SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ENGLISH METROPOLITAN AUTHORITIES: AN INVESTIGATION USING UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

GARRETH EDWARD BRUFF

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Geographical and Environmental Sciences
University of Huddersfield

August 1997

ABSTRACT

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ENGLISH METROPOLITAN AUTHORITIES: AN INVESTIGATION USING UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Garreth Edward Bruff

Sustainable development can be approached from many different perspectives. Whilst short, 'punchy' definitions have successfully communicated and popularised sustainable development, a detailed and meaningful application of the concept is much more problematic. In order to address the situation, this thesis investigates the potential of unitary development plans (UDPs) to operationalise sustainable development in the current political and economic context. The study utilises a combination of qualitative techniques over two distinct stages to meet three research aims.

Stage I consists of a broad survey of 36 UDPs to assess their strengths and weaknesses in terms of sustainable development. It uses the work of the UK Local Agenda 21 Campaign to define sustainable development as 29 'Policy Directions for Sustainable Development'. This definition is then applied to the UDPs using the methods of content analysis. The survey reveals that all UDPs are currently promoting sustainable development in terms of the built and natural physical environment. Other areas of sustainable development, however, such as energy and land, air and water quality, are currently outside the remit of most UDP policies.

Using the results of this survey, Stage II of the research selects two UDPs for a case study investigation. This stage utilises documentary analysis and in-depth interviews with local actors to explore the dynamics of each UDP process. It reveals that the policy remit of both plans were largely researched, defined and then written by the professional planners in each authority; whereas inputs from locally elected councillors, the general public or other local organisations are generally limited to narrower, site specific issues. These characteristics can be explained by the perceptions of the planning profession held by local actors in both authorities. For example, many councillors have a narrow, procedural understanding of the planning system, believing that good land-use planning is largely equivalent to sustainable development. Planners, on the other hand, see sustainable development as a new legitimisation of their profession and are therefore keen to promote their own understanding of the concept.

In order to realise the potential of UDPs to fully operationalise sustainable development, the thesis concludes with a number of recommendations for changing the current UDP process.

I

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Chapter Outline

The role of this chapter is to provide some important background to the study. The chapter begins by introducing sustainable development and identifying the intellectual roots of the concept, before going on to discuss various levels of defining it. As the idea of sustainable development has achieved such a high profile at local, national and international levels, the current challenge of sustainable development is now putting the concept into practice, or 'operationalising' it. This is where the focus of the study lies, and this is discussed along with the aims of the research in the final sections of the chapter.

1.1 Researching into Sustainable Development

From the catch-phrase of the 1990's (Reid 1995) to the holy grail of contemporary environmentalism (Barton & Bruder 1995), the concept of sustainable development has certainly made a very conspicuous entrance into the world of politics and policy making in the late twentieth century. Any meaningful research into the field of sustainable development can therefore begin by analysing some of the reasons how and why the concept is being lauded in such glowing terms, before moving on to speculate what the idea might actually mean for policy making in a specific context. Only when this very general level of background research has been carried out is it possible to present a full understanding of a concept such as sustainable development, and so move on to develop a particular area of interest within the wider field.

This introductory chapter intends to do just this. The chapter places the aims of the research project into perspective by reviewing the emergence of sustainable development as a concept, and analysing the various definitions of that concept and their meanings. As institutional and legislative progress on sustainable development has occurred simultaneously to, and often in partnership with, intellectual progress, factual and conceptual developments in the area can be difficult to distinguish from one another. For example, the World Commission on Environment and Development was an

1

internationally convened body containing politicians from both developed and developing countries, as well as many eminent academics, which went on to provide some of the most important conceptual advances on the meaning of sustainable development through its concluding report *Our Common Future* (WCED 1987; Mitlin 1992). This particular review, therefore, will discuss institutional sources, such as UN declarations and British Government legislation, alongside purely academic works to provide a full account of the area under study. All sources of literature are interpreted and organised to illustrate key events, themes and ideas important to a full understanding of sustainable development.

A comprehensive review of every piece of work on sustainable development, however, would be an immense task because of the sheer volume of material being published on the subject (Mitlin 1992). Therefore, this chapter aims to provide a realistic balance between the breadth necessary to appreciate the full implications of sustainable development, and the depth required to understand how the concept applies to a specific area. To enable this balance to be drawn, large parts of the wider sustainable development debate are covered through a brief referenced summary of existing work, where the review concentrates upon the most influential writers to affect the evolution of sustainable development, and condenses some of the less relevant debates into a clear and concise précis of key ideas. This arrangement is particularly appropriate as so many other authors have already provided very thorough examinations of sustainable development, the conditions which led to its emergence and why it has achieved such a level of commitment from such a wide range of organisations (see for example Adams 1990; Kidd 1992; Pearce et al 1993; Redclift 1987; Reid 1995; Smith 1992).

1.2 The Origins of Sustainable Development

Reid (1995) credits the actual term 'sustainable development' to the *World Conservation Strategy* produced by the World Conservation Union (IUCN 1980). However, even this relatively straight forward point at which to start a discussion on the subject of sustainable development is not entirely resolved. There are other possible origins for the term, for example Kidd (1992) points out that the term 'sustainability' was used in *Blueprint for Survival* (Goldsmith et al 1972), and Barbara Ward was also discussing the

sustainability of planet Earth in the same year (Ward & Dubos 1972). To fully understand the origins of the concept, therefore, it is important to look beyond simple vocabulary and identify those intellectual strands which formed the pre-cursors to sustainable development.

There are two principal approaches to doing this (Dobson 1996). The first is to examine the emergence of sustainable development on a chronological basis. This approach identifies the evolution of the concept through an examination of its most important 'milestones', often in the shape of particular reports like *Our Common Future* (WCED 1987), *Agenda 21* (UNCED 1992), or similar publications. The second method is more thematic, where distinct issues or ideas are isolated from one another and then discussed in more detail so that their role in the overall concept of sustainable development is made clear.

This section of the chapter will combine both of these methods to present the main themes of sustainable development whilst explaining their place and chronological position in the evolution of the concept. As such the section begins with an introduction to the debates and schools of thought which preceded sustainable development, before moving on to identify and analyse the implications of the more established 'milestone' reports which helped establish the concept on the world stage. Only when this has been achieved is it possible to consider the different approaches to defining sustainable development (see Section 1.3). Figure 1.1 illustrates these points and maps out the structure of this chapter.
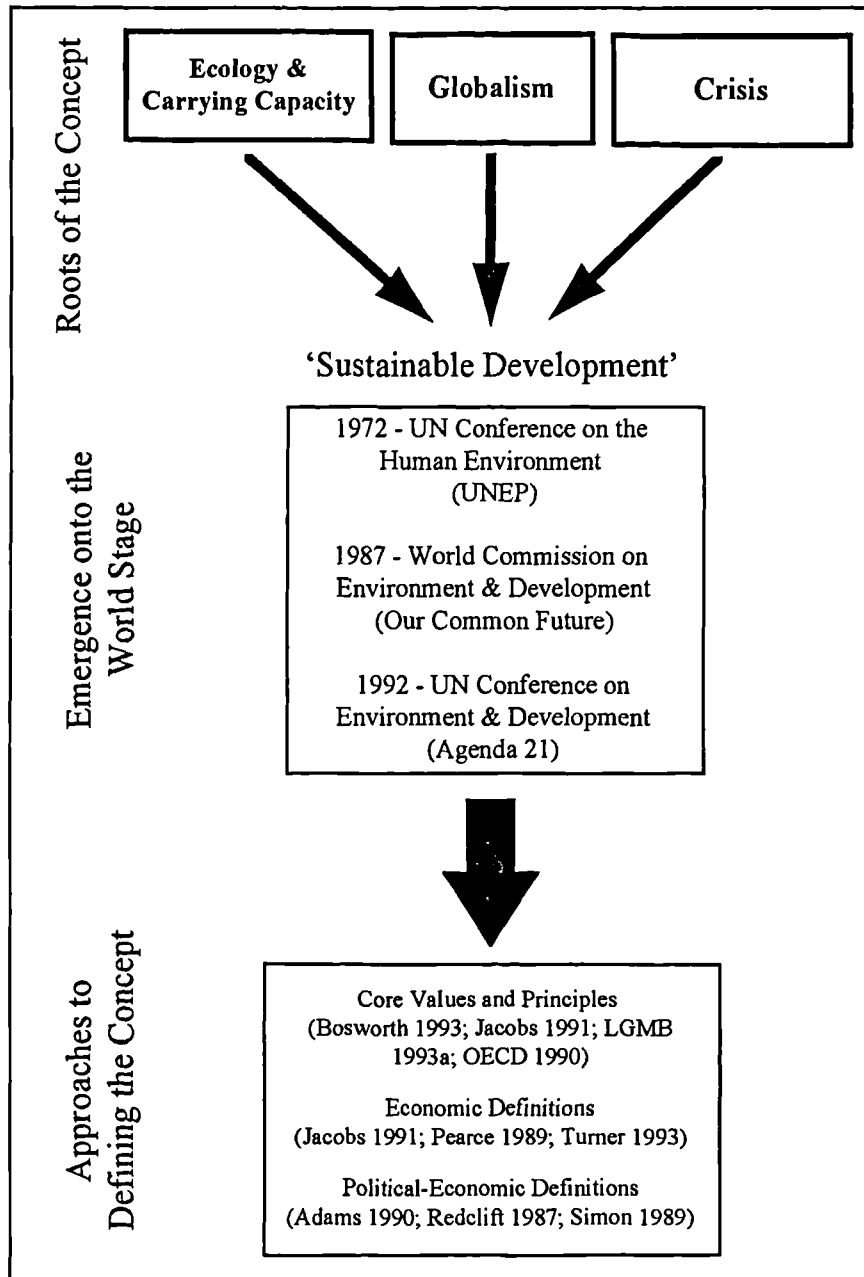
Figure 1.1: Origins, Emergence and Definitions of Sustainable Development

1.2.1 Three Roots of Sustainable Development

The first, and one of the most important, characteristics to observe about sustainable development is that the concept has not suddenly appeared on the political and policy making agenda without any history or precedent. Rather it has 'evolved' over time from a number of separate debates and schools of thought which come together to form the concept of sustainable development as it is known today (Kidd 1992; Adams 1990). It is

4

possible, therefore, to identify a number of separate, but related, strains of thought that form the 'roots' of sustainable development (after Kidd 1992).

Ecology and Carrying Capacity

Not in any order of priority, the first root can best be described as emanating from the ideas of *Ecology and Carrying Capacity*. This root has developed from the science of ecology and its understanding that eco-systems have a ceiling or naturally defined maximum number of given species which the system can successfully support (Kidd 1992). Beyond this natural level, or carrying capacity (IUCN et al 1991), the eco-system will fail to support life and, through natural processes, cut back the population numbers to levels at or below the threshold.

It was during the 1960's and 1970's that writers first started to apply this principle of ecology to human-kind and economic development. The approach made a popular impact when *The Ecologist* published its *Blueprint for Survival* (Goldsmith et al 1972 from Reid 1995), an almost polemical book (Kidd 1992) which stated quite clearly that indefinite growth of any kind cannot be sustained by an Earth with finite resources. Released only a couple of months after Blueprint, the title *Limits to Growth* (Meadows et al 1972) perfectly encapsulates the same message and links the human desire for progress through growth (Myerson & Rydin 1996) to the environmentalist concern for how the Earth, its ecological systems and resource base, can match this desire.

The similarity of these beliefs to the original concerns of the mathematician Thomas Malthus (1766-1834) have not gone unnoticed, and neo-Malthusian principles still pervade some interpretations of sustainable development at the 'deeper green' end of the spectrum (Reid 1995), which sees any kind of economic growth as ultimately unsustainable. For example Porritt (1993), writing much more recently than either Malthus or Meadows, still uses their basic principle and arguments to demonstrate the limits of the natural world upon the actions of human kind:

> ".... Exponential growth (in either human numbers or volumes of production
> and consumption) *cannot* be sustained indefinitely off a finite resource base.
> A growth rate of 3 per cent implies a doubling of production and

consumption every twenty-five years. Nobody actually disagrees with that, not even the most manic of growthists. But professional Micawbers that they all are, they just go on hoping that something will turn up before their bluff is finally called." (Porritt 1993 p25)

A number of economists also began to develop this understanding through economic models. These models were based on the premise that the scale of economic production has reached the level where it can alter the natural cycles and processes upon which human survival relies. Therefore an unlimited growth in economic activity, or expansion of population levels, would eventually alter the very basis upon which economies, and therefore human existence, relies (see for example Boulding 1966 and Georgescu-Roegan 1971).

Of course such views are not entirely uniform, and economists and environmentalists who profess a commitment to sustainable development are not in total agreement. Different economists emphasise different ways of managing the finite stock of environmental resources available to ensure that the ecological support systems of the Earth are not undermined (Blowers 1993a). Some economists argue that ecological systems, and the services they supply, can be freely traded like any other form of capital upon the open market so long as their role is properly valued, whereas more interventionist economists would argue that certain environmental capital are too critical to be traded or exchanged for other goods (Pearce et al 1991). For example, the loss of biological diversity could threaten the primary support functions of ecological systems, and in this sense it is a critical form of natural capital that humankind should not trade in freely (Pearce et al 1991).

Very deep green environmental economists would argue that all environmental stocks and assets are totally unsubstitutable and cannot be traded against other stocks in the form of man-made capital; this view is more similar to the zero economic growth response to the ecological imperative and a 'steady-state paradigm' (Turner 1993). It is clearly just one of a range of economic interpretations of the ecological carrying capacity principle and its application to human-kind. Just how far the carrying capacity principle can be applied to humans and economics is still an inconclusive matter, subject to a great deal of debate (see for example Pearce et al 1991; Turner 1993). The implications of this

debate are discussed further on in the chapter when definitions of sustainable development are considered.

Globalism

Complementing this ecological view of the Earth as a fragile organism is the growing understanding of the interdependency of countries, along with human activities in general, and the environmental impacts they cause (Grayson & Hobson 1994). This second root, referred to here as *globalism* for want of a more precise label, is closely related to the idea of ecology and carrying capacity but deserves particular attention in its own right. Globalism, in the sense of sustainable development, means an appreciation of the global scale of environment and development problems, and the requirement for international solutions to them.

The concern for global environmental change was beginning to be recognised in established academic circles well before the start of the twentieth century, as the industrial revolution became an international phenomena:

> "The scale of change initiated by man is no longer local, but global. The climatic and hydrological effects of deforestation provides an example." (Marsh 1864 from Kidd 1992)

However, the full impact of trans-national environmental problems did not make a major impact upon political and public consciousness until the middle of the twentieth century. It was in the 1960's that various international environmental concerns - or to be more precise, concern about the environmental symptoms of problems caused by development - became more acknowledged (Reid 1995). For example, it was at this time that the effects of acidification from air born pollutants on Swedish lakes and forests became known, as well as the discovery of the pesticide DDT in the fish stocks of Arctic and Antarctic waters (Reid 1995).

Both Adams (1990) and Simon (1989) also provide several examples of emerging globalism in the conservation movement of the 1960's and 1970's, and stress its importance to sustainable development. This global view was typified by the notion of

7

'Spaceship Earth', the view that the Earth's economic development exists in a closed, ultimately finite, system where every action has a reaction and the consequences of one country's economic activity is ultimately felt by another country:

> "The closed economy of the future might similarly be called the "spaceman" economy, in which the Earth has become a single spaceship, without unlimited reservoirs of anything, either for extraction or pollution, and in which man must find his place in a cyclical ecological system which is capable of continuous reproduction of material form even though it cannot escape having inputs of energy." (Boulding 1966 from Kidd 1992).

How far this analogy was inspired by the space programme and newly available photographs of the Earth from space, showing it as a single, small and even vulnerable whole, is debatable (Reid 1995). The analogy certainly had, and continues to have, an emotive and effective impact upon the minds of many. In a similar way the title *Only One Earth* (Ward & Dubos 1972) also sums up the global scale of concern reflected in the 'new environmentalism' of the 1970's (Adams 1990). *Only One Earth* was a submission to the United Nations' Stockholm Conference of 1972, one of the first international conferences to look at environmental issues in a more holistic way, and is discussed further below.

Indeed, globalism has been one of the most significant and defining aspects of sustainable development. It is reflected in the initiative towards sustainable development at the international level through the United Nations and other bodies. By their very definition, reports such as *Our Common Future* (WCED 1987) and *Agenda 21* (UNCED 1992) are a product of this new global perspective. Although this international impetus towards sustainable development is not wholly representative of the situation (as Chapter Two explains), the importance of supra-national publications cannot be underestimated. Such reports are often the clearest way to plot the evolution and expansion of the concept of sustainable development, and this emergence is explored in Section 1.2.2 as the impact on the concept of various international processes, commissions and reports are analysed.

Crisis

The third and final root to the current status of sustainable development is that of *crisis*, particularly environmental crisis. A sense of impending crisis, of unrecoverable ecological damage to the biosphere at the cost of greater world-wide human suffering, is an important and formative precedent of the sustainable development concept (see for example Reid 1995). The precise details of the crisis can take many forms (human, environmental or economic), and the idea of crisis was both a strong motivational force and an important conclusion for many of the earlier works already referenced in this section.

Blueprint for Survival (Goldsmith et al 1972) takes as its starting point the view that the continuation of current patterns of production and consumption will inevitably lead to "the breakdown of society and the irreversible disruption of the life-support systems on this planet"(Goldsmith et al 1972, quoted in Reid 1995 p29). The authors even went so far as to predict the occurrence of this event to be before the end of the present century. In contrast, rather than beginning with this rather bleak assumption, the authors of *Limits to Growth* (Meadows et al 1972) used a systems based computer model to predict the effects of current trends in population growth, industrialisation, malnutrition, depletion of resources and ecological damage (after Reid 1995). Its conclusions were rather similar to those of Blueprint's, however - unless these five major trends do change significantly, then the Earth's limits to growth would be reached within the next one hundred years.

Since the 1960's a great deal of research has been carried out, and many individual works published, detailing the precise nature and extent of the environmental, social and economic problems facing the World (see for example Carson 1962; Ehrenfield 1978; Wijkman & Timberlake 1984; Leggett 1990). Still the idea of crisis continues to pervade much more of the literature on the environment and sustainable development.

However, rather than review this whole collection of literature, and examine every individual crisis threatening the existence of human-kind, it is more useful to see this particular phenomenon as the context within which sustainable development has now emerged to form a discrete concept. Identifying the importance of a perceived crisis to

sustainable development, along with the increased appreciation of globalism and ecology/carrying capacity, is an important recognition of the fact that 'sustainable development' has not suddenly appeared on the international political stage, but has emerged from a combination of ideas and particular socio-economic contexts (Kidd 1992). The recognition of various roots to sustainable development is also the most straight forward way of explaining where the concept has come from, and will help explain the various interpretations of sustainable development which are discussed in Section 1.3 below.

1.2.2 Emergence of Sustainable Development onto the World Stage

Crises on a global scale, and a concern for global ecology or carrying capacity, require global solutions (Simon 1989). As noted above, globalism - through a supranational process involving most of the countries of the world - has been one of the most significant and defining aspects of sustainable development and its emergence onto the policy agendas of governments and other organisations. This section will therefore present a more or less chronological account of the rise of sustainable development as a distinct concept on the world stage.

The peak of this international process was probably marked by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. This was the climax of a long process, a more detailed account of which can be found in Grubb et al who take their readers down the "Road to Rio" (Grubb et al 1993, chapter 2). However, the beginning of the process can be traced right back to the already mentioned UN Conference on the Human Environment held at Stockholm in 1972. The submission to this conference by Ward and Dubos (Ward & Dubos 1972), is one of those publications which was among the first to use the phrase 'sustainability' in the context of the environment and natural resources. The conference also saw participating countries sign the Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment. The 26 principles contained in this declaration establish a direct link between environmental and developmental issues. It is this link which marks the concept of sustainable development as separate from the environmentalism and conservation which preceded it during the 1960's.

Another outcome of Stockholm 1972 was the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In 1983 it was UNEP who commissioned the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) to make a full investigation into the socio-economic and environmental condition of the world and the relationships between society, economy and environment (Grubb et al 1993). The publication of their report as *Our Common Future* in 1987, ensured that social and economic issues were firmly linked to ecological problems on the political agenda (Simon 1989). This report was also responsible for providing the most well used definition of sustainable development as development which:

> "...meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future
> generations to meet their own needs." (WCED 1987 p43)

Although many authors have since criticised this definition for its lack of precision, it is still the starting point for many discussions about sustainable development and this illustrates the importance of the report on a global scale (Mitlin 1992). *Our Common Future* has, therefore, been responsible for the general acceptance of the concept at the international political level (Adams 1990; Blowers 1993; Mitlin 1992). Although many other reports and studies have since been published on the subject, it is this document that has really 'stood the test of time', popularising sustainable development and placing the notion of sustainability firmly on the international, national and local policy agenda (Buckingham-Hatfield and Evans 1996).

The global political initiative continued in December 1989 when the UN General Assembly convoked the UNCED. Held in 1992 UNCED attracted nearly all the national governments in the world and five agreements were signed covering important global issues such as climate change, biological diversity and forest depletion. Of most relevance to this field of study is the signing of *Agenda 21* (UN 1992) at Rio, the document described as an action plan or master plan for sustainable development in the twenty first century (Grubb et al 1993; Keating 1993). This document begins by outlining the social and economic dimensions of development and goes on to consider the whole range of natural resource issues and their relationship to human activities. This second element of the report takes up a large proportion of the document and is essentially a

reproduction of agreed negotiated wisdom on the issues (Grubb et al 1993), although the structure of it includes objectives on each issue and targets which have been agreed to elsewhere in the UN.

However, one of the most significant differences between *Agenda 21* and its predecessors is that the report does not stop after its consideration of environment and development issues, but proceeds to consider how sustainable development can be implemented and who should be involved in this implementation. For example, Chapters One and Eight of *Agenda 21* emphasise the primary role of central government to sustainable development, whilst the roles of other major groups in society, such as local government, women, youth and business, are considered in the third section of the report.

In considering each of these groups, Agenda 21 provides a list of specific measures which should be undertaken by them to ensure a move towards sustainability. National governments were required to prepare a national strategy for sustainable development by 1994, and to submit this to the new UN Commission for Sustainable Development. Local authorities were required to draw up a local Agenda 21, applying the themes of the report to their own particular towns or cities by the end of 1996. Whilst the final section of Agenda 21 looks at the financial aspects of implementation.

Agenda 21 is a large and comprehensive document which has clear ramifications for most areas of society. A useful way of summarising its implications for our understanding of the concept of sustainable development is provided by Grubb et al (1993) who identify a set of underlying themes to Agenda 21. These are:

- **A 'Bottom up' approach** - an emphasis on people and communities and non-government organisations rather than the state. For example chapter 3 on poverty stresses the need to increase poor peoples' representation in local government.

- **'Community participation'** - especially the role of women in local decision making, an emphasis on respect for indigenous people and value of traditional knowledge and local

expertise which should be incorporated into a sustainable development plan. Local people should be heard when economic development conflicts with local interests.

- **'Open Governance'** - emphasising the pre-requisites of participatory democracy, transparency of governmental processes and accountability of decision makers to the people.

- **A Need for greater knowledge** - the lack of adequate knowledge and institutions within countries and internationally is seen as a major problem to the implementation of Agenda 21. In keeping with a bottom up approach, sustainable development requires adequate education and development of the "human resource".

- **Integrated Approaches** - should be followed along two main themes:
  i. Integrating environment and development.
  ii. Integrating different disciplines and sectors towards a more comprehensive approach, in science, policy and politics, between various sectors and at different levels (international, national and local).

1.3 Approaches to Defining the Concept

The above themes, along with the roots of sustainable development in Section 1.2.1, provide a very factual background to the concept of sustainable development. However, it is clearly necessary to go beyond these facts and introduce some of the debates and issues surrounding sustainable development to enable a full understanding of the concept and its current status. This step, from a factual history and simple list of themes, to a fuller discussion of what sustainable development actually means for policy making, is provided in the following paragraphs as different approaches to defining sustainable development are introduced and analysed.

However, interpretations of the facts and themes of sustainable development have generally been very disparate over the last few years, resulting in quite divergent definitions of the concept. As Porritt has pointed out:

"Sustainable development is to the Environment Movement what sound money was to the Conservative Party during the 1980's: ubiquitous, capable of multiple (and often contradictory) definitions; and in danger of being enfeebled by both these attributes." (Porritt 1993, p25)

In short, defining sustainable development has become an issue of controversy and an important area of study in its own right. Of the multiple definitions identified by Porritt, the short sentence on page 43 of the WCED report, as noted above, is probably one of the most popular ways of answering the question "What is sustainable development?" Answer:

Development that "...meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (WCED 1987 p43)

Another example of a short, one sentence, definition of the term, which has received a similarly high degree of popularity is that provided by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in their report *Caring for the Earth: a Strategy for Sustainable Living* (IUCN 1991). The IUCN's definition of sustainable development is:

"Improving the quality of life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems." (IUCN et al 1991, p10)

Both of these short punchy definitions, and derivations of them, have been quoted in a variety of plans and policy documents as a way of introducing the concept of sustainable development and its meaning (see for example CEC 1992; DOE 1994a; LGMB 1993a; Newcastle-upon-Tyne City Council 1993). However both definitions are not necessarily synonymous and still require a great deal of further interpretation before they can be of any use in practice. The way that this interpretation has been approached is often linked to what has been called "different world views" (Turner 1993, p3).

Such different world views reflect the range of opinions upon the relative importance of different sustainable development themes. For example, despite the popularity of the WCED definition, it is interesting to note that this particular sentence does not carry any

specific reference to resource constraints. The two key concepts in the WCED report are 'needs', especially the essential needs of the world's poor; and 'limitations', particularly limitations in the ability to meet needs because of the current state of technology and social organisation. The report states quite clearly that technology and social organisation can be managed and improved to make way for new economic growth through a better utilisation of natural resources (WCED 1987, p8 and 9).

Therefore this popular definition of sustainable development, used by so many organisations, could be criticised by authors like Porritt (See Section 1.2.1 above) for its reliance on economic growth and failure to emphasise natural limitations. The IUCN definition, on the other hand, places far more emphasis on absolute natural limits defined by carrying capacity. Where carrying capacity is defined as the "capacity of an ecosystem to support healthy organisms while maintaining its productivity, adaptability, and capability of renewal" (IUCN 1991, p210), and the potential for achieving development within such limits. (These different perspectives, and different emphases upon ecological importance, are outlined later in the chapter as positions upon a 'spectrum of sustainability', varying from very weak sustainability to very strong sustainability.)

This is but one approach to defining sustainability, however, and from the mass of literature on the subject it is possible to recognise (at least) three separate approaches, or conceptual levels, to defining sustainable development. The first is the core values or principles level; the second the economic level and the third is the political economy level. These categories for describing the approaches to a definition of sustainable development are not designed to be mutually exclusive, there are areas of overlap between them and some writers may be listed in more than one. They do, however, help to organise the large amount of literature on the subject and so simplify a complex situation.

1.3.1 Core Values or Principles

The first approach to defining sustainable development can be conveniently labelled as *The Core Values or Principles Approach*. There are many writers who have endeavoured to understand what sustainable development means through isolating the

central principles on which the concept is based (see for example Bosworth 1993; Jacobs 1991; Kidd 1994; LGMB 1993a; OECD 1990). These principles are most often drawn from key documents on the subject of sustainable development such as *Our Common Future* report, *Agenda 21* or *Caring for the Earth*, as discussed in the section above.

The main advantage of this particular approach is that it provides a relatively simple and straightforward definition of sustainable development. For example, Bosworth defines sustainable development with four principles:

- *Futurity* - that all human activity should be considered in terms of its effects on future generations
- *Environment* - that the full and true costs of human activities should include all environmental costs
- *Equity* - that control over resources should be more evenly distributed
- *Participation* - that development requires that people can share in decision making and have an active role.

(from Bosworth 1993)

Whereas Jacobs isolates three commitments required to achieve sustainable development:

- A commitment to including environmental costs in economic decision making
- A commitment to equity
- A commitment to economic development as opposed to economic growth.

(from Jacobs 1991)

In distinguishing between economic development and economic growth Jacobs is referring to an important principle advanced by many writers concerned with sustainable development. This principle, or commitment as Jacobs terms it, recognises that human well being requires much more than simple economic growth, as measured through popular economic indicators like Gross National Product or Gross Domestic Product. GNP and GDP are quantitative

indicators limited to measuring absolute levels of wealth and do not recognise a wide range of other aspects which are also important to well being, for example physical health, community health, employment opportunity and physical security. Therefore, 'economic development' is a much wider term than 'economic growth' as measured by current indicators, and writers like Jacobs are more concerned with the nature of economic growth, and its human implications, than quantitative levels of growth (Jacobs 1991; LGMB 1993a).

Another interpretation of sustainable development is made by the Local Government Management Board who believe that sustainable development has four core meanings:

- *Futurity* - a concern for the well being of future generations.
- *Environment* - recognition of the health and integrity of the natural environment
- *Quality of Life* - a recognition of the many dimensions of well being
- *Equity* - a concern for the fair distribution of costs and benefits.

(from LGMB 1993a)

This cross-section of work illustrates one example of a consensus among writers within this general approach, and it is evident that particular values or principles re-appear in various forms in each of the three interpretations. For example, Jacob's third commitment, to economic development rather than growth, is broadly similar to the LGMB's third core meaning of sustainable development, Quality of Life, which "recognises that there is much more to life than can be measured by purely economic indicators or delivered by simple growth of income" (LGMB 1993a, p10). Similarly, both Jacobs and Bosworth stress the need to include all environmental costs in decision making, whilst the LGMB underline the importance of the environment through the term 'environmental integrity', and stress the need to recognise this.

Of course, these similarities do not mean that there is an overall consensus on the precise meaning of sustainable development, which principles of the concept should dominate, or on the relative importance of each principle. Different writers will place differing levels of importance on each principle, some writers may include principles that others would not, and

this represents one of the main weakness of this approach to defining sustainable development. It is possible for different individuals with different backgrounds, coming from different disciplines or philosophical positions, to interpret core principles or values quite differently. Even if the values postulated were to have universal acceptance, and be universally understood, they still need to be interpreted to be of use in policy making and decision making in day to day situations. Therefore many approaches to defining sustainable development have concentrated upon the particular discipline of economics to provide a coherent methodology for defining sustainable development in a form that is useful to policy makers wishing to implement the concept.

1.3.2 Economic

The Economic Approach to defining sustainable development concentrates upon an economic conception of sustainable development (see Jacobs 1991; Pearce 1989, 1991, 1993; Pezzey 1989; Turner 1993). This conception stems from the idea of sustainable yields, which means ensuring that the output or level of wealth in an economy is maintained or increased. As Mitlin puts it:

> "... sustainable development requires policies that enable future generations
> to have at least as much wealth (or stock of assets) as the next generation."
> (Mitlin 1992, p113 on Pearce et al 1989)

If this aim is achieved then the economic approach to defining sustainable development assumes that the social and environmental considerations of the concept are automatically taken into account. Pearce uses the example of trees and fish to explain the point. Foresters and fisher-people have long been concerned with harvesting these natural resources at a rate less than or equal to the growth rate of the bio-mass. In this way they ensure that both the resource and the output from it are being sustained, thus ensuring that wealth remains the same for future generations. This in turn ensures the livelihoods of the people and their families' into the future, and in this way sustainable development is assured (Pearce 1993, p4).

Pearce then goes onto to extend the analysis from fish and trees to whole economies:

"If there is a concern for future generations' well being it seems wise to ensure that the economy is itself sustainable so that future generations can be as well off as we are now. .... As with the fishery and forestry example, it is both the output of the economy that needs to be sustained, *and* the underlying resource base that gives rise to that output." (Pearce et al 1993 p3)

By stating this basic point, the economic approach to defining sustainable development can make the concept much more meaningful, and possibly achievable, to policy makers.

Of course, such a simple analogy still requires further interpretation, and both Pearce (1993) and Turner (1993) recognise several ways of doing this. They each identify a wide spectrum of positions on sustainable development ranging from 'very weak sustainability' through 'weak sustainability' and 'strong sustainability' to a position of 'very strong sustainability'. These various positions reflect different understandings of the environment and resources, their importance to economic and social objectives, as well as different mechanisms for putting the concept into practice. For example very weak sustainability does not distinguish between natural capital (natural resources, biological diversity, clean air, etc.) and man made capital (machines and infrastructure such as housing and roads), therefore so long as a 'constant capital rule' is obeyed sustainable development is achieved (Pearce 1993, p15). This position relies on the market mechanism and technological advances to achieve the aim of constant capital.

In direct contrast to this is the position of very strong sustainability which places the value of natural capital above all other considerations because of its inherent value and the irreversible nature of any loss to the natural stock of capital. To minimise society's and the economy's impact on the natural environment, negative economic and population growth is required. This is achieved through very heavy regulation of the economy and planning how resources should be utilised (Pearce 1993, p18).

In summary, the economic approach to sustainable development starts from a position of natural resource management and then goes on to consider how this can best be achieved through the most suitable economic framework. The consideration of social and environmental issues is a direct result of this primary concern with best economic

practice. Writers such as Jacobs and Pearce provide prescriptive texts for good economic policy, where all the issues of sustainable development are included as by-products of their concern with the optimum economic framework.

