Culture and Capability in the New Zealand Planning System

Report to the
New Zealand Productivity Commission

McDermott Consultants Ltd
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1.   Summary and Conclusions

This section introduces the report, summarises its content and findings, and provides general conclusions.

Purpose

This report is intended to enhance our understanding of the culture and capability of planners and organisations involved in planning in New Zealand. It has been prepared as a contribution to the review by the Productivity Commission of New Zealand's urban planning system.

In particular, the Commission wishes to better understand:

- How professional and organisational cultures impact planning outcomes, and
- The workforce capabilities needed for a modern and effective planning system.

Approach

The discussion is based mainly on a scan of the websites and the statements of agencies that influence and represent the culture of urban planning, the professional institutes, and a range of others that collectively form a large part of the institutional setting within which planning culture is embedded. The courses which lay the platform of knowledge for entrant planners and endeavour to maintain its currency in the course of their careers are surveyed. The focus is on New Zealand agencies, although international examples are given and comparisons made.

The other principal source is academic planning literature. This informs the discussion of the history, role, and culture of planning, and the capabilities required of planners.

Report Structure

Section 2 covers the nature of urban planning as described by professional planning institutes. This is followed by consideration of the evolving role of planning drawing largely on the academic literature (Section 3) which helps explain the shift in New Zealand from a Town and Country Planning Act to the Resource Management Act. The reasons for re-thinking current urban planning practice are considered in Section 4.

Section 5 introduces the idea of a professional planning culture based mainly on the knowledge deemed central to the discipline by the New Zealand Planning Institute (NZPI) and reflected in the planning degrees offered by universities as a prerequisite to accreditation as a planner. A collegial culture based on recognised processes is reinforced in the course of career development and progress through employment experience, particularly in councils and consultancies, and continuing professional development requirements.

While the planning culture is based primarily on qualifications of and membership of the NZPI, it is also subject to the influences of a wider institutional network. This is described in Section 6. The following section explores the capabilities prescribed for planners in both the academic literature and contained in planning programmes. Section 8 draws conclusions relevant to the questions raised in the Brief for this assignment.

Summary

The Role of Urban Planning

The planning institutes in the United Kingdom, North America, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand generally split any description of planning between process and outcomes. They do not offer definitive definitions but are assertive about planning's importance to urban development.

The institutes represent communities of professionals who they indicate may design places, plan and advise on major projects and infrastructure, provide for the protection of the environment and the well-being communities, or simply manage growth. These concepts are abstract, more so as urban areas become bigger and more diverse, making it difficult to define concrete outcomes and measure plan progress against goals.

Given that professional planning is prescriptive, we would assume that it draws on a unique body of knowledge and distinctive set of specialist skills to support its prescriptions, as is the case in, for example, the medical, engineering, surveying and legal professions.

Planning deals with diverse demands on land, and with the choices, freedoms, and decisions of a range of stakeholders. The institutes consequently focus on process requirements and expectations of professional standards and behaviour among planners. They rely largely on knowledge from other fields and disciplines for the substantive content relevant to the issues they deal with.

This highlights the potentially integrative nature of planning. Unfortunately, perhaps, its capacity is limited by a knowledge base marked more by breadth than depth in the substantive matters affecting the allocation of land and the effects of development and resource use. As a result, there is a tendency to over-reach in aspirations enunciated by the professional institutes.

The Evolution of Urban Planning

Post World War Two planning moved from a modernising, design-based and authoritarian discipline, through phases that can be described as rational-comprehensive, radical-communicative, post-modern, and neoliberal, all leaving their mark on practice today,

With origins in town and country planning, which emerged in response to changing land uses during the industrial urbanisation of the 19th Century, urban planning has maintained an idealistic commitment to bettering living conditions. It still relies on zoning as a key method for doing so, despite significant changes in planning's theoretical foundations, and in the nature of urban growth.

The literature dealing with the rationale for planning is written mainly from a planning rather than community perspective. Despite relating actual or ideal changes in practice to wider social movements, practice continues to rely on limited regulatory tools. Indeed, planning risks being an introverted and defensive discipline, authoritarian in practice even if benign in intent.

If planning were to be more sensitive to the many communities in many places it serves and more nuanced in its interventions, it might better act as an integrative rather than coercive discipline. This means managing expectations not by educating and informing the public about the benefits and power of plans, and why they should conform with them, but by acknowledging the limits to what

planning might achieve and how far it can satisfy public expectations, and by mediating development with light handed regulation well informed by the relevant specialisations.

The medical analogy might be with the General Practitioner who does not over-prescribe, recognises the limits to her capabilities, and is prepared to refer the patient to specialists when a serious condition is evident, perhaps subsequently managing treatment and monitoring patient progress.

The Reasons for Rethinking

Contested areas in urban planning today are creating increasing dissatisfaction among many of the discipline's constituents. This, and, the changes taking place in and diverse nature of urbanisation, raises questions over whether planning today remains fit for purpose.

Planning still seeks to apply modernist precepts of conformity, control, and exclusionary zoning despite a changing geo-political environment which impacts unevenly on individual places. This includes increasingly dynamic and diverse cities; maturing suburbs, distinctive urban villages, exurban lifestyles; a mix of thriving <u>and</u> declining villages and townships; structural changes impacting unevenly on employment; increased social, job, and geographic mobility; and the increasing density of far-reaching and multi-faceted connections among urban places.

The reality is that cities are assemblies of inter-connected private businesses, public agencies, third sector and voluntary organisations, communities, households, and individuals for whom their domain (let alone the world) is neither stable nor predictable. More grounded planning might better focus on allowing urban settlements to develop in a manner compatible with their surroundings and the development of their multiple resident interests. This need be subject only to the directional guidance provided by their geography and infrastructure commitments, rather than persisting with plans that lock citizens and institutions into a punt on the shape of the future informed in large measure by planners' and their advisors' understanding of a less complex past.

The Foundation of Planning Culture

The NZPI is the gate keeper of foundation knowledge for New Zealand planning, mainly through its programme prescriptions for the universities. This is reinforced by the institute's CPD programme. In addition, the Quality Planning website managed by the NZPI has become an important vehicle for tying current planning processes and thinking into local government generally.

While there is potential for subcultures to emerge within the educational establishment from the different affiliations of university planning departments, the choices of elective non-planning papers individual students make, and the varying experience and views of the teachers, diversity is not obvious in practice. Indeed, the existence of subcultures within planning is more likely to emerge from the increasing involvement of non-planners as experts and advisors in particular areas of social analysis and resource management, rather than from any robust academic or professional debate about the meanings and relevance of planning and alternative paradigms to New Zealand today.

The Institutional Setting

Planning culture is mediated, modified and to a large extent safeguarded by the various institutions that impinge on it. A degree of homogeneity and inertia persist even as planning is subjected increasingly to influences from outside disciplines, internationally promoted principles, and scrutiny

and influence by well-informed interests and communities seeking to retain or extend control over their local environments.

In New Zealand two organisations appear to sit at the core of planning culture and practice, the Ministry for the Environment, through the statutes it oversees and the influence it exerts, and the NZPI, through setting the requirements for accreditation and representing the profession.

An "inner circle" of influential institutions surrounds this core. It comprises university departments, the Environmental Protection Authority (as the key government quasi-scientific agency dealing with environmental matters), councils and consultants as the principal employers, and the Commissioner for the Environment, as an independent watchdog. The Resource Management Law Association is a major industry body representing a range of parties with a stake in the Resource Management Act, which also occupies the inner circle of influence.

Beyond this is an outer circle, largely comprising the constituents of planning, either acting individually (businesses, households) or collectively (community groups, lobbies, interest groups). Such interests are both influenced by planning, and seek to influence it through processes of application, submission, and objection.

Other professional groups at this level include those representing property professionals and those representing environmental and social science interests.

Planning in New Zealand – The Institutional Framework
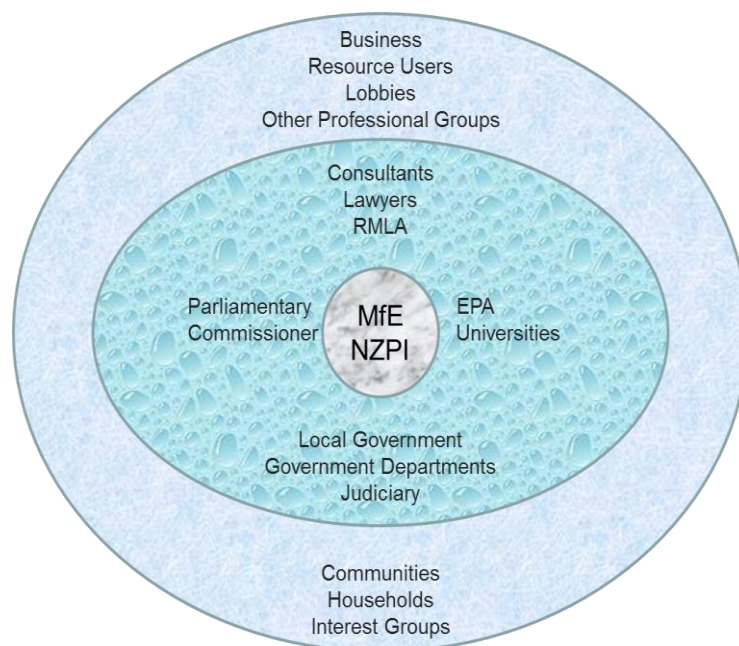
This network of intersecting and often conflicting organisations embeds planning capability and knowledge by a collective commitment to the RMA and the associated planning culture. This creates the inertia which preserves planning practice even in the face of performance shortcomings.

Significant change to planning practice, then, may require significant change (or disruption) to the entire institutional framework.

This raises the prospect that the issues confronting – and arising from – the practice of urban planning result not from deficiencies in the statutory framework but lie in the consensual knowledge brought to bear on urban projects and problems within that framework.

This may in turn obscure the fact that in many cases there is no one solution to a given urban issue. Instead, negotiated – and often local -- outcomes might be necessary, albeit set within a wider regional or national framework that sets outer limits on actions and activities. Yet such outcomes deconstruct and threaten the orthodoxy embedded in the institutional framework. They are not a threat just to urban planning as we know it, but also to those agencies with a vested interest in it, or have simply learnt to live with planning as practised in New Zealand.

> **A new starting point may be recognising that plans will inevitably disadvantage specific groups and areas. This highlights the political nature of planning, suggesting that the best it might achieve is compromise, compensation, and reconciliation with *negotiated outcomes*, rather than assuming that *prescribed ("tried and tested") outcomes* will be superior.**

Planning Capability

The culture of planning, the institutions in the planning space, and the nature of modern urbanisation suggest an impossibly wide range of knowledge and skills is required if planners are to fulfil the aspirations of the professional bodies and satisfy the expectations of the many organisations and interests that it affects.

> ***Alternatively, urban planning could be rethought, opening it up to more participation by the necessary expertise while addressing proportionality and significance, and seeking outcomes that reflect context. In other words, we need to: recognise the limits to planning; create an environment in which minor matters are dealt with in a straightforward administrative manner; and deal with major issues primarily through an alternative dispute resolution framework drawing on specialist experts in the substantive issues it confronts. This would allow greater freedoms to achieve societal ambitions and maintain environmental standards without relying on the inflexible regulatory framework that planning has erected over the past 25 years.***

The emergence and relative success of planning commissioners in dealing with high order planning disputes is a marker for the direction in which the discipline might well head.

If this alternative approach is adopted, planners would play an important role in managing the resolution of planning issues and project advancement based on skills in or appreciation of the following capabilities:

- Scene setting;
- Issue identification;
- Community engagement
- Negotiation and mediation;
- Technical project management;
- Evaluation (including assessing the costs and benefits of policy options);
- Risk assessment;
- Reporting and communication.

In essence, planners would be the specialised administrators of the planning system, drawing on core consultative, planning, evaluation and mediation capabilities. Substantive matters would, where they arise, be subject to input from requisite specialists.

The level of competence required of planners in substantive areas (or non-planning disciplines) should be sufficient for them to communicate effectively rather than displace specialists. The planner's key task would be to manage the flow of information required to reach a resolution. Their role may be one of integrating knowledge, rather than generating or promoting uncritically a "learned" paradigm of urban development.

This requires greater emphasis on capabilities in planning process and less on "knowing the answers". It also calls for an enhanced critical capacity, leading to the recommendation that a formal planning qualification be confined to postgraduate learning, ensuring that candidates first have a firm grounding in the arts, social science, or physical science.

Revising Planning

It is difficult to redefine capabilities – and responsibilities – in isolation from changes proposed to the planning system as a whole. An alternative planning system might operate through several layers that clearly separate responsibilities in the interests of bringing greater expertise to play at different levels of resolution, and a more transparent process.

Regional environmental plans based on a sound scientific base might be prepared by a central government environmental agency working through regional offices with local councils. It would identify areas un-suited to development for environmental, heritage or conservation reasons.

Regional spatial plans could be developed by local councils working together (perhaps in a united council format) and with infrastructure organisations, identifying future development corridors. These would provide directional guidance to individual councils, to developers, and to infrastructure providers. The spatial plans would facilitate efficient urban expansion within the "envelope" identified in the regional environmental plans.

The quality and character of settlements, suburbs, and communities generally could then be influenced by local **city** or **district plans** dealing with such matters as reserves, walkways, cycle-ways, and road corridors, and facilities and amenities within the context of community preferences and demands on local council funding capacity and priorities. Local plans may also seek to vary national building standards to reflect local conditions and preferences.

Local plans would be expressed ideally in terms of standards for infrastructure and amenity expected of development in different areas –precincts or zones. Generalised zones might be discouraged, though, while the level of regulation in them should be limited to matters that clearly contribute to the public without excessive costs, whether public or private. Major developments would be subject to master planning and to the negotiation of infrastructure provision between the private and public sectors.

Separating Responsibilities: An Alternative Planning Framework
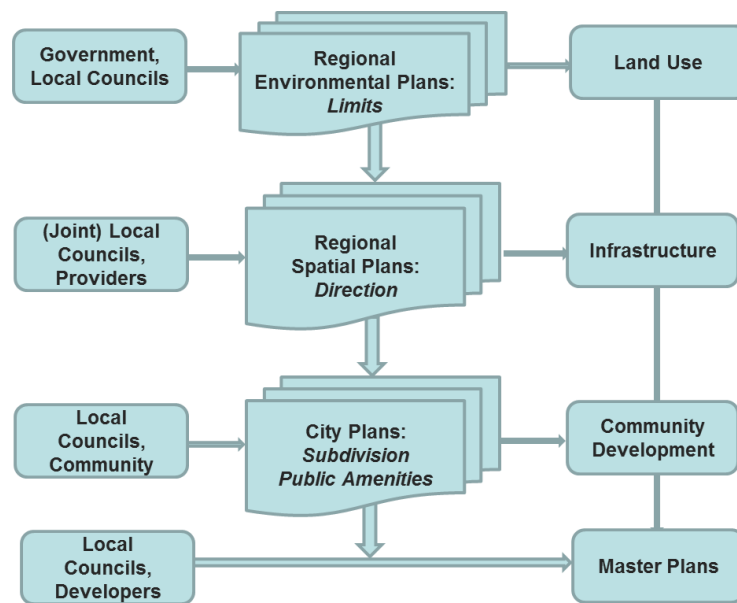
Local plans should favour **master plans,** the broad parameters for which would be negotiated with the local council. They may be subject to negotiated infrastructure agreements covering capacity costs, and funding. Otherwise, developments would proceed as of right (at the developer's risk) in areas not excluded by the regional environmental plan and consistent with the regional spatial plan.

Any significant **departures sought** from higher order spatial plans may be resolved through a process of dispute resolution overseen by planning commissioners. It is expected that such issues would only go to court on matters of law rather than on matters of substantive disagreement.

Conclusion

Currently, planners are placing themselves at the centre of what happens in cities – preventing some things from happening, or taking credit for others, instead of recognising that whether playing in concert or as solo artists they are just one of many influences on how an urban area will evolve. The role of urban planners needs to be reined in to enable people, communities, organisations, and institutions to exist and interact effectively within and around urban areas.

Planning as a body of knowledge and a set of practices has become static if not sterile. Planning might better focus on new ways of thinking about the future rather than seeking to spell out how it should look. Planners should have the skills to support communities seeking to meet their economic and social objectives without impeding diversity, innovation, or investment, and to encourage informed rather than rote measures to limit environmental damage that might result from doing so.

Rather than exercising priority over the other players on the basis of received wisdom, their role might better be one of setting the wider parameters within which urban development takes place and removing unjustified costs and impediments. Ideally, planners will be the mediators, interpreters, communicators who have an understanding of the manifold drivers and occupiers of urban spaces and whose presence will maintain and encourage opportunities for development shaped by community needs and preferences.

2.   What is Urban Planning?

This section identifies the roles that the planning plays according to the United Kingdom, North America, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand planning institutes. This provides a basis for evaluating current planning cultures and practices.

Is There a Theory of Urban Planning?

In order to understand the skills required by planners and the cultural attributes appropriate to fulfilling their role, it is important to first understand what that role is, and in particular the specialist knowledge they bring to the process of urbanisation. A coherent body of specialist knowledge – a set of principles collectively explaining the evolution and nature of urban areas, for example – would constitute a theory on which interventions might be based with a reasonable expectation of what the outcome will be.

Wikipedia brings together several sources to present an all-encompassing view of what urban planning covers (which includes rural planning); and a pragmatic view of what urban planners do.

Wikipedia says

> *Urban planning is a technical and political process concerned with the use of land, protection and use of the environment, public welfare, and the design of the urban environment, including air, water, and the infrastructure passing into and out of urban areas such as transportation, communications, and distribution networks. Urban Planning is also referred to as urban and regional, regional, town, city, rural planning or some combination in various areas worldwide. Urban planning takes many forms and it can share perspectives and practices with urban design.*
>
> *Urban planning guides and ensures the orderly development of settlements and satellite communities which commute into and out of urban areas or share resources with it. Urban planners in the field are concerned with research and analysis, strategic thinking, architecture, urban design, public consultation, policy recommendations, implementation and management.*
>
> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urban_planning

Expansive as this definition is, it does not answer the question of what unique knowledge planning offers with respect to urban development except, perhaps, that it should be "orderly".

In fact, urban planning leans on specialist knowledge and skills to advance development. These include civil engineering and subdivision; conservation and environmental management; architecture and structural engineering; transport, energy, and communications network design; and funding the civil works and private investment that make up the fabric of urban settlements.

The question of what specialist expertise planners bring to this assembly may lie in their understanding of land use and their integrative skills, placing planners near the centre of a web of disciplines and specialists who collectively respond to the drivers of urbanisation and the ongoing evolution of urban spaces. This does not, however, provide an obvious theoretical starting point.

Based in part on a survey of practitioners (Whittemore, 2014), the planning website, Planetizen, raised the idea that planning is founded on "procedural theories", effectively the formalisation of what planners do:

There are eight procedural theories of planning that remain the principal theories of planning procedure today: the rational-comprehensive approach, the incremental approach, the transactive approach, the communicative approach, the advocacy approach, the equity approach, the radical approach, and the humanist or phenomenological approach

(http://www.planetizen.com/node/73570/how-planners-use-planning-theory)

It is debatable how far knowledge of approach, or of multiple approaches, comprises theory. However, to the extent that planning pursues specific outcomes based on particular procedural knowledge, assessing its effectiveness should at least commence from an understanding of what those outcomes are intended to be. Once the expected outcomes for planning are understood it should be possible to make judgements about the appropriate procedures and consequently the skills and resources to apply to achieve them (capability) and the organisational and institutional influences on the ways in which they are pursed (culture).

Based on the idea that planning is defined by what planners do, the following section considers the purpose of urban planning espoused by planning institutes.

Planning is what Urban Planners do

To understand the culture of planning and the capabilities required to achieve its objectives, it makes sense to look to the definitions of the higher order goals and expectations proffered by the bodies representing professional planning. The planning institutes take responsibility for ensuring that expectations of the discipline are linked to the requisite skills and expertise (the knowledge base of planning) through accredited tertiary courses and further education programmes.

The institutes play a major formative role in planning through these programmes, through their advocacy and submission roles, through the promulgation of good practice, and through the values and visions they articulate on behalf of their members. Their accreditation of planning courses and planners ensures conformity with a core set of values and expectations. Given this influence on culture and capability, then, the clarity, consistency, and focus of the goals the institutes articulate, the values they espouse, and the skills they promote are central to planning knowledge and culture.

Somewhat surprisingly, a review of web sites shows that planning institutes do not headline what planning is intended to achieve. Less surprising, they highlight their roles in terms of advancing the interests of the profession.

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)

The RTPI offers no obvious definition of planning, but the by-line "*mediation of space – making of place*" implies a focus on the development of localities and how this is achieved through the interventions of planners.

A report prepared for the RTPI on the value of planning favours a high level view of what planning is trying to achieve: "*helping to create the kinds of places where people want to live, work, relax and invest, while acknowledging that different people will interpret concepts of place differently according to their own particular interests and experience*" (p.9). Given that people "*mobilise to improve and protect those places they live in, work in and care about*" planning is also depicted as a "*collective endeavour which may be championed by private-and voluntary-sector actors, as well as*

those based in the public sector". This view suggests that planners are engaged in helping those actors to "*improve place qualities*" (Healy, 2010 8).

The idea that planners mediate space suggests that they are the arbiters who resolve or settle competing claims that may be made on the same locality by different parties. This treats spatial planning as a process through which land use conflicts are resolved – or mediated – and the results represented in plans. The conflicts may be between groups with different interests in a place – differences between what residents and investors want or expect of a locality is an obvious example that leads back to the origins of town and country planning.

The RTPI concludes that "*planning must be seen as an activity of considerable breadth, both in theory and practice"* (Adams and Watkins, p.12), a conclusion that leaves the scope of planning wide open and, paradoxically perhaps, undermines any claim that planning is a distinct discipline.

Summary: Planning is presented as a place-focussed set of practices that seek to enhance where people live and work through spatial planning, mobilising the relevant interests, and resolving differences in expectations of land use activities among them.

The American Planning Association (APA)

The APA adopts a wide-ranging and assertive approach, defining planning ("*also called urban planning or city and regional planning*") as a "*dynamic profession that works to improve the welfare of people and their communities by creating more convenient, equitable, healthful, efficient, and attractive places for present and future generations*". It "*enables civic leaders, businesses, and citizens to play a meaningful role in creating communities that enrich people's lives*".

It goes on to describe "*good planning*" as creating communities that "*offer better choices for where people live*" and helps communities improve themselves. It scope doesn't stop there, however, because planning "*is done in many arenas*" by professionals "*who are planners and those who are professionally certified by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP)*", working with elected and appointed officials "*to lead the planning process with the goal of creating communities of lasting value. Planners help civic leaders, businesses, and citizens envision new possibilities and solutions to community problems*".

Summary: A benign, professional, community-focused discipline based on advising decision-makers how to make decisions that contribute collectively to a wide range of socially beneficial outcomes.

The Canadian Institute of Planning (CIP)

The CIP also offers a broad definition of planning but addresses more directly the substantive areas of knowledge that planners bring to bear, being "*the use of land, resources, facilities and services*". The goals, though, are as ambitious and far-reaching as those of the APA, given that this knowledge is to be used "*in ways that secure the physical, economic and social efficiency, health and well-being of urban and rural communities*".

The CIP website lists the areas in which members work: "*fields such as land use planning, environmental resource management, land development, heritage conservation, social planning, transportation planning, and economic development*".

Summary: Planning is focused on physical resource and land use planning but also covers other aspects of development activity, managing them to the benefit of urban and rural communities.

Planning Institute of Australia (PIA)

The PIA definition is all-embracing: "*the process of making decisions to guide future action*". It then qualifies this for "*the planning profession (… also referred to as 'urban planning' or 'town planning')*", which is "*specifically concerned with shaping cities, towns and regions by managing development, infrastructure and services*". (https://www.planning.org.au/becomeaplanner)

Planners specialise "*in developing strategies and designing the communities in which we live, work and play. Balancing the built and natural environment, community needs, cultural significance, and economic sustainability, planners aim to improve our quality of life and create vibrant communities*".

PIA planners contribute to "*assessing development proposals and devising policies to guide future development*", in areas "*as diverse as housing, energy, health, education, communications, leisure, tourism and transport. They create new, and revitalise existing, public spaces, conserve places of heritage and enhance community value*", and "*are at the centre of complex debates about the places in which we live and specialise in areas of planning that include*:

- "*Urban development*
- "*Regional and rural planning*
- "*Development assessment and land use*
- "*Social and community based planning*
- "*Urban design and place-making*
- "*Environmental planning and natural resources management*
- "*Transport planning*
- "*Heritage and conservation*
- "*Neighbourhood and urban renewal*
- "*Infrastructure and services planning*
- "*International development*".

The PIA allows that in managing change in growing cities and towns, planners *"frequently work with other professionals such as engineers, architects, building surveyors, economists, developers, politicians, scientists, and environmental scientists".*

While it is good to have a positive vision and ambition, it's hard to avoid the conclusion that the PIA website promotes a highly assertive, encompassing, and self-serving view of the role of planning and planners in urban society today.

Summary: Planning will save Australia and Australians from the (adverse) consequences of change (although others may be involved).

The South African Planning Association (SAPI

While the objectives of SAPI are expressed almost exclusively in terms of advancing planning, the stated aim of the organisation indicates its view of planning as a discipline: "*to enhance the art and science of sustainable local, regional and national human and physical development planning, and the theory and practise relating thereto*".

It includes in its detailed objectives ensuring *"that planning within South Africa promotes sustainable use of natural resources, social and economic upliftment of all population segments".*

Summary: Planning involves the sustainable use of resources to facilitate development to the benefit of the entire population.

The New Zealand Planning Institute (NZTPI)

According to the NZPI website,

"Planning is a complex profession requiring the input of a variety of different disciplines, Planners work in cities, suburbs, and towns, and can specialise in, for example, transportation, urban design, or rural environments".

In its University Accreditation Policy (2011), NZPI

"*recognises that Planning is a diverse discipline which deals with the processes and mechanisms through which natural and built environments are managed and transformed in the interests of the economic, social, cultural and environmental aspirations of communities. As a discipline, planning is shaped by and responds to environmental and cultural values, economic circumstances, technological, political and social imperatives, institutional arrangements, and society's ongoing evaluation of resources and the environment.*"

In its submission to the Productivity Commission's Better Urban Planning Inquiry, the NZPI recognised the validity of changes to the system, and in doing so suggested that:

"Planning needs to be conceptualised as a public good where public and private property rights are protected, rather than as a user-pays service for permission to develop"; and that

"Economic and social externalities of development including losses and gains affecting public and private property need to be provided for in the present RMA framework by means of national policy statements and s.32 type processes" (p.2)

Summary: planning is a process in which planners fulfil multiple roles, managing and transforming built environments, protecting property rights, providing for externalities, and acting in the interests of communities across a range of disciplines.

Comment: The Institutes' Views

The review of institutes' websites confirms that the definition of planning is both elusive and expansive. It is split between plenty on process – what planners do when they are preparing plans – and somewhat less on outcomes – what they are trying to achieve with those plans and how successful they are. It confirms the procedural view of planning knowledge. However, this allows for wide-ranging claims regarding the scope of planning and, by implication, the competence of planners to deal effectively with the many issues that urban development creates.

The Institutes are assertive about the planning's role in urban and community development. However, the breadth of outcomes flagged, the disciplines cited, and the focus on what they do

rather than the grounds for doing it suggest that planning cannot be easily represented as a distinctive goal-focused profession.

The institutes represent a community of professionals who in the urban context may design places, plan and advise on major projects and infrastructure, provide for the well-being of the environment and communities, or simply "manage growth". Shaping places, managing growth, and enhancing economies and communities are fuzzy concepts, however, even (or especially) in urban areas. They seem increasingly abstract as those areas become bigger difficult to define concrete outcomes and consequently measure progress against goals.

One reaction to over-reaching by the discipline might be to default to a more confined, process-based definition rather than high order (and high ground) outcomes. However, we would still need to be assured that there is a coherent body of knowledge and skills in place to ensure the quality and effectiveness of process-focused practice.

We might expect the process to commence with a sound knowledge of the competitive demands on land and resources. While lip service is paid to diversity, the default-setting for practice is more likely to be conformity, especially when definitions promote "*orderly development*". Planning is inevitably prescriptive, seeking adherence to standards and activities regulated by a combination of the statutes it operates under and the prescriptions that emanate from its professional institutes.

Such an approach is more appropriate for medical, engineering, surveying and legal professions than for planning. In these cases, there is a considered body of contemporary specialised scientific knowledge and broad agreement about what outcomes are sought (e.g., health, structural integrity, justice, and accurate measurement and recording of land and building parcels). Strong sanctions apply for failing to adhere to membership principles, practices, and standards.

Planning deals with and influences the behaviour, choices, freedoms, and decisions of a wide range of individuals and organisations. Its application and effects may in turn be influenced by the relative power of different groups involved in the process, and the resources they can access. This leaves as perhaps the distinctive character of planning its integrative nature, something reflected in the wide ranging knowledge base indicated in university planning programmes and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements.

