the terms used to analyse the literature in Chapter Two, namely occupational control, knowledge and skills, accountability and trust, and values, and through the concepts of hegemony and ideology.

Despite being acknowledged as a key aspect of political theory, the concept of legitimacy is surprisingly under theorised, and there is no systematic exploration of the concept in relation to professionals, in planning or beyond. The literature considers the legitimacy of governments or states, from the abstract and theoretical to the local and specific (for example see Beetham, 1991, Connelly et al., 2006).

In the context of this research, legitimacy means, at its broadest, what is licensed by the state for the professional to do. Different states' ideologies will articulate different logics of a particular aspect of the social, rendering certain things as viable and desirable for professional intervention. This includes concepts of the people, what is socially desirable in a given area, and what is possible to be achieved. At an abstract level this sounds very vague and nebulous, but it is necessary to explain without reference to a specific concept initially as

this illustrates the links between the above described theory and its practical relevance for this research.

The discussion above about the relationship between states and professions should illustrate how it is possible for a discourse of legitimacy to be made. However, each time the dominant ideology of the state changes, not all logics of equivalence are successfully rearticulated at all levels, thus leaving constructs of a previous ideology still providing temporary stability of meaning. For if new ideology was able to rearticulate all aspects of society, it would achieve hegemony. This is not possible as the discussions about fluidity of identity and meanings have illustrated. Even in the most totalitarian of states, control cannot be absolute, and in fluctuating western democracies, where state ideologies can be openly challenged by the presence of an opposition, when logics of equivalence are rearticulated, there will be much antagonistic challenge. Although the state's power grants it the strongest voice in rearticulating logics of equivalence and difference, this has to be mediated through locally specific contexts. With regard to planning in the UK, this will mean attention will have to be paid to the local political arena as well as the national ideology. However, local authorities' power over planning decisions is not absolute; as stated in Chapter One, much of the power lies with central government, but this undeniably adds another level of consideration to any research using these concepts in the field of planning. In addition, the state's legitimacy in democracies, however imperfect, is to express and act upon the will of the people, therefore public support for, or antagonism to, such rearticulations will qualify their success. Although the state can withdraw its licence from certain professions, this alone does not remove legitimacy as the retention of public trust is a key part of the identity of a legitimate professional. Conversely, loss of public trust weakens the claims of a

discourse of legitimacy, as public support is necessary for legitimate professional operation. The concept of who the public are is highly contentious, as seen in Chapter Two and discussed further below.

Further, the use of the concept of legitimacy can be expressed as a space to operate for professionals. This applies the concept to the individual professional and their work, as well as to a profession in general, as explained above. This idea draws upon Healey and Underwood's (1978) notion of action space and situates it within the above outlined theoretical perspective. The discourses of legitimacy structure the power and remit of the professional, but within that do not define every possible action as (in)valid. This is where the space to operate for the professional opens up. This is both within the discourse and beyond it, because of the limits to the state, and its need for public support as defined above.

Epistemologically, following Connelly et al. (2006), I do not see the meaning of legitimacy as being

> "settled in some final, objective way, but as one which is both continuously
> constructed through discursive processes and plays a reciprocal and highly political
> role in shaping those processes"(Connelly et al., 2006, my version p7)

The use to which the concept of legitimacy is put in this research, draws on the four themes of professionalism, and examines them in relation to the wider literature. This is, of course, a conceptual construction, rather than a natural occurrence. In addition, it is important to again stress the productive and constructive side of discourse theory. Although the always/forever fixity of meanings is denied, the operation of discourse is a constant

remaking of meanings. The concept of legitimacy is being constructed and employed in this research to explore its usefulness in presenting the link between professional planning practice and hegemonising political ideologies. The following section develops this with specific reference to the last sixty years of British politics, as outlined above.

3.6 Discourses of Legitimacy

Table 1 provides a summary of the discourses of legitimacy available to planning professionals in Britain based on the four themes of professionalism and the three dominant post-war state ideologies in the UK. This time frame is justified because planning as a largely public sector profession has only existed since 1947, hence further discourses of legitimacy based on previous political ideologies would not be relevant. In addition, the focus of this study is limited to the UK context for reasons of practicality and problems of international comparability. However, if this study were to be widened beyond Britain, the same method could be employed to create discourses of legitimacy with regard to state ideologies at the relative scale, be it alternative nation states, federal areas or wider unions. The state-professional pact is not only relevant in a UK context.

The categories used in this table are explained in more detail in the following section. The question 'who is planning for?' relates to the theme of values explored in the literature; asking who planning is serving clearly addresses the interest which the profession works for, and hence its values. The theme of occupational control is addressed by asking 'who does the planning?'. How tightly entry to an occupation is controlled, and how much of a monopoly it has on its remit define who is able to undertake the work. The two remaining themes, knowledge and skills, and trust and accountability fit more obviously with the

question 'what does the professional know?' and "how is the professional held accountable?"

respectively.

Table 1: Discourses of Professional Legitimacy

	Welfare-consensus	*New Right*	*Third way*
Who is planning for?	The universal (national) collective	The individual as a customer	The community
Who does the planning?	Professionals working for the state	Professionals working for clients	Partnerships which may contain professionals public, private and voluntary
What does the professional know?	The best way to achieve the product, how to see through competing interests and decide in the national good.	Whatever is relevant to achieve the client's wishes, including where necessary buying in other experts	Who to involve, what documents to refer to, how to listen, how to shape policies
How is the professional held accountable?	Through representative democracy and against a legal framework	Financial and Legal contracts	Through deliberative democracy and against a performance management framework

Each discourse has two roles. It links together articulated *moments*; this means presenting together 'things' which have been articulated, or had their meanings temporarily stabilised into a discourse. This is a logic of equivalence as explained above. Secondly, it draws boundaries to excludes that which it is not. For example, with regard to the first category,

the Welfare discourse's articulation of a universal/national interest denies local or individual interests as being what planning should serve. Following this, the New Right's articulation of customer relations denies the concepts of communities or collectives; Thatcher's infamous 'there is no such thing as society' is illustrative here, and the Third Way denies the universal and the individualistic. This may sound obvious, but it is important to remember that unless any of these concepts of the social are fixed forever, i.e. they really represent the real nature of humans, they, and their whole discourse are open to challenge.

The categories used in this table are quite general, to the extent that they could be seen as ambiguous. This is because the discourses do not allow them to be drawn up more specifically. They are posited as an open question to attempt to encompass the same *elements*, each of the four themes of professionalism. As Chapter Two indicated, these can be defined and approached in very different ways. The ideologies illustrate how they can be articulated into very different *moments*, specific concepts of the planning profession, each forming a different discourse of professional legitimacy. However, drawing these questions any more tightly would be to impose my own discourse. For example, asking 'who does the planning professional work?' for instead of 'who is planning for?' would provide very different answers. The same considerations have been employed in the drawing up of the other three questions.

3.6.1 Who is planning for?

This question addresses whose interests planning and planners claim to serve in each of the discourses. Each one implies a different concept of 'people' or the public, rather than serving a specific, pre-given interest group. A community is not the same as a collective or

universal and conceptualising the public in such different ways leads to different courses of action on behalf of the professional. A customer is different from both of these, as is its attendant professional action. It is important to note the articulation of a given concept of people/public is not a one-way process. The 'public' can also articulate their needs for a certain type of professional dependent on how they construct their identity.

3.6.2 Who does the planning?

This question demonstrates how different discourses of professional legitimacy actually have different subjects. Even the category of who is the planner is not a stable one in this investigation. The methodological implications of this are considered in the next chapter when discussing the research strategy. The point of this category is to further elaborate the idea of the state-professional pact. How the state draws up this pact will clearly affects what planning is or can become.

3.6.3 What does the professional know?

This question relates to what is considered professional knowledge in each discourse of legitimacy. The 'definition' for each of the discourses are especially vague, as to specify them further would need examples from actual situations. What, precisely, the professional knows for all the discourses of legitimacy will vary greatly by context. The general terms used here make more sense in the analysis when specific examples pertaining to these case studies are used.

3.6.4 How is the professional held accountable?

This question addresses how the ability to practice is maintained. The relationship by which the professional is held accountable is also the relationship by which they establish autonomy to practice. This category further details the state-professional pact. It more clearly situates the professional within a given state set-up. It is important to note that 'autonomy' does not mean anything more fixed than any other concept, it does not allow for the professional to be removed from the discourse. This situates professional autonomy firmly within political struggles:

> "if the identity of each movement can never be acquired once and for all, then it cannot be indifferent to what takes place outside it"(Laclau and Mouffe, 1983, p141)

This indicates that what being a planning professional means is not a given, therefore, it is necessary to engage in wider the social and political movements which will affect this, so it can be defended, or restructured.

It may seem a notable absence that this table does not have the category 'the product of planning'. However, the reason for this is twofold. Firstly, if it were to be defined generally, it would be tautological as the product of planning is achieving the aims of the ideology. On the other hand, if it were to be defined specifically it would be impossible as the product relates to every case, partnership, project development plan or development application. Secondly, the aim of a discourse of legitimacy is to fix professional action within a certain ideology. However, as the section above about the relationship between the state and professions explains, the specifying of the product is at the discretion of the professional. Hence, a discourse of legitimacy can be a tool with which a professional illustrates how their

action fulfils a certain logic of equivalence, if they are aiming to be legitimised within that wider ideological discourse. Although the theoretical paradigm adopted for this research denies the possibility of the world being knowable apart from through discourse, this does not deny agency; discourse creates agency and is created by agency. It, like everything else, is a discursive construct, and one created in opposition to the concept of structure.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the epistemological background for this research, and from this drawn a conceptual framework within which research questions can be framed. It illustrates how important epistemology is in social science research, how the way of conceptualising the world is not a philosophical distraction to the meaty content of real life research, rather fundamental to it at all stages. This chapter has explained the use of Laclau and Mouffe's ideas to researching changes in the planning profession. It has linked their idea of discourse with state ideologies in the UK over the past sixty years, and in drawing on the relationship between the state and professions, created a conceptual framework of discourses of legitimacy.

The next steps are to link these ideas back directly with some of the relevant considerations in the literature, and place these both within the general research aims to draw up research questions. Following from this, a suitable method and its attendant methodological considerations will be detailed, as will the strategy undertaken to achieve this. This is contained in the next chapter.

Chapter Four: Methodology and Research Strategy

4.1 Introduction

This chapter draws upon the background established by the previous two chapters, to focus

on how, practically, to address the research area. It links together ideas from both to create a

researchable area in which to explore these ideas. It situates them within the context of

change outlined in the introduction, and draws upon the concepts of new professionalism

and legitimacy to outline a way of investigating the meaning of these changes. The starting

point for this is based upon my previous research (McClymont, 2003) which found a

perceived divide between forward-based planning and regeneration work, and development

control planning.

To do this, two main research questions are drawn up. These questions address the

problems raised in Chapters One and Two in a form that makes them researchable in light

of the epistemological considerations raised in the last chapter. They are then clarified by

subsidiary questions which will be directly addressed in the analysis of the fieldwork.

The chapter then describes and justifies the methods which were used to address these

questions. In short, two case studies, one from either side of the control/forward planning

'divide' were chosen. They are described here, and in the following chapters, with fictitious

names to preserve the anonymity of the participants. This chapter explains why case study

research was deemed most appropriate, and how and why cases were identified and chosen.

It then considers the techniques of interviewing and observation. In this, it considers the

role of the researcher in the research, following from the anti-positivist critiques of social

science made in the previous chapter, considers how the analysis of this material will be undertaken, and finishes with considerations of the ethical issues raised.

4.2 Conceptualising the Changing Nature and Construction of the Town Planning Profession

The previous chapters have raised many related issues in relation to the changing nature of the planning profession. The aim of this section is to draw these together and bring out the links between the different aspects.

4.2.1 New Professionalism, Legitimacy, and Hegemony

The first aspect to be considered arises from the literature review, namely the concept of 'new' professionalism. As already stated, this is a nascent and under-researched concept, but one which must be explored when researching changes in a profession. To summarise, new professionalism encompasses a range of theoretical and empirical works which attempt to rehabilitate the concept of a professional in the light of the critiques of occupational control. This relates to how professionals operate, the people they involve, their use of power and knowledge and the influence of performance management regimes on their work. In many ways this concept of professionalism is akin to the Third Way discourse of legitimacy as facilitation and a partnership approach is central to both. However, it remains to be seen whether this is necessarily the case, whether all professionals operating in a new mode draw upon a Third Way discourse of legitimacy. This in turn relates to how well the Third Way discourse of legitimacy is fixing articulations, how strong are its attempts at hegemony. The previous chapter has clearly explained the concepts of discourses of legitimacy and hegemony. To put these together with the idea of new professionalism, and to further

clarify the research area, it is helpful to think of a metaphorical fried egg. This is not merely culinary fantasy, and will be drawn on further in the analysis. The yolk is professional operation, what professionals actually do. The white is discourses of legitimacy. They are intimately related but not the same thing, having distinct identities. In addition, the frying pan is the concept of hegemony. The pan is what makes the fried egg what it is. Without its structure it would be a runny mess on the red ring. The white and the yolk can be separated, and used without each other for meringues or rich pastry for example, however an egg is not whole without both. To paraphrase this out of the cookery analogy, the concept of hegemony is what structures this approach, it is necessary, but not something to be looked for, or interrogated directly. Professional operation does not have to be investigated alongside discourses of legitimacy, as is shown by the use of the concept in the literature. However, as argued in Chapter Two, this leads to a failed attempt at ignoring the political/ethical dimension of professional decision making. This parallels metaphorically with claiming the yolk is the whole egg. In turn, it is possible to investigate discourses of legitimacy without the concept of professional operation. However, this would fail to account for the productive power of discourse, its ability to make practice possible. In addition, it would limit the possibilities of investigating the potential of practice to rearticulate a discourse of legitimacy, or at least challenge a dominant discourse. Professionals may be more than the discourse within which they legitimise their action, but in turn this action is impossible without an overarching discourse of legitimacy. To sum up this discussion, the terms professional operation, discourses of legitimacy and hegemony provide an interwoven framework in which the research questions are drawn up.

4.2.2 Development Control versus Forward Regeneration?

To further explore these issues, and tighten the focus of the research area, it is fruitful to return to my previous research and the perceived divide between development control and forward or regeneration planning. As stated in Chapter One, positive professional attributes, such as creativity, were articulated as part of forward and regeneration planners' skills whilst development control planners were dismissed as monolithic bureaucrats. Although, as has been already noted, a divide between different ends of the planning activity has a long pedigree, this rearticulation took this further than before. The aims of forward planning accord with the Third Way discourse of legitimacy. This is alongside the claim that these planners are operating in a new mode. The attempt to articulate the two aspects together repositions the logic of difference, putting development control planning 'outside' this concept of professional legitimacy. If this articulation is successfully fixed into a hegemonising discourse, it alters the meaning and concept of the planning profession. This restates the importance, and interconnectedness, of professional operation and legitimacy, and why they both need to be part of research into changes in the planning profession. If development control practice can, too, be seen as new, the relation between this and discourses of legitimacy is exposed as arbitrary and politically contingent. The exploration of this divide is therefore not a capricious choice to limit possibilities of fieldwork, but at the heart of the potential redefinition of planning.

This leads to two different angles which need to be explored: *what is happening* and *why is it happening*. This is expounded to a greater degree in the next section with regard to the different levels of the research area. This provides a preamble to the research questions.

4.2.3 Levels of investigation

4.2.3.1 Professional Operation

It is necessary to consider whether the term 'new' professionalism, and its attendant characteristics of facilitation and managerialism are visible in the work of planning professionals. Particular regard is needed to the differences or similarities between development control and forward or regeneration planners. This situates the empirical focus of the research within the public sector; it is here that the context of change outlined in Chapter One, and the literature on 'new' professionalism have the most relevance. Also, it was from the public sector criteria that the case studies were chosen, as explained later. Within this however, issues around private sector practice emerge, and they provide a comparator to the actions and working of the public sector officers, and well as some interesting observations about their own practice. This provides the focus on the *what is happening* side of the research. A lack of focus on action has already been stated as missing from research in this area, both my own and more widely in the literature. As the previous chapter explained with regards to the concept of legitimacy, this is possible within an anti-positivist discursive epistemological framework. There is no assumption that 'new' professionalism is something real and attainable extra-discursively. However, as is illustrated in Chapter Two, there is much diverse and interesting new writing about professions in the literature, which can be drawn together as they share the tenets of facilitation and managerialism. By using the term 'new' professionalism as part of my investigative toolkit, its use in the field of planning can be explored, and further contributions to this academic debate can be made. In addition, as a researcher my interpretation of events and actions is all I can present. Being explicit about my use of the term 'new' professionalism and where this has come from illustrates how I am present within my analysis.

4.2.3.2 Legitimacy

Much of what has been discussed in relation to professional operation is relevant in the definition of the term legitimacy. The relationship between mode of operation and discourses of legitimacy is unclear and under researched. This research aims to investigate whether modes of operation are successfully joined into a logic of equivalence of professional planning legitimacy.

4.2.3.3 Policy, Ideology and Hegemony

The two above-explored levels of investigation allow for the analysis of this level. The concept of legitimacy should provide a two way anchoring point between professional action and ideologically articulated policy. It relates what professionals are doing to why this is being done; the *why is it happening* being the focus of this level of the research. This reinserts the research within the context of change and the querying of expert judgement set out in Chapter One. It explores the relationship between societal moods and daily work, the place planning and professionalism hold within this context. It sees changes to local government as being part of wider changes, and potentially affecting working practices. It is this exploration of the links between micro and macro processes which this research aims to consider.

4.3 Research Questions

With these considerations in mind, two sets of research questions frame this investigation into the changing construction of the town planning profession:

Set 1

- Is the planning profession being successfully rearticulated as part of the Third Way ideology?

Specifically,

- Is this leading to a division, in action and legitimacy, between development control and forward-looking or regeneration planning?

These overarching questions clarify the general focus of the research. To address them, the second set of questions will be used. These provide the steps which need considering to address the first set.

Set 2

- What modes of operation do professionals use? Does this vary by sector?

- What discourses of legitimacy do professionals draw upon? Does this vary by sector?

- Are there any challenges to the dominant discourse of legitimacy in any one sector or case?

- How does this relate to their mode of operation? Does operating in a new mode necessitate a Third Way discourse of legitimacy?

4.3.1 Set One

These questions endeavour to draw together the different elements which structure the problem and area for research. In considering the general idea of a time of change within the town planning profession, the focus of attention is on the political. It is essential to look

at where within political changes and struggles, the specific shifts in meaning and construction of town planning are located. Although the focus of this research does not deny the possibility and importance of influences other than dominant ideologies, these are shaped within or against the wider political arena. This is why the first set of research questions focus on ideological rearticulation. However, these alone would be too broad and unfocused to conduct a piece of research, hence the need for the second set of questions. These are subsidiary to the first set, providing the pieces which enable the first set to be satisfactorily and rigorously answered. The first set put the research into the context of policy, politics and hegemony, as theorised in the previous chapter. They take the daily work of planning professionals and place it within the context of political ideologies, providing the potential for critique of both how planning is being currently rearticulated, and of the ideology in which it is located. This provides insight for theories of planning practice and planning's place in contemporary British society.

4.3.2 Set Two

The role of the second set of questions is to illustrate how to, step by step, answer, or at least address, the main questions. They logically draw out the issues raised in the above section about the three levels of investigation, namely mode of operation, legitimacy and hegemony, and their relationship with each other. They provide the focus for analysis of the micro levels of planning practice and to gather insight into the terms used in structuring this research. They are the ones which deal directly with the concept of professionalism, but as the egg analogy in the previous section illustrated, I believe it is vital to tie this to wider political and theoretical concepts. Addressing the first of these questions will further the debate around the concept of new professionalism, providing both more empirical research

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and theorising of the concept. The second and third attempt to link how professionals justify and situate their practice within political ideologies. The fourth attempts to link these two levels of analysis, providing further insights into both and their relationship with each other. By linking these questions to the first set of research questions, the meaning of professionalism, as well as planning, is situated in a wider debate.

In relation to the question about challenges to the dominant discourse of legitimacy, further clarification is needed. This may relate to challenges between discourses, actively engaged in antagonism about what is 'real' professional legitimacy. On the other hand, it may relate to a withdrawal of trust by the public, which in turn challenges the discourse of legitimacy employed by any given professional. This does not necessarily mean that the public are articulating a specific alternative discourse of legitimacy, be it a different one of the three tabulated in the previous chapter, or a different one altogether from that which a given profession is articulating. It can simply be a challenge to that given dominant discourse. This also becomes antagonistic as public support, is necessary for the success of any of the discourses of legitimacy. This forms the basis for the analysis presented in Chapter Seven.

4.4 Research Programme/Strategy

It is now necessary to outline how these research questions are to be addressed. In short, two case studies were undertaken, one with a development control focus, the other with a regeneration focus. Within these cases studies, interviews and observations were undertaken, and related documents were consulted. This section considers the methodological implications of case study research, and how and why the specific case studies were chosen. It goes on to discuss issues around interviewing, and undertaking

observation. This is followed by a discussion about the ethical considerations of this research. The section finishes with a review of how the fieldwork will be analysed and presented.

4.4.1 Choice of Approach

To be able to answer the research questions posed in the previous section, a method which could provide access to both professional action and their discursive articulations of legitimacy is needed. Two case studies were undertaken as the basis for to explore the research questions. Two case studies provide the opportunity to explore and observe practice, and to contrast development control and forward or regeneration planning work. They allow for the in-depth exploration which is needed to examine the operation of discourses of legitimacy and modes of professional operation. Interviews or observations alone would not have provided the same depth as a case study approach; a multi-layered methodological approach suits a multi-layered research problem. Case studies provide a flexible approach to exploratory research, and a possibility for a variety of observations within one working environment (Yin, 1984). Criticisms of case study research largely come from a more quantitative and positivist background than the one that this research is situated within. The issues relating to this have largely been dealt with in the previous chapter in relation to the epistemological position of this research, or are raised below in the discussion of practicalities.

4.4.2 Practicalities

In undertaking the fieldwork, the following considerations were important when choosing cases. Firstly, to explore the development control case fully, it was decided that a complex

planning application being taken to public inquiry would be most suitable. This was because it would involve a wide range of actors; private developers, members of the public, development control officers and other council officers, all focused on a specific issue. All would have some experience of working with each other and within the system. In addition the inquiry itself was a public event in which planning professionalism was enacted, and contrasting discourses of legitimacy were likely to be articulated. For the second case study, a locally focused regeneration project or partnership was deemed most suitable. This is because it would provide the other extreme from development control. As with the public inquiry case, a specific regeneration partnership or project would present a range of actors all involved in the same issues. A case of this sort was seen as preferable to one of local authority plan making, as it would not be about following statutory procedure and widened the conception of the planning profession. As Chapters One and Two illustrate, this research does not focus on a narrow statutory local authority concept of planning, this has methodological implications which are discussed below. Also, it was deemed appropriate to explore two different cases rather than two aspects of one case to avoid personal and departmental conflicts of interest. It might have altered what people were willing to say to me, and their perception of my research if they knew I was also researching the other team, oppositions may have been deliberately sharpened or glossed over. It is possible the selection of one case study might have overcome some of the complexities of organisational cultural specificity in comparisons, the benefits of two case studies are stronger. It was also very unlikely that I would have been able to find one case study which provided all that I had wanted both in terms of events and practicalities.

In practical terms, the case studies needed to be accessible, both in terms of location and support for the study from members of staff. This led to an exploration of possible case studies which were commutable from Sheffield. However, cases in Sheffield itself were ruled out due my personal relationships with or knowledge of too many people who worked in related areas, and the likelihood that I would have prior knowledge of the case, and hence a preformed opinion. This does not mean that going beyond Sheffield, and my previous areas of knowledge would make me more objective. However, it did allow me to form opinions of a place and the professionals on the basis of this research study rather than anything else.

Another practical consideration in undertaking the case studies is the question of who are the professionals, and subsequently, who is to be researched. As is indicated in Chapter Two, the review of the literature does not provide solid boundaries to the planning profession. In addition, who counts as a professional in different settings is articulated differently in the three discourses of legitimacy, and it is therefore necessary to keep this definition as wide as possible, to attempt to see how practitioners define themselves and their skills in relation to each other. To begin this research with a closed definition such as RTPI membership, would make assumptions which are antithetical to the discursive constructionist foundations which underpin my approach, as the focus is planners and planning, rather than the professional institute. Hence, an exploratory approach to this definition was taken, within the boundaries previously set out.

4.4.3 Choosing the Cases

To find a development control case, a list of all the pending public inquiries for the next six months was obtained from the Planning Inspectorate. From this, all those within a commutable distance from Sheffield were shortlisted. This provided a total of twenty-three potential cases. The criteria by which this was narrowed down to one was based on the application of the following criteria: a case which was not too technically complex nor likely to be a 'terminal 5'[1] in scale and controversy; that involved local residents or the public in some guise; that was easy to get to and where officers were willing to offer information and accommodate a researcher. Although any member of the public is entitled to attend any public inquiry, this event was only to form part of the case study. It was necessary that I would be able to investigate the daily work of the officers within which this appeal was situated. After making initial enquiries by email, the only case getting back to me that met these requirements was that of Bridgate MBC, and an inquiry into the rejection of planning permission for 117 houses on the site of a former printworks. I initially visited the offices to meet the case officer and find out more about the inquiry in January 2004, returned in the following weeks to observe work in the office, then attended the one week of public inquiry sessions on the week commencing 17th February 2004. Interviews were conducted after the inquiry with the case officer, his manager, the landscape, environmental health and transport witnesses for the council, the appellant's planning consultant, the secretary of the Residents' Association, the local elected member for the site and neighbouring village, the council's planning consultant and the planning inspector.

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[1] This was the five year public inquiry into the building of a 5th runway at London's Heathrow airport, attracting huge amounts of negative publicity about both planning and aviation.

Finding and undertaking a regeneration case study followed a similar pattern. After undertaking web searches for regeneration projects, and looking at local authority websites, and asking colleagues and friends if they knew of anywhere appropriate, I drew up a shortlist of seven potential cases. The criteria on which I shortlisted these case studies was similar to the development control ones in that I wanted somewhere that was easy to get to and where officers were willing to offer information and accommodate a researcher. Also, I wanted a case which was not a direct part of a local authority, but also had direct and strong links, rather than a community based initiative. This choice was made so as to reduce the differences between cases and therefore render comparisons possible, and to involve a wide variety of actors. A shorter shortlist emerged in this case, as webpages gave more details of the projects and partnerships, and also there were fewer to choose between. I then wrote to all the shortlisted projects, outlining my interest in their work, and telephoned the ones who had not replied to ask if they were able to assist me. This time two potential contenders emerged. I first visited an East Midlands New Deal for Communities project in November 2003 to talk to their planning and business regeneration manager. In December 2003, I visited the Somersmeade Partnership in Manchester to talk to their Physical Programme Manager. Both cases offered much potential as case studies but I chose the Somersmeade Partnership as they were just about to begin drawing up their Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF), a long term planning document, the development of which would involve numerous different actors. However, after the first meeting I did not return to Somersmeade until June 2004 as this was most mutually convenient time as I was undertaking research in Bridgate, and more pertinently they were running behind schedule. I attended five Strategic Regeneration Framework consultation events in June and July, and a Physical Programme Group meeting in August 2004, as well as observing work in their

offices during this time. I interviewed the Physical Programme manager, the Partnership co-ordinator, the council's planning officer with responsibility for the partnership, a local community centre manager and community activist, the manager of the local *Groundwork,* the housing trust regeneration manager, a local councillor and the private consultant who worked on the SRF. The fieldwork was undertaken between July and October 2004.

Both cases were chosen deliberately to contain a range of public, private, voluntary and community sector actors, to widen their scope. However, as already stated, the focus of the research questions which led to this choice of cases was primarily on the public sector. The existence of other sectors within these cases allowed for a more in-depth investigation into contemporary planning practice, rather than being able to provide any rigorous insights into private, community or voluntary sector working. Further, both cases had few, if any, factors which made them out of the ordinary. Although the length and scale in terms of reasons for rejection of the public inquiry made it larger and longer than most according to the inspector, it could not really be seen as anything more than locally controversial. Bridgate MBC is one of just under five hundred local authorities in England and Wales, it is lead by a Liberal Democrat administration, with nothing that makes it particularly more unique than any other location. The site did not contain building or ecosystems of national importance, nor were proposals of such interest to bring in others from outside the locality. With the regeneration case study, although one ward in Somersmeade was rated high in the top 1% of the most deprived in the country in the 2000 Multiple Indexes of Deprivation (see ODPM, 2000 for details about this rating), the partnership was established through the same Single Regeneration Budget regime as numerous others throughout England (see ODPM, 2004b for more details about its history and purpose). Its setup and budget did not vastly differ

from other comparable organisations. None of this denies the specificity of the case studies,

but it also suggests that findings from them could parallel events and articulations in other

places.

4.4.4 Interviews and Observation: Theory and Making Meaning

The two main techniques utilised in this research were interviews and observations. These

were occasionally supplemented by consideration of written materials, which largely

supported or provided background to the observed events. In general, interviews were used

to examine discourses of legitimacy, and observation of practices and events to examine

professional operation. However, this divide was by no means absolute, as articulations of

legitimacy were observed, and the mode of professional operation was discussed in many

interviews. The two methods were used in complementary ways, rather than exclusively.

It is necessary to consider the theory of extracting, establishing or creating meaning in a

structured "conversation with a purpose" (Burgess, 1984, p102 in Mason, 2002, p225).

Using Franklin's (1997) three models of interviews: information extraction; shared

understanding; and discourse, I see my interviews as nearest to shared understanding, with

theoretical input from the discourse model. In accordance with the former I see the

interview as

> "a situation in which the interviewer attempts to gain understanding of how the
>
> interviewee experiences aspects of her own life and/or the world of objects and
>
> other persons …(and is) a process during which meanings are not only brought forth
>
> but sometimes newly formed…. Such understanding does not preclude applying a

theoretical framework that yields interpretations at another level from the interviewee's own." (Franklin, 1997; p102-103)

However, the discourse model allows for consideration of the input of the interviewer, they "contribute, intentionally or unintentionally, to the spirit and perhaps the substance of the dialogue and so may shape it significantly" (Franklin, 1997; p104). As already stated, this is unavoidable to a certain extent, but I did not actively wish to construct the meanings produced *in* the interview, more to understand the interviewee's constructions and then be able to analyse this further. As the above quote explains, this may well involve mutual meaning making rather than information extraction.

Another useful tool in the conceptualisation of creating meaning in interviewing is Plummer's (1995) 'continuum of contamination'. Although drawn up in relation to the telling of a life history, his demarcations are useful in all aspects of qualitative research. The continuum starts with 'pure accounts' such as original diaries, goes on to edited personal documents, in which the researcher only deletes repetitive or boring aspects of the pure material. Thirdly is 'systematic thematic analysis'. This is when the researcher draws themes out of the pure material and in relation to other social science theories, but still allows much pure material in the account. The fourth point on the continuum is when the researcher's own theories take precedence over the participants', and their input is used to verify what has already been thought through. The fifth and final point on the continuum is a researcher's own account, all theory with only passing reference to the participants, and no use of their actual material.

The importance of this continuum to interviews, and also observations (although how textually it would be possible to present a 'pure' observation is highly problematic) is further explained by the following:

> "The problem of analysis is hence the extent to which the researcher progressively imposes his or her 'theory' upon the understandings if the participant, or the extent to which the participant's own rational constructions of the world is grasped and apprehended in its purest form...Researchers...can legitimately move through any state on this continuum as long as they publicly acknowledge how far they are 'contaminating' the data. It is as useful to have 'raw' data as 'general theory'; and the researcher should therefore acknowledge the degree of interpretation that has taken place" (Plummer, 1995, p61-62).

I see this research as somewhere between the third and fourth points on the continuum. Although the research is guided by definite epistemological and theoretical foundations, these are not at the expense of listening to and engaging with the fieldwork. As stated in the previous chapter, the aim of discourse theory is to unsettle the notion of discrete and fixed meanings, rather than to come to an area with a definitive or normative framework and fit what is found to this. However, as this research locates changes to the planning profession within a political context, it is necessary to have some theory against which to review the fieldwork, rather than just scope for meanings.

These approaches have shown that to make some sense of what is said by the interviewee involves firstly, following Franklin's (1997) shared meanings during interviewing, and secondly, following Plummer's (1995), 'contamination' through writing up the

interpretations of these interviews. These ideas also apply to observations. There is even less possibility of a pure account here, and the way in which meaning and details are 'extracted' by the researcher depends on the mutual construction of what parts of the event are of interest.

4.4.5 Interviews and Observation; Recording and Practicalities

On the practical side, I tape recorded all the interviews apart from those with the case officer and the area manager in the development control case, and with the physical programme manager and the council's planning officer in the regeneration case. The reasons for this were as follows: the majority of interviews were tape recorded as I found it allowed me to concentrate on what the interviewee was saying rather than being overly conscious of ensuring that I had written it down. In all these cases I was given the consent of the interviewee to used the tape recorder. In the cases where I did not use a tape recorder, this was because I felt I had already, over the course of the research, built up too much of a rapport with them, and using a recorder would have seemed odd, and some of our personal relationship would have been lost. In all interviews, however recorded, I did not follow strict formula of questions. I generally started by asking for their reflections on the process they had been involved in, and also about their personal biography; how they came to be doing what they were doing. Although largely techniques to get conversations started, they also proved fruitful in getting interviewees to reflect on their role in a constructed situation.

The interviews were not transcribed in full, but detailed notes and quotes at length were drawn from them. As they were part of a wider case study rather than the research material

in its entirety, and as the form of discourse theory employed does not demand detailed linguistic analysis, full transcripts were not necessary.

In observations, tape recording would have been neither practical or possible, so during the Inquiry sessions, the SRF meetings and the PPG meeting I took detailed notes. During the SRF open day, as well as note taking, I helped some of the partnership officers set up their stall and carry boards and equipment to their desired location. In addition, I suggest this part of my research to be participant observation, however, it was so minimal that I do not consider in necessary to seriously enter into a methodological discussion on the subject. I felt that assisting in these minor ways helped build a relationship of trust, and also was a way of thanking the officers for giving me their time and access to their materials.

4.4.6 Ethical Issues

Although this research did not present any serious ethical issues, such as working with children or discussing illegal activities, it is still vital to consider its ethical implications. All research, especially social research, involves ethical consideration, or at least should do, as it involves constructing a picture of 'reality'. This, as explained in the previous chapter, involves the drawing of 'insides' and 'outsides', of repositioning of difference. This section considers who benefits from the undertaking of this research, who may be at risk and issues of anonymity, confidentiality and informed consent.