Of course an economic perspective is but one epistemological standpoint among many. In some ways the deeper green positions of the sustainability spectrum, as described by Pearce and Turner above, propose such radical changes to the ways in which resources are valued and produced for consumption that they fall outside an economic understanding of the concept. For example, Section 1.2.1 has already illustrated the importance of carrying capacity and ecologicalism to the sustainable development debate, and the criticisms of a purely economic and growth oriented approach to defining sustainable development are an important origin of the concept (see Section 1.2.1). To understand the differences of opinion between economic and other approaches to understanding and defining sustainable development, therefore, it is necessary to look beyond the limits of the discipline of economics itself to the wider context in which economics operate.

1.3.3 Political Economy

So far this chapter has illustrated some of the different ways of making sense of sustainable development. Whereas some approaches to defining sustainable development may attempt to isolate the core principles of the concept, other approaches adopt the methods of economics. Even within these individual approaches the interpretation of sustainable development made by different individuals can be quite divergent, as the spectrum of sustainability, described above, illustrates. It is therefore necessary to consider some of the reasons for these different interpretations.

This depth of analysis is provided by *The Political Economy Approach* to defining sustainable development (see Adams 1990; Redclift 1987; Simon 1989). The political economy approach stresses the need to address the structural forces which lie behind unsustainable practices, rather than simply attempt to define the concept of sustainable development within the limits of one particular philosophy or methodology. Therefore writers within this approach typically place greater stress on the characteristics of the

political and social context of the world (or a particular environmental or economic problem), and how these characteristics influence perceptions of the environment (Redclift 1987; Simon 1989); in contrast to concentrating on environmental management techniques or specific economic instruments as described above.

For example, Redclift (1987) emphasises how different social constructions of the environment are supported by different social groups with different degrees of power and competing economic interests. These social constructions, such as the goal of short term economic growth and private ownership of resources, are identified as being responsible for most environmental problems and the subsequent social impact that such problems generate. Although Redclift fails to give a precise definition of the concept of sustainable development, he does conclude with the comment:

> "It [sustainable development] means a definition of development which recognises that the limits to sustainability have structural as well as natural origins." (Redclift 1987, p199)

In this way Redclift develops the concept of ecology and carrying capacity, as identified in 1.2.1 above, to include social aspects and therefore underlines the importance of human institutions and systems (the political and economic dimension) to sustainable development (Simon 1989).

The task of elaborating on Redclift's observations is taken up by Simon (1989), who provides a detailed critique of Redclift's work in his attempts to "operationalise the concept in the prevailing world order" (Simon 1989, p41). Simon uses Redclift's work in conjunction with three other definitions of sustainable development to highlight the breadth of the concept and the importance of political factors to its successful implementation. The first definition, from Conway (1983, 1985), derives from the traditions of agronomy and ecology; it defines sustainability as a system which maintains productivity in spite of major disturbances. The second is that of the WCED report (1987), as cited and discussed above. Simon highlights the notions of social equity between and within generations inherent in this report, and the mechanisms envisaged to achieve this re-distribution of wealth and resources in concert with sustainable growth.

The question of redistribution is at the heart of his understanding of sustainable development.

The third definition used by Simon is from Barbier (1987); this is concerned with the qualitative dimension of ecological, cultural and social potential, in association with the quantitative dimension of economic growth. Barbier argues that sustainability relies on the interaction of both these quantitative and qualitative factors and simple measures of economic growth do not fully capture this interaction. Any development process, therefore, requires consideration of both qualitative and quantitative biological and resource, economic and social, systems (Simon 1989 p44).

From his discussion of these three definitions, Simon concludes that, although they stem from different ideological, theoretical and epistemological positions, they are mutually complementary and do not conflict. Therefore, when brought together, they encapsulate the key ideas of sustainable development incorporating both structural and natural dimensions of the concept.

1.4 Issues Raised: Operationalising Sustainable Development

The whole of the chapter so far can be summarised around three main points:

1. That there is a long history of progress in environment and development thinking pre-dating the emergence of sustainable development as a unified concept.
2. That sustainable development is now widely accepted by the international community.
3. That there are several approaches to defining sustainable development in any meaningful way, and therefore many possible definitions.

The review of academic, practitioner and government literature has demonstrated that there are two extremes in the current understanding of sustainable development. At one extreme are a few short, 'punchy', definitions of sustainable development which have successfully communicated and popularised its broad message to many different sectors of society; but which do not necessarily explain the ideas and history behind sustainable

development. At the other extreme are more thorough analyses of the concept which provide a strong theoretical and intellectual framework within which to understand sustainable development. However, neither of these extremes are particularly helpful in solving the problem of how a concept like sustainable development can be applied and made achievable in the current socio-economic circumstances.

Whilst sustainable development remains little more than a theoretical construct to link environment and development it is open to the criticism of ambiguity. Sustainable development achieves universal consensus in the sense that no-one uses the term pejoratively (Myerson and Rydin 1996). Several writers have championed this as a distinct advantage to fostering a lively and informed political debate (see for example Buckingham-Hatfield and Evans 1996; Myerson and Rydin 1996), however, it can also attract criticism. It is possible to dismiss the term sustainable development as meaningless when it is continuosly being used to justify almost any particular decision or standpoint. For example, Redclift warns how sustainable development can obscure very real conflicts between environment and development, replacing intellectual thought with a moral conviction based around a slogan (Redclift 1987 from Blowers 1993a); whilst Jacobs expresses concern over the fact that the British Government were able to adopt sustainable development as a policy goal and then use it to justify their existing economic policies (Jacobs 1991:p59). The problem is that the ambiguous nature of sustainable development can, and is, being used in some cases to legitimise 'business as usual'.

One way of removing the ambiguity surrounding sustainable development is to attempt to apply the concept, to put the idea of sustainable development into practice in a particular context or setting. Therefore, one of the main issues to arise from this chapter, and the wider sustainable development debate in general, is how to 'operationalise' the concept in a meaningful and practical way. How to move on from a definition and identification of basic principles to provide detailed policy guidance which would be of use to specific implementation systems, such as land-use planning for example. Clearly, there exists a considerable conceptual leap between the acceptance of a definition of sustainable development and the detailed policies to see it implemented.

23

This conceptual leap has been bridged by several authors and practitioners who move on from first principles and theorising to assess the implications of sustainable development for their particular specialism. Smith (1992) calls for less arguments about what the concept of sustainable development actually means, and more work on providing a 'conceptual framework' to tackle the issues. An example of this is provided by Haughton and Hunter (1994) who dedicate themselves to operationalising sustainable development to create sustainable cities. By this they mean developing detailed policy guidance, drawn from the basic principles of the idea, which is useful to practitioners.

• **Global Level**	UNCED: The UN conference which provided an international action plan for sustainable development (Agenda 21).
• **European Level**	Towards Sustainability: Europe's Fifth Environmental Action Programme sets out policies, objectives and implementation programmes for the period 1993-2000.
• **National Level:**	The UK Sustainable Development Strategy: The UK Government's response to UNCED, this initiative committed the Government to developing indicators for sustainable development as well as a UK advisory panel and roundtable on sustainable development.
• **Regional:**	Manchester 2020: A demonstration project seeking to apply sustainability principles to the Greater Manchester City Region.
• **Local Level:**	The UK Local Agenda 21 Campaign: An initiative to assist British local government in achieving sustainable development through pilot projects, publication of best practice guidance and round-table discussion.
• **Community Level:**	Going for Green: A public awareness campaign in the UK, developed to improve individuals' grasp of sustainable development issues and pilot sustainable communities projects.

Figure 1.2: Examples of Initiatives to Operationalise Sustainable Development at Different Levels

In more general terms, it is also possible to identify initiatives towards operationalising sustainable development at several different scales of operation, and within many different sectors of the economy as business, central government, local government,

community groups and other organisations begin to address the concept (Figure 1.2). Many of these initiatives are discussed in detail in the following chapter.

1.5 Focus and Aims of the Research

It is within this area of operationalising sustainable development that this research project is carried out. The main focus of the project is upon making the conceptual leap between sustainable development as an abstract concept, and sustainable development as a useful set of criteria for improving the ways in which human-kind manages the environment. In particular, the investigation will focus upon unitary development plans (UDPs), as an example of a particular tool which has the potential to put sustainable development into practice at the current time. UDPs contain strategic and site specific land use development policies for metropolitan areas in England. They are the land-use development plans prepared by local planning authorities within the framework of national planning policy and guidance from central government, and must be accepted by the Secretary of State for the Environment before they are formally adopted.

As yet we have only a hazy understanding of the processes by which sustainable development is percolating through the planning system and into development plans (after Mathews 1996). Therefore, this research project addresses three main aims:

1. To establish how far UDPs are currently operationalising the concept of sustainable development in their policies.
2. To identify the primary factors influencing the form and content of policies for sustainable development throughout the UDP making process.
3. To explain these results and so explain the position of sustainable development on the current UDP policy agenda.

1.6 Structure of the Dissertation

The justification for focusing upon UDPs, and their relevance to sustainable development, is explained and discussed in the following chapter. The rationale and details of the research strategy are then set out in Chapter Three, where Figure 3.3 explains exactly how the dissertation will meet the research aims.

In relation to UDPs, it is salient to note that the interpretation of an ambiguous idea like sustainable development at the beginning of a plan making process, can result in large differences between policies and programmes which seek to achieve sustainable development at the end of that process. Therefore the research strategy begins with a wide survey of the current state of UDP policies in relation to sustainable development. The methods for this survey are presented in Chapter Four of the dissertation. Chapter Five presents the major findings of this survey, which are further analysed in Chapters Six and Seven.

Moving on from the survey, Chapters Eight and Nine of the dissertation look in greater depth at the context and history of UDP policy making in two case study authorities. In this way the relationship between UDP policies and sustainable development is fully investigated and explained with the intention of shedding greater light upon how the abstract concept of sustainable development can actually be put into practice. Finally, Chapter Ten of the dissertation concludes with a summary of the study's key findings and contribution to knowledge as well as a set of recommendations to realise the potential of UDPs to fully operationalise sustainable development.

CHAPTER 2: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

2.0 Chapter Outline

The role of this chapter is to remove some of the ambiguity surrounding sustainable development and make it a much more meaningful and practical concept than was possible in the abstract discussion of Chapter One. This is done by relating the principles of sustainable development to cities, local authorities and land-use planning. The chapter begins by introducing these three themes and then moves on to analyse each of them in more detail, outlining their status, relationship to sustainable development and potential for putting the concept into practice. The final section of the chapter suggests that all three themes are currently an important part of unitary development plans, and therefore illustrates how UDPs have a real potential to be able to put sustainable development into practice in Britain.

2.1 Removing the Ambiguity From Sustainable Developmɔnt

Bearing in mind the focus of the study, and the wealth of academic and professional experience on the subject, it is possible to draw on a range of existing work to operationalise sustainable development. Three broad themes are highlighted for this task: cities (or urban areas), local authorities and land-use planning. These three themes each reflect important elements of the current debate about sustainable development, and have been selected for their ability to highlight some of the most important challenges and opportunities facing sustainable development in Britain.

The first theme, cities, or urban areas, is important because of the increasingly urban context in which the principles of sustainable development must be applied. With over half of the world's population living in cities by the year 2000, and around 60% of the World's GDP currently generated in cities (Lees 1994), the city or urban area clearly requires serious consideration in any attempt to put sustainable development into practice. Some of the most important, and difficult, issues of sustainable development are

currently being addressed in the world's urban areas, as the European Commission's Expert Group on the Urban Environment note:

> "So much of human activity is urban that sustainability problems are insoluble without urban solutions." (CEC 1994 para 3.18).

Local authorities, on the other hand, are highlighted as important organisations for applying the principles of sustainable development in most of the prescriptive documents already mentioned in Section 1.5, above. For example Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 emphasises the vital role played by local authorities in educating, mobilising and responding to the public to promote sustainable development (UNCED 1992, Chapter 28). Although chapter 28 forms only a small part of the much larger document, the importance of local authorities to sustainable development can be gauged by the calculation that about two thirds of the measures in Agenda 21 require the co-operation of local authorities to be implemented successfully (LGMB 1993a). British local authorities also have a long tradition of environmental regulation and management, and this historical legacy has clearly been an important factor in the adoption of sustainable development initiatives by the local government sector in this country (Jacobs 1993).

Finally, land-use planning has been very closely associated with sustainable development because of the number of similar concerns between the two. The traditional concern of British land-use planning, to relate development to economic, social and environmental considerations (Healey and Shaw 1993a), places the planning system firmly within the sustainable development debate. Well established planning roles, such as environmental protection, development restraint and locational policy, mean that planners are often the first to expose the conflicts between environment and development that sustainability is meant to reconcile (Owens 1995). This relationship is reflected and re-enforced in governmental initiatives to implement sustainable development, particularly in Britain where planning and the implementation of sustainable development are linked through the Government's Strategy for Sustainable Development (DOE 1994a) and more recent planning guidance (DOE 1992a & 1997).

Therefore, this chapter moves from the general context for considering sustainable development, cities, through the role of an important organisation for delivering sustainable development, local authorities, to discuss land-use planning as a practical mechanism for implementing sustainable development. The following sections discuss the value of these three themes to sustainable development in practical terms, making reference to recent legislation and academic works, as well as comparing and contrasting each theme with the concept of sustainable development in more general and theoretical ways. Through this process of moving from the general to the specific, the chapter also begins to remove some of the ambiguity surrounding sustainable development, making the concept more relevant and meaningful to policy makers working with real world problems.

All three of these themes are present, in the British context at least, in UDPs. Therefore the final section of the chapter draws all three themes together with a detailed consideration of UDPs and how they are currently being used to put sustainable development into practice by local authorities. Discovering exactly what is motivating local authorities to address sustainable development in their UDPs, and the level of success they are achieving in doing so, then forms the basis for subsequent chapters of the dissertation.

2.2 Theme 1: Cities

The term city is used here as a synonym for urban settlement, this includes cities, towns, urban and sub-urban areas (Gilbert et al 1996). Although many Northern hemisphere countries have seen a significant increase in the number of households leaving city centres for more sub-urban and rural locations during the post-war period (Breheny & Rookwood 1993), the pre-eminence of urban lifestyles remain largely undiminished. Depending upon the precise definition of an urban settlement, well over half of the World's population will be living in cities by the end of this century, whilst in the United Kingdom the current urban population is around 89% of the total population (Gilbert et al 1996; UN 1995).

The importance of the 'sustainable city' in the international political context has also been demonstrated by its central position in recent international conferences such as Global Forum (Manchester 1994), a follow up to UNCED for non-governmental organisations, and Habitat II (Istanbul 1996), the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements. Particular initiatives to promote sustainable towns and cities have also taken place at the European level through the European Commission Expert Group on the Urban Environment, established in 1991 to advise the Commission on its urban development and environment policy; and at national level through the Greening the City Initiative launched in Britain in 1995.

Therefore, whilst local authorities and land-use planning have been mentioned as an organisation and mechanism to operationalise sustainable development, cities (or urban areas) form an important contextual element for this operation. The very fact that cities currently contain so many people, and therefore so much of the wealth generating capacity of the world, often means that cities experience many of the environmental problems mentioned in Chapter One:

> "... it is at the urban level that many environmental problems are sourced and where many environmental problems are experienced at their most intense."
> (Haughton & Hunter 1994 p10)

And this is because:

> "Cities have a concentration of polluters - from industry to cars to litterbugs and can in fact be seen as the location of one extreme of environmental degradation. Most importantly, now that the urban economic system is global in extent, cities and the exploitative activities generated by and in them are able to disturb the planetary support systems on which humanity depends."
> (Elkin et al 1991 p6)

At the same time, however, there is also a strong case to be made for the positive role of cities in the process of implementing sustainable development. The potential for cities has been articulated in many contexts by a range of writers (see for example Elkin et al 1991; Gilbert et al 1996; Houghton and Hunter 1994; Roberts and Hunter 1991; Nijkamp &

30

Perels 1994; OECD 1990), but appears to focus on the increased efficiency of economies of scale, for example:

- Much lower costs per person/household for the provision of utilities such as piped water and sewerage, rubbish collection, and provision of emergency services.
- A greater range, and possibility, of material reclamation, re-use and recycling.
- A more efficient use of land through higher concentrations of people.
- Considerable potential for combined heat and power, heat from waste, etc. and therefore potential for reducing the use of fossil fuels.
- A greater potential for reducing use of private motor vehicles through public and non-motorised transport and mixed land-use. (Mitlin and Satterthwaite 1994)

In short, the challenge to national and local authorities is to respond to the environmental problems caused by (and in) urban areas, and to aim to bring about these potential environmental advantages whilst maximising the public good (Gilbert et al 1996).

However, the built form of a city or town is merely the tip of the iceberg of an urban system (Elkin et al 1991), and the political and social context of cities should also be considered in relation to sustainable development. Mitlin and Satterthwaite stress good governance as essential for making full use of the advantages of a city. This means the provision of a representative political and administrative system that is "both encouraging and supporting individual, community and private sector initiatives whilst also setting limits to ensure that health and safety standards are met, waste is minimised and other sustainable goals achieved" (Mitlin and Satterthwaite 1994 p63).

Clearly, therefore, sustainable development in cities will depend to a very large extent upon the power, actions and decisions of the municipalities, or self governing local authorities of the city. These organisations have a responsibility for ensuring the provision of a system of governance in line with sustainable development and for developing the physical urban environment in a sustainable way.

31

2.3 Theme 2: Local Authorities

Chapter 28 of *Agenda 21* is concerned with the role of local authorities in putting sustainable development into practice. This stresses the need for their involvement:

> "... because so many of the problems and solutions being addressed by Agenda 21 have their roots in local activities, the participation and co-operation of local authorities will be a determining factor in fulfilling its objectives. ..... As the level of government closest to the people, they play a vital role in educating, mobilising and responding to the public to promote sustainable development." (UN 1992, Chapter 28)

The plan also makes two specific objectives for local authorities:

- to consult all of the community to reach consensus on a *Local Agenda 21* by 1996

- to work towards consultation and cooperation among local authorities at an international level by 1994.

The status of Agenda 21 has increased since it was first signed at Rio, and, for local authorities at least, Agenda 21 is seen as the most significant outcome of the UNCED process (Tuxworth 1996). Although Chapter 28 is relatively short and fails to go in to great detail, it is estimated that around two thirds of Agenda 21's actions require some kind of local authority involvement (LGMB 1993a).

A similar importance is also attached to the role of a local authority in the European Union's view of sustainability. The EU's 5th Environmental Action Programme (CEC 1992), which came into operation at the beginning of 1993, has as its title *Towards Sustainability*. On the function of local authorities it says that:

> "Local and regional authorities have a particularly important part to play in ensuring the sustainability of development through the exercise of their statutory functions as 'competent authorities' for many of the existing Directives and Regulations and in the context of the practical application of the principle of subsidiarity." (CEC 1992 p57)

Again, a large proportion of the programme's recommendations, around 40%, require the active participation of the local authority sector (LGMB 1993a). The 5th Environmental Action Programme also indicates the direction that policies should be taking and provides quite detailed recommendations for local authorities in the areas of:

- Spatial Planning
- Economic Development
- Infrastructure Development
- Control of Industrial Pollution
- Waste Management
- Transport
- Internal Auditing
- Public Information, Education and Training

This emphasis is mirrored at the national level in the UK. The UK's national sustainable development strategy (DOE 1994a) describes in Chapter 30 the role that local government plays in putting sustainability into practice. Although the UK has recently seen increasing centralisation in the role of central government at the expense of local government (Cloke 1992; Kingdom 1991a), the UK strategy places great emphasis on the importance of local authorities in sustainable development and lists a number of existing initiatives which demonstrate this importance. For example the Strategy notes the importance of the *Local Agenda 21 Campaign* and other local government work on indicators for sustainable development in particular (see Section 2.3.2 below), as well as the significance of local authorities for implementing transport and land use policies to encourage walking, cycling and public transport, whilst decreasing volumes of private motorised transport (DOE 1994a, Chapter 30).

However, the National Strategy is also quick to emphasise the importance of collaborative work, where central and local government, as well as other public and private organisations need to be actively involved in sustainable development initiatives (Selman 1996). It is on these grounds that the UK Strategy has been criticised by many in local government and academic circles for not taking an active enough lead in sustainable development, and for

failing to enable local authorities to be as active as they would like to be in certain areas (see for example LGMB 1994a; Whitehead 1996). These issues are discussed later in the chapter as the progress of local authorities on sustainable development is considered.

To understand the emphasis placed on local government by the documents discussed above (and the recent levels of activity in local authority sustainable development) one must also understand the traditional role of local government in the UK, and how this relates to a new role focused around sustainable development. The local authority sector has a long history of dealing with environmental issues of all kinds, and rather in the way that sustainable development evolved out of existing debates and long running problems, so the local authority role in sustainable development has evolved out of its own traditions and existing responsibilities.

2.3.1 The Local Authority Tradition and Sustainable Development

Perhaps one of the clearest illustrations of why local authorities have been given such an important role in putting sustainable development into practice is provided by Bosworth (1993). He summarises the importance of local authorities to sustainable development through a straight forward list of points:

- Local authorities are big resource users in their own right, it is estimated that they can have an impact on about 10% of the energy bill of England & Wales.

- Local authorities are service providers & enablers, therefore they have specific statutory environmental (& social) duties and responsibilities.

- Local government is the level of government closest to the people, therefore local authorities have the democratic mandate which is the basis for public participation in decision making about the local area. This also requires informing and educating the public on sustainable development.

- Local authorities have the responsibility for putting central government ideas into effect so that the benefits are felt at local level. For example the Governments initiative to recycle 25% of domestic waste by 2000 requires local implementation. Central government sets the regulatory framework but local authorities turn this into action.

• Local authorities also influence central government, that is the communication channels between the two levels work both ways. Therefore local government should be, and often is, influencing central government into further action in this area. (after Bosworth 1993)

One further point could also be added to this list, that local authorities can *translate* global issues relating to sustainable development into relevant issues and actions at the local level, so that global problems can be made relevant to local people and the local environment (LGMB 1993a).

When considering an approach like Bosworth's, it is helpful to understand the history of British local government. The very basis of local government as we know it today grew out of the need to address the environmental problems generated by the industrial revolution (Kingdom 1991b, Chapter 16). To deal with many of the immediate symptoms of rapid urbanisation and industrialisation, local authorities were given a wide range of environmental responsibilities covering areas such as environmental health, housing, waste, transport and planning. And therefore local authorities can be seen to have been developing policies and providing services aimed at improving the local environment and local living conditions since 'Victorian times' (Ageyman & Evans 1994).

More recently these discrete areas of activity have begun to be seen in relation to each other. Local environmental policy making has begun to converge, with individual areas of responsibility being coordinated under the corporate banner (Webber 1994). The first sign of this development in the UK were the increased number of 'green plans' and environmental strategies being developed at the local level to meet what has since been called the 'new environmental agenda' (Ageyman & Evans 1994). The ascent of a more corporate approach to the environment throughout the 1980's is well analysed by authors such as Raemakers et al (1991; 1992a; 1992b), who investigate the increased publication of green plans, and provide a comprehensive index of them throughout the UK; and Ageyman and Evans (1994), who plot the rise of this new local environmental agenda, its impact in traditional areas of policy making and its implications for the local government role as a whole (see below).

As well as an important environmental tradition, however, local authorities have also developed an economic role, and this is also a significant element of their relationship to sustainable development. Since the 1980's local authorities have taken a much more strategic role in promoting and managing local economic development (Shayler & Laimer 1994). This means that local authorities are often the best placed organisation to intervene in the local economy and integrate environment and development concerns towards sustainable development (Jacobs & Stott 1992; Shayler & Laimer 1994). As noted above, much of the European and UK Government position is in-line with this view. The European and UK legislative framework for economic development is reviewed by Gibbs (1994) who investigates the potential for marrying environmental and economic development concerns in metropolitan authorities. Gibbs' main conclusion is that:

"Metropolitan authorities are ideally placed to formulate a multi-levelled corporate strategy for the sustainable management of the local environment." (Gibbs 1994 p99)

One of the ways in which local authorities can achieve this aim is to ensure that that their economic development plans, required by the Local government and Housing Act (DOE 1989), contain environmental as well as economic goals. A great amount of detail on how this should, and has been, done can be found in Gibbs (1993) and LGMB (1993b).

2.3.2 The Local Agenda Moves On

Once this corporate approach to the environment and economy is established, a wider interpretation of the environmental agenda is possible in local government. Consequently some, but by no means all, individual local authorities have also begun to adopt sustainable development as a policy aim. Jacobs (1993 from Gibbs 1994) reviews local authority progress on environmental issues and differentiates between three stages of development. The first stage is a concern for isolated environmental issues, the second an adoption of a corporate environmental approach, and the third the adoption of sustainability goals. The extent of this move from a general concern for the environment to a full acknowledgement and commitment to sustainable development is at present well documented in quantitative terms. For example various questionnaire survey type research exercises have indicated an increased adoption of sustainable development by

individual local authorities in distinct policy or more corporately (Ageyman and Tuxworth 1995; Patton and Worthington 1995; Gibbs et al 1995).

One measure of corporate commitment to sustainable development is the extent to which local authorities are producing their own Local Agenda 21 strategy. As noted above, Agenda 21 placed a requirement on all local authorities to prepare their own action plans for sustainable development, and this has been interpreted by many British local authorities to mean the preparation of their own plan, or strategy document, commonly referred to as the Local Agenda 21 (LA21). Indeed, LA21 is now emerging as the main vehicle on which local authorities are driving their sustainable development initiatives in the UK (Tuxworth 1996). A recent survey on this subject found that 90% of responding UK local authorities are committed to a LA21 process (Tuxworth 1996). This represents between 44% and 50% of UK local authorities as a whole (depending upon whether the survey's response rate is calculated as a proportion of local authorities before or after local government re-organisation on the 1st of April 1996). Over half of the local authorities who are committed to LA21 are also intending to produce a strategy document on sustainable development by a specific target date (Tuxworth 1996).

'Leading edge local authorities' (Webber 1994) are also becoming well known for sustainable development initiatives throughout local government and academic communities. For example the Leicester Environment City project have published their experiences of turning Agenda 21 into practical local initiatives (Environ 1996), whilst the experiences in several other authorities has been reported in conference and journal papers (see for example Brand 1995; Hollins and Percy 1995; Ravetz 1995; Shayler and Lairner 1994; Webber 1996). Often these exercises are conducted jointly between the local authority concerned and an academic institution, and this can provide important results on the experiences of promoting sustainable development in various areas of council responsibilities.

However, probably the most significant level of activity in this area has been seen in the five local authority associations - the Association of District Councils, the Association of County Councils, the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, the Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities and the Association of Local Authorities in Northern Ireland. These local

authority associations made an official submission to UNCED through the Local Government Management Board - a technical agency of the local authority associations (LGMB 1992b), and were part of the consultation exercise for the UK sustainable development strategy (LGMB 1993a). The UK Local Agenda 21 (LA21) Campaign, which has the aim of supporting local authorities in preparing LA21's, was launched by the local authority associations in spring 1993. The first step of the Campaign was to establish a steering committee, made up of senior local elected officials and representatives from other sectors such as business, education, women's groups and trade unions. Since then the Campaign has been active in many areas and has published a range of guidance and advice for local authorities which promotes policies for sustainable development, and is often critical of the lack of commitment to the concept by central government (see for example LGMB 1993b and 1994a).

Most of these publications are essentially prescriptive guidance to individual local authorities, rather than detailed analysis. They provide a general introduction to sustainable development issues and case study examples of current good practice (LGMB 1994b). The exception to this pattern is *A Framework for Local Sustainability* (LGMB 1993a), which provides a relatively detailed discussion of sustainable development issues and the process of creating policies and projects to address them in the present legislative framework. This publication and its recommendations for central and local government is discussed further in Chapter Four.

Since its creation, the UK Local Agenda 21 Campaign has also served as an organisational model for the creation of LA21 initiatives around the world, receiving international recognition for its innovation in local sustainable development initiatives (ICLEI 1997). In 1997 the three English and Welsh local authority associations (Association of District Council's, Association of County Council's and Association of Metropolitan Authorities) merged to become the Local Government Association (LGA), and the LA21 Campaign continues its work on this basis.

2.3.3 Discussion

Running parallel with this activity in local government have been some changes in the status of local authorities and their remit to make and implement policy decisions. Changes to the central-local legislative framework in the UK since 1979 have altered the balance of power between local government and central government in the UK, at the cost of the former (see for example Cloke 1992; Kingdom 1991a; Stewart & Stoker 1989; Stoker & Young 1993). Therefore a point which deserves clear emphasis at this stage of the research is that the initiative towards sustainable development is not a top down imposition from national government to the local level. Indeed, in the UK, as in other countries, local authorities have often been much further advanced in terms of their understanding of, and initiatives towards, sustainable development than central government. So that local authorities have adopted sustainable development aims despite central government measures, rather than because of them (Ageyman & Evans 1997).

Therefore it is important to consider why and how local authorities are adopting sustainable development and LA21 with such enthusiasm, as well as how true to the original principles of Agenda 21 are their current initiatives. Ward (1996) suggests that most local authorities went through the 'greening process' as a response to external environmental activists and pressure groups. The number of authorities signing the Friends of the Earth *Environmental Charter for Local Government* (FOE 1989) in the late 1980's and early 1990's would seem to support this model (Ageyman & Evans 1994).

However, as noted above, many changes have occurred within local authorities since this time. With the establishment of a corporate environmental commitment many authorities have also set up inter-departmental environment working groups, often with a new post of environment officer or coordinator (Webber 1996; Tuxworth 1996). These groups of officers and individual coordinators are now increasingly recognised as being the main driving force behind local sustainable development initiatives, with over half of local authorities describing their LA21 process as an officer driven initiative and only a small handful of councils citing local politicians as an original motivator (Tuxworth 1996). The role of the LGA and the national Local Agenda 21 Campaign (see above) should also not be underestimated, as it provides the majority of material and guidance for these active officers.

There are also questions surrounding the quality and success of local sustainable development initiatives. As explained above, many local initiatives originated from purely environmental concerns and the extent to which sustainable development has moved outside this sphere of influence is debatable. Tuxworth (1996) notes that sustainable development is only a significant influence in the traditional environmental areas of local authority policy work, namely environmental services (that is environmental health), waste management and land-use planning. Even within these areas it is possible to question how far sustainable development principles have changed existing methods of working. For example Whitehead (1996) suggests that much of the LA21 process has involved a simple substitution of the difficult sustainable development issues by far more manageable areas of 'environmental protection'. He also raises the question of whether local politicians are tempted in to 'fudging' the issue of sustainable development by presenting the concept in a limited way which is in line with their current environmental agenda. So that, although local authorities can be seen to be very active in traditional green areas of the environmental development agenda, other parts of their work in areas like finance and transport remain relatively unaffected by sustainable development (ibid., p18).

Of course this is not to suggest that all local authorities are simply adopting the vocabulary of sustainable development whilst carrying on with their 'business as usual.' However the questions raised by authors such as Tuxworth and Whitehead, above, underline the inherently qualitative nature of sustainable development. The fact that over 90% of responding local authorities reply in the positive to a survey question about LA21 does not necessarily mean that the vast majority of the UK local government sector are implementing radical sustainable development policies. On the contrary, "the generally favourable conclusions of many analysts (some of whom are, in practice, advocates for local government) must be tempered with the difficulties experienced in implementing substantive local programmes" (Selman 1996, p89). Therefore it is important to recognise the potential for local authorities to implement sustainable development, as well as analyse just how far this potential is being realised. This is one of the aims of this research project with regard to land-use planning.

2.4 Theme 3: Land-Use Planning

The third theme to be selected from the wider sustainable development debate is land-use planning. This can be defined by three key characteristics, land-use planning is:

- An activity focused on the future - concerned with devising strategies towards desired end states

- An activity carried out in the public sector - local, regional or national government influencing households and firms

- An activity focused on the physical environment - concerned with strategies to shape (or manage) the built and natural environments (After Rydin 1993).

Therefore, before going on to discuss the relationship between land-use planning and sustainable development, it may be helpful to understand exactly what the term land-use planning actually means to a local authority. A definition of general planning, as opposed to land use planning specifically, is provided by Faludi:

> "Planning is the application of scientific method - however crude - to policy making. What this means is that conscious efforts are made to increase validity of policies in terms of the present and anticipated future of the environment." (Faludi 1973: p1)

This definition, although it is rooted in the procedural planning theory (see below), demonstrates the scope of planning which, in its broadest interpretation, is no more than a process for determining future action through a sequence of choices (Davidoff & Reiner 1973). Archibugi (1996) notes the many fields in which planning is applied, in an attempt to summarise and understand the scope of planning he classifies all its forms into five distinct categories: physical planning, economic planning, social planning, development planning, and operational planning.

This research project is concerned with the first item in Archibugi's list, physical planning, also known as land-use planning or town and country planning in the UK. A simple but comprehensive definition of land-use planning and the planning system in the UK is provided by Healey and Shaw:

"The land use planning system uses regulatory power to contribute to the management of environmental change... development plans provide the framework within which the criteria for making regulatory decisions are established." (Healey and Shaw 1993a p769)

The scope and objectives of the British land-use planning system are set by central government through guidance notes and legislation which require interpretation by the local planning authority and are underpinned by legal review (Healey and Shaw 1993a & b). Local authorities are the main agent of land-use planning in the UK, they control development through regulatory decision making, and their development plans influence the course of future development in the area. As such British planning can be seen to operate largely within the context of local government (Selman 1995). The land-use planning system is, therefore, a good example of how one particular aspect of a local authorities' responsibility can make a central contribution to the pursuit of local sustainable development (Selman 1996).