While the institutes range in their prescriptions across process requirements and expectations of professional standards, in terms of substantive content they rely largely on knowledge that must be acquired from other fields and disciplines, either directly through collaboration, or indirectly by the introductory knowledge offered within planning education programmes. As a result of a lack a deep understanding of the different disciplines on which they draw, planners may over-estimate their ability to "construct" a society that meets their aspirations. The result is likely to be plans with disappointing social, economic, and even environmental outcomes.

The utopian aspirations enunciated by the professional institutes risk over-reaching and over-simplification they if do not built on a strong base of theoretical and empirical evidence. The risk is that planners become jacks-of-all-trades, masters of none.

3.   The Evolution of Urban Planning

This section describes the evolution of town planning from its utopian origins at the time of the Industrial Revolution to the present, mainly through reference to academic literature dealing with the rationale for planning. Over the second half of the 20th Century the intellectual foundations moved from a modernising, design-based and authoritarian practice, through rational, communicative, post-modern, and neoliberal phases. All these leave their mark on planning today, although the basic tools of allocating urban space to different uses and users remain despite the increasing complexity of urban areas and a growing sustainability preoccupation with sustainability.

The Town and Country Planning Legacy

Urban planning has it antecedents in the rural closures and consequent massive productivity gains in European and North American agricultural in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Visionary reformers aimed to restore some of the perceived qualities of rural life to rapidly urbanising areas and mitigate the impact of industrialisation on the health of the population.

Separation of conflicting uses, particularly industry and housing, facilitated progressive engineering developments in sanitation and water supply services and reduced the negative impacts of congestion and pollution associated with living close to workshops and factories. It also facilitated the provision of transport and energy infrastructure to businesses and households, a key to the capacity of cities to cope with the urbanisation pressures of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Under the weight of accelerating urbanisation the garden cities movement emerged in the late 19th Century with a utopian vision of urban settlement based on preserving rural values through the planned city and suburb. This promoted well-designed housing with provision for green space and gardens, public spaces, and local services, and led to the formation of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association in 1901. This continues today as the Town and Country Planning Association, to promote and implement its precepts. The TCPA remains heavily focused on the junction between environment and planning, as recently as 2012, publishing a manifesto for new garden cities and suburbs as a response to Britain's "housing crisis" (TCPA, 2012),

Five years after the first House and Town Planning Act was passed in Britain in 1909 a separate British Town Planning Institute was established. This was closely associated with surveying, civil engineering, and architecture. It was closely aligned with the state and focused on the physical design of urban areas. The mapping of long-term land use outcomes – effectively master plans of what might go where – emerged as the principle instrument of town planning. Land use rights were spelt out and enforced on a zone by zone basis.

A Town Planning Act was introduced in New Zealand in 1926, followed by the more comprehensive Town and Country Planning Act in 1953. The latter required councils to prepare land use plans based on zoning alongside an aesthetic ethos rooted still in nature (the garden city) and urban design.

The 1977 revision of the Town and Country Planning Act recognised increasing diversity in circumstances among regions and increased the focus on economic development. It recognised that a standardised prescription of zones ignored local circumstance, and it provided for local councils to

assume responsibility for plans. One result was an extension of planning into many facets of urban life, prescribing what could be done where in increasing detail.

How Did We Get Here? The 1950s on

So how did we get to think today that we can successfully and comprehensively plan across all scales of urban settlement during an era of advanced urbanisation, as implied by the statements of the institutes? This section looks back to look forward to understand the claim of modern planning to anticipate and manage the dynamic, diverse, and largely unpredictable nature of urbanisation in the face of increasing demographic and economic diversity and a new awareness of the environmental risks of irresponsible development.

While there is continuity in terms of planning practice, tools, and ideals, the narrative around planning and the theories underpinning how it is prescribed and practiced reflect wider shifts in both the character and progress of urbanisation and the academic themes and theories drawn on to interpret it.

Physical Development and Design

Developments in planning immediately following the Second World War and through the 1950s reflected a long-standing emphasis on physical development and design (Taylor, 2007).   They maintained the normative role of the state and national conformity of standards, conventions, and practice. It can be argued that this was consistent with the Fordist-Keynesian regulatory regime, focused on creating conditions for the uninterrupted growth of production, and with the political influence of social democracy.

A growing association with architecture elevated the design of human settlements and in particular the role of civic design, all of which supported the tradition of planning "by the manual". While not overtly directed towards social and economic outcomes, the underlying premise was that social and economic objectives would be served by good design. This mode of physical planning, while seen as reformist in the sense of maintaining improving the standard of the built environment, was also considered conservative in scope and values.

Urban Projects

If there was a continuing link to architecture it was to modernism and its focus on reconstructing society on the basis of reason and rationality. This was expressed physically in neatly ordered form, in new towns, carefully planned housing estates, high rise dwellings, and motorways. Civic architecture, construction, infrastructure and transport development were co-located along with Town and Country Planning in the Ministry of Works and Development with its various divisions for infrastructure, civil engineering, and public building design and construction.

More generally, a move towards major urban projects in the public and private sectors saw planners playing their part either evaluating projects or within multi-disciplinary teams focused on delivering them.

The Rational Comprehensive Model

The emergence of a comprehensive rational mode of planning in the 1960s tended to reinforce the role of planning as committed to large-scale order on expanding urban landscapes and convergence on "ideal" urban design.

The challenge for a systems-based, comprehensive planning was to establish the technical framework and tools for predicting the future (Harris, 1960) and unravelling the connections in urban systems that would offer planners a sound theoretical foundation for physical planning (McLoughlin, 1969). This movement was informed by a new interest and competence in quantification that accompanied the emergence of computer-based modelling of land use and transport interactions (Wilson, 1998).

The application of systems theory, while conceptually powerful, appears to have played little part in urban planning except to express potential cause and effects and, through the modelling of physical flows within the urban environment, illustrating the interaction of land use and transport.

While the interconnected and complex nature of decisions around transport and land use, in particular, may have been a justification for comprehensiveness, the level of knowledge required, the complexity of urban systems, and the difficulty of marrying them through analysis made it almost impossible to operationalise (Altshuler, 1965).

Paradoxically, by highlighting the complexity of urbanisation the approach demonstrates the difficulty of establishing the cause and effect underpinnings to policy interventions. It also illustrates the difficulty isolating policy impacts and thereby assess plan performance.

Fainstein (2012) adds to these shortcomings the view that rational comprehensive model tended to favour "*powerful interests and ignored the needs of the poor and the weak*" (2012, 10).

While the modelling approach to urban and regional systems continues to be developed as information technology has become more powerful (Dearden and Wilson, 2015) the application of sophisticated analytical models to the task of urban planning appears to be the exception today, as planning seeks other grounds for legitimacy and modes of practice.

There were at least three responses to the perceived shortcomings of the rational, comprehensive model of city dynamics and its influence on urban planning: incremental, strategic planning, and communicative and strategic planning. The first two sought to sustain the rational positivist approach of traditional planning while dealing with future uncertainty and unpredictability highlighted by post-modernity, while the third reflected a more radical departure and refocusing.

Incremental Planning

Incremental planning involves pursuing planning objectives based on the planner's knowledge of options regardless of how constrained that knowledge might be. The comparison of options for pursuing a clearly enunciated goal would draw on experience more than theory. Using this partial approach or approach conditioned by current "local" knowledge led to more attention paid to the plan-making process than the practicality of implementation and the desirability of the outcome (Taylor,2007).

Following this method of planning, the cumulative impact of "*successive limited comparisons*" are as likely "*to be foolish as to be wise'* according to the key protagonist (Lindblom 2012, 188). Nevertheless, Lindblom claims that "*muddling through*" is a common method of policy formulation in practice. He sees it as "*superior to any other decision making method available for complex problems, certainly superior to a superhuman attempt at comprehensiveness*".

Strategic Planning

The adoption of strategic planning can be construed as another response to rejection of the comprehensive rational planning model. Strategic planning model derives from the military via business management and offers a sense of forward movement by focusing on visions, goals, strategies, and policies without the need to deal with difficult detail of the underlying dynamics in the urban environment. It also carries with it the idea of tracking the results of planned initiatives and evaluating their outcomes, leading to an emphasis on plan evaluation.

The adoption of strategic planning models was associated with a move towards regional planning to consolidate or align the plans of individual councils with regional objectives (Hall 1975, 173) and signalled a shift to long-term planning horizons of 20 years or more (Salet and Faludi, 2000).

According to Friedmann (2005), strategic planning is promulgated for a number of reasons: it provides visions for the future; it generates technical studies that would not otherwise be undertaken; it substitutes political for technical rationality; it creates a platform for public engagement and collaboration. He sees a major weakness, though, in the long term unknowns and the fact that local governments do not usually have the stability or continuity implied by the practice. He conceded that strategic plans may, however, provide a useful framework for prioritising long-term infrastructure investment and master plans (125).

Communicative Planning

Another response to the limits of the comprehensive rational approach was a call for planners to recognise that to be effective they needed to "*speak to power*", to acknowledge the political nature of planning and act (and communicate) accordingly (Forester, 1989). This gives rise to the prospect of advocacy planning, highlighting the values implicit in explicit or implicit in plans which the rational model tends to obscure. Davidoff (2012) points out that prescriptions are value laden and that "*the values of the planner should be made clear*". In addition, determinations

> "*of what serves the public interest, in a society containing many diverse interest groups, are almost always of a highly contentious nature. … planners should be able to engage in the political process as advocates of interests both of government and of such other groups, organizations, or individuals who are concerned with proposing policies for future development of the community*" (192-193).

That planners should advocate the plans of many interest groups, as Davidoff contends, removes the veil of objectivity but nevertheless calls for a sound evidential base for the position argued, even if that base may be challenged by contrary evidence. [1] He also makes the point that

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[1]   In practice, the planner's role as an expert in the Environment Court is to assist the Court. Evidence is hence expected to be "impartial" in nature (see Environment Court Practice Notes, 2014, 7.2 and 7.3).

"Urban politics … must balance the demands for ever-increasing bureaucratic control for increased concern with the unique requirements of local, specialized interests".

If nothing else, if planning is to

"encourage democratic urban government, then it must operate so as to include rather than exclude citizens from participating in the process. 'Inclusion' means not only permitting citizens to be heard. It also means allowing them to become well informed about the underlying reasons for planning proposals, and to respond to these in the technical language of professional planners". (p193)

Significantly, he sees the preparation of unitary plans (comprehensive plans prepared "by only one agency") as contrary to the principal of inclusion.

In the United Kingdom Healey (1997) developed the theme of communicative rationality further with her analysis of the influence of institutionalised values and behaviours on the interactions among players involved in urban governance, and how these values influence the practice of planning. She emphasises the complexity of relationships and how collaboration could be undermined by participants' failure to understand their own concepts and practices relative to the group, and their limited capacity to collaborate.

Healey subsequently sought to distinguish her explanation of the diversity of urban policy governance and behaviours from simple collaborative concepts associated with cooperation in business models. Based on ten years of observation Healey proposed ten different "process forms" to illustrate the diversity potential policy paths, going beyond the "*well-known possibilities of manipulative politics, the rational-technical process, top-down command-and-control practices and bureaucratic rule-governed behaviour*" (Healey 2003, 108).

One of the issues arising from Healey's theorising is the tension between concentration on processes and the significance of context, which leads her to note that processes are not easily generalised but "*unique constructions in specific situations*". The issue from a theoretical process is to determine, mainly from case studies, "*the extent to which innovation in process forms builds capacities that may change the governance culture*" (110).

Another issue is whether focusing on process and interaction diverts attention from the justice of planning outcomes, in terms of both social justice and sustainability. In fact, Healey accepts that "*process and substance are co-constituted, not separate spheres*" (citing Gualini, 2001). This means that participants in the process of planning need to make "*decisions (explicit or implicit) about an ethics of conduct as well as an ethics of material outcome*" (Healey 2003, 111, citing Howe, 1990).

While aware of the wider social influences that might be expected to influence planning practice (fiscal and financial crises, for example, and globalisation), Healey argues that the issue is one of the "*quality of the communicative and collaborative dynamics through which [local] social relations are maintained and changed*" (2003, 112). In other words, the way in which power is embedded in governance relationships and how it might shift as a result of the interaction of the various players involved in, influencing, or influenced by particular decision processes will influence the outcomes of that process.

Healey argues that this is not simply an argument for more inclusive and open decision-making, but calls for "*an analytical focus on the quality of relational interactions*" so that planners know when such processes "*are likely to encourage these qualities [the inclusivity and creativity of urban governance processes] and improve life conditions for the diverse groups and communities of interest in cities and regions, and when they are likely to be merely mechanisms to sustain old and well-established power relations*" (112). The process does not determine the decision and plan outcomes so much as the relationships among participants in the process.

From the point of view of the current review, this stream of academic work lifts the focus of planning not simply to ensure a greater inclusivity through collaboration and communication. It also highlights the role of the range of organisations involved in urban planning, and the relationships through which they come together (or not) to determine planning decisions and, consequent outcomes. The processes resulting from this interaction are diverse and shifting, and while different modes can be identified, they will vary by context and may well change governance relationships.

More generally, Taylor suggested that these sorts of development were moving planning from an art to a science as an academic endeavour. The benign view of the capacity of planning to improve the quality of urban areas remained, aided now by a claim to an improved scientific understanding of how planning as well as cities work.

Fractured Planning – Beyond Modernity

According to Taylor, modernist precepts of rational material progress based on a common tendency towards functional design and large scale development resulted in public protest aimed at defending different urban environments from the uniformity of urban projects that conceived the city as a whole rather than as an assemblage of distinctive communities and places.

This criticism found support in neo-Marxist literature which saw planning as an instrument of the market, supporting capital accumulation, and thereby compromising planning's traditional ideals around bettering society. One consequence was an increasing division, perhaps defined along the practitioner-academic interface, between the instrumental or normative views and practices of the former and the critical views of the latter.

At much the same time, however, planning also came under attack from the right on the grounds that large-scale centralised planning suffered from a lack of knowledge in a globalising society in which economic well-being depended increasingly on the capacity to compete internationally.

In more everyday terms Peter Hall acknowledged the problems of social democracy espoused by planners in the late 20th century. He saw slum clearance, monotonous and depressed housing estates, and urban containment as resulting from the political ideology associated with the large scale interventions that marked modern planning. It was perhaps the fear that this cycle would be repeated that saw him resile from the prospect of adopting the precepts of smart growth in the UK.

These intellectual ruptures in the tradition of prescriptive planning collectively reflect a wider questioning of the inevitability of progress, the universally benevolent nature of modernising, and the belief that the only path to progress and knowledge is the path of rationality.

Post-Modern Planning

The rejection of a belief in absolute knowledge and of the immutable nature of scientific knowledge defines post-modernity, rather than any distinguishing character of the post-modern. A particular feature of modernity in planning, and providing an impulse for its displacement by "post-modern planning", has been the marginalising of minority groups, particularly those markedly different from the prevailing social and cultural norms.

The move towards post-modern planning in the face of these critiques highlighted the diverse and often fragmented nature of cities and acknowledged the unpredictability of urbanisation. Oranje (2001) makes the point that there had been significant critiques of modernist planning in the 1960s and 1970s, including Jacobs (1961), Lindblom and Davidoff, discussed above; and Friedmann (1973).

He concluded that while planning had engaged with postmodernity there were

> "sadly still ... far too many vestiges of modernity in planning theory that favours/privileges sameness and even the closing down of the progressive possibilities and opportunities that some of the other strands of modernity in postmodernity still offer".

He suggests that planners would be more productive if they were to engage in and learn from

> "the local and beyond … ceaselessly reflecting on our actions and seeking ways of doing things better in and for the futures of communities we live/work in/with" (183)

Critiques of the narrow expertise and knowledge of planners relative to the urban domain, of the rational model, the relationship of planning with power, and the lack of inclusivity in planning suggest a pessimistic view of what planning might achieve. However, planning moved to encompass the needs of the "other" (groups that do not conform to the dominant cultural norms) in urban areas and the distinctive character of the places within cities which they tend to occupy (perhaps in response to the foundations of postmodernity in the arts and design).

By focusing on the so-called "creative classes", such minorities were effectively recruited by urban planners and policy makers as the new drivers of urbanisation, a move which created a new normative rationale for planning, inspired by Florida's (2005) normative treatment of creativity and urban development.

Planners could now promote precincts focussed on leisure, consumption, and visual and performing arts. In celebrating inner cities and the CBD fringes for their minorities, planners could give them greater visibility, paradoxically co-opting them and their environments into what is essentially a new form of modernity founded on increasing material well-being and leisure time. In practice, it became evident that little had changed: elevation of the creative classes promoting gentrification, favouring central city property owners, and doing nothing to break down ethnic and other boundaries, or exclusion (Ponzini and Rossi, 2010; Jakob, 2010).

Today, the focus of such initiatives is very much on urban regeneration through gentrification of the inner city. This is giving rise to a new round of large scale urban renewal, including central city transport and land rehabilitation projects that displace the marginalised inhabitants of the inner city in support of a new urbanity founded on high end consumption of goods and services.

One of the drivers of post-modern thinking is globalisation – the increasing impact of the international flows and exchanges on the character and opportunities of urban places. Globalisation contributes to greater local ethnic and cultural diversity and socio-economic divergence within cities, as well as increased stratification among cities, including the emergence of "*world or global cities, that is, strategic nodes in the dynamic inter-city flows generated by financial transactions, trade, migration and information*" (Friedmann, 2005, 183).

In his review of global planning Friedmann stated that despite planning practices being *"deeply embedded in the political culture of the country and/or individual cities … (g)lobalization is bringing about major changes"* … However, "*despite the growing volume of international communication within the profession … major differences exist in the way planning is conceived, institutionalized, and carried out"* (184).

Friedmann suggests that these differences reflect state structures (federal, unitary, or multi-national –as in the EU), level of economic development, rate and level of urbanisation, and political structure. Despite contrasts, all the systems he examined are "*in movement*" (112), with a general shift from restraining market forces to "*a kind of entrepreneurial activity that seeks to facilitate economic development through the market*" (113).

He suggests that the way forward to a common if "*daunting agenda*" is through reference to *"the natural processes sustaining human life, but equally to the social dimensions of cities, equity, social justice, and community, and to the aesthetic and spiritual qualities of the built environment"* (114).

To Friedmann the movement is away from "*the tradition of modern city planning that seeks to restrain market forces in city-building processes with the intent of furthering the public good*" using in particular zoning, " *and "master plans (or general or comprehensive plans …) [that] seek to lay out a physical pattern of land use and transportation routes for a city … as a guide for public agencies that are expected to conform their sectoral programming   while hoping to constrain private investment in the same manner*".

In response, he advocated more innovative planning solutions and institutional arrangements, with planning seen as a "*social learning process*" based on "*continuous monitoring and reflection*" (115). He notes also the emergence of city marketing, the practice of cities in competition with one another to sell themselves to international investors, a model of city growth that he considers "*a race to nowhere*". He suggests instead that cities should ensure that they have a sound asset base, driving endogenous growth. This shifts the focus back to the city's residents and their needs rather than to "*the needs and desires of global capital*" (118), although if effective it should increase the interest of global capital in a city.

He lists the assets to be nurtured in the interests of long-term sustainability and liveability as: human, social, cultural, intellectual, environmental, natural, and urban.

At the same time Friedmann highlights the social diversity of cities and the importance of "*planning for difference*", ensuring all groups have access to "*basic human needs*", subject to "*the condition of each diversity group*", and the significance of civil society organisations for pursuing access in the poorest of societies and communities (122).

In summing up, he is dismissive of the effectiveness of master planning "*in which all elements are brought together in a neat package encompassing a single vision for the city*" as impractical, even if "intellectually satisfying". Aside from the uncertainties it faces, he claims that the ability of a master plan (or integrated urban development plan):

> "*to serve as a single template for the multiple public agencies of the city, not to mention the competitive private sector, foreign investors, and civil society organizations and social movements is virtually nil*" (130)

At the end of his review Friedmann proposes a move to "*action planning*" with collaboration as a response to an environment in which

> "*none of the actors alone has the ability to do what they want to do without the voluntary collaboration of others … Dynamic action planning … appears to be perfectly suited to the contemporary conditions in rapidly changing cities   It is engaged over the life-time of project development. It bypasses planning in favour of incremental decision-making. It focuses on the here-and-now rather than final outcomes. It takes place in a framework of assumptions that may be given politically or in higher-order policies and plans. And it brings together all the parties that have a potential interest in a project and negotiates among them so that the project (as modified) may continue to thrive*" (231).

In summary, Friedmann's review of global planning practice identifies some convergent themes but concludes that planning will always remain conditioned by the local. He identifies the components of the (endogenous) asset base of cities that they might seek to nurture to the benefit of their inhabitants and suggests that maybe the most appropriate path to participating in the global economy. Finally, he comes down on a collaborative and inclusive mode of planning practice –action planning – as the most appropriate means of moving forward in dynamic cities subject to the exogenous forces associated with globalisation.

> ***The major challenge to action planning is reconciling a very wide-ranging view of the planning task and the diverse agencies that may be involved in any one city with the practice of planning as a focused activity dealing with the here and now in an incremental fashion. Another is to determine the unique place of planners –if any—in this framework,***

A Neoliberal Discipline?

During the latter part of the 20th century governments were embracing the neo-liberal agenda which elevated market disciplines and sought to reduce the government interventions that were seen to increase transaction costs and impede market operations. Neoliberalism was also associated with the new managerialism implemented to increase the efficiency of government. This included moving quasi-commercial or contestable service delivery to publicly owned trading entities or, where market competition was possible, privatising them.

One of the outcomes of this has been the emergence of commercial monopolies or oligopolies in the provision of infrastructure, including water supply, liquid and solid waste disposal, public transport, transport networks (aircraft and airports, freight terminals, rail, and ports), electricity and telecommunications. These entities may have their own planning capacities and may operate more

or less independently of local plans and at arm's length from democratically elected decision-makers, adding a further complication to the planner's task.

Sager (2011) reviewed extensively the impact of neo-liberal principles across fourteen neo-liberal planning policies implemented between 1990 and 2010 in four policy areas (147-148):

1. Urban Economic Development
    1.1. City marketing
    1.2. Urban development by attracting the 'creative class'
    1.3. Economic development initiatives
    1.4. Competitive bidding
2. Infrastructure Provision
    2.1. Public-private partnerships
    2.2. Private sector involvement in financing and operating transport infrastructure
        2.2.1. Roads
        2.2.2. Airports
        2.2.3. Railways
        2.2.4. Seaports
    2.3. Private sector involvement in procuring water
3. Management of Commercial Areas
    3.1. Business friendly zones and flexible zoning
    3.2. Property-led urban regeneration
    3.3. Privatisation of public space and sales-boosting exclusion
4. Housing and Neighbourhood Renewal
    4.1. Liberalisation and housing markets
    4.2. Gentrification
    4.3. Privately governed and secured neighbourhoods
    4.4. Quangos organising market-oriented urban development

He listed a number of concerns about neo-liberal urban planning:

- Its "one-dimensional concentration on efficiency and economy";
- A predilection for private, competitive, and market-oriented solutions to urban problems;
- A lack of democratic agenda other than consultation aimed at gathering information;
- "Indifference to concerns for unequal treatment, exclusion, segregation, and distributional questions" (180).

These reservations are embedded in a commitment to "*a determined down-sizing of local government a simplification of public planning processes, and an emphasis on production and economic efficiency rather than distribution and fairness'* (180).

It should be acknowledged, however, that the case studies focus on the reflection of the neoliberal turn on planning policy, rather than on immediate or long-term effects on urban development. Friedmann enunciates on the adverse effects of neoliberal impacts on plans as he sees them as:

- Private investors receive better treatment poorer people;
- Neoliberal policies will support sustainable urban areas only to the extent that they align with market preferences;

- An increasing further private investment and operating presence in infrastructure supply leads to the "contraction of the political sphere" (180).

Healey (2000) suggests that the neoliberal movement represents a "purposeful attack" on urban planning, the aim of which was:

> To seek to transform planning systems into quasi-market regulatory systems for dealing with conflict mediation over complex spatially manifest environmental disputes" (518).

Sager suggests that planning survives the neo-liberal onslaught because sufficient of its business constituents value the greater certainty that an intrusive regulatory regime offers when demand is volatile and unpredictable.

From a planning perspective, the neoliberal turn not only undermines the social mandate of planning and the community benefits of a focus on equity. It is also less transparent than, say, communicative planning, and undermines local democracy. Sager sees it as a movement to be resisted:

> "the challenge to planners is to convince the public at large that market-oriented systems for solving urban problems serve those with high ability to pay far better than those with low ability, and that even the well-off are being served by neo-liberal policies mainly in their capacity as economic actors (producers and consumers). In contrast, the aim of public planning is to treat people as citizens with political roles, rights, and agendas – not only as recipients of service. It is the task of planning to provide public goods even when markets are non-existent, and protect against externalities even when payment systems are not in place. Planners should draw continued attention to collective goods that are not marketable at a profit-giving price, and whose production is therefore not attractive to private companies. Some goods benefitting disadvantaged segments of the population belong to this category, as do redistribution policies in general.

> "Neo-liberalism aims to improve governance systems by new public management (NPM), whilst communicative planning theory aims to improve the democratic system through inclusion, participation, and public deliberation (Sager, 2009). Public planning will be in a better position to resist the neo-liberal attack if succeeding in disseminating the message that broadly based and justifiable collective decisions are generally more important than efficient decision-making in the economic sense" (181).

The neo-liberal movement as it impacted on planning was broadly consistent with the intellectual recasting of cities in a postmodern rather than modern framework, contributing to more fraught public governance and service delivery at the same time as cities themselves – and urbanisation generally – were becoming more fractured and communities fragmented. In theory, the neoliberal movement should have led to greater flexibility and freedoms.

In practice, this does not appear to have happened, perhaps as a result of the resistance of traditional (or "conventional") planning; perhaps because the underlying arguments about market failure, the management of externalities, and democracy justify that resistance.

> *If so, the real challenge for planning is to demonstrate that the correction of market failure is indeed warranted and that the benefits to society of planning regulation outweigh the costs of apparently higher transaction costs and lower efficiency. This is more likely to be demonstrated if planning is perhaps constrained in the scale at which it seeks to operate, is sensitive to local context, and oriented more towards conflict resolution than enforcing bureaucratic rules that are all too often based on received wisdom rather than critical situational analysis.*

Smart Growth

The Smart Growth movement originating in the United States holds some promise in this respect to the extent that it is based largely on local initiatives. However, those initiatives are in turn based on principles held to be universal in urban areas (implicitly through proselytising, if not explicitly).

Smart Growth builds on the design tenets of new urbanism, and has had a similar impact. Inspired by notions of neighbourhood character and community, mixed uses and liveability, it comprises a set of principles to which, it is believed, planning for regenerating urban settlement should aspire.

The Charter of the Congress for the New Urbanism:

The Congress for the New Urbanism views disinvestment in central cities, the spread of placeless sprawl, increasing separation by race and income, environmental deterioration, loss of agricultural lands and wilderness, and the erosion of society's built heritage as one interrelated community-building challenge.

We stand *for the restoration of existing urban centers and towns within coherent metropolitan regions, the reconfiguration of sprawling suburbs into communities of real neighborhoods and diverse districts, the conservation of natural environments, and the preservation of our built legacy.*

We advocate *the restructuring of public policy and development practices to support the following principles: neighborhoods should be diverse in use and population; communities should be designed for the pedestrian and transit as well as the car; cities and towns should be shaped by physically defined and universally accessible public spaces and community institutions; urban places should be framed by architecture and landscape design that celebrate local history, climate, ecology, and building practice.*

The Smart Growth movement adapts the New Urbanism design framework into a series of principles for planning communities, which it disseminates widely (with the support of the US Environmental Planning Agency). Smart Growth communities in the US are said to:

- *conserve resources by reinvesting in existing infrastructure and rehabilitating historic buildings.*
- *design neighborhoods that have homes near shops, offices, schools, houses of worship, parks, and other amenities, giving residents and visitors the option of walking, bicycling, taking public transportation, or driving as they go about their business.*
- *provide a range of different housing types to make it possible for senior citizens to stay in their neighborhoods as they age, young people to afford their first home, and families at all stages in between to find a safe, attractive home they can afford.*

- *enhance neighborhoods and involve residents in development decisions, creating vibrant places to live, work and play.*

The resulting quality of life is claimed to make Smart Growth communities competitive, creating business opportunities, thereby strengthening the local tax base, and echoing Sager's view that addressing the strength of local assets may be the best way to attract investment from outside.

This is achieved by the application of ten principles enunciated on the Smart Growth website:

- *Mix land uses.*
- *Take advantage of compact building design.*
- *Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.*
- *Create walkable neighborhoods.*
- *Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.*
- *Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.*
- *Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.*
- *Provide a variety of transportation choices.*
- *Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective.*
- *Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions*

New Urbanism might be seen as the urban designer's response to postmodernity. New Urbanism explicitly favours preservation and centralisation in a way that is not as pronounced under Smart Growth. Indeed, the principles and practices of Smart Growth may be more readily and effectively applied to new settlements than old.

At the same time, the development of the Smart Growth network and the creation and dissemination of manuals for the application of its principles suggests a modern project in a post-modern world. Without commenting on the merit of the principles, or of the underlying design tenets of New Urbanism, these closely related movements jointly provide and promulgate design and planning templates across diverse settlements in quite different national and local settings as a means and measure of good development.