It is necessary to consider who benefits and who is at risk from this research at two levels. The first is that external to the research, the wider academic and professional communities. The second is internal to the research, namely myself and the people involved in my case

studies. As my doctoral study has been funded by the Economic and Social Research Council [ESRC], there is a duty that it will be of public interest as it has been publicly funded. In addition, as it engages with the meaning of planning professionalism, it should be of interest to the professional body, and related academic institutions which support the education of planning professionals. It is important that this research contributes to debates within these communities, and whilst not providing a justification of government policy, justifies its use of public money. How this has been done is discussed in Chapter Eight.

The ethical considerations internal to my research need further consideration at this point. There is no simple or easy follow code to achieve a satisfactory outcome for all parties in any part of the field of ethics, and ethics in research is no exception to this (Mason, 2002). In all my dealings with officers, members of the public and all other actors I was honest about the aims of my research, attempting to give enough information to allow then to give me their informed consent to take part. However, I did not explain my theoretical framework in any detail to any actor, largely as I was not asked about this, but also because this may have suggested things which they may not otherwise have considered. This was how I chose to balance the conflict between informing participants about my research, and not wanting to provide too many categories of my own making for them to either feel they had to fit into, or explicitly want to reject. I was explicit that I was undertaking a PhD, so I that would benefit from this research.

The issues of confidentiality and anonymity for participants has lead me to not name either of the areas of the case studies or any the people I have interviewed more than with a very general job description. The details given about each area are enough to give the reader the

information needed to understand the specificity of the case studies. As the aim of the thesis is a detailed study, with a limited readership, I have attempted to consider these conflicting interest, of confidentiality and specificity, in the way most suited for this medium of communication. However, I did not feel comfortable in giving the names of the area, especially in the development control case study, as I do not believe interviewees would have been as candid with me, if they thought what they said could be traced back to them.

The final issue which needs consideration here is the use of the material from interviews and observations. I am satisfied that it fulfils the requirements and responsibilities of being publicly funded and part of wider communities. What is less easy is being certain that the material is used in a way that the participants would see as appropriate, and that I have listened to all voices rather than falling back on my own pre-existing ideas. In many interviews, participants talked about issues which were clearly close to them, and important in their work, but not relevant to this research. However, for this thesis to simply provide detail of these interviews would lead it to fail in its duty to the professional and academic communities, as it would lose its focus. I have tried to balance these contradictory interests as best I can, and believe that the acknowledgement of this as part of the research is the first step in so doing. The position cannot be perfect, but aspires to find a balance between my ideas and analysis and the voices of my interviewees, as is discussed in the above section about interviewing.

4.4.7 Analysis

To analyse this fieldwork, the three levels of investigation, namely, professional action, legitimacy and hegemony will be drawn upon. Each case study will be presented and

discussed in turn, with the concepts of modes of operation and discourses of legitimacy examined with detailed reference to the events and articulations witnessed and interpreted. Each study is discussed in detail with reference to the working setup, the officers and other actors who featured played an important role in proceedings, and the surroundings in which the work took place. These are important both as way of background for the reader to be able to gain a better feel for each case, but also become organisation and working environment are important in shaping professional work. Subsequently, the two cases will be compared, again in relation to the concepts of modes of operation and discourses of legitimacy. This section of the analysis will also consider how the two concepts relate to each other, and whether this is different or the same in both case studies. It then considers challenges to the dominant discourses of legitimacy. This all focuses on addressing the second set of research questions. In the conclusions to this thesis, consideration is given to the first set of research questions, and the benefits and disadvantages of the conceptual and methodological approach taken. It also reflects more widely on the aims of the research and themes emerging from it, in turn considering what further studies are suggested.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has drawn together the conceptual ideas, background literature and the research area to provide a framework for undertaking fieldwork. It illustrates how discourses of legitimacy relate to the ideas from the literature about 'new' professionalism, and how together these provide the key concepts by which change in the profession, in terms of its rearticulation by the Third Way discourse, can be assessed. From this, two major research questions are posited, with subsidiary ones, which in turn guide how the fieldwork is analysed and evaluated in relation to the major questions. It outlines the research strategy

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and then raises issues of making or finding meaning in interviews, and the role of the researcher in this, and in the fieldwork more generally. This provides a guide to the next two chapters, as well as illustrating the premises behind the fieldwork. The development control case study is presented first followed by the regeneration partnership.

Chapter Five: Development Control Case Study

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the empirical details of the case study in a way which begins to address the analytical issues raised in the research questions. It provides an overview of the general working observed in the development control offices and presents the public inquiry in this context. It relates actions observed and arguments made publicly to those expressed in interviews. It begins by giving the background context to the case study area, then provides a history of the appeal case and puts this in the wider context of development control work in the borough. It then details arguments made in the inquiry and analyses the mode of operation of the practitioners and the attendant constructions of legitimacy.

For convenience, local authority, its elected members and officers are referred to as 'the council' and the developer and their planning consultant will be referred to as 'the appellant', apart from where there is a need to differentiate between their composite parts.

5.2 Background

5.2.1 Bridgate and Development Control in Bridgate

The case study local authority area is a relatively wealthy borough on the south eastern edge of a large northern urban conglomeration, and on the fringes of a National Park. It is a unitary authority, and hence has both strategic and operational planning powers. It borders two rural counties and falls into four parliamentary constituencies being split between one Labour and three Liberal Democrat MPs. This is reflected in local government too, the

Liberal Democrats have a large enough majority to be the controlling party. It has a population of over 291,000 with an unemployment rate consistently lower than the national average. The age profile of the borough is fairly similar to the national average and it is less ethnically mixed than then national average with 95.7% of residents being white as opposed to 90.9% nationally. It has a higher percentage of owner occupied properties than the national average, logically alongside a lower percentage of council and social landlord tenants. House prices by type are lower than the national average, being in the North, but higher than others locally. The town itself is quite small, but with most major high street shops. It is well served by public transport, having frequent bus services and a well developed suburban rail network, linking it to the whole conglomeration with shared fare subsidies and ticketing.

The council's planning functions are split into regeneration, which is in the chief executive's directorate, forward planning and development control which are in the Environment and Economic services directorate, alongside waste management and environmental health. Forward planning and development control both are part of the planning and transportation service. The development control team is then split into two area based teams, east and west, which cover the respective sides of the borough, and a support team which is there to cover sickness or increased workload. As well as the planners, both teams employ technicians to deal with household applications. Each half of the borough is then subdivided into four and one planning officer is responsible for all the applications in that locality. Each area based planner reports to an area committee of local elected members. These committees each meet once per month, and the development control planning officers' work revolves around this cycle. The role of these area committees is described by

the council as having decision making power over issues such as pavement repairs, public

rights of way and other local highway matters. They also decided on applications for the use

of parks, nominate governors to local schools and have powers to determine most planning

applications. Also they have a role in monitoring most council services, and making

suggestions for improvements. They are local democratic arenas in which people can ask

questions of their councillors. The council uses the area committees to consult with the

public and community groups and other associations.

This puts the development control officers' work directly into contact with the democratic

running of the borough. Bridgate's system is not dissimilar to most development control

services in local authorities in England and Wales. All proposed developments require

planning permission before they can be undertaken, and the role of considering these

applications is the local (planning) authority's. There are local variations in the guidance for

delegating applications to be judged by officers, and the exact committee set-up in a given

local authority, but the underlying status is the same nationally.

5.2.2 Development Control Work and Workers

The development control office is on the second floor of a new, fairly non-descript building,

just further up the hill and in the opposite direction from the town centre and the ornate

white Town Hall. As a member of the public, to access the development control offices and

officers, it is necessary to ask at the building's reception. There is a desk with a bell to

summon the attention of a receptionist if one is not present. On most occasions, the

receptionist was present, but often busy in conversation with another member of the public.

The reception area is clean and new, having been recently (re)furbished. It contains seats

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near the door, and two tables, big enough for four people to sit at each comfortably. The room is all glass down the side facing on to the street, and slightly tinted. At the end of the room is a glass office, so meetings can be held privately. Everything is in the council's corporate colours of turquoise blue/green. The area is well used with people reading applications or the UDP, or asking questions of officers and the reception staff. Planning officers come down to see members of the public if they request them to do so, to discuss potential and actual applications, and be given advice on how to read the UDP.

However, from the stairs leading up to the development control offices onwards it is evident that the building is older and only the reception area has been refurbished recently. There is a code entry lock on the door into a large open- plan office. This room contains both west and east area development control teams, and their support team. Above each desk, sellotaped to the ceiling, is the name and telephone extension of its usual inhabitant. The office has a feeling of bustle, the phones ring frequently and there is much talking. The desks are arranged so that each team is clearly differentiated.

In the office there are suitable 'props' such as sample sheets of bricks and roof tiles. There are posters listing the use class order and encyclopaedias of planning law. On all available surfaces there are the ubiquitous yellow application folders. Much of the planning officers' time is spent on telephone conversations. Permitted development rights, use changes and the following up of submitted planning applications are examples of the sort of things they cover. They are generally very clear at explaining planning rules in plain English.

In addition to this day to day work, other activities undertaken by the development control officers included attending meetings about getting funding for town centre regeneration scheme. One officer said he was supposed to go too, but he did not see the meetings as relevant to his work, nor did he feel he could have put much of an input into these meetings, so the manager went instead. He considered that the town centre regeneration group wanted development control input but that development control could not do this unless there are plans or schemes, which there are not at the moment. He happily said it is a management responsibility. When the manager returned there was much banter, eye rolling and talk about the regeneration team and its meetings in references to "piss-ups" and "breweries". She was about as positive about the meetings as the other planning officer was. As well as implying a general incompetence on the part of their colleagues in regeneration, there was a general feeling that such meetings are irrelevant to their work, and a waste of their time. The banter between the manager and the rest of the team continued to cover certain area committee chairs and well known vocal members of the public.

In the period immediately before the inquiry, all officers had received a monitoring form from the Chief Executive's directorate on which they were supposed to record who they speak to, for how long and what about. It was generally criticised as being unhelpful as the workload varies so much depending where on the four week committee cycle any given officer is. The appeal case officer also added that he has not had time to fill in the sheet.

Another officer was working on a planning application, entering data into a communal database with all current and past applications listed in it that all have access to. In general, the working atmosphere was jovial and chatty, for example, jokes made that seeking

injunctions against a kebab shop owner would lead to the officer in question being made into a kebab. One officer pronounced to the office at large about the application he had just done for a pigeon loft, saying "that's what I went to uni for- not any old pigeon loft, but a sympathetic one in the greenbelt!" Another officer then passed a message of praise and thanks to him from the pigeon loft developer.

Within this working environment and set up, the council's case for the public inquiry was prepared. This was almost entirely the work of the officer in whose area the appeal site was situated. He spent a great deal of time on the phone to the council's solicitor. The whole inquiry had created lots of extra work for him despite the council employing a consultant to actually present the case and write the proof of evidence. There was a small scene when a phone call from 'downstairs' (i.e. reception) was received saying a member of the public wanted to look at the Fordlow case file. The case officer was annoyed by this as he was using the material and did not want to be parted from the documentation. It then emerged that the member of the public who wanted to see the case file was a member of the Ramblers' Association, who had submitted a Proof of Evidence for the appeal and was therefore an official third party. The case officer then took the box of information down to meet her. She argued that Ramblers' Association had been denied a proper chance to look at the information. The case officer responded by saying that this was because the box had spent a lot of its time at the consultants.

5.2.3 Local Democracy

In addition to the general day to day working of the office, the development control officers' work follows a four week pattern around the area committee cycle, working to prepare

reports on applications which are going to the meetings for member decisions. An example of this was the committee meeting for the appeal area which happened shortly after the inquiry. The meeting was held in the committee room of the 1960s local library which is on the edge of a park. Everything seemed in good condition, there were no obvious signs of vandalism in the park or of the library fabric. It was closed, but there was a notice with the agenda for tonight's meeting on the notice board. However, it was not exactly clear where in the shut library the meeting would be held. On entering, the room is upstairs in the library and formally set out. There is a formal wooden chair (for the chair of the meeting) and a matching plaque on the back wall reading "Linton Urban District Council 1895-1974" with a list of past chairmen (sic). These two items looked slightly incongruous against the modernist architectural backdrop and local authority style furnishings. The room was laid out with three tables in an angular horseshoe at the front. These were for all the officials: there were six rows of about ten seats ordered in straight lines facing the horseshoe and nametags for all the councillors.

There were six councillors, all Liberal Democrat, and six members of the public present. They were all dressed very smartly, the four men all wearing shirts, ties and jackets. There was much banter between the councillors and the councillors and officers. The atmosphere was friendly and most people knew most people by name. There was a formal welcome from the chair to tonight's proceedings. She then asked if they agreed to accept the minutes of the last meeting as a true and correct record, to which all the other members shouted "agreed". They were then asked to declare any interests they might have. One replied that the person going to speak about job centres is his financial advisor as well as being employed by the Department for Work and Pensions. This was quite confusing as there is no such

item on the agenda for the meeting. It was then introduced as an emergency item. The chair directed the proceedings firmly and decisively, giving an impression of stage management as all other councillors seemed to know their lines. They discussed the proposal to close the local job centre. It was all very polite, no-one disagreed or spoke over each other. The next section on the agenda was entitled 'public questions'. This was not mentioned by the chair but no-one appeared to object.

Proceedings moved on to the application for area committee flexible funding. It was from the local allotment association who wanted money to better secure their allotments from vandalism. They said they were advised to come and ask here. The councillors made some in-jokes about 'thanks to leisure services for sending them (i.e. the allotment association) there'. They offered some contacts in the council where recycled flagstones are available at a very low cost and offer £1000 "as a gesture of goodwill", making clear that their entire budget is only £5000 a year. One councillor asked if it would be possible for the allotment holders to do a health and safely audit and therefore get some mainstream council funding 'redirected' towards them.

The next item was planning or "development applications" as it was titled on the agenda. The chair asked if any members of the public were there to speak about them. There were not. There were three applications; one for the resurfacing of a car park, and the erection of lighting at a church, the second for "conversion into a dwelling", the turning of a bungalow into a two storey house. The final one was for the conversion of a schoolroom into an office. In general, the language used by the development control manager in presenting the applications was notably different from that used by the councillors. The development

control area manager presented the planning items as the case officer was on leave. With the third application, where it was clear the councillors were not happy about granting planning permission, one asked is there "anything from a planning perspective we can do?". The development control manager answered that the parking standard in relation to floorspace were adequate, and that the council could not win on appeal about this and the parking issue was a wider one, and not limited to this premise in particular. The committee generally looked to the planning officer to supply a technical answer to their questions, which she generally did. There was a general informality about agreement to grant permission: there were no votes taken, and the committee was only formally asked about the first application. The pace of the meeting was very fast. It did not feel as if it were being done for the benefit of the public, but rather that they had the right to watch. The rest of the meeting was over in about five minutes. The whole thing lasted about fifty minutes.

5.2.4 Who are the Professionals?

Before detailing the history of the case, and the events surrounding the public inquiry, it is necessary to comment on the issue of who are the professionals in this case. As stated in the previous chapter, this issue is not one which has clear, preset boundaries, due to the epistemological standpoint of this research. The main part of the question here is fairly self-evident in as much as it is the members of the development control team, and not the members of the public with whom they are working. However, this category also extends to the other professional officers who worked with the development control case officer on the public inquiry case. There are two groups. First, it encompasses the private sector planners, working both for and against the council and secondly, the environmental health, landscape and transport officers who present evidence at the inquiry as part of the council's case. The

legitimacy of the latter is potentially shared, as they were presenting the case together. This is reflected on further in Chapters Seven and Eight.

5.2.5 Background to the Public Inquiry Case

As is stated in Chapter Four, the focus of this case study was a public inquiry into an appeal made against the decision of the council to refuse planning permission for a proposed development. The history of the application which ended up at appeal in February 2004 is long and contradictory, and versions vary depending on who is telling the story. This in itself is important as it indicates that conflict and differences, rather than any sense of consensus have been endemic throughout. The following provides a brief outline of relevant events and outlines some of the arguments which had taken place prior to the inquiry itself.

Discussions began in the summer of 2001, with the appellant making initial enquiries about the possibilities of an application for housing being given permission on the site of a redundant printworks. The village nearest to what became the appeal site, is located on the extreme south-easterly edge of the council's area. It is a couple of miles from both the borders with both neighbouring counties. It is in the steep valley of the river Werver, hills rising up beyond the main road and down to the river. It lies on the main road between two neighbouring small towns. This road is quite busy and does attract many lorries on longer journeys as well as local traffic. There is open countryside between both aforementioned towns and the village. The village is long and linear with a range of styles and ages of houses dating from the 1600s to the 1950s. The majority of the housing, both the pubs and the shop are along this road, with more houses climbing up the hill. There are about 160 houses

currently. It has two pubs, a post office/general stores, a bus stop, a church and a train station, which is off the main road in the valley bottom by the appeal site. Aside from the main road the village is quiet: much birdsong is audible and sheep are visible on the hillsides.

The site is in the valley bottom adjacent to the river Werver. The entrance to it is down the road to the station, over a bridge and the on the left. The factory buildings are partly visible from the main road but partly screened by deciduous woodland. It feels physically removed from the current settlement due to the lack of highway linkages and the gradients. The works' chimney is clearly visible from many vantage points. The building itself is a large one storey 1920s premise covering a large surface area. The appeal site is part of a larger area of the valley bottom which contains some currently operating industrial premises and former sports facilities. It does not directly adjoin any current residential dwellings.

The appellant wrote their own planning brief about the options for the site. This document was criticised by the council for only looking at the site itself not its relation to the neighbourhood, and deliberately making housing the only viable option. Also, the council argued, their development brief had no clout as it had not been consulted on with the wider public, nor had it gone to any formal council meeting. The case officer stated that he believed that there was some potential for development on this site; some small scale housing that took into consideration local vernacular and would not prejudice the existing neighbouring industrial works, but because the brief was drawn up by the appellant, this sort of scheme was not considered. This opinion was reiterated during the appeal by the council's planning consultant stating it was merely another means for the appellant to make their case, not something democratically approved or consulted on by the local community.

These feelings were reinforced by the Residents' Association who argued that the only course of action they could follow was to object to the application as it was, although they were not against any development on the site.

In January 2003 an outline application for planning permission to build 131 houses on the site was submitted. The Linton Area Committee voted unanimously in line with officer recommendation to refuse permission for the development on the basis of thirteen individual reasons. The appellant immediately appealed against the decision and the date of 17th February 2004 was set for the public inquiry. During the year between the refusal of the application and the inquiry, much happened. Plans for the development were frequently resubmitted, ending with a final application being submitted for 117 houses when it came to appeal. Very little was agreed upon, and a couple of weeks before the inquiry the two parties had not even been able to agree on how far the appeal site was from the nearest urban centre. Also during this time, Fordlow village residents formed a residents' association, set up at a public meeting organised to oppose this development. They acquired official third party status for the public inquiry, writing a proof of evidence which they presented, generally in support of the council's decision.

In the interim, the number of reasons for refusal was reduced due to negotiations between both parties and the subsequent withdrawal of some of the reasons due to lack of supporting evidence. A good example of this was school places: the education department had said there was no space at the school into which the catchment area of the appeal site would fall. However, to get to this school from the site, one would have to drive past another school which did have spare capacity. It is important to mention the issue of flood risk at this

point. As the site was located adjacent to the river Werver, the council had some concerns about its potential for flooding. This was supported by the Residents' Association who cited evidence of past floods in the village. However, in accordance with the advice from the Environment Agency, the council agreed that as long as slab levels in any development were raised according to this advice, that they would not consider flood risk as a reason for refusal. The Residents' Association did not agree with this judgement.

Also during this period, the development control team decided to employ a consultant to write the proof of evidence and present the case at appeal. The council claimed this was due to the pressures of targets and the lack of time of the case officer, however, the appellant did not agree. He argued that it was a convenient way of not putting the council's own development control officer forward in the inquiry, so they could not be held accountable for the council changing its mind about this application. He claimed he had been informed that the council would look favourably on this application, then once submitted refused to engage in any dialogue and rejected the proposals.

In addition, as part of the backdrop to the case preparations, the council's UDP was under review. In the new draft, the site area was designated as a *Major Existing Developed Site* (MEDS) in the greenbelt. This put some weight behind the redevelopment of the site, but the policy had not undergone full consultation nor had it been agreed by the elected members.

The appellant's team put proofs of evidence to the inquiry on planning, landscape, noise, transport and employment; the council on all apart from the latter. The appellant's team had

a different 'expert' to present each proof, from different firms and practices, compiled by the planning consultant. All, apart from the planning consultant, of the council's witnesses were council employees.

The inquiry lasted for six days, starting at about half past nine each morning and ending at about half past four with regular breaks in the morning, afternoon and for lunch. The first five days consisted of evidence being given and cross examined by all parties and the last day included an application for costs by the appellant and the conditions which the council would put on the application if it were granted. After site visits, it then took the inspector about six weeks to produce his decision. He dismissed the appeal, agreeing that the council's decision to refuse planning permission on this site was correct on the grounds of inappropriate development in the greenbelt. However, he awarded part costs against the council on the grounds that their evidence on employment issues and housing need were not substantiated. The following describes the process which led to this decision being made, and reflects on how this contributes to the understanding of the planning profession, given the framework outlined in the previous chapter.

5.3 Public Inquiry

5.3.1 Surroundings and setup

The inquiry was held in the council chamber in the large ornate 19th century white town hall. There were no signs up externally nor in the reception of the Town Hall to show that the public inquiry was going on but reception staff were there to provide those who did not work there with visitor passes after signing in. The town hall is a very pristine building, and emitted feelings of historic wealth and prestige. There were two large wooden doors to the

chamber, labelled, confusingly 'legal hearing-Werver Works'. The chamber itself was mainly made up of five tiers of horseshoe shaped benches in dark green leather with Bridgate's coat of Arms emblazoned in them in gold. They each had desks with microphones and speakers, each named after the councillor who usually sits there. Above this was a row of chairs (still green with gold crests) and behind that was the official public gallery, harshly differentiated by a fence and gate. Directly facing this is a very ornate raised green and gold chair with a heavy wooden desk both mounted so steps are needed to there ascend.

The witnesses and supporting officers for the council did not wear the Visitor stickers that the other members, both participants and observers, of the inquiry had to, instead they wore their work photo identity badges. The appellants did not obviously display their visitor stickers, or any other explicit forms of identification. Their unifying coding was the more subtle cut and style of their suits. The Residents' Association, as well as displaying Visitor stickers wore round bright yellow stickers to identify the group and their membership. All the groups sat with their own in the council chamber, the appellant on the inspector's right, the Residents' Association in the middle and the council to the left. These division remained throughout the breaks, less strongly with the Residents' Association who formed into smaller friendship or familial groups. On the first day at least, the members of the Residents' Association greatly outnumbered the other parties and sticking together as a group of fifty would have been difficult. The appellant's team all converged in the corridor, standing together in a close-knit circle, they also managed to find takeaway coffee, the source of which they only shared amongst themselves. The council witnesses remained in the chamber, largely coffeeless; although it seemed to be more naturally their home territory than that of the appellant. They also chatted more generally in breaks, whereas the

appellants gave the impression that their break time discussions stuck to matters of the appeal. Both the council and the appellant had boxes full of evidence and issues of well thumbed rule books, marked with corporate logos; this further differentiated them from the Residents' Association whose material looked distinctively more homemade. However, they did have an identity more strongly defined and upheld than simply members of the public. For example, they seemed to distance themselves from the woman who came in to present the Ramblers' Association evidence. She did not have one of their stickers, nor associated with them and there was no sense of shared working in the evidence or the presentation.

5.3.2 Structure of the Inquiry

The inspector opened the proceedings very formally, beginning by stating his name, qualifications and jurisdiction to preside over the appeal; permission of the secretary of state under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act. He then outlined the structure which the inquiry would follow over the ensuing week. All parties gave opening statements. The council presented each of their proofs of evidence in the following order: landscape, transport, noise and planning. Each of these was followed by a period of cross examination from the appellant's barrister and then re-examination by the council's barrister if necessary. This was followed by the evidence of the Residents' Association, followed by the same examination; but to a much lesser extent as they had no barrister to direct their presentation. The appellant then presented their evidence, again followed by the same cross examination. This structure was interrupted by a series of breaks, one in the morning, one for lunch and one in the afternoon, and evidence from members of the public who were not part of the Residents' Association, was fitted in around all parties' mutual convenience, largely at the ends of the days. Throughout the inquiry, the inspector was quiet, competently keeping

order over the proceedings, but did not dominate them. His position in the room made his presence felt at all times, but it was never clear what he was thinking.

However, before any of the formal evidence was given the outstanding issue of flooding was raised. After much complication, the outcome was that all parties were still waiting for the decision of the Environment Agency.

5.3.4 Opening statements

The opening statements, given by each party before the formally submitted evidence provided a good way to outline the arguments pursued by each of them. The first opening statement was that of the appellant. Their barrister began by criticising the value of the buildings currently on the appeal site. He argued that the only reason the council and the Residents' Association were arguing that the chimney of the mill was significant and characterful was because they did not want houses on this site. He went on to say that the mill was not on any national or even local list of buildings of significance or value for heritage and it is similar to numerous others in the region. He argued that this presents very special circumstances (and hence it was appropriate for development in the greenbelt to be allowed). He said that "while the aesthetic merits of the factory can be debated, it is fact that it is developed", simply because it is old, and has been on that site for a long time, it does not become part of open space. Leaving it as in its present state would be "underuse of a valuable brownfield resource". He argued that in its present form and use it is unviable, and that to measure unviability it is not necessary to market the site. He said the site had 'limited B2 rights' and industry is not an appropriate use for land in the greenbelt. He referred to the deposit draft of the emerging UDP, arguing that the policies do not stipulate employment as

the only use for that site, and that it is not likely to enhance their wider objectives, having a net effect detrimental to the character and appearance of the greenbelt. The only alternative to accepting this development would be to let the site decay. To sum, he made three points: first, that housing is the only viable use of this site; second, that the deposit draft of the UDP does not protect the site for employment; and thirdly that there is not empirical data gathered or presented by the council that this site is needed for employment, nor evidence of need for employment land in East Bridgate, or in Bridgate as a whole, only anecdotal evidence.

The Resident's Association made their opening statement next. It was much shorter than the appellant's and focused on the scale of the proposed development. They said they did not want to be accused of being NIMBYs, as they were not against any development on this site, but the impact that this proposal would have on their lives and environs would be vast, and this was why they were all present here today. They did not have a barrister, and their spokesperson did not stand up to make his opening statement.

The barrister for the council then made his opening statement. He had much less gravitas and was a less engaging orator than the barrister for the appellant. His opening statement started from a position of rebutting the claims made by the appellant. He did not agree with the logic that because the appeal site has buildings currently on it, that it must be redeveloped: just because it is brownfield, the proposed residential development is not inevitable. He poised the question of which development, the current or the proposed was likely to have more impact on the openness of the greenbelt, arguing that the current buildings, being industrial in nature have faded in and are part of the landscape. His

arguments focused around the inappropriateness of the current proposals, and not on employment viability.

5.3.5 The Council's Evidence

5.3.5.1 Landscape

The first witness for the council was a 'landscape project officer', holding a diploma in Landscape architecture, an HND in horticulture, had been chartered since 1993 and worked for fifteen years in the local authority. He said that he often provided comments on planning applications on landscape matters. He agreed that he had followed the methodology of the chartered institute of landscape architects in carrying out his landscape and visual impact assessment. Most of his evidence consisted in his reading from his proofs of evidence, guided by the barrister. He then was asked to refer to the pictures in the appendix of his proofs and to talk through what they illustrated. The whole process was long and drawn out, and moved along very slowly. The landscape witness was not very confident at speaking in this situation, and frequently went red. There was not a good rapport between him and the barrister, and for quite a while they lost their place in the proofs. The witness was describing the methodology he had followed to come to the judgements he was about to discuss, they being the 'desktop' and the 'walk over' approaches. He said that he had walked extensively over the area to assess its landscape character and judge the qualities of the Werver Valley and the potential damage to it that the proposed development might do. He generally made quite rambling statements such as 'there are trees in the view, but you can see the chimney' and that the current buildings are 'not intrusive in the sense of it being alien'. The landscape witness said that the proposed development 'could be a housing estate anywhere' and that the council have rigorously defended special

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landscape areas for a long time. The discussion moved to the screening of the development from existing buildings, they referred to specifics by the code number allotted to them for the inquiry: this was very unclear to anyone who has not got a copy of the relevant documents; this being most of the people present. He went on to disagree with the appellant's argument that the removal of the mill chimney would have a positive effect on the landscape quality of the site because it has historic associations with area and is part of the character of the 'peak fringe', he described it is an 'accepted and comfortable feature, valued by lots of people' and that it illustrates why the village was there in the first place.

The appellant's barrister was much more slick and a better performer than the council's. He made the landscape witness very flustered, starting his cross examination by making him concur that he had broken the guidelines of his own professional body by using a zoom in the photographs in his proof of evidence. The barrister then questioned him about the policies which protect the site and what development would be deemed acceptable. They argued about the character of the site and of the proposed development, and what is more detrimental to the surroundings and area in the context of landscape impact. The argument centred on whether the current built form was an eyesore or part of the local industrial fringe heritage, whether the proposed development enhanced or degraded the greenbelt, and subsequently whose interpretation of UPD policy is correct. The council's barrister tried to redress the evidence given, and 'correct' any part of the cross examination he thought he could by re-examining the witness.

5.3.5.2 Transport

The next witness for the council spoke on transport and highways matters. The general point he began by making was a complex technical one about different maps and the adoption status of about a metre of road. He was more clear and confident than the landscape officer had been. He looked older, and came across as more used to such proceedings. His evidence was constructed as more technical and less easy to understand than the evidence about landscape; it was all minimum and maximum widths for different types of roads. The barrister for the council made some joke about the 'little black book' of highway regulations. The fact that all this evidence was about safety as opposed to aesthetics made it feel more solid, have more weight and status. The appellant had a copy of the highways manual to which the witness is referring, the Residents' Association did not.

In cross-examination, the appellant's barrister began by using a similar tack to that with the previous witness. His first question rested again on the assumption that the council's policy was to redevelop the site for employment purposes, and that this would need the same highways access roads as for residential development. The barrister then moved on to access to Bridgate and the city beyond by bus and by train. They agreed upon the times of trains and buses from the village into the two centres, but not that this constitiuted a description of a regular public transport service. The barrister argued that the site was within the nationally given criteria of 'easy walking distance' and that it is a national policy goal to site housing developments near train stations. The witness argued in turn that the incline between the site and the bus stops removed it from easy walking distance, especially for those who are elderly or not able bodied. The next point the barrister raised was about highway safety. He inquired as to whether the council, alongside other local authorities,

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were moving from the rules of the 'black book' to risk based assessment, to which the witness grudgingly agreed, but stressed that the rule book remains the current way to judge highway matters. There was then a discussion about what is being realistic and what is being overcautious in relation to emergency access to the site. In the re-examination, this point was remade, then the inspector asked about peak hours for travel and working from home. This interchange provoked some murmuring from the Residents' Association.

5.3.4.3 Noise

The third witness presented by the council was their noise expert. He had a BSc in Environmental Health, a diploma in noise, was a member of the chartered Institute of Environmental Health and Acoustics. He had been employed by the council for six years in the environmental health department concentrating on pollution control and noise control. He agreed to these qualifications. The barrister directed him to read from his proof, which he did eloquently and quite loudly. He began by talking about the industrial units which neighbour the appeal site and stressed the frequency of deliveries, saying that the factories work from 6am to 10pm Monday to Saturday, and sometimes twenty-four hours a day and that there are no controls over them. He then said that they need and like this flexible working as they make their products on demand, and clearly this is not constant. During his evidence, the appellant's team formed a constant huddle. They talked to each other, leaning over and pouring collectively over documents. The council's team were much more separate. They generally did not sit together and just listened to the evidence, rather than going over papers. The witness discussed sites that he had worked on which were similar to this. What he argued was important was not simply the volume and hence measurability of noise, but its characteristics, the times at which it occurs and its duration. He claimed there

was a need to look beyond the single objective measure of a noise level. The levels of disturbance and annoyance caused by different types of noise need also to be taken into consideration. He questioned the possibility that annoyance can be numerically quantified, saying that, 'residents are not concerned about the numerical value of noise'. He said that the appellant's noise consultants have simply employed an objective measure of noise and ignored the human side of annoyance, and the fact is that residential development and industrial uses are not compatible. In cross-examination, this issue of the interpretation of noise was further discussed, in relation to the specific wording of the council's case and related policies. In arguing this case, the barrister had a list of highlighted points, which he ticked off as he went. There was no re-examination.

5.3.4.5 Planning

The fourth witness for the council's case was the planning consultant they had employed to present their case. She was introduced by her qualifications and length of experience of working as a planner. She introduced her evidence by saying it is "to be read in conjunction with that of other expert witnesses". She began by talking about section 54a and how development must be in line with the development plan; reading from her proof of evidence. She then talked about housing need, the planning implications of landscape considerations and the economic development strategy and transport issues. Her presentation got stronger and clearer as she continued. Much of the discussion in her evidence and cross-examination was about the interpretation of greenbelt policy; centring around the idea of 'very special circumstances' for development in the greenbelt. She started by saying look at the UDP and its policies on development in the greenbelt, and also Annex C of PPG2. From this, she outlined two issues. The first was that any proposed development should have either no

greater or less impact; the impact of the proposed development would be greater than what is currently there. The second was that any proposed development should increase the ease of access to the countryside; this development does not, she argued. It did not have positive landscaping feature nor did it contribute to sport or recreation.

The next issue for discussion was the weight to be attached to the Major Existing Developed Site [MEDS] designation the site has in the emerging UDP. The council team had produced a table of objections to the policy, the council's barrister saying this is 'just to assist you'; this was not part of any of the proofs of evidence. The appellant's barrister clearly was not happy about the emergence of this new information, but agreed to accept it. The planning witness argued that the objections to the MEDS policy listed, illustrated that limited weight should be given to the MEDS designation. The appellant's barrister was definitely not happy about this and presented evidence that illustrated the opposite, that the emerging UDP should be used as guidance for development control. He summed up by saying that it is now unclear how the council are treating the emerging UDP. This left an odd, tense atmosphere hanging in the chamber.

The next issue discussed by the witness was her sustainability appraisal of the proposed development. She talked about the 'day to day' accessibility of the proposed development and said that it failed PPG3's test of the ability to build sustainable communities. She criticised the appellant's planning consultant's view that sustainable development is just centred around the reuse of brownfield sites. She said that other things come into this, and that the proper approach to judging this is by using the regional planning toolkit. She argued that access to the site "cannot be considered a good public transport corridor". She then

went through a complicated calculation from which she concluded that the borough has thirteen and a half years' supply of housing. She talked about city centres "where urban renaissance is to be achieved", where the brownfield land to be developed would contribute towards sustainable development. She stressed the need for the region to work together, not to give permission for too much housing in Bridgate at the expense of renewal elsewhere.