2.4.1 Planning for Sustainable Development

A clear link is made between land-use planning and operationalising sustainable development in several of the international reports mentioned in Chapter One. Chapter 7, in the first section of *Agenda 21*, entitled *Promoting Sustainable Human Settlement Development*, dedicates a whole programme area to planning. In Chapter 10, entitled *Integrated Approach To The Planning And Management of Land Resources*, *Agenda 21* states that physical and land use planning is required to resolve the conflicts between the human demand for land and the life support role it provides. This chapter requires the planning system to adopt an overall framework of environmental and development goals to achieve the optimal use of land.

Towards Sustainability, the European Fifth Environmental Action Programme, provides similar reasons for the importance of planning system, as well as guidance for planning authorities. As the statutory planning authorities in the UK, the Action Programme requires local councils to:

- safeguard the natural environment & improve the urban environment

- optimize energy use and promote transport efficiency

- subject policies to strategic environmental assessment

- cooperate with neighboring authorities to prepare a joint regional development plan which is able to take on board the wider issues. (After LGMB 1993c)

In a similar way, in Britain, *Sustainable Development: the UK Strategy* (DOE 1994a) is also specific about the role of the planning system in meeting the challenges of sustainable development. Chapter 11 on Land Use is consistent with *Agenda 21* in that it highlights the need to balance competing demands for the finite resource of land. It also stresses the need to protect certain environments and maximise access while minimising travel. Chapter 35 of the strategy, in section 4 *Putting Sustainability into Practice*, outlines the planning system and promotes it as "a key instrument in delivering land use and development compatible with the aims of sustainable development" (DOE 1994a, p224), setting four clear goals for the planning system which are outlined in Figure 2.1.

1. To provide for the nations needs for food production, mineral extraction, new homes and other buildings, while respecting environmental objectives.

2. To use the already developed areas in the most efficient way, while making them more attractive places in which to live.

3. To conserve the natural resources of wildlife and landscape (safeguarding those identified as being of special interest or of national and international importance).

4. To shape new development patterns in a way that minimises the use of energy consumed in travel between dispersed settlements.

(After LGMB 1994a)

Figure 2.1: Four Goals for the Land-Use Planning System from *Sustainable Development: The UK Strategy*

Prior to the publishing of this strategy, UK Government legislation (DOE 1990a and 1991) increased the areal coverage of plans and their significance in the decision making process; so that, after a relatively low profile in the 1980's, the development plan has

emerged as an increasingly important instrument in the planning process (Healey and Shaw 1993a). Other recent changes to the planning system have attempted to take account of environmental and sustainability issues, these are:

- Revision of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG's), particularly PPG 12 and PPG 1 which require development plans to ensure that development and growth are sustainable (DOE 1997; DOE 1992a, para 1.8).

- The publication of a good practice guide on environmental appraisal of development plans (DOE 1993a).

- The inclusion of environmental assessment requirements in the planning process for some developments (DOE 1988).

In the words of one local government activist this new legislative framework:

> "...sends a clear signal to the planning system that there are opportunities for local and global environmental issues to be taken into account in plan preparation." (Hams 1992 p5)

However, the UK sustainable development strategy and changes to planning guidance have also seen some criticism. Notwithstanding the fact that the strategy is generally seen to have a 'light green' and superficial understanding of sustainable development (Selman 1996), the strategy does not actually define what sustainable development means for land-use planning, neither does it suggest how other local sustainable development initiatives such as a LA21 relate to development plans (LGMB 1994a). Similarly the confidence of local planning authorities to refuse planning applications on the grounds of sustainable development or environmental considerations has also been questioned (LGMB 1994a). Whilst the discretion of local authorities to interpret legislation and guidance has led many to point out that individual authorities are under no obligation to integrate sustainable development issues or even conform to the policies in their development plan (see for example LGMB 1994a; *Planning 1092;* Whitehead 1996).

Therefore, to understand these developments in the UK, as well as the significance attached to planning for sustainable development at the international level, it will be necessary to

develop a more theoretical analysis of the discipline. The deeper understanding of planning practice and ideology that this provides may then illuminate more about the relationship between land-use planning and sustainable development.

2.4.2 Relationships Between Land-Use Planning and Sustainable Development

One reason for land-use planning's continued association with sustainable development is the fact that land-use and the development of land takes place in precisely located geographical space (Selman 1996). Therefore all of the abstract debates surrounding sustainable development, such as economic benefits and the environmental or social impacts of these benefits, become very tangible and real as they relate to a particular place with its own physical characteristics, environmental constraints, history, cultural attachment and ownership (Selman 1996). The land-use planning system is the locally administered political framework charged with dealing with these issues.

The following quote goes to the heart of the relationship between land-use planning and sustainable development:

> "Because land use is so closely bound up with environmental change, land-use planning demands the translation of abstract principles of sustainability into operational policies and decisions. Paradoxically, this process is likely to expose the very conflicts that 'sustainable development' was meant to reconcile. .... The planning system is likely to remain a focus of attention because it is frequently the forum in which these conflicts are first exposed." (Owens 1995 p8)

Owens' simple but incisive insight helps explain some of the institutional emphasis placed on planning by the reports described above. Land-use planning is operating at the interface of sustainable development in theory and sustainable development in practice.

To some, land-use or spatial planning, with its traditional emphasis on bringing together environmental, economic and social aspects of land use (Healey and Shaw 1993a), appears to have been working within the central concerns of sustainable development since the first inception of the system in 1945. Certainly this view is advocated by writers

45

such as Hall et al (1993) and Millichap (1993) who argue that the planning system in the UK has always been concerned with sustainable development albeit under different names:

> "....although the words 'sustainable development' are new, the underlying concept is already a familiar one in British land use planning. The planning system as we know it - based on the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act - was designed in and immediately after the war years in a context of intense public concern about the balance between urban development and agricultural, forest and open land resources." (Hall et al 1993, p19)

The authors acknowledge that the planning system, post-war, has its limitations and requires new impetus in order to re-focus around sustainability; but maintain that the underlying approach of the system largely equates to that of sustainable development. This view is often supported by the rediscovery of traditional planning policies renewed in the context of sustainable development, for example support for public transport, 'compact city' and 'de-centralised concentration' patterns of development (Owens 1991; Breheny 1992 from Healey and Shaw 1993b).

Other research, however, illustrates a position of changing emphasis in planning and a gradual development of environmental concerns which is only just coming around to the full implications of sustainable development (Healey and Shaw 1993b; Kidd 1993; Marshall 1992; Owens 1995). For example Healey and Shaw argue that the whole approach of post-war planning has been largely concerned with economic priorities over environmental considerations, and therefore quite different in practice to the newer considerations of sustainable development (if the concept is to be defined in line with *Our Common Future* or *Agenda 21*):

> "....this [the belief that the planning system equates to sustainable development] ignores the scale of the challenge outlined above. The traditional planning agendas have typically been judgmental rather than calculative in form. As such, there are major problems in incorporating the language of trade off and balance in any other form than as a vague professional and administrative policy criteria." (Healey and Shaw 1993b, p40)

The difference of perspective between these two views is the basis for the first stage of the research project and has greater significance in the light of the recent legislative changes (outlined above), which place increasing emphasis on the planning system to deliver sustainable development.

As well as considering these practical similarities between planning concerns and the concerns of sustainable development, it is also important to understand the ideological and theoretical relationship between the two. Foley, writing back in 1973 for example, isolates three ideologies within British land-use planning:

1. **The budget function of planning:** To reconcile competing aims for the use of limited land, so as to ensure a consistent, balanced and orderly arrangement of land uses. Although it appears neutral, or rational, this aim is carried out in the name of 'the public interest' and so relies on judgments from planners. Balanced and orderly are also highly ambiguous terms which deserve better definition.

2. **Planning as champion:** To provide a good or better physical environment for a healthy and civilised life. Foley sees this role as championing planning, it removes the veil of neutrality from the system and emphasises planning's social concerns.

3. **Planning as part of a broader social programme:** To provide the physical basis for better urban community life. At the time that Foley was writing this was interpreted as low density residential areas and control on conurbation growth to foster community life.

Despite the ambiguities and inconsistencies within and between these three ideologies, it is salient to note planning's concern for social and environmental issues, and the relationship between society and the environment. This is still very much a central concern of today's planning system, and is central to an understanding of sustainable development. Of course, Foley was writing over 20 years ago, these ideologies have changed in relation to each other and in their content over time so that some of Foley's ideas may now seem dated. It is, therefore, important to understand planning's recent historical development and place Foley's work into some kind of ideological and historical context, bringing his and other interpretations of land-use planning up to date.

2.4.3 The Ideological Context of Planning for Sustainable Development

It was the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act which formalised the activity of land-use planning in the UK, and this was part of a wider period of consolidation and development enjoyed by British planning immediately after the second world war. The establishment of planning at this time owed much to those who theorised planning as superior to *laissez-faire* capitalism or totalitarian dictatorship (Hague 1991). However, British planning had grown from a peculiar amalgam of concern for public health and urban social unrest (see Rydin 1993: Chapter 1, for a fuller account of the development of planning), and this tradition meant that physical design professionals, such as architects or engineers, and their technical practices dominated planning thinking until the 1960's. The general consensus that planning should aim to improve living conditions in towns and their economic functioning (see Foley's first & second ideology above) meant that there was little need to analyse the activity to any depth (Hague 1991).

This situation had changed by the 1960's. At this time land-use planning began to evolve from a creative profession, based on technical skills but with a strong reliance on individual intuition, towards a rational scientific process called procedural planning. Procedural Planning Theory (PPT), imported in to Britain from the USA, derives from a general systems model and conceptualises planning as a general decision making process. This process relies on several distinct and rational steps: goal identification with systematic analysis, systematic evaluation of alternatives and monitoring of performance (After Healey et al 1981). This technical/rational approach to planning became well established throughout the 1960's and early 70's in the UK, and enabled Faludi (1973) to argue that planning is pure scientific method applied to decision making (see his definition of planning above), and as such the planning process could be applied to many fields of practice including land-use planning.

PPT, then, offered a very important legitimation of the planning profession, and the land-use planning system, bringing it under the auspices of social science and rational choice theory (see Jordan & Richardson 1987: Chapter 1, for an explanation of rationality in the social sciences). To understand PPT, however, one needs to discount any knowledge of wider issues such as power and politics, issues which set the context in which planning operates. This fact, along with some noticeable failings of land-use planning in the mid 1970's, led to a

certain amount of scepticism about comprehensive planning from pluralists and others. Pluralism understands politics and decision making as the consequence of competition by participants, as such decisions evolve through the interactions of various interests (Jordan & Richardson 1981, Chapter 1). Although pluralism has a history dating back to the nineteenth century, the concept became relevant to British land-use planning in the mid 1970's as ideas of *power* and *incrementalism* were introduced into planning theory.

Power is difficult to define precisely (see Wood & Pitkethley 1994 for at least eight separate definitions), but it has clear implications for a theory of PPT which fails to recognise that different groups in society have different levels of power and can therefore influence the planning process and land-use planning decisions to different extents. The depth of this influence can be misleading, and decisions in the planning system should be understood in terms of *observed power* (analysis based on whose preference is selected, whose preference is not selected), *non-decision making* (analysis based on what preferences are suppressed or not even discussed as an option) and how preferences in general are manipulated to the advantage of one particular group (*ultimate power*). A full discussion of power, the three levels of its operation and their implications for decision making is provided by Ham & Hill (1984, Chapter 4).

An incrementalist approach, on the other hand, criticises the claim to synopsism made by PPT. Incrementalism is essentially political change by small steps. Lindblom (1979) makes a strong critique of comprehensive approaches to decision making, such as PPT, based on the impossibility of gathering sufficient information to consider all possible policy options and their implications. He goes on to demonstrate how every step of a rational decision making approach is necessarily limited or compromised by the practicalities of real situations. Public administrators and bureaucrats, such as planners, have a range of tactics for overcoming these short falls. For example they tend to limit their alternatives to a few familiar policy scenarios, draw on experience and past mistakes to guide decision making and react to problems rather than create positive goals (after Lindblom 1979: pp 517-518). This analysis is not intended to be a criticism of planners, however, merely an attempt to understand how the practice of decision making really works. Lindblom does not see synopsis as a realistic or helpful goal, and argues that informed incrementalism is far superior to misconceived comprehensiveness.

An appreciation of the political dimension to the land-use planning system through concepts like pluralism, power and incrementalism changes our understanding of planning. The technical understanding of planning as merely a rational and disinterested decision making process is scrutinised and found wanting. Policy making, and with it British land-use planning, is seen to be more of a social, rather than scientific, process requiring an understanding of politics and power. Acceptance of this fact changes the nature of land-use planning with implications for a concept like sustainable development. For example, land-use planning has been criticised for its support of the interests of capital rather than the environment or wider society (Hague 1991). Stemming from a Marxist understanding of the state and its agencies, critical planning theory saw land-use planning operating in the interests of capital; its concerns for housing improvements or environmental protection, for example, being simply a concession to enable the reproductive needs of capital (Healey at al 1981). This is clearly in direct contrast to the 'public interest' element put forward for planning (see Foley's first ideology), and is at odds with the radical role envisaged for land-use planning in *Agenda 21* or the UK strategy for sustainable development.

However, the greatest threat to the British planning system did not come from a Marxist analysis, but from the opposite end of the political spectrum - the New Right. A bureaucratic, interventionist and socially orientated planning system has little in common with the New Right emphasis on free markets, consumer choice and de-regulation. As land-use planning was 'modified', by-passed and simplified throughout the 1980's (see Thornley 1993 for a full account of this) planning had to rethink itself and its role. From this necessity emerged public-choice theory (see for example Poulton 1991), essentially conceptualising planning as a mechanism for regulating the externalities of markets, whilst allowing choice to be exercised as efficiently as possible through free markets. Again, this change in the perception of land-use planning has direct implications for sustainable development and planning's role in implementing the concept. For example, the retraction of planning's scope and remit during the changes of the 1980's could limit the ability of land-use planning to implement all aspects of sustainable development. This issue, and other points to arise from the current ideological context of land-use planning, is discussed in the following section.

2.4.4 Discussion

This short review of land-use planning, its ideological elements and relationship to sustainable development, has not been comprehensive or particularly detailed. What it has provided, however, is an insight into how land-use planning has been perceived over the last fifty years, and how the current thinking on sustainable development perceives planning now.

Perhaps the only sure conclusion on land-use planning that could have been reached by the end of the 1980's was that the general perception of land-use planning, its interpretation and role in society, had changed. To some this change meant that land-use planning had contracted from the all embracing and powerful manifestation of state intervention on behalf of society and the environment, to a limited control mechanism designed to service the market. To others however, planning had not contracted, but merely fragmented into several possible roles defined by the economic and physical contexts in which it was required to operate (Hague 1991, p503-4).

In the 1990's, however, this debate over the role of planning has some interesting consequences for sustainable development. There are currently two distinct themes in planning practice - firstly a need to legitimise the practice of land-use planning, and secondly the ever-changing frontier or scope of planning responsibility. The tendency for some to see sustainable development as a traditional concern of land-use planning has already been noted above. This, combined with the international commitment to sustainable development, may mean that sustainable development is seen as a new legitimation of the land-use planning system. Hague (1991: p306) notes how the 'new environmental agenda' (along with participation and regionalism) may provide an 'old yet new' basis of theory and legitimacy in British planning, and (one can't help thinking) this may be the reasoning behind the arguments of Hall et al (1993) and Millichip (1993), outlined above.

In this sense the implications for land-use planning from sustainable development may seem quite positive. However, the implications for sustainable development from the current planning system are not quite as clear. With the restriction of much of planning's scope throughout the 1980's, and the lack of certainty surrounding its present role after the rise of the New Right, is land-use planning up to the task of operationalising sustainable

51

development? Selman (1995, p287) wonders whether planning historians will see the 1990's as 'the sustainable development phase' of British planning. In noting the 'fortuitous collision' between a large part of the sustainable development agenda and the traditional domain of planning (Selman 1995, p287), he could well be right. And the above review has indeed found a close relationship between planning and sustainable development on some issues.

For sustainable development, however, the point to emphasise is that the concept, as conceived in *Our Common Future* and *Agenda 21*, is more than a passing phase designed to reinvigorate the land-use planning system after the 1980's, or assist planners in justifying their profession. The aims of *Agenda 21* and similar documents require much more fundamental commitment and a wider response by the planning system as a whole for success.

2.5 Issues Raised: Sustainable Development and Unitary Development Plans

UDPs are the focus of this research because of their potential to combine all three themes discussed above and operationalise sustainable development in the current socio-political context. UDPs contain strategic and site specific land use development policies for the metropolitan areas of England, and are prepared by local planning authorities. As such it can be seen that UDPs are an important aspect of cities, local authorities and the land-use planning system in Britain:

Cities

UDPs cover the 36 metropolitan district authorities and 32 London boroughs of England. Together these local authorities account for the largest cities and most heavily urbanised areas in England. For example, even excluding the capital of London, the 36 metropolitan districts account for around 11 million people, or 19% of the UK's population.

Local authorities

UDPs are prepared and written by the 36 metropolitan authorities and 33 London boroughs within the framework of national guidance and legislation. Since 1986 all of these authorities have been unitary, with no further tiers of government between themselves and central government or themselves and the local community. The several stages of plan preparation each require local political verification and public consultation.

Land-use planning

The plans are the primary land-use planning policy document for a particular geographical area, their significance in the decision making process being increased by legislation in the early 1990's (DOE 1990a and 1991). Part one of a UDP provides strategic guiding principles and general policies for the development and use of land, part two of a UDP contains detailed proposals and policies for land use, including a site specific map.

In addition to the similarity of subject matter between UDPs and sustainable development, one of the most favourable aspects of the plans for operationalising sustainable development is the fact that they are already in place and part of a well established regulatory system. UDPs offer national government and local authorities the opportunity at least to start the journey towards sustainable development (Selman 1995), without the need to initiate a new regulatory or political system. As such UDPs have the potential to allow a rapid response to be made to issues on the new sustainable development agenda. This opinion, and the pragmatic approach to sustainable development which is encouraged, may well have been instrumental in the emphasis on land-use planning made by the UK national strategy for sustainable development.

However, the extent to which UDPs are currently taking advantage of this opportunity and putting sustainable development into practice is still unclear. Enthusiasm to be, or be seen to be, active in the area of sustainable development certainly does exist. This is illustrated by a recent survey of local authorities which reveals that the majority of councils are intending to incorporate sustainable development into their development plan in some

form, even if they are not entirely sure what this will mean and how to do it (*Planning* 1047). Academic research into the changing content of development plans, and its success in integrating sustainable development, has also been carried out, but this is not yet conclusive nor comprehensive.

For example, Healey and Shaw (1993b) examine the position of the environment in the planning system, as represented by development plans and government advice spanning the 1940's to the 1990's. Their study identifies five environmental themes in development plans, the first four of which revolve around the conservation and exploitation of the landscape as a resource for recreation. It is only when looking at the 1990's that their work identifies:

> "An adoption of the rhetoric of sustainable development, absorbing ecological conceptions of restraints into planning criteria, along with some concern for global impacts, capacities and limits, but yet to be developed into practical strategies and practices." (Healey and Shaw 1993a p771)

However, their study does note that some planning authorities are rapidly absorbing the new agenda of sustainable development and cite Newcastle upon Tyne Draft Unitary Development Plan, Kent County Councils revised Structure Plan and the work of the County Planning Officers Society (CPOS 1993) as attempting to address the issues important to sustainable development.

Marshall (1992) identifies the terminology of sustainable development and an awareness of the issues in some of London's UDPs, although he finds little evidence of sustainable development being addressed in its stronger sense and describes the process in London as being at an intermediate stage with some further improvement required. Kidd (1993) charts the historical development of environmental planning in the policies of metropolitan district development plans. She concludes with the point that while sustainable development is only just beginning to make its way into the UDPs of metropolitan districts, there is at least one plan which uses it as a starting point to develop strategic policies.

These in-depth investigations are complemented by the findings of more extensive, but less detailed, surveys which attempt to assess the position of sustainable development in a range of current development plans. Gibbs et al (1995) in their postal survey of all urban local authorities, find that over 70% of responding authorities believe that they have successfully integrated environment and development policies in their development plans. 48% of the authorities also claim to have combined environment and development issues in their economic development strategies. However, the quality of this integration, in terms of sustainable development, is unclear from the results of a simple questionnaire. Particularly as the same survey found that only 4% of authorities had conducted an environmental appraisal of their plans using the DOE guidelines (DOE 1993a).

These types of results raise the issue of the suitability of the current UK planning system, as implemented by local authorities, to the requirements of real sustainable development. How well does the agenda of the planning system coincide with that of sustainable development? And how successfully can the current institutional arrangements of land-use planning put the issues on this agenda into practice? These questions are particularly salient in terms of sustainable development in urban areas, for as Mitlin and Satterthwaite note:

> "The key problems [to allowing cities to address sustainable development goals] are generally institutional and societal constraints, not natural resource constraints." (Mitlin and Satterthwaite 1994, p2)

Therefore, in order to be able to assess how far the institution of British land-use planning currently constrains or enables local authorities to address sustainable development, a more systematic and comprehensive investigation into the content of contemporary unitary development plans is required. The research strategy put forward in the following chapter attempts to address these issues and so meet the aims of the research project.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH AIMS AND STRATEGY

3.0 Chapter Outline

The role of this chapter is to look in more detail at the aims of the research project and explain how these will be met by the research strategy. Before this is done however, it will be useful to briefly discuss the rationale behind the construction of the research project, and so link the project into the wider debate surrounding sustainable development and UDPs outlined in Chapters One and Two.

3.1 Rationale of the Research

Chapter One has introduced the concept of sustainable development and some of the ways in which it is currently being defined. The main issue to arise from Chapter One is the need to *operationalise sustainable development*, that is, to put the principles of sustainable development into practice on the ground. Chapter Two developed this idea to suggest how sustainable development may be operationalised through an existing policy mechanism, namely unitary development plans. Through their relevance to cities, local authorities and the land-use planning system, UDPs exhibit a potential to apply the principles of sustainable development to some of the most populous areas of the UK.

Taken together, both chapters provide one example of how a broad concept like sustainable development can be focused upon one particular mechanism, like UDPs, as a means of implementation. This study will discover how well UDPs are currently meeting this challenge and operationalising sustainable development in their policies. It will then explain the reasons for these results and, in doing this, move on to identify the main reason for the successes, or failures, of UDPs to put sustainable development into practice.

To set the scene for this research it is first of all necessary to look in greater detail at the process of producing a UDP, and highlight some of the possible influences for sustainable development acting upon UDPs. Chapters One and Two have already made reference to many of these influences, and Figure 3.1 uses this information to provide a

simple model of some important factors in the formulation of UDP policies for sustainable development.
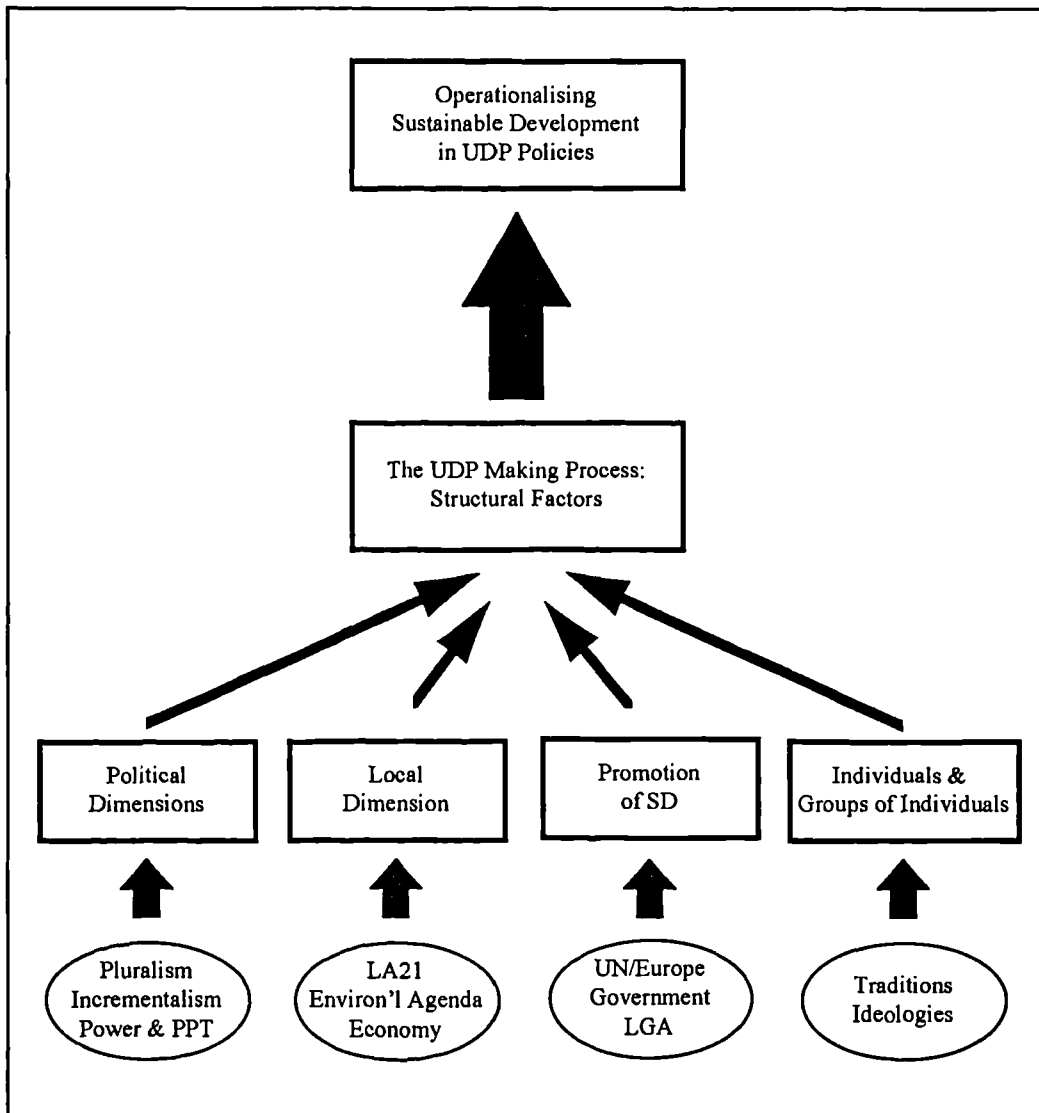
Figure 3.1: Possible influences on the formulation of UDP policies

3.1.1 Producing a UDP

Possibly the most important factor to influence a UDPs general character will be the UDP making process itself, or rather the nature of that process, defined by central government legislation and guidance. The importance of this factor is reflected in Figure 3.1 by its central position in the model. Chapter 2 has referred to the nature of the British land-use planning system and noted how local planning authorities interpret central government guidance to produce their own plans. Precise guidance on how to prepare

and write a plan can be found in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 12* (DOE 1992a) and the DOE's own good practice guide (DOE 1992b). It is possible, therefore, to provide a detailed description of the plan production process, and several authors have done this (see for example Rydin 1993). In the case of UDPs, the plan making process consists of a number of key stages which are outlined in Figure 3.2

- **Publicity and Consultation:** The local authority is required to give adequate publicity to it's proposals and make adequate opportunity for representation to be made on them whilst the plan is being prepared. In most cases this takes the form of a consultation draft plan publicised and made available for comment to statutory consultees and the general public (DOE 1992b).

- **Deposit Stage:** After any possible changes are made to the draft plan in the light of consultation, a further draft plan is placed on formal deposit. During this six week period individuals or organisations can make formal objections or statements of support on the plan and its policies. Again legislation makes requirements of the authority to ensure minimum levels of publicity and opportunity for the public to inspect the deposit draft plan. Every single objection must be considered by the local planning authority who should publicise their responses to each one.

- **Public Local Inquiry:** If all the objections to the deposit plan cannot be settled to the satisfaction of both sides than a public inquiry is held before an independent inspector. The Inspector hears both sides of the argument over all the objections and makes his recommendations known in a report to the local authority. Any modification to the draft plan in the light of the inquiry must be placed on deposit for counter-objections to be made.

- **Adoption:** The authority is not legally bound to accept all the recommendations of the Inspector, but must respond to each one. In this way UDPs may be adopted without reference to a higher authority. However, the Secretary of State for the Environment may call in any part of the plan, including one of the two parts or individual policies (Rydin 1993).

Figure 3.2 - Stages of the UDP making process

What is not clear from guidance and legislation, is how far the nature or structure of this process affects the content of policies, and specifically policies for sustainable development. This type of influence can be termed 'structural', in so much as it is a reflection of the structural characteristics of the land-use planning system. As legislation and government guidance set the framework for the operation of land-use planning in England, and every mechanism of the system is closely defined by such guidance and

legislation, it is sensible to assume that structural influences will be an important influence on UDP policies for sustainable development.

In addition to this factor there are also a set of external influences which feed into the structural characteristics of the land-use planning system, and these need to be made more explicit in the research. External influences on UDP policies for sustainable development may be grouped in several different ways, but can generally be seen to be composed of four main factors: the effects of politics; the particular situation at the local level; the impact of international, national and local promotion of sustainable development; and the particular effects of personalities or groups of personalities active in the plan making process.

Political Dimension

A very closely related aspect of structural factors is illustrated in Figure 3.1 by the box titled 'Political Dimensions'. Chapter Two (Section 2.4.3) has already referred to the criticism of a purely *procedural* understanding of the plan making process, as advocated in procedural planning theory (PPT). Policy making is subject to more subtle influences than the physical structure of the policy making process, and it is important to understand the political dimensions of the process. Issues of *pluralism, power* and *incrementalism* are all useful concepts which could assist in understanding the policy making process. Therefore the relationship of political dimensions to the UDP, and their influence on policies for sustainable development, should not be ignored.

Local Dimension

As every UDP is produced locally, by an individual local authority, the characteristics of that local situation is clearly of importance to the plan's policy content. As explained in Chapter Two above, UDPs are produced by the metropolitan authorities and London boroughs. Although metropolitan authorities do exhibit some very similar socio-economic characteristics, covering as they do the old industrial heartland of England, this should not negate the importance of localism in terms of sustainable development. Chapter Two has already noted that different local authorities are at very different stages

in the development of their environmental policy. This, and the importance of the local sustainable development agenda through a LA21 process, may prove to be an important influence on individual UDPs.

In a similar way, the local economic situation could also prove to be an important influence on the shape and content of UDP policies. The whole focus of sustainable development is about combining environmental and economic priorities. Therefore the characteristics of the local economy, and the priorities that these impose on the UDP must influence the manner in which the environment and sustainable development is perceived at the local level.

Promotion of sustainable development

Both Chapters One and Two were able to highlight many organisations and publications currently promoting the adoption of a sustainable development approach at the international, national and local level. Figure 3.1 highlights the work of the United Nations (Agenda 21) and the European Union (Fifth Environmental Action Programme) at the Global level; the British Government (UK National Sustainable Development Strategy and PPG12) at the national level; and the Local Government Association (LGA) at the local level. Although other organisations are also mentioned in Chapter Two, all of these organisations produce a wide range of guidance, legislation and best-practice advice combining land-use planning and sustainable development. The impact of these on the UDP process could have a very direct relevance to the study, and they will require further consideration.

Personalities and groups of personalities

This final factor contained in Figure 3.1 covers a wide range of potential influences for UDPs and sustainable development. It is in this area that the beliefs and characteristics of the actors involved in the UDP process could be important. For example, Chapter Two has already referred to the relationship of British land-use planning to sustainable development, and the importance of planning ideology and tradition to this relationship. As tradition and ideology are important aspects of the land-use planning system, they

may also be important aspects of the individual planning professionals who work in this system and become socialised to these traditions and ideologies (Rydin 1993, p218). Therefore these individuals, along with the other professionals in the local authority organisation, may well be an important force on the position of sustainable development in UDPs.

In addition to the professionals in the local authority, the actions and power of politicians must also be identified as an important part of this factor. So far the political dimension of the UDP process has only been discussed at an abstract level, in terms of power, pluralism and incrementalism for example. Such concepts will ultimately be revealed in individuals. At the time of researching, the majority of the metropolitan districts are Labour controlled, with the remaining councils having no overall controlling party. Whether or not the traditions and ideologies of these politicians and their parties make a difference to sustainable development and UDPs must therefore be an important consideration for the investigation.

3.1.2 Understanding the UDP Process

Although this section has highlighted a number of possible factors which could influence UDP policies, Figure 3.1 is not intended to be a prescriptive or comprehensive model of the relationship between sustainable development and UDP policies. It is simply an initial attempt to identify some of the possible influences affecting how well sustainable development is addressed in UDP policies. What Figure 3.1, does not tell us, however, is how *successfully* all these factors combine to influence sustainable development in UDPs; which factors are the most important or *powerful* influences for sustainable development in UDPs; or, the relationships that exist *between* the individual factors.

The absence of this information and understanding forms the basis for the whole research project. It can be summed up by three main questions:

- How well are UDPs operationalising sustainable development?

- What factors influence the extent to which UDP policies address sustainable development?

- How effective are these different influences in raising, or suppressing, the profile of sustainable development on the UDP agenda?

Once these questions are answered, it should then be possible to recommend how the UDP making process can be optimised or improved to ensure that UDPs directly address all aspects of sustainable development in the most comprehensive manner possible.

3.2 Investigating Sustainable Development in UDPs

This section explains how the research project will go about answering the above questions to provide a greater insight into sustainable development and UDPs. Within the context of this discussion, the project will address three main research aims using a two stage research process.