Together New Urbanism and Smart Growth have defined a distinctive and currently widely referenced paradigm for dealing with urban development. Consequently, Smart Growth provides only residual space for local discretion. It can be seen as doctrinaire, falling short on the communicative planning scale.

The Sustainability Agenda

Under the influence of New Urbanism/Smart Growth 21st Century planning in the west, at least, has focused on the restoration and revival of the inner city, and promoted largely historical boundaries as limits to the spread of urban areas. The contemporary focus on the central city and city boundaries has been justified in large part as planning's contribution to the sustainability agenda.

Hence, the APA policy guide for sustainability[2] places "suburban sprawl" at the top of its list "US indications of unsustainability". Its policy positions include the following:

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[2]   www.planning.org/policy/guides/adopted/sustainability.htm

"… planning policies and legislation that encourage alternatives to use of gas-powered vehicles. Such alternatives include public transit, alternatively-fuelled vehicles, bicycle and pedestrian routes, and bicycle and pedestrian-friendly development design.

"… planning policies and legislation that result in compact and mixed-use development that minimizes the need to drive, re-uses existing, infill, and brownfields sites that have been thoroughly reclaimed and remediated before using open land, and that avoids the extension of sprawl. ("Sprawl" refers to low-density, land-consumptive, center-less, auto-oriented development typically located on the outer suburban fringes).

"… planning, development, and preservation policies and legislation that conserve undeveloped land, open space, agricultural land, protect water and soil quality, consciously restore ecosystems, and that minimize or eliminate the disruption of existing natural ecosystems and floodplains. Such policies and legislation include Growing Smart and other innovative planning approaches.

These land use strictures are by no means the only policy positions, which range over depletion of finite resources (fossil fuels and minerals), dependence on chemicals, activities that impact on ecosystems, the use of renewable energy sources, sustainable farming practices, and the like.

The *Urban Design Protocol* produced by the New Zealand Ministry for the Environment was somewhat less doctrinaire, being focused on the need for a commitment to quality urban design, and prescribed process (usefully drawing attention to both the complexity of towns and cities and the range of professions and stakeholders in urban design) rather than form. However, it did include a criticism of existing urban design and an implicit commitment to greater densities:

"Quality urban design can help us avoid some of the problems of poorly designed low-density developments that we have experienced in the past. These problems have included: traffic congestion, unsustainable energy use, overloaded urban infrastructure, a lack of distinctive identity, social isolation, and reduced physical activity with its associated problems such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease" (9).

While the elevation of medium to high density urban design was in large part a reaction against the proliferation of large lots encouraged within the United States planning system, at a scale well ahead of most other jurisdictions, it has been picked up elsewhere as a path which planning can – or should -- follow in the interests of sustainability

From Smart Growth to Anti-Growth: The Urban Containment Planning Paradigm

The path for urban planning proffered by Smart Growth received endorsement from outside the urban design field by the widely-cited work on urban transport of Newman and Kenworthy in the 1990s (1999, 2000), which reinforced the conservative new urbanist paradigm. Put simply, their work charted a cross-sectional relationship between urban density and fuel consumption across a variety of cities in Canada, Australia, Europe, and Asia and concluded that the path to sustainable cities is built on reducing private automobile dependence. This is the basis on which planning has relied to promote high density living as a way of cutting demand for car travel, generating a sustainability rationale for a combination of urban containment and medium and high density housing and employment policies.

Yet the transport argument for containing cities, while widely promulgated and adopted, has not been well tested either in terms of a counterfactual; e.g., whether more efficient transport systems and changing automotive technology might provide greater sustainability gains if they were to be promoted through policy. Nor have they been well tested in terms of whether reducing automobile dependence by changing urban form stacks up in terms of a comprehensive life-cycle cost-benefit assessment; or whether the social cost of the externalities of reduced personal mobility, higher density living (including congestion, as well as psychological and physical effects), and the loss of consumer utility are justified by possible savings in resource consumption.

The push for higher employment and residential densities by containing cities within strict boundaries is also supported by reference to the New Economic Geography. A recent wave of economists, from Krugman (1995) on, has attributed the tendency towards large city development almost entirely to the external economies of scale and spill-over effects which they offer business, with minimal reference to the historical foundations of city building and the cumulative advantages which accrue to some of them.

Size may act as a driver of the further concentration of population and employment in large cities (a process described in economic geography as cumulative causation). However, the argument in support of city containment that above-average growth is attributable to density rather than advantages of circumstance and scale is less plausible.

Indeed, the agglomeration argument may confuse cause and effect: large cities concentrate capital and labour, consequently exercising greater political and commercial influence. And because they have large populations, they naturally tend towards higher population density, or have some high density precincts. However, neither of these conditions, the concentration of commercial resources and population and the existence of high density precincts in large cities are functions of intervention, nor can they be easily created by coercive urban plans and policies.

Reliance on agglomeration to explain differences in city growth not only overlooks history, it denies the structural drivers of city growth and decline. It ignores the existence of diseconomies of scale in both public and private production and the emergence of global production and distribution chains that transcend the constraints of distance and dispersal.

Through their impact on the location choices of business, the rapid development of global logistics capacity in response to falling trade barriers and diminishing international transaction costs (for goods and services, capital, and information). These global developments substantially reduce the advantages of proximity among producers and between producers and markets, fundamentally changing the dynamics of city development and form. In fact, they underpin a refocusing of planning on the arrangement of consumption in cities (recreation and leisure precincts, creative quarters, housing typologies, retail centres, and the like) ahead of production (industrial zones, distribution centres, and transport nodes, for example).

The record of planning for economic development suggests that when cities and regions encounter structural headwinds, there is little that planning regulation can do to reverse economic decline.

Compact Cities – an Answer is search of a Question?

In the face of all these contingencies and counterpoints, international "group think" appears to have aligned the nostalgia implicit in New Urbanist prescriptions of urban form with contentious and contestable arguments for urban sustainability and productivity to sustain the practice of city planning by rationing land, setting targets for residential and employment densities, and protecting existing retail and commercial centres.

Nowhere is the adaptation of traditional planning methods to new circumstances more obvious than in the reliance of the new urbanist paradigm of urban containment. In the past city boundaries were defined to protect food-producing hinterlands to feed the local urban population. (Prior to that, they often served as defensive fortifications) The food-protection rationale has been long superseded by gains in the capacity to handle and transport food, the emergence of specialist food producing regions, and by the internationalisation of trade in foodstuffs.

Indeed, imposing city limits can be characterised as a planning policy in search of a rationale. Under the Town and Country Planning Act (1977) urban limits were promulgated to protect productive soils. Under the RMA they were justified initially in terms of preserving the "natural" environment – air, water, and soil quality. This rationale has since morphed into preventing the spread of urbanisation and consequently reducing the use of private vehicles.

The effect of applying urban limits today, though, is simply to over-inflate the value of urban land and potentially to boost the costs of investment and production. Unsurprisingly, this has far-reaching negative consequences for the cost of living and investment and is ultimately unsustainable in an era of increasing wealth and growth. While it is a move that may favour the owners of urban property, it is socially divisive and through its negative impacts on the costs of capital, the efficiency and resilience of infrastructure, productive investment, and the cost of labour, may well reduce economic performance and ultimately undermine the growth that it was intended to contain.

Quite apart from the fact that its contribution to sustainability remains unproven, the new urbanist compact city paradigm which dominates urban planning in New Zealand and elsewhere also cuts across the diversity and consultative agenda associated with post-modernity, and is at odds with the movement towards less regulation associated with the post 1970s neoliberal ascendency or with the push for the more radical options of communicative or action planning.

New Zealand's Response: The Resource Management Act

Against the background of post-modernity and the neoliberal turn in economic policy, the Resource Management Act 1991 was something of a trail blazer. It consolidated responsibilities for environmental management of water, soil, air, forests and, as something of an anomaly, regional transport. It promoted effects-based planning in support of the principle of resource environmental sustainability. It represented a response to growing global and green movements that elevated physical sustainability in national and local policy agenda. It was also seen as a response to the neo-liberal shift in New Zealand policy settings during the 1990s (McDermott, 1998).

The RMA provided for greater innovation in land use, and increased the capacity for the private sector to initiate changes to plans, subject to environmental bottom lines. It did dismiss land use zoning, but offered the prospect of a much more light-handed approach by the regulators, and the

opportunity for resource users to justify their activities by demonstrating how they might manage their effects on the environment rather than being constrained by land use rules.

As an enabling act the RMA has proved less satisfactory in practice than in principle. The greater flexibility offered was seen as increasing uncertainty for citizens and businesses according to proponents of traditional town and country planning. The need to reach decisions about how best to manage the effects of development has seen prolonged disputes between advocates of the status quo and those pursuing change, and has not diminished recourse to the court for arbitration. Among other things, this risks the judiciary becoming the de facto environmental agency.

In addition, the risks associated with the cumulative effects of individual plan changes have fostered a more conservative approach to planning than the drafters of the RMA intended, elevating the precautionary principle (whereby the perception of environmental risk leads to a refusal to consent an activity) as the *de facto* starting point in decisions about resource use.

Consequently, planners continue to rely on detailed and exclusionary zoning that prescribes activities consistent with plan objectives and excludes those deemed inconsistent. This reflects the tried and tested tenet of town planning: the view that separating or excluding some uses is the appropriate way to limit externalities.

The results of this approach, however, have been increased delays and costs, increased uncertainty about land use and environmental outcomes in the short-term, the strong possibility that many of the externalities avoided were more apparent than real, and that the likelihood that, if fully accounted, the costs of exclusion would often outweigh the benefits.

Despite the neo-liberal context in which the RMA was introduced, and the intention of the law makers, its application has been conservative and largely impervious to the demands of diversity and change in urban areas. This is compounded the centralising requirement in the RMA that policies set out in the Regional Policy Statement (RPS) should be reflected in district plans.

While the setting of regional standards and provisions for protecting or restoring the quality of air and water, the integrity of soils, and biodiversity should be clearly set out and adhered to throughout region as far as practical, the tendency for Regional Policy Statements to promulgate land use prescriptions to control matters outside the immediate requirements of the natural environment intrudes on urban development options. Indeed, it was the prioritising of regional land use prescriptions over local urban plans in the Auckland RPS in the 1990s led to the disputes among councils and the perception of erratic planning that, in turn, led to the establishment of a single unitary council for all of Auckland.

Quite apart from further diminishing the capacity of local councils to respond to the distinctive needs and character of local communities, RPS land use prescriptions have tended to cement in existing activities and patterns despite pressure for change. Apart from Auckland, examples include Bay of Plenty Region (through the Smart Growth project) and Tauranga City; Waikato Region (through Future Proof) and Hamilton City, and Canterbury Region and Christchurch City.

Another key reservation is that the RMA was not drafted to manage the development and maintenance of urban areas, even if that has turned out to be a major role. It has, consequently,

been subject to a range of ad hoc amendments including out-of-context add-on criteria dealing with a range of matters outside the "natural and physical" environment.

Perhaps the greatest sign of its subversion is the spectacular expansion of the Act over the 20 years from 1991 to 2011 (Table 1). An Act that was around 380 pages when enacted had been expanded through multiple amendments to 827 pages by 2013, more than doubling. While the structure of the RMA appeared more or less stable over this period, with a6 parts and 434 principle paragraphs in 2013, the proliferation of sub-paragraphs (reflected in the expansion of the contents section saw the body of the Act boosted by over 160% in volume. This was checked by means of a count of words and actual paragraphs which confirm a doubling over that period.

Table 1: The Expansion of the Resource Management Act

Version	Pages					Counts		Structure		
	Total	Contents	Interpretat-ion (Part I)	Body (Parts I to XIV+)	Schedules	Words	Paragraphs	Parts	Reference Paragraphs*	Schedules
1991	382	7	15	282	100	133,000	6,740	15	433	8
2007	722	27	25	668	54	232,700	12,960	14	433	8
2011	790	30	35	684	106	247,000	14,310	15	433	10
2013	827	32	34	739	88	260,700	15,120	16	434	11
2016**	683	29	27	600	83	266,200	15,000	16	434	11
1991-2007	89%	286%	67%	137%	-46%	75%	92%			
2007-2013	15%	19%	36%	11%	63%	12%	17%			
1991-2013	116%	357%	127%	162%	-12%	96%	124%			

* Excludes sub-paragraphs
** July revisions to come

A reduction or streamlining is evident since 2013 but the July 2016 amendments to the Act have not yet been incorporated, so that the comparison cannot be made. This simple analysis suggests, however, that major changes will be made to streamline what has become an unwieldy statute. With the complication of the RMA, the clarity of the planners' role must also be diminished.

Comment: The 21st Century: Back to the Future?

The preceding review suggests an academic preoccupation with what planners do, and what ends planning serves, rather than with its contribution to those ends. If planning is defined as what planners do, the follow up question is: "what will planners be doing in the future to maintain their commitment to improving urban places". (The alternative question, one raised by the post-modern is "do we need planning as an independent branch of urban knowledge, policy, and practice?")

This preoccupation is not surprising. The literature about the role of planning draws overwhelmingly on the social sciences. Despite a reorientation of practice over the last thirty years towards the sustainability of the physical environment, the focus of urban planning has simply moved towards the consumption end of the production chain, using land use rules to manage personal and household options and behaviour. Curiously, though, this social science legacy is hardly reflected in a strong shift to the communicative or action planning in planning practice.

There are various reasons for this. Planning rules remain firmly focused on the allocation and use of land. Planning remains firmly rooted in modernism, imposing far-reaching land use divisions across urban areas rather than necessarily encouraging the emergence of distinctive and intimate precincts

of activity from place to place. (While increased mixed use zoning recognises possibilities for less homogeneous uses, it's effect appears mainly to be extend housing as an option commercial areas).

In Auckland and Christchurch, planning has become more centralised and less transparent as a result of the creation of a unitary council. Planning is effectively removed from local communities, in part because of the statutory constraints imposed on the unitary planning process. A managerial approach (mandated in part by procedures to accelerate the process) and an autocratic, modernity mind set within the planning community act against the more locally-nuanced, innovative, and participative approach that the planning literature points to in a post-modern, globalising world.

The relative dearth of planning material reviewed in the planning literature points to intellectual and practical divisions between the practice of planning and the sciences of physical sustainability. This raises the prospect that potentially more effective and less coercive planning intervention might concentrate on physical processes rather than behaviour and social organisation.

At the most basic level this might entail, for example, subsidies to promote the conversion of appliances and vehicles to sustainable energy sources with substantially more impact on emissions and at less cost than constraining urban development. Road pricing is potentially a more effective tool for modifying behaviour to reflect and lower congestion-related externalities than redesigning transport networks and land use to shift community behaviour towards greater public transport use for commuting. This is especially so when the majority of trips are for non-commuting purposes.

> *Despite the apparent acceleration of change in the post-industrial if not post-modern age, planning has changed only slowly and continues to apply traditional and essentially static tools in a dynamic and diverse environment - despite its ostensible focus on the future.*

The questions that follow from this assessment of the planning response to post-modern challenges are: how far theorising should start from the perspective of the interests planning seeks to serve? And how it might deal with the diversity of those interests when its only consistent and defining tool is holding sway over if, where, and when things might happen? Perhaps more fundamental is the question of how the sciences of sustainability might be integrated into the practice of urban planning, or, indeed, if they can be?

Where to from here?

The history of planning suggests that aspirations espoused by the institutes, laudable as they may be, cannot be fully delivered on. The academic commentaries and theories of planning appear both progressive and critical (insofar as they seek to associate planning practice to relational changes among agencies), and changes in how the social sciences interpret the urban world. Yet it is hard to see planning practice as progressive.

A generalisation of planning modes is presented in Figure 1, drawing on the forms identified in the planning literature. While different modes have been associated with different time periods and phases of urban development, elements of them all appear to persist today. On this basis they have been organised, more or less, according to how intrusive they may be, how regulatory, on the one hand, and how inclusive on the other. In practice, categories will overlap and there could be some re-ordering among modes. However, those at the top are generally considered inclusive and in the neoliberal vernacular involve only light-handed regulation, whereby discourse, education, and the

information gathering and dissemination processes maybe sufficient to bring about desired changes in urban development and behaviour.

Figure 1: Modes of Planning
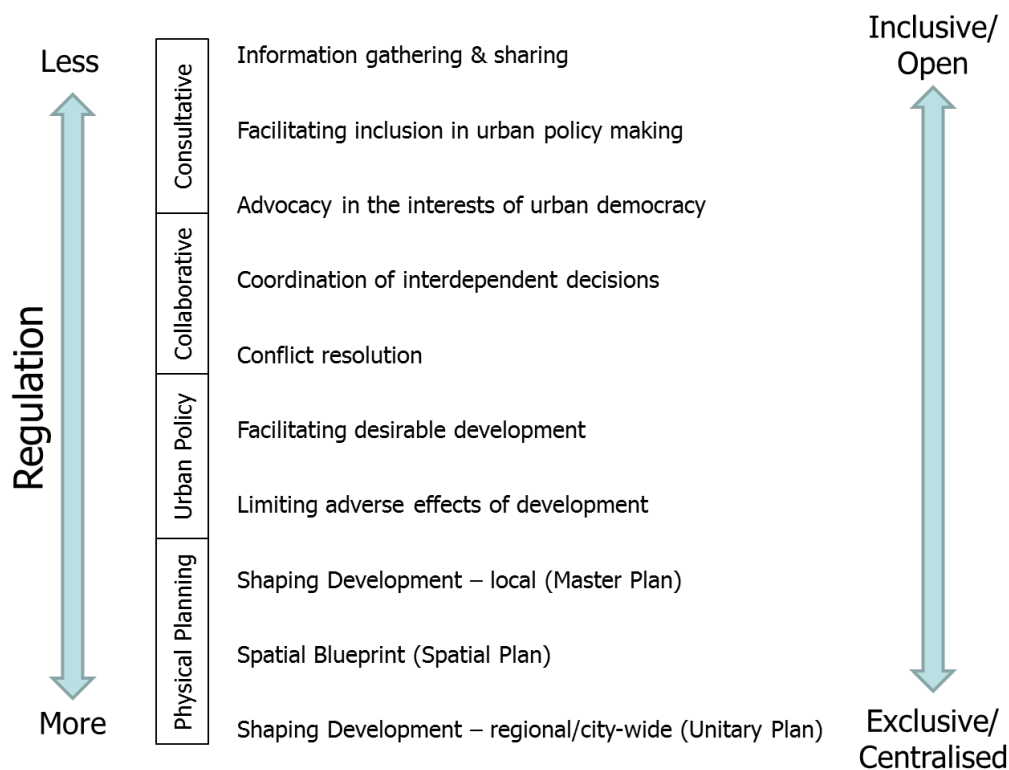
Communicative planning might be expected to sit somewhere in the cross-over between consultative and collaborative planning (the latter geared towards generating outcomes based on reconciling differences). Action planning may sit between collaborative and policy-focused planning with the capacity to generate regulations, although in action plans they such regulation may lean towards redressing imbalances in power. In these central modes (relative to our continuum), however, policy need is unlikely to rely heavily on land use prescription and would address more directly the outcomes sought of individual interests, groups, or communities.

It is significant that urban planning in New Zealand falls towards the end of the continuum reliant on regulation through preparing physical plans with their zone-based rules. Moves to streamline – or bypass – the RMA also point to more centralised, less inclusive process without necessarily lifting the substantive content or scientific rationale for policies, or diminishing its dependence on land use rules constructed by the planning establishment.

If, in fact, the base of planning is broadening, and it is to be more sensitive to the many communities in many places it serves, it might be expected to act as an integrative discipline, rational in outlook but with rationality informed and tempered by the expectations of its communities. And this means managing expectations not by seeking to educate and inform the public, but by acknowledging the limits to which those expectations might be satisfied by traditional planning and plans.

4.   The Reasons for Rethinking

A basic problem for urban planning is an inability to deliver on its own aspirations. This section canvasses some contested areas that have created dissatisfaction among many – but by no means all – of urban planning's constituents. It also addresses the diversity of urban areas, asking whether planning skills focusing on established or mandated planning rules are still fit for purpose.

The first part highlights some issues raised by the prevailing urban containment paradigm, raising questions over how grounded current practice of urban planning really is. The second part is a general statement about the shifts taking place in urbanisation, raising the questions; can we truly predict and control the evolution of urban places? Should we even try? And if so, how?

Contested Decisions

By-passing the RMA

Planning has a recent history of controversy and criticism. Many fundamental plan provisions and planning decisions are contested. While that may be an inevitable consequence of competition for resources and the conflict between environmental and developmental imperatives, the time and financial costs of planning disputes raise questions over the capacity of planning to fulfil its integrative role and the veracity of the advice behind plans.

Conflicts and delays in decision-making frustrate achieving development and environmental objectives. Dissatisfaction with delays, in particular, is reflected in amendments to the RMA, most of which have focused on process.

Perhaps most telling, the Government has begun to side-step RMA processes. It created an alternative framework for the development and adoption of a unitary plan for Auckland. Special Housing Areas have been established in Auckland because of the under-supply of land for urban development which has resulted from plans constraining city expansion over the past two decades.

The Government has now proposed a National Policy Statement (NPS) requiring councils to release sufficient housing land to provide for 15 years of projected demand. In most cases this figure which will be determined on the basis of a series of arbitrary assumptions in the face of unknown shifts in the volume and character of future demand, suggesting that such a requirement will not resolve issues brought about by planning that has proven too conservative relative to reality. It reflects continuing adjustment to the detail of a form of planning that is proving inadequate for dealing with the issues of advanced urbanisation in an increasingly open economy. [3]

Putting aside any such short-comings, the fact that the Government has seen fit to issue a NPS that strongly contrasts with the direction of the Auckland Plan and the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan suggests that despite the reorganisation of the city's governance Auckland's planning continues to fail its less well-off communities and younger residents, and impose deadweight costs on the region.

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[3]   Recent electoral developments in in the United States and Australia, the Brexit vote, and growing concerns over immigration and international investment in New Zealand and elsewhere suggest that there is growing public resistance to this openness.

Growth Management, Growth Containment, or Simply Anti-Expansion?

It can be concluded that the impact of seeking to physically contain the city is an example of planning that results in unintended consequences; i.e., a failure to anticipate the limits to, costs of, and limited demand for higher density development in already developed parts of the city. It may also reveal poor understanding of land use economics and of the motivation and behaviour of households as people proceed through housing and career ladders, ignorance of the integrated operation of subregional housing and labour markets, and insensitivity towards the equity impacts of alternative land use policies.

Arbitrary allocating urban land based on a paradigm emphasising urban containment and reliant on monocentric city development can be expected to increase socio-economic disparities and lead to a slowdown in population and output growth, and a decline in productivity. These outcomes reflect the growing cost of living in such cities – the combined impact of expensive housing, high transport costs, including high public transport costs (even if subsidised), and a deteriorating fiscal position – and the high costs of doing business. The latter include the costs of new or expanding investment when commercial and industrial land availability is constrained and high operating costs, including the costs of employment when labour turnover is high, competition for skills is intense, infrastructure services (including transport infrastructure) is prone to breakdown and stoppage, and service charges are high.

If such criticisms simply represent a different world view from the majority of planners, the issue is a political one, one that may need to be resolved by judicial judgement and which leads to de facto policy-making by the courts.

Areas of planning policy other than housing that may – or have been -- strongly contested include:

- The provision of land for business and employment, the conflict being between the relatively cost effective and easily serviced suburban and urban-edge sites versus absorption, rehabilitation, and intensification of more restricted sites in already developed centres in and around the CBD.
- Provision for retail and distribution capacity – where and how many centres and what floor area – must change as global production chains and the international logistics industry integrate production and consumption over long distances. This has implication for city structure, undermining the planner's adherence to hierarchy-based allocation of growth capacity and constraints which limits the prospect for investment in new forms of distribution.
- Among other things, adherence to historical business models as the basis for allocating land to manufacturing, retail and service sales elevates centralisation over a natural tendency towards decentralisation. It leads to promotion of old centres and sunk investment over new.
- The widespread use of lists of excluded uses within zones as a means of regulation rather than assessing the effects of individual uses. This issue arises from changing technologies (and business models) which may obviate the need for exclusions of activities that nevertheless continue to be promoted in plans.
- The response to uncertainty about future demands by different sectors and activities on land and other resources is to rely on discretionary use status, which tends to increase the uncertainty and lift the costs of securing consents, regardless of the merits of projects.

- Ongoing issues around infrastructure cost recovery which tends to discount the fact that most infrastructure generates long-term, predictable returns so that funding should not be front-loaded against the initial occupiers of developed land.

- Adherence to a monocentric city form in mature cities, which involves promoting the growth of the CBD, downtown and inner suburbs ahead of the development outer suburbs and greenfields, is inconsistent with the growing emphasis on resilience in the face of more frequent extreme natural events, particularly in coastal, estuarine, and riverine regions, and disruptions to ageing or under-capacity infrastructure.

Cleary, these debatable issues, with the proponents of constraint-based planning relying on limiting land urban expansion and constraining private transport as measures to limit resource use and lower externalities; and the opponents focussing on property rights, economic benefits (including private utility gains), and fiscal sustainability.

The challenge raised by discord over planning policies is whether the protagonists of change are simply seeking a new planning orthodoxy with which they are more comfortable, for reasons of efficiency and accumulation or equity and distribution; or whether they are seeking to diminish or confine the role of planning generally. This encompasses the familiar question of whether reform or revolution best serves the public purposes- and just how wide that purpose is?

A Changing and Diverse Urban Setting

The planning issues confronting New Zealand cities at present reflect some fundamental trends in urbanisation, and some misconceptions about its nature.

There is no question that the 20th was the century in which urbanisation truly accelerated across the globe. Between 1950 and 2000 the world population grew by 240%; the urban share grew by 380%. Among more developed nations population grew by 146% as the urban population doubled. In less developed nations it grew by 289% and 652% respectively (United Nations, 2016). By 2015 54% of the world's population was classified as urban. The figures were 79% in more developed nations.

The shift from a rural and mixed urban-rural to a predominantly urban population challenges a planning profession that still draws heavily on practices focused for over 100 years on the rural-urban interface and continues to treat urban areas as more or less homogenous and predictable, and prescribe land use arrangements accordingly.

Urbanisation in New Zealand

Growth was not quite as spectacular in New Zealand. Here the population more than doubled between 1950 and 2000, while the urban population grew by 239%. By 2015 88% of the New Zealand population was described as dwelling in urban areas. However, any presumption of homogeneity or of a tendency towards homogeneity among urban areas in New Zealand is a major over-simplification. If nothing else, contrasts in scale mean it is highly unlikely that a single planning paradigm, or even a single set of principles, shared policy frameworks, or common planning capabilities will cater for the needs of urban settlements across the size spectrum (Figure 2).

Urbanisation does not mean that all non-rural settlements share the same values or face the same opportunities and constraints, just as the idea that one size plan and plan process fits all is naive.

The growth management issues that dominate urban planning described above pertain to Auckland, in particular, with its scale, Christchurch as it rebuilds, and Wellington as it seeks to develop an economic base less dependent on government services. They are also relevant to rapid growth areas like Queenstown, Tauranga, Hamilton, and Nelson. They are hardly relevant to the balance of settlements. So it would be a mistake to presume that even in New Zealand better urban planning should draw on a consistent set of capabilities or cultures, or on a common urban policy paradigm.

Size differences among urban settlements highlight that most urban areas are small provincial cities, towns, and villages. The idea that 88% of New Zealand is urbanised disguises distinctly different lifestyles, circumstances, and consumption across settlements. More than that, the fact that Auckland tends to dominate dialogue and debate around urban planning downplays the fact that 63% of urban dwellers do not live in Auckland, and 49% live outside the three main centres.