The barrister moved to the evidence about employment. Unlike the appellant, the council had not employed a specific consultant to deal with this, so it became the remit of planning. She discussed policy generally, then outlined comparisons with other different yet similar properties in the borough. The next issue the witness discussed was open space: both the size and amount, and the type, location and style. As this was raised as the topic, the appellant's team rummaged through their papers. To sum up, the barrister asked her to conclude what her professional judgement made her think about this development in overall terms. She concluded that given all the evidence the development should not be allowed.

After a break, the planning witness finished her evidence by briefly recapping on the area which had cause so much controversy earlier, that of the status of the MEDS policy. She also discussed the cases in both her and the appellant's witness's evidence which had been drawn on as comparisons. The first main point of the cross-examination was about the issue that the council wanted the site redeveloped for employment use. The barrister asked the planning witness if she could talk about the range of rents available in comparative developments. She answered that she was not suitably qualified being neither an engineer nor a surveyor. To this he answered that she should be able to defend what she has in her proof; saying "it is incumbent on you to support your arguments". Issues about what sort of

development the council would like to see on the site were covered, featuring the state of the current buildings, and whether they should be described as a factory or as a mill. The barrister claimed that this building had nothing special about it which could not be seen across the surrounding urban area. He argued that the chimney may be seen as heritage, but for anyone wanting commercially to redevelop the site, it would be viewed as a liability and the first thing to be knocked down. The witness agreed that the policy stated that the site could be redeveloped as long as the redevelopment fitted in with other policy aims.

The next major topic was that of employment. The council's case here was thoroughly taken apart. The barrister asked the witness to show him how her analysis of employment issues for the site related back to the policies in the UDP. She could not. The barrister illustrated that the council's policies did not protect this site for employment. On the issue of housing supply, he argued that regenerating brownfield sites is more important than worrying about granting permission for houses over and above the borough's allocation. The witness countered this by arguing they are still part of the North, and oversupply of housing there may be detrimental to the urban renaissance in neighbouring major cities, saying "PPG3 does not delete the approach of PPG2". The barrister retorted to this, "I do not subscribe to the school of reading between the lines of policy".

The next discussion was about the idea of 'building communities' put forward in PPG3 and what this meant in relation to the appeal proposal. The witness and the barrister presented quite different interpretations, the latter saying that it was up to the inspector to decided whose interpretation is correct. The issue of what constitutes very special circumstances was discussed next. The barrister argued that PPG2 Annex C set out the development control

criteria for development in the greenbelt, not a definition of 'very special circumstances'. The witness did not agree. Their argument moved on to visual impact and the footprint of development, with the barrister saying that "you can't assume that housing and the dispersal that goes with it will be more visually intrusive just because PPG2 Annex C says it may". After this, the council's barrister re-examined the witness on the following points: the character of the appeal site; industrial heritage; the wish for a development brief promoting mixed use development for this site. The inspector asked one question, whether the proposed development was for the whole of MEDS designated site or not. The witness replied no, that it was it was only for part of it. This ended the council's evidence.

5.3.5 The Appellant's Evidence

The pattern of proceedings for the appellant's evidence was identical to that of the council, as were the topics covered, with the addition of a witness for employment. They also began with landscape but these observations continue from their second witness, giving evidence on highways and transport.

5.3.5.1 Transport and Employment

The witness was introduced as the director of a consultancy, a member of the Chartered Institute of Transport, a civil engineer who has been working in transport for eighteen years. He also began by reading from his summary proof of evidence. His evidence was generally technical and full of complex measurements. He summed this part by saying that in his professional judgement an emergency access road was not required. He also argued that the local authority guide, 'the little black book', on whose rules this judgement has been made, was out of date being written in the 1970s, onerous and overly prescriptive. In regard to

access to services and transport he stated that the development was within 600 metres of a shop and 400 metres from the station, this being within the recommended guidelines. It was also within the ticketing area for the wider conglomeration which he argued made flexible travel both easier and cheaper. He argued that the bus and rail links make the site more convenient for residents travelling from it to work than employees travelling to it for their jobs. He spoke about trip generation and flow of vehicles in technical terms.

In cross examination the character of the roads adjoining the site was discussed, as were train links to the local station. The route he suggested provoked a chorus of "no, no, no" from the Residents' Association. They were silenced by the inspector telling them that this is "inappropriate". In talking about the levels and adequacy of the public transport service, the barrister commented "That's your view and [their witness] has the same information and he expresses a different view". The earlier discussion about what is probable in terms of risk was continued, coming to no agreement again. As with all the other witnesses for the appellant, the Residents' Association also undertook cross examination. Overall, their questions were more like questions and less like making a prolonged point step by step as the barristers tended to do. The Residents' Association's spokesperson asked about emergency access, giving an example of a lorry stuck on an ungritted road. The witness replied by criticising the council's road maintenance, and says "I accept your local knowledge" but did not concede the point, adding "if it is a real concern I'd expect hard evidence not suggestion". She next criticised the interpretation of the train and bus services as being hourly to which the witness argued that he was referring to "an availability of bus services". The appellant's barrister did not re-examine the witness, stating "I don't re-examine a great deal". The inspector asked if there were "a number of geo-technical

techniques that can be used nowadays" for overrun on to a verge, to make what is road actually look like grass, to which the witness agreed. He also asked how long the distance was to walk from the bus station to the train station in the local town, the witness said that he did not know. A member of the Residents' Association answered that it was a ten minute walk, but was admonished by the inspector as he was only asking the witness.

During cross examination, the employment witness spoke about mixed use development, saying it is important that the "commercial bit does not become a financial albatross to the residential bit". He said that criticisms from the council that they have not appraised fully the option of a mixed use development are inappropriate as they have been given no indication as to what mix of what uses to appraise. He talked about the financial viability of different mixes of uses. The council's barrister said to him "I appreciate you are not a planning witness, but look at just one policy in the UDP", saying it stresses the importance of local employment sites. He agreed that there are reasons why people will like the site, but this does not make it commercially viable. After some more similar discussion, the proceedings moved on to the cross examination of the witness by the Residents' Association's witness on employment. He began by expressing the superior status of the qualifications and expertise held by the witness in comparison to their advisor who was just "a trained person who lives and works in the local area". He was generally under-confident and unclear, asking questions about the local area, drawing on specific examples of sites locally which are similar to the appeal site and used for employment. It gave the witness more of an opportunity to discuss his views than be critically interrogated by the Residents' Association. The discussion finished on the best way to access the road network from the site, and whether the motorways are too congested to be worth using. The inspector asked

two questions: about possible funding to develop the site and about similar sites in the locality.

5.3.5.2 Planning

The final witness for the appellant was also their planning consultant. He was introduced as having received a degree in Town Planning in 1981 and been practicing ever since in both the public and private sectors. He started his evidence with his rebuttal proof, and unlike the other witness did not read the summary of his original proof out, instead quoting PPG4 and criticising the council. The barrister asked the witness to express his views on the fact that the council claim that the brief prepared by himself should not count as it had not undergone public consultation. The witness said that as it formed part of the planning application, and as this underwent public scrutiny that it was valid. When asked about the council's interpretation of the sequential approach, he said "I am surprised to see the guidance interpreted so literally". The witness claimed that the council would see a greenfield urban extension as preferable to this development on a brownfield site. He also discussed open space/play provision, suggesting that the council had been unreasonable by not coming to an agreement on this matter before the appeal. This became a highly technical discussion referring constantly to abbreviated policy names, and sizes of development which 'trigger' the need for playspace. To finish he reiterated that the footprint of the proposal, measured in the terms of PPG2 Annex C, would be 32% of what is currently present. The council's cross examination began with the penultimate issue discussed by the witness, open space provision; the aim being to defend themselves from charges of unreasonableness. The council's barrister and the witness went through this very laboriously, until there was an agreement on what the SPG says and how it applied to the

site. The witness then asked why policy was not applied in this way to permission granted for 107 houses and flats on a council owned site in January. This case did not appear to be in anyone's evidence and caused quite an upset. It also remained unanswered as the council's planning witness was not allowed to reply due to inquiry rules.

5.3.6 The Residents' Association's Evidence

This section deals with both the evidence submitted by the Residents' Association; the group who formed the official third party, the Ramblers Association, who had also submitted a proof of evidence, and that of the public more generally: people who attended the inquiry to present their opinions of the proposed development. Although not chronological, this begins with the Residents' Associations' evidence. It was presented in the same style as that of the other two formal parties on the topics of employment, social infrastructure, transport and character. Their documentation was in plastic folders, consisting of leaflets and locally published local history books about Fordlow. They had diverse information, printed on home computers, gathered from libraries; personal and public, they did not have logos, corporate images and specified fonts or battered well thumbed rule books. Before their first witness spoke, the planning inspector gave a friendly preamble to the entirety of the Residents' Association's evidence. He outlined the order in which the evidence would be heard and that there would be opportunities for the appellant's barrister to ask questions after each topic. Despite this, there was the distinct impression that during the Residents' Association's evidence, neither the council nor the appellant gave what was being said the same attention they had given each other. The Residents' Association chair introduced their evidence by stating that they represent the majority of Fordlow's residents, that they are not against development per se but against this proposal as they want "a solution which is

appropriate and sustainable" for the site. They did not have a barrister to present their evidence, and each witness read out his or her own statements.

5.3.6.1 Employment

The first witness, on the topic of employment, began by saying he lived at Fordlow Hall and was a member of the Residents' Association. He said that he is a building restorer, but "I claim no expertise in this field I am going to talk about, apart from local knowledge". He sounded quite nervous and a little vague. The language he used was an odd mix between jargon and normal parlance. He described the site as "an employment use for local people". He discussed what he considered the local area as comprising geographically. The witness said that he contacted businesses near to the site, asked them to write with their views about this application and conducted a questionnaire as he knew that not all would have the time or inclination to express their own opinions. He then talked at length about the road connections from the site. He explained that he had rung up some local estate agents, pretending to be interested in renting property in the area in order to find out more about demand for local workspace similar to that offered on the appeal site. He said "it is the only way a lay man could gain access". Through doing this he found no ground floor accommodation available. He also argued about the appellant's figures and methods. The appellant's barrister did not have many questions for the Residents' Association on this topic, but wanted to find out more details about what they would like to see in this site. He mentioned PPG13, but called it "a document called PPG13" in this context.

The Residents' Association's employment evidence was supplemented by the opinions of three employers based near the site. The chair of the Residents' Association introduced

them as perfectly successful businesses with first hand experience of operating from the site. They all, in turn, said how much they liked the current working arrangements and would be damaged by the introduction of housing on the site.

5.3.6.2 Social Infrastructure and Transport

The next witness spoke about what they called 'social infrastructure' meaning facilities for the proposed residents. She asked "what will these children do?", referring to potential inhabitants of the proposed development. She said that there is no space at the nearest Catholic school, and that the doctors locally are full but as it is administratively hard to close lists, they have not done so. She said that the countryside and the fresh air and the birds are important to them, and hence this development was inappropriate, but this did not mean she was against all developments. She said that "some exclusive houses in keeping with Fordlow village" would be more appropriate. The appellant's barrister asked her why they have not come and discussed the sort of development they would like with them.

The transport witness introduced her evidence by saying "I've lived in Fordlow for fourteen years". She reiterated the point that the Residents' Association are not against all development, but against this development. She started by talking about cars, saying that there are currently 1.7 cars per household in the village and that just by having a station in the village, does not encourage public transport use. The proposed development, she said, does not provide parking spaces for a potential of twenty-four cars, based on the cars per household figures there are currently. She asked if this is against a UDP policy, stating "I'm not a planning expert, but it occurs to me it might be". She talked about public transport from a user's perspective, saying that buses are always late and unreliable, and less frequent

than the appellant's evidence portrayed. She talked about a survey they have done of local residents, 77% of whom use their cars to go to work. She finished by addressing misinterpretations of their evidence in the rebuttal evidence of the appellant.

5.3.6.3 Local Character and History

The witness who spoke for the Residents' Association on transport was also their witness on the character and history of Fordlow. She began by discussing planning policy, saying that the conflict seemed to be about guidance on greenbelt as opposed to brownfield guidance. She stated that the reasons for allowing greenbelt development were not present in this case; local services are not under threat and there is no demand for affordable housing. She said "we do not think it is necessary to cite every point of planning policy, as suits their argument, and it is up to you (referring to the planning inspector) to decide who is right". She argued that the spirit of PPG3 is meant for urban brownfield sites and wanted to give the inquiry "an insight into Fordlow" to illustrate how this is not therefore here relevant. She stated that Fordlow has been given lots of technical terms and definitions; it has been a village, a ribbon development, a place between two towns, but it is not just geography and topology, it is character and heritage that are important considerations. There are issues about community and the feeling of living somewhere which cannot be expressed by reference to policy. She gave a history of the village and the printworks. She then drew attention to the books and pamphlets they had with their evidence, saying, "they do not have to be entered as evidence, consider them as gifts" to the inspector. At this, the inspector said that he is not allowed to accept gifts, creating an atmosphere of slight embarrassment. She went on to argue that the proposed development "wouldn't check urban sprawl, it would deliver it". She stated that their evidence and arguments were "not driven by a

misguided sense of nostalgia" but issues of sustainability. To the developer, issues of conservation are "irksome financial burdens" she continued. She summed up her evidence by saying that the pivotal question is, does brownfield or greenbelt policy dictate this site's future? There were no questions from the appellant's barrister or the planning inspector.

5.3.7 Other Public Evidence

In addition to the formal Residents' Association evidence, the local Ramblers' Association group had submitted a proof of evidence. The witness looked very much the part, dressed in walking boots and wearing a rucksack. She read from her pre-submitted proof of evidence, arguing that her group often walk through the Fordlow area and definitely see it as rural and value the local built heritage. She said that "planning experts should come up with a brief of what should be done with the site". She said that the chimney is part of the local heritage whereas a housing estate would be alien, although it would merge into the landscape eventually. The barrister for the appellant asked her if she was aware that the council do not have the resources to prepare a brief, to which she answered, "no".

At the end of each day during the inquiry, the inspector left time for members of the public who wished to speak and could not attend at other times. He said that he did not want to hear the same evidence that the council had or would give, but wanted to give people the opportunity to say what they considered to be important. There was a mix of very brief statements, and ones that went on for over forty minutes, some people read from pre-prepared statements and others seemed to speak off the top of their heads. People talked about their experiences of living in the village, and about what made it special to them. They also discussed some of the arguments raised by the council and the Residents' Association;

about traffic, road safety and heritage. Issues of wildlife habitat and nature conservation were also raised, with scathing comments about policies designated to protect the environment. In addition to residents of the village, the local MP spoke against the proposed development.

In general, the inquiry provided a forum in which contested and different ways of knowing a place could be presented. Within this, different ways of knowing what was right to do with a given space emerged. It is from this, within the context of general daily work outlined above, that the next section begins to analyse the concept of professionals' work and legitimacy, based on the devices and concepts outlined in the two previous chapters.

5.4 Professional Operation

This section analyses the empirical work in the light of the first concept, that of professional operation. More specifically, it considers whether professionals can be seen as operating traditionally, that is to say with knowledge discretely controlled by themselves and above concerns of power; working autonomously, without consideration of how they are held accountable; and assuming this work is for some greater good than simple self interest, or money making. On the other hand, it considers whether their operation is new, work which has taken into consideration the challenges of the critique, but reasserts itself as professional, work which involves networking and facilitation, that operates within the context of managerialism. If new professional operation is found, then the questions of values, of the ethical/political gap in work will too need consideration.

Overall in this case study, there is no clear dominant mode of professional practice. On the surface, the mode of operation could be seen as traditional in the day to day work of the office; the 'non-expert' public ring up the 'expert' planners seek to advice. This status was asserted by officers answering the phone and saying "yes, I'm a planner" and presenting what could or could not be done, and was supported by the props seen in the development control offices. The traditional mode of operation was also reinforced by the inquiry. The need for all expert evidence to begin with declarations of qualifications and experience asserts a traditional understanding of professional knowledge, as does the fact that witnesses could not answer outside their area of expertise. Paramount to defining the development control officers' mode of operation as traditional, is the role of the inspector. During the inquiry, his judgement was frequently referred to as being right, the correct interpretation of contested policy and vitally the fact that the decision to uphold or dismiss the appeal was his.

However, when the daily work is examined in greater depth, this does not accurately reflect the full remit of the work undertaken by the development control officers. Moreover, much of their work can be seen as fulfilling the two criteria of new professionalism: acting as a 'network professional' and responding to the challenges of managerialism. As explained in previous chapters, new professionalism is not a denial of the differences between experts and non-experts, rather it is a reformulation of what these differences and two positions involve. Hence, the surface exhibitions of traditional operation do not undermine an underlying new mode. Before discussing this further, it is important to note here the issue of the private sector consultants. Both their modes of operation and their subsequent legitimacy were quite different from that of the public sector.

5.4.1 'Network Professionals'

Alongside the overall importance of working with the public, exhibited in the daily work of the development control officers, most of the officers working together on the council's team had a strong sense of working together as well as with the Residents' Association. Key to the planning officer's work was the facilitation of other officers and parts of the council to provide evidence to support the case, a bringing together of people to work for shared outcomes. This was seen as successful with the highways engineer and environmental health officer both being positive about the overall approach of the planning officer and the case. The highways officer said he worked very closely with the case officer on this application, and generally with the development control team and believed the council worked more successfully due to the formal closeness of the two teams. The working relationship with the environmental health team was also strong. The officer responsible for the comments on the initial application and the later writing of the proof of evidence described the relationship between environmental health and development control as a "brother/sister relationship". He said that although the two areas were controlled by "different legislation…at the end of the day it's controlling the same thing", adding that planning and environmental health were compatible because development control had to deal with the here and now but environmental health can look into the future, hence their work was complementary. Therefore, the development control case officer can be seen as having successfully networked between different occupations, he provided the point of facilitation to bring this case together. There is no real difference in their discourses of legitimacy, reinforcing the decision to keep the definition of who the professionals are fluid. This is furthered by his ongoing relationship with the council's planning consultant. Not only did

he act as a network point for the internal council staff, he acted as a network between the private sector and the council.

However, this facilitation had not been so successful with all council departments. Although a proof of evidence on landscape was submitted by a landscape officer to the inquiry, the working relationship between these departments was not very good, as is indicated below in the discussion of the importance of targets in development control's work. In addition, the development control manager expressed annoyance and disappointment about the sustainable transport team's attitude and lack of support, stating this was especially bad as they were in the same building and directorate as development control. She also said that there had been previous problems between council departments, for example, with education not applying for planning permission for new school buildings which would not have been deemed suitable. These concerns had clearly not been resolved, as the issue about school places had to be dropped from the reasons for rejection of the development and had caused much annoyance. The planning officer stated "you'd assume that if others have given you information that they'll be able to substantiate it".

Despite the problems indicated above, a renewed vigour to achieve joined up working emerged from the failure to be able to bring together all necessary parties for the inquiry evidence. This included the establishment of development issues meetings for senior managers, in which the aim was to harmonise corporate and planning priorities. In addition, the case officer said that everybody concerned will be looking at how the issues raised at this appeal can feed into the new UDP, especially with regard to employment issues as he felt that they were let down by the planning policy officers on this topic, having had costs

awarded against them on these grounds. However, he did emphasise the positive of this situation, saying that if they had not raised employment as a reason for refusal, it would not have been included in the new UDP. In addition to this, the case officer became a member of the council's mills strategy group, as there are many mills similar to the appeal site spread throughout the borough. He said that he had gained considerable experience from the inquiry which he did not want to see go to waste. Between council officers, the amount of work which can be described as facilitation is great. Even when not successful, it is seen as desired and having the potential to overcome many institutional problems.

As well as inter-council facilitation, the work undertaken by the planning officer included directly working with the Residents' Association and supporting the case they presented at the inquiry. The case officer said he had been "very naughty" as he had arranged for people from the three businesses situated adjacent to the site to give evidence during the Residents' Association's proof on employment. In addition to this, the highways engineer explained how he had assisted with the Residents' Associations' transport proof by "prim[ing] the locals and giv[ing] them photographs". As the highways engineer was not the appropriately qualified person to present the evidence on sustainable transport in the formal setting of a planning inquiry, the evidence had to be submitted in another format. The Residents' Association had received their formal status and therefore could be used to do this, but due to the rules of the situation this could not be done explicitly. This illustrates both the problems of needing to work with diverse persons in a limited timescale, and the ability of those involved to think laterally and get around the formal rules of the situation. As well as illustrating the mode of professional operation to be akin to the idea of a 'network' professional, this illustrates a potential difficultly which emerges more fully in the

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consideration of discourses of legitimacy, and their relationship with modes of professional operation.

Beyond the inquiry, the development control team's work included promoting dialogue between developers and residents. The team manager gave the example of one company who invited local residents to an event offering wine and nibbles to discuss potential objections to their proposal. In addition, she explained the new ways of working with large scale applicants in light of the best value targets regime. She said that previously, when developers had submitted large application that they were not entirely happy with, they worked together over a long period of time until the application was ready to be resubmitted. However, the timescale based targets altered this, so they suggested to potential applicants to submit an application, then withdraw it, so that it could still be discussed but would not look as though the council were taking too long to decide their application, and the developer would not lose their fee as they would be able to resubmit it free of charge once both parties were happy with the proposals. The development control officer stated frequently that the backing of the community was vital in his work, saying that he was pleased with the outcome of the appeal as it would strengthen trust between them. He also criticised the appellant's use of the MEDS policy as this was not from a plan which had undergone public consultation, saying "if the public don't like it not happening", stressing the importance of their views. The council's planning consultant furthers this line of argument during the inquiry, arguing that they wanted a properly prepared brief for the site. For a brief to be considered proper, it would need to involve the local community and gain democratic approval. She criticised the brief prepared by the appellant as just another

way of making the statement of their case, rather than a document properly considering the future of the site.

5.4.2 Managerialism

As well as the frequent occurrences of facilitation, the influence of managerialism in the work of the development control team was strong, presenting more grounds for the mode of operation to be seen as 'new' professionalism. Like all English local authorities, the development control team was subject to centrally set *best value* performance indicators. These consist of targets of the number of applications which have to be decided within a given number of weeks. The authority is then compared nationally and receives more or less funding depending on how well it is performing. These were seen as highly important, if not liked, by all those working close to the development control system. They were given by the development control manager as the reason for employing a private consultant to present the council's case at the inquiry; evidently changing their way of working. She also stated that they had changed the way in which they were able to work with developers, as was discussed above. These examples further illustrate how new professionalism can shift in response to the challenge of managerialism.

The appellant, however, saw them as something that the council strove for slavishly, and in so doing put quantity above quality; making the requisite number of planning decisions more important than getting the decision right, or than judging each individual case on its individual merits and working with the applicant to achieve a successful outcome. However, his application did not appear to have received the sort of treatment so described. The view of the landscape architect was equally critical of the development control officers' attempts

to meet the targets set by their performance indicators. He said, "I get the impression that they try to not involve us because they think it might complicate matters". This illustrates that managerialism does not necessitate facilitation at all times, and that decisions and value judgements are still made by the planning professionals. In addition to this, the landscape witness gave an example of the lack of policies which take into account the relationship between housing and open space, and how this has been detrimental to his work in a local park. The reasons for this he gave were a lack of joined up working between the two departments due to planners' target focus. Landscape too has targets, but these are largely reliant on the amount of grant funding they can secure, so do not influence their daily work in the same way that they do in planning.

In both these aspects of new professionalism, stark contrasts can be seen between the operation of public and private sector planners. The private sector consultants, both working for the appellant and for the council did not have to redefine their roles around managerialist targets. Neither of them worked with the public in any meaningful or direct way. The appellant's planning consultant did draw together his own team of experts to present the case at appeal, but this was not central to his role as a planning witness. These issues are considered further in Chapter Seven.

5.5 Constructions of Legitimacy

This section illustrates the different discourses of legitimacy drawn upon in the case study work and begins to consider the issues surrounding their usefulness and weaknesses. The aim here is to see how these constructions fit with practice, and explore any contradictions that may be exposed. The issues in this section are then explored more fully in Chapter

Seven in comparison with the issues emerging from the next case study. The following comments follow the structure of questions identified in Chapter Three, based upon the four themes of professionalism drawn from the literature. These questions are: who is planning for; who does the planning; what do the planners know; and finally how are professionals held accountable.

5.5.1 Who is planning for?

The recipient of planning was not clearly articulated at any point in either the inquiry or in the development control offices. It was also the case that in the interviews no-one explicitly said for whom the council were preparing and defending the case. In the general work of the development control office, planning officers worked for applicants, answering their questions and helping them submit their forms. However, this was not directly articulated as their client group. On the phone to a member of the public, one officer said the purpose of a particular policy was to "protect areas for the future, not just the present". This suggests that planning is for something general, beyond empirical, quantifiable measure, or beyond the wishes of any given applicant.

The only explicit articulation of planning being for a greater good came from the Environmental health officer, who speaking more generally said:

> "the local authority are the people who are trying to fight the corner of what is right, they speak to the local residents...it's always the local authority against the big bad developer"

The issue of whether planning is for a general good which necessitates that there are certain minimum standards below which nothing and no-one should fall relates to this question, and was of importance in this case. The following exchange between the council's noise witness and the appellant's barrister illustrates this. The barrister suggested that specific mitigation measures could be added to the buildings. Special ventilation measures could be added and that there are "techniques to avoid the necessity of opening windows". To this the witness replied that having these specially designed and ventilated houses does not mean that people would not want to open their windows, and that none of this would have any effect when people were in their gardens. The barrister then argued that we "shouldn't be over-paternalistic" and that people have different priorities and should be allowed to chose for themselves whether or not to buy a house. He said "we're all different aren't we" and "people should be allowed to make choices". This exchange reveals assumptions about what role the state has in protecting people and making places 'liveable', and how planning can intervene. This in itself is neither an explicit articulation, nor actually about planning, but it illustrates on what grounds planning arguments can be made.

Supporting this, the Residents' Association did not argue that they wanted the area preserved because they lived there, but for its intrinsic value saying this value was "not just because we live here, everyone is welcome". However, their status and ability to defend this bit of countryside did relate to them living there as did the council officers' willingness to work with them. This is reinforced by the ability of area committees to judge planning application, a power strongly supported by the local councillor, "as local people know best". Further than this, the view from both the Residents' Association and other members of the public was that planning should be about protecting the countryside and wildlife, although cynicism

was expressed about it ever achieving this goal. To a certain extent this was supported by the inspector's ruling that the greenbelt was sacrosanct.

The only explicit recipient of planning work were the clients of both planning consultants', namely the council and the appellant. Both private sector planners were clearly working for their clients and had no difficulty in expressing this when asked. Beyond this, the appellant saw "a great unfilled demand" for houses in the north, of which the ODPM "denied the reality for years and years" illustrating that this development would have benefited those looking for a house in the area. His view was that planning and local authorities have a duty to promote development. This also suggests that planning is for the future, but envisages a different future to that of the public and the public sector officers.

5.5.2 Who does the Planning?

Considerations of who does the planning relates to issues of occupational control. In this section, this is considered by discussing the officer/member relationship, both from the perspective of those within and outside that institutional arena.

Throughout the inquiry process and general daily work, the relationship between the development control planners and the councillors was central. Councillors and planners defined themselves with and against the other. Both officers and local members stressed the closeness of their working relationship. In interview, the local member described the case officer as "my Linton planner...I'm used to working with him". In conversation with the case officer both before and after the inquiry, he discussed his working relationship with the elected members of his committee. He saw the system as having both advantages and

disadvantages, the latter being too heavily relied upon and facing the moans of elected members, and the former being a close working relationship and getting a large amount of local knowledge. Their roles were seen as complementary by both parties, but not overlapping. The support and confidence of the committee was something that the case officer valued strongly. Before the inquiry he was concerned about losing the appeal, and hence losing their faith in his judgment. After the appeal, he felt that he had strengthened his and the council's image in the eyes of the committee and of local residents. It is clear from this that development control maintained a direct relationship with the mechanisms of local government, drawing its legitimacy from the Welfare construct of professionals working for the state. This was not the case with other council officers, such as the landscape architect and the environmental health officer, and as such is key to what is special about the legitimacy of this sort of planning practice. The special working relationship between the area officer and the area committee was seen at the area committee meeting, with the area manager commenting that she was apprehensive about presenting there, as the case officer had such a good relationship with his committee.

However, the role of elected member in the planning system was something that the appellant and the planning inspector commented on in interview after the inquiry, neither in especially positive terms. The Planning Inspector's view was more cynical than overtly critical, saying, "but what else can you do in a democracy". His views were therefore generally supportive of the Welfare discourse of legitimacy. He also added that he had "sided with the councillors not the professional officers" on many occasions, illustrating a blurring of boundaries between professional and lay knowledge and responsibilities. His

view of the relationship was that it is not perfect, but there is little else practically that could be done instead. Their roles are complementary and each need each other.

In contrast to this, the appellant's planning consultant was very negative about both elected members in general, and the current planning mechanisms. He stated that

"there are a very large number of members nationally who think their duty is to reflect the views of the electorate. That's half of their job. The other half is to make decisions that are correct…and a lot of local authority members forget that".

This suggests that the delineation between officers and members is not as clear as the case officer and the elected member in the council suggested it to be. Moreover, that there are 'correct' planning judgements which can be made aside from the views of the people they effect. This implies a different discourse of legitimacy is being drawn upon than that within the public sector.

In general, who the professional is, largely fits the Welfare discourse of legitimacy; the corporatist pact between politicians and practitioners. However, it is clear that the relationship is more complex and the roles are not discretely divided. The copious evidence of a close working relationship between officers and members, and officers and the public, suggests that the roles are not totally clear cut. This is far more nuanced that the ideological typology suggests. It also illustrates that the fit between modes of operation and discourses of legitimacy may be complex.

5.5.3 What does the Professional Know?

In addressing this question, three aspects to knowledge emerge. The first is general in nature and has two aspects: the need to be 'site specific' and the importance of formal qualifications and designations. The second the marked difference in emphasis in the private sector, and the third concerns challenges to this from lay knowledge.

The first issue to emerge in relation to what the professional knows in this case study is the site specificity of development control. The officers know about real outcomes, buildings and other developments that policy allows or rejects. They know how to take these decisions. This is seen especially clearly in the day to day work in the development control offices as the following examples illustrate. A member of the public rang up with a question about a regeneration project which was going on in the area of the officer who answered the phone. He told the individual that they will find out what they want to know by contacting the regeneration department. He said "we are site specific". He could not give a name or contact details of who to speak to in the regeneration department. One of the most notable features of this was the necessity for all work to relate to site drawings. One officer said, in relation to a working group on the regeneration of the city centre, that he did not see attending the meetings as relevant as he could not give development control input unless there were actual plans and schemes to look at. Officers responded to inquiries from the public in a similar manner, suggesting they could not make recommendations without specific plans. In addition, the appellant described his dealings with the development control team as "the nitty gritty of the application". The fact that the inspector judged the appeal site in largely the same way as the case officer, strengthened the legitimacy of this decision, and hence his ability as a planner. What he knew about a site specific outcome was

further legitimised by it being supported by a more senior colleague. This draws on the ideas of a collegial occupational control described in Chapter Two. There are shared judgements about how to act professionally, as opposed to managerialist, external accreditation.

This case study also illustrated that there was a right way to know the right thing to do. All persons officially involved in the inquiry had to be explicit about their qualifications to give evidence; this included the local residents whose local knowledge was theirs. The ability to know the right decision to take in relation to a given site was intimately linked to qualifications and status. At all times, the inspector was referred to as having the knowledge as to what interpretation of policy was the correct one; with comments such as "it is up to the inspector to decide" coming from the appellant, council and Residents' Association. Support for this style of decision making was given by the Residents' Association chair in interview who said that a decision of this kind should be made by "an inspector who is qualified and knows what he is doing".

The inspector described his own work as based upon principles of "fairness, openness and impartiality", and to make decisions. "I have to use my own judgement- it's common sense isn't it really, you know when a bus service is good". Beyond common sense and fairness he drew upon the legitimacy which underpinned all planning decisions, saying "only the person appointed by the Secretary of State can make that decision". This legitimacy is constructed through a Welfare discourse: professionals working for the state.

The work of the private sector consultants was notably different from that of the public sector employees. Their work was for a client, constructing a particular argument to suit that

client. The appellant discussed his role in bringing together the witnesses, saying "we have to have regard to the fact that any application can go to appeal". Their whole work is focused around bringing together and winning a case. This tightness as a team and differentiation from the others at the appeal was apparent, and reinforced by their dress and secret supply of coffee. However he was, critical of the council officers for taking the same approach, clearly differentiating the legitimacy of the two types of planning work, saying:

"they've got a professional job to do as well. They are not there to write the report that members or local residents want. They are there to write the professional view"

In interview, the council's planning consultant reaffirmed these differences, saying her work would have been:

"pretty much the same really, because which ever way round you are doing it, whether you are acting on behalf of the developer or the local authority you've still got to build a case up…and deal with the issues that are there, so there's not particularly any difference. You'd do that anyway, whoever you were acting on behalf".

She also said that the work she had done with the Residents' Association was not entirely out of choice

"I wanted to assist them as much as I could, but at the end of the day, we've all got time commitments, you can't always…do things for altruistic reasons".

This clearly differentiates her work from that of the public sector, and how what she is doing is made (il)legitimate.

The third aspect relating to constructions of what the professional knows legitimately relates to non-professional challenges to claimed professional knowledge in a Welfare discourse. The issue of flooding in the inquiry illustrates a range of issues. The assumption that the professional can know better than local people what is in their interests is clearly a contentious one in the general context set out in Chapter One. Throughout the case, the appellant and the council both agreed to the judgement of the Environment Agency, whatever this may have been, but the Residents' Association did not. They kept up their objections, and by the start of the inquiry the appellant and the council were still in meetings with the Environment Agency about how best to resolve this situation. Finally, it was accepted, very unwillingly and only following the threat of costs being awarded against the Residents' Association, that the issue was dropped after the necessary slab levels were raised higher. When presenting this news, the appellant's barrister made some condescending remarks about the non-expert nature of the Residents' Association's evidence on flooding. However, as was noted by the inspector in interview it was their perseverance on this matter that got the flood levels raised for the second time, and he considered this raising of heights of proposed housing to have a detrimental effect on the visual amenity of the site, saying "that left me feeling somewhat uneasy about the overall appearance of the site". Even after the inquiry had been determined, and the way they would have wanted it, the Residents' Association were still not happy with the resolution of the flooding issues. The secretary of the group in interview said that she did not agree that there was a lack of harm over the issue of flooding, saying "we have other land, why put people at risk?". This clearly challenges the Welfare discourse of legitimacy, and is discussed in more theoretical depth in Chapter Seven.