3.2.1 Research Aims

As introduced in Chapter One, the aims of the investigation are:

1. To establish how far UDPs are currently operationalising the concept of *sustainable development* in their policies.
2. To identify the primary factors influencing the form and content of policies for sustainable development throughout the UDP making process.
3. To explain these results and so explain the position of sustainable development on the current UDP policy agenda.

In order to meet these three aims various steps need to be taken. These steps are listed in Figure 3.3 and explained below as the two stages of the research strategy are outlined.

3.2.2 Research Strategy

A two stage research process will be used to meet the three research aims. This process is illustrated in Figure 3.3. Stage I consists of a broad survey of all 36 UDPs to assess their strengths and weaknesses in terms of sustainable development. Stage II consists of a much more detailed case study investigation into the evolution of two contrasting UDPs. This will enable the histories of the plans to be analysed so that specific influences and significant features can be identified.
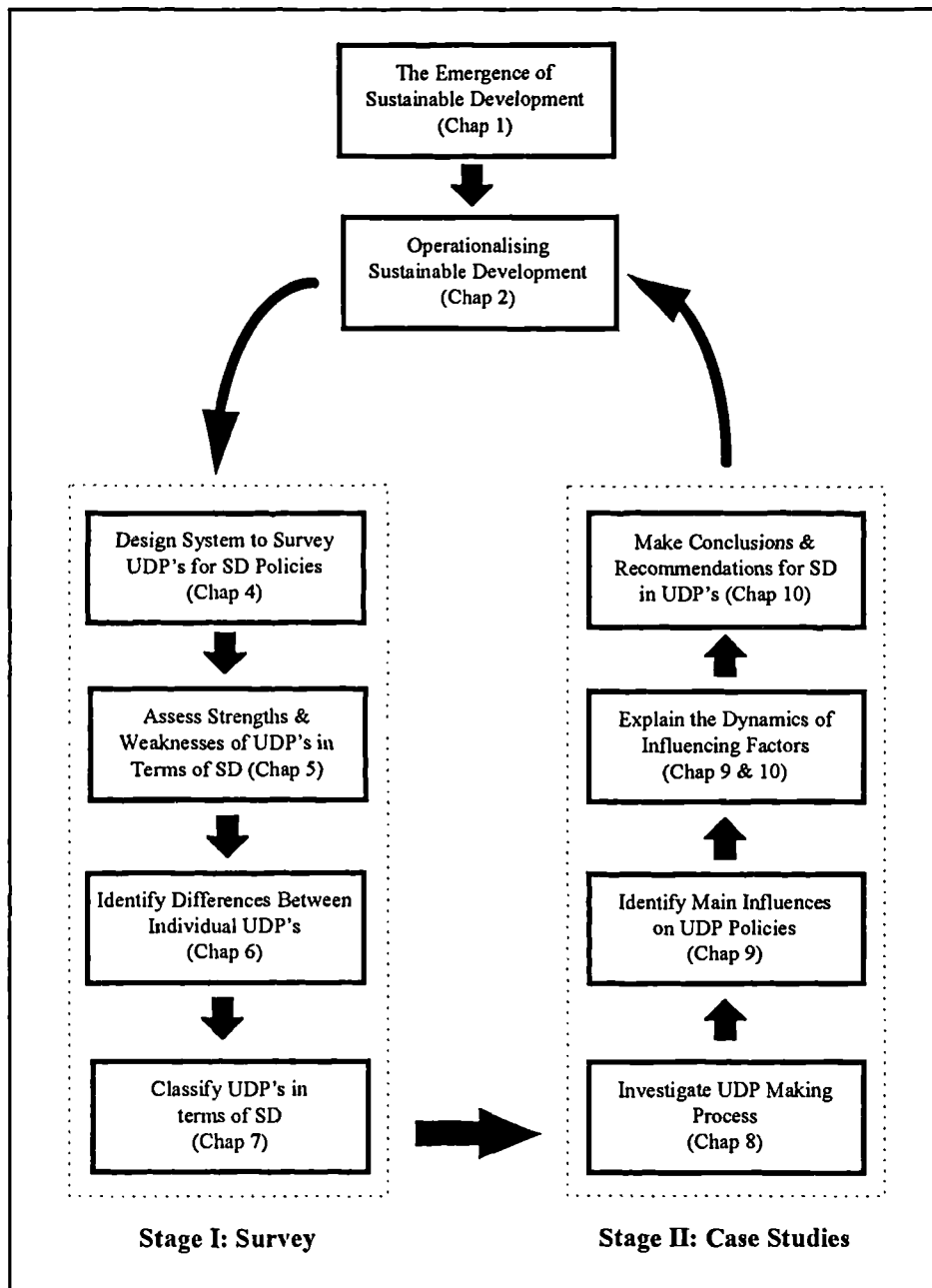
Figure 3.3: The research strategy

Stage I - Survey

The first research aim will be met by Stage I of the project, the survey. In this stage the UDPs produced by all 36 metropolitan district authorities will be surveyed for policies supporting sustainable development. This will enable the congruence between sustainable development and UDPs to be precisely identified.

UDPs from the Greater London authorities have been omitted from the study because of their particular characteristics in being part of a single capital city. This makes the London UDPs quite distinct from the plans prepared in the metropolitan districts and would not necessarily enable meaningful comparisons to be made between the two sets of plans. Limits of time and other resources also make it more practical to study 36 plans rather than 68 at the initial survey stage. However, as Stage I will cover the whole population of UDPs outside Greater London it will enable some significant conclusions to be made about all the of plans within the scope of this study. This breadth of coverage also ensures that the first aim of the project will be conclusively met.

Figure 3.3 illustrates the steps that will be necessary to carry out the survey. First of all it will be necessary to design an efficient system for the systematic comparison of UDP policies to the concept of sustainable development. This system is explained in Chapter Four, it will be based on the methodology of content analysis, and utilise strict criteria to identify and record all policies supporting sustainable development in the 36 UDPs.

Secondly, the system must be applied to survey the 36 plans, and the results of the exercise analysed. This step is presented in Chapters Five and Six. Chapter Five will analyse the results of the 36 plans as a whole, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of UDPs in terms of sustainable development and identifying the types of policies currently promoting the concept. In contrast to this, Chapter Six will disaggregate the survey data to identify any significant differences between the individual plans in terms of sustainable development. This analysis will enable comparisons to be drawn among the 36 UDPs.

The final step of Stage I will be to classify different UDPs in terms of their relationship to sustainable development. This is explained in Chapter Seven which will attempt to place

every individual UDP on a single spectrum, ranging from relatively weak sustainable development at one end to relatively strong sustainable development at the other.

Once all of these steps are complete, it will be possible to move on to Stage II.

Stage II - Case Studies

The second and third research aims will be met by Stage II of the strategy, the case studies. This stage moves beyond the policy content of 36 UDPs to look in greater depth at the context and history of two plans. A case study approach involving just two UDPs will enable a far wider range of information to be gathered and analysed in greater depth. A combination of research techniques will be used to do this. The two plans will also be drawn from either end of the spectrum, in terms of their relationship to sustainable development, ensuring that some meaningful contrasts can be made between them.

As in Stage I, a number of steps will be required to ensure that Stage II meets it's research aims. The first step, illustrated in Figure 3.3, will be to investigate the history behind the two UDPs. Section 3.1 has already introduced the legislative process required to produce a UDP, and the investigation will use a combination of document analysis and key informant interviews to explore the dynamics of this process throughout the two plans' histories. Chapter Eight describes the results from this exercise, providing a detailed narrative of the events in the formation of both plans.

The next step will develop this narrative description to identify the most important features of the two UDP processes to influence the plans' contents, and analyse these in more detail. In particular it will be important for this step to identify the reasons for the success of particular features in influencing the UDPs, as well as to suggest reasons why other features fail to influence the plans. The results of this step are presented in Chapter Nine.

Taken together Chapters Eight and Nine will identify the primary factors influencing policies for sustainable development throughout the UDP processes. This level of

research and interpretation will provide the depth of insight required to meet the second aim of the study.

In identifying the reasons 'why' certain factors influence or do not influence UDPs, Chapter Nine will also begin to refine the analysis to meet the third aim of the project, that is to *explain* the position of sustainable development on the current UDP policy agenda. By the end of Chapter Nine it should be possible to identify the most important features or themes to emerge from the research, and understand how these explain the current position of sustainable development on the UDP policy agenda. The process of refinement is concluded in Chapter Ten, where reflections on the whole research project will be used to generalise the results of this research to the whole population of UDPs.

In this final chapter it will also be possible to make some general recommendations about UDPs and sustainable development. These recommendations will be concerned with ensuring that UDPs contain the breadth and depth of policies required to truly operationalise sustainable development. In this way the research project will return to its original concern for operationalising sustainable development in the UDPs of the 36 English metropolitan authorities. Figure 3.3 illustrates how this final step takes the research strategy full circle to inform our understanding of the issues identified in Chapter Two of the project.

3.3 Methodological Approach of the Project

It is important to understand the methodological approach of the project in more detail and underline the links between the research, as explained above, and the real world situation of sustainable development and UDPs explained in Chapters One and Two.

3.3.1 The Interpretative Approach to Research

Figure 3.1 illustrates how several different factors may each influence the UDP making process and therefore influence the current position of sustainable development in UDPs. The research strategy in Figure 3.3, however, begins by surveying how sustainable development is currently being addressed in UDPs, and then proceeds to investigate the

UDP making process and identify the most important influences on the plans. As such the research strategy can be seen to be a mirror image of Figure 3.1 - Stage I of the strategy begins with the UDP policies and finishes by identifying the influences on those policies, Figure 3.1 begins with the influences and finishes with the UDP policies.

The project's methodological approach is therefore largely interpretative, employing an exploratory first stage, and using these results to dictate the form of the later stage (Tesch 1990). In order to understand this approach and its applicability for the research of sustainable development and UDPs, it will be helpful to distinguish between three basic methodological elements (based on Tesch 1990 and 1991):

Description

This element involves a detailed examination of the phenomena under study. The main outcome of this should be the identification of major features and important themes. For this study, the description element is provided by Stage I, the survey stage, where the current policy agenda of all 36 UDPs is compared to the sustainable development agenda. This stage of the research produces a precise picture of the similarities and differences between UDP policies and the concept of sustainable development.

Interpretation

This element seeks to understand how the features and themes recognised in the description relate to each other, and to other variables. The main outcome of interpretation should be propositional statements, these are statements which show causal connections between different themes and variables identified in the description. For this study, interpretation is carried out in Stage II where case study methods are used to investigate the most important factors to influence the UDP process and the shape the content of the final plans. It will then be possible to identify and make propositional statements about these influences and their relationship to sustainable development in UDPs.

Description and interpretation together should provide a systematic and illuminating insight into the phenomena under study.

Theory building

This element seeks to explain what has been discovered in the description and interpretation elements of the research. This final methodological element expands on propositional statements to develop theory, which has relevance to a much wider situation and can be used to predict future phenomena. In some cases this may be a whole new theory, but in most it involves relating the findings to an existing theory. For this research the theory building element takes place towards the end of Stage II, in Chapters Nine and Ten, where the results of the survey and case studies are explained using existing theory on land-use planning and policy making.

Although these three methodological elements can be clearly defined in a theoretical sense, in practice elements can overlap and all three may 'blur' into one another as the practical stages of the research are carried out. In this way Stages I and II of the research both provide a range of material relevant to all three methodological elements, so that description, interpretation and theory building about sustainable development and UDPs develop simultaneously.

3.3.2 The Qualitative Dimension

Qualitative research is, by its very nature, eclectic and difficult to define (Mason 1996; Robson 1993). There is often little consensus on how qualitative research can be differentiated from any other kind of research, and, indeed, whether there is actually a meaningful distinction between 'qualitative' and 'quantitative' when research is actually carried out (see for example Tesch 1991; Robson 1993, Chapter 1; Bryman 1988). This is generally because qualitative research has developed from a wide range of intellectual and disciplinary traditions, including education, history, sociology and human geography (Mason 1996).

However, this study falls within the general description of a 'qualitative research' study for two main reasons. First of all because of the general methodological approach of interpretation and exploration adopted by the study, outlined above, and secondly because of the set of particular research methods and techniques used to collect and then analyse data. As such the research strategy contains particular features which are an important part of its philosophical basis and should therefore be clearly stated. As a qualitative piece of research, this research strategy is:

- grounded in the interpretivist position in the sense that it is concerned about how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced and produced. Although the research strategy focuses upon the land-use planning process, the study also recognises the inherent complexity of the social world and the impact this may have on the research aims of the study.

- based upon flexible multiple methods of data generation which are sensitive to the social context in which data are produced and adaptive enough to cope with the complexity of the social world. For example, although the research strategy uses a systematic content analysis technique to survey UDPs, the precise operation of this survey is developed, piloted and then carried out with close reference to the style and form of UDP policies and the limitations that these impose.

- based on methods of analysis and explanation which involve understandings of complexity, detail and context, producing a rounded understanding of rich and contextualised data. In this way the case study stage of the strategy will be wide ranging and inclusive enough to ensure that all possible influences upon UDPs are considered. The aim is to 'explain' the relationship of UDPs to sustainable development, rather than simply chart the correlations, trends or surface patterns of sustainable development in each case study. (After Mason 1996)

However, a clear problem with the qualitative approach to research as outlined above is the temptation for the research practitioner to "rush in blindly or blithely without realising the complexity of the situation" (Robson 1993, p9). Therefore, although the

research strategy will be flexible enough to respond to its particular context and any unanticipated situations which arise, the study will also be systematically and rigorously carried out. In effect this means planning and acting in a systematic manner whilst also making informed decisions on the basis of the changing context or situation in which the research takes place (Mason 1996).

As such a qualitative and interpretative research approach is clearly very different from the more traditional and narrower 'scientific' approach variously labelled as positivistic, natural-science based, hypothetico-deductive or quantitative (Robson 1993). The main difference between the two is the fact that, whereas 'traditional scientific' enquiry deduce a hypothesis from the theory *before* data collection, in the interpretative approach theories and concepts arise from the inquiry and are therefore developed *after* data collection (Robson 1993, p19).

However, this does not necessarily mean that qualitative research is not a 'scientific' pursuit at all. On the contrary, the rigour and concern for justifying the research strategy implied by the whole of this chapter illustrate the methodological and epistemological considerations at the design stage of this qualitative research study. Although these issues have only been discussed in a very general sense so far, the following chapter introduces the survey methods used for Stage I of the strategy and this brings to life many of the abstract issues considered in this section. After the survey stage Chapter Eight describes the conceptual framework in which the two case studies are carried out, and again this discussion is rooted in many of the issues discussed above.

CHAPTER 4: METHODS FOR THE SURVEY OF UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

4.0 Chapter Outline

The role of this chapter is to explain how the survey of 36 UDPs will be carried out. First of all sustainable development is precisely defined by using some of the work from the UK Local Agenda 21 Campaign. The form and content of this definition is then analysed. Following this, it is then possible to apply the concept of sustainable development to UDPs using the methods of content analysis. The final sections of the chapter illustrate exactly how this is done and discuss some of the issues which arise when a survey of this type is attempted.

4.1 Surveying UDPs for Sustainable Development

The arguments developed in Chapter One to Three of the dissertation have established a clear need to assess the quality of the UDP agenda in terms of sustainable development. As explained in Chapter Three, the project will meet this need by surveying the 36 UDPs of the metropolitan local authorities in order to identify the precise areas of congruence between sustainable development and the policies of UDPs.

This survey of UDPs will require two major elements if it is to be successfully carried out. The first is a concise and relevant definition of sustainable development which is of practicable use in terms of meeting the research aim. Bearing in mind the ambiguity and controversy surrounding sustainable development, particularly when efforts are made to define the concept, this is not necessarily as straight-forward a task as it may at first seem. Therefore, rather than add to the mass of literature on sustainable development by developing another definition of the concept, a different approach is adopted. This approach utilises some of the existing work on sustainable development carried out by the UK local authority sector and its Local Agenda 21 Campaign (LGMB 1993a) which provides a detailed discussion of sustainable development as well as a precise definition of the concept.

The second element required by the survey is a rigorous and methodical system to apply this definition to the form and content of a UDP. This is provided using the methods of content analysis (Krippendorff 1980, Robson 1993). Content analysis is concerned with ensuring a systematic and objective inspection of varied documents. It is primarily descriptive in nature and as such it is an ideal technique for investigating UDPs which, although they all need to conform to the same central Government guidance, were found to be quite varied in style and layout.

Once these two elements are in place it is possible to survey the whole population of UDPs prepared by the metropolitan local authorities, and so develop a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between UDPs and sustainable development. In this sense the survey has the twin strengths of both breadth and detail. Breadth is achieved through the extensive coverage of such a large number of UDPs in the survey, whilst detail is arrived at through the intensive nature of the analysis carried out on each UDP.

4.2 A Practical Definition of Sustainable Development

As discussed in Chapter One, the nebulous character of sustainable development can cause some major problems for anyone seeking to develop a precise definition of the concept. At the present time there are about 300 individual definitions of sustainable development, and it is not surprising, therefore, that 'individual seekers of knowledge are often left as confused at the end of their search as at the beginning' (Dobson 1996, p402).

Such confusion has not escaped groups such as the Royal Town Planning Institute in their efforts to understand and define sustainable development:

> "'Sustainable Development' is an awkward subject, it has changing frontiers but as yet no firm foundations. Yet in conceptual terms it has great appeal and has managed to grab popular imagination. It may well become as sexy as Green Belts in public perception. Society's expectations on this issue are running far ahead of our capacity to deliver..." (Welbank 1993 para 1.9)

In addition to the sheer quantity of definitions of sustainable development, the qualities and meanings of these definitions are also quite varied. This is largely because sustainable development is defined through social processes and is therefore a product of inter-group relations (Mathews 1996) rather than factual evidence or scientific rationale. The situation was explained through the idea of 'different world views' in Chapter One, the observation that different perspectives on the different themes of sustainable development produce quite divergent understandings of what the concept actually means.

Such confusion, or 'awkwardness', has been avoided in this study by cutting through the debate on the meaning of sustainable development to establish a more *practical definition* of the concept. For this study, a practical definition of sustainable development means one that is relevant to metropolitan local authorities and applicable to their UDPs. In this sense the main criteria for developing this particular definition of sustainable development is not especially ideological, in so much as it is not based upon a particular world view or philosophy about sustainable development, but is more pragmatic, in that it is based on the need to survey the policy content of UDPs.

4.2.1 A Framework for Defining Local Sustainable Development

A practical definition of sustainable development was developed for this study by adapting the work of the LGMB and their report *A Framework For Local Sustainability: A Response by UK Local government to the UK Government's First Strategy for Sustainable Development* (LGMB 1993a). This document was prepared by a firm of management consultants and a variety of local government professionals on behalf of the LGMB and the whole UK local authority sector. As its name suggests, it is the full response of the UK local government sector to UK Government's draft strategy for sustainable development.

The document's general approach to sustainable development is innovative and progressive. It clearly defines the meaning of sustainable development and summarises the range of actions that local authorities are currently carrying out to promote the concept, as well as making demands on central government to remove barriers to further innovation at the local level. As a very comprehensive analysis of sustainable development in the UK context, the document

73

also provides a large amount of information and advice about the concept and is a useful insight into the UK local authority view of sustainable development.

The Framework document's analysis of sustainable development begins with the identification of four core meanings. These core meanings were first introduced in Chapter One of this study and are reproduced in more detail in Figure 4.1. They form the main principles of the concept as the LGMB perceive it and are very similar to the writings of other authors who seek to define sustainable development (see for example Adams 1990; Bosworth 1993; Jacobs 1991; Turner 1993).

Futurity: concern for the well being of future generations: the moral principle that we - the people currently living - should not deprive our successors of the chance to enjoy opportunities, choices, amenities and resources as good as those available to us.

Environment: recognition that the health and integrity of the natural environment is critical to future human well-being, that this depends on how we treat the environment in the present, and that our duty to future generations therefore includes a duty to safeguard critical aspects of the environment.

Quality of Life: realisation that human well-being has many dimensions, and that it is not necessarily proportional to or dependent on growth of economic wealth as conventionally measured.

Equity: understanding that the first three meanings are intimately related to the fairness with which economic, social and environmental cost and benefits are distributed between people.

(LGMB 1993a)

Figure 4.1: Core meanings of sustainable development in local authorities

Chapter One has already noted the popularity, and limitations, of this 'core values or principles approach' to defining sustainable development. The difference between this example and the other works quoted, however, is the fact that the LGMB go on to apply their core meanings of sustainable development to eight 'Key Areas' for policy making. These Key Areas are largely topic based and organised under the titles of Natural Resources; Solid Waste Management; Energy; Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity; Transport; Economic Development; Land, Air and Water Quality; and the Built and Urban Environment

Each of the eight Key Areas contain a number of important issues which need to be addressed when the core meanings of sustainable development are applied to them. Although some of these issues are clearly outside the immediate responsibilities of a local authority, many of them have distinct local impacts and need to be directly resolved at the local level. Much of this debate has already been referred to in Chapters One and Two of the dissertation, and Figure 4.2 provides a summary of these issues, and their relevance to local authorities, for each Key Area.

Natural Resources: At the global level the Earth's stock of finite, renewable and continuing natural resources must be protected for future generations. At the local level resource use and extraction can often damage the local environment.	**Solid Waste Management:** Waste is material lost to the productive economy, it needs energy to be processed and can cause pollution to the local environment through leaching, methane and toxin release.
Energy: 90% of the UK's energy comes from fossil fuels, a finite resource which causes CO2, SOx and NOx pollution. Over 30% of energy use is in buildings, but over 30% of households cannot afford to heat their homes adequately.	**Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity:** Diversity of species increase the stability of eco-systems and provides a range of useful products and materials as well as valued countryside and open spaces. This is under threat from a variety of urban and agricultural developments.
Transport: Nationally, road vehicles are significant users of fossil fuels and emit CO2, they are the fastest growing contributor to global warming. Locally, pollutants damage health and cause noise, accidents and building damage, whilst roads take up valuable land. Public and non-motorised transport are more efficient and cause far less damage.	**Economic Development:** Economic activities increase human welfare but affect the environment through resource use and waste generation. Sustainable development requires increased environmental efficiency of economic activities to increase quality of life.
Land, Air and Water Quality: Pollution of these media can damage health and reduce quality of life. Poorer people often have to live and work in the most polluted environments. Pollution can also threaten the health of eco-systems which help to support life.	**Built and Urban Environment:** Over 90% of the UK population lives in urban areas, therefore their design and manufacture has a great effect upon most peoples quality of life. Current trends, like decentralisation and car dependency threaten the countryside around towns whilst decreasing the quality of life in towns.
(After LGMB 1993a)	

Figure 4.2: Key Areas of sustainable development

The identification of sustainable development's core meanings, and the Key Areas in which sustainable development issues need to be addressed, provide a very helpful framework for understanding local sustainable development. Having achieved this, the LGMB's Framework document is able to move on and conclude its analysis with a number of 'Policy Directions for Sustainable Development'. These Policy Directions, discussed below, are designed to address each of the areas identified in Figure 4.2 and are also used to define sustainable development for this study.

4.2.2 Policy Directions For Sustainable Development

30 Policy Directions for Sustainable Development can be identified from the LGMB's Framework document. These are listed in Figure 4.3 and are organised by the eight Key Areas or topics discussed above.

The Policy Directions for Sustainable Development should not be regarded as a comprehensive or detailed prescription on the subject to local authorities. On the contrary, they are simply intended to suggest some main lines of approach to policy making for sustainable development (LGMB 1993a). As such these Policy Directions are a particularly useful way of defining and translating the rather complex concept of sustainable development into a more practical form, which is of direct relevance to policy makers in local authorities.

In this way the LGMB's approach to defining sustainable development also complements the general aims of the thesis, identified in Chapter One, by developing the abstract discussion surrounding sustainable development to reveal how the concept can be operationalised within the current social and economic context. The LGMB's approach is targeted at central and local government, provides a general line of approach for adopting sustainable development values and prescribes the type of actions which will put these values into practice. This is clearly far removed from the interesting, but largely theoretical, discussion about sustainable development outlined in earlier chapters.

Natural Resources	Solid Waste Management
1. Production minimisation for non-renewable resources 2. Production limits for renewable resources 3. Protection of sensitive sites from extraction 4. Mitigation of environmental impacts	13. Encouragement and planning conditions concerning waste reduction, re-use, recycling and recovery 14. Ensure responsible disposal, minimise impact and costs of waste disposal
Energy 5. Improve energy efficiency in existing buildings 6. Set design standards for energy efficiency in new developments 7. Encourage renewable energy sources 8. Encourage combined heat and power schemes	**Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity** 15. Absolute protection of nationally designated sites of landscape and habitat importance 16. Designation and protection against development of locally important sites 17. Encourage re-use of already developed and derelict land, promote compact settlements 18. Management of recreation, lowering impact of use and access in countryside
Transport 9. Mixed land use policies to reduce travel demand in new developments 10. Increase availability and attractiveness of public and non-motorised transport	**Economic Development** 19. Design standards for durability and repairability of new developments 20. Encourage efficiency in resource use, including land and transport 21. Conditions of landscaping and compensation on new industrial developments 22. Re-use of already developed and derelict land
Land, Air and Water Quality 11. Set local pollution limits 12. Identify and treat contaminated land	**Built Environment** 23. Investment in environment and facilities of inner cities 24. Strengthen and concentrate facilities in inner cities 25. Integrated land use, provision of all immediate needs locally 26. Preference for medium rise, high density developments 27. Site new developments on redundant and vacant sites 28. Protect and enhance urban green-space 29. Protection of buildings and areas of cultural and historic interest 30. Invest in public and non-motorised transport/ restrict car use
(After LGMB 1993a)	

Figure 4.3: Policy Directions for Sustainable Development

4.2.3 Discussion

This particular approach to defining sustainable development is clearly just one interpretation among many other possible interpretations, several of which are just as rigorous and valid in an academic sense. However, the fact that this particular interpretation of sustainable development is also a product of the UK local authority sector lends it, and the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development, a considerable amount of credibility. The

Framework document is an important part of the wider Local Agenda 21 Campaign in the UK. It carried the endorsements of the five local authority associations when it was written and is therefore representative of the broad views of the whole UK local government sector.

In addition to its local government significance, and in line with many other publications from the UK Local Agenda 21 Campaign, the Framework document has also played an important and high profile role at the national and international level. It is:

> "... regarded as a model of local authority input to national strategies, and is being used as such by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development which is now sitting in New York." (Hams & Morphet 1994, p24)

However, as the introductory section to this chapter has already noted, sustainable development is a notoriously fluid concept which is constantly being refined and improved as academics and practitioners develop their understanding of it. Therefore the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development should also be seen within the context of their own publication date. For example, the Framework document was written in 1993, not very long after the Rio Summit and before most local authorities had gained experience in implementing their own LA21 or similar sustainable development initiative. More recent work commissioned by the LGMB illustrates some subtle shifts in the interpretation of sustainable development by UK local government. For example, a research and piloting exercise on sustainability indicators (LGMB 1995) produced over 100 sustainability indicators covering 13 themes of sustainable development. Although less detailed than the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development in the Framework document, these themes cover all of the issues addressed by the Policy Directions, and also go on to include further topics, as outlined in Figure 4.4.

A sustainable community would be one in which:

- resources are used efficiently, waste is minimised and materials are recycled;
- pollution is limited to levels which do not cause damage to natural eco-systems;
- the diversity of nature is valued and protected;
- where possible, local needs are met locally;
- everyone has adequate food, water, shelter and fuel at a reasonable cost;
- everyone has the opportunity to undertake satisfying work in a diverse economy. The value of unpaid work is recognised, and payment for work is both fair and fairly distributed;
- health is protected by the creation of safe, clean and pleasant environments and of services which emphasise prevention of illness as well as care for the sick;
- access to facilities, services, goods and other people is not achieved at the expense of the environment or limited to those with cars;
- people live without fear of crime, or persecution on account of their race, gender, sexuality or beliefs;
- everyone has access to the skills knowledge and information which they need to play a full part in society;
- all sections of the community are empowered to participate in decision-making;
- opportunities to participate in culture, leisure and recreation are readily available to all; and
- buildings, open spaces and artefacts combine meaning with beauty and utility; settlements are 'human' in scale and form; and diversity and distinctive local features are valued and protected.

(LGMB 1995)

Figure 4.4: The LGMB's 13 themes of sustainable development

Clearly these themes of sustainable development are not intended to provide the same detail of practical policy guidance as the Framework document. However, the range of issues that they, and the sustainability indicators developed from them, cover indicate a distinct expansion of the LGMB's sustainable development agenda. The increased emphasis of issues like participation, discrimination and empowerment in the themes also shows the development of thinking on sustainable development at the local government level. And one of the most important aspects of this development is the growing appreciation of social considerations in the process of furthering sustainability (Webber 1996).

The LGMB's interpretation of sustainable development should also be understood in terms of its political and economic context. The LGMB's position on sustainable development is more radical than that of the UK central Government, as outlined in the UK sustainable development strategy (DOE 1994a). For example, the Framework document states quite clearly that markets will not automatically produce a sustainable economy (LGMB 1993a, p29) and prescribes direct government intervention for sustainable development through regulations (particularly on the utilities), green taxes, subsidies for conservation measures and public transport, and direct government investment in infrastructure and research. Whereas the UK Government interpretation of sustainable development, as outlined in its sustainable development strategy, is much more market based and less interventionist, relying on the choice of private individuals to achieve sustainable development through awareness raising and encouragement (Vidal 1994).

The LGMB's work, on the other hand, may itself be criticised by 'deeper green' activists as an example of a relatively reformist approach. For example, although the LGMB emphasise some absolute natural limits to human activity through an eco-systemic approach, they also champion the role of economic development with some recognition of market mechanisms. Indeed, some authors argue that the whole industrialised city concept is a totally unsustainable way of living (for example Berg 1990 from Haughton and Hunter 1994 p24), and would therefore be diametrically opposed to the LGMB's interpretation of the concept.

The Framework document and its Policy Directions for Sustainable Development could, therefore, be seen as taking a largely central position on the 'spectrum of sustainability' described by Pearce et al (1993) and Turner (1993), see Section 1.3.2, above. The LGMB do recognise a qualitative distinction between economic growth and economic development, as well as the importance of environmental capital and natural systems in supporting life. They do not, however, promote negative economic growth to reduce human impact on these systems, or place the value of natural systems above social and economic considerations. Their approach is also reformist and pragmatic, designed to work within the existing political-economic context, rather than a radical attempt to develop a new context.

The points discussed above may illustrate some deficiencies in the Policy Directions approach to defining sustainable development. However, this is not necessarily an obstacle to the aims of the research exercise. As noted above, the 30 Policy Directions adopted for this study are not intended to be an exhaustive list of issues to be addressed in UDPs and by local authorities. Neither are they designed to be a detailed prescription for policy makers to follow. They are simply general policy guidance, designed to direct policy makers towards a more sustainable approach. As such the largely practical and reformist position adopted by the LGMB in their *Framework for Sustainability* document is a distinct advantage in terms of the research. It ensures that the Policy Directions are a realisable and inherently applicable interpretation of sustainable development with which UDPs may be analysed for their utilisation of the concept.

4.3 A System to Survey UDPs - Content Analysis

In order to carry out the survey of UDPs, these 30 Policy Directions for Sustainable Development need to be applied to the 36 UDPs of the English metropolitan authorities. A rigorous and methodical system to compare each of the 30 Policy Directions with the typical content of a UDP is therefore required. This very specific requirement is met by the qualitative research technique of content analysis (Krippendorff 1980, Robson 1993).

Content analysis is simply a system which allows replicable and valid inferences to be made from data to their context (Krippendorff 1980 p21). Dixon et al describe it in very straightforward terms:

> "In a content analysis a checklist is developed to count how frequently certain ideas, words, phrases, images or scenes appear." (Dixon et al 1987 p95)

In this way, therefore, content analysis allows the researcher to develop inferences "by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics in text" (Stone et al 1966, from Tesch 1991). As such, content analysis makes it possible to inspect and analyse a varied number and type of documents, such as UDPs.

In practice this type of analysis means that a particular research result or interpretation is being identified from a piece of text which has been written for a quite different purpose to that of the research exercise. Therefore Tesch (1990) explains the process as one of 'de-contextualising', taking a piece of text out of the context for which it was originally intended, and 're-contextualising', placing the text into a whole new context dictated by the needs of the research exercise. In terms of this study, for example, a piece of text's original context would be the UDP itself and the particular chapter or paragraph where the text was first written. The new context for this piece of text, however, is the concept of sustainable development, and in particular the 30 Policy Directions which are used to define sustainable development in this study.

4.3.1 Carrying Out the Content Analysis

The actual work involved in carrying out the content analysis is largely "codified common sense": it is a logical series of steps that anyone might adopt to try and explain a particular phenomenon (Robson 1993). In all, six steps are required to carry out this particular content analysis (after Robson 1993).

Step 1 - Start with a research question.

The survey is carried out to meet the first research aim:

> To establish how far UDP policies are currently operationalising the concept
> of sustainable development.

Hence the research question for the content analysis is quite simply:

> How far are UDP policies currently operationalising the concept of
> sustainable development?

Therefore the survey must consider the whole range of sustainable development issues and establish how far they are currently contained in UDP policies.

Step 2 - Decide on a sampling strategy.

The sampling strategy requires the definition of the 'Sampling Unit':

> "those parts of observed reality or of the stream of source language expressions that are regarded as independent to each other" (Krippendorff 1980 p57).