Figure 2: Size Distribution, New Zealand Urban Settlements 2015
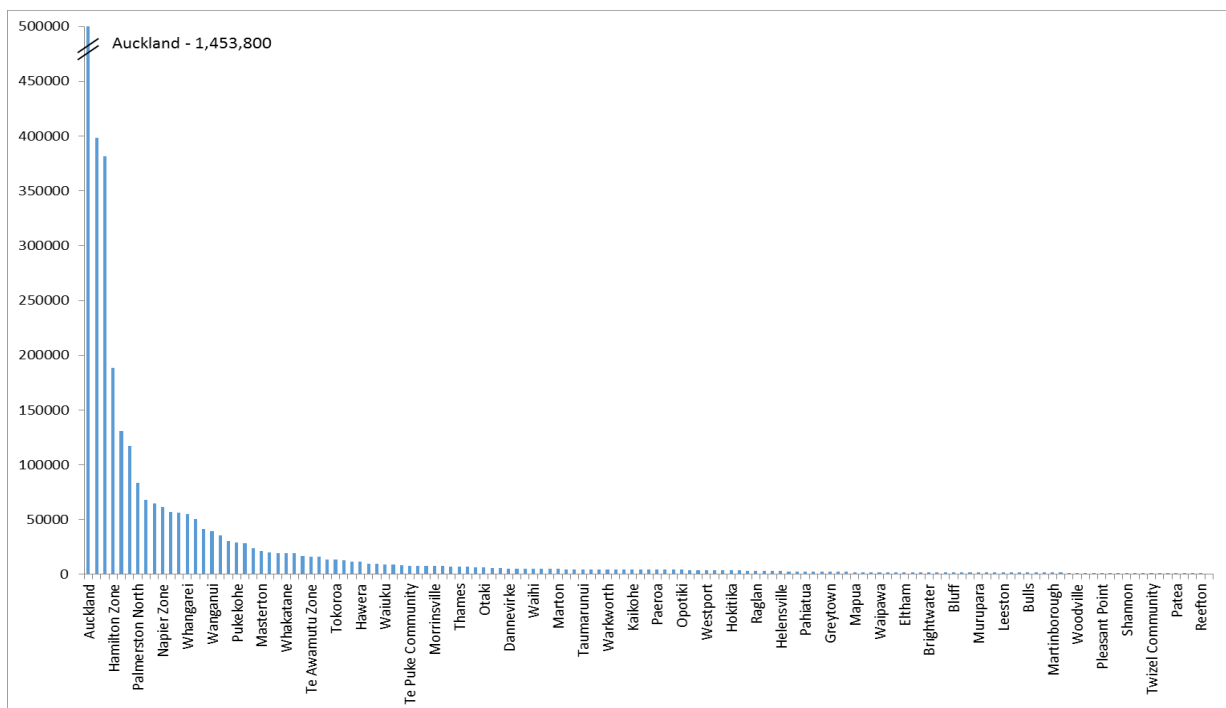
Source: Statistics New Zealand

In fact, the small centres, particularly the satellite towns sitting within the sphere of influence of the dominant cities, face the greatest growth pressures (Figure 3). The issues for them are likely to be different from those of the large centres. Local accessibility is not an issue, and the release of land relative to demand should not be issues. On the other hand, labour market constraints, modest housing markets, and limited public revenues will create their own challenges. Under these circumstances relatively small absolute gains in numbers may have a disproportionate impact on development costs (as evidenced by the impact on local housing prices of relocation by growing numbers of Aucklanders into small centres).

With adequate funding methods, Infrastructure investment should nevertheless be efficient in smaller areas, less subject to retrofitting, the diseconomies of large metropolitan networks, and a commitment through incremental investment to legacy technology and hardware.

Figure 3: Growth Rates, New Zealand Urban Settlements 2012-2105
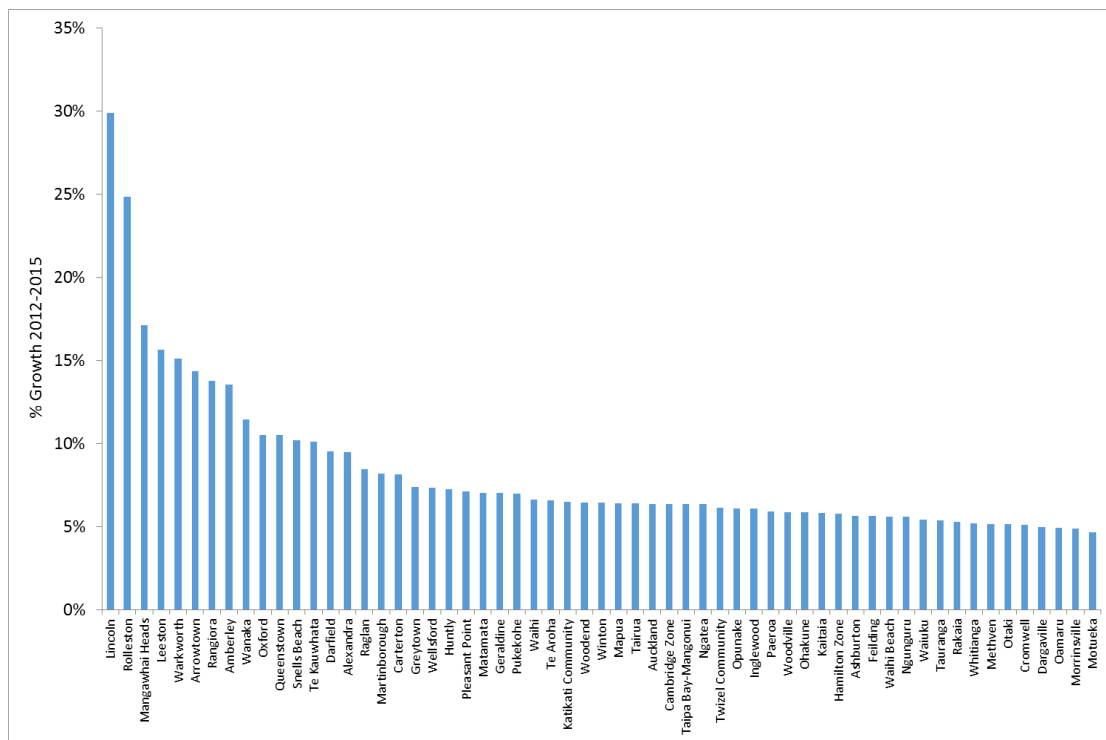
Source: Statistics New Zealand

In practice, planning in most New Zealand "urban areas" will differ (or should) from the models and methods appropriate to large cities. Smaller settlements may require less consultation, submission, and documentation to identify the expectations of residents and businesses, with fewer zones and rules to address their land use needs. The result should be more flexibility and more rapid responses to changes in growth. In urban planning terms one size does not necessarily fit all.

Diversity

Demographic and social diversity within and across larger urban areas suggests that land use requirements will vary according to the differing needs and expectations associated with age and household structure; different accommodation, service and community expectations associated with social and physical mobility; housing tenure, and material well-being; and different behaviours, values, and amenity needs associated with ethnic, cultural and religious differences.

At the same time, increasing wealth and health puts pressure on land as people seek out a greater level of amenity space, by way of lot or home size, or both; by way of demands on public spaces; and by way of movement to public and private facilities for recreation and entertainment, whether local or regional parks; gymnasia, stadiums, and theatres, or domestic and international transport nodes.

The Challenge of the Future

The diversity of urban areas compounds the complexity facing urban planning in an era of volatility and unpredictability. With respect to the latter, Chief Environment Court Judge Newhook recently noted that the work of "*the Environment Court differs markedly from that in the general civil courts on account of … the subject matter is almost entirely predictive, relating to future events, activities, plans, and effects on the environment... This means that the work of the parties and the Court in the*

cases is much more heavily dependent on expert opinion and principles of law, than they are on historical fact. They routinely involve prediction, relative probability, analysis of potential risk, and sometimes the application of scientific modelling (Newhook, L, 2015).

Unfortunately, planning does not have a strong track record in predicting the future. Newhook highlights its focus on the future and consequently its dependence on predictive methods and models as a reason for its failings. Predicting the long term future of a city – beyond three to five years – is inevitably fraught and almost inevitably wrong, or at best, only ever approximately right.

Given that, the key to developing plans may well lie with the rigour of tests applied to the underlying assumptions about the future. Yet, the evaluation of plans appears to do little to address the veracity of the information, assumptions, and analyses behind them. Indeed, there is little check on the internal consistency of assumptions behind demographic and employment predictions, or the values that might influence future lifestyle, housing, and transport preferences.

As a future oriented discipline, planning relies too often on constructs rooted in the past or, at best, on assumptions that extrapolate what we know about the present. The issue is not how to improve predictive ability – a tall order in a fractured world of volatile cities. It may be better based on how to negotiate arrangements among parties that satisfy immediate needs and expectations without unduly limiting future options. Plans might usefully set the scene within which mediated outcomes are the norm when significant differences in views of expectations of the future emerge.

> *There is little evidence that past predictions and policies are reviewed after the event. It could be argued that planning treats the future in a cavalier manner: by simply projecting present knowledge into the future the resulting plans are conservative, defend the status quo, and favour incremental changes. In this way they that serve entrenched interests rather than encouraging the exploration and innovation that might better serve future generations.*

A Judicial Response

In discussing the complexity and uncertainty around planning, Judge Newhook espouses alternative methods for resolving environmental disputes, something which the Court has been developing over recent years. He outlines the reasons as follows:

"… the cases are often multi-issue, and hence have multi-disciplinary professional input. Examples include the many branches of science, the many branches of engineering, social, economic, Māori cultural, heritage, architecture, urban design, landscape, and planning/resource management.

"… most cases involve multiple parties and many people representing those multiple parties in many capacities. Examples of parties in our cases include public authorities (central, regional, and district government, and council-controlled organisations); Māori (iwi, hapu, marae committees); NGOs; community groups; and individuals. Many cases involve dozens, sometimes even hundreds, of parties. …

"… there are strong elements of public law and public interest running through the cases, particularly those that concern proposed policy statements and plans. That is, while there are

often flavours of private dispute, public interest matters underpin the interests of many parties in the cases" (Newhook, 2015).

In the absence of methodologies that might create confidence in future expectations and the development of planning methods that can cope with the unknown and unexpected, the disciplines bought to bear in arbitration processes may give rise to more robust outcomes than mechanistic planning methods and rule making.

Comment: The Reasons for Rethinking

The failure of planning to deliver on its promise in urban areas and, indeed, to impede their development is not necessarily a reflection on the integrity of its learning, the knowledge it draws on, or the methods it uses. But it does suggest that the practice is overreaching in both promise and capability simply because the milieu within which it operates and the difficult issues it seeks to deal with are complex and cannot be easily and neatly resolved, especially if they cannot be foreseen.

Despite a changing geo-political environment, a world of dynamic and diverse cities, maturing suburbs, urban villages, exurban lifestyles, thriving and declining townships, diverse employment, and multi-faceted connections among urban places, planning still seeks to apply modern precepts of conformity, control, exclusionary zoning and predictability to what can still be termed a post-modern urban world, a world of continuous change, shifting challenges, and entrenched contrasts.

It appears that:

where growth is slow, the planning response evidently lies in containing it. Where growth is strong, the planning response evidently lies in containing it;

when diversity increases and new activities, business models, or cultures of creativity emerge to challenge the norms within urban areas, the planning response is to deliver ever more refined zones;

nurturing communities within cities is all about adopting what works in your city to ours. Auckland can be the new Seattle, the new Vancouver. Its streets can be the new world streets of Barcelona or boulevards of Paris.

Urban planning all too readily relies on the "me too" city as a mark of a claim on global development, rather than responding to local circumstance and need, and facilitating development based on local character, innovation and investment.

The reality is that urban settlements are diverse, complicated, and dynamic. They are assemblies of private businesses, public agencies, informal and voluntary organisations, distinctive communities, households, and individuals for none of whom the world is either stable or predictable.

Grounded planning would allow urban settlements to develop in a manner compatible with their surroundings and their multiple communities, subject directional guidance based on geography and infrastructure. By contrast, the currently favoured paradigm is planning which seeks to lock its citizens and institutions into a punt on the future based on existing technology and investment – and investors – rather than the possibility of the new, the innovative, and the different.

5.   Planning Culture

This section explores the foundations of planning culture primarily by considering the knowledge base promulgated by the NZPI.

The Role of Culture

If the formal culture of planners and planning can be discerned from the statements of institutes as (Section 2, above), it is one of professionals benign in intent, confident in the capacity to deliver improved environmental, economic, and social outcomes, and assertive in how this should be done.

Culture comprises the values, beliefs, and norms which shape an individual's behaviour, attitudes, aspirations, and the ways in which these are expressed and pursued. Distinctive world views and social traits may be associated with an individual's ethnic and national origins, religious affiliations, or familial traditions. Cultural antecedents may be modified by membership of formal and informal groups, and by exposure to and experience of other cultures, groups, and ways of thinking. (It is in the cultural domain of "the other", the observer, the unfamiliar and the new, that the arts lie as a particular component of culture, usually evolutionary, often revolutionary, and nearly always marked by place.

It is in the category of formal groups that the more codified cultures of organisations and professions are largely defined. This section explores the professional and organisational cultures that might shape planners' commitment to and capacity to deliver the outcomes advanced by their institutes.

Professional Culture

Professional culture is based on shared knowledge and vernacular, procedures, practices, and values. It reflects a common understanding of what it takes to be successful, drawing on "formally learned" expertise. Knowledge, practices, and values are typically articulated, codified, reinforced, and promulgated by professional associations. Institutes literally institutionalise the values and beliefs, standards and procedures relevant to a particular profession or practice, reinforcing and validating them to the wider world.

In planning, the knowledge requirements are not as obviously demanding or scientifically grounded as those associated with professions such as medicine, engineering, surveying, and law in which accreditation is effectively a licence to practise. The strictures are not as limiting in terms of what is valid and what is invalid by way of practice, and the sanctions for planning failures appear less than those in the other professions. This might be expected to leave capacity for flexibility in the professional planning culture especially as it is derived from the social sciences.

Professional cultures evolve and as they do so new or changed elements may be adopted through various paths by the professional institute: conferences, congresses, committees, workshops, and panels of (senior) practitioners help such changes to become embedded over time. They will be influenced progressively by changing stakeholder needs, by shifting statutes that might give them standing, and members' experiences.

Ideally, an association will itself lead change as the world changes around a profession, plotting new paths, procedures and practices as well as delineating and refining the qualifying knowledge that

underlies a profession. Almost inevitably, an institute is governed by well-established members of the profession and long-standing contributors to the professional organisation. Their presence is a reflection of adherence to current values. Their mission will be to protect and promote the profession, its role and its values. Consequently, their appetite for reform and capacity to lead change is naturally likely to be limited.

A key question in the current review may be how well the NZPI absorbs and responds to change in expectations and ambitions among its stakeholders and in the scientific knowledge that informs the practice of planning, and how far it resists change.

Membership of the NZPI

Membership is promoted as empowering professional development and enhancing careers. The promise includes standing out from the crowd in the job market, meeting the requirements of "many employers", increasing earning potential and accelerating careers, increasing standing in the Environment Court, networking and knowledge sharing opportunities, and access to professional development opportunities. Notably, however, it is not a condition of practising planning. Nor is it a condition of labelling oneself a "planner".

From the NZPI Website:

Becoming a member of the NZPI will enhance your career and empower your professional development whether you are a student just starting an illustrious career in planning or an experienced and senior planner at the peak of your career.

Why Join?

- NZPI will help you stand out from the crowd in a competitive job market
- Meet the requirements for many employers
- And can increase your earning potential and speed up your career
- Give you additional standing in the Environment Court
- Provide you with a voice through NZPI's advocacy work
- Provide you with opportunities to network and share knowledge, either online or face to face
- NZPI will support you in accessing the professional development you need to help you excel.
- Your membership will help you keep up to date with information on planning policy, best practice and research.
- NZPI offers a class of membership to suit all levels of planning professionals. Your membership opens doors and gives you professional standing.

Despite this, admission to membership is challenging. It requires both academic qualification and relevant work experience (see box below). Maintaining membership also means demonstrating continuing professional development to the Institute's satisfaction.

From the regulations

8   Entry to Membership
8.1   These Regulations may only be waived when a person is admitted by reciprocity agreement with another institute pursuant to Section 5.2.2 of the Constitution
8.2   No person shall be admitted to any class of membership unless he or she complies with the requirements for the class of membership referred to in Sections 5 and 6 of the Constitution
8.3   The date of completing a recognised course shall be the date of notification of the completion of all requirements for that course
8.4   No applicant shall be admitted to the class of Full Member pursuant to Section 5.2 of the Constitution unless:
8.4.1   He/she has completed no less than three years of practical experience of which two years must be in New Zealand and acceptable to the membership Convenor. Where a candidate has completed an accredited planning

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degree while employed in a full-time planning role he/she must complete no less than three years practical experience comprising at least two years post-graduation practical experience all of which must be undertaken in New Zealand, which is deemed acceptable by the Membership Convenor. Where the said experience is not deemed acceptable by the Membership Convenor, he/she will prescribe a period of practical experience required which will not exceed three years of post-graduation practice experience.

8.5   For the purposes of admission to Full membership under the provisions of subsection 5.2.3 of the Constitution the applicant must meet the following procedures and requirements of these Regulations:

8.5.1   Applications for membership will be accompanied by detailed evidence of the nature and extent of the applicant's training and experience sufficient to show that the applicant is likely to have a thorough and mature knowledge and understanding of planning and has held a position of responsibility in planning work

8.5.2   Applications for membership will be assessed by the Membership Convenor. The Membership Convenor will decide, on the basis of information from and about the applicant, whether the application for membership should proceed;

8.5.3   Where the Membership Convenor approves the application to proceed to a Membership Interview Panel will conduct a personal interview supplemented, where necessary, by any other form of assessment, and may request the production of additional evidence from or about the applicant.

8.5.4   An applicant will be admitted to membership only upon approval by the membership interview panel referred to in Section 8.10 of these regulations.

8.6   intermediate members are required to apply for full membership of the Institute after six years of full time equivalent work within the planning profession as a Graduate/Intermediate, unless an extension of up to two years has been sought and granted. If this requirement has not been met, then the individual's membership status of the Institute shall be deemed to have been terminated.

8.6.1 A written request for an extension of up to two years must be made to the Membership Convenor prior to the six years full -time equivalent date being reached.

8.6.2 The Membership Convenor will then make a decision on whether an extension will be granted based on the criteria stipulated in 8.6.3 of the Regulations.

8.6.3 Grounds for seeking an extension include: a) Illness b) Non or partially –active membership status c) Criteria for entry to membership (see Clause 8.0 of the Regulations) have not been met. d) Extraordinary circumstances

8.7 For the purposes of Section 5 of the Constitution and these Regulations practical experience shall comprise:

a) Research and assessment, such as for example:
i) Survey and analysis for the preparation of plans for regional, urban or rural development and redevelopment. ii) Feasibility Studies iii) Research directed towards the increase of planning methods iv) Study of economic, health, social, demographic, landscape, architecture, water resource or transport issues impacting on regional, urban or rural communities. v) Assessment of environmental effects

b) Plan Preparation such as for example: i) The preparation and review of national, regional or district policy statements and plans, and/or plans and strategies prepared under other relevant legislation. ii) The preparation of comprehensive development or redevelopment projects, or conservation projects. iii) The preparation of schemes for the development of urban or rural land such as shopping centres, tourist areas, industrial estates, housing schemes, infrastructural services and coastal areas. iv) The preparation of schemes for comprehensive urban or landscape design. v) Constructive and substantial contributions to the evolution of specific planning proposals. vi) The preparation and review of plans/strategies under other relevant legislation

c) Implementation and administration such as for example: i) Administration and organisational work of planning, ii) Judicial and legislative work of planning, iii) Implementation of policy statements and plans, iv) Preparation and processing of applications

d) Planning Teaching

The Knowledge Base for Planning

Planning knowledge is embodied in (1) academic publications – books and journals – not limited to those dealing directly with planning; (2) professional treatises – reports, conference papers, and professional magazine articles, (3) policy documents and plans (especially those espoused as "good practice"); and (4) professionally accredited university programmes. Much of this information is published on the web, whether conference papers, academic articles, the policies and plans of government agencies (including local government), and company websites, and specialised planning websites and blogs.

University programmes incorporate material from these sources into programmes of teaching modules (courses or papers), typically ordered in a programme from the introductory and general, to the more advanced, focused, and specialised (the latter typically at fourth year of an undergraduate programme, or through a postgraduate degree).

Accredited University Programmes

A key objective of the NZPI is to advance the theory and practice of planning by:

> *setting standards for entry to membership; promoting training and education of planners; and providing for the examination and continuing professional development of practising planners. The Institute supports the continuing status and funding of existing planning programmes that are structured and implemented in accordance with this policy.*

The objects of a planning education are listed by the NZPI as being to:

- Encourage critical and creative thinking planners that are adaptable, articulate, independent, flexible and capable of working in a dynamic environment
- Attract and support high quality students from a diversity of cultural and educational backgrounds
- Promote an understanding of the Treaty of Waitangi and how its settlements may be implemented through the planning system
- Encourage a sensitivity and commitment to working in multi-cultural, multidisciplinary and multi-ethnic contexts
- Facilitate a commitment to the planning profession and to lifelong learning
- Respond to the changing needs of the profession
- Engage the profession in ongoing support of planning graduates to ensure a smooth transition from student to graduate planner
- Generate an understanding of the global aspects to Planning
- Support research and the pursuit of planning knowledge.

The content of a planning programme is listed by the NZPI as follows:

a) **Planning Thematics,** including philosophy, policy, history, ethics, theory, and critical reflection of planning to provide an overview of the nature and purpose of planning; planning history; contemporary debates and trends; planning theory; and planning at different spatial scales.
b) **Planning Context,** including knowledge of natural, physical, policy, economic and social processes affecting the natural and built environments. Understanding of the social, cultural, environmental and economic consequences of management and change in the natural and built environments. Understanding the complexities of interactions between people and their environments and the economic drivers of development processes.

c) **Planning Methods** for managing the natural and built environment through techniques and tools for environmental evaluation and impact assessment; policy development and analysis; planning and monitoring systems; managing space, amenities and heritage; principles of sustainability; and social, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and equity planning.

d) **Planning Practice,** covering processes and practice, including application of the principles of plan making; policy development and implementation, review and evaluation; goal setting; strategic planning; and planning tools and instruments.

e) **Planning Law,** including an understanding of government organisational and institutional structures, planning, Resource and environmental legislation, related legislation and case law and associated areas.

f) **Cultural and Social Aspects of Planning,** recognising New Zealand's bicultural mandate and multi-cultural context for planning and planning practice; resource and environmental law and treaties; plan development; and management of resources.

g) **Specialisations,** by way of opportunities for planning graduates to develop a specialist field of expertise.

Of particular interest is the profile of "ethics" set out on the NZPI website. While universities may well teach more about the principles, ambiguities, and institutionalisation of ethical behaviour, the coda set out by the NZPI suggests a relatively narrow approach to this topic, with ethics defined in terms of the planner's behaviour towards involved parties, and without any obvious module component on the philosophy underlying the very practice of planning.

There is little clue in the code of ethics about the approach called for to substantive knowledge, or the importance of a neutral critical capacity. Indeed, the reference to maintenance of "high environmental standards" spelt out in the "responsibility to the public" elevates the orientation of the environment and may in large part explain largely passing rather than in-depth references to the economic and urban development impacts of many of the rules and regulations contained in plans.

Code of ethics:

8.1 The Planners Responsibility to the Public.

8.1.1   A planner shall maintain an appropriate professional awareness of contemporary planning philosophy, practice and techniques.

8.1.2 - A planner shall maintain an appropriate professional awareness of issues related to the Treaty of Waitangi and to the needs and interests of Tangata Whenua.

8.1.3 - A planner shall, subject to respecting a client's or employer's right of confidentiality, endeavour to ensure that full, clear and accurate information is available, and that there are meaningful opportunities for public input and participation.

8.1.4 - A planner shall ensure that special attention is paid to the interrelatedness of decisions and the environment, social, cultural and economic consequences of planning actions.

8.1.5 - A planner shall recognise the need to maintain and promote high environmental standards and outcomes.

8.2 The Planners Responsibility to the Profession and to Colleagues:

8.2.1 - A planner shall uphold the dignity of the profession and the reputation of the Institute

8.2.2 - A planner shall act in a friendly, fair and tolerant manner to other professional planners. A planner shall do nothing calculated to injure unjustly or unfairly the reputation of another professional planner, or the planning profession.

8.2.3 - A planner shall co-operate in advancing the art and science of planning by exchanging information and experience.

8.2.4 - A planner shall endeavour to contribute to the professional development of planning students and fellow planners

8.2.5 - A planner shall not advertise for work in a misleading manner, or in a manner injurious to the dignity of the profession, or other planners.

8.3 The Planners Responsibility to Clients and Employers:

8.3.1 - A planner shall carry out all professional work with integrity, and in a spirit of fairness, fidelity and objectivity.

8.3.2 - A planner shall ensure that any private dealings or ownership or any position on any local authority, board of directors or the like, do not create any conflict of interest with any client or employer.

8.3.3 - A planner shall not make any misleading claims, or attempt to influence any decisions by improper means.

8.3.4 - A planner shall not accept any financial inducement offered in order to influence or affect his/her advice.

8.4 The Planners Self Responsibility

8.4.1 - A Planner shall strive to ascertain the appropriate factual situation, and maintain unbiased and object judgement, and shall not give professional advice or evidence which is other than his/her true professional opinion.

8.4.2 - A planner shall strive to attain a high standard of professional competence.

8.4.3 - A planner shall continue to seek and receive professional education throughout a planning career, and to keep abreast of the development of planning practice and techniques.

8.5 Any person who believes a planner has breached this code of ethics may make a complaint to the NZPI Office and it shall be dealt with according to the procedure outlined in Section 10 of the Constitution.

The NZPI accredits university planning courses based on regular reviews by panels comprising the CEO of the Institute (or a substitute), one or more practising planners, and one or more academic planners. Panels include an (academic) member at least ten years removed from planning in New Zealand, usually a member of the AIP. It reports on how far programmes meet the requirements laid down in the Education Policy and Accreditation Procedures manual.

This requires teaching departments to:

- demonstrate the range of knowledge as specified
- demonstrate competence in the application of specified skills
- develop specialist training in areas of planning
- present the diverse range of values inherent in planning work
- provide coherent training of the core requirements, clearly identifiable as planning as opposed to other disciplinary contributions which may also be offered

Accreditation is important to a university as it is likely to attract students seeking a recognised profession and a skill set understood by existing councils, practitioners, and employers.

The role and nature of university programmes are described in section 8, dealing with planning capabilities. What is noteable is the tension between the academy, with its focus on abstraction, theory, and pedagogy, and practice, with its focus on context, instrumentality, and intervention is inevitable and through the call it sounds for reflection among students should be positive.

Increasingly, universities seek direct engagement with their external communities. In the case of planners, this means more participation in outside planning activities. This includes participating in public planning movements, acting as independent experts, and undertaking income generating assignments (Siemiatycki, 2012). This changing role of the academic in planning may well be diminishing the difference with the practitioner, and undermining the critical role of both theorising

and teaching about planning. One effect is to shift the research focus from the theoretical to deal with immediate issues of societal conflict, such research being potentially compromised by the public role adopted by the academic (activist, consultant, or independent expert). Another is to move the conflict between the theorising and practice into the university itself.

Internship and Mentoring

There is a tradition of continuity and passing on of knowledge among planning practitioners. In the past internships and practical experience, most often in council environments, were requirements of university degrees, and mentoring of newly qualified planners was an expected formal role of their more senior colleagues.

However, this tradition has diminished as university funding has moved to user-pays and placed increased pressure on students to either complete their degree expeditiously or to find paid vacation work, and as a more managerial approach to local government has reduced the resources and flexibility required to sustain it.

While formal mentoring has fallen out of favour, new planners' first work place and the attitudes and experience of their colleagues (and managers) will influence planning culture. In particular, planners' exposure to prevailing policies and responsibilities assigned to them for implementing, enforcing, or generally supporting existing plan provisions at the outset of their careers is likely to have a significant impact on their evolving view of the role of planning and their place within it.

Continuing Professional Development

Potentially offsetting the impact of this organisational or corporate acculturation formal education continues for accredited planners through continuing professional education (CPD) in a range of areas. The latter is provided primarily through or assessed by the NZPI.

To illustrate this role, the courses offered through the NZPI website over three months in 2016 were grouped according to broad topic areas and show an emphasis on planning process, skills, and procedures (Table 2). They appear more geared to reinforcing planners' capacity for professional practice with less emphasis on the areas dealing with the economic, social, and scientific knowledge on which they may need to draw in the course of their work.

By way of contrast, the Canadian Institute's CPD programme offers papers that focus on the more substantive matters (climate change, economics of development, Legislation and Governance, and urban design), with fewer papers dealings with practice skills orientation which might be expected to be best served by entry level education, on-the-job learning, and conference and seminar sessions. The CPD papers identified on the CPI website (accessed May 2016) comprise:

- Climate Change
- Economics of Development
- Effective Communication, Negotiation and Mediation
- Legislation and Governance
- Professional Ethics
- Project Management
- Urban Design

Table 2: CPD Courses Offered by NZPI, July-October 2016

Subject Area	Event
Generic planning	From the PAUP to the AUP - Decision and implementation overview
	An Introduction to Planning for Maori Values
	Politics for Planners
	Planning for Maori Values - Advanced course
Economics	The Economics of Residential Development
Urban	Urban re-development/modelling
Biophysical & Effects	Advanced Noise and its Effects
	Understanding Noise and its Effects
	Water Quantity and Quality Planning under the RMA
	Managing the Surface and Groundwater Effects of Development and Infrastructure
Engagement	Effective Stakeholder Engagement
	Mediation Skills for planners beyond basics
	Negotiation beyond basics
RMA Practice	PM3 Running a good plan process
	Expert Witness
	PM2 Effective Plan Making
	Proposed changes to the RMA: Efficient Land Markets and the Importance of Development
	RC2 Assessing Environmental Effects and Notification Issues
	RC3 S.104, Conditions, Decisions, Reports and Hearings
	SECTION 32 OF THE RMA
	Expert Witness
	RC3 S.104, Conditions, Decisions, Reports and Hearings
	PM2 Effective Plan Making
	PM3 Running a good plan process
	Principles and Practice of Designations under the RMA
	RC4 Effective Engagement in Environment Court and Board of Inquiry Processes
	The Art of Presenting Good Planning Evidence

The Quality Planning Website

The Quality Planning (QP) website was established by the NZPI (which administers it), the RMLA, Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ), the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors (NZIS) and the Ministry for the Environment (MFE). The objective is "*promote good practice by sharing knowledge about all aspects of practice under the RMA*". It is promoted as "*the primary tool for delivering robust information on RMA processes and environmental policy to resource management practitioners*", drawing on practitioner experience to provide guidance notes in specific areas.