5.5.4 How is the Professional Held Accountable?

The keystone to professional accountability and autonomy in this case study goes back to the legal foundations of the planning system. The planning 'product' was shaped through debate about interpretations of policies, and their relative weight in relation to each other. The status given to these policies is from the rights of local authorities and central government to frame the ways they want to see land developed. Their ability to do this goes back to the 1947 enshrined nationalised right to develop land, assuming planning is carried out in the interests of a national or public good. Autonomy to decide is granted to a planning professional within this policy framework, which is held democratically accountable by the involvement of local councillors, as discussed above. However, this is not as simple as it may sound. Policy does not explicitly state what should happen on every parcel of land in the country; professional planning judgement does. This is where the underlying ideological base of professional legitimacy is key, as is illustrated in the policy based debates seen in the inquiry.

Despite the situation that both the appellant and council used the same policies to justify their cases, there was much debate about whether these allowed or prohibited the proposed development. The best example of this was the greenbelt/brownfield debate, which is detailed below. The issue of the relative weight of the importance of preserving the greenbelt, and building on brownfield land was one which formed a simple policy battle between the council and the appellant. The appellant argued that leaving the site in its present state would be an "underuse of a valuable brownfield resource". The relative weights of PPG2 and PPG3 and how they were to be interpreted in the light of each other and the light of the MEDS policy in the emerging UDP formed a large amount of the

planning debate at the inquiry with no positions of compromise between parties being reached. These issues formed the key to the inquiry with the inspector saying in interview when asked if one issue held more weight that others in judging this case "the answer is yes because the site is greenbelt...the greenbelt, current policy says, is sacrosanct" and continuing that PPG2 presumes against development "and there are not many other planning policies that do, in fact, I can't think of another one". The inquiry itself had the role of a *ritualised arena for making certain knowledge fact.* It was the vehicle for these policy debates to be resolved, and for their meanings to be temporarily fixed by the inspector. His autonomy and the way his professional judgement was held accountable are created on the same basis as that the development control officer, only at a higher level. Instead of being responsible for the 'correct' interpretation of policy to local elected members, he is accountable to the Secretary of State.

Through the way the different parties used their interpretation of policy, the different ideological underpinnings of their legitimacy could be seen. The council used policies in general to make assertions about their conception of the general good, as was seen in the evidence given by their witnesses, especially their environmental health officer. Policies codify unquantifiable notions such as a pleasant historic landscape, a good bus service and nuisance caused by noise. This is in contrast to the private sector professionals, both working for and against the council, who used policies more legalistically. For them policies could be used to allow the desired outcomes for their clients, if interpreted 'correctly'. They were a tool to use to achieve a desired end, rather than ambiguous definitions of a greater good.

However, it is no longer the policy-democracy framework alone that holds the professional accountable, or shapes their autonomy. The issue of financial costs is of importance too. The awarding of costs did not have as substantial a role as the interpretation of policy, but linked with the increased importance of managerialist targets and goals had power in shaping both action and constructions of legitimacy. The case officer thought it would be potentially damaging to his work if the appeal was dismissed but the council were held liable for costs. The financial penalties that could be incurred would be seen as undermining his professional judgment. He feared that he would lose the trust of his area committee as they would consider his judgement as faulty, this would be especially so if they lost money they could use on other local projects. On the other hand, costs shaped planning in a productive way. Having them awarded against the council on grounds of lack of employment evidence meant that they had to improve the employment section in their new UDP.

5.6 Conclusions

This chapter has illustrated how professional action in the public inquiry case study cannot be easily categorised in terms of its mode of operation or its legitimacy. There are times when the practitioners could be seen as operating through a traditional understanding of professional action, especially in the role of the inspector. However, much of the mode of operation of the council planners could be viewed as new, they are 'network' professionals and the influence of managerialism on their work is vast. In accordance with this, the ideological basis for their professional legitimacy is muddled. Although drawing largely from the Welfare-consensus discourse of legitimacy on which the basis for planning powers were formed, the role of the public does not allow it to be that simple. The public can, successfully, as in the case of flooding at the inquiry, challenge the views of the

professionals. Their work with the council in drawing together both proofs of evidence further blurs boundaries between expert and non expert in this matter.

Centrally to this case study, there is little agreement on who planning is for, beyond unspoken consensus on the nationalisation of the right to develop land being in the public good. This weakens claims of a Welfare discourse of legitimacy. The observations both from the officers and the inquiry illustrate that policy always has the potential to be contested when it comes to real decisions. This contested ground is at the heart of the working of development control work, as the constant refrain of needing to be site specific exemplifies. Development control is here not seen as dull, monolithic and something which could be undertaken by a trained monkey. It is this argumentative, facilitatory activity which needs comparing with the work of the regeneration officers, not the negative stereotype which is so often assumed.

Chapter Six: Regeneration Case Study

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the case study of the regeneration partnership. It too describes the background to the area and to the team currently employed on the project. By looking at their working it was possible to further critically examine the relevance of, and problems with both the concepts of professional operation; especially new professionalism, and professional legitimacy. This chapter begins by exploring the relationship of these two concepts to the work undertaken and the actors' accounts of their own and others' work. It generally follows the same structure as the previous chapter, and the differences reflect the differences between the cases.

6.2 Background

Somersmeade is a distinctive area of a large city in the North West, south of the city centre, and with wealthy boroughs to the East, West and South. The area, as it is today, was developed from scratch in the 1940s as a garden suburb, as social housing for those living in the slums of the inner city areas. It was all built at the same time and to very similar designs, giving the area a very uniform feel and a lack of distinguishing features. It is sandwiched between parts of two motorways. The area's southern end touches on an international airport. The area claims to be the largest council estate in Europe, although much of the housing stock has now been transferred to the management of a registered social landlord. The housing is generally low density, semi-detached and short terrace properties, with occasional flats and maisonettes dotted about. The place has the distinct identity of a town, rather than a suburb of the city, this separation is reinforced by the river and motorways. It

has its own bus station and shopping centre, both of which are in a poor state of repair. It does not have a train service; the rail line to the airport circumvents the area, going through the leafy suburbs before looping around to the airport station. There are frequent buses from the airport station to Somersmeade centre, which take about ten minutes. The airport transport interchange is very modern, clean and easy to use. The same cannot be said about Somersmeade bus station, an outside triangular arrangement of bus shelters and some fading listings about what buses leave from which stands.

Socio-economically, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivations 2000 (see ODPM, 2000 for more details), Somersmeade is among the 10% most deprived locations in the country, with five out of Somersmeade's six wards among the 5% most deprived and Abbotsville ward classed as the most deprived ward in England. However, this dubious claim to fame was lost as a result of the 2004 ward boundary changes, and subsequent abolition of the offending Abbotsville ward. However, the area still feels very run down with a large amount of closed and poor quality shops. There are not swathes of empty properties, but there has been much demolition of social housing and new build of private housing over the past six years. There are declining populations in all the wards which make up Somersmeade, except the one where most of this new private building has taken place. Demographically, unlike much of the main conurbation, the area's population is largely white, with a notable Irish population. It has a high proportion of people over 65 and under 18, and notwithstanding this, a low percentage of people who are deemed economically active.

6.2.1 The Somersmeade Partnership

The Somersmeade partnership was established by the City Council in 1997 as part of the Governments' Single Regeneration Budget [SRB] scheme. This was a funding regime, now ended, which began in 1994 and is best described by the following statement from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister:

"The SRB, which began in 1994, brought together a number of programmes from several Government Departments with the aim of simplifying and streamlining the assistance available for regeneration.

SRB provides resources to support regeneration initiatives in England carried out by local regeneration partnerships. Its priority is to enhance the quality of life of local people in areas of need by reducing the gap between deprived and other areas, and between different groups. It supports initiatives that build on best practice and represent good value for money. The types of bid supported differ from place to place, according to local circumstances. To obtain funding, organisations have to demonstrate that their bid meets one or more of the eligible objectives...

Under rounds 1-6 1027 bids have been approved, worth over £5.7 billion in SRB support over their lifetime of up to 7 years. It is estimated that these will attract almost £8.6 billion of private sector investment and help to attract European funding. The SRB is expected to involve over £23 billion from all sources of funding." ODPM (2004b).

The area classified as Somersmeade for funding purposes is part of six pre-2004 wards. The 2003 boundary review has reduced this down to five wards due to declining population. The total money received by the Somersmeade partnership from the SRB was £7,250,000 to be spent over seven years. On top of this, their work brought in £107 million from the private and voluntary sectors and £67million from other public sources such as the city council (for services such as highway improvements), Europe, the DfES, the National Lottery, and the Housing Corporation.

With this money, the wages for the staff were provided, consultants were employed to undertake community consultation and draw up an overall regeneration strategy for the area. Also, the Somersmeade Forum, a sort of multi-purpose public space, was substantially refurbished. This was the main tangible project from the SRB funded work. It included a visual makeover of the exterior and interior; the building now looking as if it had been built in the last few years rather than in the 1960s. It currently houses the public library, a sports centre, a café, a crèche and public meeting rooms. Before the refurbishment it also housed a theatre, but this was not replaced as it was argued that it was too underused to be viable.

The team continues to exist and work despite the end of the SRB money; it has now been funded directly by the city council, along with some *Neighbourhood Renewal Fund* (NRF) and assorted European money. The current work of the partnership focuses on drawing together the regeneration plan, the *Strategic Regeneration Framework* [SRF], to highlight the problems in Somersmeade and to suggest solutions. The team does not have the resources to put all the ideas into practice, but the aim of the document is to try to lever in private money and works, and to guide development and planning by mainstream public services.

The SRF is likely to be adopted as, or form the main part of, the new Local Development Framework's (LDF) area action plan for the Somersmeade area when this is created from the current Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

The fieldwork undertaken here consisted largely of attendance at public meetings linked to the SRF consultation. The partnership aimed to bring the SRF presentation to pre-existing meetings, rather than to try to set up separate public meetings. In addition to the ones attended, the SRF was presented to tenants' and residents' associations, school boards and parents, church groups, and disabled people's support groups. They were held both in the day time and in the evening. Over two hundred group were identified, which were then narrowed down (how this was done is unclear), and an offer was made to present the SRF at one of their meetings. In addition to these presentations, an open day with an open meeting in the evening was held to try to attract more people. These are detailed in the events section below. It is worth noting here that unlike in the previous case study, the 'story' of this case study is without contestation. This immediately sets a very different tone to the working environment.

6.2.2 Partnership Officers and Partners

The team currently employs about twenty people. It was not possible to get a precise number, as officers such as ward co-ordination support officers who work in the team and are located in the partnership offices but also liaise directly with members and officers from other parts of the council on work outside the remit of the partnership. In addition, some officers, such as performance monitoring officers and ITC officers, who work in the team also work more generally for the city council. In these cases, Somersmeade is part of their

remit, but not all of it. These boundaries have become more blurred since the end of the SRB programme, but close joint working was always undertaken. Directly underneath the coordinator, there are three principle regeneration officers, one for each major area of the team's work. These are economic regeneration, community and social regeneration and the physical programme. The first and third of these have project development officers working below them, the second has four separate posts, namely a children's and young persons' coordinator, a community safety coordinator, a senior regeneration officer and a health coordinator. These work alongside the ward coordination support officers and administrative and financial teams. In addition to these, whilst I was there they had a graduate trainee from the city council working with them.

The partnership worked very closely with a number of other bodies, public, private, voluntary and community, who also work in the Somersmeade area. The following is not supposed to be an exhaustive list, as some groups are more permanent than others and some only involved in very specific issues, but to give an example of some of the other agencies involved in the work of regeneration in Somersmeade and also to clarify some groups mentioned later. Throughout their history and foreseeable future, the Partnership work very closely with the city council, although whether they can really be called a partner is a moot point as the officers are employed by the city council, and were even under SRB funding. The Partnership work with: local schools and colleges and the education directorate; with the housing trust that has taken over much of the council housing in the area in a stock transfer; with the local *Groundwork*, a national environmental charity; the private company that owns and manages the town centre in Somersmeade; the NHS locally; the airport; and local community centres. In addition, they work with a group of local businesses who are the big

employers in the area called BW3. This group had recently appointed a new chief executive and worked much more closely with the partnership seeing their role, according to a partnership officer as "taking (people) out of economic inactivity".

The partnership officers, along with their counterparts within the City council, meet regularly with their specific partner agencies; it is an aspect of their ongoing work. This is the case for all the streams of work covered by the partnership. The physical programme group meeting consists of the physical programme manager, a planning officer from the city council centrally, the town centre manager, a member of the housing trust, a parks officer from the city council, a representative of the industrial estates, a housing officer from the city council, a transport/highways officer from the city council and a member of *Groundwork*. One of these meetings is described in more detail in the events section below.

The Partnership offices are based in the centre of Somersmeade, opposite the bus station and near the main shopping area. They comprise of about one quarter of the ground floor of a large 1960s office block. The building is quite run down and has a generally grotty feeling to it. It is not clear if it is fully occupied, and if so, the other inhabitants are not clearly labelled. Also on the ground floor is the local citizens' advice bureau and part of a Connexions office. The space allocated to the partnership feels very crowded and narrow, the offices appear to have been subdivided. The entrance is a code-locked door, with a small printed sign reading 'Somersmeade partnership'. This leads into a narrow corridor, made more so by the piles of papers which are along both sides. There is a meeting room with floor to ceiling shelves on three of the four walls, all covered with folders and boxes of papers. Next door to this is the co-ordinator's office, she is the only officer not to be

working in the larger open-plan office opposite. This room appeared to be housing more desks and people than could be comfortably achieved, as well as yet more boxes of documents. Overall, the office was quiet, the phone ringing only occasionally, and most people just getting on with their own work. If members of the team wanted to meet to discuss work together, they used the meeting room. For example, for sorting out what was going to go on stalls for the open day, what posters to use and who was going to do what. The table is big enough to seat twelve, and large enough to put out A0 maps/plans.

The physical location of the offices reinforces the Partnership's links with Somersmeade specifically rather than the city as a whole. Their meetings are all held in Somersmeade, either in public meeting rooms, NHS rooms or the Housing Trust's offices, not in the city centre. The geographical location of Somersmeade emphasises this; it is at least half an hour's taxi ride from the town hall; this being the fastest means of transport. The physical boundaries of the river and motorways also reinforce this sense of distance from the centre, as does the proximity to neighbouring authorities.

It is also important to note the existence of the Somersmeade Area Committee, made up of the councillors who represent the Somersmeade wards. It is the only such committee in the city council's jurisdiction. It has the power to approve planning application for its locality and to call in officers who are undertaking work that affects the area. However, its existence did not make any significant impact on the working of the partnership. It was seen by most officers as quite separate and not related to their work. The implications of this isolation, or local focus are discussed more below.

6.2.3 Who are the Professionals?

The concept of who the professionals are is even more fluid than it was in the previous case study. In general, it refers to all those who are not lay people, those who are employed to be working in regeneration. However, this line of division is constantly remade in practice. The thinking around this issue here draws on symbolic interactionist methods and insights, as explained in Chapter Two. Divisions between expert and non expert, and between types of expertise are largely contextual, but this does not lessen their importance, only further complicate their definitions.

6.3 Strategic Regeneration Framework Consultation Meetings

As explained above, the SRF is a document which the Somersmeade Partnership were preparing with consultants to steer the direction of the future regeneration of the area. The consultation meetings took place during June and July, at a range of times and venues, as suited the group they were aimed at. In addition, there was a public meeting in the early evening after the open day. All officers, from ward co-ordination assistants to the partnership co-ordinator, delivered the presentation which was the same basic powerpoint slide show, containing basic points, maps of the original proposals for the building of Somersmeade and the current strategic masterplan diagram. The title slide had the city council's logo on it, not the partnership's, the consultant's, or any of the other partner organisations' logo. The next two slides provided analysis of the current social state of Somersmeade, under the four headings, population, community facilities, education and learning, crime, and health. This differed from the draft summary report which places greater emphasis on the economic and physical aspects. These two issues were dealt with in the following slides. The difference between the presentation of the report to the public and

the draft itself hinted at some of the tension which emerged between economic regeneration and the interests of local people. It then covered proposals for development and traffic corridors which are the foundation to the physical side of the SRF. This corporately agreed presentation did not leave a huge amount of room for officers to present their own views about the SRF and its formation, but the style of delivery, and what was said or focused upon varied from officer to officer and presentation to presentation.

The following descriptions are drawn from four of these meetings, three which took place and one to which no-one turned up. They are *The Wednesday Social Club*, a social club for female pensioners, *The Ladies' Society*, a Methodist women's group, *Family Action Abbotsville (FAA)*, a parent and child support centre for a neighbourhood, and finally a more open meeting for users of a community centre. The descriptions cover three topics: the presentation, the response from the public; and officer discussion of the event. Some of the differences between the styles of presentation were expedient as for example, there were seven people at the Ladies' Society meeting, but over thirty at the Wednesday Social Club. Each topic is addressed in turn, detailing events from each meeting separately.

6.3.1 Presentations

6.3.1.1 Family Action Abbotsville

The presentational style at the FAA meeting was quite formal, the officer introduced it by telling the few people present where toilets and fire exits in the building were, in the style of a flight attendant before take off. She preferred not to take questions during the course of the presentation, stating there would be an opportunity to raise issues at the end. She began the presentation by saying that the consultants had done an analysis of Somersmeade which

is "a little bit scientific" and based upon things called baseline indicators which measure evidence around jobs and that it has used detailed methodology to look at what works and what does not. She then generally summarised the issues under the headings provided by the presentation. She spoke quite fluently about "a more positive image of Somersmeade for people to live and work in", "sustainable neighbourhoods" to be achieved by increasing the quality of the housing stock. She said that the physical, social and economic plans all fit together for everyone involved and that "agencies [are] on board to work with local residents" and that transport and childcare are the main barriers to getting people back into work. The officer ends the presentation by saying that it is now time to go "back to you guys...are we on the right lines? We'll feedback your feedback to the consultants and a final report will be out by September".

6.3.1.2 The Ladies Society

At the Ladies Society, however, the officer entered into dialogue with the audience throughout his presentation. His style was much more chatty, checking that all the audience could see the slides and helping one woman who could not move further forward. He answered questions and listened to the audience's comments throughout, so much so that when closing the presentation and asking them their opinions of the presentation and the strategy the response was "I think we've been telling you what we think!" He began by introducing himself and giving his job title, he then introduced the partnership, explaining that they have someone working on health, someone on crime, education and so forth. He said "the partnership's job is to support the improvement of Somersmeade over all these areas" and they have been doing this with "government money called single regeneration budget, or SRB". He joked that in regeneration work there are lots of TLAs, or three letter

abbreviations. He said they were currently consulting lots of groups and wanted all the views in the pot to make a "long term planning document for Somersmeade". The officer talked through the pictures in the introduction, and joking about nearly spilling tea on the new laptop computer. He began by saying that they have employed consultants to do the donkey work or surveying the current state of Somersmeade. He talked around the points on the slides, and actually to his audience more than the other presenters did, describing declining population in the area by saying "people voted with their feet and legged it". One audience member said that she could not believe this as it feels like there are more people than there were, another asks where they have gone as there are new houses being built and there are not many obviously empty properties. The officer replied that there are empty properties, and many tower blocks have been knocked down. He joked about the ridiculousness of needing to employ consultants to find out that there is a lack of facilities in the area and then also explained the meaning of the term 'economically active', saying it is being available for work (as opposed to being disabled, or having full time caring responsibilities). He moved on to explain what is meant by the term 'district centre', saying it is one of the "big ideas of the plans". The want to get in big name shops like Tescos and Matalan so it would be like going to one of the large local shopping centre. When asked where this shopping centre would go, he replied "one thing this isn't is a definite plan". The officer gently drew the conversation back to the presentation, asking their opinion of the 'vision' for Somersmeade, preambling it by saying "you can't have a fifteen year plan without a vision". He asked "shall we ask for our money back?" as the audience all laugh at the idea of Somersmeade being rebranded as a garden city as "that's what it was called- always", what it has been for the last seventy years. He moved on to talk about the proposals map in more detail saying "each neighbourhood is to have a service cluster (pause) what they mean by

service cluster (pause) what they mean by neighbourhood". He then went on to explain that this means that they intend to concentrate shopping areas and services such as schools, doctors and post-offices into these service clusters. He talked about a certain shopping parade and how it had changed over the years to clarify this point. A member of the audience asked "if you're going to take away other ones…where are the people that live there, especially the elderly, going to shop?" The officer explained that the aim was to have one service cluster in walking distance of all households, but acknowledged that there are different levels of walking distance. He said that this would come out in a detailed plan, and this was not what the framework was there to provide.

6.3.1.3 The Wednesday Social Club

At the Wednesday Social Club the speaker began her presentation by explaining that the SRF aims to present a vision for Somersmeade in 2020, to which an audience member retorts "I don't think I'll be here chuck!" This was met with much mirth, then murmuring, then 'shh-ing'. This event had a different feel to it from the other two, as the club's organiser introduced the speaker, but first talked about the programme of events they had planned for the next few weeks. This made it feel much more like part of a wider event than a presentation in itself. The speaker then said "this won't surprise any of you I think" when reporting the consultants' finding that there were a lack of facilities, especially shops, in Somersmeade. There was much loud agreement to this, the speaker adding "you don't need consultants to tell you that, do you?" The speaker then explained the term 'economically inactive', saying that is does not only mean people on Job Seeker's Allowance, but also for example, single parents who cannot go to work because of their childcare responsibilities. The speaker also talked about traffic, housing and schools, ending by saying that they were

aiming to bring about a 'virtuous circle', not a vicious one. She ended at that point, saying there will be time for questions and discussion next, however, everybody appeared to be quite keen to get their tea. As the audience was much larger that at the other two meetings, it made the setting less conducive to informal interactions. However, a couple of questions were asked during the speaker's presentation. Someone said that they would like a cinema locally, to this the speaker replied that there is market saturation. The second question, about why so many new private houses were being built in Somersmeade, needed more a more careful reply. It was supported by a comment from another audience member saying that there were not enough houses to rent in the area. To respond to this without contradicting what she previously said nor saying that the audience member is wrong, she stateed that the average ratio of bought to rented houses in the North West region in 60:40, whereas in Somersmeade it is 40:60, so it needed to be at least levelled.

6.3.2 Public Response

Due to the open style of the presentation, there were only two questions raised after the officer had finished speaking to the *Ladies' Social Club*. One was about disabled access to the shopping centre, and the other was about how the proposed works would be funded. The officer replied that "the way the government is thinking about regeneration is mainstreaming". He explained that all local services need to be able to focus their money to help the most deprived areas and that they were there to help services deliver more effectively within their existing budgets, but the framework documents was to help lever in money from the lottery, Europe and the government.

The other two presentations provoked far more questions. In both cases, the partnership officers attempted to split the audiences into smaller groups to go through some of the issues in more detail; this was successful in FAA but at the Wednesday Social Club, the organiser said "my lot wouldn't like to go into groups".

6.3.2.1 Family Action Abbotsville

The FAA event provided the most lively and lengthy discussion of all the SRF meetings in both general questions and the more focused discussion. All three officers supported each other in answering questions to a greater extent than in the other meetings. There followed a lively and challenging debate about the suitability of the SRF's priorities to their needs. The first point raised emphasised that it was all very well calling Somersmeade a garden city, but the garden is getting smaller and smaller and where will the new building stop? The officer said that she could not give a definite answer to this question but would raise this as an issue when the final SRF is prepared. He then followed up this question by asking why all the houses that were being built were for sale saying "the reason we're in Somersmeade is that we can't buy houses". There was general nodding of agreement to this point. Another person added that they are all in low paid jobs, and the benefits system does not help asking "who said build for sale, I've not heard local people say this?" The officer replied by stressing the diversity of the housing being built calling it "mixed housing development" and saying it was necessary because of changing sizes of families. There followed a general discussion about how market based solutions were inappropriate to their needs from housing to health. The officer then asked if there were any more questions before they split into two groups to take the discussion into more depth. There were: the next one was about the lack of information about the provision of mental health facilities, in comparison to

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gyms. Another person stated that the ideas of health and healthy living were imposed on local people by those in employment and that the dominant attitude is that of the middle class. Someone else asked a question about the environmental impact on health of the roads and planned airport expansion, saying that there has been an 'air quality monitoring area' for fifteen years but that any information about it, and its findings were kept top secret. The discussion and questions covered local school performance, public transport and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders [ASBOs]. There was agreement amongst all of the public that groups get things up and running and "then they pull the plug on you". The discussion was allowed to flow from topic to topic by the officers, there were no attempts made to try to draw the discussion back to the specifics of the SRF and the presentation. The discussion amongst the audience was lively and passionate, and most people were fully involved. All the questions were very quick-fire, and the meeting had a lively and challenging atmosphere. Further comments concerned the Forum, with one person stating "the forum isn't ours any more" now it belongs to a private company. This was felt to be the same as the civic centre which used to be publicly owned. The questioner asked why the forum has been sold off saying "we can do nothing, it belongs to a private company". One of the officers answered that the sell off of the shopping parade was done in the past and was "a regrettable decision", and that the council regretted it. However, it was made in different times, and times have now moved on. The sale of the forum was part of "how we work with private partners" and the council cannot afford to do things like this on its own. One group member said that the plans were all good, but that he had an aversion to the city council logo, saying this meant that it will never get done because of political changes. The officer denied that this was true, and said that the council had done a lot of work in Somersmeade.

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The general feeling was that regeneration schemes are only good if they actually work, and real change actually occurs, and this was frequently reiterated.

When the group split into smaller groups, one person said that they should suck things out of the city centre, including parts of the universities. The officer linked this to the topic of 'civic pride' that she had on one of her cards, saying that because of what they've been saying "I'd like to look at "this issue. She read out what was written on the card, and then said, "that's really confusing- what it means is…[pause] (there is) great stuff in Somersmeade". There was much feeling of anger at the airport taking advantage of the local environment, one person stated "as a child this was my greenbelt". The overall feeling was that too much open space has been taken, and they wanted some of it back, not new development. The discussion continued with someone else saying that they should make better use of the existing facilities such as the meeting rooms in housing offices for the community. The officer who gave the presentation briefly rounded the meeting off.

6.3.2.2 The Wednesday Social Club

During the break in the Wednesday Social Club meeting, people had conversations which picked up on the topics raised in the talk, but quite loosely: considerations of litter and hooligans were the central issues. The questions generally concerned the day to day complaints about the local environment, rather than issues of strategic concern for future regeneration, for example whether you need to book an appointment to go to the drop-in clinic, recycling bins, speeding cars, flytipping, dog fouling and luncheon clubs. The complaints seemed to stem more from general disgruntlement with the quality of the local physical and social environment than dissatisfaction with their position in society and the

continued support for private sector development above their interests, as they had at FAA. The speaker tried to bring people back to the topic on several occasions, asking if the vision of Somersmeade as a garden city was good. To this, there was general agreement, but criticism of loss of greenspace, especially the sale of school grounds and playing fields to builders. The speaker replied that there needed to be a balance as there was a need for housing. There was no real sense of agreement with this statement. Someone else asked about the flats at St Modwen's that have been knocked down, saying "somebody said they sold it for a big new supermarket". The speaker neither confirmed nor denied this, but added that they could not control what is brought into Somersmeade in the way of shops, their job is "to make the case that it can support a wide range". The next questioner spoke at length, about the past of Somersmeade and the building and knocking down of houses, she criticised the knocking down of schools, saying "are they going to give them all condoms when they move in?" (about those coming to live in the new houses). This was met with great hilarity and much clapping and cheering. The questioner continued by saying that this was "typical of - city council, the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing". The speaker replied that the council was investing lots of resources in local schools, but this did not placate the speaker who said that "- city council has ruined Somersmeade, it's true". Once more, to try to redirect questions back to the SRF and future large scale visions for the area, the speaker said, "I know there are lots of gripes and groans about the way the area is now" but there are positive changes, such as the forum, and there is potential offered by the airport and the extension of metrolink, saying "what do you think of these opportunities?" This did not work, she thanked the audience for their time and said that a final document will be out in September.

6.3.3 Officer Discussion

As the presentation did not take place in Abbotsville Community Centre on this occasion, it is not really accurate to describe the following as post meeting reactions. However, as in the other three cases, this consisted of conversations between the officers enlisted to present the SRF, with occasional points of explanation or asides to me. On this occasion, three officers turned up, one to present, the other two to support. One said that on a previous presentation she had been supposed to follow on from the committee meeting of a church, but that it had finished early, and no-one had stayed on, so she was unable to give the presentation. There was a general discussion by all three saying that groups will say "no-one asked us" when work begins, yet the consultation period may be years long, the problem being that no-one came to the meetings when they had the opportunity. This was felt to place the officers in a lose-lose situation. To me, they said that the presentation of the SRF they are taking out to groups is a short version, "very dumbed down", a sort of 'stick your sticky dot on your priority' exercise. They said that it has been hard presenting the SRF as much of it is dry and abstract, that many of the responses they had received, especially from older people have been "why ask us- you know what you are going to do anyway". They said that this isn't the reality, but in a way it was. They said that people are cynical because they know that they have employed consultants to draw up they SRF. One officer said that where he used to work they never got in consultants but here "we can't spend it (regeneration money) unless we've got a consultant putting together a strategy", all the partnership's strands have had strategies drawn up for them. Another suggested it is done like this because of a shortage of skills in the council. In reply to this, the male officer said that people would see it as a stitch up if the council did the strategies. They made jokes about what they called "drive-by planning", classing certain terms as "flavour of the month"

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imagining cowboy outfitted consultants coming to town to "call that a development corridor". They said that the use of GIS software had helped put things together, such as the distance between health centres and the areas with the worst health statistics, that it had created opportunities to look at things in different ways. By this time, they have decided that no-one was going to come to hear their presentation, so we all put away the chairs and returned out mugs to the kitchen. Whilst he was passing, one officer greased the kitchen door with vegetable oil to stop it squeaking, much to the delight of the centre co-ordinator. They packed the car with the screen, laptop and assorted maps and paper copies of the SRF and went back to their offices.

At the end of the discussion at FAA the partnership officers and the organisers of the centre discussed particularly vocal residents who turn up to all local public meetings. The atmosphere between them was friendly and familiar. In the car on the way back to the Partnership offices, the officer who gave the presentation said that as workers they have be neutral, when audience members say certain things, criticise certain actions and decisions and you may think they've got a point but you cannot actively agree. She said that there were local activists and community representatives present, but also eight local parents, which was really good as they were not easy to get to. She also said it was excellent to hear people really engaging with some of the issues as this was very rare.

On the occasion of the Wednesday Social Club meeting, prior to it starting, one of the partnership officers joked with one of the other officers about the type of projector the consultants had used to give their presentations. Apparently, it had legs which put themselves up and adjusted their height to fit the screen. They laughed, saying and who paid

for it, meaning the partnership, and seeming resentful that their money was being spent on such 'toys'. After the meeting, one of the officers whose specific role was as ward coordinator for the area talked to one member of the audience about certain local issues, making a note of the problems, to raise them at a later meeting. After they had packed up and left the building, the officer who gave the presentation said "well, that was almost no use at all", saying that people had just wanted to moan, not to engage with any of the ideas. She described the issues that they raised as ward coordination ones, not strategic ones. She commented that they had been better about the design of the Forum as this had been a more concrete issue and something that directly affected them. Another officer said that she thought the tea break had distracted them, as during the presentation there had been people nodding and agreeing with things that had been said. She added that it would have been better if they could have split them into smaller groups as big numbers were not conducive to the sort of discussion they had wanted. The other officer said that a different (male) partnership officer should have done the presentation as he was a real charmer with elderly ladies, they all laughed and said they would get him to do it next time.

As both officers were in a rush to get to other meetings after the Ladies' Society event, there was little post meeting discussion. However, before the event, whilst arranging chairs the officer giving the presentation had said that at an earlier event in a different local church, the audience feedback was very negative, saying "but who'll do it?" and "how will this help us get money for our youth club?" He seemed slightly cynical about the event, asking what was the point as most of the group would not be there in 2020.

6.4 Open Day

The open day was held in the Somersmeade forum, in the central concourse close to the library, gym, crèche, careers centre and other rooms. There were stalls from *Surestart*, the police, *Forumfutures* (a careers advice agency), the physical programme, culture and sport and a general welcome desk which was giving out balloons. The culture and sport stall was staffed by partnership officers. They had put up boards and arranged two activities to consult with people who were attending the open day about their priorities. The boards were blue and had cards on them with the questions "what do you like?" "what don't you like?" handwritten in large letters. On the back of these were priorities with coloured sticky dots by them, clearly from a previous consultation exercise. This exercise was more formally produced; actually printed and properly laminated. One activity was for people to write comments about the area on post-it notes and then stick them under the heading of 'what do you like' or 'what don't you like'. The other officer was giving out photocopied fake yellow ten pound notes which read "bank of Somersmeade" to members of the public. He then guided them to pots on the table which were labelled with a range of activities, such as football, hockey, film, visual arts, fashion, and disability arts and asked them if they were to spend this money in Somersmeade, what would it be on, and to put their money into the relevant pots; they could put it all in one pot or spread it about. A range of people, from schoolchildren to the elderly engaged in these activities. The event was not busy, but there was a constant flow of people to the stall. The officers were very good at juggling people and issues, holding two different conversations at one and the same time. They shouted "come and have your say" and "have fifty pounds" to the hall in general. One person approached by the officer to spend her money from the bank of Somersmeade, replied that she did not live here, that she has just come to this because she taught at a local school. He

replied that she could still spend the money and to do it as if she was spending the money in Somersmeade. She took the money and distributed it in the cartons, but without any of the light heartedness that the other participants had.

It was not totally obvious who was working and who was participating in the activities, as people who seemed to be working on some of the stalls participated in what was being done on other stalls. The physical programme stall was running a GIS projection of the area, so the members of the public attending the day could see where they lived in relation to the suggestions on the SRF diagrams. A member of the public came up to the physical programme officer to ask him if houses were going to be built on the park, this was a rumour that was going around her estate and she had been sent to find out if this is the case. The officer replied that there are no plans to do so.

Once the GIS system was up and running, the officer encouraged people to tell him where they lived, so that he could illustrate it on the aerial photographs. He was also trying to see how people identified their streets as being in any given area, as there was a perception that Somersmeade lacked landmarks, and that new signage would alleviate this problem. In a quiet moment he commented that this exercise was slightly pointless as people do not say where they live because of a feeling of local belonging, but for snobbery, and not wanting to look like they live in the worst areas. He seemed quite frustrated. One woman admitted to this, saying that she was too embarrassed to say that she lived in Somersmeade. As well as discussing different areas of Somersmeade and potential signage, the officer received many complaints from members of the public about people driving too fast down specific roads, the size of speedbumps and the lack of a cinema in the area. When asked "are you planning

a cinema or a hotel?" by a member of the public, the officer replied that they were not planning anything, and that he would have to speak to urban designers or the town planners about this. When talking about transport to another member of the public he said "the airport is going to grow", but also said that nothing they were suggesting here was certain. Another woman made quite a prolonged attack on the previous policies of selling off land for housing, and the way the forum redevelopment had been managed. The officer said to her that it is the planning committee who made the decisions. She said that the planners want shooting for allowing such developments. After she went away, the officer said to another officer "some people are just here to get things off their chest, bringing up stuff from years ago".