In this case the sampling unit is the UDP. Each UDP is prepared by a separate metropolitan authority, refers to a geographically distinct area and is a self contained document. Hence UDPs fulfil the requirement of being independent - inclusion or exclusion of any one plan as a datum in the survey has no implications for the rest of the survey (Krippendorff 1980).

Having emphasised this independence however, it should also be noted that all development plans are prepared within a central legislative framework and:

> "The Secretary of State's function is to co-ordinate the work of individual local authorities and to ensure that their development plans and development control procedures are in harmony with broad planning policies."
> (Cullingworth 1988 p31)

As Chapter Two discussed, the balance between central and local influence in the formulation of UDPs is a subject of great debate. Cullingworth provides a full discussion of the relationship between central and local government on this issue, but concludes with the observation that:

> "it [is] very difficult to present a clear cut picture of central-local relationships. The truth is that the position is not clear."(Cullingworth 1988 p32)

For the purposes of this survey, though, Healey and Shaw's understanding of the position will be used:

> "The objectives and scope of the [planning] system are determined by government policy and local interpretation, underpinned by legal review. As a result very little is specified as to the scope and content of planning policy, other than that its regulatory focus is on the use and development of land."
> (Healey and Shaw 1993b p1)

It is in this area of local interpretation of central policy that the survey will concentrate.

Having defined the sampling unit, the sampling strategy for the survey is to sample the whole population of UDPs. There are 36 metropolitan local authorities in six metropolitan areas, all of which have a version of their UDP available for inspection. Figures 4.5a and 4.5b list each of these authorities and show their geographical location in the six metropolitan areas of England. Where a formally adopted version of the UDP is not available (in the vast majority of cases), the latest public draft will be used for the survey, see step 6 below.

Figure 4.5a: The 6 metropolitan areas of England and their constituent authorities

TYNE AND WEAR (5)
Gateshead
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
North Tyneside
Sunderland
South Tyneside

WEST YORKSHIRE (5)
Bradford
Calderdale
Kirklees
Leeds
Wakefield

GREATER MANCHESTER (10)
Bolton
Bury
Manchester City
Oldham
Rochdale
Salford
Stockport
Tameside
Trafford
Wigan

SOUTH YORKSHIRE (4)
Barnsley
Doncaster
Rotherham
Sheffield

MERSEYSIDE (5)
Knowsley
Liverpool
St.Helens
Sefton
Wirral

WEST MIDLANDS (7)
Birmingham
Coventry
Dudley
Sandwell
Walsall
Wolverhampton

Figure 4.5b: Boundaries of the 36 metropolitan authorities

MERSEYSIDE AREA
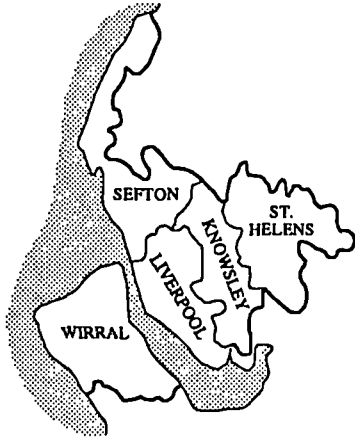
TYNE AND WEAR AREA
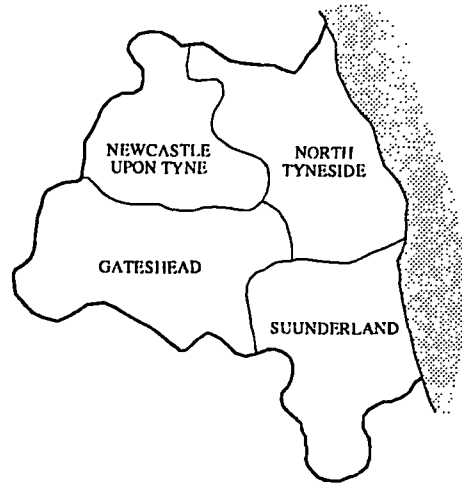
GREATER MANCHESTER AREA
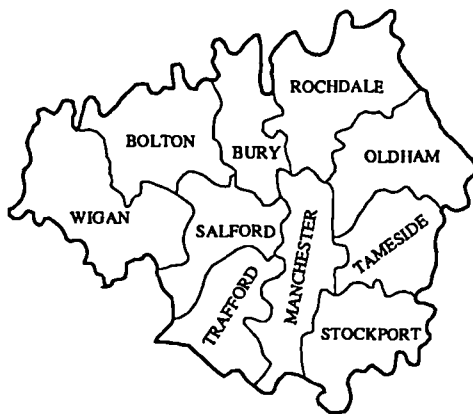
WEST YORKSHIRE AREA

WEST MIDLANDS AREA
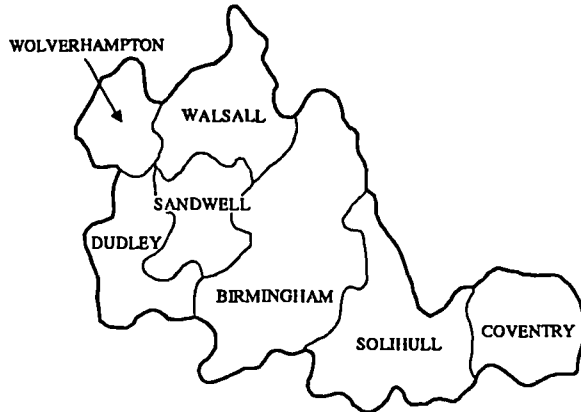
SOUTH YORKSHIRE AREA

Step 3 - Define the Recording Unit.

"Recording Units are the separately analyzable parts of a sampling unit." (Krippendorff 1980 p58).

In the case of UDPs, individual policies will be used as recording units. The policies of a UDP conveniently break down a large development plan into useable pieces of text. The DOE emphasise the need for precise, concise and self contained policies in plans (DOE 1992b), and it is these characteristics which make them suitable units to record and analyse.

However, there are several different types of policies in UDPs, and therefore several different types of recording unit in the survey. Three 'policy types' can be defined from government guidance on the subject (DOE 1992b). The first policy type is *strategic*. These policies are found in part one of a UDP and outline the general objectives and guiding principles of a plan (op. cit. p32). The second type of policy is *control*. Control policies regulate development by providing control criteria (op. cit. p106). The final type is *promotional* policies These seek to promote a particular form of development in the plan area (op. cit. p108).

The importance of these distinctions lies in the fact that different Policy Directions for Sustainable Development may require different types of policy response. For example, issues of air pollution may be met in UDPs by strong control policies to prevent polluting emissions, whereas the issue of derelict land would require a more promotional policy response from the UDP to encourage the use of derelict land in new developments. These points are discussed in greater detail as the results of the survey are considered in Chapter Five.

Step 4 - Construct Categories for Analysis

Categories for analysis are used to classify the recording units. In this study the categories for analysis are formed by the 30 Policy Directions for Sustainable Development, as explained in Section 4.2.2. In practice this means that each UDP policy (or recording unit) will be categorised by comparing it to the list of individual Policy Directions for Sustainable Development in Figure 4.2.2 above. If the policy can be categorised within a Policy Direction then it is seen as consistent with the aim of sustainable development. If a policy cannot be

categorised within a policy direction then it will be ignored. The references and details of relevant policies can then be recorded for each plan. For example:

> "The Council will not normally permit new shopping developments to be located outside existing shopping centres. Proposals should not by virtue of their scale or character affect the vitality and viability of any shopping centre." (Bolton UDP 1992, Policy S7)

This policy can first of all be identified as a control policy because it is designed to control the location of shopping developments (see Step 3 above). Once this has been done it is possible to categorise it within the Policy Direction for concentrating facilities in inner cities (Policy Direction number 24 in the Key Area of the Built Environment, see Figure 4.3). By controlling retail developments outside existing shopping centres it is entirely consistent with this particular Policy Direction, and a clear relationship exists between the UDP policy and Policy Direction for Sustainable Development. This process can then be repeated for every policy in each of the 36 UDPs.

The end result of this exercise will be a 'tick list' of sustainable development Policy Directions, within which are categorised one or more UDP policies. This will show how well each Policy Direction is currently being met by UDP policies. Those Policy Directions for Sustainable Development which have no UDP policies categorised within them will simultaneously become apparent, and indicate areas of sustainable development which are not being considered by UDP policies.

Step 5 - Test the Coding on Samples of Text and Assess Reliability

In an analysis of this type it is always important to test the reliability and robustness of the project's general design and categories for analysis. Therefore a small scale research exercise was piloted on the local UDPs of Barnsley MBC, Calderdale MBC and Kirklees MBC using the system described in the four steps above.

The most important point to arise from the pilot study was the need for the analysis to reflect the different degrees to which individual UDP policies adhere to each of the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development. It was found that, although many UDP policies are relevant to

the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development, most actually fail to fulfil the full implications of the Policy Direction. For example, this was most apparent in the Key Area of Land, Air and Water Quality. Although some of the UDP policies analysed in the pilot study refer to the need to decrease pollution, very few actually include specific local limits for land, air or water pollution. The survey was unable to distinguish between policies that refer to specific pollution limits, and policies which only attempted to decrease pollution in a very general sense. Therefore, in its original form, the survey was in danger of ignoring this important qualitative dimension to the UDP data.

To address this shortfall the content analysis system was improved to include a 'grading' element, where relevant UDP policies can be graded in regard to the extent to with which they fulfil the implications of each Policy Direction. Policies were graded from one, for weak, through to three for strong. Criteria for grading differs for each of the three types of policy, but concentrates on the extent to which the policies in a plan meet the full implications of a Policy Direction.

It can be demonstrated that UDP policies have quite clear qualitative differences. For example, the following two policies are taken from two different UDPs:

> Policy 1 - Leisure facilities will be encouraged particularly where they involve the use of derelict or neglected land.
>
> Policy 2 - The Council will as a matter of priority seek to encourage and promote the removal of derelict land as a problem in the Borough by 2001.

Both policy 1 and 2 are relevant to the Policy Direction number 27 concerning the reuse of redundant and vacant sites (Key Area of the Built Environment). However it is clear that policy 2 fulfils this Policy Direction in a much more comprehensive fashion than policy 1. Policy 2 addresses all derelict land in the borough, and includes a target date for completing its objective. Policy 1, on the other hand, only refers to encouraging the re-use of derelict land for leisure facilities.

The problem encountered by the survey was how to capture and display this difference, and the system of grading the comprehensive policies with a higher number was adopted. In this

case policy 1 would be graded '1', whilst policy 2 would be graded '3'. To enable this, strict criteria were drawn up to ensure that grading of strategic, control and promotional policies was consistent. These criteria are listed in full in Appendix One, and a discussion of the system is made below.

One consequence of introducing the grading procedure into the content analysis was a slight readjustment in the number of Policy Directions for Sustainable Development. These were reduced from 30 to 29 with the omission of one Policy Direction in the Key Area of Economic Development. The Policy Direction: "Encourage efficiency in resource use, including land and transport" was found to be too vague and wide ranging to enable UDP policies to be meaningfully graded and classified around it. Although this issue is clearly important to sustainable development, as it is defined here, the actual Policy Direction does not offer a precise interpretation for UDP policies, and the issues of natural resources, land and transport, are adequately covered by other Policy Directions.

Step 6 - Carry out the analysis

The final system used to survey the UDPs follows all of the above steps. In summary, this means that all of the policies in all 36 UDPs are compared with the 29 Policy Directions for Sustainable Development and categorised and graded for their relevance to each Policy Direction. In practice this exercise produces a matrix of results for each UDP. This matrix has the 29 Policy Directions listed down one side, and the three policy types across the top. The matrix is filled in with grades one to three for the relevant policies. To illustrate how this actually looks in practice, an example of a completed UDP survey form is included in Appendix Two.

The survey was carried out in the summer of 1995, and the precise version and date of each of the 36 plans analysed, as well as modifications to the plans, are listed in Appendix Three.

4.3.2 Discussion

In order to meet the research aim, and analyse all 36 UDPs for sustainable development, the above survey has chosen to follow one particular system of analysis instead of many other possible systems. In this way the system has been designed to allow the particular agenda of an individual UDP to be left to one side in favour of concentrating on the specific concept of sustainable development. Therefore, although the 36 plans are written in 36 different places by 36 different teams (each with their own particular emphasis and local agenda), they can be made directly comparable with each other in terms of the common element of sustainable development (Bruff & Wood 1995a).

Careful and informed choices have been made about the general approach and detailed methods of the survey system to enable this to happen. For example, in step 4 of the system, above, the survey adopts a 'tick list' of Policy Directions to define its categories for analysis (see Appendix Two). For sustainable development research, this may be associated with the similar expression 'check list' and cause some criticism of the survey system. As Healey and Shaw note, for example:

> "the specific agenda and content of appropriate policies for sustainable development can rarely be achieved from a general check list ...[and]... the new environmental agenda within the planning system does not mean merely adding further topics or subjects onto the planning agenda, a form of check list approach." (Healey and Shaw 1993 p9)

In the case of this survey, however, the tick list illustrated in Appendix Two is justified in meeting the limited aims of the survey, as explained in Chapter Three. This is because the survey needs to analyse a large number of plans in a quick and efficient manner, whilst gathering as rich and detailed an understanding of each plan as possible. The tick list (in association with the other elements of the survey) enables these two conflicting requirements to be to be brought together in one simple system.

The survey system supplements the tick list, and its concentration on a surface level analysis, by grading UDP policies in terms of the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development. Although this is probably the most contentious element of the survey, it is also the most important element for data collection. Grading UDP policies is contentious because it is

threatened by subjectivity and inconsistency, both of which will produce poor data. However, grading UDP policies is also an important element of the survey because it allows the more qualitative element of data to be captured. If done correctly this produces much more meaningful data for the survey.

Clearly, the survey as a whole requires a certain degree of inference in its operation. This is a necessary characteristic of the analysis because sustainable development, as defined by the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development, is not always explicitly stated in UDP policies. It is necessary, therefore, to consider the implicit objectives of any UDP policy and their effects on sustainable development as well as the explicit statement of the policy itself. In this way a UDP policy could be described as having a latent (as opposed to manifest) content (Robson 1993), and the survey must record this latent policy content if it is to produce a meaningful understanding of the relationship between sustainable development and UDPs. The methods for the survey, as they are defined above, are intended to do this in the most rigorous and methodical manner possible.

4.4 Form of the Survey Results

The content analysis system, as it is described above, generates statistical data which reflects the grades given to each plan policy and the tick list approach to recording those policies. 29 Policy Directions for Sustainable Development, each divided into three by the three types of policy classified within them, means that there are a total of eighty-seven separate data entries for each individual UDP. Each of the data entries have a possible score of between one and three reflecting the degree to which that particular UDP's policies address the Policy Directions (see Appendix Two).

Given this form of the results, therefore, it is important to remember that the numbers generated by the content analysis are not intended to be absolute values. They are merely relative indications of status and represent qualitative data in the form of UDP policies. In particular, the grades assigned to UDP policies are designed to highlight the areas of relative strength and weakness in UDPs for sustainable development. They are not simple 'scores' of sustainable development for each plan.

The statistics generated by the survey, therefore, are valid only for means of comparison within the confines of this research stage. They have little significance as absolute scores in themselves, and would become unreliable if used in this way. This approach to surveying UDPs has been demonstrated on several occasions (Bruff & Wood 1995a & b; Bruff 1996), and were found to be a useful means of displaying the relationship between UDPs and sustainable development to an audience or readership in a clear and concise way. The following two chapters repeat this exercise and present the survey results using graphs and descriptive statistics to highlight the most significant features of the survey.

CHAPTER 5: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN TERMS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

5.0 Chapter Outline

This chapter presents the findings from the survey of UDPs. It looks at results from the whole population of 36 plans to identify their strengths and weaknesses in terms of sustainable development. The chapter begins by explaining how the survey results will be analysed and presented, and then gives an overview of the most important points to arise from this stage of the research. The full set of results are then broken down to be analysed and discussed by individual Key Areas of sustainable development. The final section of the chapter summarises the survey's main findings and considers some of the implications of these findings for sustainable development and UDPs.

5.1 Analysis and Presentation of the Survey Results

Chapter Four has explained how the survey stage of this study was carried out and the form of the results generated by the survey. This chapter, along with Chapter Six, develops the raw results of the survey into more meaningful forms of data.

Analysis of the survey results takes place on two distinct levels and over two separate chapters. The first level of analysis considers the *whole population* of UDPs. It illustrates the areas in which UDPs as a whole are currently pursuing policies in line with sustainable development, as well as areas in which UDPs have very few or no policies to address sustainable development issues. By doing this it is possible to illustrate the relative areas of strength and weakness of the UDPs overall, and highlight the types of UDP policy which are more likely to address different areas of the concept. This chapter will carry out this first, or *macro*, level of analysis; a number of graphs are used to display the survey data and provide an illuminating summary of the survey's findings.

Chapter Six considers the second level of analysis. It investigates the differences found *between individual plans*. This is the *micro* level of analysis. Descriptive statistics and

qualitative observations of UDP policies are used to illustrate how the policy content of individual plans vary in terms of sustainable development. This level of analysis demonstrates the range of the survey results and suggests that some UDPs are much more comprehensive in terms of the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development than others. Although certain areas of sustainable development are common to all UDPs, significant differences are found to exist between plans on specific issues.

Building upon these two level of analysis, Chapter Seven of the research project is then able to make a tentative classification of the UDPs in terms of their policy content in the Key Areas of sustainable development. This classification seeks to group similar UDPs together and distinguish between dissimilar groups of UDPs.

To enable a more visual presentation of the results in Chapters Five and Six, the grades allocated to the UDP policies (see Chapter Four) have been summed together and converted into percentage figures. These figures represent the overall aggregate of the plans' policy directions (in terms of their grade '1, 2 or 3') calculated as a percentage of the theoretical maximium. The percentage figures can then be plotted on a graph to illustrate the 'relative performance' of UDP policies in terms of sustainable development, and so produce useful comparisons between different Key Areas of the concept.

For example, to provide an overview of the survey results in Section 5.2, below, all the grades allocated to UDP policies have been added together in each Key Area, divided by the total possible grade for this Key Area, and then multiplied by one hundred. The ensuing percentage figures are plotted in graphical form, Figure 5.1, and used to illustrate the relative strengths and weaknesses of UDPs in terms of sustainable development.

In a similar way, in Chapter Six, every individual UDP has had a percentage figure calculated for each of the eight Key Areas of sustainable development. In this way individual UDPs can be compared against each other in terms of specific sustainable development issues, as demonstrated in Table 6.1.

At this stage it is useful to remember the point made in Chapter Four: all the grades attached to UDP policies are not incontestable 'scores' of sustainable development, they are merely used to indicate relative areas of strength or weakness of UDP policies. In particular, the use of percentage figures in Chapters Five and Six should not suggest an increased quantitative dimension to the survey exercise. The percentages are calculated directly from the survey data in order to allow this data to be plotted on a graph or in a table. This means that they are ultimately derived from qualitative research methods, and would be both unsuitable and unreliable if analysed in a quantitative way using more complex statistical formulae or techniques.

However, in providing this type of analysis, Chapters Five and Six are able to demonstrate how the UDP agenda (outside Greater London) currently overlaps with the agenda of sustainable development (see Chapter Two). In doing so they highlight areas of current policy where UDPs are putting the principles of sustainable development into practice, as well as other areas in which UDPs have yet to operationalise the concept. Taken together, therefore, Chapters Five and Six meet the first research aim of the study.

5.2 Overview

As explained above, this chapter concentrates upon the results from all 36 UDPs together, analysing data at the macro (or whole population) level. For this reason the results from each of the individual plans have been summed together to create one body of data and converted into a percentage of the theoretical maximium. Hence, every Policy Direction for Sustainable Development can be represented by three percentage figures, indicating the relative performance of UDP strategic, control and promotional policies addressing sustainable development. By summing the data in this way it is possible to draw clear comparisons between individual Policy Directions or Key Areas of sustainable development, and therefore assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of UDPs in terms of sustainable development.

The value of this form of presentation can be seen in Figure 5.1. The graph summarises the results from the whole survey by showing how UDP policies are addressing the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development in all eight Key Areas of the concept.
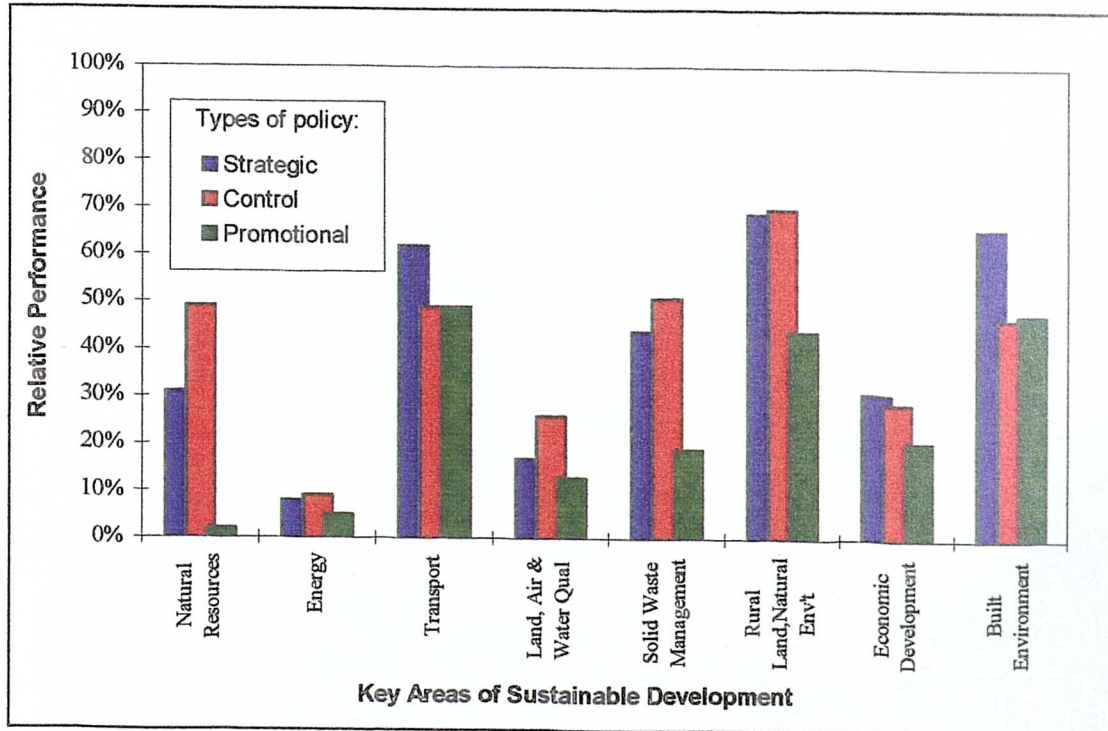
Figure 5.1: Graph to show the extent of UDP policies addressing Key Areas of sustainable development.

In Figure 5.1, each Key Area has three columns plotted against it, representing strategic, control and promotional policies. Higher Columns indicate stronger, more comprehensive, UDP policies addressing the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development in each of the Key Areas. Lower columns indicate weaker, less comprehensive, UDP policies addressing the Policy Directions. The differences in height between these columns allow some interesting contrasts to be drawn.

The first point to make about Figure 5.1 is that it clearly illustrates that all eight Key Areas of sustainable development, as defined in the survey, are addressed to some extent by UDP policies. This would seem to indicate that the whole spectrum of sustainable development issues occupy a position on the current UDP agenda. However, it is also quite clear from Figure 5.1 that the quality of the attention to sustainable development issues in UDPs varies

greatly across the eight Key Areas. For instance, the Key Area of the Built Environment achieves consistently higher percentage figures in the graph than that of Energy. This signifies that UDPs are relatively stronger at addressing Policy Directions in the Built Environment Key Area than they are at addressing issues in the Energy Key Area. This in turn suggests that Built Environment issues are much higher on the UDP agenda than those of Energy, and this qualitative difference between areas of sustainable development is one of the most interesting findings of the survey.

Overall, three Key Areas of sustainable development appear to occupy more prominent positions on the agenda of UDPs. These are Built Environment, Transport and Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity. All three areas are represented by higher columns in Figure 5.1. At the opposite extreme, two Key Areas of sustainable development appear to feature lowest on the UDP agenda. These are Energy and Land, Air and Water Quality. These have the two lowest percentage figures on the graph, signifying that the UDPs have much weaker or less comprehensive policy content in these areas in terms of sustainable development. Somewhere in between these two extremes are the three Key Areas of Natural Resources, Solid Waste Management and Economic Development. These Key Areas all appear to be moderately addressed by UDP policies.

These observations immediately suggest that UDPs have a particular type of relationship with sustainable development issues. In the two Key Areas of the Built Environment and Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity, the UDPs surveyed are currently progressing policies firmly in line with the issues of sustainable development. This group of sustainable development issues is clearly central to the current UDP agenda and appear to be a well integrated part of the current planning system. Therefore the greatest amount of convergence between the UDP agenda and the sustainable development agenda is occurring in terms of the physical built and natural environment. In contrast, energy issues and issues of land, air and water quality are not high in the current UDP agenda. These are areas where a clear difference can be found between UDPs and the concept of sustainable development.

It is also interesting to note that, in five of the eight Key Areas of sustainable development, the column representing control policies is higher than the columns representing strategic and promotional policies. In the remaining three Key Areas strategic policies appear to be most prominent. This indicates that control and strategic policies are the strongest type of UDP policy currently addressing sustainable development issues in UDPs. Indeed, strategic policies appear to be particularly prominent on the graph, dominating the Key Areas of Transport; Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity; and Built Environment; as well as relatively high in all five of the remaining areas. This suggests that the majority of sustainable development issues, as defined in this survey, are being considered to some degree in the strategic sections of the plans.

This relative difference in strength between control and promotional policies could have some interesting implications for sustainable development. If strategic UDP policies are currently addressing the majority of sustainable development issues, as Figure 5.1 suggests, then the plans' ensuing control policies are putting these considerations into practice by controlling land-use in line with sustainable development. On the other hand, the relatively low status of promotional policy initiatives identified in the survey may imply that sustainable development issues which require a promotional policy response will be less prominent in the plans.

All these findings, and the questions they raise, can only be explained as the survey results are analysed in more detail.

5.3 Analysis by Key Areas of Sustainable Development

The general observations, made above, provide a useful summary of the survey results and indicate some interesting findings on the position of sustainable development in UDPs. However, to be able to look in more detail at each individual issue on the sustainable development agenda, and suggest some explanations for the broader survey results, it is necessary to dis-aggregate the data and examine how individual Policy Directions for Sustainable Development are being addressed by the plans. The following sections do this, concentrating on specific Key Areas of sustainable development and the Policy Directions within them.

As in Section 5.2, the statistics generated from the survey have been converted into a percentage figure to enable graphical representation of the data. The following graphs have the individual Policy Directions for each Key Area of sustainable development plotted along their X axis, and the relative performance of UDP policies in regard to these Policy Directions on the Y axis. Columns indicate how comprehensively UDP policies address each of the Policy Directions. For the needs of brevity, however, the individual Policy Directions for Sustainable Development have been summarised on some graphs. The full title, and its implications, for each of the twenty-nine Policy Directions is listed and discussed in Chapter Four (Figure 4.3 and Appendix Two).

Each of the eight Key Areas of sustainable development are also grouped together on the basis of the survey's initial findings, as described in Section 5.2. Strongly featured areas of sustainable development are discussed first, then the weakly featured areas, before the remaining, moderately featured, Key Areas of the concept are finally examined.

5.3.1 Strongly Featured Areas of Sustainable Development

Three Key Areas of sustainable development have already been identified in the survey as strongly featured in UDP policies. These are Transport; Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity; and Built Environment. Although each of the three areas are not all evenly addressed by UDP policies, they do stand out in Figure 5.1 as being relatively more prominent in the graph than any of the remaining five Key Areas of sustainable development.

The three Key Areas contain a total of fourteen individual Policy Directions for Sustainable Development, nearly all of which form a strong element of the current UDP policy agenda.

The Key Area of Transport

Figure 5.2 illustrates how the two Policy Directions in the Key Area of Transport are relatively strongly addressed by UDP policies surveyed. Although the principle of mixed

land-use to reduce travel demand is not as comprehensively addressed by any one type of UDP policy, as the columns in Figure 5.2 indicate, the issue is consistently featured in terms of strategic, control and promotional policies. Therefore it is quite clear that, although UDPs do not treat the issue as thoroughly as other sustainable development issues, mixed land-use development is a theme that receives sufficient breadth of consideration to feature strongly upon the UDP agenda.
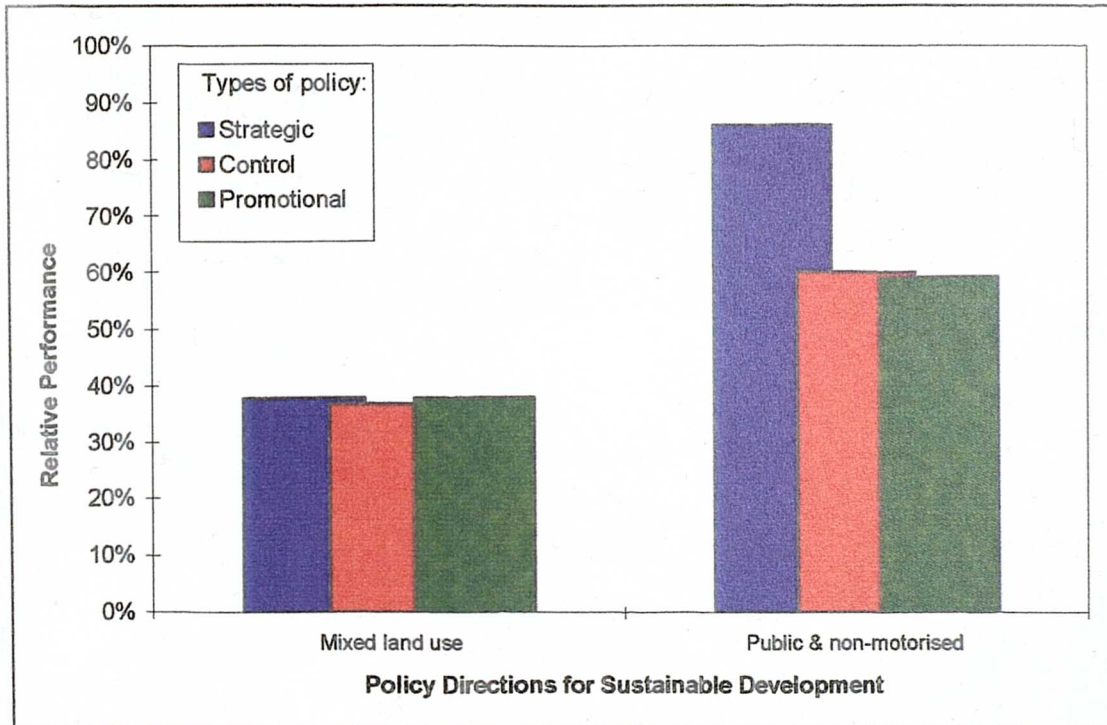
Figure 5.2: Graph to show the extent of policies addressing sustainable development in the Key Area of Transport

However, the second Policy Direction in this Key Area, encouraging public and non-motorised transport, is very strongly featured in the strategic policies of UDPs. And this consideration is also followed through to a large degree by both policies to control development and policies to promote further public/non-motorised transport. Clearly the requirement to provide public transport services within metropolitan areas is a very important issue in the current generation of UDPs.

100

The Key Area of Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity

In a similar way, Figure 5.3, illustrates how all four Policy Directions in the area of Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity are also relatively evenly and comprehensively addressed by UDP policies. It would appear that UDPs are particularly strong in providing protection for locally designated sites of landscape and habitat importance, and contain development control policies to meet this aim. This concern for protection or conservation is also extended to nationally designated sites of nature conservation and landscape importance, albeit to a slightly lesser degree. The related issues of re-using already developed land and ensuring compact settlements are also strongly featured concerns of UDPs, with a notable level of promotional policies contained in the plans to address this Policy Direction. All three of these Policy Directions are also marked by a high strategic policy column, indicating the comprehensive strategic policies on these issues in the development plans surveyed.

Figure 5.3: Graph to show the extent of policies addressing sustainable development in the Key Area of Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity

The fourth and final Policy Direction in Figure 5.3, managing recreation and lowering the impact of use and access in the countryside, is not as strongly addressed as the other

three Policy Directions. Nevertheless the survey results do indicate that promotional policies in particular are contained in UDPs to address the issue, and this is complemented by some control policies as well. Overall, the Key Area of Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity is, perhaps, one of the most comprehensively addressed areas of sustainable development identified in the survey. Indeed, Figure 5.1 suggests that, out of the eight Key Areas of sustainable development, Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity is the most prominent area of the concept to feature on the UDP agenda.