The intended audience comprises "*council practitioners and consultants, environmental managers and others involved in resource management practice under the RMA*". The QP website offers over 70 guidance notes that provide information and tenets of good practice. They are grouped in the QP library into the following topic areas:

> air quality, biodiversity, coastal land development, community, contaminated lands, culture and heritage, energy, freshwater, infrastructure, Maori, marine, natural hazards, resource consents, rural areas, sustainable development, and waste.

The QP provides comprehensive information that links the planning process with several substantive areas, mainly through integrating technical information and options with procedural steps, plan development with content, and resource consenting procedures with monitoring and enforcement.

Through the QP web site the "planning establishment" most obviously marries content with process, setting standards of practice, creating common knowledge and, encouraging consistent practice.

Organisational Culture

The organisations planners work in will also influence their values. The project brief sets out the nature of organisational culture as "*the norms, values and beliefs shared by people working within organisations, including the norms of behaviour and commonly held notions around the factors that are important for organisational success and how success is best achieved*". It quotes Schein (2013) who conceptualises culture "*as the shared, tacit assumptions that have come to be taken for granted and that determine the members' daily behaviour*" (p.1).

An organisational culture may be distinctive, but it is unlikely to be totally coherent or stable unless it is working in a static task environment. People performing particular functions within an organisation may create and maintain their own subcultures. Some subcultures will gain some ascendency as their role increases in significance relative to the others, or as the threats and opportunities an organisation faces change.

For example, local councils have moved over time from a predominantly land subdivision and settlement role through engineering, financial, and managerial phases, and more recently to broadly-based planning cultures as demands and expectations on their capacity to manage their resources and finances into the future have changed.

Within an organisation at any one time silos exist that effectively protect and project individual subcultures. Silos may be aligned with or influenced by shared professional qualifications, vocational, or career experience, or with tasks within the organisation. Professional cultures operate across organisations, forming alliances based on common world views that may be separate to or different from those of the organisations they connect.

Management responses to these natural tendencies may be to implement matrix or project-based management techniques that are intended to align the subcultures within an organisation and to utilise its capabilities more effectively. Local government has expanded with these different forms of management with mixed success, but continues to opt mainly for a hierarchical structure, especially the larger councils, one increasingly driven by the need to prepare ten-year work programmes and budgets,

Planners in Employment

The NZPI conducts regular surveys of planners to establish salary levels and trends. These give some indication of the organisational context of planning. The latest survey, conducted in 2014, covered 648 respondents. 28% were aged between 21 and 30, and 60% between 31 and 50.

Only 77% of respondents possess a planning qualification, and the balance a non-planning qualification. 39% of New Zealand degrees were from Auckland, 27% from Massey, 14% from Otago,

and 10% each from Lincoln and Waikato. 78% of respondents held NZPI accreditation, 19% were accredited by non-New Zealand institutes and 3% were not accredited

Just over half the surveyed planners worked in a council (local, regional or unitary), 38% in the private sector; 8% in central government, and 3% within not-for-profit organisations, universities, or others (presumably including in-house corporate planners).

The highest median planning salary of ($95,000) was reported in Christchurch just ahead of Wellington's median of $94,250 and well ahead of Auckland's $83,000. The median outside the main centres was $80,500. In terms of position, the highest median salary was reported by Directors at $150,750 (an increase of over $20,000 from the previous year's survey) with the second highest reported by Managers at $123,000 (an increase of $500). Senior planners and planners had medians of $91,000 and $65,000 respectively. Principals and Associates attracted a median of $106,000.

Interestingly, council salaries in Auckland matched those of private sector planners, although they were well behind in Wellington, where central government salaries also outstripped councils. A high median for other organisations, particularly in Auckland may reflect the influence of both university and in-house corporate salaries.

Figure 4: Planning Salaries by Organisation Type and Location
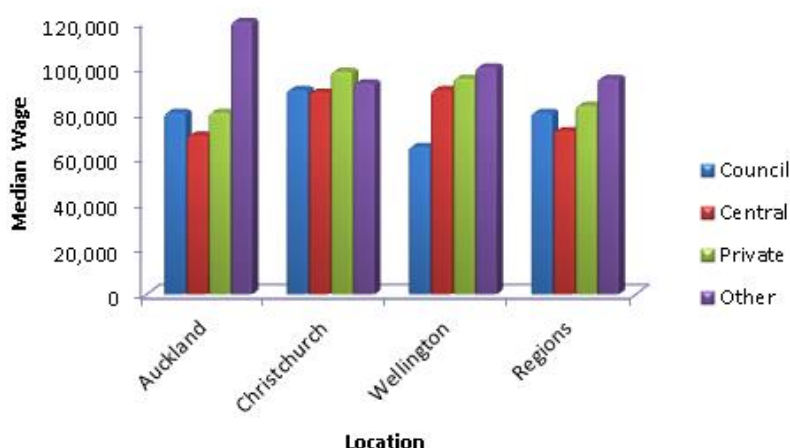
Unsurprisingly, the highest salaries are recorded by directors. Perhaps more interesting, the salaries paid to directors within Councils (median $190,000 in 2013, up $35,000 on 2012) were well ahead of those paid to directors of planning in the private sector (median $150,000, up $20,000). Another feature of interest is that young planners (those with under 5 years of experience), tend to attract much higher salaries in council employment than in private employment.

These salary figures suggest the possibility of difference in cultures between planners in the public sector, especially local government, and those in the private sector (primarily consultants) to the extent that they enjoy different career and reward structures. The latter have marginally higher salaries overall, but the greater division between operatives, managers, and directors in councils suggests a more hierarchical structure within councils, a sign of a more stable organisation, or an

organisation operating within a more stable environment, an environment in which the focus is potentially on the internal as much as the external relations of planners.

The implication is that planning in commercial organisations may be more responsive to changes and challenges among their clients (which may well be the councils) than public and particular council organisations (for whom the clients comprise mainly households and businesses in one form or the other). Even so, these differences are unlikely to lead to significant divisions within planning culture.

Comment: Planning Culture

The knowledge foundation for a planning culture is laid down in the programme prescriptions of the NZPI, reinforced by the CPD programme offered by the Institute and broadened in the resources offered to practice by the QP website.

From the perspective of the individual planner, a typical process of acculturation can be set out that commences with a planning education which builds then knowledge base, including the ethical and practical foundations of the practice of planning (Figure 5). There will be differences among candidates which will influence how they respond to the knowledge base, based on their personal histories and experiences, their motivations for wanting to be planners, and among graduate planners based on their experience of and preferences within the educational programmes. Nevertheless, the role of the education is to ensure a core set of values and knowledge is shared. The shared experiences and applied nature of planning programmes will also create a bond or network of relationships among many course participants.

Beyond that, individual's work experience and environment will begin to modify or reinforce their expectations of the discipline and their attitudes towards practice. The experience will be based on the role of the organisation, whether it be a commercial "resource user", a planning or multi-disciplinary consultancy, a council, or another government body. It will also be impacted by how the organisation itself is structured, how it operates, and the relationships within it.

Figure 5: Planner's Progress – Steps in the Acquisition of Culture
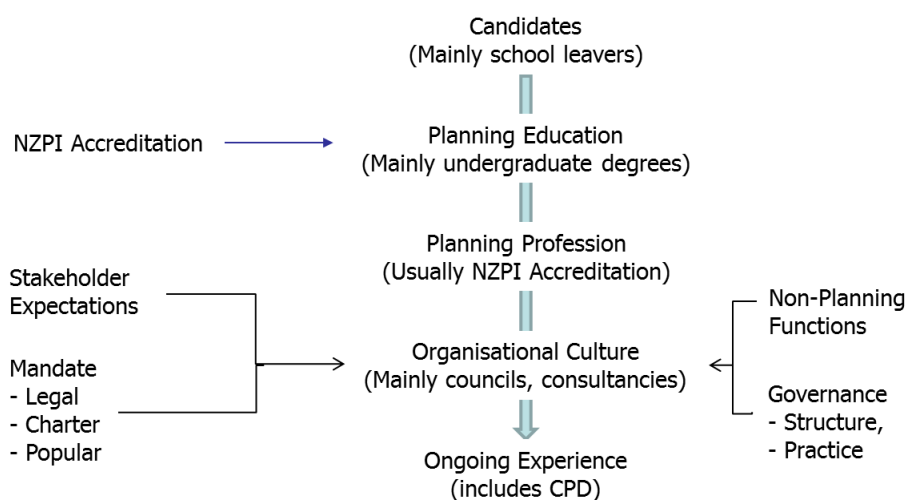
6. The Institutional Setting

> *While planning culture is formed in large part through training and work experience of planners, it is also mediated and modified by the various institutions that impinge on practice and practitioners, embodying the many of the values, beliefs, and behaviours of the wider community.*
>
> *This section scans some of the agencies in the "planning space". It indicates that changing the planning system may require a radical shift if it is to break free from the inertia which results as much from the institutional framework it operates in as from the culture of planning and planners.*

The Role of Institutions

Traditionally the analysis of the design and effectiveness of individual organisations focuses on the resources they control, their technology, and structures. An alternative to this is to consider the subtler ways in which values and norms are entrenched in the rules of an organisation and its relations with other organisations. In effect, this shifts the focus to how organisations develop <u>and</u> interact to give legitimacy to a particular set of views, values, beliefs, and behaviours.

Institutions can be defined as organisations serving a "*religious, educational, professional, or social purpose*" (Oxford English Dictionary). They provide a means of developing protocols, establishing rules, even writing the statutes shaping the beliefs, values, and behaviours associated with a particular culture. This provides a broader conception of the entities with which different practices are associated in societies than simply referring to the easily identified, individual organisations.

Professional institutions come into existence to confer and recognise qualifications and experience in a particular vocational area, and set standards and procedures, approve methods, and define and promulgate "best practice". The NZPI is at the heart of the institution of planning. But it is not the only organisation that acts to institutionalise, or entrench, planning information and behaviour.

Planning culture is mediated by the wider institutional context within which it operates. The range of relevant institutions in the New Zealand context is indicated in Figure 6. While by no means complete, this demonstrates the crowded and complex nature of the planning domain. Most of the agencies in the diagram (or implied by it[4]) have a stake in the existing planning system simply because they currently operate within it. Years of developing internal capacity or making decisions within the constraints of current (and past) plans engender a natural resistance to change.

Some of the key institutions influencing planning are described in Figure 6. This demonstrates the wide range of institutions involved in urban planning and their different but complementary roles.

Government

A number of government ministries are involved in planning. Those most closely involved include:

- The Ministry for the Environment (MFE), the Government's principle advisor on environmental matters including urban development. It is responsible for and administers the Resource Management Act (among others);

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4   For example, there are 78 local councils and at least 280 planning consultancies of varying size and structure

- The Department of Internal Affairs, which is responsible for the administration of local government and the Local Government Act;
- The Department of Building and Housing (and Crown Agency, the Housing Corporation of New Zealand);
- The Ministry of Transport, which plays a major role funding and providing transport infrastructure and administers the Land Transport Management Act, and the Land Transport Agency, which is responsible for the direct development, funding, and management of transport infrastructure;
- The Department of Conservation with responsibilities under their own acts (e.g., administering the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act and responsible for the drafting of the National Coastal Policy Statement.

Figure 6: The Institutional Context of New Zealand Planning
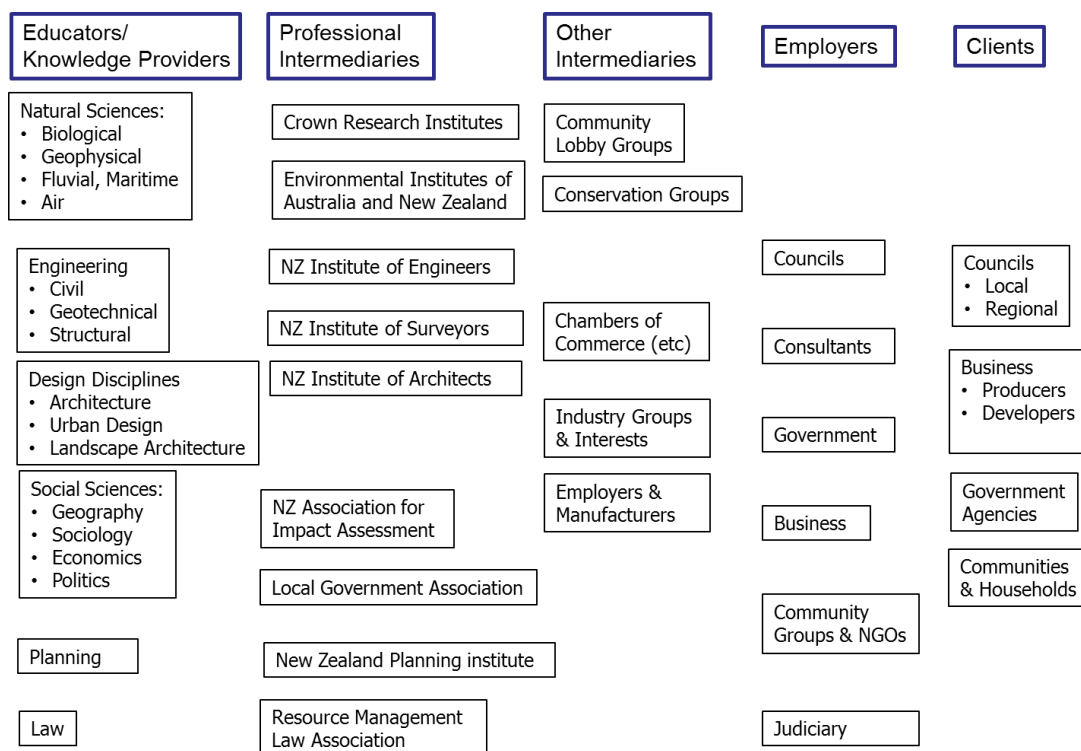
The Ministry for the Environment

The influence of central agencies obviously varies, the principal adviser to the Government on the New Zealand environment and on international environmental matters being the MFE. It expresses its mission as "*environmental stewardship for a prosperous New Zealand*". While local and regional councils are charged with developing and implementing plans under the RMA, the MFE focuses on:

- environmental management systems, including laws, regulations and national environmental standards;
- national policy statements and strategies;
- guidance and training on best practice; and
- monitoring the health of the environment.

Current MfE priorities, according to the website, are focused on the natural environment:

- ensuring fresh water is "*well governed and sustainably managed to ensure the maximum benefit possible for present and future environmental, cultural, social and economic values*";
- strengthening and supporting environmental management systems "*so that they can achieve the greatest overall environmental, economic, social and cultural benefits*";
- promoting "*a successful low-carbon society that is resilient to climate change impacts on [New Zealand's] climate, economy and lifestyle*".

As well as the RMA, the MfE administers ten other statutes with a bearing on the terrestrial and marine environments and oversees the work of the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).

The Environmental Protection Authority

The EPA was established to administer the Hazardous Organisms and New Substances Act 1996, an act to protect the environment and communities from risks associated with the introduction of new organisms and substances (including genetically modified organisms) that might introduce unknown or potentially damaging changes to the environment.

Today the EPA provides environmental management services under several acts, including the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act 2012, the aim of which to promote the sustainable management of the environment and resources in marine areas controlled by New Zealand, and the Climate Change Response (Emissions Trading) Amendment Act 2008. The EPA administers carbon trading under the latter and manages the New Zealand Emission Unit Register

The EPA has responsibilities under the RMA in several areas, including responding to applications for infrastructure projects of national significance. This may involve considering resource consent applications, preparation of regional plans (other than coastal plans which remain with the Department of Conservation), plan changes, or notices of requirement for designations.

> *In effect, the EPA administers resource management and planning matters that impact on or are impacted by international protocols and trade, which are of national significance, carry substantial risk, or entail rigorous scientific evaluation or oversight.*

Department of Internal Affairs

The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) serves and connects people, communities and government to build a safe, prosperous and respected nation.

The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment

The independent office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment was established in 1986. It is charged with investigating current environmental matters at the discretion of the commissioner, who reports to the Parliament as a whole rather than to the governing party.

The mission of the current Commissioner is to "*maintain or improve the quality of the environment by providing robust independent advice that influences decisions*", which means "*actively and constructively*" questioning the status quo. The questions raised and the solutions proposed "*are based on sound science and reasoned argument*".

Councils

Local, regional, and unitary councils are collectively the largest employers of planners. While they administer the RMA, their principal duties are spelt out in the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) and subsequent amendments councils have wide ranging responsibilities, including the provision of infrastructure and services to property, the provision of community resources and amenities. The LGA defines the statutory purpose of councils (Part 2, 11) as

a) *to enable democratic local decision-making and action by, and on behalf of, communities; and*
b) *to promote the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future.*

Under Part 2 14 councils are given explicit responsibility (among other things) for ensuring:

(g) "*prudent stewardship and the efficient and effective use of its resources in the interests of its district or region; and*
(h) "*in taking a sustainable development approach, a local authority should take into account*
     (i) the social, economic, and cultural well-being of people and communities; and
     (ii) the need to maintain and enhance the quality of the environment; and
     (iii) the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations".

These requirements least overlap with the requirements of the RMA. This creates a degree of ambiguity (in part resolved by requiring that councils adhere to the RMA in fulfilling their functions) or simply expand the rationale for promoting a planning-based approach to local matters.

They also indicate the extent to which planning in a generic sense rather than simply environmental or urban policy has become embedded in the operations of councils, with their commitments to long term financial planning and regular reporting of council performance against targets.

The local government sector is represented collectively by **Local Government New Zealand,** the aim of which is to represent "*the national interests of councils in New Zealand and lead best practice in the local government sector. [LGNZ] provide[s] advocacy and policy services, business support, advice and training to … members to assist them to build successful communities throughout New Zealand*".

The LGNZ Council comprises 15 elected members. Its vision is one of *"local democracy powering community and national success".* It operates through providing guidance and resource material to local council members, making submissions to government on councils' behalf, running conferences and workshops, providing training, and promoting excellence within the sector. Recent submissions to government cover a variety of topics, responding to relevant parliamentary bills and inquiries.

Business

The Planning Business

The place of business in the institutional framework within which planning operates is manifold. Planning consultancies are a key (and growing) component of the planning system. The NZPI Consultants' Directory lists 59 companies which a search of websites indicates operate 114 offices and employ around 280 accredited planners.

The planning consultancies range between one and two person businesses through to eight companies which employ ten or more planners. Jointly these eight companies account for 55% of

consultant planners identified through this search. The largest employers of consultant planners are the large multidisciplinary engineering and surveying practices which are internationally owned.[5] Other significant employers are property or multi-location planning practices.

The Directory is likely to omit a few practices who have not registered with the NZPI, particularly solo operators. A number of these have been identified through the Resource Management Law Association (RMAL) members' listing, which also indicates a significant level of overlap between the two associations.

Figure 7 indicates the geographic distribution of planning consultants as. It indicates a strong metropolitan centre bias, with Auckland, clearly dominant, Canterbury, and Wellington regions accounting for 70% of planning consultants compared with just 57% of local government employees (and 58% of the 2015 population). Hamilton and Tauranga also enjoy significant consultant capacity relative to their size, no doubt reflecting their growth over the past two decades as well as services offered in their hinterlands. In fact, 69% of consultant planners listed reside in the northern North Island (Taupo north), compared with 54% of the country's population. Clearly, the experience of the New Zealand planning established is biased towards metropolitan centres and, somewhat less so, towards the northern North Island.

Figure 7: The Distribution of Consultant Planners, 2016
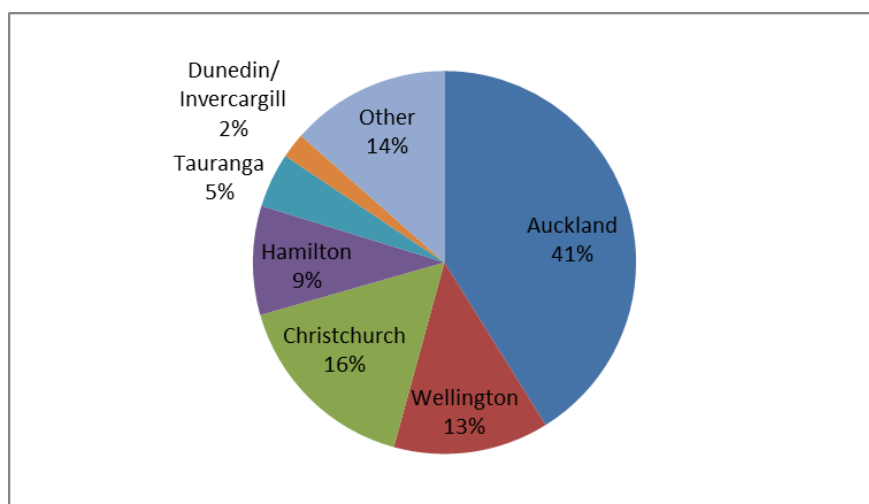
Source: NZPI Consultants Directory, Company Websites, May 2016

The Expert Evidence Business

The development of planning in the late 20th century and more so recently has seen the proliferation of advisors on effects within the sector. Such advisors are drawn from the natural and social sciences. The former advise on the impacts of development on such matters as water and air quality, impacts on soils, biodiversity, landscapes and cultural heritage.

The latter, who have become have become progressively more influential over the past twenty years, advise on the impacts of developments on communities, cultures, and economies. The advice provided on these matters is somewhat variable in quality and content.

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[5]   Beca is a large New Zealand employee-owned multi-disciplinary practice with 3,000 employees in 19 offices internationally

Economic analysis, for example, tends towards estimating the flow-on effects of plan or resource consent provisions for investment, although a stream of retail impact assessment work has been promoted, largely buttressing the interests of investors and businesses in existing commercial centres. However, despite revisions to the provision of the RMA (in Section 32), there has been little progress towards applying formal economic evaluation through cost-benefit analysis.

Businesses as Resource Users

More generally, individual businesses seek to influence plans through the submission processes, or to obtain consents for extending or introducing new activities under existing plans; collectively they seek to advance their interests through submissions, lobbying, and influence. In their individual capacity, large corporates may employ in-house planners. Most often however, they will rely on planning consultants to assemble their applications and manage the application process, co-ordinating the input of any specialist advisors.

The Lobby Business

There is a range of organisations that represents the collective interests of businesses, usually organised by sector, location, or both. While one of their key roles may be strengthening the knowledge base of their members, they also provide an effective presence for a particular sector to the public generally and to regulators.

It is in the latter role that they act as lobbyists. They may participate in planning through the submissions they make to hearings, by promoting their activities through the preparation and circulation of informative papers, press releases on special issues, and conference presentations.

Local **chambers of commerce** are the obvious location-related associations of business interests. They are generally active in planning matters, perhaps more so in large cities. There may be other industry lobby groups. Within New Zealand the regional offices of the **Employers and Manufacturers Association** also participate. Within Auckland business interests established Competitive Auckland and its successor the **Committee for Auckland,** which has been a significant driver for change in the region's governance and planning.

The Committee's vision is that Auckland should be "*a global city*", with its role that of "*an influential voice for all of Auckland, creating cross-sectoral solutions to the city's issues, … Focusing on a future beyond the electoral cycle helping New Zealand's only world-ranked city to achieve its potential for the region and the country.*"

The Committee for Auckland lobbied for the reform of Auckland's multi-council governance structure largely on the basis of planning failure. It was one of the key influencers that led the Government to establish the Royal Commission that recommended a single unitary council. The Committee's focus today is very much on lifting the economic performance of a city that "*produces some 20% of GDP*" but "*is home to 30% of its population*".

While corporate members of the Committee include university and cultural institutions the Committee is dominated by large business members complemented by individual members comprising mainly business leaders. The Committee of Auckland today runs leadership and Iwi

business programmes, and promotes various opportunities for Auckland's growth, while addressing perceived impediments. The results of these projects inform the Committee's submissions on planning matters, and are promulgated through reports and newsletters.

The **Property Council of New Zealand** (PCNZ) is based in Auckland with branches in that city, Wellington-Hawkes Bay, Waikato, the Bay of Plenty, the Bay of Plenty, Otago, and Christchurch-South Island. Its membership is based on property investors and their advisors and its principle role is one of sector representation and advocacy. This focuses on:

> *"the creation of well-designed, functional and economically sustainable built environments, which contribute to the economic prosperity of New Zealand"*.

It makes national, regional, and local submissions on legislation and inquiries, regional and local plans. It provides resources, data, and guidelines to the sector, particularly with reference to the retail property subsector.

The PCNZ is highly focused on planning matters in urban areas. Equally if not more active in this space is the Auckland-based **Committee for Infrastructure Development** (NZCID), which presents itself as *"an authority at the forefront of infrastructure development issues"* with the purpose of *"world class infrastructure for the benefit of all New Zealanders"*. It operates by

> *"promoting best practice in national infrastructure development through research, advocacy and public and private sector collaboration".* Its members "*come from diverse sectors across New Zealand, equity owners, service providers, public sector agencies, and major infrastructure users*".

The NZCID is an active submitter to planning and related inquiries, as well as a thought leader and promoter of infrastructure investment in its own right. At least six of the largest planning consultants (accounting for 39% of the consultants identified from the NZPI website) are members of the NZCID.

Professional Communities

Engineers, Surveyors, and Architects

The professionals most closely associated with planners comprise the legal profession and those that work in the development field – civil, construction, geotechnical engineers and the like, surveyors who have traditionally played a significant role in land use planning, and architects, including landscape and urban design architects as well as the designers of structures.

The engineering and surveying professions have a particularly strong role to play both in terms of understanding land capacity and constraints, and in the placement, design and implementation of infrastructure. The effectiveness with which they undertake their roles may have a significant impact on the feasibility or otherwise of particular forms and patterns of development.

The design professions will have influence partly through the aesthetic and functional quality of their designs, and partly through the practicality of their implementation.

The property-related professionals and planners need to work closely together to effect development. Often the relationship goes beyond a complementary one to elements of competition. Hence urban designers promulgate urban form which may or may not be in accord with the prognostications of planners. One result has been an increasing overlap between the urban design and planning, although the core knowledge between them differs significantly. Nevertheless, it can be argued that this relationship further this removes planning from the economic and fiscal disciplines that should underlie urban planning decisions.

The Legal Profession

The statutory framework for planning is perhaps the most significant "external" institutional influence on planning, particularly planning practice. This comprises the law firms, solicitors and barristers specialising in resource management law under the RMA, planning commissioners who form the panels that deliberate on objections to individual plans or consents under the RMA, and the Environment Court which deliberates on matters taken to appeal. Naturally, matters before the Environment Court are significant and contentious, which means that the judicial deliberations and decisions are likely to have a disproportionate effect on planning outcomes.

Indeed, the New Zealand Planning system can be described as legalistic. Submissions and objections to plans and applications for resource consents may be most effective if presented in terms of legal as well as substantive arguments. Seeking modification to a plan or to how it is applied relies as much on the legal interpretation of intent, effects, and the alignment with plan intent as it does on the quality of the evidence.

The Resource Management Law Association

The centrality of the legal establishment to the institutionalisation of planning under the RMA was reflected in the formation of the Resource Management Law Association (RMLA) in 1992. It presents itself as "*the pre-eminent organization for the protection of best practice in the implementation of environmental policy and law through education, debate and commentary*".

Of 1,100 members listed on the RMAL website (May 2016), 300 were solicitors or solicitor/barristers and 30 barristers (including two Queen's Counsels) and 405 planners (although by no means all of those are accredited members of the NZPI). This represents a substantial intellectual, professional, and commercial commitment to the RMA by the legal and planning community.

The objectives of the RMLA involve promoting:

- An understanding of resource management law and its implementation in a multi-disciplinary framework;
- Excellence in resource management policy and practice;
- Resource management processes which are legally sound, effective and efficient, and which produce high quality environmental outcomes.

While these objectives derive from a foundation of legal practice, they are wide-ranging in nature and deal directly with the outcomes associated with planning, although not necessarily with the substantive content underlying the issues. The RMLA overlaps with the role of the NZPI and focuses legal practitioners on planning issues as well as judicial procedure. Like the NZPI, the RMLA conducts conferences and workshops and publishes commentary and position papers.

Social Impact Assessment

Social impact assessment (SIA) has come to play an increasing role in determination of regulatory, including planning, decisions drawing on the knowledge and skills of social scientists in particular. The International Association for Impact Assessment defines impact assessment generally as:

"the process of identifying the future consequences of a current or proposed action".

The Social Impact Assessment Hub website elaborates, describing SIA as including

"the processes of analysing, monitoring and managing the intended and unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of planned interventions (policies, programs, plans, projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions. Its primary purpose is to bring about a more sustainable and equitable biophysical and human environment".