6.5 Physical Programme Group meeting

The Physical Programme Group meets every six weeks to bring together all those in the local area who work on issues pertaining to the physical environment. This account of one meeting summarises the main discussions that took place, rather than reports every word said, in accordance with the methodology set out in Chapter Four. The meeting was held at the offices of the housing trust. Most people knew each other to say hello to, but there was not a feeling of close working or frequent contact. The city council planner was chair of the meeting, an area assistant from the partnership was secretary. The meeting began with the partnership's Physical Programme officer explaining how the GIS which he was about to show works, and what use he thought it would be for them all. He said that with the consultants and *Groundwork*, they had been collecting data as part of the *Transport and Open Spaces Group* (a subgroup to this meeting). He said that the software will give them the "ability to look at the strategic...and specific scenes we can bring forward". The secretary

then told him how to get on to the bit that he wanted to show. He continued to talk about bad signage in Somersmeade, and said that this "dovetails into an agenda the government are very keen on at the moment" about healthy living. He explained that they were trying to encourage people to walk and cycle by making routes more clearly signed and accessible. He continued, saying that they are trying to encourage people to use "sustainable transport modes" and explained this term to mean cycling, walking and public transport. He said it is part of an initiative to create safer routes to school, but they also wanted to expand this for the use of the wider community. The group had identified sites and obstacles and how to tackle them but "we'd need to work with leisure, where we can route the footpath...we'd need to work in the round". The last slide in the presentation was of the logos of all the partners who are part of this project, there is a representative at the meeting of nearly all the groups. The chair asked a question about ongoing maintenance of the system and its compatibility, saying that the development control teams in the council are having GIS training and she wanted to make sure that they are kept updated with what is happening here. The physical programme officer replied that "trying to do something corporately...is nigh on impossible because the structure isn't there" and that they have been able to justify the use and expense of GIS for Somersmeade but cannot really make it more widely available. In turn she expressed fears of bits getting done here and there over the city, and the overall picture being fragmented. He replied "I'm sure most people involved in this sort of work, spatial planning work" will have GIS and therefore be able to link up. The chair was not convinced, saying "forward planning, which is not a million miles away from what you're doing there" does not have this sort of technology, and again emphasised fear of fragmentation. The officer replied that he is still convinced of its usefulness for their work as "we can concentrate on Somersmeade, what's relevant to Somersmeade". After some

further discussion on this, the chair then asked if they had shown this to Somersmeade area consultative committee members. The physical programme officer said that he would take it to ward coordination meetings as there he can link it to issues of signage, describing the process as "a complex...bureaucratic challenge". This ended the GIS discussion.

Points about the ongoing SRF consultation were raised briefly, as was an issue concerning poor quality housing and the lack of representatives from the industrial estates. The next point was entitled "town centre update". The town centre manager commented that "bearing in mind I don't live locally, I think Somersmeade has terrific potential". She added that the local residents seem to be very negative and need to take more ownership, but she could not say anything more concrete than this at the moment. The physical programme officer told her about the 'masterplan', namely the SRF, saying that the next step was to make more detailed plans of each area, the town centre being one of them.

Item seven concerned 'neighbourhood centre improvements' and also presented the opportunity for the physical programme officer's to report back. He outlined what had happened, and that work began next on a local main road, "the idea is to use SEMMS highway funding, we work with partners as much as we can". The chair interjected, asking if everybody knew what SEMMS is, and the secretary then clarified this; South East Multi-Modal Study. The Physical Programme officer talked at some length about this.

Point 9, leisure/open space development, provides the first opportunity for the city council parks officer to speak. He began by saying, "I'm not really sure... I wasn't at the last meeting...I can talk to you about Berryhedge park or Drey Hall park all day". He was

wearing a green city council jumper, all other staff were less uniformed, just in their own versions of smart work clothes. He said that they have had football and a tombola and a small fair, it all went very well. The physical programme manager said he was working with another officer and some consultants and architects and they will be "looking at the park in a more strategic way". This included attempting to get it re-established as "a single estate", something that was picked up in a best value review of parks, and to close it to vehicular traffic. In addition, they would be getting new facilities such as a commercial garden centre. He followed this up by saying "there was a masterplan...done about four years ago...this is to update it...to work with what we've got...work with local partners" and that they were "looking at options for significant improvement in the park".

Next, the housing trust provided an update on the work they have been doing in the area. The council housing officer said that he was "insanely jealous" of this as he was doing very little and thinks that there will be no council owned housing in the city in the next three to four years, but this is "a good thing as we can't do the work that (the housing trust) can". The physical programme officer said in relation to this that the housing trust were "able to look at the total environment...at the end of the day it is about creating sustainable neighbourhoods".

The final two issues, except for the time and place of the next meeting, dealt with at this meeting were planning applications currently under consideration in the area, and any other business. The chair went quickly through a list of applications which was circulated to all. There was a brief discussion about what the group would like to see acquired by Section 106 agreement money of a specific development likely to be given planning permission. All

members of the group appeared to know the local area well, and were happy and fluent in their discussion of local sites. There were occasional controversial comments raised, to which the secretary asked sarcastically if she should minute them. After a discussion about a local hall and the possibility of acquiring *English Heritage* funding for it, the Physical Programme manager discussed Talbot Park active living centre, saying it is "cunningly named to get sport England active living funding". He hoped that it would be built by December 2005.

People chatted to each other briefly and amicably before leaving. Whilst waiting for the taxi back to the City council offices, the chair discussed her different roles at this meeting. She talked about 'bringing in the centre' to the Somersmeade partnership, saying that it was a problem with area based teams, that they get too much of their own culture and needed to be realigned to corporate issues. This, she said, was her role here. She also mentioned the importance of having worked previously with some of the officers, how this helped meetings like this flow smoothly. She said that it is a problem when somebody leaves as their replacement is given a twenty minute handover and a big folder.

6.6 Professional Operation

As in the previous chapter, this section outlines the mode of operation of the professionals in this case study. Very generally, they fitted the idea of 'new' professionals much more simply than in the development control case, in both their use of facilitation and responses to managerialism.

6.6.1 "Network professionals"

The set-up of the Somersmeade partnership and the activities that its officers undertook in their work, especially of compiling and consulting on the SRF fit the idea of 'network professionals' very well. The very establishment of the partnership was for the *facilitation* of regeneration, drawing in private, community, voluntary and public sector interests to work together in a specific area. The fact that their role in drawing up the SRF was to convene meetings, employ consultants with a specific brief and take proposals out to local community groups exemplifies this sort of working. There was no assumption that the officers of the partnership would have the solutions to the problems of the area, but rather that they are being strategic, and not offering specific judgements about what should happen, as the following comment by the partnership co-ordinator illustrates:

> "we bring the fact that we have a dedicated team with expertise and experience, because of our role we can get to know, get to understand an area really, because we do not have any particular axe to grind, we can often play an honest broker in terms of puling together organisations to deliver particular themes or initiates on the ground for regenerating Somersmeade".

This role of 'honest broker' does make the partnership and their officers distinct from the others working in the area in a similar manner. However, the same underlying view, of not knowing the best autonomously and axiomatically, and listening to other groups was shared by the two other main groups working with the partnership; groundwork and the housing trust, as their officer expressed:

> "I identified all the agencies that were working in the area, the funding that was available and where it was going, looking at the level of community involvement in

initiatives in the area and then basically I think I attended every meeting within Somersmeade, just to find out who was who and what they were doing".

Not accepting that work should be undertaken in this way is seen as negative and destructive:

"when it comes down to certain officers, those who are concerned about protection of jobs, then there is sometimes reticence to have that view of things. I've worked in three different trusts and I've come across officers who are positively blocking of any progress, any partnership working, they prefer not to get into partnership, which from where I'm sitting is both naïve and narrow-minded"(groundwork officer)

In addition, the impact of stock transfer of housing is to necessitate a partnership approach, as tenants have to be on the board, and it creates another agency separate from the council. The importance of partnership working being undertaken by all relevant groups is emphasised by this comment from the director of development for the housing trust in relation to his working relationship with the planning department in the city council:

"we work together with them, there's no surprises, ...and because we do that there's no confrontation, they're not coming at it from a different angle, we won't put something in front of them, say on the greenbelt and say we want to build"

Further to stating their belief in partnership working, and demonstrating it by their administrative set-up, ideas about the role of the public and the community can be seen as attitudes of new 'network' professionalism. The partnership coordinator explained that "getting the engagement of key stakeholders...to develop an area focus that meets the needs

of the community" is seen as central to the working as the partnership as a whole. This is the belief underlying the choice of consultation techniques used and the rationale for undertaking this work. The community are vital to the work of the partnership. Not only are the aims of their projects to improve the quality of life for local people, these local people are needed to contribute their views. However, this does not remove the role of professionals, it simply levels the status between them, seeing both as providing something needed for success. This view of working was also welcomed by the community centre co-ordinator:

> "professionals out there, but they might call on me as well, which they do, 'how do you become successful in the community?'...we help each other"

She did not describe herself as a professional, nor someone who knew ultimately what was best for her local area *and* how to get it, but felt there was a clear need to be part of the process, and there was something specific that local people could add that officers or professionals could not. This relates to the issues raised about who the professionals are, and how the status of expert is situational and contextual in this case.

In contrast to this, there was a marked difference in the mode of professional working displayed by the private sector consultants to the rest of the officers involved in the partnership. Although he discussed working to a brief and to a steering group which consisted of a range of different partners, he described his work quite separately with comments such as "we all talk about the issue that we've identified, is there any more that we've missed". This is not the same form of facilitation which is key to the concept of a new professional and seen in the working of the partnership. The consultancy started from

the position of identifying all the issues themselves as professionals, rather than asking the public what the issues were, and then going to the public and the steering group to get confirmation that they have not missed something. The professional mode of operation was more traditional than new. The implications of this are discussed further in the next chapter.

6.6.2 Managerialism

The emphasis on the importance of meeting targets was not so evident in this case study as it was in the previous one, at least not on the surface or in day to day working. However, during the course of the interviews with officers working in the partnership and council, the importance of performance management goals were stressed as the Partnership co-ordinator put it:

> "we were delivering an SRB funded project...and part of my role was to make sure
>
> that was effective, to measure targets and outputs and outcomes and we did what we
>
> needed to do. Increasingly over the last while, (we have to be) in line with the
>
> government and citywide context"

This illustrates that the professionals in this case study had to take action and remake their professionalism within centrally set targets and regimes. As in the previous case study, this did not entail deprofessionalisation, rather a creative working round seemingly immovable rules. In this case too, managerialism changes the way professionals can work, but this is a challenge rather than an impediment as the following quote, again from the Partnership co-ordinator illustrates:

> "we will effectively manage and monitor its (the regeneration framework's) impact...
>
> the challenge then is how you do that in a way that certainly doesn't conflict with the

city wide targets and objectives, but actually complements and gives confidence really to people with city wide briefs, or national briefs, that we are engaging in this agenda in a particular area that will contribute to their delivery of their targets...I can demonstrate what I could do, and by them focusing in Somersmeade what they can do which will actually help them achieve their targets as well as achieving what I want to achieve in Somersmeade.

This illustrates that there may be potential conflict between the needs of the managerialist agenda and the action which is best for Somersmeade. These issues are explored further below in the section on discourses of legitimacy and in the following chapter.

6.7 Discourses of Legitimacy

As is fitting with a 'new' mode of operating, the professional practice in the partnership can be seen legitimising itself in the Third Way ideological discourse. As well as being different in ideology to that of the development control case, it is different in as much as it is more explicitly part of this discourse, being much less muddled and internally contradictory. As illustrated earlier, this discourse positions planning as for the community, provided by a partnership of stakeholders, the professionals' knowledge being based upon facilitating a range of options, and whose autonomy is situationally based and accountability defined therein: constructed in certain policies and deliberative democratic fora. The issue of what grounds and on what basis *decisions* are actually made is not discussed, as fitting to the paradigm of 'new' professional action. However, as with the previous case, the discourse of legitimacy employed by the private sector planning consultant differs from the rest of the professionals. Also, the case study begins to demonstrate the problems necessarily intrinsic

to this ideological discourse of legitimacy, and especially its concept of who planning is for. To illustrate this further, it is necessary to consider the Third Way discourse of professional legitimacy in the light of the four questions around the themes of professionalism. To recap, these are who is planning for; who does the planning; what does the professional know; and how is the professional held accountable.

6.7.1 *Who is planning for?*

From all the fieldwork, it is evident and agreed upon that planning is there to make the life of local community better. Unlike in the previous case study, this is a clearly and frequently voiced opinion which officers do not find difficult to express. This is in accordance with the Third Way discourse of legitimacy where planning is constructed as being for the local community. However, when considered at any more depth than this, the meaning of who are the local community and what is in their best interests become problematic. This section addresses this aspect of the construction of professional legitimacy in the following way: through exploration of the ways in which planning is defined as being for the local community; the underlying assumptions; and the inherent problems.

A range of officers expressed their interest in and commitment to working with deprived groups, including the council planning officer, the partnership coordinator, the groundwork officer and the private practitioner. They expressed the idea of putting something back and being able to help those who were not as well off as themselves. This feeling was further emphasised by a belief that getting people involved in regeneration was good for its own sake, as the groundwork officer stated:

"we can do everything from start to finish but we prefer not to, it's more about enabling them to do it for themselves".

Planning is not only for the community in terms of outcome, in this case, a regenerated Somersmeade, but in terms of process. Regeneration aims to get lay people actively involved in the processes of change; this in itself being posited as a desirable outcome. This attitude was also held by the community centre co-ordinator, who saw people being involved in the activities they put on as a success in itself. She talked about how other members of the local community could successfully regenerate their own local area by this sort of inclusive action, illustrating her approach by examples of people turning up to ask about classes, welcoming them by saying "you're a bit early, but make yourself a cup of tea, and mine's milk no sugar". This further blurs the lines between professional and non-professional and between process and outcome.

6.7.1.1 Problems with this Articulation

However, this general expression of shared interests and consensus is riven with difficulties, differences and divisions. This is particularly notable in the following three ways. First is in terms of spatial outcomes, and the tensions between economic, environmental and social benefits and their often mutual incompatibility. The second is about representation, and whether professionals can speak for locals and locals contribute to professional work. Finally, the issue of whether working together with the same aims in a multi-agency setting is actually possible.

From the observations of the consultations on the SRF, clashing environmental and economic priorities were in the minds of the public and the officers. Much disgruntlement was expressed at all meetings about the land that had been sold off for new private housing development, exposing a clash between the interests of the community and the desires for economic growth. In addition there was concern about the closure of the 'unviable' shopping areas, furthering this division. The view was held by some of the public that they could be socially viable, if they were the only ones elderly people were able to access. This is in opposition to the consultant's description of them as: "crap, (they) just wouldn't stack up, …with retail capacity testing". The criticisms from the meeting at FAA were wider and more general, than just about shopping areas, and went to the heart of much of the whole approach. The people may have wanted a vibrant regenerated Somersmeade, but were all too acutely aware that this was likely to be at their expense. Economic growth was seen as being at their expense rather than in their interests. This is seen in the discussions at that meeting around the airport and its potential for expansion.

This divide, and the problems of achieving a suitable outcome for all parties and interests was further complicated by conflicting priorities between different geographical areas. The public expressed views that getting goods such as high-tec industries and the universities to relocate in Somersmeade would be at the expense of other parts of the city, but that this was in their interests. It also raised wider questions about what choices are in the public good, and who the public is in any given locality, potentially undermining the Third Way concept of who planning is for, by querying the notion of community. This is discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

The potential for clashes between local and city, region or national interests is further expressed by the local elected member:

"one of the problems I have as a local councillor, is, you get something happening in your patch which they don't really want you to make a decision on because it's more than local significance, in quotation marks. That winds you up, that annoys you. Why should officers in this place make a massive decision which is going to affect my life for the next thirty years just because its more than of local significance. And the airport is a classic example...as a parochial politician I'd love the Somersmeade area committee to be given the ultimate power over planning applications, but it'll never happen because (pause) we wouldn't have the authority to do that".

Another problem with the Third Way concept of who planning is for, employed as part of the professional legitimacy of officers in this case was the feeling that local interests and professional views did not really harmonise. This view was reiterated frequently by a range of officers, both at the SRF open day and at the consultation meetings. Apart from at the FAA meeting, there was a real sense that the public could not, or did not want to engage with the strategic issues of regeneration. However, it is not simply the case that the public are not interested in regeneration, and want to leave it all down to the professionals. The community centre co-ordinator illustrates this potential clash:

"consultants come in and they are paid to do a job and I have no doubt that they are very good at their job or they wouldn't have been offered the job in the first place but it isn't the same. It isn't the same as using local people that local people trust. ....The reason I feel it is so different, is because the way this centre is run now and the way it would have been run then by a consultant, who I don't feel, I may be

naughty in saying this, a consultant can be fantastic at his or her job but if you haven't got that community knowledge, that community spirit, or empathy you won't do the job properly. You've got to have been there and worked with the community to know how it is run".

This same issue of clashing choices is expressed by the local elected member, in relation to how planners make and justify their decisions:

"there is a lot of friction between planning and the SAC [Somersmeade Area Committee] because we make our decisions based on what is best for local people...and they make their decision on if we can't object to this in planning law then its going to cost us thirty grand every time we lose an appeal, so let's make a decision irrespective of what's going on"

This illustrates that what is seen as in the interests of the local area, by some, often who are residents and representatives of that area, does not relate to spatial outcomes. This is due to the different ways in which concerns are expressed and possibilities constructed between professional officers, and others. It illustrates the importance of the ethical/political gap in professional action which the new professional mode of operation and the Third Way's ideological emphasis on consensus attempts to camouflage.

In addition to the potentially unreconcilable differences expressed above, the council planning officer expressed the view that not everyone working in a partnership has the same understandings of the issues covered and wants the same outcomes, the different people involved will have different mindsets and all have their own underlying interests when they

are negotiating. This means that even on issues which are agreed upon as priorities there will be different interpretations of what this actually means in terms of outcomes. The officer continued by saying that this was not the same as when working with people who are part of the same organisation, as they have the same interests and understandings.

It is important to note here that although the private sector consultant expressed a desire to help deprived communities, the discourse in which he constructed his professional legitimacy was different to that of the public sector officers. His role centred around working for his clients, the Somersmeade partnership, rather than directly for the people of Somersmeade. It was the partnership's board and steering group to whom he was held accountable, illustrating a customer based focus central to the New Right discourse of professional legitimacy.

6.7.2 Who does the planning?

The issues raised in relation to addressing this question relate to the above discussion about modes of professional operation, namely the idea of 'network' professionals. Much of the material discussed there is relevant to this aspect of professional legitimacy, highlighting links between this concept and modes of operation. Central to the discussion here is the nature of, and problems with, partnership working.

In this case study, the concept of who the professional is, or who does the planning is notably different from its articulation in the previous case study. As all officers presented the SRF, and helped with each other's stall on the Open Day also illustrate there were no clearly demarked professional groupings, just all working in partnership for the good of

Somersmeade. This is the apogee of partnership, unity of goal above sectarian occupational control. However, this partnership did not consist of equal partners.

As well as the different weight given to the opinions of the public as opposed to officers, there was not equality of power between different partners. The local authority was in the position of being the lead and the final judge. The groundwork officer described their role as being "entirely dependent on what the local authority sees as complementary work" and that the success of any given project is largely down to officers within regeneration agencies and local authority departments embracing partnership working".

Even the existence of the partnership itself was established not by a sort of spontaneous act of collaboration by all local stakeholders, but by the corporate policy section of the city council as the local elected member commented:

> "local councillors weren't involved in the nitty gritty of setting the thing up, and putting out tenders and everything like that, we basically were told, this is what's happening if you want to comment you can comment."(local elected member)

In addition, the private practitioner described how the SRF was going to form the Somersmeade section of the new LDF for the city, hence this work was becoming more formally recognised, and being used by the local authority as they remain the planning authority. It will therefore be their role to translate the strategy into concrete proposals. This reiterates a previously mentioned problem with the Third Way discourse of legitimacy; that of making decisions. This issue is of further importance when comparisons and contrasts are drawn between regeneration and development control planning.

Another issue to be mentioned in relation to the question of who does the planning is well expressed by the local elected member:

"one of the biggest criticisms at the time, was everybody that was actually doing anything, they didn't live in Somersmeade, they were all coming, doing their lady bountiful bit for the day and then disappearing...I don't have a problem with officers of this council who live in Ramptall and come and work in Somersmeade so long as they take into account and understand the needs and views of the people of Somersmeade. Just because you don't live in the area doesn't mean to say that you can't make a wonderful contribution to the area, but we do take exception to people swanning in, like I say being lady bountiful, giving out a hot meal to kids and disappearing. We resist that sort of thing. You don't have to live in the area to be good for the area, but it does help."

This further illustrates the issues of differences between the community and the professionals as discussed in relation to the issue of who planning is for. It indicates that personal characteristics and attitudes are as important as partnership structures and the interpellation of all interests as stakeholders. Despite the aim of the discourse of legitimacy which is to plan with the public rather than for them there is a possibility for tension, as long as these differences exist.

In addition, the differential locations of the partnership and the council are seen as leading to a different focus of the work. This was particularly clearly expressed by the council planning officer who described her role as "very much in the town hall", leading to a different

working ethos than the partnership's. She said that her role in working with the partnership was about "bringing in the centre", this being evident throughout the role she played in the PPG meeting, especially with regard to the discussions about the use of GIS. She expressed the view that local regeneration schemes can get too focused on the local area at the expense of corporate and wider goals. The partnership co-ordinator believed that "area based initiatives have gone out of favour" and her role now was to articulate what is in the interests of Somersmeade in the terms of the wider regeneration of the conurbation more widely. This illustrates two important issues. First, that the idea of different working cultures and ethos suggested in the previous section is also a contested issue in terms of who does the planning. Second, it reiterates the above point about unequal power in partnership settings, further highlighting a weakness in this discursive articulation of professional legitimacy.

The final issue which needs to be raised here is about the legitimacy of the private practitioner, and hence his professional position within this area of work. As already mentioned, his mode of operation and concept of who planning is for were not the same as that of the other officers involved in the partnership. His legitimacy can be seen as very client based here too, he is a professional working for the Partnership in a way more akin to the consultants in the development control case. He stated:

> "what they (the partnership) told us was that they wanted a strategic regeneration framework, but learning from the lessons of where the previous two had not gone wrong but, hadn't gone quite to plan. They wanted it written in a style that they dictated- a policy driven sort of thing. There was quite a lot of dictating about how it should be 'we'd like it like this'".

He described the client relationship with the partnership as nice, and as a job with minimal conflict. He also said that their consultancy had employed a consultancy to carry out the public consultation they were commissioned to do, this illustrating further levels of client based relationship. The client based relationship, and the explicit assumption that his professional judgement held its own validity placed the legitimacy of his practice as outside that of the Third Way; rather to that of the New Right. He would be paid for the provision of a certain product because this is what his client required of him. This relationship in this ideological paradigm legitimises the findings, assumptions and suggestions of his work in a very different way from that of the partnership and its partners.

6.7.3 What does the professional know?

What counts as professional knowledge for the public sector officers within this case study again differs markedly from the development control case. This section outlines the importance of collaboration and strategic thinking to the Partnership officers, and how this differentiates them from others. As has become apparent during the above discussion, the issue of whose voice was given what standing on what subjects or in what fora is a vital question. It relates to what, within this ideological framework professionals can claim as their knowledge, that makes it different from that of the public. The issue relates directly to the ideological base of the discourse of legitimacy and continues to illustrate the paradoxes, and inherent contradictions that have become evident.

Partnership officers talked about their work in very different ways to development control officers. They saw themselves as creative and with lateral thinking skills, being "connectors,

linking local initiatives with national ones"(physical programme manager). The quotations

by the housing trust officer and groundwork officer respectively illustrate this further:

"I have an ability to look at what the implications of the initiatives can have on a

community that maybe from a statutory point of view you wouldn't always think

about"

"we provide a service in linking local people's aspirations with regeneration. There is

a certain amount of expertise we have in engaging people in the process of physical

improvements."

The work observed at meetings supported these claims. Clearly engaging with the public

was a central tenet of events (how successful and to what extent the public engaged back is

more questionable) as was working with a range of different stakeholders on shared themes

rather than individual specialisms. As with the development control case, this can be

succinctly shorted to an often used phrase, 'being strategic.'

The view of the local community centre co-ordinator resounded with those more widely

held in this area, stressing experience as the key factor in the skills of a professional to be

able to work in regeneration:

"knowledge of regeneration as a whole and not just Somersmeade, the whole of the

city and other cities as well, they bring all that knowledge with them".

This attitude was also expressed by the local elected member. As those who were not

professionals did support their claims to professional status on the grounds of these skills,

the discourse of legitimacy is here strengthened, however, this does not allow for all the problems to be overcome.

From the public meetings, local people expressed their interests about what was happening in their area in a markedly different way to the officers, indicating an incompatibility of understanding. The funding schemes demand strategic forward-looking documents which are not site specific and cover general interdisciplinary aspirations rather than specific physical actions. The strategic decisions are made in another language, and the private consultant and the Partnership co-ordinator noted:

> "earlier than that they(local elected members) had been a little bit misguided, I don't know if its right for me to say, but they kind of missed the point of the word strategic and they were still concerned about the brick through the windows and the dogshit on the pavement, not the strategic vision".

> "I think people will become more engaged and more interested we'd be looking at things which are closer to home".

The comments of the private practitioner, one of the two officially qualified town planners encountered in the field work, about his own skills and knowledge are summarised below:

> "the word town planner is perhaps a bit misleading because... I see that as about development control and grannies' greenhouses and what can be build, we're more about urbanism and about best quality of urban design and sustainability and about what communities want really, about what makes them knit together. It's very much up there with the best practice."

He was more explicit about knowing answers, rather than just approaches and ideas than any of the public sector professionals. Again, this draws divisions between his discourse of legitimacy, and that of the other officers, positioning him again within the New Right discourse as he knew the best way to achieve his client's aims. In this case, this was also the regeneration of Somersmeade, but his knowledge was more outcome based and concrete than process and pure strategy driven.

6.7.4 How is the professional held accountable?

In answer to this question, the work of the public sector regeneration officers was articulated in the Third Way discourse once more. To be held accountable and concomitantly be autonomous, they drew on the twin rationales of deliberative democracy and the contemporary policy framework. Creation of legitimacy in this area was also constructed through funding regimes, to a much greater extent than in the development control case. The relationship between deliberative and representative democracy was strained and conflict-riven, akin to notions of who planning is for. The legitimacy of the private sector again was different to their public sector colleagues.

Throughout the fieldwork, it was apparent that the activities undertaken by the partnership, its partners and the council itself were shaped and reshaped by government policy and the funding associated with it. As well as a move to shape professional action in managerialist target related terms, officers described their aims as creating "sustainable communities/neighbourhoods", they used the government's definition, both practically and morally, of economically inactive in the SRF presentations. In the PPG meeting, too, the physical programme manager said explicitly that the work he was doing on sustainable

transport "dovetails into the agenda the government are very keen on at the moment" and when discussing a new sports facility, *Topseats Park Active Living Centre,* said it was "cunningly named to get sport England active living funding". This illustrates that governmental discourse is used by the officers to shape their constructions of their actions. This is both used subliminally, their constructions have become so reified as to be natural, real entities to describe and aim for through action, as well as deliberately applied constructions.

The effects of this governmental definition of the real further impacts on the bounding of the autonomy of professional practice by the funding regimes which enable officers to be employed and projects undertaken. The effect of these was seen throughout the public sector. The change from SRB funding to the new regimes currently makes the Partnership shape their objectives differently, as expressed by their coordinator:

> "we've got to align our objectives more closely with citywide objectives, the community plan, the neighbourhood renewal strategy, and then look at priorities in a thematic fashion and demonstrate more clearly how our programme delivers to meet those targets."

This is also the case with short-term projects, as they shape the actions and the evaluations of whether it has been successful or not. In reference to a project about neighbourhood safety, the following comment was made by the housing trust officer:

> "there was a contribution from Home Office, so along with those contributions, you have to prove who you've consulted with, how they've been involved in the process".

Short-term based funding regimes therefore affected most officers' ability to work, and how their work was undertaken and expressed as the groundwork officer stated:

> "a lot of our time and effort, particularly at manager level is to do just that, to continually look to the future, look at new partnerships, look at new ideas and ...the norm is one year ahead approval"

Funds identify a specific problem and stipulate certain things about how this problem is to be addressed. It is within these boundaries that the professional can be autonomous or held accountable, key aspects of how their work is rendered legitimate. This does not leave the professional stranded- a puppet of the edicts of policy, but it does construct a discursive realm in which their actions have to be bounded. This realm is not fixed and unchallengeable as it is a product of a hegemonising discourse, and it is therefore open to the challenge of rearticulation.

To illustrate the role of deliberative democracy, or how the partnership saw themselves as accountable to the community in general rather than the mechanisms of local democracy, the following examples prove useful. The role of the local elected members was seen largely as one stakeholder group, or *one* community voice, not anything special beyond the fact that they are more likely to be uncooperative. The Partnership co-ordinator and groundwork officer commented:

> "you wouldn't want to be doing anything major in Somersmeade without having member buy in, they are one of the key stakeholder groups".

"we put some priority on members' views because they are the active representatives of local people. They've also got a lot of power as well, so we've got to be careful of that".

There was a notable absence of local councillors at any of the events, or present in the offices. The partnership saw itself as directly working for the community, more than for them via the medium of traditional democratic structures. There is clearly conflict here with this approach and the local members' view of who knows the area best, as expressed by a Somersmeade councillor:

"Nobody knows them wards better than local members...When the partnership came in, what it wanted to do was give out lots of money: let's give out lots of money to organisations and people, the whole thing has got to be sustainable, its not just about giving out money so they can go on holiday, its about making sure they get benefit. Now, people who you really wouldn't give a penny to for whatever reason were being given tens of thousands of pounds by the Partnership. It was only afterwards when we were finding out that certain groups had got funding."

There was a feeling from some local members that the Partnership was usurping their role,

"in the early days of the Partnership, [I] felt that the Partnership were trying to do the work of the councillors, and there was some grey areas between what an elected member was supposed to do, and has the authority to do and what the Somersmeade Partnership were doing, specifically around consultation and speaking to the public...we were a bit aggrieved when they'd call public meetings, for example it was the regeneration of the civic centre...on council days, so there's not a cat in hell's

change that local members can get along to the public meetings. Then because we weren't there, everybody was saying where's the councillors?"

This illustrates some conflict in the role of 'new' professionals as facilitators of all views. Their position here does not sit easily with the position of the elected member, it is seen as duplicating it, without necessarily holding to the same underlying values. It also furthers the problems expressed in answer to the questions about who the professionals are, and unequal positions in the partnership. Although many of the officers had done their best to ignore it, the elected members still held voting powers over what planning decisions were taken. The local authority remained the base of their income and ability to effect change.

The final point to be considered here is the autonomy and accountability of the private sector consultant. This construction of the boundaries of legitimacy through funding regimes and their attendant policy constructs was not the case in his work. His legitimacy was founded on a client based relationship with whoever was paying his fees. His work was undertaken to the remit they stipulated, but his skills, operation and judgments were not bounded by funding and policy definitions in the same way. This follows on appropriately from the different mode of operation which could be seen in his practice.

6.8 Conclusions

This chapter has illustrated how the actions of the Somersmeade partnership were legitimised in a Third Way discourse of professional legitimacy, as well as the inherent contradictions and internal paradoxes to this. It also illustrates that it is not the only possible ideological base to legitimise professional action as the case of the consultant shows. The

dominant discourse claims that planning is for the local community and to aid their lives through engagement and economic growth in which their say is taken seriously, and facilitated into workable, dynamic, inclusive schemes by strategic, yet value free professionals. Underpinning this, however, the ability to act, to decide upon the priorities for achieving this is constrained, regulated and reshaped by government led funding regimes and wider targets and goals. Through these, economic growth is trumpeted as *the* solution, but not explicitly voiced by local people who see inherent contradictions between this and their environmental quality of life: the approach does not bring the heralded win:win:win situations. In addition, where local people do voice support for new projects, development and growth, it is seen necessarily as at the expense of elsewhere, such as sucking high tech businesses away from the city centre. With the same logic, but operating in reverse, the reason that the area cannot 'sustain' a cinema is because there are too many too close to make this economically viable. The desirable level and nature of input by local people into the drawing up of strategies is debatable, and it is not only the officers who think that their judgement has something specific to offer. This is not contradictory to the Third Way conception of professionalism, but the fact that different stakeholders want different tangible outcomes, or are not interested in the same, raises problems for this understanding of professional working. If the public do not see strategy as relevant to them, but strategies are necessitated by the funding regimes and the documents which facilitate or block certain outcomes, their voice cannot be seen as shaping the product of planning. The language of the Partnership, and the language of professional planning is not something in which the public are fluent. The mode of working inextricably linked to this necessitates partnership working with the public, so obviating the fact that their views may simply be ignored, where they do not fit the tenor of regeneration. All the good words about empowering

communities to work for themselves are meaningless if this remains tokenistic. The leaving of the moral/political decision which underpins new professional practice as implicit allows it to be silently hijacked by the dominant discourse of economic growth whilst assuming the façade of being a cordial collaboratively made choice which serves the interests of all involved. The possibilities to challenge this, and the wider implications these concerns raised in this chapter have for planning are discussed further in the next two chapters. It is necessary to return the focus to the research questions, and draw the findings of the two case studies together in comparisons in order to consider the implications of this for planning as a whole.

Chapter Seven: Analysis

7.1 Introduction

This chapter takes the initial analysis from the two case study chapters and focuses so as to address the second set of research questions postulated in Chapter Four. These provide the link between the case studies and the first set of research questions which are addressed in the following chapter. It further uses the analytical concepts of *mode of operation* and *discourses of legitimacy* to compare the two case studies and see how the professionals and the contexts in which they were working varied. It takes on the more conceptual language of the earlier chapters and develops the discussion in the light of theoretical and political ideas. The four key aspects, posed as questions in Table 1 are drawn upon for this comparison, as they formed the basis for the initial analysis in the case study chapters. This table is redrawn with examples of how each of the discourses were articulated in the case studies. In addition, the concept of antagonism, as outlined in Chapter Three, is employed to see what conflict is apparent or potential within the construction of legitimate professional articulations. Following from this, the chapter considers further challenges to the discourses of legitimacy, either from other discourses, or contradictions within any given discourse. The relationship between these discursive claims to legitimacy and the professional mode of operation is then examined.