The Key Area of the Built Environment
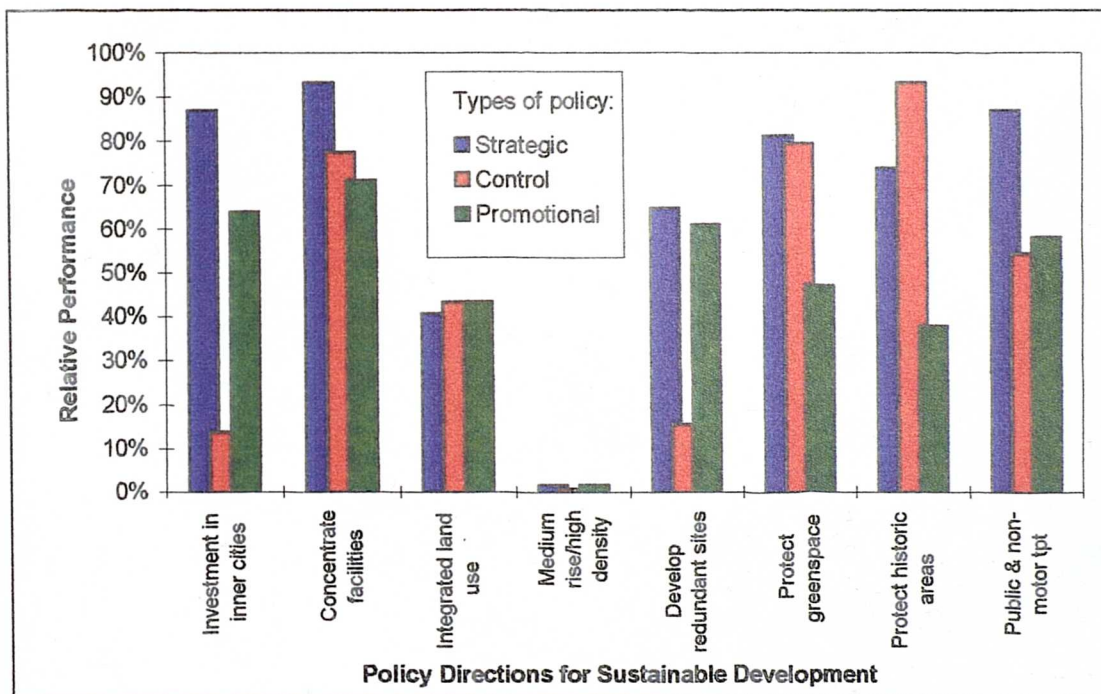
Figure 5.4: Graph to show the extent of policies addressing sustainable development in the Key Area of the Built Environment

Finally, the third area of sustainable development identified as being strongly addressed in the UDPs surveyed is that of the Built Environment. Figure 5.4 presents the findings of the research for this Key Area. The graph illustrates how six of the eight Policy Directions for Sustainable Development were very strong in the survey, with only the two Policy Directions concerning integrated land-use and high density developments being relatively weakly addressed. It would, therefore, appear that these six sustainable

development issues are all important elements upon the current UDP agenda. For example, strategic policies are very evident throughout all six issues, and this indicates that these types of sustainable development issue are all important objectives for UDPs.

The strategic initiative is followed up in all of these six Policy Directions by some sort of control or promotional policies. Where the nature of the Policy Direction demands a promotional response, the UDPs appear to be providing it. For example, the first two Policy Directions on the graph, investing resources and concentrating facilities in inner cities, can be seen to be well addressed by promotional policies. Where Policy Directions require a strong control policy response from UDPs, they are also provided. For example, all of the plans surveyed contain a wide range of policies to control development on green space and in the historical areas of towns and cities.

Only one Policy Direction in the whole Key Area receives virtually no policy attention at all, this concerns the increased density of urban development and preference for medium rise developments. It is clear that this issue is not currently a consideration in UDP policies. The idea of integrating land use and providing for all needs locally is also less strongly featured in UDPs. Although, as has been noted in the Key Area of transport above, the principle of integrating and mixing land-uses to decrease the need to travel is evident to some extent in UDPs. Therefore this sustainable development issue is not totally without some support in UDP policies.

Discussion

Overall, its is fair to say that all three of these Key Areas of sustainable development concern some of the more traditional issues of land-use planning in the UK. The three are largely focused upon the physical environment, emphasising the need to conserve and improve natural and urban features, and this characteristic may explain their prominence on the current UDP agenda. For example, Chapter Two has already noted how the core ideologies of the land-use planning system have traditionally centred upon the aim of providing a good or better physical environment as a sound basis for community life (Foley 1973). This core ideology has been translated in many ways, but the main elements of land-use planning have always been to protect the natural environment on

aesthetic and moral grounds, manage or accommodate physical growth in the urban environment whilst maintaining amenity values, and manage the countryside to minimise the impact of adverse effects upon it (after Healey and Shaw 1993a).

These similarities illustrate, therefore, how the traditional planning agenda is almost perfectly aligned with sustainable development in the three Key Areas of Transport; Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity; and Built Environment. Indeed, it could be argued that a large part of the sustainable development agenda, as it is defined in this study, is merely re-emphasising or re-classifying physical environmental issues that have always been addressed in the UK planning system.

In all three of these Key Areas, only the one Policy Direction, on medium rise/high density development, was seen to be conspicuously low on Figure 5.4. Although this is another physical land-use issue, its poor showing in the current generation of UDPs can still be explained in terms of land-use planning's traditional approach in the UK. For example, Foley (1973) notes how British town planning attacked the "great villains of overcrowding, congestion and physical blight" through technical measures that included urban density controls and open space standards (pp.-78). This tradition also led to policies for low density residential areas in the 1970's, motivated by the desire for planning to provide a physical basis for better community life in urban areas (ibid.).

This apparent antithesis of planners and land-use planning towards high density development is also at the heart of a current debate on the value of compact cities to sustainable development. For example, Breheny and Rookwood (1993) question the whole notion of a compact, high density city for sustainability. They point out that high density development does not necessarily achieve greater sustainability because of the congestion it causes in urban areas, which offsets any potential energy savings. The two authors also argue that high living densities go against the trend towards decentralisation which has been prominent for the last fifty years in Britain. On the other hand however, various other organisations and individuals claim, like the LGMB, that increased urban densities are an important aspect of sustainable cities (see for example CEC 1990 from Selman 1996; Mitlin and Satterthwaite 1994; Owens 1993).

Therefore, although the current generation of UDPs are in line with many of sustainable development's physical environmental principles, it is interesting to discover how the traditional approaches of land-use planning appear to shape the plans' current policy response to individual issues in the built and natural environment.

5.3.2 Weakly Featured Areas of Sustainable Development

Two Key Areas of sustainable development have been identified in Section 5.2 as weakly featured in UDPs. These are Energy and Land, Air and Water Quality. Figure 5.1 indicates that both areas appear to be relatively weakly addressed by UDP policies when compared to the other six Key Areas of sustainable development.

The Key Area of Energy
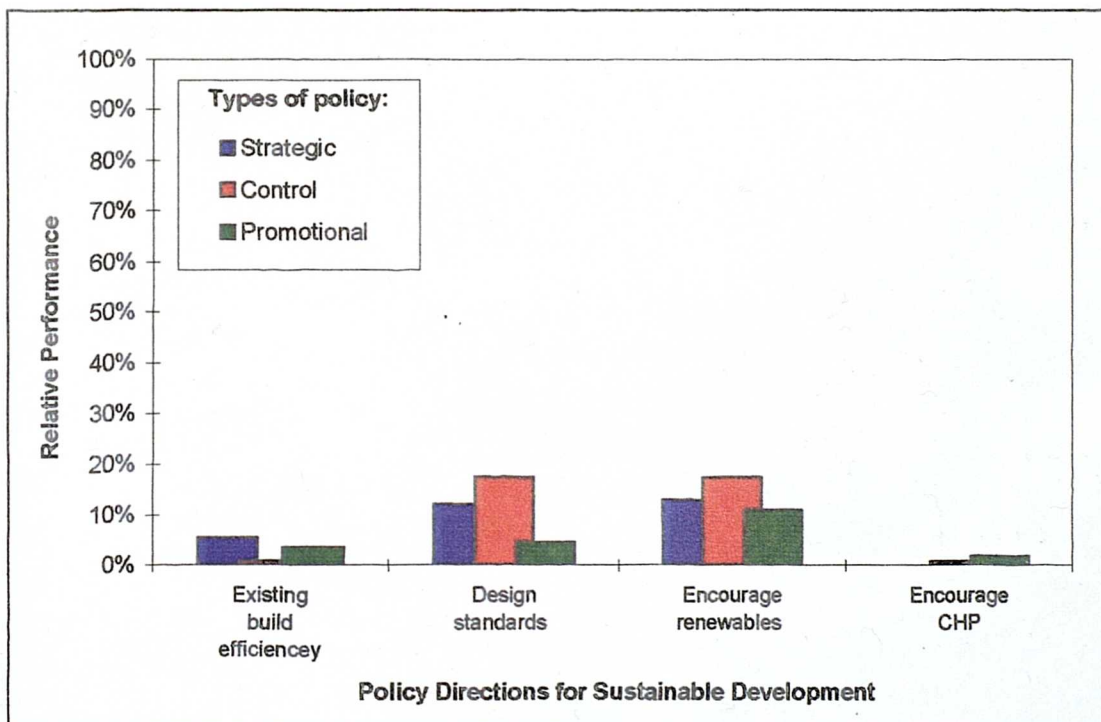
Figure 5.5: Graph to show the extent of policies addressing sustainable development in the Key Area of Energy

t is clear from Figure 5.5 that none of the individual Policy Directions in the Key Area of Energy achieve any real status on the UDP agenda. The survey failed to identify any tangible number of policies which could be classified as addressing these types of issues.

The Key Area of Land, Air and Water Quality

Figure 5.6 portrays a situation where both of the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development within the Key Area of Land, Air and Water Quality figure very poorly when plotted against 'relative performance' on the Y axis. In a similar way to Energy issues, these types of considerations are relatively weakly addressed in the policy content of UDPs. The requirement to set local pollution limits does emerge to some extent in the control policies of UDPs, as indicated by the higher control column, but it appears that this is not very comprehensive. Similarly, a limited consideration is given by UDP policies to the need to identify and treat contaminated land.
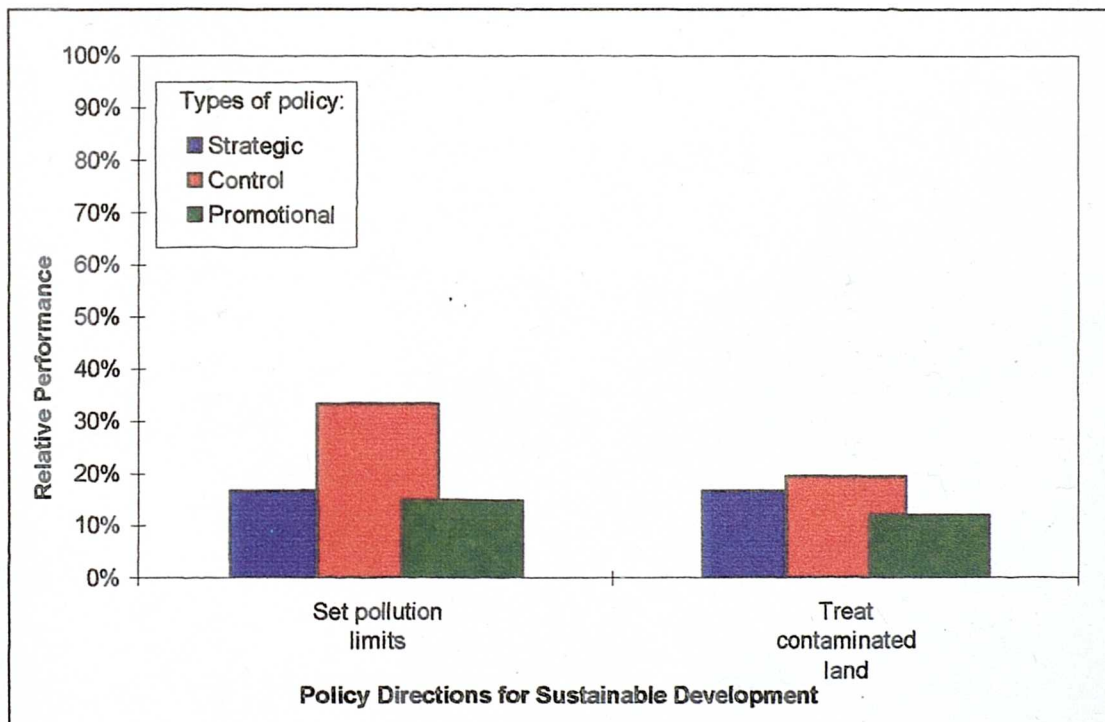
Figure 5.6: Graph to show the extent of policies addressing sustainable development in the Key Area of Land, Air and Water Quality

106

Discussion

Both of these Key Areas present quite a contrast to those discussed in Section 5.3.1, above. Their apparent unimportance to UDPs suggests that they represent an area of discontinuity between UDPs and sustainable development. The reason for this may partly be explained by the fact that these types of issue have generally been outside the sphere of local planning authorities. For example, the Environment Agency, and previously the National Rivers Authority, monitors water quality and regulates discharges into streams, lakes, rivers and the sea. Therefore, water pollution or water quality can be seen to have been traditionally dealt with by Central Government and its agencies. And UDP policies are not addressing such issues in order to avoid duplicating the responsibility of another statutory body.

Energy issues are slightly different, however. The relatively recent publication of PPG 22 in 1993 (DOE 1993b), requires planning authorities to consider the potential of their area for renewable energy sources. This suggests that the breadth and depth of policy response to this issue will not be as good in UDPs because it is such a very recent consideration in the land-use planning system. As Owens points out, it is "unrealistic ... to expect current plans and policies to reflect concerns which have become prominent only during the last five years" (Owens 1994, p442). This point is particularly relevant for the collection of plans surveyed, many of which were first drafted well before the publication of new guidance containing a commitment to issues such as renewable energy.

Owens (1992) also notes how planning authorities are either too unsure or too unwilling to include other energy issues in their development plans, often on land-use planning grounds. For example, she emphasises the reservations held by planning officers about the legitimacy of energy efficiency in buildings as a strategic planning issue. Several respondents to her survey of planning authorities noted the lack of Government guidance on the subject of energy efficiency and displayed the "prevailing sense that energy is not a 'land-use' issue" (Owens 1992, p97).

Although Owens does go on to identify a recent growing awareness of energy issues among planning authorities in general, this survey has identified a distinct policy gap between UDPs and some of the principles of sustainable development. The fact that this policy gap is largely formed around the traditional limits of the land-use planning system is clearly significant. This situation appears to be an inverse image of that discussed in Section 5.3.1 above, with UDPs not addressing energy or pollution issues to any great extent because they have not formed the traditional focus of a land-use development plan.

5.3.3 Moderately Featured Areas of Sustainable Development

The three Key Areas of Natural Resources; Solid Waste Management; and Economic Development have all been identified as being moderately featured in UDP policies. The establishment of this particular group of Key Areas is clearly relative. It is based upon a comparison of one Key Area to the remaining Key Areas. However, as the discussion below indicates, the three Key Areas do exhibit some similar characteristics which help to distinguish them from the areas of sustainable development already discussed.

The Key Area of Natural Resources

As Figure 5.7 illustrates, the level to which UDP policies address the various Policy Directions in the Key Area of Natural Resources is not consistent. Two policy directions within the Key Area are, relatively speaking, very strongly considered within UDPs, whereas the remaining two appear to be much more weakly addressed by them.

For example, the first two Policy Directions in the Key Area, which seek to minimise the use of non-renewable resources and limit the use of renewable resources, receive only a very marginal response in the UDPs surveyed. A relatively weak deliberation of the issues at the strategic policy level is matched by weak control policies in UDPs. In particular, the extent to which UDPs limit the use of renewable resources appears to be almost non-existent.
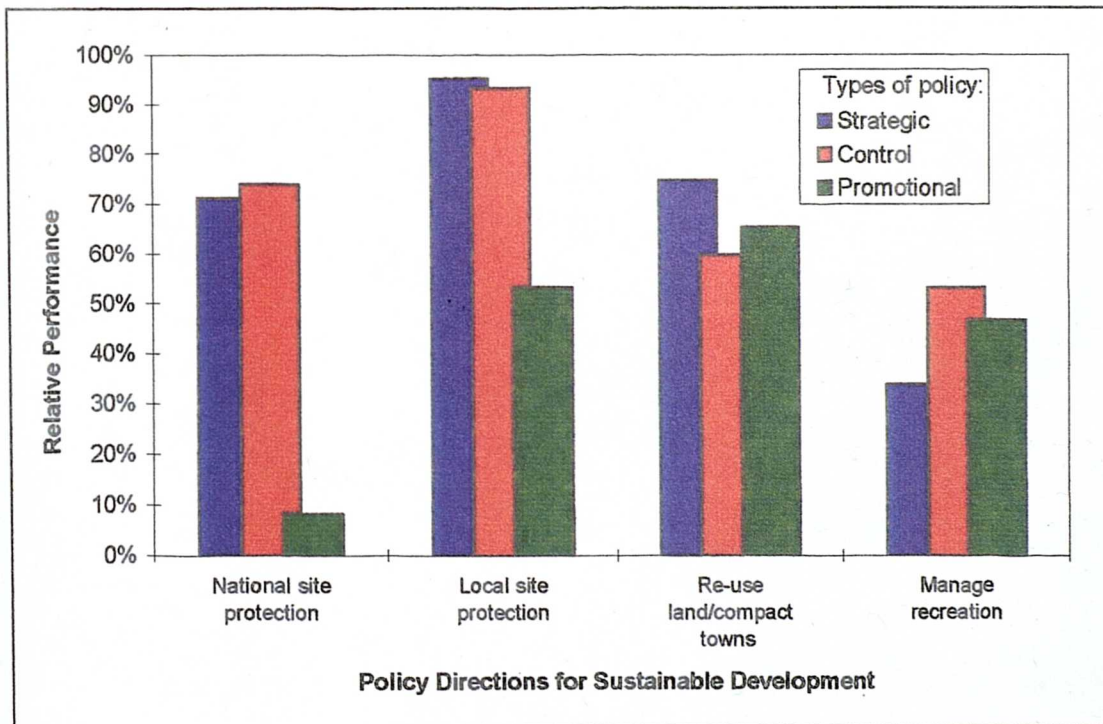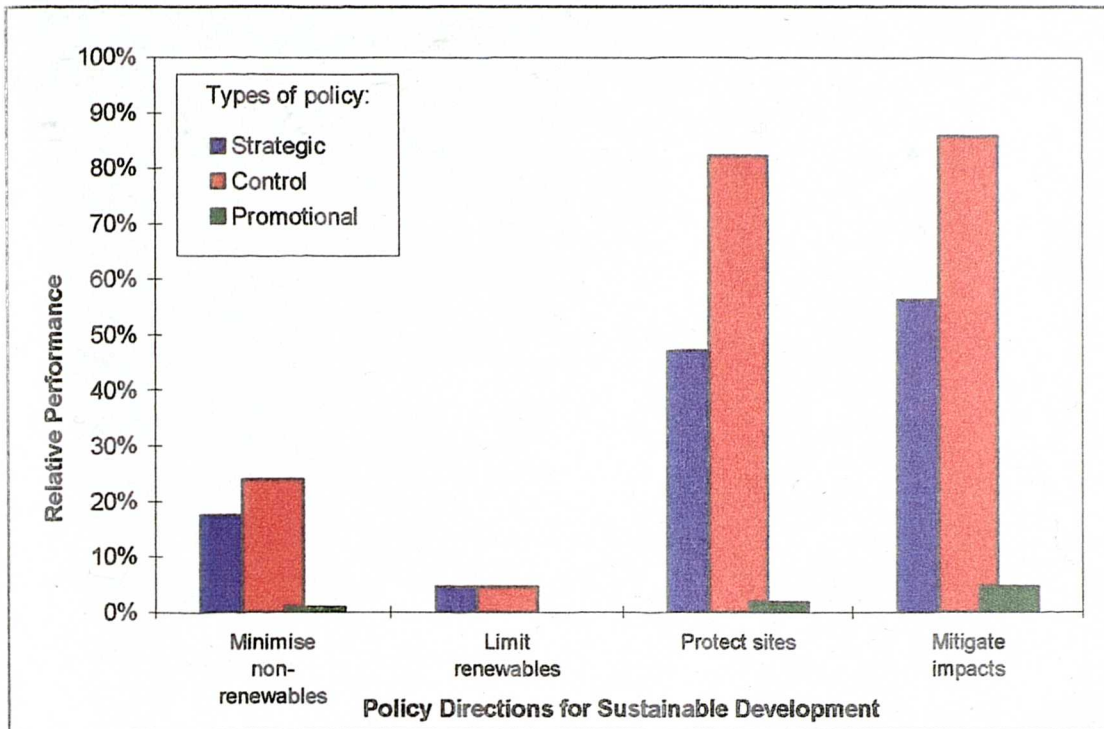
Figure 5.7: Graph to show the extent of policies addressing sustainable development in the Key Area of Natural Resources

However, UDPs appear to be providing a stronger level of protection from resource extraction for environmentally sensitive sites, and mitigating the impact of resource extraction on other sites. Clearly, this type of sustainable development issue is much more amenable to a control type of policy, and the presence of such policies appears to be a fairly typical occurrence in UDPs. The criteria and conditions applied in these control policies are generally rigorous and comprehensive enough to address the full implications of these Policy Directions.

Another observation which can be made across all four Policy Directions in this Key Area is the distinct lack of any promotional polices recorded by the survey. The most prominent type of UDP policies addressing sustainable development in Figure 5.7 are control policies.

The Key Area of Solid Waste Management

In a similar way to Natural Resources, Figure 5.8 demonstrates how the consideration of sustainable development issues in the Key Area of Solid Waste Management is not evenly addressed across both Policy Directions. The plans appear to have a stronger

109

concern for minimising the impact and costs of waste disposal, an important part of the control element of UDPs, but they generally fail to consider waste reduction, re-use, recycling and recovery to any comprehensive extent. Therefore the overall status of this Key Area is moderate.
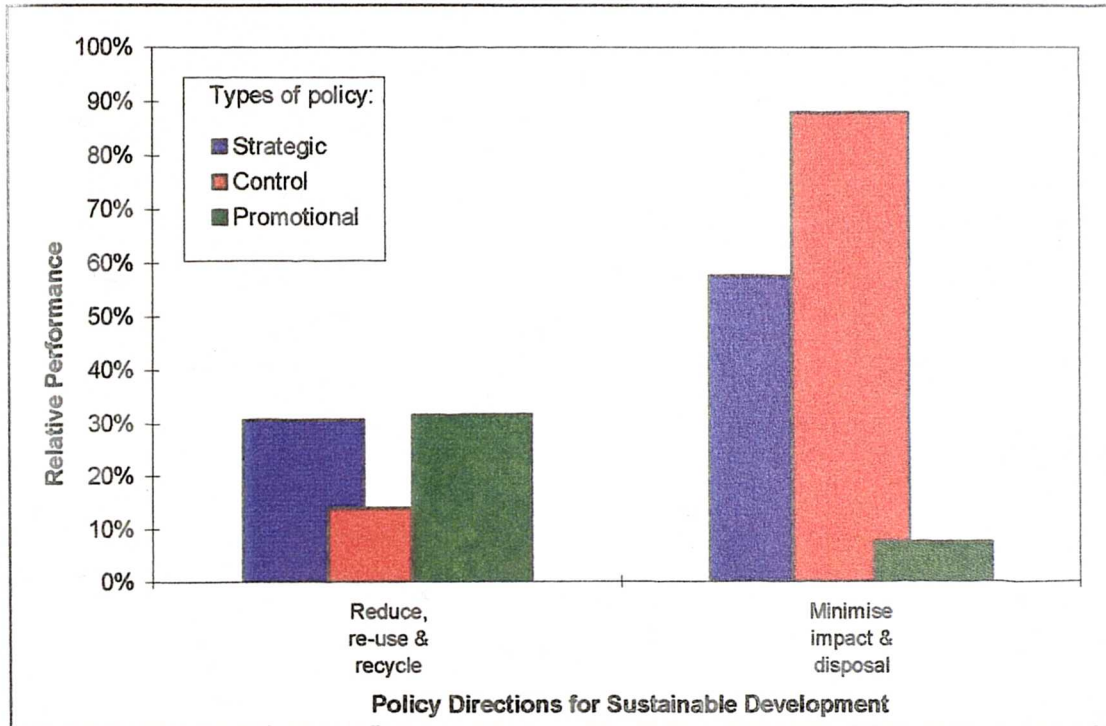
Figure 5.8: Graph to show the extent of policies addressing sustainable development in the Key Area of Solid Waste Management

The Key Area of Economic Development

Figure 5.9 shows that only two of the three Policy Directions in the Key Area of Economic Development are addressed by UDP policies. None of the UDPs surveyed contain any policies which could be identified as setting design standards for the durability and repairability of new industrial developments. This issue is not part of the current UDP agenda.

An unusual combination of policies address the remaining two Policy Directions. For instance, there appears to be little strategic consideration given to setting landscaping and compensation conditions on new industrial developments. However, the number and

quality of control policies which address this issue appears to be very strong, and, overall, UDPs are relatively much stronger in considering this issue.
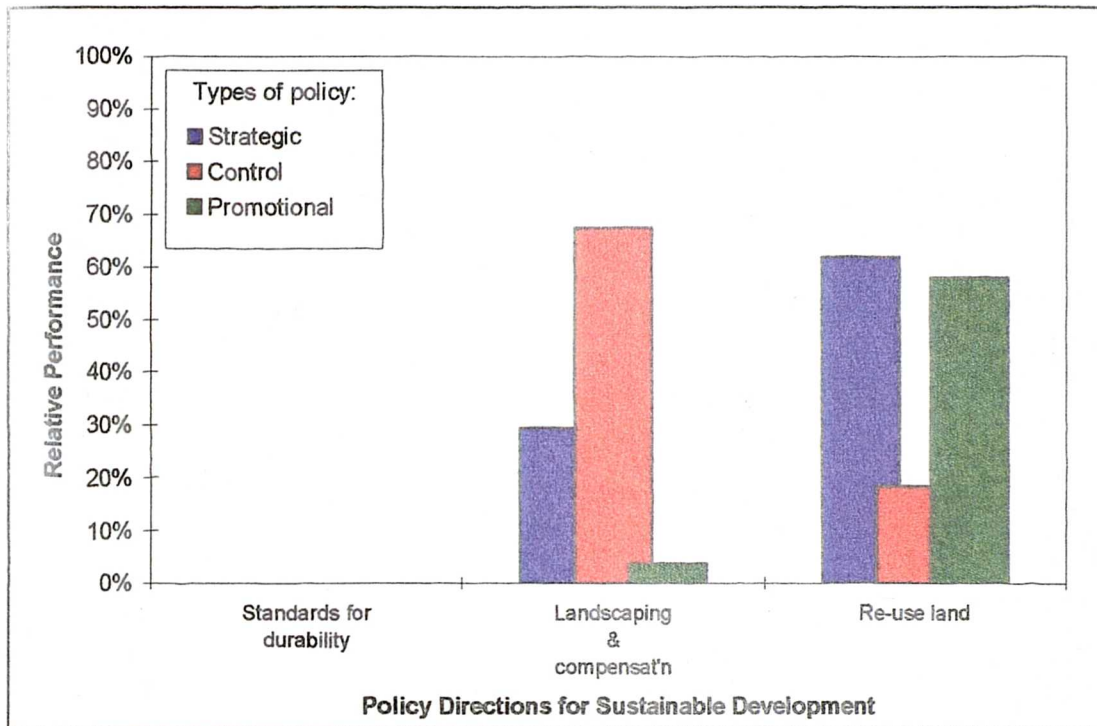
Figure 5.9: Graph to show the extent of policies addressing sustainable development in the Key Area of Economic Development

In contrast to this, a concern for re-using already developed and derelict land is a very prominent part of strategic UDP policies. Section 5.3.1, above, has already noted how UDPs contain more comprehensive promotional policies to support the re-use of land in terms of the natural and built environment, and many of these policies are directed towards economic land uses. Therefore this Policy Direction is also more comprehensively addressed by promotional policies in UDPs.

Discussion

Overall, the inconsistent approach by UDPs to the range of sustainable development issues in these three Key Areas means that they are recognised as being only moderately featured on the wider UDP agenda. However, this does not mean that individual Policy Directions within them are not an important part of UDP policy, as the observations above have made clear. Rather, it would appear that UDPs are not comprehensive

111

enough in the areas of Natural Resources, Solid Waste Management and Economic Development to meet the full requirements of sustainable development.

The reasons for this are difficult to ascertain at this stage of the research project. It is clear that UDPs include some of these individual issues because they are a traditional and mainstream part of the planning agenda. For example, in protecting environmentally sensitive areas from resource extraction and mitigating the impacts of resource extraction, UDPs are clearly addressing largely physical land use issues, as discussed in Section 5.3.1 above. These are all very direct land-use issues which are easily included within the remit of UDPs and the wider British planning system with its long history of minerals planning (Holliday 1993; Rydin 1993).

Similarly, the survey also illustrates how UDPs contain strong control policies to minimise the impact of waste disposal. As Rydin (1993) points out, development plans are legally required to include policies which address the land-use implications of authorities' waste policies. These development policies generally set out the considerations for identifying sites for waste disposal and treatment, as well as setting restrictions on developments in the vicinity of land-fill sites (Rydin 1993). Therefore it is clear that UDPs do have an important, and well established, role in the Key Area of Solid Waste Management.

However, Policy Directions such as minimising the use of non-renewable resources, limiting the use of renewable resources, reducing waste generation and setting standards for the durability of industrial developments are not currently a substantial element of UDP policies. Although these types of sustainable development issues clearly have some direct land-use implications, it would appear that this is not pronounced enough to justify a prominent place on the UDP agenda.

Again, the reason for these discrepancies between the UDP agenda and that of sustainable development, may be partly explained by the traditional and legal limits which mark the remit of the land-use planning system. For example, mineral extraction is seen by Central Government to serve the national interest (Rydin 1993). Therefore the DOE

sets the basis for local minerals planning by forecasting what the national demand for minerals will be, and it is assumed that planning authorities and their development plans should meet this demand. Most planning authorities are in effect, therefore, limited to managing the release of mineral land and controlling the environmental effects of its extraction (Rydin 1993). This basic approach is clearly against the general thrust of the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development, as they are explained in the Key Area of Natural Resources, as it fails to address the need to manage or reduce the actual demand for natural resources.

5.4 Summary of Key Findings and Issues Raised

The three sections above present the results of the survey in terms of all 36 UDPs. By grouping the data from each individual plan into one set of figures, a general understanding of the relative performance of UDPs in terms of sustainable development has begun to emerge. This illustrates the relationship between UDPs and sustainable development much more clearly. At present the UDP agenda overlaps, or converges, with a large part of the sustainable development agenda, and in several Key Areas UDPs are currently advancing policies which would assist urban areas in moving towards sustainable development as it is defined in this study.

This is particularly so in the more 'physical environment' areas of the planning agenda, such as the Built Environment, Transport and the Natural Environment. However, other policy areas, such as Energy and Land, Air and Water Quality, each of which have many land-use implications, are often completely absent from UDPs. Therefore distinct policy gaps appear in the agenda of UDPs on these issues.

The differences between the sustainable development agenda and the UDP agenda is particularly marked where the need for promotional policy initiatives are concerned. In general UDPs appear to be relatively stronger at using policies to control development and are most evidently supporting sustainable development in this way. For example, policies to protect areas with natural conservation value, green spaces, or existing town centres, are found to be very strong in the survey. In contrast, Policy Directions which require a more

promotional initiative are all considerably weakened by a lack of policies in UDPs. Therefore it could be said that UDPs appear to be better at controlling development against sustainable development rather than promoting development towards it.

The only exceptions to this general observation are in the more traditional land-use planning areas, already identified as Transport; Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity; and the Built Environment. On these more familiar planning issues UDPs do contain promotional policy initiatives in line with sustainable development.

The reasons for this relationship between UDPs and sustainable development are not wholly understood at this stage. However, the discussion above was able to recognise a distinction between 'traditional' land-use planning concerns, such as the protection and improvement of the physical environment; and 'newer' sustainable development concerns, such as minimising the use of natural resources and encouraging renewable energy. This second group of issues have only risen to prominence more recently through the concept of sustainable development, and the fact that UDPs tend to concentrate on the former traditional issues is, perhaps, understandable.

The implications of these findings for sustainable development are interesting but, again, not totally understood at this stage of the research. For example, the stress placed on the planning system by UK Central Government and the international community, as it was explained in Chapter Two, suggests that they both have a certain amount of confidence in the land-use planning system. There is a clear reliance on the system to put sustainable development into practice and meet some of the obligations made in international agreements such as those signed at UNCED. If this faith and reliance is to be fulfilled, however, the discontinuities and policy gaps that have been identified in UDPs by this survey will need to be addressed.

In terms of UDPs, the above discussion demonstrates a fairly restrictive policy content in the plans. As noted above, this content is based around physical environmental issues, where Policy Directions for Sustainable Development which are outside the narrow interpretation of 'land-use' are not as well addressed as the Policy Directions which are

114

within it. These observations raise the question of how UDPs might widen their current policy remit to include a wider range of sustainable development issues. In particular, UDPs will have to complement the level of control policies they contain with more pro-active promotional policies if they are to fully operationalise sustainable development. Whether or not this is possible within the constraints of the current land-use planning system in the UK, is, however, also unclear.

These findings are clearly very interesting, but their significance must be confined within the context of the current stage of the research project. So far the analysis of the survey results has been limited in the sense that it has only looked at the data as one whole, massing the individual results from each of the 36 UDPs together. By dis-aggregating these results, and exploring the relationship between individual plans and sustainable development in more detail, it may be possible to elaborate upon some of the ideas discussed above and judge their significance in a wider context.

For instance, although it has been demonstrated that the current UDP agenda is focused around physical environmental issues, at the cost of other sustainable development issues, different UDPs may have interpreted the fine detail of this focus in different ways. If this is the case, and different UDPs are found to have separate or distinct relationships to different areas of sustainable development, the reasons for their relationship may become clearer, or at least more important for the research project. This is because any difference between the policy content of individual UDPs in terms of sustainable development would suggest that the land-use planning system as a whole does not dictate the relationship between the concept and UDPs. This in turn would mean that the local authorities in which the plans were developed and the people who wrote them could be identified as an important factor for influencing how far UDPs operationalise sustainable development.