It quotes a paper prepared for the International Social Impact Association by Vanclay (2003) which makes the point that SIA provides an overarching framework for evaluation of "*all impacts on humans and on all the ways in which people and communities interact with their socio-cultural, economic and biophysical surroundings.*"   It is built on specialist areas such as:

"aesthetic impacts (landscape analysis); archaeological and cultural heritage impacts (both tangible and nontangible); community impacts; cultural impacts; demographic impacts; development impacts; economic and fiscal impacts; gender impacts; health and mental health impacts; impacts on indigenous rights; infrastructural impacts, institutional impacts; leisure and tourism impacts; political impacts (human rights, governance, democratisation etc.); poverty; psychological impacts; resource issues (access and ownership of resources); impacts on social and human capital; and other impacts on societies"

In a masterpiece of understatement, Vanclay concludes that "*comprehensive SIA cannot normally be undertaken by a single person*". The principles espoused in the paper are similarly ambitious and include (in brief) the:

- *Precautionary Principle*: Lack of certainty about the likelihood of serious threats being realised should not be a justification for proceeding with an intervention;
- *Uncertainty Principle*: Accepting the inevitably incomplete nature of knowledge of the social world and of social processes is incomplete and that the social environment and processes affecting change constantly, and vary from place to place.
- *Intra-generational Equity*: The benefits of planned interventions should address the needs of all, and ensure the impacts do not fall disproportionately on particular groups.
- *Inter-generational Equity*: Developments and interventions should not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- *Recognition and Preservation of Diversity*: acknowledging differences in the demography, value systems, and skills of social groups and the social diversity that exists within communities while ensuring that planned interventions do not lead to a loss of social diversity or cohesion.
- *Internalisation of Costs*. Use economic and other instruments to internalise the full social and ecological costs of interventions and avoid interventions with hidden costs to current or future generations or the environment.
- *Polluter Pays Principle*. The costs of avoiding or compensating for social impacts should be borne by the proponent of the planned intervention.

- *Prevention Principle*. It is preferable and cheaper in the long run to prevent negative impacts than having to restore or rectify damage after the event.
- *Protection and Promotion of Health and Safety*. All planned interventions should be assessed for their health impacts and their accident risks.
- *Principle of Multisectoral Integration*. The need to consider social and requirements issues should be integrated into all projects, policies, infrastructure programs and planning activities.
- *Principle of Subsidiarity*. Decision making power should be decentralised, with made as close to an individual citizen as possible.

The principles that inform SIA practitioners, regardless of their specialist discipline and particular contribution to regulatory decision-making, perhaps go further than the NZPI in bringing the economic issues of efficiency and equity firmly into the evaluation frame (through the polluter pays, internalisation of costs and equity principles). They also point to a less authoritarian regulatory stance based on the principle of subsidiarity, and a less assertive one based on the precautionary and uncertainty principles.

It can be argued that despite common ground, SIA provides an alternative approach to planning as set out by the NZPI (and other institutes). It commences with the substantive knowledge of its members in fields associated with development and its outcomes, and filters that knowledge according to a series of principles about how it might be used to inform decision-making.

The New Zealand Association of Impact Assessment belongs to the IAIA. It comprises around 100 members from a variety of social science disciplines, both academics and practitioners. Its aim is to:

"promote the use of impact assessment methods in relevant areas of public and private sector decision-making, to protect social, cultural and environmental values, and improve the standard of practice where it is used".

While the principles and practice appear to overlap planning, SIAs have increasingly been drawn as expert input into planning hearings.

The Environmental institute of Australia and New Zealand

The Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand (EIANZ), a "*professional association for environmental practitioners*" deals with the biophysical that planning addresses. It seeks common cross-disciplinary ground and language with which to address diverse environmental problems and may be considered equivalent to the SIA in the physical sciences, although the EIANZ is somewhat less focused on the impacts of regulatory intervention.

Nevertheless, the EIANZ promotes interdisciplinary discussion on environmental issues and acts as an advocate for environmental knowledge and awareness. It aims to set common standards, advancing ethical and competent environmental practice.

It offers a certification scheme which shares similarities with NZPI accreditation, although the EIANZ points out that certification refers to achieving "*the standards of a profession*" whereas accreditation denotes fulfilling pre-determined programme content or training criteria.

The Certified Environmental Practitioner Scheme recognises "*talented, skilled and ethical environmental professionals … in line with their professional counterparts from engineering, accounting, planning and architecture*". It is promoted in much the same way as planning

accreditation, as providing "*assurance to the community, employers, clients and professional associates of the credentials and peer recognition of an environmental professional*".

Certification requires:

1. an environment-related degree;
2. five years of relevant environmental experience over the past ten years;
3. three referees prepared to vouch for skills, performance and professional conduct;
4. a signed statement of ethical conduct;
5. commitment to a minimum of 50 hours of CPD over two years; and
6. additional supporting evidence of claim including at least two Referees' Reports

The EIANZ website in May 2016 identified 638 certificated professionals in Australia and New Zealand, "*including 20 Impact Assessment Specialists, 18 Ecology Specialists, 29 Contaminated Land Specialists and 1 Climate Change Specialist*".

The Community

Like business, the community is involved in planning on an individual entity (in this case household) basis, although the capacity to effectively participate in planning processes is constrained by more limited access to expertise. This may be overcome when particular issues generate a collective community view sufficient to support assembly of the knowledge necessary to respond.

Ultimately, it is the collective community voice which has an influence on plans and planning.

Because of the limited capacity of the community sector and this tendency to respond when development has an obvious effect on a particular locality, community participation in planning is too easily – and too readily – dismissed as NIMBYism. The collective voice should be distinguished perhaps from that of the regular and indiscriminate protestor, while decision0-makers might better recognise the legitimacy of residents with a long-standing and emotional connection with a place and better provide for their contribution to local change.

In fact, the capacity of neighbours and community interests to come together can be considered as a critical source of knowledge for planning. It is potentially more important than the submission process that suffers from a lack of profile and accessibility for individuals, or public surveys which may be abstract in the questions they put and consequently bear little relationship to how people will in fact respond to the changes they seek to promote.

There are a number of formal community groups that play an active part in planning, promoting their particular interests and views. These include residents and ratepayers' associations, local and national environmental groups, including Forest and Bird, Greenpeace, and various recreational associations. The Automobile Association represents a particular – and large – community group, private motorists.

Among the less formal groups are those assembling round social media including, for example, Generation Zero with its focus on the liveability and accessibility of higher density precincts and communities; and transportblog.co.nz which articulates the commitment of its members' support

for rail-based transit, among other things; and Greenways, which focuses on cycle transport in the city and is currently exploring the prospects for supplementing this with off-road light rail.

More such movements may be expected, and they may become even more active and effective with the advent of crowd funding.

The Statutory Setting

Unlike its 1926 predecessor, the Town and Country Planning Act of 1953 introduced rights of appeal against council planning decisions. These were heard by a quasi-judicial board chaired by "a person of legal standing" to ensure that the private rights of individuals were protected and that justice could be effected given the relative power and resources of individuals relative to councils.

By the 1970s the growing number of appeals called for a more formalised system to hear them, with the Planning Tribunal established through the Town and Country Planning Act 1977. The Tribunal, which attended the district within which a dispute lay, was presided over by a judge supported by one or two lay people.

The passage of the RMA 1991 with its focus on sustainability and the management of natural and physical resources saw the replacement of the tribunal with a national Environment Court in 1996, with specialist judges based in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. The objection and appeal process has since been subject to amendment and, in most cases, streamlining and additional resourcing given both the number of appeals that might be submitted, the fundamental nature of the disputes in many of those cases, and the cost to the parties of delays associated with an expanding court workload.

Planning and Environment Court Commissioners

Important innovations within the process of resource management decision-making underpin an approach intended to reduce the number of disputes reaching the Court. Today, accredited Planning Commissioners are typically appointed by a council to hear appeals on its planning decisions or to deliberate on its behalf on applications for resource consents or plan changes.

Previously hearings were usually conducted by a hearings subcommittee of the council's planning committee. Today the nomination by the council of one or more external commissioners well experienced in planning avoids perceptions of bias or conflict of interest, and brings to bear a depth of experience, an awareness of relevant case law, and therefore an understanding of the direction the Court might lean in if the case goes to appeal. In addition, Commissioners will sit with judges in hearings and conduct court-directed mediation.

Significantly, a review of the 15 Environment commissioners listed by the Court indicates that they are not necessarily accredited planners. A variety of disciplines is represented among them and they generally have wide-ranging experience outside planning. According to the Principal Environment Court Judge, Laurie Newhook, commissioners are "*invariably senior and respected members of their individual professions*" which enables the Court to "*employ horses for courses*" based on their individual professions.

The system of Alternative Dispute Resolution developed by the Environment Court over the past few years benefits from this breadth of expertise, leading to much improved settlement rate of cases in

the court and a narrowing of the issues that may be brought to hearing according to Judge Newhook. In actively pursuing settlement the processes employed "*strongly resemble collaboration, joint fact-finding, expert conferencing, third party assessment, internet-based negotiation, expert determination, conciliation, and [the province of judges] judicial settlement conferences*" (Newhook, 2015).

Comment: The Institutional Setting

The core suppliers of planning knowledge – planning institutes and educational institutions – have a fundamental role to play in shaping the planning culture, but culture and consequently practice are subject to a wide range of institutional influences.

The Planners

The preceding review has not canvassed all the agencies that impact upon the status and practice of urban planning. Nevertheless, it demonstrates the complex institutional setting it operates in, one in which a wide range of public and private bodies have a keen interest and have their own planning-related responsibilities, entitlements, and expectations.

The obvious influences outside the core repository of planning knowledge and values (the NZPI and the Ministry for the Environment), are the corporate cultures of the organisations within which planners work. Councils are particularly important as they employ the largest group of planners charged with regulating land use. Their role has been elevated in local government over the past two decades as a generic planning culture has become more deeply embedded within councils.

They are supplemented by planning and multi-disciplinary consultancies which receive much of their work from councils and are consequently committed to a common planning paradigm and outlook. Even planners (and planning lawyers) who work in the corporate sector are obliged to highlight areas of common interest through the format of planning submissions, objections, and appeals.

Establishing as much common ground as possible and demonstrating how departure from a plan provision does not affect its outcomes is the key to securing an individual resource consent or private plan change approval. Even those disadvantaged by a particular planning provision seek to minimise the extent to which they seek to sail against the prevailing winds; the planners who oppose particular provisions of plans nevertheless avoid rocking the dominant paradigm.

Urban planners are subject to influences from disciplines (and their associated professional institutions) outside traditional planning. These alliances are not fixed: alignment with design – urban design, landscape design, and architecture – has strengthened over the last decade, supplementing or perhaps displacing a long-standing alignment with civil engineering.

The Other Players

Planners are also subject to scrutiny, information, and influence by a wide range of well-informed interest groups, and face increasingly well-resourced communities often working collectively to retain control over their local environments.

A number of external agencies represent coalitions of particular interests for which they advocate within the context of urban planning, all with slightly (occasionally substantially) different urban

agendas. There can also be considerable overlap among their constituencies, overlap which reinforces particular positions more than it contributes to open debate and diversity of views. It seems inevitable that while planning encompasses diverse career paths, experiences, and spatial, social, and political affiliations, the institutionalisation of planning will lead to a rather narrow conception of policy options based largely on conserving current activities, relationships, and rules.

An Institutionalised Commitment

There is an institutionalised commitment to the RMA and current planning practice: the professional associations, business and special interest groups, and resource users themselves, have a repository of experience with the Act. Consequently, while willing to contribute to the discussion around amendments, most are likely to resist radical change. Their submissions and actions under the RMA support fine tuning: few appear ready to embrace far-reaching change to the planning system.

Institutionalised conservatism may simply be a response to the challenge of dealing with the diverse information and interests affected by a discipline still characterised by a belief in the benign nature of its endeavours on behalf of the community (singular!) it serves. Paradoxically, its capacity to deal with diversity is stymied by learning pathways that focus more on breadth than depth of knowledge; on assimilating elements of other disciplines rather than elevating the specialist understanding that might at the least indicate the limits to planning and plans; and only paying lip service to diversity as the protagonists seek to shape urban areas in a predictable and, by repetition, conventional mould.

The reason plans seem increasingly contentious despite "consensus" is that they tend to pitch a centrally validated orthodoxy onto the often quite different realities of individual households, businesses, and communities in particular urban settings. Yet opponents to the offending plans may find a range of organisations defending them. In particular, interest groups tend to proffer minor adjustments, pursuing sufficient change to meet their own interests, but reluctant to challenge the orthodoxy perhaps as a means of avoiding challenges to their interests from other quarters.

Indeed, we may have reached a point that winning an exception is a means to achieving monopoly advantages in a particular area of field of development. [6]

This raises the prospect that the issues confronting – and arising from – the practice of urban planning arise not simply from deficiencies in the statutory framework but lie also in the consensual knowledge brought to bear on urban projects and problems under the RMA.

Consensus, though, may obscure the fact that in many cases there is no one solution to a particular urban issue. Instead, negotiated – and often local, distinctive, and inclusive outcomes may be necessary. Yet such outcomes threaten the orthodoxy, not simply urban planning as we know it, but also those agencies that have learnt to live with it or, indeed, take advantage of it. Consequently, consensus may simply represent the alignment of common interests that stand to benefit from a particular urban paradigm or statutory regime, and the exclusion of those who don't. The result will be a growing gulf between winners and losers in urban society, the former being those for whom the Act works.

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[6]   This is consistent with the growing criticism of land banking in Auckland

> *Breaking down such an institutional alliance will require changing the statutory framework.*

Planning as politics

An alternative starting point may be that plans will inevitably disadvantage particular groups and areas. If this is accepted, the essentially political nature of planning can be confronted, suggesting that the best it might achieve is compromise, compensation, and reconciliation rather than outcomes that works for all parties.

The implication is three-fold. First, the environment for planning is increasingly complex and challenging, and achieving optimum outcomes defined in terms of planning knowledge is simply not possible in many if not most instances.

Second, acknowledging this, planners may be better placed as project managers, defining problems and paths towards their resolution, rather than relying on established planning lore to deliver an outcome that might satisfy the majority if not all parties.

Third, they may need to adopt skills in negotiation and risk management, accepting that development compromises may be a better way forward than relying on planning knowledge that is superficial in many areas, even if this threatens existing institutional frameworks.

These suggestions do not deny the need to respect legitimate impulses for conservation through planning, but suggests that planning needs to be far more flexible within those limits, limits defined by expert knowledge that lies for the most part outside the domain of land use planners. They also imply the need for a more reasoned allocation of responsibilities, rather than the inference that one-size-fits all indicated by unitary councils and by the move to a regional policy statement that binds local communities to urban development principles and outcomes defined at the regional level.   An institutional approach to urban planning, then, opens up the joint issues of governance and subsidiarity, issues that inform the changes discussed in Section 8 and Attachment 1.

7.   Urban Planning Capabilities

The outputs of the planning system depend in large part on the skills and capacity of the planning workforce. "Skills" include the abilities, knowledge, and expertise required of planners collectively carrying out their roles in different organisations.

This section considers the influences on planning capability, including university programmes, and the skills that might be most appropriate for urban planners given the limits on the capacity to resolve issues of urban development through long-established but limited methods or regulation.

Recap

The preceding sections set the context within which to consider desirable capabilities for planners. They indicate:

- The planning institutes' (including NZTPI) expansive and confident view of plans, planning, and planners as delivering desirable outcomes on a number of fronts, including economic efficiency, social well-being, environmental sustainability, and pleasing aesthetics.

- The educational foundation for this optimism lies in imparting established planning practices and processes, the statutory context, and planning heritage and established theories, supplemented to some extent by knowledge of the relevant physical and social sciences.

- Urban planning has evolved with social and intellectual movements from a body of knowledge focused initially on providing land for housing and industry in the burgeoning urban settlements of the Industrial Revolution; through providing a context for public investment in sanitation, transport, and other services in the course of city building; expanded to explore comprehensive rational models for dealing with the incremental development of 20th century cities. A more critical approach to urban planning emerged at the end of the century, with the literature promoting more open, community-oriented practice. However, practice remains largely centralised and prescriptive, with consultation little more than a means of seeking legitimacy.

- Despite shifts in the rationale for and theories of planning, it has retained the same basic toolkit of regulatory methods, based largely on land use controls focused on residential and industrial containment within urban areas, ever more detailed land use zones, and the protection of existing commercial centres.

- This containment paradigm that today dominates urban planning in the name of sustainability, focuses on lifting urban densities within largely existing land use zoning provisions. Under the RMA it has become institutionalised despite the evidence of:

  o the increasing diversity of urban and sub-urban areas, of the communities within them, and of the production and distribution systems that support them, changes which call for new approaches to planning and which mean that one planning size no longer fits all;

  o their increasing connectedness with other (largely urban) locations through trade, capital flows, information exchange, tourism and migration which are altering economic and demographic structure and consequently demands on land use;

  o a growing recognition of the need to manage natural resources and the built environment with flexibility and creativity in the face of evidence that climate change is leading to more extreme physical events and to manage greater local and international volatility and complexity in human events and settlements;

  o Mixed evidence over whether it is effective in achieving the outcomes claimed.

There are questions over the capability of planners to deal with the dynamism and complexity of urban areas drawing on traditional planning methods, and of the institutions and universities to adapt their teachings to the demands of 21st century urbanisation.

This section explores current and possible future capabilities based on the information summarised in this report and the literature on planning education.

Individual and Organisational Capabilities

Individual skills are acquired initially through formal education, particularly accredited university programmes and experience. The proclivities of a candidate and her capacity to acquire relevant knowledge and develop appropriate skills through the courses offered will shape her personal or **individual capabilities**. However, the extent to which those capabilities are realised and further developed will be influenced by the organisation she works in, her experience of it, and her more general experience over the course of her career.

The culture of an organisation and the capabilities it internalises depend on its purpose, or charter, the means (technologies, resources, processes) it uses fulfil it, and how effectively it does so. Effectiveness depends in turn on an organisation's capacity to define meaningful objectives and policies, in the sense that they accord with it need (the external environment) and its capability to give effect to them (the internal environment).

Organisational capability in turn depends on having the right mix of skills and sufficient of them to implement policies defined in relation to viable objectives, a recruitment, resourcing, and on-the-job training issue, and accommodating management and governance structures. So, there is circularity between organisational culture and capability: resources are likely to be recruited to fit into an organisational culture, largely reinforcing it, and the organisational culture, in turn, will highlight particular capabilities among its members. Changing organisational capability hence requires, or else brings about, changes in its culture, if not structure.

The Role of Workforce Capability

A key finding of the Productivity Commission's inquiry into regulatory institutions and practices is that the increasing sophistication of the regulatory environment and regime requires an increasingly professionalised workforce. This means a workforce that possesses the appropriate theoretical, practical and contextual knowledge; is recognised and respected by others in the field; shares a world view about the role and purpose of the profession, is guided by a common code of professional conduct; and continually challenged to stay current with developments in the field.

Changes to improve the direction or quality of the planning system will not be successful unless there is supporting workforce capability. A workforce with limited capability can undermine the credibility of the planning system through, for example: regulatory activities resulting in unexpected outcomes and costs; failing to achieve desired outcomes or achieving them in a way which imposes unnecessarily high internal (enforcement and compliance) and external (deadweight) costs; plan regulations that are difficult to implement, monitor or enforce, resulting in poor compliance; and plans and rules that limit opportunities for innovation, good practice (including good environmental practice), and progress among the activities being "managed" through them.

In addition, lack of flexibility or innovation within planning itself will result in higher than necessary regulatory costs, and undermine the credibility of planners and urban policy makers generally.

What Does the Literature Say?

Reconciling Theory and Practice

There are a number of themes evident in the literature on planning education:

- The bodies of knowledge required to be a planner, which focus on theories of planning;
- The skills required for the practice of planning, which reflect modes of planning practice; and
- The relationship between planning theory and planning practice.

A reading of the literature suggests some stability in the theoretical knowledge that planning leans on. Friedmann (1987) concluded that fundamental to planning theory are: a focus on rationality, despite the emergence of theoretical precepts based on the role of communication (Healey, 1996); a greater appreciation of the constraints imposed round the adequacy or otherwise of the information base; and recognition of the limits to planning action associated with the distribution of power among the players (Lapintie, 1999).

A survey of 638 planning and planning-related professionals in the US in published in 2003 (Guzzetta and Bollen, 2003) confirmed the influence of the growing communicative movement and role of consultation, with communication skills considered more important than technical and quantitative skills. Planners, especially public sector planners, favoured written skills more than did private sector and non-planning respondents.

Debate around the content of the planning knowledge base tends to focus on the balance between substantive knowledge and the mastery of practice. The academic planner has a commitment to the pedagogy associated with the host discipline. The practitioner is focused on practical skills, including communication, analysis, negotiation, ethics, and what has been termed a capacity to think strategically about the future.

This debate has been described for the United States planning establishment by Edwards and Bates (2011), where the core academic disciplines sit in the social sciences and are offered more often at graduate rather than undergraduate level. While there appears to be considerable overlap between academic and practising planners regarding core knowledge, they suggest that this overlap is undermined by the challenge of achieving all desired aspects in planning education. It makes teaching planning difficult, a difficulty compounded by the unwillingness of academics often to teach such practical skills as communication, writing, public speaking, and negotiation. Doing so is in any case a challenge given the diverse backgrounds from which planning candidates come and the differing aptitudes and experience they bring.

Students also find it difficult to combine both reflective learning (in the theory, philosophy, and history of planning) and applied subjects, even in a two year post-graduate programme. Edwards and Bates also suggest that it is difficult for programmes to define consistent core knowledge given the wide range of planning positions which graduates might occupy.

While the institutes through their role of accrediting practitioners have a strong influence over programme content, the legitimacy of the profession according to Edwards and Bates depends on

academic respect and legitimacy, while the university demands quality scholarship and academic research of its planning schools.

The North Atlantic Curriculum

Having described the tensions between theory and practice, academia and the profession, Edwards and Bates describe the core curriculum based on analysis of the papers offered by thirty North American planning schools in 2009. They include a "generally rigid" set of core courses with little capacity for electives. The papers and the number of schools offering each are listed below:

Planning history, theory and practice	29 schools
Urban History & Theory	20
Public or Urban Economics	17
Legal Aspects	24
Workshop or studio	23
Methods: statistics	29
Methods: GIS/Spatial	5
Methods: policy, Planning Analysis	20
Internship required	11

A planning theory and history paper is almost universal, as was a statistics paper.   Planning law and studio courses are also widely offered. Surprisingly few programmes offered spatial analysis and GIS, perhaps reflecting limited numbers of teachers qualified at that time to teach these subjects. Only a small number of programmes required internships. The substantive areas of urban history and theory and public or urban economics appear discretionary across schools.

The core requirements identified in this way were judged to be similar to those offered in 1993-94 when 20 schools were surveyed (Friedman, 1996). There were a few changes, however. Methods courses were more popular, and had developed to reflect new techniques. There was more emphasis on courses dealing with planning as a practice and profession, covering such themes as "*how planners think about the future, coping with politics and conflict, and planning ethics*".

There was also more focus on processes for "*making plans*" (p177), and on the role of "*the planner*". This was interpreted as signalling "*movement away from a primarily social science-based education that focuses on theories and concepts to a more explicitly practice-oriented education*", a movement attributed to explicit guidelines from the Planning Accreditation Board (p.178).

In considering how the core curriculum might be revised from time to time, Edwards and Bates identified the influence of the Planning Accreditation Board and multiple constituencies in planning (including academic disciplines, diverse practising planners, and external interests) as barriers to change. They also highlight the need to actually define planning and the challenges posed for setting curricula by the broad scope it purports to cover. They

"*could not come to a consensus about how to divvy up issues in planning – does a community development specialist not need to understand natural systems? Can a transportation planner safely ignore public participation methods*?" (p.179)

One response they suggest is that students should leave courses with "*plan-making experience as 'plans' are central to 'planning'*". It might be concluded from this survey, then, that this pragmatic and instrumental training of planners will continue to dominate academic programmes, in North America at least, despite the scholastic and research imperatives of academic departments.

What the Institutes Say

In the meantime, the APA continues to spell out expectation of wide-ranging skills as the basis of planning[7]:

- Knowledge of urban spatial structure or physical design and the way in which cities work.
- Ability to analyze demographic information to discern trends in population, employment, and health.
- Knowledge of plan-making and project evaluation.
- Mastery of techniques for involving a wide range of people in making decisions.
- Understanding of local, state, and federal government programs and processes.
- Understanding of the social and environmental impact of planning decisions on communities.
- Ability to work with the public and articulate planning issues to a wide variety of audiences.
- Ability to function as a mediator or facilitator when community interests conflict.
- Understanding of the legal foundation for land use regulation.
- Understanding of the interaction among the economy, transportation, health and human services, and land-use regulation.
- Ability to solve problems using a balance of technical competence, creativity, and hard-headed pragmatism.
- Ability to envision alternatives to the physical and social environments in which we live.
- Mastery of geographic information systems (GIS) and office (presentation, spreadsheet, etc.) software.

The RTPI is even more ambitious, although places greater focus on acquiring qualities than knowledge. It suggests that its skill requirements, however, develop as planning careers progress[8]:

Creative vision
- Producing creative and innovative strategies and solutions.
- Making lateral connections.
- Aesthetic and design awareness and critique.

Project management
- Defining objectives.
- Delivering- making it happen given constraints.
- Resource management, including financial and personnel management and use of information technology.
- Process management and evaluation.

Problem solving
- Problem definition.
- Data-collection, investigation and research.
- Quantitative and qualitative analysis and appraisal.
- Weighing evidence and evaluation of alternative solutions.
- Decision making.

Leadership
- Inspiring and motivating others at all levels.
- Leading by example – displaying enthusiasm, tenacity, flexibility and self-motivation.
- Embracing and leading through change.
- People and organisational management.

Coaching and mentoring.
- Collaborative and multidisciplinary working

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7   https://www.planning.org/onthejob/skills.htm
8   http://www.rtpi.org.uk/education-and-careers/cpd-for-rtpi-members/cpd-requirements/skills-and-competencies-for-planners/

- Partnership working - engaging with all professionals employed in the creation of sustainable communities and the built environment.
- Creating an environment where information is shared.
- Effective networking.

Communication
- Written, oral, graphic and multi-media communication.
- Listening actively.
- Using appropriate communication methods tailored to the audience.
- Managing misinformation.
- Internal communication and information sharing.
- Community involvement and facilitation.

Stakeholder management & conflict resolution
- Identifying stakeholders and customers, and awareness of how these groups can change.
- Relationship building.
- Negotiation, mediation and advocacy.
- Understanding the dynamics of conflict and how to achieve mutual agreement.
- Demonstrating the ethics of good practice, including respect, tolerance, confidentiality and honesty.

The institutes call for a wide range of personal skills and procedural knowledge they see as defining planning practice ahead of substantive knowledge or expertise in the issues planning seeks to deal with. The question must be how realistic this expectation of individual planners is, especially given their various motives for entering the profession, and variations in personal capacity and the necessary inter-personal skills implied by this approach.

University Programmes

There is long-standing discussion in the literature about the nature and role of the academic planning culture itself. In fact, the institutes maintain a close relationship with academia, evident in membership, office holders, and conference participation. Given the scope of planning and non-planning knowledge required by the NZPI (among others) the issue is how well this relationship is imparted through university education, and how effectively. Among other things, the answers will reflect the university setting and the academic faculties in which a planning degree is offered.

Research, Teaching, and Knowledge

There is growing emphasis in university league tables and in academic career progression on the volume of refereed research publication and research-informed teaching, potentially ahead of teaching skills and scholarship. This is a conservative development in terms of planning degrees given the capacity of the publication system to slowing down the dissemination of advances in the knowledge base and, with the proliferation of publications, distinguishing "deep knowledge" from commentary, information, and noise.

Generating refereed publications entails: submitting a manuscript to a target journal (often with a submission fee); circulation of the manuscript for assessment by two or more referees; rejection or acceptance, possibly subject to amendment. Publication may take place a year or more following submission[9], and is likely to be based on research that is even more dated.

Emphasis on refereed publication is reflected in the proliferation of journals. Wikipedia lists 48 refereed planning journals, excluding the professional journals of planning institutes. This raises

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[9]   The move by some journals to publish on-line prior to printed publication should have improved the timeliness of distribution among subscribers.

issues over the consistency and quality of knowledge disseminated. Additional noise is introduced by authoritatively named journals that canvass for articles, usually from authors culled from other publications, with minimal screening by referees.

The growth of "grey literature", the dissemination mainly through the web of un-refereed manuscripts introduces further noise. While useful for authors aiming to get research results and think pieces into circulation, it is difficult to assess their individual validity.

Paradoxically, the requirement for research-based teaching can also narrow the scope of material offered in a paper because it is likely to be tied to the research interests and capacity of the teacher. This can also lead to advocacy in courses and reduce student exposure to the critical thinking of more broadly based scholarship.

As it is, the body of knowledge applied in any one programme is inevitably conditioned by the experience and background of its teachers, including their own planning qualifications. This is significant in New Zealand given the tendency to recruit permanent and temporary staff from the United States, the United Kingdom, and South Africa, each with different institutional experience and expectations of planning. Any tendency towards personal bias among lecturers is not necessarily disadvantageous provided that there is sufficient diversity in the teaching body and that the programme imparts critical skills on the students.