In short, all discourses of legitimacy are drawn upon by different professionals, and none are without conflict or contradiction. The development control officers largely articulate their professional legitimacy in a Welfare discourse, the regeneration officers in that of the Third Way. This becomes more apparent in comparison to each other. Also, across both the case

studies, the private sector planners emerge as more similar to each other than the public sector officers in their case, through drawing on a New Right discourse to articulate their legitimacy. These differences are further complicated by the different modes of operation employed. This analysis provides the material on which address the first set of research questions, the next chapter.

7.2 Modes of Operation: What modes of operation do professionals use? Does this vary by sector?

7.2.1 Introduction

This section aims to further the analysis of modes of professional operation which was begun in the two previous chapters. The idea of a mode of operation, as explained in Chapters Two and Four, relates to what professionals do in their work. It emerges from the range of literature classified as 'new', which, accepting the challenges of managerialism and to positivist concepts of knowledge, aims to rehabilitate the concept of professional work. Drawing strongly from Furbey et al's (2001) idea of 'network' professionals, facilitation is key to operating in a new mode. Modes of operation which do not centre around facilitation nor have to face the challenges of managerialism are classified as traditional. This section aims to see if this concept has use in the field of the planning profession, and endeavours to add to the reconceptualising of professionalism by so doing. These ideas are not without flaws, but it is by exploring them further that these may be addressed.

In brief, there are many similarities between the modes of operation of the public sector professionals in both cases, both contributing to the argument that there is a new mode of professional operation in the face of criticisms and in response to managerialism. In

addition, the differences in operation seem to be between private and public sectors planners, rather than development control and regeneration planners, although the issues and daily working of private sector officers needs further investigation before anything substantial can be said about their work outside of this context. However, the following observations are of interest here. As issues of managerialism do not present the same challenge to private planners' practice as it does to those working in the public sector, their response to the critique of traditional professionalism is quite different and does not alter their daily work. Managerialism in the private sector is associated with achieving the wishes of the client and, is therefore fundamentally part of their discourse of professional legitimacy, rather than the challenge it is to professional practice in the public sector. Overall, this illustrates that the concept of a mode of professional operation is a fruitful category for analysis, and, as will be illustrated below, the idea of 'new' professionalism is worthy of academic use and further investigation. However, as has been argued in Chapter Two this mode of operation is deliberately non explicit about the grounds on which decisions are made, it has an ethical/political 'gap'. Facilitation may overcome anti-positivist criticisms of knowledge, but for action to be taken, decisions have to be made. This links back to the idea that the professional's role is to make the cognitive jump between 'diagnosing' and 'treating' (Macdonald, 2000). Despite many similarities in the approach to the daily work, this 'gap' was filled very differently, in relation to their discourse of legitimacy. This furthers the importance of discourses of professional legitimacy, as they link action to ideology. However, the relationship between the two is not simple or obvious.

The following sections examine the mode of operation of public sector professionals, namely 'new' professionalism, looking first at their work with other practitioners, secondly with members of the public and thirdly the influence of managerialism. At the same time, it

contrasts their working with that of the private sector practitioners in both case studies. It then looks at the relations between these different aspects of new professionalism, and concludes by considering the importance of this concept to the study and of theorising public sector professionals.

7.2.2 Working with other professionals/practitioners in different sectors

Both sets of public sector professionals engaged in a creative process of problem setting and policy interpretation, in conjunction with other parties, under the constraints of legal, financial, policy and performance management regimes. In both cases, professionals had the role of compiling documents; proofs of evidence in the development control case and the strategic regeneration frameworks in the regeneration case. In both cases, these were drawn up with the assistance of private sector consultants and in negotiation with other officers and the public. In neither case were the professionals solely responsible for the content and construction of these documents. These are exemplary cases of 'facilitation' as defined in Chapter Four and drawn from the literature on new professionalism. However, the ways they were subsequently publicly presented were very different. This again relates to the ethical/political gap in new professional decision making, and furthers the necessity of considering both legitimacy and modes of operation together; the white and the yolk, to draw upon the analogy set out in Chapter Four. Although the partnership case study had more contact with 'outside' bodies, these were largely other members of the public sector, often those fulfilling functions that have been removed from direct local authority control, such as the housing trust. In parallel to former council housing stock being eligible for more funding when it transfers to a different social landlord, former council housing officers are no longer council employees, but largely the same people doing the same job. The politics

of this removal from direct state control fits with the ideologies of partnership, actors had been made into partners rather than colleagues so that their working relationship is partnership rather than as part of a (monolithic) bureaucracy. This was not the situation in the development control case study, as apart from their private sector consultant, their 'partners' were other council officers. However, as these boundaries are reified, the difference in daily practice between case studies is minimal. What was important in both case studies was personal working relationships, rather than institutional boundaries. Despite being in the same building and directorate as the sustainable transport team, development control had little interaction with them, to the detriment of both. This is in contrast to environmental health, which physically and institutionally worked separately, but were able to support and interact with development control effectively. In the regeneration case, where partnership was the official mantra of working, similar problems could be identified. Their relationship with the BW3 group of local business interests had only recently started speaking to the partnership team as they had appointed a new chair. Related to this was the problem with obtaining representatives from the industrial estates to attend the PPG meetings. This and the BW3 group illustrate differences between the regeneration workers and the private sector, despite the vision of partnership. In addition, their working relationship with the parks department of the council was not on a equal footing. Despite the fact that the officer responsible for the day to day activities in the local park attended the PPG meeting, the activities undertaken by him, and by the physical programmes officer were not complementary. This illustrates the potential incompatibility and tensions of being strategic and dealing with specific activities.

Although the public sector officers worked with private sector professionals necessitates logically that private sector officers worked with public sector officers, their relationships were not equal and reciprocal. The private sector consultants working for the partnership and the local authority did not see it as their role to talk to anyone other than their client, they did not engage directly with public consultation, or coordinate the views of other officers. From this working basis, their strategies and proofs of evidence were their own work, not collaborative efforts, typifying this as traditional professionalism, rather than new. The appellant's consultant's role was slightly different to this, as part of his role was drawing together a team of experts to defend their case at inquiry. This case was a joint construct, but each had autonomy over their own area of expertise. How this differed from the public sector mode of operating is seen more clearly in relation to working with the public. The reasons for and implications of this are considered further in answer to the questions about legitimacy.

7.2.3 Working with the public

As with working with other practitioners, both sets of public sector officers worked as facilitators with members of the public. The previous two chapters have detailed this at some length, illustrating daily telephone and in person conversations for the development control officers, as well as working alongside the Residents' Association in the Inquiry. The regeneration officers' work in consultation meetings and the open day also involved frequent contact with the public. However, the presentation of this varied greatly between the case studies. In the regeneration case, the offices of the partnership were located at the physical heart of the community they were working for, and their work focused around engaging people in potential future developments in the area, as the open day and consultation

meetings illustrated. This was supported by a strong commitment to the local area and local people from the partnership officers, to the extent that the council's planning officer viewed them as becoming too local. However, most members of the public consulted for the SRF wanted definite answers and practical action to be taken, as was seen from the questions asked at the public meetings and open day.

In relation to dealing with the public, the development control officers can be seen as acting as gatekeepers of the rules of development control rather than facilitators. When dealing with members of the public on the telephone, they did talk about rules, what would or would not get planning permission and whether or not permission was required. The content and meaning of these rules were known by the development control officers, and not up for any meaningful level of renegotiation with members of the public. However, as the discretionary planning system of the UK allows, the officers worked with members of the public to help them make the case for the development they wished to undertake. This is best exemplified by the cases of the pigeon loft, and the withdrawal and resubmission approach to major developments. These differences, both between and within cases, relate to the vital yet uneasy relationship between professional operation and legitimacy.

The private sector consultants' work with the public further drew the divide between them and public sector officers. None of the private sector consultants viewed working directly with the public as their role; the public were only their clients by default, rather than their direct employer. This meant that the version of their interests which the private sector consultants worked to was totally mediated by public sector officers. The partnership's consultant, still only worked with Somersmeade residents through events set up by the

partnership officers, for example, presenting the SRF at the open day meeting. The public consultation on the SRF was undertaken by the partnership officers, and then this was fed back to the consultant to add to the SRF. Similarly, in the development control case the council's planning consultant stated that the Residents' Association had been in touch with her, but she had not seen it as her role to advise and support them. It would be an overstatement to say that the appellant's planning consultant had no concept of or interest in the public. However, in relation to the Residents' Association, apart from being at the initial committee meeting about the application and at inquiry he had no direct dealings with them. The arguments about the status of the appellant's planning brief further illustrate these issues. In relation to the public more generally, the appellant's planning consultant talked about national housing shortages, and this was not central to his operation as a professional, but was not professionally legitimised through his work to combat these shortages.

7.2.4 Managerialism

As previously stated, the other side of 'new' professionalism is managerialism. When analysing and comparing the case studies in the light of this, the divide between public and private sector officers is sustained, as is the similarity between development control and regeneration officers. The most obvious impact of managerialism is that of performance targets, and this is seen most clearly in the development control case. Although less explicit and quantifiable, managerialism was equally present in the regeneration case study. This was most evident in relation to their need to align their aims with city and national regeneration goals. Its influence is also present in the regeneration officers' and their colleagues' perpetual need to get more funding for their projects. This constant restating of professional aims into the language of funding regimes is a prime case of redefining goals to

make them acceptable and relevant in a managerialist system, supporting Causer and Exworthy's (1999) claims. Although the actual tasks were different, the need to work within the discursive frames of government policy was common to both. This strongly supports the arguments within the literature that public sector professionalism both has to and can change in the light of government drives towards managerialism. It is not a context which professionals can just ignore, or that their work allows them to rise above, but also it does not necessitate deprofessionalisation.

The importance of managerialism to the public sector professionals is increased when contrasted with the operation of their private sector counterparts. Their work is framed by the desires of their clients, and the general policy background in which planning is situated. They do not have to fit their work nor articulate their professionalism with government targets or funding regimes. When working for the public sector, it is the job of the council or partnership officers to ensure that their work fits these managerialist criteria, either by how they use the private consultants' work, or how they commission it. This further positions private sector planning's operation in a traditional mode.

7.2.5 The 'new' public sector professionals?

It is necessary to draw together the different aspects analysed above and reflect on their fit, as a whole, to thoroughly consider what modes of operation professionals use. As discussed in Chapter Two, at one level, the facilitation side can be seen as the antithesis of the managerialist side. The latter is about centralisation and imposing performance regimes and ways of working; the former is about collaboration and listening to diverse voices. However, in practice this was not the case.

In development control, the officers saw the need to meet their targets as being part of their professional competencies, and found ways to interpret them which enabled further facilitation with other parties as the 'withdraw-resubmit' approach to large scale planning applications illustrated. In the partnership, meeting targets was seen as proving they were achieving their goals, and was apparent in the need to articulate their aims in the language of citywide priorities and potential funders. It became a shared language of action when facilitating the work of other officers or members of the public.

The practitioners in neither case acted as simple automatons, carrying out edicts like instructions from a recipe book. Instead they absorbed targets and policy framing into the work they were already undertaking, and remade it in suitable language. Facilitation and managerialism support, rather than contradict each other; it is not as simple as the former being a response to the latter. This allows for another side of new professionalism to be rendered visible, namely, the importance of the hidden ethical/political basis on which judgements are made. These two aspects of new professionalism are process, rather than outcome, focused. Facilitation is the embodiment of 'good' process in action and managerialism is the policy context which shapes this, and the criteria against which its success can be audited. The relationship between this work and the *content* of the strategies, frameworks or proofs of evidence is opaque. This is in contrast to the private sector consultants as the main part of their work was the content of their documents. Their shaping of policy and other information into an argument was to support their clients' needs and wishes. This was of much greater importance than *how* they went about doing this.

7.2.6 Summary

To summarise, public sector professionals operate in a process-focused, outcome opaque mode, and although there are important differences between development control and regeneration, these are nothing like as dramatic as the difference between public and private sector professionals. There is no gulf of difference emerging between the professionals working in development control as opposed to those working in regeneration. This does not fit with the assumptions articulated in McClymont (2003), and is considered further in the next chapter. Both sectors of working can claim to be 'new' professionals, according to the definition used in Chapter Four, furthering the usefulness of this nascent descriptive category. There is continued meaning in the concept of a professional, but this is one which accepts new styles of public sector working and acknowledges the critiques of occupational control. This is seen in both the regeneration case and the development control case, but only amongst public sector workers. The implications of this are considered in the next chapter when addressing issues around the ideological rearticulation of planning. However, to make sense of theses differences and similarities in modes of operation, and to further discuss the meaning and usefulness of the term, it is necessary to consider the questions about discourses of legitimacy and their relationship with modes of operating.

7.3 Discourses of Legitimacy: What discourses of professional legitimacy do professionals draw upon? Does this vary by sector?

7.3.1 Introduction

As explained in the conceptual framework, legitimacy is a two-way process with both the state legitimising certain professions, and these professions in turn legitimising the state. The question of legitimacy illustrates greater divergence between case studies, as well as

between the public and private sector professionals as their aims and actions were constructed in very different terms. Very generally, development control officers articulated their legitimacy through a Welfare discourse, the regeneration partnership officers through a Third Way discourse and the private sector consultants through the New Right discourse. This is summarised in *Table Two* below. The discourses are not fixed nor definite but fluid constructions of meaning, and an aim of this research is to see how stabilised any of these have become.

There is a general fit between sectors and discourses of legitimacy, however, this is not exact or without problems. This section outlines the dominant discourses articulated by each sector, namely development control, regeneration and private consultancy by again drawing on the four themes of professionalism as questions by which a discourse of legitimacy is articulated, as shown in Table 2.

In general, the development control officers' legitimacy can be seen as relying on the foundations of the planning system. This embodies the legal status and the cultural implications of the nationalisation of the right to develop land and still underpins the articulations of their professionalism. This is in contrast to the regeneration officers; their legitimacy is derived from a more contemporary ideological basis constructed through policy and funding regimes. In contrast to both of these, private sector professionals in both cases articulate their legitimacy on the basis of their customer/client relations. Legitimacy is shaped and articulated through actions, relationships and policies, and in turn, shapes and (re)articulates legitimacy.

Table 2 Discourses of Legitimacy from the Case Studies

	Development Control- public sector	Regeneration- Public Sector	Private Sector
Who is planning for?	Unspecified/not clearly or consistently articulated. Possibilities include the area committee, the borough, and the 'little' people as opposed to the'big bad developer'	The people of Somersmeade	The client, who can be a private developer, a local authority or a regeneration partnership
Who does the planning?	Development control *planners* working for a local authority with a direct relationship with councillors	A team of multidisciplinary quasi public sector officers, with input from a wide range of private, voluntary and community bodies	Individuals and members of consultancies with planning qualifications, working for a range of clients

What does the professional know?	How to be *site specific*. What can/should or cannot/should not be done in any given case	How to be *strategic*. How to involve all the relevant parties to get an overview of what is best for the area, and how to achieve this goal in general terms	How to serve the interests of their clients: How to regenerate Somersmeade How to know what should or should not happen to the printworks site according to law and policy
How is the professional held accountable?	By the area committee, and by the Planning Inspectorate, through planning policy and law, and representative democratic structures	In deliberative democratic fora, whether projects get funding and partnerships remain viable	Financial contracts- bonuses may be given for winning a case, also, the durability of the client relationship is sealed through these

7.3.2 Comparative Discourses: Who is planning for?

This question relates to the values underpinning the profession of planning; issues around whose interest it should serve. In relation to the case studies, the three named groups, or sectors all articulate this idea very differently. As is clear from the two previous chapters, there is no consensus amongst public sector professionals, or professionally qualified planners as to the answer to this. In addition, the difference between the development control officers, and the other planners is in terms of articulated and non-articulated rather than clashing or contrasting articulations. Both regeneration and private sector officers have clear, although divergent, discourses of who they are planning for. In contrast, development control officers do not.

In the regeneration case, planning is clearly articulated as for the people of Somersmeade, the community, as bounded by the SRB area. This fits exactly the Third Way discourse of professional legitimacy. The officers all defined their work as tackling inequalities and exclusion, with the wishes of the local residents central. This extends as far as the private sector consultant, although, as is explained below, does not hold the same position within his discourse of professional legitimacy. Throughout dealing with the managerialist agenda of aligning with city regeneration goals, the Partnership see their role as rearticulating the interests of the community in different terms. The aim of the PPG is to ensure the community's interests are best served by getting all relevant parties together to discuss their future direction, as the GIS example illustrates well. The themes the Partnership worked to advance were health, safety and education, as well as physical and development issues. However, this was not without problems. There were conflicts about who this community actually are and how best their interest could be known and then served.

In contrast to this, in the development control case, no dominant discourse about who planning was for was openly articulated. It may be that the longevity of development control in a local authority setting leads to complacency about their *raison d'etre*, whilst a newly established partnership feels more need to justify its existence. This did not mean that there was no need for such questions to be considered, or that agreement was so widespread that as a term there was no need for further articulation. In the inquiry, the discussion about required ventilation and noise pollution, are illustrative of how the collective can be articulated as the subject of planning. The environmental health officer did not see building houses without windows that open as a matter of personal choice, rather, he saw ensuring that these were not built as maintaining a minimum standard below which no-one should fall. Although this may not be the most crucial political issue facing those within planning, it illustrates the subject of planning as people in general, for whom certain standards of living should be met, rather than individuals, rationally operating their own choices.

This is in contrast to the majority of the daily working of the development control officers being focused on applicants, giving their work an unconscious customer focus. The nature of the system necessitates that development control officers spend the majority of their time working with people submitting planning applications, rather than anyone else. Although none of the officers were explicit about their applicants being who planning was for, it became so, in a practical if not theoretical way. Officers mentioned planning as being for the future, not just the present, and also discussed serving the local community. This concept was not as clearly articulated or definitely bounded as it was in the regeneration case. It was also muddled by their relationship with local democracy; as they had a direct working relationship with their local area committee, and local elected members, they can be seen as

serving the local community by default. The differences between the way this, and the regeneration officers, articulated the concept of local community is large and of much importance. Although the development control articulations are by no means as coherent, the regeneration Third Way discourse is not without its problems.

In relation to the private sector, the case studies suggested that planning was clearly for their client. The previously made caveats about the lack of empirical focus or explicit theorising of private practice still stand, but the following observations about private practice add to the differences drawn between it and both types of public sector practice. As clients do not have to be a developer or private interest, it can be the community, or the wider public by default. However, the private sector consultants did not articulate that they are planning for the community/public as in the case studies, as none were directly employed by a community group. The interests of whom they were working was defined as a client, so a community, or the public would be treated in the same way as private developer. Planning is not for any particular group, with a positive ethical stance defining it as so, it is for whoever is paying for the service.

7.3.3 Dominance of the Discourse of Community

From all the above discussion, it could be argued that the Third Way discourse of legitimacy with regards to who planning is for, is becoming dominant, at least throughout the public sector. There is no clear discourse of a general or national good as in the Welfare discourse. As the later sections illustrate, this is otherwise the discourse of legitimacy employed by the development control officers throughout the other aspects of their discourse of legitimacy. Its absence here is notable, and raises questions as to whether a Welfare discourse of

legitimacy is possible. However, neither the development control officers, nor any of the private sector consultants draw upon the discourse of community to the same extent, or in the same way as the regeneration officers. This illustrates that each aspect of a discourse of legitimacy needs to be seen in relation to the other aspects. This does not negate that the issue of who planning is for has clear potential as a point for antagonism. If community becomes the dominant qua hegemonic concept of who planning is for, private practice could no longer be for individual customers, but would have to be for a community, akin to the concept of advocacy planning. Their legitimacy would have to centre around who they were working for, rather than the notion of a *paying* client. It would also change profoundly the nature of development control and regulatory work. Policies and plans would have to be interpreted specifically in the interests of the community, and representative democracy may well become redundant, if it were not able to reassert itself as representing *the community*. Notwithstanding all the above-mentioned issues with the concept as planning for the community, this would be problematic. Without national or general interests as a guiding principle behind policy and its interpretation, planning decisions would be made largely on the grounds of parochial self interest, and those with the least voice could be the most disempowered. This is not to say that current development control practices are in favour of the disenfranchised, but they have the potential to be.

The problems enacted in both case studies tie back to the debates within planning theory, about whose interests planning serves, and whose interests it should serve (Campbell and Marshall, 2000, Sandercock, 1998). It also supports some of the reservations about an unproblematic assumption that communities are benign, and their empowerment will

axiomatically lead to better planning outcomes for all. The implications of this are considered further in the next chapter.

7.3.4 Comparative Discourses: Who does the planning?

This aspect of the discourses of legitimacy relates to how the professionals themselves are articulated: how they articulate their own roles and positions, and how they are constructed by the others amongst and for whom they work. It relates to the ideas of occupational control, and the importance of boundaries between expert and non expert. This mutual articulation of who does the planning is considered throughout this section. However as it is too wordy and cumbersome to restate this in relation to every example given and point made, so will only be referred to explicitly when necessary. In general, in the development control case, the officers saw themselves as individual planners with an area to plan for, and it was their responsibility to make the right decisions and to work alongside the elected representatives for that area. Although they worked as part of a team and a council, this individual aspect of their identity appeared important. They would only guardedly deal with someone else's work or present to another committee. In the partnership case, officers' primary loyalty was to the partnership as a whole and they all worked together on cross-cutting issues and all presented the SRF at public events, regardless of status or specialism. In both cases, the private sector consultants' roles were different again. They had their own workload, which was drawn up with their client. Their connection to a given geographical area did not have the longevity or breadth of either type of the public sector officers.

In the development control case, the public sector officers were 'professionals working for the state', and hence using a Welfare discourse of legitimacy. This is articulated in

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statements such as "yes, I'm a planner" on the telephone to a member of the public, and the elected member's description of the case officer as "he's my Marple planner". The 'state' for which they were working is clearly bounded, it is the local authority by which they are employed and held accountable by its elected members. The importance of this relationship is discussed in detail in the *'how is the professional held accountable?'* section. Differences between the roles of professional, politician and public were maintained to reinforce this Welfare discourse of legitimacy, the analysis highlighting that the mode of operation and the boundaries in action were more blurred than this. The planners remain directly employed by the local authority, and as discussed in the sections on facilitation, worked largely with other local authority employees. Professional qualifications were of paramount importance in the public inquiry. Each witness began their evidence by stating their qualifications and experience. This was what made them able to do the planning, made their evidence carry weight in that setting. The setting itself, too, is worth further comment. The formality of the inquiry and its criteria for granted valid knowledge were reinforced by the council chamber, its grandeur and complex entry procedure. The separate seating of the council and the appellant, and the raising of the inspector also reinforced all their respective roles and positions. These surroundings are part of the maintenance of occupational control for the development control officers. The stating formally of qualifications, and refusal to answer on areas where they were not suitably qualified, expressed this control and the reification of boundaries in the inquiry. This was also the case, if in less formal language, in the daily work of the officers, and in the public's articulations of the planners. A witness in the inquiry called for 'planning experts' to come up with a suitable brief for the site, and the secretary of the Residents' Association in interview argued for all large scale applications to be dealt with

by qualified local inspectors. The boundaries of occupational control were patrolled therefore on both sides, expert and non-expert.

As there was no collectively clearly articulated goal as to whom planning is for in this case, there was no strong sense of shared values or a shared motivation for work which united the officers, unlike the appellant's team at the public inquiry. Their similarities were their self presentation as autonomous skilled individuals. This relates back to the assumption that planning is in the general interest, without any need for it to be articulated explicitly. It is axiomatic from the skills and qualifications held by the professionals that their work will be for this general good. This further places the professionals within a Welfare discourse of legitimacy. The legal rules of the inquiry did not necessitate this approach, a stronger sense of 'teamliness' would have been possible, legally, but would have gone against their articulation of legitimacy as autonomous professionals working for the state. There are issues about where this aspect of the discourse of legitimacy sits within the 'new' mode of operation. This is discussed in the later section in answer to the question about how legitimacy relates to modes of operation.

This is in contrast to the partnership case which can be seen as articulating the role of their professionals in the Third Way discourse of legitimacy. Clear boundaries were not drawn between who was employed by what organisation, and at times between officers and the public. Those who were not employed by the partnership, for example the groundwork officers, still presented the SRF in the same way as those who were. A shared goal, the regeneration of Somersmeade, broke down occupational, professional and sectoral differences. Unlike in the development control case, qualifications and training were not

publicly presented, so no hierarchy or specialisms were evident. As the public role of regeneration was to engage the community, and gauge their ideas about what was needed in their area, formal planning qualifications were seen as less important than personal communication skills. The focus of who does the planning in the regeneration case concerns whether it is the team as a whole, rather than individual planners. At the open day, the lack of clear differences between who was presenting and who was participating reinforced this, there was a strong sense that everyone should be part of the regeneration of the area more than promote their particular interest, be it the reduction of crime, educational improvement or physical regeneration. In this case, the idea of occupational control was much more fluid and less formally structured. On the surface, the only qualification for undertaking work was to support the aims of regenerating Somersmeade. However, the more intangible qualification of 'being strategic' drew boundaries between expert and non expert work. In addition, much of the public articulated a different concept of who the professionals were.

In general, there was not a clear and unproblematic articulation of the Third Way discourse, as the public response to the Partnership was to treat the officers as officers rather than as partners. This was seen in the questions asked in the SRF meetings and the reactions to the physical programme stall at the open day. Questions centred around issues of nuisance neighbours, and what they, the council, as they were seen, were going to do about these issues. In addition, the fact that no member of the public sat on the PPG suggested a hierarchy in partnership. The distinctions between officers and the public was used in practice, if not openly, in the discourse. This further indicates the importance of articulation as two way process. The officers articulate their own legitimacy to specify their construction

of professionalism, but are interpellated by others in their understanding of, and requirement for, professionals. It is not only the professionals and the state who create and define discourses of professional legitimacy, the public have power in this area too.

In relation to the private sector, the answer to this question is fairly obvious. Consultants working for a client do the planning. They advocate their clients' interests on the grounds that they are being paid to do so. As later sections illustrate, this can involve a nearly limitless range of areas. Their role is similar to that of the development control officer, with the exception that who the private sector works for and therefore whose interests they are working in is explicit, whereas the cloudy concept of the state does not allow for such certainty. Their skills and qualifications are used as a marketable product, and it is the relationship between these two which maintains their occupational control. Without the skills and qualifications they present as having, they would not be able to market their services. Moreover, without being able to market their services, and receive payment from clients, their skills and qualifications would be rendered meaningless. The financial value of their knowledge is what reifies it in light of anti-positivist challenges.

In relation to possible points of antagonism, they are less obvious than with the previous question. The three discourses of professional legitimacy are used to articulate different versions of who should be doing the planning, they do not directly challenge each other. The work of the two sets of public sector officers is so separate, that this does not seem very likely. However, this in itself may be a problem for planning as a whole. It links to the perceived disjuncture between development control and forward or regeneration planning, and has the potential to further this divide to the detriment of both aspects of planning.

7.3.5 Comparative Discourses: What does the professional know?

This question was the most ill-defined of all the aspects of the discourses of professional legitimacy in Chapter Three. The case study material makes this category's use more evident, as well as providing further material for analysis. Asking what the professional knew lead to the same divisions as with the previous two questions. The private sector consultants knew how to serve their clients' interests, be it regenerating Somersmeade, or defending what development was appropriate in the greenbelt. The regeneration officers knew how to 'be strategic', and the development control officers knew how to be 'site specific'.

In both case studies, what the private sector professionals knew was how to serve their clients. This encompassed a wide range of factual and practical knowledge. For example, in the development control case, the private sector consultants knew both relevant policy and case law, and how to interpret it, and also how to assemble a team of supporting experts. The private sector consultant in the Somersmeade case knew how to designate local shopping areas and draw up transport corridors, and also to work with other consultancies and the partnership officers in relation to the compiling of the SRF. This is both general and specific knowledge, and shaped to the interests and desires of the client. This is exemplified by the councils' consultant's claim, in the development control case, that she could as easily have been working for the appellant as for the council. This illustrates that professional status does not presuppose a certain right answer in a given situation; there is not one way to 'diagnose' and therefore 'treat' a problem. For the private sector planners, what is right, and therefore what they know, is the aim of their paying client, and their skills are therefore about argument-making, in a case by case, rather than general way.

7.3.6 'Being Strategic' versus 'Being Site Specific'

Both sets of public sector professionals define their knowledge very differently from each other. However, in contrast to the private sector planners, what both sets know is less wide and more situationally based, and both more focused and more general. In the regeneration case, this was expressed by those involved as 'being strategic'. Although this was never explicitly defined by any of the officers who used the term, it can be seen as meaning future oriented, based on ideas drawn up by partnerships of relevant officers to further their vision of the interests of the community, which they were serving. The phrase was used in relation to work being undertaken by the PPG as well as work on the SRF, and by those not directly employed by the partnership as well as those who were. 'Being strategic' is a good way of expressing what is known by the professional in the Third Way discourse. It encompasses bringing different interests together and shaping policy on this basis rather than having an occupational monopoly on knowing what is the best course of action to take in terms of achieving the desired product of planning. It is about a general course of action rather than specific concrete proposals. What is legitimate to be known is about process rather than outcome; how to be strategic, but not what the strategy should contain. This links back to the issues around the hidden ethical/political basis on which decisions are made by professionals. Their mode of operation of 'being strategic' is akin to facilitation. However, the specific tangible aim of their actions is never stated beyond regenerating Somersmeade, and listening to all voices. This leaves hidden what a regenerated Somersmeade might actually be, and what will be done with these voices when heard. As the discussion in the previous chapter illustrated, much of what goes into the strategy is shaped by Third Way ideology, such as the primacy of economic development and growth, and private housing led regeneration. Many of the voices of the public 'heard' in SRF meetings suggested this was

against their wishes, illustrating the paradoxes in this ideology and with the issues underlying the 'new' professionalism.

This is in contrast to what the professional knew in the development control case, articulated in a Welfare discourse of legitimacy. It was expressed as 'being site specific' and was about achieving things, concrete decisions and actions, as well as ways of getting to these actions. This was about both process and outcome, in both the inquiry and the day to day work of the officers. For them, 'being site specific' was akin to 'being strategic' in as much as it provided a convenient shorthand to describe their work based knowledge. This led to being slightly more explicit about the hidden political/ethical decisions than the Third Way discourse allows: it is more open about its relationship with outcomes. The professional knows what certain things can or cannot happen in any given place which is within their jurisdiction. These are shaped by planning policy and law, and therefore should indicate the desired outcome. However, as this case study has shown, there is professional room for manoeuvre within this legal/policy framework, depending on the discourse of legitimacy employed. Policy can be interpreted, and the basis of the interpretation can be different political/ethical standpoints, or different interests, as the following example illustrates. In the public inquiry the issues of character and heritage with regard to the mill buildings and their relation to the local area drew out two different versions of what should be done, despite being based upon the same policies. The policies of the local plan concerning industrial heritage pertaining to the printworks buildings were indecisive about their value. They classified that area of the river valley as an area of special landscape interest, and alongside national policy, was firmly against inappropriate development in the greenbelt. This was interpreted both in favour and against the demolition of the printworks and its chimney.

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During the discussions in the planning inquiry about this, the council's landscape witness disagreed with the aesthetic criticisms of the built form, levied by the appellant's witness, saying that the mill's chimney was an "accepted and comfortable feature, valued by lots of people". To counteract this, the appellant made the point that the chimney was a financial liability and demolishing it was the first thing that any potential developer would do. This argument progressed into a debate about whether the fact that buildings of a very similar style could be seen all over both the local urban and rural areas made them less valuable as they were common, or more valuable as they were part of a special local character. Both descriptions of the printworks and chimney are 'true', but the one is part of a case for a client who wants housing on the site, and the other is in the interests of a general, unspecified public, which happens to be supported by the local Residents' Association. To justify their legitimacy, each actor has to present their interpretation as the only truth. There is no space for agreement or compromise here, the ideological discourses on which they are individually based cannot be coalesced. This example also highlights how different values and interests are articulated within the policy framework to produce clashing discourses. The differences are guided by whether what the professional knows is how to serve their client, or be site specific, with action guided by the Welfare ideology.

7.3.7 Public Inquiry- Ideology and Fixing of Meaning

Although the above clearly illustrates that policy is interpretable, and allows or prohibits very different outcomes dependant on what discourse is being articulated, the inquiry takes on the role of a ritualised arena for making knowledge fact. It is where the meaning of the policy is (temporarily) fixed. In this case, this formal procedure became the only viable way to achieve the product of planning, this being what is specified in planning policy be it PPGs or

the local UDP, as the two clashing interpretations were irreconcilable. It is not simply because the two sets of professionals, public versus private sector, articulated their legitimacy from different ideological discourses that their interpretations of policy were so diverse. It is evident by the existence of a private sector consultant working for the council. However, the divide is more subtle than this. The council officers draw on the Welfare ideology which underpins their discourse of legitimacy, although implicitly. This shapes their interpretation of policy. The private sector consultants also have their decisions underpinned by the ideology of their discourses of legitimacy, but the relationship this has with their interpretation of policy is tempered by their customer relationship. The New Right ideology allows for the customer's wishes/views to shape the professional's interpretation of policy, as the planners are providing a service for which the customer is paying. So, in this case, it is the difference between the customer's desired site specific outcome, mediated by a planning consultant, and the public sector officers' Welfare influenced interpretation of policy that leads to a different site specific outcome that creates the irreconcilable difference.

The inquiry tested what these actually meant in the concrete situation of this case, how the policies were to relate to what could or could not happen on the ground. In the Welfare discourse, the professional has legitimate knowledge about outcome as well as process. In their daily work officers are undertaking activities on the same basis, but on a less grand and explicit scale. What is known is how to make a decision in the face of competing interests, unlike in the Third Way discourse, where the professional should have the knowledge to overcome differences of opinion by being strategic. As already stated, 'being strategic' relates to process rather than outcome, and decisions that possibly involve conflict are

hidden behind this notion of fair process. This is best seen in discussions around airport expansion and private housing development.

7.3.8 Knowing and Doing: Discourse and Practice

However, the divide in practice is not as clear as it is in the claims of legitimacy. As has been shown in the section above on the mode of operation, professionals using Welfare discourses of legitimacy also know about involving different stakeholders and shaping policy. In addition, professionals using Third Way discourses of legitimacy know the best way to achieve their product, such as how to successfully engage people and write funding bids, this being more practical than strategic. This illustrates how the discourses of legitimacy operate to make differences in practice become salient, drawing on different aspects of similar practice, to make differences meaningful. In this, the ideological underpinnings of practice becomes of increased importance,. In addition, the difference between regeneration and development control officers in their discursive articulation of their legitimacy, in contrast to the similarity in practice, illustrates that professional action is more than its articulation. What it is presented as is not its totality. This simultaneously illustrates the importance of, and limitations to this conceptual framework of research. This is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

In terms of grounds for antagonism, the situation is similar to that of the last section. The two discourses of legitimacy articulated within the public sector create such different moments of meaning, that they do not clash with each other, but cannot easily be joined to create a unified concept of planning as a whole. In relation to the differences between the public sector and private sector however, the grounds for antagonistic conflict are stronger.