Likewise, the research results have noted the relatively weak promotional policy initiatives to put sustainable development issues into practice. Although this is typical of the UDPs as a whole, individual plans may be far more pro-active in certain areas than the others. If this is the case, then different UDPs would be operationalising sustainable development in different ways.

115

Therefore, in order to investigate the full policy remit of UDPs within the land-use planning system, the following chapter will analyse the results in terms of individual plans. By doing this it will be possible to develop our understanding of how sustainable development relates to UDPs in their widest sense, giving a more detailed picture of just how far individual UDPs are able to include the full spectrum of sustainable development issues in their policies. In this way the questions raised in the above discussion, on the constraints of the planning system to UDPs and the lack of promotional policy responses in UDPs will be able to be answered much more thoroughly and meaningfully than at present.

CHAPTER 6: VARIATIONS AMONG INDIVIDUAL UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

6.0 Chapter Outline

The role of this chapter is to analyse the survey results at the level of the individual UDP. The analysis develops the findings in Chapter Five to highlight the variation of results across the whole population of 36 UDPs. The first section of the chapter explains how the analysis will take place, as well as the need for this type of analysis in the study. The second section uses observations and examples from the survey to examine how individual UDPs address Key Areas of sustainable development, and the qualitative differences between UDP policies on specific sustainable development issues. This is followed by a more comprehensive approach in the third section of the chapter, which calculates the statistical variations among the 36 plans in each Key Area of sustainable development. The chapter is then able to conclude with a general summary and discussion of the whole survey exercise.

6.1 Comparing and Contrasting Individual UDPs

The previous chapter has provided an overall picture of how the UDP agenda compares to that of sustainable development. Although this macro level of analysis has been helpful in providing a typical picture of the UDP approach to sustainable development, by its very nature it requires broad generalisations to provide an overall summary of the current situation. By making broad generalisations, however, Chapter Five may well have overlooked many interesting details and exceptions from the average. Such details are valuable results in their own right and often deserve further investigation. As Section 5.4 noted, the general approach adopted in Chapter Five can also be too simplistic and extensive to provide a sufficiently detailed understanding of the full scope of UDPs and their relationships to sustainable development.

In terms of the study's first research aim, these are serious deficiencies. Although the overall relationship between UDPs and sustainable development is now much clearer, without knowing the full extent of an individual UDP's policies for sustainable development it is difficult to establish just how far the plans are currently operationalising the concept. This

117

chapter, therefore, investigates the survey results in much more detail. It compares and contrasts individual UDPs, to illustrate how they vary amongst each other in terms of sustainable development. This level of analysis is the micro level of analysis. It is designed to complement and support some of the findings already made at the macro level of analysis in Chapter Five.

The chapter will investigate the detailed survey results in two ways. Firstly, Section 6.2 makes a number of qualitative observations from the survey to highlight the major themes and differences to emerge from UDPs in each Key Area of sustainable development. The section gives examples from different UDP policies to illustrate these differences and demonstrate how limited (or relatively weaker) policies only partly address the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development. More innovative (or stronger) policies, on the other hand, are demonstrated to address the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development in a much more comprehensive fashion. This type of comparison produces a range of policy responses to each Key Area of sustainable development, stretching from relatively weak or limited policies in some plans, to relative strong or more innovative policies in others. The more innovative policies and UDPs are identified from the survey as they go beyond the normal, or average, UDP's remit to address sustainable development issues in a much fuller sense.

Secondly, Section 6.3 applies simple descriptive statistics to the content analysis data generated in the survey to highlight trends in the results, and lend support to the qualitative observations made in Section 6.2. By ranking the summary results from each UDP, it is possible to calculate the range and inter-quartile range of results in each Key Area, and therefore identify those Key Areas in which individual plans differ most from each other.

This type and depth of analysis was made possible by the content analysis system developed for the survey. Chapter Four explained how each UDP policy was systematically compared to the 29 Policy Directions for Sustainable Development. As each relevant UDP policy was first of all categorised and then graded in terms of the Policy Directions, the survey produced a rich and multi-faceted source of data which enables a number of analysis opportunities.

The example policies and observations used in Section 6.2 were drawn from the categorisation stage of the survey (see step 4 in Section 4.3.1). This stage of the survey effectively recorded every single UDP policy to address sustainable development, and therefore enabled interesting examples to be easily selected from the plans. The statistical analysis explained in Section 6.3 was drawn from the grading stage of the survey (see step 5 in Section 4.3.1). By representing the relevant UDP policies in a numerical form, the survey is able to generate quasi-statistics, a form of data which in principle is numeric, but in practice cannot be precisely quantified (Robson 1993). Therefore, although Chapters Four and Five demonstrate that the survey is qualitative rather than quantitative by design, the frequencies and counts that it generates do allow some simple statistical tests to be carried out.

Taken together, Sections 6.2 and 6.3 provide a more in-depth understanding of the ways in which UDPs operationalise sustainable development. Their findings, discussed in the final section of this chapter, demonstrate the qualitative differences between UDPs in terms of sustainable development. This distinction, along with the findings of Chapter Five, can then be used to meet the full implications of the study's first research aim.

6.2 Analysis By Key Areas of Sustainable Development

As explained above, this section will consider the differing extents to which individual UDPs address sustainable development for each Key Area of the concept. Actual policies from a range of UDPs will be used to illustrate and exemplify the different approaches to sustainable development found in the plans.

As in Chapter Five, the eight Key Areas of sustainable development are grouped together on the basis of the survey's initial findings, described in Section 5.2. Strongly featured areas of sustainable development are discussed first, then the weakly featured areas, before the remaining, moderately featured, Key Areas of the concept are finally examined.

6.2.1 Strongly Featured Areas of Sustainable Development

Chapter Five identified the three Key Areas of Transport; Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity; and Built Environment as relatively strongly featured in UDP policies. This section investigates the validity of this observation for all 36 UDPs.

The Key Area of Transport

There are just two Policy Directions in the Key Area of Transport. Further analysis of each one reveals a great amount of diversity in the extent to which they are addressed by the 36 UDPs. In short, some plans are found to perform very well in terms of sustainable transport policies, whilst other plans do not.

This is particularly true when looking at UDP policies to develop mixed land use and reduce travel demand in new developments (the first Policy Direction in this Key Area). For example, very few of the policies contained in the Saint Helens UDP could be identified as addressing this issue, and a substantial number of other UDPs contain only marginally relevant policies. Typical of these is Bolton UDP which requires recreational open space and community facilities to be in 'appropriate locations' (Bolton MBC 1992 & 1995 policies R3, R3/1, R3/2 and CP3), whilst containing policies to promote and protect local and accessible shops (ibid. S1, S6 and S7/2).

This type of approach is clearly in line with the general desire to see mixed land-use and reduced travel demand. It is, however, only marginal, and far less substantial, when compared to the policies of other UDPs. For example, Sunderland UDP adopts the principle of mixed land-use and reducing travel demand as a central element of its strategy:

> "The long term aim should be to provide a range of opportunities which could make broad areas of the city largely self sufficient." (City of Sunderland 1994, p1)

> "[The objective of the plan is to] Evolve a pattern of land use which minimises the need for increased traffic movements." (ibid., p7)

These strategic policy statements are followed by a range of control and promotional policies which support their broad aims. A similarly comprehensive approach is also made in the Leeds UDP. A prominent feature of the Leeds plan is its allocation of employment sites using the following policies:

> "Distribution of land for employment uses is based on the following principles ... :
>
> i. Provision of land in quantities and locations which offer job prospects close to homes of the workforce, reducing travel to work; ......" (Leeds City Council 1993 SP6)

> "The role of the city centre will be enhanced by: ......
>
> v. A broad land use approach involving mixed uses within a 'quarters' philosophy." (ibid. SP8)

The plan also contains control policies to support mixed land use, such as:

> "Proposals for major developments ...... will normally be required to contain a mix of uses additional to the main use ...." (ibid. CC29)

The manner in which UDPs address public and non-motorised transport, the second Policy Direction the Transport Key Area, is also very diverse. All the UDPs surveyed contain some policy reference to public transport, but the calibre of these policies varies to a great extent in terms of detail and implied commitment. Solihull UDP, for example, pledges little more than a general support for public transport in several of its policies:

> "The Council will encourage the provision of public transport to meet the need of the future population of the area." (Solihull MBC 1990 FA6)

> "The Council will encourage the development of public transport facilities to meet the needs of the future population of Dickens Heath." (ibid. HH10)

This lack of detail, typical of several plans in the survey, is in stark contrast to many highway improvement schemes detailed in all the UDPs. Policies on highway schemes tend to include very specific information on routes, finance and completion dates. This mismatch of detail

between road development and public transport development implies a lower commitment for

public transport in UDPs.

In contrast to this, some UDPs do suggest a much greater commitment to public transport

over private transport. For example, some UDPs contain more comprehensive promotional

policies which include details of the kind of public transport planned and references to

individual schemes for bus/rail development at stations or along public transport corridors:

> "The City Council, in conjunction with the PTE and bus operators, will
> investigate potential traffic management measures to improve bus travel,
> particularly on:
> (1) Hylton Road (B1045)
> (2) Chester Road (A183)
> (3) Durham Road (A690) ......" (City of Sunderland 1994 SA39)

> "The City Council will support the development of the Metro from the City
> Centre to South Hylton, reserving a corridor utilising the former Penshaw-
> Pallion branch railway line. Stations are proposed at Millfield, Pallion and
> south Hylton." (ibid. SA 30A)

Other plans complement this promotional initiative with control policies to ensure that new

development is located within the existing public transport network. For example:

> "New Development will not normally be accepted unless: ....
> ii. It can be served adequately by existing public transport services and
> infrastructure, or minor alterations, unless the development is sufficiently
> large to support economically viable new services ...." (Leeds City Council
> 1993 T2)

The position of non-motorised transport in UDP policies is similarly varied. All of the 36

UDPs surveyed mention cycling and pedestrian transport to some extent, but support for their

development varies considerably among the plans. At one end of the spectrum plan policies

simply consider pedestrian and cycling access to new developments, or express support and

encouragement for cycling in general. At the other end of the spectrum, however, some

UDPs are able to provide a range of promotional and control policies for improvements to

the cycling and pedestrian environment. Doncaster UDP, for example, refers to a cycling

strategy and programme, and others plans, such as South Tyneside, Sunderland and

Stockport, detail the routes of new pedestrian and cycle paths as well as introducing strategic cycle networks to the area.

The Key Area of Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity

Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity has already been identified as, perhaps, the highest featured Key Area of sustainable development on the current UDP agenda. Although UDPs cover exclusively the metropolitan areas of England, and by definition therefore the traditional urban conurbations of the country, rural and natural habitat issues are very important to the plans. This is illustrated by the fact that all of the UDPs surveyed incorporate some form of nature conservation or protection principles at the strategic stage of their policy making.

Different UDPs do address each of the four Policy Directions within this area in slightly different ways, but the quality and detail in which they do this is unfaltering. The detail of policies on conservation issues, for example, is illustrated by the number and range of locally designated sites of habitat or wildlife importance in plans. The Trafford UDP contains a number of control policies to protect:

- Local nature reserves
- Wildlife corridors
- Ancient woodlands
- Western River Mersey
- Trees
- Woodlands & copses
- Areas of special landscape value
- Natural features
- Green belt areas (from Trafford MBC 1993 & 1995)

The final item in the above list, green belt areas, is of course a common policy element in all UDPs. As well as being relevant to landscape and habitat conservation, green belts also emerge from the survey as one of the main types of policies promoting the principle of

compact settlements. A number of UDPs also complement their green belt policies by making compact settlements a distinct policy aim of their strategy, and include further development control policies to keep new development within existing built areas. For example the strategy section of Doncaster UDP includes the policy:

> "Land will be provided, principally within or adjacent to the Doncaster area or the larger surrounding settlements, to meet Doncaster's regeneration and development needs up to at least 2001." (Doncaster MBC 1994 Gen 2)

In line with this Key Area, most plans also promote the re-use of already developed and derelict land. A common approach to this issue in UDPs is through allocating new land uses to redundant or derelict sites, or through listing sites for re-use and giving preferential consideration to applications on them. A good example of this is found in South Tyneside UDP whose strategy, control and promotional policies stress the need to develop and recycle land, and restore sites for industrial and retail uses in particular.

The fourth Policy Direction in the Key Area, lowering the impact of recreation in the countryside, receives a much more mixed response from UDPs than the other three Policy Directions discussed. Some UDPs include countryside recreation issues within their strategic approach, for example:

> "Conflicts between appropriate open land uses, particularly recreation, agriculture, woodland planting, and nature conservation, will be minimised wherever possible.
>
> This will be achieved through the sympathetic siting of new uses and by promotion of joint countryside management agreements with landowners, farm tenants and other interested parties." (Tameside MBC 1993 OL5)

In the Trafford plan, this initiative is followed by policies to control inappropriate recreation in the countryside and promote recreation in other, more suitable, areas.

Other UDPs, however, can contain very little or nothing in their policies on the subject of recreational impact. For example Sheffield UDP does not address countryside recreation specifically, and it must be assumed that the general development control policies in the plan consider the suitability of recreation development in the countryside. Despite this, nearly all

the plans go on to promote countryside recreation (with or without specific measures to control environmental impacts) in a wide range of policies concerning country parks, community woodlands, linear open spaces, heritage areas and river valleys, for example.

The Key Area of the Built Environment

In general terms the Built Environment has already been identified as very highly featured on the UDP agenda. In particular, the level of strategic policies addressing the issues in this Key Area are especially significant; and all but two of the eight Policy Directions are very well addressed by either control or promotional policies (see Section 5.3.1). A more detailed examination of the survey results finds relatively little deviation from this average picture. All of the 36 UDPs contain similar policies on each of the eight Policy Directions, with only minor differences between plans.

The first Policy Direction for Sustainable Development in this Key Area, investing in the environment and facilities of inner cities, is certainly very highly featured on the agenda of all UDPs. Although the actual amount and timing of any financial investment is impossible to deduce from UDP policies, each plan features a number of policies concerning a range of improvements to city or town centres. Nearly all of the plans surveyed propose new developments for shopping, business and industry, as well as environmental improvements in existing town or city centres.

Many of these UDP policies are also relevant to the second Policy Direction in this Key Area, strengthening and concentrating facilities in inner cities. UDPs feature a great deal of policies to promote the concentration of facilities in city centres; and very often these aims are complimented by the control of new out-of-centre developments. For example Bolton UDP states that:

> "The town centres will continue to be the principal focus for retailing, arts and cultural provision, leisure, entertainment and commercial services."
> (Bolton 1992 TH7)

The Bolton plan goes on to list a range of environmental improvements, economic initiatives and retail enhancements to ensure this aim, whilst at the same time discouraging out-of-centre shops:

> "The Council will not normally permit new shopping development to be located outside existing shopping centres. Proposals should not by virtue of their scale or character adversely affect the vitality and viability of any shopping centre." (ibid. S7)

The aim of integrating land use and providing all immediate needs locally, the third Policy Direction, has already been partly discussed under the Transport heading, above. This discussion noted a number of differences in the ways that UDPs address the issue, and similar differences also exist when the Policy Direction is applied specifically to the Built Environment. For example, Solihull UDP requires new developments to include community facilities and open spaces (Solihull MBC 1990 R5, BC1, BC13, HH7, HH8). These type of policies certainly meet some of the demands of this Policy Direction, in so much as they ensure that some immediate needs are provided locally in new developments. However, this approach compares very poorly with Leeds UDP and others which make mixed land use in the city centre a strategic principle in the plan:

> "The role of the City Centre will be enhanced by: .....
>
> v) a broad land use approach involving mixed uses within a 'quarters' philosophy." (Leeds City Council 1993 SP8)

The Leeds plan supports this strategic principle with the promotion of a combination of land uses in centres accessible to the local community as well as easily accessible facilities, as explained in the Transport Key Area, above. These differences between UDPs means that this Policy Direction is marginally lower on the UDP agenda when compared to other Policy Directions in the Key Area.

A preference for medium rise, high density developments, the fourth Policy Direction in this Key Area, has already been identified in Chapter Five for the lack of any significant UDP policy initiative. Only one UDP in the whole survey actually made reference to this issue; Birmingham UDP included a strategic policy which sought to promote higher

density housing development near to public transport corridors (Birmingham City Council 1993). However, this single strategic initiative was not supported by any other policy proposals.

The fifth Policy Direction in the Built Environment Key Area, siting new developments on redundant and vacant sites, has already been covered in some detail under the title Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity, above. Nearly all of the policies discussed in this section also relate to the urban environment, and the observations made there also apply to the Built Environment Key Area as well.

In protecting and enhancing urban greenspace, the sixth Policy Direction in this Key Area, all the plans surveyed provide very strong control policies to protect a wide variety of greenspaces from all types of development. Linear open spaces, green corridors, playing field, parks and gardens, local open spaces and other types of urban greenspace all receive the attention of usually quite detailed development control policies. This is clearly a very well established and supported principle of unitary development plans.

Protecting buildings and areas of cultural and historic interest, the seventh Policy Direction in the Key Area of Built Environment, attains a similarly high status to that of greenspace in UDPs. All the plans surveyed contain particularly strong, detailed policies to protect listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological sites, historic buildings, historic townscapes and other local heritage areas. Many of the plans also go on to propose extensions to conservation areas or improvements to listed buildings.

The final Policy Direction in this Key Area, investing in public and non-motorised transport and restricting car use, has already been partly covered by the discussion in the Transport Key Area, above. Indeed, all of the points made under the Transport title also apply to this Policy Direction. However, the requirement to restrict car use in urban areas provides an interesting new dimension to this issue for the Built Environment as well as providing some interesting contrasts between different UDPs. A large number of plans do not make any specific reference to restricting the use of private cars in city centres. Of those that do, most simply refer to pedestrianisation schemes in town or city

centres. Only a small number actually refer to traffic management or calming. For example Solihull UDP makes this a specific aim in its strategy, although no actual proposals are made in later parts of the plan:

> "On roads throughout the Borough the Council will, as appropriate, take traffic management and calming measures for environmental protection and improvement." (Solihull 1990 T7)

In a similar way the Leeds UDP also refers to the need for traffic calming in urban areas:

> "Traffic management and traffic calming measures will be encouraged particularly alongside main radial roads and within residential areas." (Leeds 1993 T23)

The Leeds plan goes on to list two specific schemes, timetabled to commence within the plan period, and also restricts car use by controlling the amount of commuter car parking in city centres:

> "....... Parking provision in new development should reflect the city council's long stay commuter parking guidelines which distinguish between:
>
> - within and immediately adjoining the public transport box, where additional commuter parking will be discouraged;
> - the city centre core, where the provision of additional commuter car parking will be restrained; and
> - fringe city centre areas, where the objective is to control growth of commuter parking by adopting differential standards between defined zones; ......" (ibid. T28)

Overall though, despite some notable differences in two of the Policy directions, and the lack of any policy consideration in terms of higher density developments, this is a Key Area which is well covered by UDP policies.

6.2.2 Weakly Featured Areas of Sustainable Development

Chapter Five has identified the two Key Areas of Energy and Land, Air and Water Quality as being relatively weakly featured in UDP policies. This section investigates how true this observation is for all 36 UDPs.

The Key Area of Energy

The low profile that energy issues experience in UDPs is typical for all 36 plans, and very little deviation can be found among any of them. Eight of the plans surveyed currently contain no policies at all to address any of the four Policy Directions in this Key Area. Most of the remaining UDPs contain only the very minimum of references to energy issues in their policies. And the few policies that the survey was able to classify as relevant to sustainable development issues tend to be very weak and contain vague, insubstantial proposals or control criteria.

For example, most of the UDPs which seek to set design standards for energy efficiency in new buildings tend to use less than committed vocabulary. Typical of this type of policy is:

> "The Borough Council will, *where appropriate*, prepare planning briefs for the sites proposed for employment use in the UDP in order to establish basic planning criteria for access, design, landscaping, energy conservation and other considerations [my emphasis]." (Doncaster MBC 1994 EMP5)

This type of approach is clearly less than committed to the principle of energy conservation and efficiency, and therefore fails to ensure a consistent implementation of the issue. The example policy may also illustrate that this type of issue is beginning to make its way onto the land-use planning agenda, but the imprecise vocabulary combines with the very small occurrence of such a policy, to mean that the profile of energy efficiency issue is very low in UDPs as a whole.

A similar situation exists for the three remaining Policy Directions in this Key Area. For example, where UDPs do consider renewable energy, the following policy is typical:

> "The Council will support the generation of energy from non-fossil and non-nuclear fuels providing this does not have a significant adverse impact on the environment including any building of importance and is not in an area of Ecological or Landscape Value." (Calderdale MBC 1992 N91)

This promotional policy clearly offers some support to renewable energy, but in a very limited fashion. In contrast to this, a very small number of UDPs contain slightly more detailed and committed policies which address the issues in a fuller sense. For example Newcastle-upon-Tyne UDP promotes renewable energy in stronger terms:

> "The development and use of renewable energy will be encouraged by:
>
> A. Maximising passive solar power gain through building design and orientation;
> B. Introducing photovaltaic cells onto appropriate buildings;
> C. Utilising bio gas from energy crops or waste; and
> D. The development of wind turbines in suitable locations." (Newcastle-upon-Tyne 1993 SD 1.4)

And Oldham UDP sets development control criteria, whilst referring to design guidance, for energy efficiency in new developments:

> "In determining a planning application for development, the Council will take into consideration the provision made for the conservation and efficient use of energy, through thoughtful location, landscaping, design, use of materials, layout and orientation of buildings.
>
> Planning guidance supplementing these criteria is set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 17." (Oldham MBC 1993 W1.10)

Therefore, although this Key Area is correctly identified in the survey as being poorly addressed throughout all of the 36 UDPs, it is still possible to locate a handful of more innovative policies which go beyond the limits of the majority of plans.

The Key Area of Land, Air & Water Quality

All 36 UDPs in the survey fail to address the Key Area of Land, Air and Water Quality in their policies to any significant level. This is not to say, however, that plans do not recognise the importance of issues like water pollution and contaminated land at all. Most plans do contain at least one or two relevant policies which address these issues, but none of these policies actually fulfil all the implications of the Policy Directions in this Key Area.

For example, all of the UDPs surveyed fail to establish identifiable local pollution limits. Their policies on this issue contain only very generally worded commitments to pollution control such as "unacceptable" or "adverse" pollution impacts, and none of the plans go on to define exactly what "unacceptable" or "adverse" levels of pollution are. Typical of this type of policy is:

> "The Council will seek to reduce pollution by:-
> (A) Not permitting development which is likely to result in unacceptable levels of air pollution, ...
> (B) Not permitting development which is likely to result in unacceptable levels of pollution in water courses and ground water ...." (Wigan MBC 1993 EN3)

The nearest that UDPs do come to making firm local limits for pollution is to refer to other regulatory bodies, for example:

> "The Council will, in conjunction with the National Rivers Authority, use all its available powers and influence to prevent the pollution of all surface and underground water and seek to improve their quality consistent with EC water quality objectives." (Barnsley MBC 1993 UTL 2)

In a very few cases a UDP may also refer to targets for one particular medium of pollution or one particular locality within the plan area:

> "The Council supports the Mersey Basin campaign and its role in the regeneration of the region and the improvement of its waterways. Through this initiative the City Council will work with other agencies to improve the water quality of all rivers and watercourses to a standard that will at least sustain fish (classification 1A, 1B and 2) and will encourage economic development which will secure the improvement of the waterside environment." (City of Salford 1992 EN21)

A similarly imprecise situation also exists for identifying and treating contaminated land, the second Policy Direction in this Key Area. The survey failed to identify any systematic schemes in UDPs for identifying and treating contaminated land. Most policies identified as relevant to this issue rely on applicants to treat contaminated land before developing. For example:

131

"In considering applications for planning permission where it is known or strongly suspected that the site is contaminated to an extent where it could adversely affect the proposed development, an investigation by the developer to identify any remedial measures will normally be required before an application can be determined by the City Council." (City of Salford 1995 DEV10)

Overall, the issues raised in this Key Area of sustainable development appear to be a part of the agenda in a very small number of plans. Where UDPs are responding to the issues raised by sustainable development, the purpose and detail of this response does not appear to be sufficient to meet the full requirements of the concept, as it is defined in this study.

6.2.3 Moderately Featured Areas of Sustainable Development

The Key Areas of Natural Resources, Solid Waste Management and Economic Development have already been identified as being moderately addressed by UDP policies. As in the two sections above, the main aim of the following discussion is to explore how well this observation applies to all 36 UDPs, and highlight any significant differences in the manner that individual plans address sustainable development issues in these areas.

The Key Area of Natural Resources

Although the macro level of analysis in Chapter Five identified the Key Area of Natural Resources to be moderately featured on the UDP agenda, this is not the case throughout the full population of plans. A more detailed analysis of the survey results reveals a great deal of diversity in the extent to which individual UDPs address the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development within this Key Area. This diversity ranged from Liverpool UDP at one end of the spectrum, which does not address any of the issues raised in the four Policy Directions, through to the policies of South Tyneside UDP which are comprehensive enough to address all four Policy Directions to some extent.

The clearest difference between the 36 plans is illustrated by the fact that thirteen of them only consider two of the four Policy Directions in this area, that is protecting sensitive sites from resource extraction and mitigating the environmental impacts of resource extraction in other

areas. Sixteen plans do extend their coverage of natural resource issues with policies to minimise the use of non-renewable resources in addition to these two Policy Directions. However, only the South Tyneside, Kirklees and Calderdale plans actually address all four Policy Directions in this Key Area, including the need to limit the use of renewable resources.

Typical examples of control policies which seek to minimise non-renewable resource extraction can be found in Doncaster UDP and Sunderland UDP:

> "The Borough Council will provide for the continuation of aggregate mineral extraction in an orderly, sustainable and environmentally acceptable manner ......" (Doncaster MBC 1994 SM1)

> "The extraction of peat will not normally be permitted (ibid. M9)

> "Before any permission is granted for opencast coal extraction, the marketability of the particular coal on a local, regional or national basis must be established." (City of Sunderland 1994 M3)

The requirements made on developers in these policies, and stated resistance to certain types of extraction like peat, is clearly analogous with the aim of minimising the use of non-renewable resources, as required in the first Policy Direction of this Key Area. This is also made a clear objective in the strategic approach of South Tyneside UDP, which seeks to "reduce the use of natural resources" within the South Tyneside area (South Tyneside MC 1995 environment aims and objectives). The plan supports this statement with control policies which attempt to ensure the minimum use of natural resources and conserve their stocks (ibid. NR5).

Overall then, this Key Area displays some interesting contrasts between different UDPs. A large group of plans concentrate on mitigating the impacts of natural resource extraction and protecting sensitive sites from mineral development, whilst more innovative plans go beyond this approach and attempt to manage demand for natural resources before extraction takes place.

The Key Area of Solid Waste Management

Although Solid Waste Management has been identified as being a moderately featured Key Area of sustainable development in Chapter Five, more detailed analysis of the survey results reveals that it is also one of the most diversely addressed Key Areas in the survey. The issues within this area represent some of the most marked differences amongst the policy content of individual UDPs. At the most extreme, these differences are illustrated by Birmingham UDP, which does not contain any policies to address either of the Policy Directions in the Key Area; and South Tyneside UDP, which contains a wide range of policies addressing both Policy Directions in the Key Area very comprehensively.

Most plans in the survey address the need to dispose of waste responsibly, the second Policy Direction in this Key Area. In this sense, a wide range of policies in UDPs control the environmental impact of waste disposal and go on to require the restoration of waste disposal sites. For example, Doncaster UDP lists eleven criteria for waste disposal proposals to meet, and requires waste disposal developments to include amenity, forestry or agricultural after uses to provide aftercare management for a period of five years (Doncaster MBC 1994 WD13 & 14). Wigan UDP also attempts to use waste disposal as an opportunity to reclaim derelict land in its strategic approach (Wigan MBC 1993, p4).

These examples demonstrate some of the more comprehensive policy approaches identified by the survey, but both are largely typical of the type of policies addressing this sustainable development issue. The most marked differences between the UDPs in this Key Area occur in relation to the Policy Direction concerning waste reduction, re-use, recycling and recovery. Five UDPs, a notable number of plans, do not contain any policies on this issue. Nine plans contain only the minimal of policy reference on the issue, such as a vague and general policy to "support" or "encourage" waste recycling or re-use; for example:

> "The Council will promote the recycling of waste. There will be a presumption in favour of the development of recycling facilities and especially of neighbourhood recycling centres where these can be provided without undue harm to the amenities of the area concerned." (Dudley MB 1993 ENV 47)

However, this type of approach contrasts sharply with a smaller number of UDPs which attempt to go further. For example Newcastle-upon-Tyne UDP makes a firmer policy commitment on this issue with much more specific proposals:

> "All waste collected by the City Council will be processed for reclamation and recycling purposes before final disposal to landfill." (Newcastle-Upon-Tyne 1993 WD1)
>
> "Proposals for new, or extensions to existing waste disposal and handling facilities will not be allowed unless they comply with: ....
>
> B. The Newcastle City Council Waste Recycling Plan." (Ibid. WD2)

South Tyneside UDP goes further than all the other plans by including targets for the recycling of domestic waste by the year 2001.

On the whole, although this is a Key Area only moderately addressed in the population of UDPs, it contains some very interesting differences in the way that plans are addressing waste recycling and re-use. This particular issue is relatively new to policy makers, and it appears to divide those plans that are beginning to accommodate newer sustainability issues, and those that are not.

The Key Area of Economic Development

At the macro level of analysis, in Chapter Five, the Key Area of Economic Development has been identified as moderately featured on the current UDP agenda. Closer investigation reveals relatively little difference in the way that the 36 UDPs address each of the three Policy Directions in this Key Area.

As noted in Section 5.3.3 of Chapter Five, none of the plans contain any policies concerning design standards for the durability and repairability of new developments, the first Policy Direction in the Key Area.

With relevance to the next Policy Direction in this area, on conditions of landscaping and compensation in new developments, all UDPs contain policies to control the design of new

developments - this appears to be a very well established element of the development plans. Most plans also contain policies specifically referring to industrial or commercial developments, and these generally stipulate some form of landscaping. The form and detail of these landscaping features, however, does differ slightly amongst some UDPs. Solihull UDP, for example, does not specifically mention landscaping in any of its control policies. The Kirklees UDP, however, makes landscaping a central criterion for successful applications:

> "Applications for planning permission should incorporate an integral landscaping scheme which protects or enhances the ecology of the site" (Kirklees MC 1994 EP11)

> "New development should be designed so that ...... existing and proposed landscape features (including trees) are incorporated as an integral part of the proposal." (Ibid. BE2)

The more progressive plans also refer to some kind of compensation from developers for the environmental or social impact that new industrial or commercial developments cause. These references may not be particularly well developed or comprehensive in the UDPs, but the scope of some of the policies is relatively wide and innovative. For example, Doncaster UDP requires "compensatory measures" from developers when developments affect nature conservation sites (Doncaster MBC 1994 ENV42). These compensatory measures could take the form of habitat creation or enhancement elsewhere. In a similar way, Coventry UDP is quite specific in requiring compensatory recreational facilities from developers where appropriate (City of Coventry 1993 GS27); and Wirral UDP specifically mentions the use of Section 106 agreements to assist in securing community benefits and the best use of land from developers (MB of Wirral 1994 URN2).

The third Policy Direction in this Key Area, re-using already developed and derelict land, has already been addressed in part under the title Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity, Section 6.2.1 above, which also discussed policies promoting the use of derelict land. All but one of the plans contain some specific policy initiative to reuse land, disused buildings or derelict sites for economic development. Wolverhampton UDP, for example, typifies one policy approach to this issue with the promotional aim of re-utilising derelict land and regenerating industrial areas:

"The Council will maintain its support for the Black Country Derelict Land Strategy, the prime object of which is to aid the regeneration of the Black Country by the elimination and re-utilisation of areas of derelict land." (Wolverhampton MBC 1993 Env 28)

This policy is complemented in the Wolverhampton plan by proposals for building and site refurbishment in Key Opportunity Development Areas (ibid. TC17 & 18).

A slightly more precise policy approach is shown in North Tyneside UDP, which also states the intention of reusing land for regeneration (North Tyneside MC 1993 E6), and then proposes to reclaim land for shop and office development within the plan period. Thus setting a very specific target for completion of the scheme.

6.2.4 Discussion

These observations and examples drawn from the 36 UDPs have illustrated just some of the detail and richness of the survey results. At the level of the individual plan, UDPs have been shown to have a very complex, and sometimes very diverse, relationship with sustainable development. This complexity and diversity suggests some very substantial qualitative differences between individual UDPs and sustainable development, and these differences clearly require further investigation.

In three Key Areas of sustainable development particularly, different UDPs have been shown to have very different policy initiatives. In the Key Area of Transport, for example, the Bolton and Saint Helens UDPs were shown to contain only very marginal policies to promote mixed land-use, whereas the Sunderland and Leeds plans both appear to contain much more innovative policies on this issue. This situation is paralleled in the Key Areas of Natural Resources and Solid Waste Management, where some plans showed more far-reaching policies than others plans. Even in the Key Area of Energy, shown to feature only very weakly in UDPs as a whole, one or two plans currently contain more innovative policies which set them apart from the wider population of UDPs. For example, Section 6.2.2 pointed to the UDPs of Sunderland and Newcastle-Upon-Tyne which promote the principles of renewable energy and energy conservation.