Whether or not these conditions are met in courses is, however, critical to the quality of undergraduate and graduate learning. There is a real risk otherwise that graduates will lack the capacity to discriminate with respect to the quality of the substantive knowledge they may choose to act on in their planning careers.

Planning Schools in New Zealand

Individual programmes are also influenced by, or reflect, the academic colleges or departments in which they are located. These affiliations are set out for New Zealand and Australia in Table 3.

Planning programmes have their origins in the social sciences, particularly geography. Many continue to draw geography papers into the planning schedule. Geography, and therefore planning, has been located predominantly in Arts, Humanities, and Social Science faculties. Historically, planning emphasised the location drivers and attributes of different localities, with an analytical grounding in spatial analysis. In New Zealand, geography remains the host discipline for the planning degrees in Massey, Waikato, and Otago universities.

There is greater diversity in planning's affiliation in Australian universities. Of the 24 accredited programmes identified, four are affiliated with geography (Macquarie, Queensland, Curtin, and Tasmania). Others fall into broader faculty groupings of social sciences and the arts (New England, Western Sydney, Sunshine Coast, La Trobe, and RMIT). The balance is divided between schools with a built environment focus or those with a focus on the natural sciences and the environment.

Table 3: Disciplinary Affiliations, Accredited Planning Degrees,
New Zealand and Australia 2016

University	Faculty	Bachelors Degrees in:	Masters Degrees in:
New Zealand"			
University of Auckland	National Institute of Creative Arts & Industries	Urban Planning	Planning
University of Auckland	National Institute of Creative Arts & Industries		Urban Planning
Lincoln University	Faculty of Environment, Society & Design	Environmental Policy & Planning	Planning
Lincoln University	Faculty of Environment, Society & Design	Environmental Management & Planning	
Massey University	School of Humanities, Dept Geography	Resource & Environmental Planning	Resource & Environmental Planning
University of Otago	Division of Humanities, Dept Geography		Planning
Waikato University	Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, Dept Geography, Tourism & Environmental Planning	Environmental Planning	
Australia:			
University of New South Wales	Faculty of the Built Environment	City Planning	Urban & Regional Planning
University of Sydney	Architecture, Design & Planning		Urbanism
University of Technology, Sydney	School of the Built Environment, Design, Architecture and Building		Planning
Macquarie University	Dept. Geography & Planning	Planning	Planning
University of New England	School of Behavioural, Cognitive and Social Science	Urban & Regional Planning	Urban & Regional Planning
Western Sydney University	School of Social Sciences	Planning	Urban Management & Planning / Planning Accreditation
Southern Cross University	School of Environment, Science & Engineering	Urban & Regional Planning	
University of Queensland	School of Geography, Planning & Environmental Management	Regional & Town Planning	Urban & Regional Planning
Griffith University	School of Environmental Planning	Urban & Environmental Planning /Bachelor of Science /Bachelor of Law	Urban & Environmental Planning
Queensland University of Technology	School of Urban Development	Urban Development (Urban and Regional Planning	
James Cook University	School of Earth & Environmental Sciences, Faculty of Science of Engineering	Bachelor of Planning	Masters of Tropical Urban & Regional Planning
University of Sunshine Coast	Faculty Arts & Social Sciences	Regional & Urban Planning	Regional & Urban Planning
Bond University	Faculty of Society & Design	Sustainable Environments & Planning	Sustainable Environments & Planning
University of Adelaide	School of Architecture & Built Environment		Planning / Planning (Urban Design)
University of South Australia	School of Natural & Built Environment	Urban & Regional Planning	Urban & Regional Planning
University of Tasmania	School of Geography & Environmental Studies		Environmental Planning
La Trobe University	College of Arts, Social Sciences & Commerce	Urban, Rural & Environmental Planning	Community Planning & Development (Urban & Rural Planning Stream)
RMIT University	School of Global, Urban and Social Studies	Urban & Regional Planning	Urban Planning & Environment
University of Melbourne	Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning		Urban Planning / Urban Design
Deakin University	School of Architecture & Built Environment	Planning	Planning (Professional)
Curtin University	Department of Planning & Geography, School of the Built Environment	Bachelor of Arts (Urban & Regional Planning)	Urban and Regional Planning
University of Western Australia	School of Earth & Environment	Science (Urban Planning)	Masters (Urban & Regional Planning)
Edith Cowan University	Centre for Planning, Faculty of Business & Law	Planning	
University of Canberra	Urban & Regional Planning	Urban & Regional Planning	Urban & Regional Planning

Source: NZPI and AIP Websites; Programme Websites, accessed May 2016

University Courses

While planning in New Zealand (and elsewhere) has moved from its geography base, it remains more rooted in the wider social sciences, although with more "non-spatial" knowledge brought to bear, particularly with respect to culture, communities, society, and their governance. This is evident in the suite of papers offered in New Zealand accredited planning degrees (Table 3). For present

purposes only Bachelors programmes are displayed. All four universities offer accredited masters degrees, as does Otago (through its Geography Department).

All programmes responded during the 1990s to the new directions set by the Resource Management Act (1991) by incorporating environmentally-oriented introductory papers. Degree name changes were implemented to reflect the new legislation. Ancillary papers were introduced, where available, for the relevant physical sciences at an introductory level, often by way of electives outside the core compulsory planning papers. At the same time the general introductory papers of the physical sciences were couched increasingly in terms of environmental management and sustainability. In Table 3 the prefix to paper numbers denotes the discipline from which they derive.

As the scope of planning degrees has widened to encompass knowledge of the physical environment and a greater range of social science issues, alternative paths to a full qualification may be available, one emphasising the physical sciences and the other social sciences.

Previously, non-planning subjects such as economics or sociology were contained within the planning programme, taught by non-specialists or guests. Greater reliance on other departments today presumably provides superior basic knowledge of the relevant non-planning subject matter. (Accessing papers from other disciplines may also be a function of the limited resourcing of planning programmes, mainly because they attract relatively small numbers of students).

While offering a range across disciplines at an introductory level, progress through the Lincoln degree is likely to place more emphasis on the natural environment, while Waikato offers opportunities to supplement planning courses with learning in the cultural (particularly Maori) and political science spheres

The Massey course as depicted in Table 4 includes only the compulsory planning papers. However, this programme goes furthest in terms of requiring students to broaden their education into supplementary areas, requiring them to complete a Minor in a non-planning discipline; i.e., completing the majoring requirements that would qualify for a three-year degree in that discipline. In this way the Massey degree achieves true multi-disciplinary status, rather than simply providing generalist knowledge in planning-related subjects. Subjects eligible for inclusion include: Agriculture, Ecology, Economics, Geography, Management, Maori Studies, Property Management and Soil/Earth Science.

Auckland University has recently restructured its degree to emphasise urban matters, reflecting its location in Auckland and repositioning within the university within a new and eclectic faculty, which also includes dance, music, visual arts, and architecture. Its alignment with architecture provides a basis for reinforcing urban design and studio elements of the programme and provides grounds for a distinctive (in New Zealand) urban emphasis. It is not clear how far this focus extends at the moment, with the first year apparently based entirely on planning or urban related papers. Some degree of specialisation may be possible within the field of urban studies in subsequent years.

Table 4: New Zealand Accredited Planning Degrees, Course Outlines, 2016

University	Level	Paper	Level	Paper	Level	Paper	Level	Paper
Auckland National Institute of Creative Arts & Industries Bachelor of Urban Planning	101	Introduction to urban planning		Over the folowing three years:		Sustainable urban development		
	102	Urban planning economics				Housing issues		
	103	Introduction to visual literacy & research skills				Maori Urban planning		
	110	Urban Planning Studio One				Urban Design		
	105	Introduction to Urban Planning Law and				Visual & Spatial Literacy		
	111	Urban Planning Stdio 2				Urban Economics		
						Urban environmental issues		
						Urban Planning Law		
						One General Education Course		
Lincoln University Faculty of Environment, Society, and Design Bachelor of Environmental policy & Planning	COMM 113	Economies and Markets	ERST 201	Environmental Analysis	ERST 302	Environmental Policy	ERST698	Design or Research Essay
	LINC 101	Land, People and Economies	ERST 203	Environmental Monitoring and Resource Assessment	ERST 330	Risk and Resilience	ERST699	Research Placemenr
	LINC 102E	Research and Analytical Skills	ERST 205	Principles of Urban and Regional Planning	ERST 340	Environmental Planning		
	MAST 104	Te Tiriti O Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi)	LINC 201	Sustainable Futures	MAST 319	Te Kaitiakitaka (Māori Environmental Management)		
	SOCI 116	Society, Culture and Environment	SOCI 204	Research Methods	SOCI 314	Professional Practice		
	SOCI 117	Introduction to New Zealand Government and Public Policy			ERST 604	Advanced Urban, Regional and Resource Planning		
		One of:		One of:	ERST 621	Principles of Environmental Impact Assessment		
	ECOL 103	Ecology I: New Zealand Ecology and Conservation	ECOL 202	Biological Diversity	ERST 630	Environmental Policy and Planning		
	ENGN 106	Land Surfaces, Water and Structures	ECOL 203	Ecology and Behaviour	ERST 635	Group Case Study		
	PHSC 101	Chemistry IA	ECON 211	Land Economics	LWST 602	Advanced Resource Management and Planning Law		
	PHSC 107	Introduction to Earth and Ecological Sciences	ERST 202	Environmental Analysis with Geographic Information Systems				
	SOSC 106	Soil Science I	LASC 218	Landscape and Culture				
	VAPM 101	Introduction to Property	MAST 206	Whakatakoto Kaupapa (Māori Planning & Development)				
			PHSC 211	Land, Water and Atmosphere				
			SOCI 214	The Living City				
			SOSC 223	Geomorphology				
			WATR 201	Freshwater Resources				
			WATR 202	Water on Land: Quality and Quantity				
Massey University School of Humanities Bachelor of Resource & Environmental Planning Deoartment of Geography	132.101	Introduction to Professional Planning	132.212	Profesional Practice	132.304	Maori & Planning	132.403	Planning Project
	132.106	Introduction to GIS	132.213	Policy Analysis & Evaluation	132.305	Natural Tesource Policy & Planning	132.412	Professional Practice II
	132.111	Planning and the Environment	132.217	Planning Hazard Resilient Communities	132.311	Planning Theory	132.414	Urban plannin& Design
	132.112	Planning for Sustainable Development	132.218	Building Collaborative Communities	132.312	Environmental & Planning Law	132.415	Environmental Planning
		Elective (limited choice)	150.201	The Treaty of Waitangi in New Zealand Society	132.313	Advanced Planning Techniques	132.419	ProfessionalPractice Studio
		Elective (limited choice)		Minor Subject	132.314	Transport & Urban Planning		Minor Subject
		Minor Subject		Minor Subject		Minor Subject		Minor Subject
		Minor Subject		Elective Paper		Minor Subject		
University of Waikato Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences Department of Geography, Tourism & Environmental Planning Bachelor of Environmental Planning	ENVP106	Introduction to Environmental planning	ENVP206	Principles of Environmental planning	ENVP305	Maori Planning and Resource Management	ENVP403	Legal Principles and Processes for Planners
	TTWA	An Introduction to the Treaty of Waitangi	ENVP207	Spatial Analysis	ENVP306	Planimg in Aotearoa New Zealand	RNVP404	Strategic Spaial planning
		Plus Three from :	ENVP217	Environmental Ethics for Planners	ENVP308	Planning Methods & Environmental Sustainablity	ENVP405	Profesional Skills
	BIOL102	Biology of Organisms	GEOG219	Maori Lands and Communities	ENVP307	Planning forSustainability	ENVP410	Planning Theory
	ECON104	Business Economics & New Zealand Society					ENVP408	Plan Implementation and Consent Processing
	ECON110	Economics & Society						
	ENVS101	Environmental Science						
	ERTH103	Discovering Planet Earth						
	ERTH104	Earth & Ocean Environments						
	GEOG103	Resource & Environmental Sustainablity						
	POLS100	Playing politics: Conflict, Cooperation, and Choice						
	POLS105	People & policy						
	SOCP102	Intro to Social Policy						

These programme structures confirm a move from a degree directed at spatial analysis and land use regulation formed principally within an arts and social sciences environment, to subcategories of planning dealing more directly with either the natural physical or the built social environment. The potential pathways towards environmental or urban planning evident programmes indicate a welcome degree of specialisation which is brought about by broadening rather than narrowing the horizons of planning.

It may be that most degrees do not go far enough to enable planers to specialise in any particular area of environmental management or community development, with introductory papers at best contributing to an ability to interact with the relevant discipline. Only the Massey degree appears to expose students to alternative disciplines to a level that encourages reflection on the nature of planning based on in-depth appreciation of some of the non-planning issues it might impact on, or that provides for specialist skills and knowledge in related areas that it might draw on.

Overview

The current survey of secondary sources does not cover what is actually taught under each paper heading, which is considered by the Accreditation Panel. However, it does raise some questions. In some cases, the non-planning content of degrees is taught at too junior a level and offers little more than introductory material. Economics and urban economics do not appear to be widely taught, or offered in any depth, which may well explain an aversion to economic analysis and deficiencies in urban planning practice. While the Massey programme ensures a breadth of view, it is unlikely that v many planning students nationally are receiving exposure in depth to important academic disciplines other than planning.

Overall, however, the natural tension between development and environment suggests that the alternative pathways offered by a physical science and social science perspective is a healthy development, with planning as a discipline potentially bringing two broad areas of endeavour to bear on critical issues of physical development.

Rethinking Planning Accreditation

There is a possibility that we are asking too much of a planning education and planners as the "required knowledge base", covering the theory and practice of planning and the substantive issues of environmental and urban management, expand. At face value, the preceding discussions of the culture, knowledge base, and development issues suggest that urban planner should possess a formidable affray of capabilities, including:

- Knowledge of the substantive issues driving urban development, including demographics (particularly migration), culture, social organisation, and business investment;

- The capacity to measure and understand community and business preferences for location, amenities, and services;

- An awareness of context and particularly of any irreversible physical or cultural constraints to development;

- Understanding of the economics of the land market, which includes its relationship with the rural land market;

- The capacity to allocate efficiently scarce public resources for infrastructure development based on an understanding of the economics of infrastructure and major projects -- including the costs and benefits of different options for generation (e.g. electricity) or treatment (e.g., wastewater), distribution (e.g. potable water), and disposal (e.g., solid waste) -- and alternative charging regimes and their fiscal, economic, and social consequences;

- Understanding of investment in production and distribution, and the links between international, national and local components of the chain;

- Transport economics, including an understanding of the transport expectations and needs of businesses, households, and individuals, transport operating economics, and the capacity to interpret the output of transport models;

- Sufficient knowledge of the natural sciences to anticipate the effects of different activities on the biophysical environment and understand how they can be avoided or mitigated;

- Quantitative and discursive skills, the latter covering qualitative analysis and the capacity to develop and communicate independently reasoned arguments;

- The capacity to deal with future uncertainty without reliance on mechanistic forecasts;

- The capacity to identify and appraise regulatory options in response to clearly defined issues;

- The capacity to design policies that can be readily implemented, monitored, and enforced;

- The capacity to engage with communities and various interest groups as well as with the public at large, including the capacity to elicit and listen to diverse viewpoints as well as communicate policy options and, subsequently, choices;

- The capacity to negotiate or mediate over differences surrounding issue identification, the options to be considered, derivation of a preferred option, policy design, and implementation;

- The capacity to communicate all the above succinctly to different audiences – politicians, the judiciary, interested parties, and the public at large.

> *Alternatively, urban planning could be rethought altogether, opening it up to more participation by the necessary expertise while addressing proportionality and significance? In other words, we need to recognise the limits to planning, create an environment in which minor matters are dealt with in a straightforward administrative manner, and major issues dealt with primarily through an alternative dispute resolution framework drawing on the appropriate specialist experts in the substantive issues it confronts. This would allow greater freedoms to achieve societal ambitions and maintain environmental standards without relying on the inflexible regulatory framework that institutionalised planning has erected over the past 25 years.*

At an individual level, planners, through skills in analysis, critical thinking, communication, and negotiation, may provide the pathways through which well-informed dialogue helps to resolve difficult issues and contribute to efficient regulation, and equitable development. Whether this can happen, though, depends on understanding the need for robust knowledge in areas in which planners usually have only superficial information. It may be that providing the skills that can bring the necessary expertise together and find a way through issues will be what sustains planning.

The Core Capabilities

Ideally, planners would substitute depth in a distinctive set of core skills for breadth of ancillary knowledge. In effect, the academic ambition should be defined by more depth and quality, and less

breadth and quantity. Planning would be defined by the role planners play in managing issues and conflicts through to resolution and advancing projects rather than imposing their own values or knowledge of the substantive issues on the options. This is not to deny the importance of environmental issues, or to elevate the social or economic over the environmental: it is to recognise that there is occasionally but inevitably conflict among key values that needs to be resolved to allow urban society to progress.

These core skills could include, if not be limited to:

- Scene setting;
- Issue identification;
- Community engagement;
- Negotiation and mediation;
- Evaluation (including assessing the costs and benefits and fiscal impacts of policy options);
- Risk assessment;
- Reporting and communication.

In essence, the planner's role would be that of specialised administrators of urban policy development, drawing on contextual knowledge for scene setting and consultative skills, a capacity to think strategically about the future, and mediation and evaluation skills. Substantive matters would, however, be subject to direct input from requisite specialists.

The level of competence required of planners of the substantive issues should be sufficient that they can communicate effectively with specialists rather than displace them. The key to their success would lie in managing the flow of information required to reach a resolution and craft a policy (and regulations if required).

A set of skills of this nature should reduce the inevitability of a regulatory response to every issue that is too often the mark of a plan, and lead to better informed policies where they are required. The practising planner's role may be one of integrating knowledge, rather than generating or promoting any one branch of it, of testing the need for policy responses, and ensuring that they are well-founded and well-designed where need is proven. This implies both a shift in skill sets and cultural change, whereby planners are more open to testing policies than to imposing them.

> ***The call for emphasis on capabilities and skills to mediate and progress development in the face of conflict, rather than on "knowing the answers" suggests that planning qualifications are best offered at postgraduate level, so that candidates have a firm grounding in a related activity, or an extant degree in the arts, social science, or physical science prior to commencing their planning education.***

Over time this rearrangement would resolve issues around competence and the limited experience of entry-level planners. It may also reduce the body of accredited planners as such, at least in the current format, but it also recognises the growing multi-disciplinary foundation of urban policy which may currently be better reflected by the membership of the RMLA than the NZPI.

This is a proposal that could reflect and build on the role of planning commissioners (including those without a planning degree). Indeed, increasing the panel is one way of bringing about immediate improvements given commissioners' seniority and experience. It may still be necessary to ensure

that the weight of current case law does not weigh too heavily, which could limit opportunities for innovation and improvement both to practice and in the areas in which planning is most active.

Who does what, where?

It is difficult to redefine capabilities – and responsibilities – in isolation from changes proposed to the planning system as a whole. This section suggests several layers of planning and where they might lie in governance and administrative terms. Moving towards the arrangement proposed does, however, imply an overhaul of the planning-related statutes (see also Attachment 1).

At the highest level, regional **environmental** plans might be developed to reflect the areas which are not suited to development for environmental, heritage or conservation purposes (Figure 8). Such land might be consigned to national or regional parks, or retained in extensive commercial land uses[10]. Other areas might be identified in which settlement might be limited on the basis of physical capacity constraints or natural hazards (e.g., coastal inundation, flooding, instability).

Regional land use plans might be developed in consultation with a central government environmental agency engaging at the regional level with local councils, environmental specialists and interest groups, producers (e.g., farming, forestry)., Maori and community groups. Councils might participate jointly, acting along the lines of the former united councils.

Figure 8: Separating Regional Environmental and Local Urban Plans
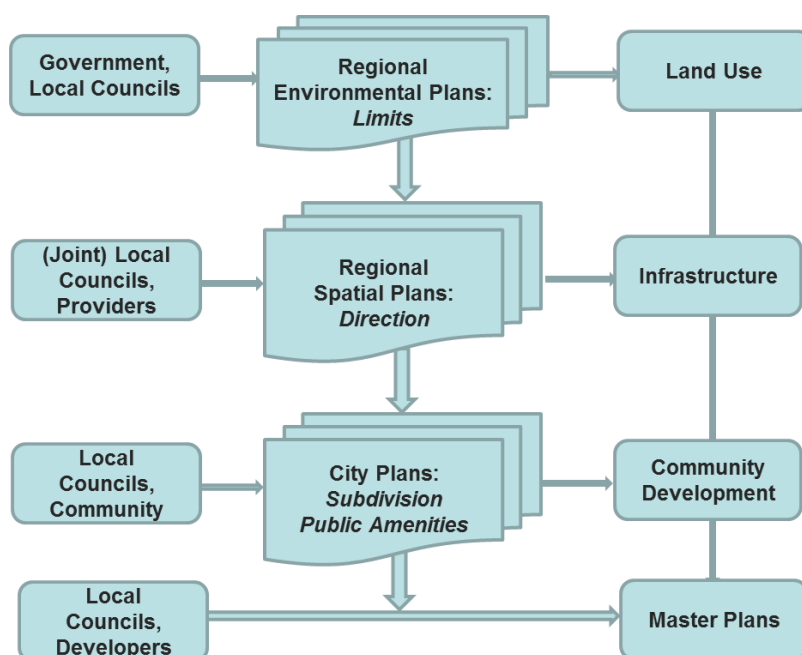
At the next level councils would work jointly with providers of infrastructure and representatives of the property sector to identify areas most suitable for development and settlement, preparing **spatial plans** based on their directional decisions. While these may not be binding or exclude other options, they would denote likely development corridors and inform the plans of infrastructure

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10   Minimum levels of environmental stewardship could be laid down for such uses

providers, local councils, and developers. Their purposes would be to facilitate efficient settlement, including but not limited to city expansion.

The quality and character of settlements, suburbs, and communities generally could then be influenced by **district** or **city plans** dealing with such matters as reserves, walkways, cycle-ways, and road corridors, and facilities and amenities according to community preferences and council funding and priorities. Local plans may also vary national building standards to reflect local conditions.

Local plans should favour private or public sector master plans for large-scale development. They may be subject to negotiated infrastructure agreements covering technology and technical specifications, capacity, costs, and funding. Such developments could proceed as of right (at the developer's risk) in areas that are not excluded through the regional environmental plan and are consistent with the regional spatial plan.

Any significant **departures sought** from the higher order environmental and spatial plans may be resolved through a process of dispute resolution overseen by planning commissioners, initially. It is expected that such issues would only go to court on matters of law rather than on matters of substantive disagreement.

Administrative planning matters that deal with obvious issues of compliance (shading, building separation, height management) might be rolled into the building consent process drawing on a **national building code**. The **monitoring and enforcement** of compliance can be assigned to technical agencies in related fields such as building inspection, water, air quality, and soil monitoring, and pest management. Any additional training required would be pitched at the technical level, but would include the capacity to relate achieved outcomes to standards and to deal with processes in any detail only in the event of failure or potential failure.

Conclusion

Planning as a body of knowledge or as a set of practices has become static if not sterile. Planning education might be better teaching new ways to think about the future rather than spelling out how it should look. Planners need the skills to support communities to meet their economic and social objectives without impeding diversity, innovation, or investment, and without being subject to capture by particular interest groups. They need the capacity to, encourage the exploration and evaluation of informed measures if and when intervention is called for to limit environmental damage and to advance urban development, rather than relying on rote regulations.

Currently, planners are placing themselves in the centre of what happens in cities – preventing some things from happening, or taking credit for others, instead of recognising that whether playing in concert or as solo artists they are just one of many influences on how urban areas evolve. The role of urban planners needs to be reined in to enable people, communities, organisations, and institutions to exist and interact effectively within and around urban areas.

Rather than exercising priority over the other players on the basis of received wisdom, their role might best be one of setting the (wide) parameters within which urban development takes place and removing unjustified costs and impediments. Ideally, planners will be the mediators, interpreters, and communicators who have an understanding of the manifold drivers and occupiers of urban spaces and whose presence will maintain and encourage opportunities for

development shaped by community needs and preferences, supported by and drawing on the appropriate expertise.

8. Addressing the Impact of Planning

This section of the report draws on the preceding sections to address the questions about planning culture and capabilities set out in the terms of reference.

The Professional Culture of Planners

The culture of planners and planning organisations in New Zealand

Based largely on NZPI documentation, planners appear optimistic about the future of urban areas and confident in their capacity to improve the way settlements work, the quality of the urban environment, and the quality of life within it, and in their ability to promote environmental sustainability through plans. This in large part defines the culture of planning.

The specialised knowledge that characterises planning internationally focuses on role and procedure (planning practice). Theorising, as such, has been based on the nature of and rationale for planning as a social science, and the relationship between academic planning and professional practice.

Core knowledge outside theorising about planning focused in the past on geography and land use. This was tied up with understanding the location demands of different activities, and how these were manifest in different rates and forms of development. Prescription was directed towards avoiding conflict by providing capacity for the separation of land uses and for infrastructure services in urban areas.

As the urban environment has become increasingly complex and communities and institutions with an interest in plans more visible, planning has taken on new roles – currently the pursuit of "sustainability". The procedural base has become more complex while the substantive knowledge on which it draws has been extended by diverse disciplinary feeds. However, there is limited normative analysis to establish the processes through which planning prescriptions would give rise to desired outcomes in this dynamic environment, and how they might limit undesirable consequences. Instead, there appears to be a reliance on institutionalised consensus about regulating urban areas relying on long-established zoning methods.

The knowledge required to manage or plan urban matters today lifts the diversity and depth of knowledge and skills required from non-planning disciplines. While this might be expected to build on the integrative nature of planning, it has not greatly disrupted the status quo. Rather, dealing with complexity has tended to reinforce the adherence to authoritarian and arbitrary principles in plans as a means of countering uncertainty. That planners believe their procedures, principles and plans can create certainty, especially if they recruit other specialties to support them, reflects a culture characterised by misplaced confidence in itself and its long-established practice toolkit.

The key forces shaping the professional culture and planning organisations

In keeping with other professional cultures planning is collegial and strongly influenced by membership of and accreditation by a professional association, the New Zealand Planning Institute.

The NZPI and the planning schools are drivers of planning knowledge and culture, with the former setting the parameters within which that knowledge is delivered by the latter.

The NZPI is international in outlook, with a particularly strong affiliation with its Australian counterpart (which is also reflected in the trans-Tasman relationship among university planning schools). Joint conferences provide one means of comparing experience and reinforcing ideas pertaining to the transition of 20th century cities into the 21st century.

At the same time, there has been a reasonably steady stream of British and latterly South African planners into New Zealand. They generally come from different and even more authoritarian planning backgrounds. Their experience lies in the challenges associated with cities with different heritages, physical settings, urban dynamics, and challenges.

Planners generally follow a prescribed career path that may limit the capacity for new thinking and innovative practice:

- From secondary school to a planning school (a step often associated with green ideals, values, and expectations for planning);
- Through a university programme that emphasises procedure, practice (although not without information on the evolution of planning and planning theory), and basic knowledge in related subjects (the exception being Massey which seeks greater depth of knowledge outside planning with its second major ["Minor"] requirement);
- To a work environment within which early exposure to existing plans and pragmatism are likely discourage alternative thinking; and
- Subsequent mandatory participation in CPD activities prescribed by NZPI, including learning modules provided or promoted by the Institute.

While accreditation is recognised as denoting certain skills recognised as "planning", and promoted as a means of advancing careers in the "profession", the sanctions for non-performance are not as rigorous as in professions such as medicine and engineering, which require conformance with scientifically established standards. In addition, membership is not a prerequisite to practice, something reflected in the mix of backgrounds of planning commissioners.

Differences among work environments may lead to some variations within the planning culture, particularly through the experience they offer to new planners. It is significant that according to the 2014 NZPI Salary Survey, 52% of planners with less than five years' experience work in the private sector compared with just 38% of all planners. The inference is that the commercial workplace will have an increasing impact on planning culture.

A commercial environment may offer wider exposure to a variety of planning settings and regulatory options given the potential to work for private interests, either as developers or as resource users. However, a shift favouring the private over public and council employers also reflects the growing role of consultancies in council planning.

Consequently, consultant planners, particularly those with limited experience in other fields, will tend to endorse and identify with the planning culture and values of client councils. One potentially perverse result of this is that the plans of different councils using the same consultants may lean on similar structures and similar rules and regulations, despite differences in settings.

Another is that planners working in the private and public sectors tend to converge on the bigger issues regardless of differences over the detail of individual plan provisions. Hence, planners acting for the private sector are more likely to advance variations to plans based on exceptions or differences in detail of interpretation than to attack the principles on which a plan is based. Hence, at the end of a hearing dealing with a local issue of city form, for example, adherence to the city containment paradigm will prevail almost regardless of any the evidence offered.

The Independent Hearings Panel to the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan may prove an exception judging by its Guidance Notes. Even here, though, a departure from the city containment paradigm in the interests of affordable housing or enhanced long-term employment opportunities may be difficult to achieve without turning over the Auckland Regional Policy Statement. In any case, discretion for the adoption of the Panel's recommendations lies with the Council (acting under considerable time constraints). Auckland Council is unlikely to welcome an independent view that highlights the shortcomings of the rationale underlying its preferred plan, even though the plan has already been undermined by central Government edict with respect to housing supply.