This is not in terms of the debates over the interpretation of policy. It falls back on the more abstract conception of what the professional knows, in this case either how to defend the interests of clients or how to achieve desired outcomes in the general good. The potential for antagonism comes from the possibility of defining all interests as client interests rather than general or public values. This latter cannot be conceptualised as that of a client as its interests are not bounded by one specific case, and cannot be paid for, being a theoretical rather than a quantifiable subject. The potential to have all interests defended as clients is apparent from the fact that the council had employed a private sector consultant to take their case to inquiry. If this were to become more widespread it would change the role of the planning profession significantly. It is from this potentially antagonistic divide that the differences in policy interpretation can come. This potential site of antagonism could also challenge the Third Way articulation of what professionals know. This is as 'being strategic' supposes bringing together many parties, rather than the explicit defence of one set of interests: the client's, which the New Right discourse necessitates.

7.3.9 Comparative Discourses: How is the professional held accountable?

As explained in Chapter Three, this question refers to the mechanisms by which the professional is simultaneously granted autonomy to practice and is held accountable. It provides further detail as to how the state/professional pact is shaped in any of the given ideological frameworks which articulate the discourse of legitimacy. It also considered how spatially bounded autonomy to practise and attendant accountability are related. The issue of public support and trust is not discussed at any length in relation to this question, as the role of the public vary greatly from discourse to discourse. However, as this issue is a vital aspect of legitimacy as a wider concept, it is covered in some depth in the discussion below

about challenges to a dominant discourse of legitimacy. In relation to the private sector, financial and contractual relationship override issues of democracy and policy in the creation of autonomy and maintenance of accountability.

In the development control case the issues raised in Chapter Five about the nationalised right to develop land as enshrined in the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act remain the keystone on which autonomy and accountability are founded. This remains more important than any current changes or policies, or performance management regimes. This is not to say that development control officers' constructions of legitimacy in this area have remained unchanged since 1947, but the effects of other influences are minimal in comparison. As long as this remains, legitimacy can be constructed through this legal framework and its attendant values about the purpose of planning. This is maintained and reinforced on a daily basis by the relationship between development control officers and the area committee, or local elected members more generally. The 1947 Act established this uneasy relationship between 'science' and 'democracy'. This linking of spatial outcomes with democratic control, in theory at least, ensures that decisions are made in the public interest, by both granting 'experts' autonomy, and holding them accountable. It is within this set up that trust in the professionals is assumed to be guaranteed.

In the regeneration partnership case study, the officers are autonomous within the financial constraints and adherence to policy initiatives as explained in Chapter Six. They are accountable as to whether or not they successfully achieve funding bids; the criteria for so doing being in the merry-go-round of relevant policy initiatives which largely have a focus on 'community' and 'stakeholder' engagement. This is illustrated by the fact that the

partnership has to realign its priorities when they became funded by the council rather than the SRB, and the discussions around healthy living and home office funding. Their work, centring around 'being strategic', is spatially bounded by the area of the partnership. Their legitimacy does not extend to the city as a whole, or beyond. This area, and hence their legitimacy, was a creation of the policy which allowed for the establishment of the partnership and subsequent funding for the project. This necessarily allied the aims of the professionals with the aims of SRB policy more widely, leaving them free to operate within these boundaries.

7.3.10 Financial Concerns

However, as is illustrated in Chapter Five money also had an influence on how the professionals were held accountable in the development control case in relation to the potential awarding of costs against the council and how this may damage the relationship between the case officer and his committee. Although this remains bound up with representative democracy, as it is about the officer-member relationship, it adds a dimension which is not part of the Welfare discourse. Their professional judgement is being judged not on whether the decision they make about a site specific application was 'right' or not, rather that the processes in which they engaged to get to this decision were suitable. In this case, part costs were awarded against the council. This was because some of the evidence they used to make their case was deemed irrelevant, rather than that their decision was wrong. This illustrates that issue by issue, the appellant's planning consultant can interpret policy in making his client's case, in such a way that it overrides the council's case, based on general principles. Accountability, therefore, in development control, is not simply about just making the right decisions in the eyes of the elected members, or successfully interpreting

policy in relation to what can happen on any given site. It takes on financial considerations, more akin to New Right concepts of legitimacy; instead of being paid to make certain points, they are being charged to fail in so doing. Although financial penalties are a longstanding tool to support the use of due process, the monetary side appears to now take on further significance, as it has the potential to unsettle the relationship between officers and members. The Welfare concept of planning implies a clear and non-permeable distinction between professional and political roles. However, the awarding of costs, an issue which may affect members directly if the money has to come from their budgets may draw their interest into the 'technical' side of planning; to processes as well as outcomes. This could alter the relationship between the two, and therefore the officers' potential to claim legitimacy through this discourse.

7.3.11 Representative or Participatory Democracy?

In addition to these above mentioned problems, neither the Third Way nor the Welfare discourse of legitimacy successfully articulates how the professional is held accountable. At times, both draw on the others articulation of how professionals create autonomy or are held accountable. In both cases, this centres around the balance between public involvement and representative democracy. The Third Way discourse heralds the former as having superseded the latter, and the Welfare discourse has no concept of the former, but a belief that its professionals are working in the public interest. However, neither alone provides a legitimate concept of the public.

In many ways, the development control case can be seen as the epitome of corporatist working held accountable by traditional mechanisms of representative democracy, at both

local and national levels. The officers work to their committees and their roles are complementary yet separated. In the inquiry, the inspector declared himself as appointed by the Secretary of State: there to legitimately do the work designated by the politicians, thus illustrating the ongoing relationship between central and local government, and how officer-member roles are paralleled throughout the democratic hierarchy. However, this is muddied by their work with the public and other officers, as is discussed in the earlier section about the mode of operation. The actual way that the public are dealt with is more deliberative than the formal structure of representative democracy would allow. This is in both official and unofficial ways. In the inquiry, the inspector was willing to adjust the running order so that members of the public could speak at times which were suitable for them. Members of the public were entitled to speak at the committee meetings where planning applications were judged, and any application that had received more than three objections from members of the public had to be referred to the committee for a decision, rather than remain delegated to the officer. This is in addition to the facilitatory approach to working with the public described in detail in the section above about modes of professional operation.

In the regeneration case, despite ambivalent feelings about 'the council', and especially the elected members and their inability to 'be strategic', held by many officers and partners, the structures of representative democracy was necessary for their work to be implemented. The area committee had a role in passing proposals, regeneration has still got to be approved by development control and its mechanisms if it were to have any physical impact, to become 'site specific'. In addition, the SRF would need council wide democratic approval if it were to be adopted as part of the LDF for the whole city. From this it is clear that

deliberative democracy alone does not hold the regeneration team accountable, unless their actions and aims are purely articulated as strategy, with no impact on spatial change, which is evidently not the case.

In relation to the private sector professionals in both cases, their accountability was to their clients, and their autonomy was constructed in the financially bounded client relationship. However, this does not exist in isolation from the other two discourses. To have any bearing on physical land use outcomes, New Right legitimacy must take a position articulated within one of the other two discourses. The political mainstream of the state has never rejected a need for public control of land use decisions since 1947, and planning has always necessitated a relationship with democracy. This was even the case under Thatcher. This firmly situates planning as an activity and a profession within direct democratic control, although the specific variation of this is not fixed.

This analysis illustrates clear differences between development control and regeneration officers' articulations of how they are held accountable, and the construction of their autonomy. However, despite the conflicts apparent between ideas of representative and deliberative democracy, there appears to be too much reliance on each other's articulations for this to become a point of antagonism. Both sets of public sector professionals need formal process *and* deliberative engagement to be held accountable and to work autonomously. Where either is seen to draw too strongly on just one, the public withdraw their support from the professionals. There are more grounds for antagonism between public and private sector professionals, where there is also some enmity. In relation to this area of professional legitimacy, the divide is greatest between democratic and financial

accountability. The importance of this is discussed in the next section in answer to the question about challenges to the dominant discourses.

7.3.12 Summary

To conclude, professionals are seen to draw on all three discourses of legitimacy as established in Chapter Three; the general distribution of this being all private sector professionals using the New Right discourse, the public sector officers in the regeneration case using the Third Way discourse and the development control officers using the Welfare discourse of legitimacy. Areas which have the potential to be sites of antagonism are identified in each of the themes/questions. The issue of conflict is described in more detail in the section below, illustrating where different aspects of the discourses of legitimacy clash, or internal problems become so contradictory as to damage the discourse as a whole.

7.4 Challenges to the Dominant Discourse: Are there any challenges to the dominant discourse of legitimacy in any one case or sector?

This section looks at some of the problems intrinsic to the claims of legitimacy elaborated in the previous section, and uses examples which do not fit simply within one of the 'questions' which make up the discourses. It further illustrates how the discourses of legitimacy do not encompass all the action and events of professional practice, or they prove inadequate in justifying what professional action has been taken. As explained in Chapter Four, this question relates to either antagonisms: active clashes over legitimacy between discourses, or failings within a discourse to fix meaning, or to a withdrawal of public trust in any given case of professional action, and therefore in the discourse of legitimacy too.

7.4.1 Flood Risk and the Public

In the development control case study, the issue of flooding highlights the most severe challenge to the Welfare discourse of legitimacy. It was arguably the most contentious issue of the whole appeal, as none of the 'facts' or issues were resolved by the start of the inquiry, but also one, if left to the professional officers alone would not even have emerged as an issue. To recap briefly, before the appeal, the council's in house officer who deals with flooding issues had said that he thought the site was liable to flooding, but in these cases this issue is always referred to the Environment Agency. Their response was not to object to the proposals as long as all slab levels were raised to a certain height which they believed would safeguard any potential houses against flooding. Throughout, until threatened with costs, the Residents' Association maintained an objection to the application on this ground. After the decision, the Planning Inspector said that it had been their perseverance in getting slab levels raised for a second time that had contributed to his decision. However, the Residents' Association were not satisfied with this outcome. This illustrates that the public did not believe that the professionals were working in their interests, or the interests of the public in general, thus undermining their discourse of legitimacy. As already stated, to be successful, discourses of legitimacy need not only to be used by the professionals, but those who the professionals work with. In this issue, the public asserted a more active role for which the Welfare discourse of legitimacy did not allow. Instead, the public and their interests needed to be mediated through this system, as legitimacy rested on representative democracy. Returning to the issue of flooding, it is not that the public were concerned about this for their own sake. They can be seen as drawing upon an idea of the public good, that people should not live in houses that are at risk of flooding. They argued that building these houses would only lead to private gain for the developer, and that planning decisions should be

taken on the basis of wider interests than private profit. In this instance, their withdrawal of trust from the state and the professionals is a challenge to the discourse of legitimacy within its own terms. By arguing against building on potential flood plains they are articulating who planning should be for more clearly than the officers were in this case. However, by arguing that their knowledge was valid, they were challenging the Welfare constructions of who does the planning and how they are held accountable. They saw a need for articulations of broader interests than parochial community based desires, but also for a direct place within expert and decision making discourse for their voice. This illustrates the need for a more considered concept of democracy than the articulated divide of representative: deliberative democracy allows.

7.4 2 Third Way decisions and the Airport

This section discusses in further detail some of the issues raised earlier about problems with the Third Way discourse of legitimacy and decision making, or outcomes. However, unlike in the development control case example above, these clashes were not so openly acknowledged. This is partly due to the differences between the two situations; the inquiry was a one-off confrontational event, whereas the regeneration project was an ongoing process of consensus building. This fits with the aim of the Third Way discourse to encompass all voices. This section considers some of the difficulties seen in the regeneration case study about deciding between competing interests, and the grounds on which these decisions were made. As well as the issues about the relationship between representative and deliberative democracy, there were issues about who were the community in whose interests the professionals were working. This is illustrated by the evident tensions between the partnership and council officers in the PPG meeting, such as over the issue of

who should get access to the GIS software. It may well have been in the interests of those in the area for such tools to be used to combine different planning and regeneration schemes, but not the city as a whole as it would lead to inequality between areas, and potentially offer a different approach to problems. The conflict between this local and the view that the partnership needed to be more focused on city wide goals, was expressed by both the council planning officer and by the partnership manager. There is no explicit acknowledgement that the interests of one community have the potential to compete with others. This is not possible in a discourse of legitimacy which centres around consensus.

The issue of conflicting interests and decision making is taken to a further level of poignancy in relation to the airport. The expansion of the airport was a critical issue in local politics. It can be seen as doing the reverse of the above example about GIS; putting wider interests above that of the community. Despite much community resistance to the airport being allowed to expand, because of issues of pollution and loss of green space, the SRF still stated that the continued development of the airport was one of the four key opportunities in the area. This conflict was acknowledged by the regeneration manager and the local councillor. It illustrates a major flaw in the Third Way discourse of professional legitimacy, as it does not acknowledge conflict. The decision to support airport growth illustrates that decisions are being taken on grounds other than mirroring the interests of all stakeholders, and that there is an ethical/political dimension in new professional decision-taking. As is evident from this discussion, this situation raises problems with both the Third Way discourse of legitimacy, and with the new mode of operation as it is currently conceptualised. Facilitation may well be occurring by means of community involvement and partnership, but the relationship between this and spatial outcomes is insufficiently explained and theorised.

7.4.3 'Consultation fatigue'

This issue links closely to the above discussions about conflict over airport expansion, and draws on the other side of the failure of either deliberative and representative democracy to alone provide a suitable mechanism for the public's relationship with professionals. It too draws in issues around trust, or the lack of trust. The term consultation fatigue is being used as a shorthand for a range of public dissatisfaction with the role they are given within the processes which shape the spatial make up of their locality, and the relationship between this and the outcomes of planning decisions. This is antithetical to the conception of the public in the Third Way discourse, where they should be engaged and vocal, at least in the process, with an assumption that if this is so, the outcomes will be satisfactory for all. The open day and the SRF meetings illustrate, there was a feeling that big decisions were being taken without public involvement, for example the demolition of former public buildings, both social housing and a school, to build new private housing; and there was much anger at this. In addition, many of the questions directed at the regeneration officers, especially with regard to physical changes, were asking the officers what they were planning. Despite the physical programme officer's attempt to distance himself from this, the public still positioned the officers as the doers, reinforcing their interpellation as distinct experts. This reveals willingness to trust others. The public did not hold a quasi anarchistic view of knowledge and authority, but there was little belief that the officers were acting in their interests. This leads to a reluctance or inability to engage strategically on the part of the public, or at least not to be able to see the links between the events in which they were engaged, and the outcomes they see around them. This is not to imply that this is impossible, or that the public are somehow stupid, but that the assumption that getting people to discuss general and strategic aims for an area makes them feel that they have

influenced changes is misplaced. The regeneration team had a wealth of opinions, but how any of them translated to change was at best opaque. This ties back to the problems of 'being strategic' without' being site specific', as discussed earlier. It also links to a wish of the public to trust officials to be working in their interests, and consult them when necessary. This is also seen in the example from the development control case about flooding and links to some of the issues raised below about clashes between the public and private sectors.

7.4.4 Tensions between Sectors

Despite working together, often very closely, there was much at best light-hearted criticism, and at worst animosity, between the public and private sector professionals. This was the case in both development control and regeneration, despite the supposed differences in their discourses of legitimacy with regard to their work with others. In the regeneration case study, the partnership officers frequently made jokes about how before they could do anything, they needed to get a consultant, and at public meetings they commented sarcastically yet jovially that it had taken a consultant to say that the area needed better facilities. Underlying these good-humoured jibes were genuine feelings that it was an overused requirement to get a consultant in to present what they already knew and were doing anyway. However, it was necessitated by the structure in which they worked. Conversely, the consultant presented his work as dealing with the real intellectual and spatial matters. He was not critical of the partnership officers, as they were his client and he was working for them. The relationship between them is dictated by his discourse of legitimacy, they were his client, he was not one of their partners. The council's planning officer's views reinforce this description of the relationship. She said that the role of consultants in the wider work of the partnership had "change(d)... the skills required for our job" as officers

no longer have to do the drawing up, designing of schemes and map; they manage the job. She furthered the argument by saying that the ethos between the public and private partners was not necessarily shared, that consultants are given a formal brief, as they are no longer just upstairs and part of the council and with the same aims. The partnership, and the council more widely now need to be explicit about what they wanted consultants to do, rather than rely on previously assumed shared mores. This idea was in turn expressed by the private practitioner who described the brief that his firm were given as very detailed, and said that the partnership made it very clear and stressed very heavily that they wanted social, economic and physical aspects of regeneration covered.

In the development control case, the criticism between sectors was much more open than in the regeneration case. The appellant's planning consultant was very critical of the ability of the public sector officers and the notion that they should be working for the community, rather than making correct planning decisions was regarded as unprofessional. In turn, the public sector officers accused their private sector counterparts of "reeking of greed", and that one can do or say anything if given enough money to do so. The council's relationship with their planning consultant was also defined in terms of a paying client. After the inquiry, the council officers reflected that it may not have been the right decision to employ a consultant, as for every individual piece of work, the company had charged them more money. This was in addition to the case officer working full time on the appeal, to coordinate the other witnesses, work with members and the public and agree on what went into the statement of common ground. This illustrates that the overall clash in the discourses of professional legitimacy between the development control and private sector officers amounted to professional incompatibility. The public sector assumptions about

what presenting a case amounted to were evidently very different to the private sector ones. In the former, it was about making a overarching and general statement about what was right and wrong in terms of a specific development, and therefore whether or not it could go ahead. In the latter every document, every issue covered, ever issue investigated and every meeting attended was at the client's wishes. Each one came with a real price.

The continued presence of a New Right discourse of legitimacy in planning amounts to the idea that paying money for a service implies neutrality in professional work, but is it not clear who actually believed this. The majority of the public sector officers expressed low levels of public trust in the local authorities, however, there was no clamour from the public for more consultancies to be undertaking planning in their area. If anything, the reverse was the case, as the example of the community centre manager in the regeneration case and her criticism of attempts to get consultants to run the centre shows. Also, in the development control case the Residents' Association's clear antipathy towards the appellant and their consultant, and their dealing with the case officer, rather than the council's consultant in the development control case illustrate this further. However, neither of these examples illustrate much potential for trust in the public sector either. The continued power of the New Right discourse of professional legitimacy related to a more general mood of consumerism and litigation. If one pays for something, and it is not satisfactory, there are ways of being reimbursed. The financial contract can therefore be seen to replace that of trust. This is alongside the issue of concealed or inarticulated values in public sector work. If public officials are not explicit about who they are working for, fears of abuse of power and corruption in decision making will prevail.

7.4.5 Summary

These situations illustrate that the discourses of legitimacy employed by the professionals in each case study were not complete nor without both internal and external challenge. They illustrate the failings of legitimacy because the ideologies on which they are based can be successfully challenged or are incompletely articulated. This in turn illustrates how no one discourse has successfully anchored all elements to secure hegemony in this area, and hence how each could be challenged. This section has also illustrated that there are challenges to all discourses of legitimacy. In relation to the New Right, this comes only externally, from both sets of public sector professionals: it is challenged by both Welfare and Third Way discourses of legitimacy. In relation to the Welfare and Third Way discourses, the challenges are all internal to the discourse. This means that they are not points of antagonism in the same way as that over who planning is for. The challenges here do not actively deny whole articulated identities, or moments; rather they destabilise some of the component moments of the discourse. Both sets of public sector professionals face challenges to their conception of the public for contradictory reasons. In the development control case, the public found that their voice was not listened to enough, as they were to be planned *for* not with. The opposite was the basis of challenge in the regeneration case; the public were to be planned *with*, not for, leading to what can be dubbed as consultation fatigue, and a desire for visible and definite answers. In addition, in the regeneration case, it was problematic that the officers' sense of community was so tightly and explicitly drawn along SRB lines. This was reinforced by and a lack of engagement with elected representatives serving the wider city. Although this challenge is not directly from the Welfare discourse, it could be seen as providing a counterargument to the nascent antagonism over 'who is planning for' as explained in the previous section. Although the Welfare discourse in relation to this issue is

not actively articulated, the Third Way's construction is so internally flawed as to seriously damage it. The idea of planning for the community attempts to rearticulate the concept of who planning is for whilst internally collapsing.

7.5 The Relationship between Mode of Operation and Legitimacy: How does this relate to their mode of operation? Does operating in a new mode necessitate a Third Way discourse of legitimacy?

This section draws together the concepts of modes of operation and legitimacy, to see how they do or do not fit with the issues raised in the previous section about challenges and limitations to the three dominant discourse of legitimacy. Asking if a 'new' mode of operation necessitates Third Way legitimacy clarifies and specifies the issue of how legitimacy relates to professional operation. The two questions overlap, as the second is a specific clarification of the first. These issues begin to link together the daily work of officers with political changes and strategies. The private sector consultants will be discussed first, as their mode of operation and discourse of legitimacy are most simple, but are not without contradictions. The public sector officers are then considered in turn. The issues surrounding fit between mode of operation and legitimacy are clearly more similar to each other than either are to the private sector. This is because they both operate in 'new' modes, but their constructions of legitimacy opposing. It is therefore necessary to not only consider the fit between mode of operation and legitimacy, but also analyse why, and for what reasons, these differences are apparent.

7.5.1 Traditional Professionalism for Sale

Although the focus of this research is public sector professionals, interesting observations arise from considerations of the examples of private practice found in these cases. The private sector consultants operated in a traditional mode, drawing on a New Right discourse of legitimacy to construct their actions as professional. These fitted well together, centring around the concept of clients who would buy a product. The need for the product to be saleable supports the traditional mode of operation, with professionals having special positivist knowledge about planning. The more nebulous facilitated product of new professionalism, on the other hand, being less concrete and definite in terms of outcomes would be harder to sell and to value. An application using policy and plans 'correctly' to support the client's wishes for a certain site is a more tangible concept than bringing together different people in line with the influence and requirements of managerialism, to achieve the best outcome, and one more readily associated with financial gain. This links to what shapes private practice to use this mode of operation and discourse of legitimacy. In these cases, private sector consultants operate only within the constraints of the market and the law. It is market forces, in a given legal context which constrain and produce their professional legitimacy. This allows for the continued use of the traditional mode of operation, but removes from it the concept of professionals being the 'morals of society'. If people are willing to buy their skills and judgement, then it exists as something real, or at least commodifiable. This directly links to the New Right ideology, making the fit between the two comfortable. Autonomous practice is granted to those who have the desired qualification, but the idea of working for the general good is replaced by working for monetary goods. It is not possible to conclude that private practice across the board is amoral, or without any other guiding principles than money from this limited research, but

does suggest wider ruptures in the possibilities of legitimate planning practice. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, even when New Right ideology was dominant in British society, planning never became totally a tool of the market, direct democratic accountability always remained. This means that although it is evident from these case studies that private practice is alive and well, its ability to actually make policy or take decisions has to be tempered through the democratic process. No government nor act has removed the nationalisation of the right to develop land. Without this planning, in any contemporary or comprehensive way, would not be possible; regulatory structures are needed for private practice to exist too.

7.6.2 'Network Professionals' and Hidden Ideology

The regeneration partnership officers practiced in a new mode articulating their legitimacy by means of as Third Way discourse. These two aspects were clearly complementary because facilitation fits with the concepts of who planning was for, who did the planning and what the professional knows, and can relate well to a deliberative democratic process. The fit with the managerial side of the concept is less apparent and less fitting; there is no obvious reason that a central government target, or the requirements of a funding regime should be a stakeholder in a deliberative process. This highlights the contradictory context of 'modernised' local government (Martin, 2002, Cochrane, 2004). However, by giving detailed analysis to their practice, the contradictions and deliberate omissions in both this mode of operation and the discourse of legitimacy become apparent. This centres upon the twin issues of hidden ethical/political dimension to decision making in new professionalism, and failure to acknowledge the potential for conflict and differences of opinion in the Third Way discourse. Beyond this, professional action is shaped by policies and funding streams. Obviously, they would be still party to the same legal issues of corruption, for example, as

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the private sector consultants, but they are mainly constrained and enabled by funding regimes and their requirements. These shape both how they work; the necessity of public consultation and use of the consultants, and what they can achieve; a healthy living centre rather than a sports facility.

The development control officers also operated in a new mode, but largely articulating their legitimacy through a Welfare discourse. The fit here is more complicated and less neat than with the regeneration case. However, its possibility illustrates that operating in a new mode does not necessitate articulating legitimacy in a Third Way discourse. Unlike in the regeneration case, there were no evident links between who planning was for, what a planner knew and how the professional was held accountable. Furthermore, there was potential conflict between who does the planning in a Welfare discourse of legitimacy and the new mode of operation, especially with regards to facilitation. However, the development control officers negotiated this conflict, by, perhaps not consciously, redrawing their self conception of being professionals working for the state, to encompass facilitation with members of the public and other officers. This move to a 'new' mode of operation could be seen as to counteract the loss of trust in, and critiques of traditional professionalism as argued in Chapters One and Two, however it is unclear whether this is a successful response. As the private sector still operate in a traditional mode, and still get paying clients for so doing, it cannot be merely this mode of operation which has lost the trust of lay people. It appears to be the lack of articulation of in whose interests the professional is working that is a cause for concern. The private sector consultants constructed their legitimacy with an explicit focus on their clients' interest. The regeneration officers legitimacy is paralleled with a focus on the community, although it has been illustrated that this is a highly problematic

concept. However, the development control officers lacked an explicit discourse of whose interest they were working in. In both cases, the public wanted definite answers from the professionals, taking into consideration their wishes or interests, but not relying on them to do the planning. Currently, neither the 'new' nor the traditional modes of operation, based on any of the discourses of legitimacy adequately do this. This suggests that there is still more conceptualising, with attention needing to be paid to the ethical/political basis for decision making, of professionalism. Further discussion of this, in relation to the planning profession is examined in the next chapter.

In the development control case, professional action is largely shaped by the law, and legally material planning policies. These relate more directly and explicitly to outcomes than the policies and funders' requirements of the regeneration officers. The legal power of these plans and policies comes from the nationalisation of the right to develop land, as enshrined in the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act, linking their actions with the welfarist foundations of planning. However, the increasing importance of managerialist targets, although not undermining the fundamentals of this sort of planning, does have an impact on how professional action is shaped. This does not necessarily preclude the use of a Welfare discourse of legitimacy, as it is possible that these targets could be articulated as part of serving the general interest, and part of the role of professionals working for the state. The case study has illustrated that although they do shape action, there is room for manoeuvre and creativity around them.

The public inquiry case was defined by planning law and the partnership by policy and guidance made little difference to how professionals viewed what could and could not be

done in practice. Although there were clear legal boundaries about sharing evidence, this did not stop the council working with the Residents' Association in the public inquiry case. Conversely, although the SRF could have legally said almost anything, what it actually comprised of was shaped by the targets and potential funders. It is not just law which rules certain actions as beyond the powers of professionals, it is funding regimes. The public sector professionals in both cases saw financial matters as constraining what they were able to do; the issue of costs being key in the public inquiry case and the need to fit aims of projects in line with that of the funders in the partnership case. It was not simply the case that the development control officers' work was moulded by following rules and laws, whereas the regeneration officers were able to creatively engage with their community(ies) to achieve their aspirations. This illustrates the usefulness and failings of the concept of new professionalism, and that its relationship with the discourse of professional legitimacy is not fixed.

7.5.3 Summary

By bringing together the two conceptual ideas of modes of operation and discourses of legitimacy, this section has been able to begin to consider some of the 'why?' questions of this research, namely considering what shapes action and legitimacy for planning professionals. In short, the mode of operation and legitimacy have an imperfect fit, revealing both the limiting and constructing power of discourse. The structures which shape the discourses of legitimacy used by the different planning officers guide how they are to practice if they are to be legitimate in light of the state-professional pact. It is evident that this fit is not perfect as although three contrasting discourses of legitimacy are drawn upon by the professionals, three modes of operation are not. A discourse of legitimacy opens up

space for professional practice, and as long as what the professional does in this space does not provoke antagonism within the discourse they are operating with, they have much freedom in which to operate. To consider this further, it is necessary to do so in relation to the broader concepts of political changes and strategies that this research addresses. To do so, the meaning of the perceived divide between development control and forward or regeneration planning is developed, as is the power of the Third Way concept of professional legitimacy. In so doing, issues of trust, communities and the public, the meaning of professions and the future of planning are addressed.

7.6 Conclusion

This section has provided in-depth analysis of the case study material with regards to how daily work is undertaken and constructed as legitimate. It compares the case studies, highlighting the similarity in modes of operation and discourse of legitimacy of the private sector consultants across the cases, and the similarity in mode of operation, but difference in discourses of legitimacy, of the public sector officers. It illustrates that differences between public sector and private sector are greater than differences between development control and regeneration. By so doing, it is able to interrogate the concepts of new professionalism and discourses of legitimacy, showing points of antagonism and rupture within and between discourses. It also considers how these affect modes of operation, and what other influences shape them and their relationship with the discourses of legitimacy. Overall, this has shown that concepts of democracy and community are vital *and* contestable in the field of planning, and that actions and decisions cannot be neutrally made, relying on an understanding of fair process to ensure fair and universally acceptable outcomes. Its focus is internal to planning practice, and examines in detail both daily professional work in settings which are presented

as very different in popular parlance, and the claims of legitimacy made around this. It has focused on the 'what is happening?' side of the research aims, providing empirical and analytical material which will be used to consider *why* this is happening, and its implications for the planning profession in the next and final chapter.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This chapter draws together the thesis, addressing its overall aims and objectives as well as drawing on the discussions in the previous chapter to help address the first set of research questions. The questions are addressed in turn, highlighting the relationship between daily planning work and political ideology. The first considers whether the planning profession is being successfully rearticulated as part of the Third Way ideology, the second considers whether this leads to a division between development control and forward and regeneration planning. By addressing whether the notion of the planning profession is being successfully rearticulated as part of the Third Way ideology, the issue of the influence of policy on practice is considered. Following from this, addressing whether any potential rearticulations are leading to a division between development control and forward-looking planning furthers this analysis of the relationship between policy and practice. How the Third Way discourse could redraw planning to make its meaning fit its articulation of the social is considered. From this, four issues arise. These are: who the public are, and the conception of a community, accountability and democracy, the nature of public sector professions, and problems intrinsic to the Third Way ideology. These together create the context in which the current state of the planning profession is to be examined.

The chapter then reviews the usefulness of Laclau and Mouffe's theories as an overarching framework for social science research, reflecting on the advantages and disadvantages of this approach. Positioning the planning profession within these theoretical constructs is useful to critique the political, and place planning practice fully within this contentious and

contested arena. Professions are necessarily political, and asserting their role is a reassertion of ideology and values. This research has endeavoured to express this.

8.2 Answering the Research Questions

Is the planning profession being successfully articulated as part of the Third Way ideology? Is this leading to a division, in action and legitimacy, between development control and forward-looking or regeneration planning? This section addresses whether and how the planning profession is being rearticulated, by considering the strengths of the Third Way ideology in relation to the case studies detailed in the previous chapters. In many ways the key word in this question is *successfully*. As is evident from the case studies, the Third Way discourse, as well as being dominant in the regeneration case amongst the public sector officers, is beginning to have an impact on the development control officers' articulations of their legitimacy. However, this impact is limited and there are numerous flaws which can be found in Third Way discourses of legitimacy.

8.2.1 Strengths of the Third Way Ideology

The regeneration case study clearly illustrates professionals using the Third Way discourse of legitimacy, indicating that this area has been (re)articulated in line with this ideology. On one level this may seem obvious, as partnership working and its attendant policies and funding regimes have largely been a product of government since 1997; Third Way government and its agenda for 'modernisation' of the local state (Cochrane, 2004, Martin, 2002). However, no policy frame can be tight enough to encompass all the action which goes on within it, and as the discussion of the state-professional pact explains, policy only creates the space in which the professional has autonomy to practice. Within this space, professionals are

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drawing on Third Way concepts of who planning is for, who does the planning, what professionals know and how they are held accountable, as the previous chapter illustrates.

In addition to the strength of the Third Way discourse within the regeneration partnership case, there are signs of its influence in the development control case. This is two-fold and centres around questions about power and the divisions between the professionals and the public. Firstly, the public were dissatisfied with where they were positioned in the development control case with regards to flooding, as is explained in the previous chapter. Despite numerous cases of the development control officers working with the public in a facilitatory manner, this was not continued in all areas of the inquiry, especially in aspects deemed the most technical. The way the issue of flooding was dealt with, by all official parties, that is accepting the expert line of the Environment Agency, was not accepted by the Residents' Association who were not part of this decision. This reifying of certain types of knowledge as more technical removes them from non-expert comment. However, the rejection of this by the public suggests that the relationship needs to be altered if the professionals are still to be legitimate. The traditional acceptance of and trust in reified and formally certified experts is not present, with the public rejecting the idea of 'professionals working for the state' being axiomatically in their interests. There was a demand for their voice to be heard in all areas; to be planned *with* not just for. A levelling of power between voices, more akin to Third Way concepts, is supported by the public here.

The second area where the Third Way discourse appears to be influencing the discourses of legitimacy used in the development control case is in the area of who is planning for. Officers generally referred to the community more than the collective, national, or general

good, lacking any clear articulations of the latter. The Welfare concept of this theme was not articulated, and this gap was beginning to be filled by Third Way constructions. A lack of an alternative discourse alone would strengthen the possibility that this area was ripe for rearticulation. Without strong alternative discourses creating certainty of meaning, it is easy to see who planning is for as made of unarticulated elements, half ideas, not clearly linked together. No strong alternative concept of the public leaves little in the way of it being rearticulated as community, as in the regeneration case. This alongside the public's version of their role does strengthen the case that planning is being rearticulated in a Third Way discourse. Together they suggest that the public want a more official stakeholder role where their knowledge is taken more seriously, and that this may fit with a more locally bounded notion of the public as community, as the Third Way discourse claims, as this specifies them as valid knowers. Chapter Seven has illustrated how this is a potential site of antagonistic struggle. Although it is only one aspect of the discourses of legitimacy which has the potential to be readily antagonistic, the importance of this should not be underestimated. Following the explanation in Chapter Three about logics of equivalence and difference, once one moment is rearticulated as a different element, it alters the fit with the other elements as their meaning can only be understood relationally. If, in development control, planning becomes for the community, rather than for the general public, who does the planning, what the planners know and how they are held accountable also necessarily change. The idea of professionals working for the state does not fit with planning being for the (specific, identifiable) community, nor would generalist representative democracy or knowledge about achieving general goods. However, the concept of community is problematic itself. This raises further issues around the notion of how to conceptualise the public. As it is the area with the most potential for rearticulation into the Third Way discourse of legitimacy, and

one which links into much of the discussion about the planning profession within the literature, it is considered in more depth below.

The above discussion illustrates that there is a Third Way concept of planning professionalism, as is clearly evident from the regeneration case and beyond, however its discourse of legitimacy is not entirely successful. If this were the case, its rearticulation would be more widespread. It is riven with internal conflicts and contradictions, centring around who planning is for and how decisions can be made in face of opposing interests. Despite the government working to pursue a Third Way ideology throughout society, it cannot be all-powerful and omnipresent. This is due to the need for public support for professionals and government in a democracy system. These issues are considered in more depth after addressing the second part of this research question, namely whether rearticulations of planning is leading to a division between action and legitimacy in development control and forward or regeneration planning.

8.2.2 Development Control Versus Forward Planning

As explained in Chapter One, the perceived divide between development control and regeneration planning was the basis for the focus of this research project. In general, the case studies have illustrated that there is a divide between the two aspects of planning. The different ideological articulations of legitimacy are what cause these divisions, rather than modes of operation or the level of freedom or constraint policies or the law impose on the planners. In relation to action, there is much similarity between the way the regeneration and development control officers work, both operating in what can be described as a 'new' mode. However, their articulations of what they are doing presents their work in divergent

ways. This illustrates two related points. This first is that the political/ethical 'gap' in new professionalism is vital and how it is filled shapes professional practice beyond their modes of operation. The second is that discourses of legitimacy do not have a simple fit with professional action, and also need to be considered when reconceptualising professionalism. The research illustrates that the Third Way attempts at rearticulating professional planning are leading to a furthering of divisions between these two sides of planning in terms of legitimacy. This is problematic for planning as a whole, as is discussed below. Although as the previous section illustrates, the Third Way discourse does influence development control articulations of legitimacy, the limitations and problems with this make it of minor importance. What is of more concern than the influence of the Third Way discourse within development control, is the implications of this divide in legitimacy in the light of discussions about local government 'modernisation'. Although both development control and regeneration operate in new modes, to rise to the challenge of managerialism, the divide in legitimacy still positions the former as anachronistic, unmodernised in terms of the New Labour agenda (Cochrane, 2004, Martin, 2002). Although regulation can overcome the challenges in terms of professional practice, it cannot in terms of ideology.

However, the differences in legitimacy between development control and forward and regeneration planning have not led to a successful discursive deprofessionalisation of the latter. As stated earlier, professional legitimacy is more than just the state professional pact, as *government* itself has to be legitimate, and hence in a democracy have the support of the people. This research illustrates that regeneration planning is not the only professional planning activity with the support of the people. There is still support, if qualified, for the work and attendant legitimacy of the development control officers, and support for site

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specific decisions to be taken under democratic control. In addition, the continued practice of the private sector officers indicates another different version of legitimacy is still valid. These together reveal further problems with the Third Way's concept of planning, and hence its potential to successfully remove the legitimacy from the site specific and regulatory aspects of planning, or distance themselves from monetary versions of legitimacy. There is a divide between regeneration and development control planning, and this is greater than simply one of organisational boundaries and the focus of daily action. However, the Third Way rearticulation of planning, is only partly successful, and does not manage to delegitimise development control. Its attempts at hegemony of meaning are further weakened by the continued New Right legitimacy of the private sector planners.

To summarise in answer to the research questions, the Third Way ideology is having an influence on the construction of legitimacy in planning practice. This is leading to a widening of the divide between development control and forward or regeneration planning as they draw upon different ideological discourses to articulate their legitimacy. However, there are four critical caveats to this position. First, there are fundamental paradoxes within the Third Way discourse of legitimacy, which make it inherently problematic and unstable. Second, the similarities in modes of operation of the public sector officers illustrate more similarities than this divide would allow, revealing its ideological basis, challenging the claims of outdated paternalistic practice levelled at Welfare style professionals. Third, the continued legitimacy and traditional mode of operation of the private sector professionals illustrates that the issues are wider than just differences within the public sector, and further undermines hegemonising claims of the Third Way. Finally is the issue that legitimacy is wider than just the state-professional pact. Although, this has evidently been crucial,

professional legitimacy also relates to public support or mistrust. To situate these findings in a broader context, it is necessary to reflect on the following four themes, the public, the Third Way, professions and 'new' professionalism and accountability. Then, this in turn leads to further comment on the state of the planning profession.

8.3 Further Issues

8.3.1 The Public

The issues about concepts of community/customer/public/people are evidently problematic, yet central to any discourse of professional legitimacy in planning. This section considers the issues further in the light of the aims of this research, and then the wider discussions in planning theory.

The Third Way discourse articulates planning as being for the local community, whose desires are found through facilitation and deliberative democratic means. This assumes that this can be achieved without conflict, or that conflict can be overcome within its own terms, i.e. through further deliberation and facilitation. This in itself is at best unlikely. In addition, these deliberative discussions bear little direct relation to decision making and spatial outcomes. These are based on the hidden ethical/political dimension of professional action, bounded by what policy and law make possible or impossible. In this case, decisions were underpinned by logics of economic progress and growth. This fundamental conflict at the heart of the Third Way's discourse of professional legitimacy makes it difficult to say that planning has been successfully rearticulated in its ideological construction. The following section considers this in a more general critique of the ideology and its internal contradictions.

As the two previous chapters have illustrated, there are numerous issues about the concept of planning being for a specific identifiable community including the drawing and fixing of boundaries, conflicts with neighbouring communities, conflicts internal to the community and how a community's wishes are to be judged against other competing interests and ideological goals. These issues were all identified in the literature around planning practice, and contributed to rather than resolved by this research.

Starting from Campbell & Marshall's (2000) notion of the difference between the community and the collective, the findings of this research support this problematisation. Planning for a given community can be at odds with planning for wider interests, or one community's wishes have to be ignored if greater goals are to be achieve. Both aspects of this were illustrated in the Somersmeade case study. In addition, in the development control case study, the members of the Residents' Association made claims in the interests of a general public good, rather then just their own community interest. This articulation of a more general interest also had links to the articulation of non-human interests: future generations and the environment (cf O'Neill, 1997). An articulation of planning as for communities, nationally, or internationally will not be able to resolve these tensions nor encompass all these interests. Policy making which positions the community as its object (for example, ODPM 2004a, 2005, and typified by the ODPM's transformation into the Department for Communities and Local Government) will be faced with the issues. This illustrates how constructions of 'the people' and problems with them are not simply abstract academic ideas, but affect policy debates and their implementation: theory affects practice.

These issues link to discussions about reification of boundaries, between groups and areas. If the public are conceived as a specific bounded community, or group of communities, where this is found to be at best imperfect, problems occur. As discussed in Chapter Two, community identity is situational, and boundaries occur to divide problems rather than naturally (Gupta & Ferguson, 2002, Ferguson, 1997, Bauman, 1996). The current ideological conception of planning being for communities does not comprehend this shifting, situated notion of a community, nor does it accept that the drawing of a community boundary is inescapably political. Dividing somewhere into communities is to reify their problems as bounded, rather than tying them to the wider society, country or system that created that problem. By focusing on the regeneration of Somersmeade, the conspicuous wealth of the neighbouring areas, and the fundamental systemic causes of these inequalities are not addressed. Instead, the problems of a reified area are addressed as such (see, Peel, 1993, as a comparator of these ideas). In the development control case, if the community became articulated as who planning is for, as the above discussion has indicated is possible, this would also be problematic. Development in that local area would have to be seen as in their interests, which has the potential to be in conflict with wider interests. Hypothetically, a proposed development could be against the wishes of the specific community, but if boundaries were to be drawn more widely it could become in the community's interest. An example of this could be affordable housing in a so-called desirable area (see Hubbard, 2005, for a similar example of these issues). This is not to suggest this was by any means the case in the development control case study, but to speculate on its wider implications. All this is not to claim that reasserting planning as being for the general or public good easily resolves these issues, it is simply to indicate the wide problems there are with the concept of community, especially as these are largely ignored in the policy literature. In general, this

calls for a more subtle understanding of this in policy and in practice, for one which does not believe the fantasy of community as a reality, rather sees it as a way of conceptualising interests that would otherwise be ignored, a practical tool through which people can be engaged in planning. Accepting the reification as reality is dangerous as is ignoring the voices of those whose support is necessary for the possibility of professional legitimacy.

In contrast to this, but also of great importance when conceptualising the public in planning practice is the articulation of people as customers. This New Right articulation of who planning was for still held much meaning within the private sector and their clients. Despite indications in the literature (Casey and Allen, 2004) that part of a 'professional project of the self' was to view public sector professional relationships in these terms, this was not apparent in the case studies. However, this does not diminish the power of this construction. The fact that planning can be for a paying customer indicates the continuity of a New Right discourse of professional legitimacy. As it has not been superseded, or rearticulated, by the notion of community, the Third Way's articulations cannot hegemonise. It illustrates another viable interpellation of the public which assumes certain rights to and responsibilities from the profession of planning (cf Prior, 1995). It illustrates that planning can be positioned as a service which can be bought and sold, and those who wish to receive its services should pay for it. This articulation does not sit comfortably with the Third Way notion of planning for the community, and is discussed further in the below section. These issues are of particular importance for considerations of the planning profession, as unlike other public sector professions, planning affects everybody. Teaching and Social Work, for example, although they may cite wider ideal such as education and social justice as what they

are working for, have identifiable clients. Whether a certain development is or is not allowed to go ahead has a more immediate impact on a wider population.

These issues around the definition of communities, are ones which needs much more research. Drawing the distinctions as between expert and lay can hide differences between communities, and lead professionals and researchers to ignore issues of diversity (Sandercock, 1998, 2003). All professional discourses are different from public or non-expert discourse about spatial issues which therefore reified the non-professional as, most commonly, the community. Part of the Third Way discourse of professional legitimacy is to listen to local communities as they 'know best' about their area, this gives power to a reified entity, further reifying it. This research has illustrated that there are numerous problems with this approach in theoretical and policy terms, but now also calls for caution in researching communities, or at least accepting this reified entity as something researchable. Although the above discussion indicates there is much research in this area generally, none within planning has come from this starting point and has focused upon a community's perception of who they are, and how this is interpreted or ignored by officials. This is a complex and conflict ridden area, issues which only strengthens the case for further research into them.

8.3.2 The Third Way

Despite the impact of the Third Way discourse on the planning profession, it cannot be described as successfully rearticulating the meaning, practice and values of the planning profession. In addition to the problems with its conception of the public-qua-community, the continued use of both the New Right and Welfare discourses of legitimacy undermine its attempts at hegemony. If planning had been successfully rearticulated as part of the Third

Way, it would offer the only possibility of professional legitimacy. Professional planning would be unthinkable in any other understanding.

The Third Way project is claiming regeneration as *planning*, paradoxically typified as, pro-development planning for communities. This is seen in the wealth of policy documents discussed in Chapter One (ODPM, 2004a, ODPM, 2005, HM Treasury, 2004) and reinforced by the findings of this research. Their claim is that this is what planning should be about and hence this is what a planning professional should be, and how their practice can be legitimate. Regeneration, as so defined is the product which the state requires, and requires as a depoliticised professional reality. This automatically positions development control planning as other, as not professional planning. The success of this, however has already been questioned by the continued public support for both Welfare and New Right discourses of professional legitimacy within planning.

A central pillar of the Third Way is to be beyond, and yet encompass both New Right and Welfare ideologies (Giddens, 1997). This is suited, in theory at least, to its concept of regeneration. This embraces both the people and the economy, and aims for partnership and consensus. The previous chapters have illustrated numerous problems with this in practice, problems which largely stem from the fundamental problems with the ideology on which this practice is based. Merging contradictory ideologies to gain the mutual support of both is not possible. This is illustrated below.

The Third Way discourse articulates its legitimacy alongside the New Right discourse. The working relationship of the regeneration officers was by no means as strong with the

consultant as it was with their other partners, and it was qualitatively different. It is a professional-client relationship. Likewise, the consultant did not see himself as working in partnership with the regeneration team, they were his clients like any others. The relationship exists in a New Right, not a Third Way articulation of legitimacy. The Partnership are positioned as the client of the private sector consultant, not the consultant positioned as a partner of the Partnership. Although the Third Way is the current governmental ideology, it does not insist that its logic of professional legitimacy is dominant in relation to the private sector. If the Third Way was truly beyond left and right, it would not have to rely on New Right discourse of legitimacy. However, the private sector consultant offers the partnership a very specific service, that of decision making. His input into the SRF was in the drawing up of maps, and indicating what could or could not happen. The regeneration officers articulate their self identities as partnership workers, closely tying into the idea of facilitation from the 'new' mode of professional operation. The planning is done through facilitating partnerships. However, the action of facilitating a partnership does not link directly to outcomes. Decision making; having impacts on outcomes, is so antithetical to the Third Way concept of professional legitimacy, that it has to be removed from its activities. The Third Way discourse of professional legitimacy provides a concept of what a professionas knows, however, the activity that this actually relates to is *being strategic*, which has at best a passing influence on what happens on the ground. Of course regeneration officers do have an impact on what is in the SRF, but at work, it cannot be articulated as what they know about, as this involves choices and outcomes. This means that it has to be constructed as the work of another, different, remote and neutral party.

This issue needs developing further. The relationship between the Third Way and New Right discourses of legitimacy appears to be of mutual co-existence, as this discussion illustrates. However, this is not possible because one's construction of legitimacy necessitates the impossibility of the others. Planning cannot be for communities *and* for customers, held accountable by deliberative democracy *and* by financial contracts. They suppose different constructions of the same matter; the same moments constructed into alternative elements. They undermine each others hold on 'reality', and as with all different logics of equivalence have the potential to become antagonistic. However, as the descriptions and analysis of the case studies illustrate, there is little conflict between the discourses on an explicit level, largely due to the Third Way's claim to encompass all voices and make consensus out of opposition positions. This belies a weakness in the Third Way ideology as a whole. The Third Way discourse does not rearticulate the New Right's legitimacy, it simply allows for money to be an alternate means of accountability and the public to be paying clients. This links to wider arguments about the impossibility of the ideology, eloquently put by Neal Lawson and Paul Thompson:

"Social democracy and capitalism cannot be triangulated - more of one means less of the other. The job of social democratic governments is to draw and redraw the lines between democracy and the market, the individual and the collective, the public and the private. If we give in to the principle of market supremacy then we won't know where or how to draw those lines. Worse still, we end up not knowing that lines have to be drawn at all."(Lawson and Thompson, 2004)

This denies the Third Way claim to have successfully gone beyond right and left, merging the two into a coherent and practical ideology. It indicates that allowing for the continued articulation of the logic and inescapability of the market and New Right values cannot cohabit with desires for social justice as one's articulations of society necessarily denies the other's. This relates to why decisions in competing interests are impossible within this logic. This is illustrated in the case studies as Third Way practice needs New Right or Welfare decision making, which each presuppose very different values and attendant constructions of the social, as the above discussion has illustrated. This represents a fatal flaw in its internal logic of discursive reality making. This is further illustrated by how in practice, the regeneration officers, articulating their professional legitimacy in a Third Way discourse, found clashes and contradictions with the private sector consultants using New Right discourses of legitimacy. This positions them in an impossible location as their legitimacy both needs and disavows that of the New Right. It needs it as working with the private sector is a fundamental part of partnership, but disavows it as its construction of legitimacy is antithetical to its own.

The problems with the Third Way ideology are related to those in the concept of new professionalism, as it centres around bringing together divergent interests and ideas through facilitatory means. On a basic level it is a very Third Way idea, but has use beyond this ideological construction of the social, as this research has illustrated, as is considered further below.

8.3.4 Professions

The potential and will to reconceptualise professionals in light of the challenges outlined in this thesis evidently has much strength. The concept of new professionalism is one which needs further exploration, especially in relation to the political/ethical gap which its suggested mode of operation suggests. Furbey et al's (2001) concept of a 'network' professional has resonance in the professional action of planners and their public sector colleagues, giving these ideas relevance beyond housing alone. This in turn fits with the idea of a planner as a "knowledge mediator and broker"(Healey, 1997; p309). Facilitation of information is rightly seen as key to professional action. However, this does not overcome in theory or empirically the issues of the ethical/political gap, and decision making.

In relation to the issue of managerialism, it is clear that its influence on planning practice in all areas of public sector work is profound. However, it does not cause the impasse or deprofessionalisation that some commentators feared (Imrie, 2002). Causer and Exworthy's (1999) assertion of the need for professionals to remake their goals in managerialist terms conveys the situation in planning more accurately. In addition, Harrison's (1999) claims that, conversely, managerialist goals are made more palatable when undertaken by professionals is echoed in this research. In both cases, professionals were judged by the public on the spatial outcome that they achieved, rather than how centrally aligned their strategies were, or whether enough of their decisions were made in the given time limits. The importance of these tasks would only be acceptable in the light of positive spatial outcomes they should be the means to achieve. Despite their importance in professional operation, managerialist targets and goals only have validity within the organisation, they do not create or replace trust, as is discussed below. They are merely a configuration through which professional

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decisions have to go, before they can become outcomes. This in turn relates to the ethical/political bases on which decisions are being made.

From this, questions of what is next needed in reconceptualising professionals need to be addressed. In short, there is a need to engage directly with the political/ethical gap hidden in professional decision making, hidden by both aspects of new professionalism. Facilitation, by its emphasis on inclusive and collaborative processes ignores decisions and the justifications on which these are made. Managerialism too, by emphasising corporately accountable and auditable process as something measurable supplants these in place of outcomes, again obviating the question of in whose or what interests these decision have been made. This links back to calls in the literature for professional work to develop a distinctly ethical dimension (Jones et al, 2006, Upton, 2003, Campbell, 2006). Any understanding of professionalism which does not consider the reasons for the existence of any given profession, and the ethical or political goals which this granted power can therefore serve is at best incomplete and at worst deliberately misguided. This links to the next issue, the personal professional space, linking back to Healey and Underwood's (1978) concept of 'action space', and the power to act within this. It is within this, that the ethical/political gap of decision making can be further explored.

The importance of the personal professional space open to planners to construct their practice, their space to operate, within and beyond a discourse of legitimacy, is something that this research has only touched upon briefly. Although there was little explicit evidence of planners being engaged in 'professional projects of the self' (Casey and Allen, 2005), this is more due to the lack of focus on this area, rather than it being necessarily absent. This

area lends itself well to further investigation. The influences on individual professionals, and how they see their actions constrained or enabled, by policy, law or other influences is an important part of planning. This research project has focused on the wider influences, and considered planning as a activity in the general sense, rather than looking at how this is mediated by individual actors, and what influences their self image as professionals. By looking at how individual planners make decisions, what influences them, what they see as shaping their power to decide and on what ground, or in whose interests they make these decisions, the area of ethics and politics in professional decision making can be explored.

8.3.5 Accountability

Issues of accountability and trust are one of the themes shaping understandings and discussion of professionals, as well as part of any discourse of professional legitimacy. This has three aspects which are relevant in this case. This first is the issue of democracy. This emerges as of great importance from the divide between development control and forward regeneration planning. Much of the governmental emphasis on community involvement suggests a superseding of the system of local representative democracy. This is echoed in the discourses of professional legitimacy used, and actions undertaken in the regeneration case study. However, as discussed above, this obviates decision making and cannot account for irresolvable conflicts of interest. In addition, without representative democracy, equal access to a say in spatial change in highly unlikely, it is by no means guaranteed through deliberative means;

> "while representation without participation is clumsy, participation without representation is simply the dictatorship of those who turn up."(Monbiot, 2004; p119).

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Although imperfect, no better or fairer system than representative democracy has been invented or found, it remains "the least-worst system" (Monbiot, 2004). This research accords with the concerns of Connelly et al (2005) over the suitability of deliberative democracy as a process and a just means of governance. To a certain extent, the supremacy of representative democracy is assured by the fact that it has not been removed as the final arena for accepting or denying spatial changes, for granting or refusing planning permission. However, the use of deliberative means as an alternative means of accountability is in itself cause for concern. This is not to devalue involving the public in 'being strategic', but unless there is a say and role for democratically accountable planning in site specific decisions, it is hard to see of what tangible use this would be. Also, as with other aspects of the discourses of legitimacy, there is the problem of the incompatibility of articulations.

The interests of the community are not the same as the interests of the wider city, not to mention the general, linking back to Campbell & Marshall's (2000) argument. This directly relates to the issue of how the professional is held accountable. If planning is for the community, it logically follows that they, however defined, should hold the professionals accountable. This circumvents the notions of representative democracy as articulated in the Welfare discourse. Although a community may elect representatives, such as an association which has a chair, secretary and other such posts, this is qualitatively different from the notion of representative democracy which assumes one person one vote, regardless of interests, activities and foibles. This is further complicated by the notion of 'communities of interest', dissolving geographical boundaries to ones of shared mores and peccadilloes. By altering one part of any discourse, its logic of equivalence is ruptured, altering and making impossible much of the rest of its meaning, leaving the whole discursive construction up for

rearticulation. This illustrates the importance of this part-rearticulation into the Third Way discourse; it makes further rearticulation simpler and necessary.

The second issue of accountability links closely to both this, and the third one. It is questions of trust and the need for consultation. Within the general context of this research, and alongside accusations of the weakening of local democracy, there is a feeling of a lessening of trust in professionals (O'Neill, 2002). As was argued in Chapter Two, facilitation has been presented as the new professional response to this. However, from this research, how and when the public wish to be planned *with*, or planned *for* is more complex this can remedy. Neither case study showed a public full of ideas, time and energy to plan for their area, or 'community', only needing pointing to the right committee by helpful dynamic professionals. However, this did not equate to the public being passive or uninterested in planning issues. This sort of either/or divide is challenged. The public wanted professionals to take *professional* decisions, these being ones which considered their concerns and provided the right *outcomes*. They did not want to take the decisions for the professionals in either case study, asserting a specific and different role for the professional. This links back to the issue of the politics or ethics underlying professional decisions; values such as social or environmental justice are needed to underpin what is right and good. Trust in professions is linked with a belief in professional values: a return to the traditional position of upholder of the 'morals of society' for the professional, but without a prejudged idea of the content of either the 'morals' or 'society'. This makes for a more complex professional role than that of facilitator if trust in professionals is to be rehabilitated.

The third issue is also about a proposed remedy to diminishing trust, this time performance management and auditing. It also equally fails to address the issues key to loss of trust, that of outcome rather than process. In both case studies, managerial targets and goals were important, but internally and corporately, rather than publicly. They allow for professional work to hold greater legitimacy within a public sector organisation, for corporate goals to be achieved and a supposed sense of unity of work to be presented, but have little relation to public trust.

Democracy has yet to be surpassed as legitimate government, and within this, professions still hold extra democratic legitimacy. They are not directly democratically accountable, doctors and planners cannot be voted into or out of office, but their legitimacy, and attendant means of being held accountable still depends on their relationship with government. To be legitimate to practice, professionals need to be trusted. This does not depend on achieving centrally set targets, nor on consulting with and facilitating the public, it relates to decision making. As already questioned, the possibility of all decisions being liked by all is impossible, however some explicit professional values would situate these decisions within a coherent framework of aims.

These issues suggest that there is the need for more research in this area. One aspect where it has already been stated that further consideration would be potentially fruitful is that of the impact of local authority political differences on the discourses of legitimacy used by professionals. Using the same general framework, it would be of interest to see if different political control of councils, or area committees influenced how the professional planners with, altered their discourses of legitimacy. In addition, this could further consider whether

this provided more or less difference than between development control and forward or regeneration planning.

8.4 The Planning Profession in the Twenty-first Century

"A traditional opposition...will only be maintained as long as the context out of which it has grown remains pertinent. However, when life is sufficiently disrupted to undermine or disable the efficacy of traditional allegiances, people are able to subordinate old oppositions to the need for new alliances." (Bowman, 1994, p155)

Developing from the four sections above is the issue of the contemporary meaning and values of the planning profession. Each of these four shape the state of planning, and link it with these wider debates. However, planning is not simply the aggregate of these four issues, its wholeness makes it more than the sum of its parts. This section aims to bring together some of these issues, in the light of conceptual ideas underpinning this research, to consider the current and potential future state of the professional planning.

The aim of this research has not be solely to report the state of different aspects of planning, but to consider why this is happening, and what the implications are for planning as a whole. In short, despite it not being possible to successfully claim that planning has been rearticulated as a Third Way activity, differences in terms of professional articulations of legitimacy between planners based on different ideological discourses, have implications on planning as a whole.

Although it has been argued that the divide between forward and development control planning has not lead to the latter being denied status as professional planning, there are serious implications for planning as a totality if this divide is to continue and expand. The different types of planning, both operating in a new mode, fill their hidden political ethical gaps very differently as they draw on different discourses of legitimacy. What the current divide shows is that not having the same discourse of legitimacy can lead to working together less well, there are examples of this in both the regeneration and the development control case, in their dealings with other officers. This means that this divide may be to the detriment of all planning, leading to decisions without strategy and strategy without decisions.

This links back to ideas in the previous chapter about the differential importance of, and emphasis placed upon, outcomes and processes. The regeneration case, using the Third Way discourse of legitimacy emphasises the latter, whilst development control emphasises the former, it is about decisions. For planning to be rearticulated in the Third Way discourse would be to remove its link from spatial *outcomes*. Invisible sleight of hand would alter strategic visions into zoned landscapes. It would become decisions without decision makers, losing its discretionary character.

Alongside this is the continued legitimacy of New Right practice in planning, of money being able to pay for legitimate professional practice. As the above discussion about the Third Way illustrates, this is not challenged by current ideological articulations and therefore still possible. Despite no current antagonistic challenges, that this remains legitimate means that it has the possibility to challenge other constructions of legitimate professional practice,

to say that customer relations are key, and not only is there no such thing as society, but no such thing as community. Unless a challenge is mounted to New Right legitimacy, it retains the potential to challenge other articulations.

For planning to reassert its unity and purpose, some shared values, explicitly articulated throughout public sector planning are needed. This is so that the universal/general is considered in the strategic and the community are considered in the site specific, rather than just general or individual interests. This links to the quote that opens this section. A reformulation of the boundaries of oppositions could answer the problems of both paternalism, as is seen in the case of flooding, and consultation fatigue, as seen in the regeneration case, and would link outcomes with processes, as part of a democratic system. It could also challenge the articulations which make expertise legitimate through a paying client relationship. The possibility of this is seen in the flexibility of practice, and professional space opened up by the use of a discourse of legitimacy and the lack of exact fit between this and a mode of operation. As development control and regeneration officers practice in a similar mode, and law, policy and targets only partially constrain action, there are grounds for more unified workings which may start to challenge some of the imposed divide of the discourses of legitimacy. They both could draw upon some of the weaknesses inherent in either or both discursive constructions of planning practice to create an alternative legitimacy of practice which could not be hegemonised by any current ideologies. This offers the potential of planning being about creating a new, better society, linking it back to its origins in utopian movements. However, if the divide is pursued further, the two articulations of professional legitimacy cannot co-exist, they both cannot both *be* professional planning. This would lead to antagonistic struggle for meaning, and one

conception would have to lose out to the other. As long as this current situation remains unchallenged, this is unlikely to happen, but with the ongoing policy debates which touches on the role of planning, change in one or the other seems probable. How governmental reformulation of the state: professional pact in the area of spatial planning will happen, and whether this can successfully gain public support to be legitimate is unclear. This links to suggested further areas of research leading from this project.

An area considered to be of importance, but not explored at any depth is the actual working relationship between public sector planners using different discourses of legitimacy, and how they actually impact on the possibility of working together across the divide of different legitimacies. This would have to involve a project where both development control officers and forward or regeneration planners actually worked together. In both the case studies used for this research, there were no examples of this. The sustainable transport team did not provide evidence for public inquiry, and there was no development control presence at any of the regeneration meetings or events.

In addition, the role of the planning inspector in the development control case is not given much consideration. However, it is evident that it is a very important role, bringing in a different level of considerations about mode of operation and discourses of legitimacy. This is the case with inspectors in general, and they are an under researched area within planning academia. The same conceptual framework could be applied to their work in a range of different cases to see if the inspectorate held a shared discourse of legitimacy, and how this relates to the wider articulations discussed in this project.

8.5 Suitability of Approach

This section reflects on the approach taken in this investigation both in terms of the conceptual framework used to form the research questions, and shape the analysis, and in terms of the methods used to do this. Some of the areas of potential future research relate to this, as the gaps they identify come about partly due to the choice of this approach. However, this section also highlights some of the strengths of this approach and their wider use for other studies.

As stated in Chapter Four, the conceptual approach of this research can be seen, analogously, as a fried egg. The yolk was the concept of professional operation, the white, professional legitimacy, and the pan the concept of hegemony. The sections below are split between the pan and egg together, and the cooking; firstly considering theory and secondly method.

8.5.1 Theory

This section reflects upon the three-fold conceptual framework used to structure this research project, the yolk, white and pan. The concept of hegemony provided a useful overarching 'backbone' to the whole research. It positioned daily activities within the political spectrum and rendered visible their mutual reinforcement. This means that how daily activities of planners are constructed and legitimised can be used to criticise the claims of a political ideology at the same time as seeing the influence of ideology in shaping the daily work of professionals. Laclau and Mouffe's (1983) theory provides the language, with concepts such as elements, moments, articulation and antagonism to express the actions of this theoretically. This adds an extra analytical edge to the research, and positions it within

the dialogue of other writings using this theoretical standpoint. It is part of a wider political understanding of the social.

Legitimacy too has provided a useful intermediary concept, between hegemony and daily action and operation. It is a complex and under theorised term- but provided the necessary link between action and articulation, and tied the theoretical ideas more closely to the literature and conceptualising around the notions of professionals. This has shown that there is more work needed around this area generally, and more communication between (social) policy researchers about its relevance/usefulness in linking ideas of theory and (professional) practice. However, that the idea is under-theorised and therefore quite vague makes it a difficult concept with which to work. This presents two divergent issues. The first is that its ambiguities may lead it to mean very different things to different people, therefore weakening its analytical appeal. The second relates to how it has been used in this research, specifically the idea of three ideology based discourses of professional legitimacy. In contrast, these could be accused of being too specific, of imposing a pre-decided analytical idea on to empirical reality. The methodological implications of this are considered below. Conceptually, however, there is a need for some structure. The discourses of legitimacy were not simply imposed upon the fieldwork, but refined and developed through the process, themselves a product of it, as well as a tool of investigation for it.

The third aspect of this conceptual framework, namely the mode of professional operation, has contributed to the ongoing theorising about the concept of 'new' professionalism. By using the three-fold conceptualisation, the importance of policy and constructions of

legitimacy to professional action can be seen, making the links both ways between power, politics and daily work. It is in this area, however, the personal side of professional work which most further research is needed. The three-fold conceptual framework provides a useful approach for a wider consideration of the relations between policy and practice which is a central aim of this research. What is does not do, but highlights as important, is examine the relationship between wider personal values and identities and the decisions taken in the space opened up for professional practice.

More generally, problems with this approach have been that it begins with certain assumptions; necessary to all research, but potentially precluding other understandings. In this case, it has situated planning within a national political framework, to see how much impact this actually has on practice, through the means of the concept of legitimacy. This means that the concept of what planning is, and what it could be is already shaped before the investigation. It is hard to imagine how fruitful research could be undertaken without some framework of understanding being in place, as the boundaries of what to investigate would be so wide as to make it impossible. This links to the difficulties in keeping a constant and comparable conception of who the professionals are in each case. By not making an arbitrary marker, such as RTPI membership to define who the professionals were in each case, it has allowed for a wider and more thoughtful conception of this. However, it could lead to accusations of incomparability between actors and case studies, and a lack of structured focus. This is a difficult balance for all social science research to negotiate. Starting with too many definitions and categories can lead to accusations of prejudging what is to be researched, starting with too few can lead to a lack of focus or analytical sharpness. This research has endeavoured to find a suitable balance between these two, but cannot do

everything, and hence the suggested further research which would extend and deepen the findings of this project.

8.5.2 Method

This section appraises the methodological decisions made, and the usefulness of the terms in which these were considered. In general, the choices of method strongly influenced the findings, as would be expected. This, more than the conceptual framework relates to some of the gaps now apparent in this research. Specifically, the attempt to investigate the difference between development control and forward or regeneration planning in the terms of the above-assessed conceptual framework necessitated the use of case study research. This provided a wide snapshot, bringing in many events and actors, rather than personal in depth constructions of meaning and identity. This, as argued above, would have provided an alternative approach to investigating change in the meaning and construction of the town planning profession, and is discussed in relation to potential further research.

In terms of Franklin's (1997) three models of interviews, I still consider my approach most close to her concept of shared understanding, however, this was not always the case with interviewees. Many assumed that I had come to, in Franklin's (1997) terms, extract information from them rather than attempt to collectively interpret their views and constructions of the situations. This was something what was negotiated tacitly through the course of the interviews, with varying levels of success, reemphasising the importance of the personal dynamics of research. This does not undermine the shared understanding approach, rather it restates the active constructions of meaning and content in interviews,

and the importance of considering participants' expectations and concepts of the research process.

Plummer's (1995) 'continuum of contamination' proved a useful concept to bear in mind when writing up research material. As stated in Chapter Four, I see this research as between the third and fourth points on this continuum. The analysis and conclusions lean to the latter, and the case study chapters to the former. As a tool it allows for reflection on the purpose of fieldwork and theory respectively in academic research. It does not guide the researcher in to taking certain actions, rather it allows the aim of this action to be thoughtfully positioned methodologically.

8.6 Conclusion

There is no one dominant way of articulating legitimacy within the planning profession. The planning profession is not being successfully articulated as part of the Third Way's ideological project, but the impact of Third Way articulations on the planning profession are of profound importance. The Third Way discourse of professional legitimacy is just one amongst three discourses, all dominant within their own sector. Its concept of people, as the community, has influenced the Welfare concept of professional legitimacy, but as it is such a flawed concept, it has not been able to produce successful antagonisms which would have the potential to deconstruct, and remove from current possibility, the Welfare concept of professional legitimacy. Despite this, the difference in discourses of legitimacy drawn upon by development control and regeneration officers may lead to incompatibilities in working practices, weakening the impact of both, as they should be mutually supportive. Planning needs specificity and strategy, fair process and public input into outcomes, to be legitimate.

Legitimacy is granted by the people as well as the state, as the state has to be legitimate to sanction professionals to act and practice in its name. This project illustrates the political importance of the planning profession, and the importance of politics in shaping professional action.

The case studies have illustrated the importance of the situational and the local in creating legitimacies, and operating professionally. They illustrate how national agendas are mediated through and are drawn upon during daily work in different settings. It also illustrates the 'working space' for professionals within given settings and ideological discourses of legitimacy, all illustrating grounds for further research. It contributes to the understanding of professionals in terms of knowledge and skills, values, accountability and occupational control. By use of the concept of hegemonic discourse, the aim of relating policy and societal changes to professional practice is achieved, as is examining the position of planning in contemporary society. Planning is not a pre-given, real thing, rather a concept ripe for rearticulation. What it becomes through this is influenced by what planners do in the space open for their own legitimate action and how they politically position their work.

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