Herein lies another feature of the planning culture, its rigidity; not only in how participants view urbanisation but also in the institutional framework erected to preserve it. At almost every turn, any attempt to modify the RMA has been dealt with as an issue of process or omission, rather than one of suitability for purpose or integrity of its management and application.

Bypassing the RMA altogether through the identification of Special Housing Areas, changing the rules to suit Auckland City through the special unitary plan process, and producing a Proposed National Policy Statement on Urban Development Capacity can be seen as consequences of planning failure. The consequent ad hoc "plan remediation" by-passing the RMA or fundamentally challenging the logic of plans prepared under it reflects an institutional rigidity that deflects the key question:

Does the RMA provide an appropriate statutory framework for urban planning today?

As an aside, it is worrying that these central government interventions are so short-sighted, perhaps as a result of the growing urgency of the issue: they say little about the complementary policy measures required for balanced community development, including the location of employment, appropriate funding mechanisms, or the infrastructure required for significant expansion of housing within or outside city barriers and how it might be funded. While they demonstrate the failure of the RMA as an instrument for managing (or allowing) urban development, these interventions do not advance any concept of integrated or flexible planning that might correct that failure.

Ad hoc and partial measures along these lines suggest a commitment deep within government to preserve not just the existing planning statute but also the values and practices that have grown up around it. One implication is that the Ministry for the Environment may be an impediment to change in urban planning practice in New Zealand. Indeed, its main foray into urban matters has amounted to little more than issuing urban design guidelines.

The bigger institutional picture is one of multiple organisations with a vested interest in the current planning regime. These include: the advisory sector (including planners and non-planners); property owners, developers, and infrastructure providers, both as individual entities and collectively through

their various associations; the legal profession and judiciary; a variety of government departments and agencies; and the community at large.

While their interests may vary slightly, a prevailing preference for incremental change in areas that directly affect individual interests means there has been little if any traction evident with respect to fundamental statutory or institutional changes which might alter the status of the planning profession or its central position in regulating land use and development.

Friction between planners and other professions

There is no obvious friction among the various professions active in the planning field. Indeed, alignment is probably a better term to use as interests and views converge among players whose fortune is determined largely by agent/client-principal relationships, whether that is between councils or developers and their legal and specialist advisers.

The legal and planning professions play an important role in commissioning or recommending expert input from other specialists, maintaining mutually beneficial commitments to existing processes.

The opportunity for the emergence of an alternative approach and views may have occurred with the establishment of the RMLA, an association of interested rather than accredited parties. The RMAL has a strong focus on legal matters associated with the RMA. However, by its open nature, the RMLA also encompasses non-planning experts in the social and physical sciences. For some time, it was focused more on the natural than built environment.

In terms of the substantive rather than legal or procedural elements of its papers and deliberations there is little evidence today of alternative thinking emanating from the RMLA

An alternative approach may be incipient in other quasi-professional bodies, which bring their diverse but relevant disciplinary expertise to bear on planning matters and seek knowledge of planning as a means of doing so. Those discussed in this paper are the New Zealand Association for Impact Assessment and the Environmental Institute of Australia and New Zealand, with membership based on qualification in the social and natural sciences in the first instance.

The Practice of Planning

The role of planners in the urban planning system

After a period of marginalisation in the late 1980s – the main symbol of modernism and the Keynesian consensus in New Zealand, the Ministry of Works and Development, having been dissolved in 1988, together with its Town and Country Planning Unit – the RMA 1991 gave local planners a new and elevated role in development decision-making. This has been a role in which principles of sustainability have been espoused uncritically, providing what amounts to a moral (rather than scientific) justification for regulations that reined in or constrained development as a means of environmental management. In practice these methods were little different in substance than those of the defunct Town and Country Planning Act.

With the accompanying growth of managerialism in local government, and the increased transparency, reporting, and accountability of councils instigated by the Local Government Amendment Act 1996 and then the rewriting of the entire Local Government Act (2002), the role of

generic planning (strategic, long-term, corporate or financial) has been elevated in local government, giving professional planners an even greater presence in policy making.

The capacity for the planning profession to continue – or resurrect – business as usual with the enactment of the RMA was in part a reflection of the transition arrangements. Councils were given a significant time period to shift to new plans prepared under the RMA. They were able to retain in the meantime their operative plans under the former Town and Country Planning Act, and then modify them "to fit" the RMA.

Among other things, this left the existing Town and Country Planning culture in place, and enabled planners to transition with little disruption to practice between regimes. Case law was carried over and quickly the regulatory practices under the former act became central to the planners' new toolkit. Effects, it appears, can be best managed by zones that exclude the potential for conflict or minimise the risk of negative externalities by separating activities rather than necessarily demanding or encouraging better standards of environmental performance.

For example, the "foundation documents" of the new Auckland Council, including the report of the Royal Commission on Auckland Governance, effectively endorsed the Regional Policy Statement commitment to a Metropolitan Urban Limit (MUL). This was despite the fact that the growth concept behind the RPS prescription was a key source of the conflict among the region's councils (particularly between local authorities and the regional council) that ultimately led to their consolidation. The Auckland Plan prepared by the new council and the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan through which it is to be implemented have simply adopted and reinforced the city containment paradigm favoured by the Auckland Regional Council planners.

Subsequently, the issues of housing supply, the ability to increase urban capacity inside and outside the revised urban limits, the assumption that the release of land should be scheduled through the plan, the pressure to ration and intensify the occupation of urban land, and the service and funding problems this raises have become the most contested and contentious issues in the city at large, let alone within the planning community. [11]

> *It appears that planners have sustained a central role in local planning so that their favoured urban development paradigm prevails and is defended even where local opposition is strong and unintended negative effects are evident.*

Future challenges facing the planning profession

Urban planning will face increasing challenges if only because of the growing complexity of cities and the increasing expectations of and demands made by many groups on the public sector generally.

Complexity is the result of a wide range of currents in increasingly urbanised societies. These include more transparent public life; increased international influences; greater diversity as a result of increased national and international household and personal mobility; greater wealth and discretionary income among many groups; higher levels of education and the capacity of citizens to engage in public affairs through a multiplicity of channels; higher expectations of public services – education, health, recreation; increasing disparity among groups within urban communities, marked

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[11]

by increased cultural and material differentiation between different parts of the city; and a greater range of community and individual values, behaviours, and interests.

Over and above these broadly observable movements, volatility results from "game changing" events which are rarely anticipated and, if so, for no more than a few years ahead.

Examples include the oil embargoes and price hikes of the 1970s that marked the end of the Keynesian consensus; the neoliberal shift in western governments in the 1980s; massive strides made by integrated circuit-based technology – communications and information in particular -- in the 1990s and consequently the penetration of households and businesses by the computing power of PCs and linked networks; the thawing of Sino-American relations after 1972 and the emergence of China as an economic power displacing manufacturing and disrupting industrial cities throughout the world in the 1990s; Perestroika in the 1980s, the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, and the dissolution of the Russian Empire in the 1990s; the expansion of terrorism as a driver of foreign policies and international relations in the 2000s and beyond; the global financial crisis of 2007; the current threat by expanding marginalised groups within democracies to overthrow – or at least seriously undermine confidence in -- two party consensus, reacting against the status quo of four decades of middle-way politics; and now, perhaps, we face a decade of international fragmentation, nationalism, and even autarky in the shadow of Brexit.

Most such movements have not been predicted; yet individually and creatively they have led to a more open but less certain society today, one that is subject to volatility that does not necessarily come from within, and a society in which a wide range of values might be held at any one time, values that can potentially change in short order. And now, as democracy drives a move to isolate parts of the United Kingdom, even the established progressive path of lowering impediments to the movement of capital, people, goods, and services might take a U-turn.

All or any of these sorts of drivers of change in the international status quo have the capacity to alter the conditions of growth and decline in cities and their suburbs. None are amenable to either prediction or control by the planners who assume responsibility for managing urban evolution.

> *Volatility can rapidly overturn the assumptions on which plans are based. This is inconsistent with the confident approach with which planners draft, implement and defend plans. Complexity and volatility call for a less intrusive regulatory approach except where real threats to the environment, to property values, or to community well-being can be demonstrated. More than that, there needs to be a move from the "one size fits all" plans institutionalised in New Zealand (and elsewhere).*

Current deficiencies in skills and workforce capability in New Zealand planning

While the broadening of the information required of planners is reflected in the NZPI prescriptions of requisite knowledge and the mix of planning courses planners are exposed to, this is essentially "received wisdom", all too easily amounting to a basic rather than in-depth knowledge of other disciplines. The presumption that this is sufficient to generate authoritative evidence to support planning policies (like the presumption that costs and benefits can be reduced to a two column table of bullet points, for example) is a major deficiency in the skills required to prepare a plan that might facilitate or at least not unduly impede desirable development.

The inter-disciplinary knowledge offered by planning courses should be sufficient that planners can recognise the need for expert input and perhaps provide informed evaluation of its implications. Even, the capacity to evaluate and mediate, though, is not a substitute for the expert input.

An alternative may be to seek potential planners who have qualifications in a requisite discipline – economics, sociology, ecology, soil science, and so forth -- and promote post-graduate training in planning procedures and principles among them.

One deficiency in planning appears to be the failure to adopt tools for addressing the future in a strategic rather than deterministic manner. Planning practice tends to assume a greater knowledge of the future and therefore a greater capacity to control it than justified by past performance.

Among other things, this reflects: (1) a reluctance to anticipate non-linear change, quite possibly rooted in the methods papers to which planners are exposed; (2) assuming demographic shifts account for changes in collective behaviour, rather reflecting on the possibility of new behaviours that cross age cohorts, ethnicities, and cultures; and (3) a perception that to become immersed in the future economic or fiscal consequences of a particular development or regulation is inimical to the higher moral calling of planning for preservation (of current conditions) and protection (of established interests).

A reluctance to explore future options and outcomes suggests a further deficiency in the planners' toolkit, the inability to perform or appraise economic analysis, although this is a key requirement of policy evaluation. While economic analysis does not necessarily provide solutions to environmental or urban development planning problems, it provides a disciplined and meaningful basis for comparing the alternatives, particularly relevant in a practice which is preoccupied with the future. Formal cost-benefit analysis should be mandatory for any regulations that entail large public or private expenditures, may significantly alter or constrain markets, or carry significant risk of failure.

Financial and fiscal analyses should also be part of the evaluation toolkit, a claim that requires an understanding of their roles. Financial analysis should identify the impacts on private investment from implementing a particular charging regime or changing market conditions to give effect to a policy. (In the event, it can only be partial or indicative as the impact on individual firms will depend on their financial structure and circumstances). Fiscal analysis assesses the impact of a policy, plan provision, or regulation on the income and expenditure of the council to determine whether or not it is financially or politically sustainable.

Again, it is not necessary for planners to be able to undertake such analyses, but it is important that they require them to be done and understand what the results mean for policy development.

Finally, once the information justifying a policy, or favouring one policy over others, is assembled, there is a requirement for risk assessment to be carried out. Too often this has been handled simply by applying high or low estimates (e.g. +/-10%) of demand on outcomes, rather than through systematic and informed appraisal of the causal nexus between a regulatory provision and an

expected outcome, and the risks attendant on (1) whether or not the necessary conditions will exist to proffer a high chance of success; and (2) the consequences of getting it wrong.[12]

The skills and workforce capability necessary for a high-performing planning regime

Beyond an enhanced awareness of the limits to planning and consequently a more open approach to evaluating a range of future possibilities for city development, other qualities that might be looked for in planners include:

- **Context-sensitive policy identification**: In the area of specialist knowledge – land use - an awareness of the full range of policy responses available including new or innovative options, the capacity to recognise whether or not they are germane to a particular issue and location, and to take a balanced approach to selecting those for evaluation;
- **Technical project management:** A capacity to mobilise and manage rigorous and open policy evaluation, including marshalling the relevant specialists for technical and evaluation input;
- **Communication**: the capacity to organise and communicate diverse technical information to non-technical audiences as well as to brief and negotiate with technical specialists;
- **Consultation:** the capacity to engage with diverse community groups and individual entities, to present issues and discuss options, and to elicit and consider their various positions, views, and expectations with the capacity to respond in a meaningful manner to them;
- **Critical capacity:** The ability to be open-minded, on the one hand, and to undertake or manage critical analysis (in a technical sense) on the other;
- **Dispute resolution skills**: Skills that contribute to dispute resolution, including, listening, mediating, and negotiating;
- **A future orientation** focused on prospects and possibilities rather than predictions, and a capacity to explore options using the appropriate specialists;
- **Evaluation skills**, including an appreciation of economic, financial, and fiscal analyses, and the capacity to identify where each is relevant and required; an understanding of survey weaknesses and shortcomings; and the capacity to develop frameworks for authoritative policy evaluation.

Indicators of planning skills and capability

The indicators of successful planning might include managerial performance standards: e.g., cost and speed of performance (e.g., consent processing times), which are the basis of performance comparisons today; the ease and quality of communicating the results of policy analysis; the level of support for (or lack of opposition to) plans; the number of objections and appeals to particular provisions; and the number of exceptions generated (private plan changes, reliance on resource consents).

Beyond those, however, there is a need for a focus on achieving outcomes rather than simply the capacity to adhere to process. This raises a new set of evaluation techniques which need to be anticipated at the time of plan preparation, imposing greater rigour on the process of plan making and subsequent monitoring and evaluation.

Outcome measures need not (perhaps should not) be the responsibility of those who prepare plans. The requirements include:

- Establishing in observable terms the expected outcome of the policy;

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12   For example, plan provisions promoting central city redevelopment in places like Christchurch and Auckland needs to be appraised against the regret arising from the prospect of extreme natural events including occasional coastal inundation or flooding (or earth quakes)

- Identifying the plan outputs that are expected to contribute to these outputs;
- Conducting a programme of monitoring outputs.

In short, the evaluation of planning skills and capability should shift from the current emphasis on expeditious inputs (plans delivered, consents processed) to monitoring outputs and their timeliness (changes brought about through plans) and outcomes (movement towards plan objectives).

Priority areas for reform

The prognosis in this paper suggests several areas for reform. However, two areas need emphasis:

> ***First, the division between environmental and urban planning needs to be made much clearer, to the benefit of both development and sustainability.***
>
> ***Second, reform has to be thorough to be far-reaching. This means addressing the statuary, professional, knowledge, and intuitional settings.***

On the Statutory Setting:

The following consequential proposals are elaborated in Attachment 1:

- A base-line review of the future of the RMA, ideally confining it to a clearly defined environmental mandate that can be enacted at the regional level according to national standards and local conditions;
- The management of urban development (and development generally) should be more clearly dealt with in the Local Government Act (or a new statute) and oriented towards facilitating development. Three elements are recognised: the need for regional level, inter-council spatial planning; the need for local district or city plans dealing with the environments within which people live and work; and where substantial investment is required, master plans.
- The control of local design standards to the extent they are required (e.g., to preserve view shafts, protect heritage features, and achieve yard and sunshine controls) could be incorporated through a national building code into the Building Act and associated consent process;
- Specific environmental protection and monitoring matters may be shifted to specialist technical monitoring and enforcement agencies.

On the Professional Setting

Although one of the main contributors to the rigidity of planning may be the central and conservative role of the NZPI, the best way of achieving the necessary changes may be to recruit the Institute and the RMLA to participate in reviewing the role of professional association within planning. The exercise would be one of defining – and perhaps limiting – the scope of planning, while identifying the skills required to support policy in a volatile and complex environment. This would extend to reviewing the relevance of the current content of planning degrees and accreditation and determining the process and evaluation skills planners that need extending.

On the Knowledge Setting:

A shift towards graduate rather than undergraduate degrees, building on specialist knowledge in non-planning first degrees, is recommended.

There may be some value in developing through undergraduate education in an "intermediate profession", that of environmental management. This would build upon the environmental and physical sciences. It would provide the grounds for more active involvement in conservation and advancing and managing development in a manner which is sympathetic with but not unnecessarily pre-empted by environmental values and which does not contaminate planning or seek to achieve conservative ends by intervening unnecessarily in urban processes.

The university departments might be included in the review of professional and knowledge settings, with a view to shifting the professional planning programme to post-graduate level, with an increased focus on the additional process management, dispute resolution, and evaluation skills described above.

On the Institutional Setting

The role of the Ministry for the Environment should be reviewed.

This might consider a division of responsibilities to migrate environmental management skills to the Department of Conservation, thereby focusing and reinforcing the government's own environmental management and conservation responsibilities.

Regulatory responsibility for developing and applying appropriate environmental land and resource use standards might be assigned to a scientifically focused central agency (most likely a restructured Environmental Protection Authority) which could operate through regional offices.

The balance of the MfE could merge into a new small Urban Affairs department or a division of the Department of Internal Affairs, combined in either case with DIA local government responsibilities.

> *Such a reorganisation would separate prime responsibility for environmental stewardship from environmental advocacy and conservation, on the one hand, and a responsibility to facilitate efficient and equitable urban development, on the other. It would make any conflicts between the two roles more transparent and so open to meaningful mediation.*

Advocacy for conservation and the environment will remain important functions. In part, this will be reinforced by aligning conservation interests currently housed in the MfE within the Ministry of Conservation and removing all RMA related functions from that agency. The independent Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the environment should also be retained as an autonomous source of expertise and advocacy for key environmental matters.

The major agency issues to be addressed are those associated with the employment of planners, particularly the councils and the consultancies. The latter are covered in any review of the role of the NZPI. The former are a greater challenge, particularly as the LGNZ (like the NZPI) naturally acts to protect the interests of its members and in doings so promotes incremental changes in practice as a means of protecting the status quo.

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Attachment One: Resource Management for the 21st Century

Introduction

One of the conclusions of this report is that current practice cannot be attributed simply to training, or to culture, or even to a combination of the two. Rather, it is enmeshed in a much wider institutional framework. At the heart of this framework sit the NZPI and the Ministry for the Environment and, at one step removed, the Environment Court, the RMLA, the universities, the councils, and the major consultancies. The roles and behaviours of all these parties have been shaped by and helped modify the RMA. Surrounding them is a host of other government, business, commercial, voluntary, and community agencies, each with a vested interest in the RMA.

The grounding, then, for the current planning system and the institutional milieu that supports it is the planning statute. For the urban planning system to be reformed the Resource Management Act must also be rewritten.

It is revealing just how far that Act has been modified over the past 25 years, all such modifications ultimately intended to preserve its purpose but all in many respects watering it down. Cumulatively those adjustments have seen the length of the statute grow by over 160%. And each set of amendments makes it more complex and convoluted; requiring stakeholders to commit additional resources to living with it, while the planners' role becomes defined in terms of stewardship of the Act and their role in defending and applying it rather than acting as stewards of the natural environment or managers of urban development.

This attachment sketches a new approach to resource management that would build on the separation of environmental management from urban development. The aim is not to free one from the other, but to set well founded limits to development and then ensure that sensible development can proceed without undue cost and impediment from an over-complicated and ambiguous piece of legislation administered by a profession committed to using it to justify a debatable model of urban development (the compact city) using long-standing (and clumsy) regulatory tools.

What to do about it?

The proposal to separate environmental stewardship from responsibility for development requires first a new act that unambiguously focuses on protecting what is important in our natural environment. At the same time, the Local Government Act can be streamlined as a better vehicle to support development in the interests of local communities and to support progress towards national development objectives through the way in which New Zealand cities are allowed to evolve.

From Dictating Uses to Managing the Environment

The RMA was a bold replacement for the 1977 Town and Country Planning Act which relied on often-dated lists of what land uses would and would not be allowed in different zones.

It required councils and resource users to focus on managing the *environmental effects* of activities *in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being and for their health and safety.* It set out broad approaches and listed

environmental attributes to be considered by councils preparing resource management plans or hearing applications for change to those plans, or for consents under them.

A shift from regulation based on a long-standing town planning tradition to regulations informed by environmental values, natural science, and the needs and ambitions of communities required significant changes in institutionalised practices. They were not forthcoming.

The planning community simply adopted the zoning of land use from the Town and Country Planning Act as the favoured means of avoiding, mitigating, or remedying environmental effects. The potential for more measured development in sensitive areas or for new approaches to environmental management yielded to the old practice of writing rules about what might be done (more importantly, what might not be done), and where. At the same time new provisions for community participation fostered obstruction by partisan interests and promoted NIMBYism, increasing reliance on judicial decisions without necessarily delivering environmental gains.

While the intent of the RMA was to protect the natural environment, its scope in practice and subsequently content extended to include the built environment. Its definition of amenity values to be protected is all-encompassing and open to wide interpretation (and debate): "*those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes*.

The scope of natural and physical resources is unlimited, covering *land, water, air, soil, minerals, and energy, all forms of plants and animals (whether native to New Zealand or introduced), and all structures.*

In fact, the Act has been subject to a large number of changes, with significant amendments in 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2011, 2013, and now in draft. In addition, its content has been amended through other Acts, including the Land Transport Management Act, the Local Government Act, the Crown Minerals Act and the Marine and Coastal Resources Act. This is in addition to a series of National Policy Statements issued by the MfE to be given effect through regional and local plans. These include:

- The Coastal Policy Statement (Department of Conservation), 1994, reviewed 2010
- The Electricity Generation Policy Statement, 2008
- The Renewable Energy Policy Statement, 2011

In addition, an Indigenous Biodiversity NPS has been under preparation for some time; and a newly issued Urban Development Capacity NPS is a result of the dysfunctional nature of recent planning for residential land use and development in Auckland and elsewhere.

In 2015 a 180-page bill was introduced to overhaul the Act in order to "*support business growth and housing development while also ensuring more effective environmental management*" and reduce the bureaucracy "*that gets in the way of creating jobs, building houses, and good environmental management, it provides for greater national consistency, more responsive planning, simplified consenting and better alignment with other laws*" according to the Minister's press release (26 November 2015). The bill contained another "*40 changes contained in 235 clauses and eight schedules*".

This latest panoply of regulations, re-regulations, and amendments raises questions over the efficacy of all those earlier additions, amendments, and deletions; and whether regularly amending the Act is simply entrenching the institutional framework built around it and the role of the practitioners that determine how it will be interpreted and implemented.

Time to move on

It may well be more rational to start over. This note proposes a planning regime that separates environmental stewardship from responsibilities for development as one way of moving forward.

Given New Zealand's small population and its diverse and challenging landscape it may be appropriate to revert to an act focused on the natural environment but this time round clearly acknowledging international imperatives for sound environmental stewardship.

A new act could locate responsibility for setting well-founded environmental standards within a scientifically strong central environmental and conservation agency. It would focus on measures that manage, preserve, and enhance biodiversity, soils, air and water quality, and coastal environments. The grounds for intervention would be based on a combination of international protocols and nationally agreed standards, mediated by local physical conditions and subject to rigorous evaluation. Standards would be developed nationally but application would be through regional offices which might mediate standards according to local conditions.

This approach would see environmental envelopes defined within which development could proceed subject to clearly specified and consistent conditions. Envelopes might be delineated by "no-go" areas using sound scientific evidence. Within these envelopes local communities could then pursue development, moderated through any provisions or conditions made under a suitably revised Local Government Act.

Changing the practice of planning

Changing the way things are done requires breaking down institutional inertia. New statutes require policy practitioners and those affected by their regulations to adapt to the changed demands rather than to adapt new regulations to old ways of doing things. Planning may have to become more progressive, scientifically-informed and forward-looking rather than conservative, precedent-based, and stymied by tradition, if it is to retain a central position in this revised framework. There may also have to be a clearer division between environmental and development planners, although a common set of procedural practices and skills would ensure the capacity to draw on the knowledge appropriate to any particular planning need.

One option for institutional change would be for a national environmental agency absorbing the responsibility of the Ministry for the Environment for administering environmentally focused acts, including a rewritten RMA.   The current Environmental Protection Authority could do so and through regional offices ensure environmental standards were developed and enforced that would be sensitive to local conditions. Such an agency may well absorb the environmental functions (and personnel) of regional and unitary councils.

The Department of Conservation may also absorb some functions from the MfE where those relate directly to the environmental management affecting Crown assets, while it would also divest any

RMA consenting responsibilities. The Department would become more clearly the manager of and advocate for conservation values and the conservation estate.

Regional Environmental Plans

Given that regional councils are generally effective in environmental management, it makes sense to transform them into the regional offices of the central agency, developing and implementing *regional environmental plans* based on national policies and standards. Plan preparation would still include local consultation and allow for challenges before independent commissioners and local council representatives. The Environment Court could continue as final arbiter.

Regional Spatial Plans

Within the environmental envelope defined by regional environmental plans there might be two level of development planning. The first would comprise preparation of *regional spatial plans*. These would be prepared by local councils working together in collaboration with providers of infrastructure (including both incumbents and potential new players), to set out corridors and nodes prioritised for future development. Future development might include retrofitting and expanding services in existing corridors, which might also be prioritised in a spatial plan.

Equally, such a plan could identify or at least allow for opportunities for off-trunk development of local infrastructure – for water supply, waste water treatment and disposal, energy generation and distribution.   The regional spatial plan would also identify areas to be set aside for conservation, biodiversity, water catchment, or other environmental purposes in accord with the Regional Environmental Plan, as well as major recreational reserves.

District or City Plans

The form of local development, however, would be left to individual local councils, reflecting communities' needs, aspirations, and values. The starting point would not be inimical to development, however, as environmental matters would be clearly dealt with and protected under the Regional Environmental Plan, while broad directions in which infrastructure and land use planning favours development would be evident from the Regional Spatial Plan.

The Local Government Act already requires councils to provide for the social, economic, cultural, and environmental well-being of communities when they prioritise, plan, and budget expenditure. The changes proposed would exclude councils from controlling matters to do with the natural environment. Instead they would be required to comply with regional environmental plans.

Local regulation of urban form and land use could be managed through *local plans*, although these would be about facilitating desirable development rather than precluding "undesirable:" development. They would map the commitments councils make in their long-term community plans and budgets rather than set out zones describing in detail what might happen where. Among other thing, spatial plans would indicate council intentions for local infrastructure investment.

Local plans could deal with the form of local corridors and transport, defensible variations from national building codes and standards, issues around streetscapes, parks and local reserves,

community centres and recreational facilities. Local plans would prioritise expenditure of local rates and entail a high degree of fiscal transparency and accountability.

Institutional Implications

Managing New Zealand's environment would fall to a government agency supported by regional offices. The agency itself – perhaps an expanded Environmental Protection Authority – would develop scientifically founded standards and adopt international protocols as appropriate for the protection of the environment and oversee their application through the development of regional environmental plans that would reflect local circumstance and be developed in consultation with local communities.

Conservation, as such, conservation management, and associated environmental advocacy would be strengthened within the Department of Conservation, which would relinquish its limited role as a consenting authority under the RMA.

The Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment would be maintained in its present role.

Separating environmental regulation from planning for the built environment would pave the way for changes in local government. Regional councils would no longer be required, their roles taken up by the regional offices of a single central agency. The regional offices would, however, work closely with local councils in developing local application of nationally mandated standards.

Territorial boundaries may be modified to reflect communities of interest as they would no longer need to be aligned arbitrarily with physical boundaries. The shape and composition of local boards, if still required, could be more closely aligned with local communities, and reflect local circumstances, values, and needs.

Local councils would work together, jointly representing local interests when regional environmental plans are under preparation and in preparing regional spatial plans. A united council structure may be appropriate, with nominated members of the local councils in a region (or the mayors) meeting regularly and supported by a small secretariat.

Changes would be required of Council Controlled Organisations. Currently, CCO business plans can influence development independently of plans prepared under the RMA. Under the new arrangement CCOs would also be required to comply with regional environmental plans and commit to the development directions prepared in the regional spatial plan. They would need to cooperate with councils when preparing these plans.

The level at which local plans are prepared and the matters they deal with could see a much closer relationship between a council and its community. Apart from the accountability benefits, this may see the community getting more closely involved in public affairs and open the way for greater local democracy through enhanced community engagement and a greater contribution to local governance through an increase in third sector involvement in civic affairs.

It should also clearly disentangle development options and issues and enable the corporate sector, including commercial development agencies, to respond more effectively to household, commercial, and community demand.

In summary

The changes proposed raise issues and opportunities beyond those discussed here. In summary, though, they suggest:

- Consolidated responsibility for environmental regulation in a national agency operating through regional offices, facilitating compliance with international environmental commitments and scientifically sound central policy settings, while responding through regional plans to local conditions;
- Collectively, territorial local councils would negotiate over the content of the regional environmental plan, and take responsibility for regional spatial plans;
- Territorial councils would be bound by the regional environmental plan and informed by the regional spatial plan, but responsible for community well-being within the development envelope established by such plans. They would focus on ensuring adequate land and infrastructure for development in an economically viable and fiscally prudent manner, public services and amenities, and maintaining the quality of the built environment (particularly with reference to efficiency and safety). Local plans would be development focused, and prepared through a combination of consultation and analysis.
- CCOs would be accountable for delivering the infrastructure required to support spatial development plans.

While these arrangements will reduce local autonomy over environmental matters, the aim is to improve both environmental management and the capacity of spatial planning to provide in an effective manner for economic, social and cultural development. Councils' accountability will increase as their mandate is clarified, conflicts around the environment are externalised, the consistency and quality of environmental regulations are increased, and costs reduced.