These qualitative differences between the UDPs indicate that the potential of UDPs to operationalise sustainable development cannot be understood in the general terms of Chapter Five alone. Indeed, the variations of individual plans from the average UDP agenda may be more significant, in terms of sustainable development, than the more traditional UDP agenda. If the more innovative policy examples given above are evidence of the concept of sustainable development making an impact on a UDP's policy content, then this would suggest that some of the plans are indeed beginning to put the full concept of sustainable development into practice.

However, it would be unsafe to make a such a fundamental conclusion on the evidence of the (relatively) small number of more innovative policies identified by the survey. Although the preceding discussion has utilised a large number of individual policies to exemplify various points, many of these were chosen on the grounds that they are exceptional not typical. Therefore it is necessary to develop a more extensive analysis of the current differences between UDPs, and examine whether the observations made above do indeed signify real trends within the survey results. This level of consideration can be developed from the survey results by utilising some simple statistical measures of the variation between the UDP results.

6.3 Statistical Variation Between Individual UDPs

Section 6.2 illustrates how different UDPs address sustainable development issues in quite diverse ways. The qualitative differences between some of the plans were shown to produce relatively weaker or stronger policy initiatives for specific aspects of sustainable development. This section will extend this idea of diversity in UDPs, complementing the qualitative findings and observations above with some statistical descriptions of the survey data.

Natural Res.		Energy		Transport		L, A & W Quality		Waste Mgt.		Rural, Nat'l & Bio.		Eco. Dev't		Built Env't	
South Tyneside	55	South Tyneside	33	Leeds	83	Gateshead	39	South Tyneside	73	Rochdale	78	North Tyneside	41	South Tyneside	67
Doncaster	44	Rochdale	19	Stockport	78	Salford	39	Trafford	61	Trafford	78	Coventry	37	Stockport	67
Rotherham	44	Bury	17	Doncaster	72	Barnsley	33	Barnsley	56	South Tyneside	72	Doncaster	37	Leeds	64
Sunderland	44	N'castle u Tyne	17	Sunderland	72	Sheffield	33	Doncaster	56	Doncaster	72	Kirklees	37	Manchester	64
Calderdale	42	Oldham	17	Manchester	67	Stockport	33	Rochdale	56	North Tyneside	69	Sheffield	33	Birmingham	63
Gateshead	42	Barnsley	14	N'castle u Tyne	67	Liverpool	28	Wigan	56	St Helens	69	Stockport	33	Sheffield	63
Barnsley	36	Calderdale	14	Sheffield	67	Sunderland	28	Liverpool	50	Stockport	69	Sunderland	33	Doncaster	61
Rochdale	36	Stockport	14	South Tyneside	67	Tameside	28	Oldham	50	Sunderland	69	Tameside	33	Sunderland	61
Trafford	33	Doncaster	11	Calderdale	61	Bury	22	Rotherham	50	Tameside	69	Wirral	33	Tameside	61
Kirklees	33	Liverpool	11	Dudley	61	Dudley	22	St Helens	50	Wirral	69	Birmingham	30	Gateshead	60
Sandwell	33	North Tyneside	11	Kirklees	61	N'castle u Tyne	22	Tameside	50	Birmingham	67	Gateshead	30	Liverpool	60
Solihull	33	Salford	11	North Tyneside	61	Oldham	22	Bury	44	Oldham	67	Liverpool	30	North Tyneside	60
Wigan	33	Sheffield	11	Oldham	61	Rochdale	22	Calderdale	44	Walsall	67	Manchester	30	Oldham	60
Knowsley	31	Tameside	11	Wakefield	61	Rotherham	22	Manchester	44	Gateshead	64	Rochdale	30	N'castle u Tyne	58
Salford	31	Coventry	8	Birmingham	56	St Helens	22	Gateshead	39	Rotherham	64	Sefton	30	Coventry	57
Tameside	31	Manchester	8	Rochdale	56	Calderdale	17	N'castle u Tyne	39	Sefton	64	South Tyneside	30	Rochdale	57
Oldham	29	Kirklees	6	Salford	56	Coventry	17	Salford	39	Bury	61	Calderdale	26	Dudley	56
St Helens	25	Knowsley	6	Coventry	50	Kirklees	17	Sheffield	39	Calderdale	61	Knowsley	26	Sheffield	56
Stockport	25	Bradford	3	Gateshead	50	Leeds	17	Sunderland	39	Barnsley	58	Oldham	26	Trafford	56
Walsall	25	Dudley	3	Liverpool	50	Manchester	17	Wirral	39	Bolton	58	Salford	26	Kirklees	54
Bolton	25	Gateshead	3	Rotherham	50	North Tyneside	17	Wolverhampton	39	Coventry	58	Sandwell	26	Walsall	54
Bury	25	Leeds	3	Trafford	50	Sandwell	17	Kirklees	33	Kirklees	58	St Helens	26	Wolverhampton	54
North Tyneside	25	Rotherham	3	Wolverhampton	50	Sefton	17	Knowsley	33	Salford	58	Walsall	26	Calderdale	51
Coventry	22	Sandwell	3	Barnsley	44	South Tyneside	17	Solihull	33	Wigan	58	Wigan	26	Rotherham	51
Leeds	22	Sefton	3	Bradford	44	Wakefield	17	Walsall	33	Bradford	56	Wolverhampton	26	Sefton	51
Sheffield	22	St Helens	3	Bury	44	Wirral	17	Sefton	28	Knowsley	56	Barnsley	22	Salford	50
Manchester	19	Sunderland	3	Sandwell	44	Bradford	11	Stockport	28	Leeds	56	Bradford	22	Wigan	50
Wirral	19	Wigan	3	Sefton	44	Doncaster	11	Bolton	22	Liverpool	56	Rotherham	22	Wirral	50
Wolverhampton	19	Birmingham	0	Tameside	44	Knowsley	11	Bradford	22	Solihull	56	Trafford	22	Wakefield	49
Dudley	17	Bolton	0	Wirral	44	Trafford	11	Coventry	22	Sandwell	53	Bolton	19	Barnsley	47
N'castle u Tyne	17	Solihull	0	Solihull	39	Wolverhampton	11	Leeds	22	Manchester	50	Bury	19	Bury	46
Wakefield	17	Trafford	0	Walsall	39	Birmingham	6	North Tyneside	22	N'castle u Tyne	50	Dudley	19	Sandwell	45
Bradford	14	Wakefield	0	Wigan	39	Bolton	6	Sandwell	22	Dudley	47	Leeds	19	Bolton	44
Birmingham	11	Walsall	0	Bolton	28	Walsall	6	Dudley	17	Sheffield	47	N'castle u Tyne	15	Bradford	43
Sefton	11	Wirral	0	Knowsley	28	Wigan	6	Wakefield	17	Wakefield	47	Wakefield	15	Knowsley	38
Liverpool	0	Wolverhampton	0	St Helens	22	Solihull	0	Birmingham	0	Wolverhampton	42	Solihull	7	St Helens	38

	Natural Res.	Energy	Transport	L, A & W	Waste Mgt.	Rural	Eco. Dev't	Built Env't
Range	56	33	61	39	78	36	34	29
1st Quartile	19	3	44	11	27	56	22	50
3rd Quartile	34	11	61	22	50	69	31	60
Interquartile Range	15	8	17	11	24	13	8.8	10

Table 6.1: Individual UDPs Ranked in Key Areas of Sustainable Development

139

Table 6.1 summarises all of the results from the survey in terms of the Key Areas of sustainable development. Every UDP's grades for each Policy Direction in a Key Area have been aggregated together to produce one mean percentage figure for each plan in the eight Key Areas of sustainable development. This allows individual plans to be ranked in eight columns by their average score in each Key Area. So, for example, in the Key Area of Natural Resources, South Tyneside UDP is the first plan on the list, it has the highest score in the survey with 56% and is therefore ranked first. This indicates that the plan contains a collection of particularly strong policies addressing natural resource issues. At the other extreme, Liverpool UDP is ranked last in the column, as it is the lowest scoring plan in the survey with 0%. This is because none of the plan's policies are relevant to the Policy Directions in this Key Area of sustainable development.

Again, it is worth emphasising the point that these figures are only indications of relative strengths and weaknesses for each issue. They are quasi-statistics, not real numbers, and as such the specific percentage figure for a plan is not as important as its relative position in the ranking.

However, as explained in Section 6.1, numerical figures do allow some simple statistical analysis of the results. Descriptive statistics at the foot of each column provide an interesting insight into the distribution of these results. Range calculates the difference between the highest and lowest scores in each Key Area. This lends support to the observations made in Section 6.3, above, that very real differences exist in the ways that UDPs are currently addressing sustainable development. For example, the Key Area of Transport has a range of over 60, between St Helens UDP with 22% and Leeds UDP which has a 83% figure. Clearly these two UDPs are addressing sustainable transport issues to very different extents in their policies.

The three Key Areas with the greatest range of results are those of Natural Resources, with a range of 56; Transport with a range of 61; and Solid Waste Management with a range of 78. The three Key Areas with the lowest range between plans are Built Environment, with a range of just 29; Energy with a range of 33; and Economic Development with a range 34.

It should also be noted, however, that the calculation of range has the disadvantage of being sensitive to the extreme values in a distribution. This is overcome by calculating an inter-quartile range. Inter-quartile range simply takes out data that falls within the top and bottom quarter of a distribution and calculates the range of the remaining data (see for example Shaw and Wheeler 1985). When inter-quartile range is calculated for the data distributions in the eight Key Areas of sustainable development, the results are generally similar to those of range. The Key Areas of Natural Resources (15), Transport (17) and Solid Waste Management (24) have the greatest inter-quartile range; whereas Built Environment (10), Energy (8) and Economic Development (8.8) have the lowest inter-quartile range.

It can be concluded from these two statistical measures, therefore, that UDPs display the greatest variation in their approaches to sustainable development in the areas of Natural Resources, Transport and Solid Waste Management. This was first suggested in Section 6.2. The supporting evidence from this section confirms the finding, and the fact that the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development in these three Key Areas are addressed very well by some UDPs and much less well by others.

6.4 Summary of Key Findings from the Survey and Issues Raised

Using qualitative observations and statistical analysis of the survey results, this Chapter has demonstrated that certain Key Areas of sustainable development are currently being addressed in different ways by different UDPs. The greatest differences between the individual plans was found to exist in the Key Areas of Natural Resources, Transport and Solid Waste Management. The least differences between plans occurs in the Key Areas of Built Environment, Energy and Economic Development.

From these basic findings, and the results of Chapter Five, it is possible define three distinct groups of sustainable development issues in UDPs.

The first group of sustainable development issues are central to the UDP agenda and appear to be a well integrated part of the current planning system. In the two areas of Built Environment and Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity nearly all of the UDPs surveyed are currently progressing policies firmly in line with the issues of sustainable development. It is in these areas that the greatest amount of overlap, or congruence, between UDPs and sustainable development exists.

The second group of sustainable development issues are not part of the current UDP agenda, or feature only very slightly in a few of the plans surveyed. Most UDPs do not contain policies addressing issues of Energy and Land, Air and Water Quality to any meaningful degree.

The third and final group of sustainable development issues have made their way onto the agendas of some UDPs, whereas other UDPs have still to encompass them within their policies. The extent to which UDPs feature issues of Natural Resources, Transport and Solid Waste Management varies greatly among the 36 plans surveyed. This result supports the assumptions of other research which finds evidence to suggest that many planning authorities are now responding to the challenge of sustainable development, but also notes the likelihood of variances in both the commitment and quality of these responses (see for example Healey and Shaw 1993b). This is, perhaps, the most interesting result to emerge from the survey as these types of sustainable development issue appear to divide the population of UDPs so that it becomes possible to distinguish between different plans on the extent to which they are currently meeting the full challenge of sustainability.

These findings have been thoroughly analysed by the survey stage of the research, as such they can be reliably used to answer the first research aim of the study. However, what is not yet clear is *why* this particular pattern of results occurs. Chapter Five suggested that the ways in which sustainable development issues are being addressed in the present generation of UDPs could be partly explained with reference to traditional and newer (or emergent) planning concerns (see for example Owens 1994). For example it is unsurprising to see UDP policies concerned with protecting the landscape quality of

142

the natural environment and improving the amenity and quality of the built environment, as these have been a typical concern of the planning system since its formal inception in 1947. This familiarity could make these issues some of the easiest elements of sustainable development for the land-use planning system to relate to. Therefore the two Key Areas of Built Environment and Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity are both identified as being strongly and comprehensively addressed in all of the plans surveyed.

Likewise, the relatively recent publication of PPG 22 in 1993 (DOE 1993b), requiring planning authorities to consider the potential of their area for renewable energy sources, suggests that the breadth and depth of response to this issue is not going to be as good as that of more familiar issues. Therefore the Key Area of Energy is an area of sustainable development identified as being weakly addressed in the plans surveyed. The area of transport also contains some similarly recent concerns for development plans. For example, policy guidance in PPG 13 (DOE 1994c), to reduce motorised journeys and encourage transport modes with less environmental impact, was not finalised until 1994. Clearly, therefore, any UDPs written before this date will reflect these issues much less than later plans, and this could explain the variation between UDPs on transport issues. This point is particularly applicable for the collection of plans surveyed. Many of them were first drafted well before the publication of new policy guidance containing a commitment to sustainable development and an emphasis on issues like renewable energy or reducing motorised journeys.

The differences in the way that UDPs address waste management issues may also be explained in this way. For example, Government guidance on planning and pollution from waste was not published until 1994 (PPG23, DOE 1994b). This guidance sets out a hierarchy for waste management policies in development plans. Starting with waste minimisation, the guidance advises planning authorities to promote the re-use, recovery and safe disposal of waste. This aspect of the structural land-use planning system could, therefore, explain why a plan like the Doncaster UDP (published in 1994) is more progressive on waste issues than a plan like the Bolton Plan (first published in 1992).

However, this reliance on the 'traditional-newer concerns' distinction alone is insufficient to explain such a wide set of differences between UDPs. For example, in the Key Area of Transport some plans begin with the strategic need to ensure that locational policy is designed to limit the need to travel and reduce the number of journeys made, whereas other plans base their whole regeneration strategy upon the need for further road building. These two strategic positions are diametrically opposed in their approach to transport, and clearly some explanation of these differences is required. In a similar way, some UDPs currently contain detailed policy proposals for cycling and pedestrian networks to link all major areas and buildings in a city, whilst others fail to mention non-motorised transport at all.

Such differences cannot always be explained by publication date of the UDP alone. The first draft of the Leeds UDP, which emerges from the survey as the strongest plan in terms of transport (see Table 6.1), was published before the final version of PPG 13 was available. Whilst other plans, published around the same date as the Leeds plan, are not as comprehensive or thorough in addressing sustainable transport issues.

Therefore, the survey's findings also suggest some very worthwhile routes for subsequent stages of the research project. If the date of publication alone cannot explain the results of the survey, other factors must be investigated. Chapter Three of the study, for example, suggested that the local political dimension, or the effect of important individuals in the UDP process, may be an important influence upon the sustainable development content of UDP policies. These types of questions will not be answered by the survey, which has produced largely descriptive data. Therefore the second and third research aims of the study, see Chapter Three, will be met by a case study investigation.

Before this can happen however, it will be necessary to select suitable cases for investigation. These must be based upon the survey results and enable some interesting contrasts to be drawn between the UDP processes concerned. In particular, it should be noted that some of the Key Areas differentiate between UDPs, identifying plans as relatively weaker or relatively stronger in terms of sustainable development. This is a very powerful function with which it is possible to divide the whole population of Plans

into a smaller number of categories. Each category being defined in terms of sustainable development. The following chapter presents the methods and results of this exercise.

CHAPTER 7: CLASSIFYING UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

7.0 Chapter Outline

The role of this chapter is to classify each of the individual UDPs in terms of their relationship to sustainable development. The chapter begins by explaining the advantages and scientific rationale for classifying data. Using the survey results, eight categories are then constructed and defined by the way in which their constituent members are addressing sustainable development. Having categorised the 36 plans, it is possible to construct a 'spectrum of sustainable development' based upon three Key Areas of the concept and so illustrate the different degrees to which different UDPs are currently operationalising sustainable development. Finally, two UDPs, one from either end of the spectrum, are then selected for further analysis.

7.1 Classification and UDPs

Having established the fact that different UDPs address certain Key Areas of sustainable development in different ways, and that the relative performance of some UDPs is stronger than other UDPs in terms of sustainable development, it becomes possible to distinguish *between* the 36 plans. For the needs of the study, and to enable two contrasting UDPs to be selected for case study investigation, this chapter will use the data generated in the survey to classify each of the plans into a small number of categories.

Each category will be defined by its specific relationship to sustainable development. Therefore all the individual plans grouped together within a particular category will exhibit a similar relationship to sustainable development, each one addressing the concept in a broadly comparable way. In this way the two case study plans can be chosen from separate categories in the certainty that they are sufficiently different from each other to ensure a significantly diverse set of results. This will mean that the case study investigations will be able to provide some interesting contrasts and revealing insights into the factors which influence policies for sustainable development in UDPs.

146

The main aim of this exercise is to assist in the selection of two UDPs for the case study investigation. However, classification can also enable a greater understanding of the survey results in the sense that it emphasises any patterns and variations among the data. This point is discussed in the following section, when the process of classification is considered. After this, the methods and results of the classification scheme for UDPs are presented along with a justification of the work carried out. The final sections of the chapter then provide profiles of the two UDPs selected as the case studies and their respective local authorities.

7.2 The Scientific Enterprise of Classification

Classification involves grouping similar cases together, and distinguishing between dissimilar cases:

> "It is the process of *sorting out* a collection of people or objects and of developing a set of *categories* among which you divide the collection."
> (Simon 1969, p54)

In this study, the cases (referred to as people or objects by Simon) are the UDPs themselves, and the aim is to group together UDPs that address sustainable development in a similar way. Conversely, this also distinguishes between the UDPs that are addressing sustainable development in dissimilar ways.

The history and epistemology of classification research in science is a long and interesting one. Although the detail of this history is not within the remit of this particular study, it is worth making the distinction between two different types of classification research. The first type of classification research sees classification as an end in itself. For example, eighteenth century biologists sought to classify the natural plant and animal kingdoms to reveal family relationships (Simon 1969).

The second type of classification research sees classification as a means to further investigation and emphasises the useful features, or by-products which can result from

classifying data. Although these features are as numerous and diverse as the subjects on which classification research is applied, they can be usefully summarised around four main points:

- *A classification may aid summarisation:* a population of many individuals can be simplified into just a few categories, each exhibiting similar features. This enables a general description of each category rather than detailed descriptions of each case.

- *A classification may enable one to deal routinely with individual cases:* once categories have been constructed it is possible to assume that new cases, which exhibit similar features to a particular category, belong in that category. Conclusions made about that category can then be applied to the new case.

- *A classification may make one aware of the differences among categories:* defining categories can 'flag up' the differences between categories and their members, raising further research questions.

- *A classification may contain the explanation of the phenomena:* variables or themes common to all the members of a category may explain the features of that category. At the very least categorisation enables the investigation of such hypotheses. (Adapted from Simon 1969)

To summarise the above list, it is clear that classification can be an important step to clarifying one's understanding about a particular phenomena. This is certainly true in the terms of this project, where UDPs are classified to enable the selection of contrasting case study authorities and thereby allow more in-depth investigations to take place.

7.2.1 Threats to the Validity of Classification

Like all other scientific processes, however, classification is open to threats of validity, and the features outlined above should not be accepted without reservation. The greatest threat to the validity of classification research occurs when too many assumptions are

made about the cases in a particular category, without the use of further corroborating research. For example, it is dangerous to assume that a variable common to all the members of one category, necessarily explains the features of that category. Further research is necessary to confirm this assumption.

A second threat to the validity of classification is the loss of information involved when individual cases are classified into categories. This is a defining feature of categorisation, however, and to be able to group several similar cases together it is necessary to ignore some of their individual detail. This means that some data is inevitably lost from the individual cases. The loss of individuality through classification is a common criticism of many social sciences (Simon 1969). However, in the case of this research, it will be justified by the further (and much more detailed) research it makes possible.

A third threat to the validity of classification is the possibility of imposing 'artificial' categories on data through the classification methods, rather than allowing 'natural' categories to emerge. This is a relative, but nevertheless important, distinction. The crux of the distinction lies in the question of whether a classification is of general use to many different research projects, or is constructed to meet the aims of just one research project (Simon 1969). In terms of this study, the classification is relevant to sustainable development and UDPs only. It is designed to provide an insight into the survey data and enable two contrasting UDPs to be chosen for further investigation. It is not intended to be applicable to any research questions other than those in this study.

7.2.2 The Similarity of Cases

Whatever the threats to the validity of a classification exercise, crucial to its scientific success is the concept of similarity. As noted above, cases have to be recognised as similar, or dissimilar, so that they may be respectively grouped together, or distinguished between. Although this may appear to be a relatively simple statement of fact, the ways in which similarity is expressed and implemented in science can become very complex (Aldenderfer and Blashfield 1984). Traditional science requires that its methods are replicable and objective. And this has led many to argue for a quantitative estimation of similarity. For example:

"To be successful, science must be based upon objective, replicable procedures; therefore, the development of statistical procedures to measure more 'objectively' the similarity of things is a natural consequence of the necessity for replicable and reliable classifications." (Aldenderfer and Blashfield 1984, p19-20).

The suitability of this approach in all circumstances is open to debate, however. Robson (1993), for example, warns of the danger of undermining qualitative research with over mechanistic quantitative procedures. This debate is central to the understanding of sustainable development in UDPs. So far the study has largely been based upon qualitative research methods, and the application of quantitative procedures to this data must be carefully considered. Section 7.3 and 7.4, below, discuss these issues in more detail as the mechanics of classifying UDPs are outlined.

Whatever methods are used to measure similarity, a decision on what to measure must be made. The dimensions (or variables) on which classification is based should be chosen to fit the purposes of the research (Simon 1969). The chosen dimensions should distinguish between cases in a way that helps the researcher to understand their different characteristics, and reflect the aims of the research. A dimension which does not distinguish between cases is useless. Conversely, choosing a dimension which distinguishes between cases, but is irrelevant to the aims of the research, is also counter-productive. In practice, classification schemes are multi-dimensional. They rely on more than one dimension to investigate the interactions of different aspects of cases.

In the case of UDPs and sustainable development, the Key Areas of sustainable development, as outlined in Chapter Four, have been selected as the basis for a simple classification process. The details and results of this process are explained and justified in the following sections.

7.3 The Classification Process

The above section introduces classification research and explains the advantages that it can bring to any research exercise. Several new terms were used in that section, and it is helpful to clarify how these terms relate to the current research project:

Cases - the cases for this project are the individual UDPs prepared by the 36 metropolitan authorities of England. These have been referred to in the previous chapter by their authority's name, for example Bradford, Liverpool or Dudley.

Dimensions - each case (UDP) has eight dimensions to it. These are the eight Key Areas of sustainable development, as described in Chapters Four, Five and Six. These are referred to by their specific topic area, for example Built Environment, Natural Resources or Transport.

Similarity - this will be measured by the relative performance (strengths and weaknesses) of each case in the eight dimensions (Key Areas of sustainable development). The recording of these strengths and weaknesses by the survey stage, and the percentage figures that were generated from the grades '1, 2 or 3', has already been described in Chapter Four, Five and Six.

7.3.1 The Steps to Classification

There are three steps to the classification scheme for UDPs. The mechanics of these steps are described below.

Step 1 - Choose the Most Meaningful Dimensions

Considering all eight dimensions for each case would result in a very complex multi-dimensional classification scheme. Therefore the first step to classifying the UDPs was to choose the most useful (or meaningful) dimensions for distinguishing between the individual cases.

Of the eight dimensions under consideration, the discussion in Chapter Six has already revealed that three contain the greatest range of results across the 36 cases. These are the Key Areas of Natural Resources, Transport and Solid Waste Management. Chapter Six found that the remaining five dimensions are all addressed relatively similarly across the 36 plans. Therefore just these three dimensions are selected to construct the classification scheme on the basis that they illustrate the greatest differences between cases. The five dimensions dropped from the scheme are all assumed to be too similar in each case to help in classifying them.

This step exemplifies some of the points discussed in Section 7.2, above. The classification scheme developed for the study has already resulted in a loss of data, and an assumption has been made about this lost data. Such a degree of selectivity may mean that some UDPs, which have a very credible policy basis for sustainable development across all eight dimensions of the concept, are relegated behind other plans which are relatively strong in the three dimensions of Natural Resources, Transport and Solid Waste Management only. However, this decision has been made on the basis of the statistical and qualitative evidence presented in Chapter Six. Although there may well be some exceptions to the assumption, it is valid to make such a generalisation within the confines of this study and a strong case can be made to justify the decision (see Section 7.4 below).

Step 2 - Coding the Relative Performance of Cases

The average performance in each of these three dimensions was then calculated. This simply involved summing the percentage figure for every case in a dimension, and dividing that sum by 36 (the number of cases). Individual cases could then be coded according to these averages:

- If a case was above or equal to the average it was coded as HIGH.
- If a case was below the average it was coded as LOW.

Step 3 - Classifying Each Case

Two alternative codes for each of the three dimensions means that there are eight possible combinations for individual cases to display. These combinations form the categories for the classification scheme. They are presented in Figure 7.1.

Having constructed eight categories, it is possible to classify each of the 36 cases by their combination of results in the three dimensions. Therefore cases coded high in all three dimensions are classified in the first category. Cases coded low in all three dimensions are classified in the eighth category. The remaining cases fall into categories two to seven, depending on the coding of their dimensions.

| Combinations Category | Dimensions | | |
	Natural Resources	Transport	Solid Waste Management
1	High	High	High
2	Low	High	High
3	High	Low	High
4	High	High	Low
5	Low	Low	High
6	Low	High	Low
7	High	Low	Low
8	Low	Low	Low

Figure 7.1: Categories for classifying UDPs in terms of sustainable development

The characteristics and members of all eight categories are listed below:

Category 1

Characteristics of members: **High** Natural Resources
High Transport
High Solid Waste Management

Members (7): Calderdale, Doncaster, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, South Tyneside, Sunderland

Category 2

Characteristics of members: **Low** Natural Resources
High Transport
High Solid Waste Management

Members (3):   Manchester, Newcastle, Sheffield

Category 3

Characteristics of members: **High** Natural Resources
Low Transport
High Solid Waste Management

Members (7):   Barnsley, Gateshead, Rotherham, Saint Helens, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan

Category 4

Characteristics of members: **High** Natural Resources
High Transport
Low Solid Waste Management

Members (2):   Kirklees, Stockport

Category 5

Characteristics of members: **Low** Natural Resources
Low Transport
High Solid Waste Management

Members (4):   Bury, Liverpool, Wirral, Wolverhampton

Category 6

Characteristics of members: **Low** Natural Resources
High Transport
Low Solid Waste Management

Members (5):   Birmingham, Dudley, Leeds, Wakefield, North Tyneside

Category 7

Characteristics of members: **High** Natural Resources
Low Transport
Low Solid Waste Management

Members (4):   Knowsley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall

Category 8

Characteristics of members:	**Low** Natural Resources
	Low Transport
	Low Solid Waste Management
Members (4):	Bolton, Bradford, Coventry, Sefton

7.3.2 The Full Spectrum of UDP Performance in Sustainable Development

The seven members of category one are the strongest plans in terms of sustainable development. They all contain stronger policies in the three Key Areas of sustainable development chosen to categorise the plans. Conversely the four members of category eight are the weakest in terms of sustainable development, as they all contain weaker policies in the three chosen Key Areas.

In between these two extremes, comparisons can also be made between the remaining twenty-five plans. The twelve members in categories two, three and four have stronger policies in two Key Areas, and weaker policies in the third. Therefore the UDPs occupy a relatively strong position in terms of sustainable development when compared to other UDPs. The thirteen members in categories five, six and seven, on the other hand, have stronger policies in just one Key Area, and weaker policies in two areas. Therefore they all occupy a relatively weak position in terms of sustainable development when compared to other UDPs.

This information allows each of the 36 plans to be plotted on a 'spectrum of sustainable development', Figure 7.2. The spectrum covers four positions, from 'Very Weak' to 'Very Strong' sustainable development, and each of the UDPs falls within one of the four positions. From a very strong position, where UDPs are stronger in the three Key Areas of sustainable development chosen from the survey, through to a very weak position, where UDPs are weaker in the three Key Areas of sustainable development, the spectrum demonstrates how the current population of UDPs are addressing sustainable development issues in different ways. Although the greatest number of plans fall in the two middle positions of the spectrum, ten plans occupy the most extreme positions, and these UDPs demonstrate the diversity of results found in the survey of UDPs.

Very Strong	Strong	Weak	Very Weak
◄───►			
Calderdale	Barnsley	Birmingham	Bolton
Doncaster	Gateshead	Bury	Bradford
Oldham	Kirklees	Dudley	Coventry
Rochdale	Manchester	Knowsley	Sefton
Salford	Newcastle	Leeds	
South Tyneside	Rotherham	Liverpool	
Sunderland	Saint Helens	North Tyneside	
	Sheffield	Sandwell	
	Stockport	Solihull	
	Tameside	Wakefield	
	Trafford	Walsall	
	Wigan	Wirral	
		Wolverhampton	

Figure 7.2: Spectrum of UDP performance calculated using three Key Areas of Sustainable Development

The idea of understanding sustainable development through a spectrum of views, or interpretations, of the concept has already been discussed in Chapter One (see Turner 1993 or Pearce 1993 for example). The positions on the spectrum in Figure 7.2 do not correspond with those of Turner or Pearce, however. These positions are constructed from the findings of the survey and are therefore based upon the policy content of current UDPs. The image of a spectrum has been adopted because of its value in illustrating the different degrees to which sustainable development is being addressed in the current generation of UDPs. Each of the four positions on the spectrum contain a group of largely homogeneous plans which are addressing sustainable development in a similar way in three Key Areas of the concept. As noted above, this may mean that some UDPs with a very credible policy basis for sustainable development are relegated behind other plans because of the very selective nature of the classification process. However, the main reason for carrying out this exercise is that it enables the research study to draw clear comparisons between plans and therefore choose two contrasting plans for the case study stage. This is explained in more detail in Section 7.5, below.

7.4 Justification of the Process

Shaw and Wheeler (1985) distinguish between quantitative classification, 'classification by enumeration', and qualitative classification, 'classification by definition'. This is a very useful distinction to apply when discussing the classification process adopted for this study.

The method outlined above is relatively simplistic. It relies on observations and manual techniques to categorise cases, using only the very simplest of statistical analysis (mean average, range and inter-quartile range). In the terms of Shaw and Wheeler, this can be described as a qualitative classification. Each category is first of all defined, and then cases conforming to these definitions are classified into each category accordingly. On the subject of UDPs and sustainable development, the definition of each category was built around the Key Areas of sustainable development. UDPs were then categorised by their relative performance in three Key Areas of the concept.

In terms of quantitative classification techniques, there are a number of distinct and well defined methods that can be adopted for different types of data. For example the methods of cluster analysis (Aldenderfer & Blashfield 1984; Shaw and Wheeler 1985) could be applied to the survey data and used to classify UDPs into different groups. Like many quantitative classification methods, cluster analysis attempts to measure the multi-dimensional similarity of all cases in a quantitative or numerical sense. The measurement techniques produce a similarity coefficient (an actual number) for each case from its dimensions, and the proximity of different cases can be calculated from this figure. Similar, or closer, cases can then be grouped together. Hence Shaw and Wheelers' description of quantitative methods as classification by enumeration.

7.4.1 A Comparison of Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

Although the wider debate surrounding qualitative and quantitative research techniques cannot be covered at this stage of the dissertation, some of the aspects and considerations in this debate have already been raised in Chapter Three. It will also be

useful to briefly compare and discuss the strengths or weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative classification techniques in this Section.

Even before the methods of cluster analysis exercise are applied to a particular set of data, the general methods involved in the exercise can be seen to have several advantages over the qualitative classification method adopted for this study.

Firstly, the statistical power of cluster analysis would easily allow all eight dimensions (or Key Areas) of the 36 cases to be accommodated. This means that the loss of data at the start of the classification exercise is minimised. In contrast, the qualitative method explained in Section 7.3, above, uses only three of the eight dimensions to classify the 36 cases.

Secondly, cluster analysis represents similarity with a number - the similarity coefficient. This illustrates with some precision the many degrees of similarity found between cases in the data set. The qualitative method, on the other hand, codes the percentage values of each dimension as either high or low, and this substantially decreases the sensitivity of the method to any small differences between cases. Finally, quantitative methods like cluster analysis can also be argued to have much greater scientific credibility. This is because they use objective statistical methods, applicable to many types of data and cases. The qualitative method explained above, however, relies on manual methods which are specific to the subject matter of sustainable development and UDPs. This system of classification could not be used in any other study or be applied to different types of data or cases.

However, despite the points made above, a qualitative method of classification was designed and adopted for the study. There are a number of reasons for this, several of which challenge the assumptions made by advocates of quantitative methods. Firstly, methods like cluster analysis are generic, they refer to many different and very specific techniques, and each of these different techniques can generate a different grouping of the cases. The reason for this stems from the fact that clustering methods have evolved from different disciplines, emphasising different rules of group formation (Aldenderfer &

Blashfield 1984). So, for example, the hierarchical agglomerative methods (of which the "Ward's method" is just one example) would create different groupings of UDPs from iterative partitioning or hierarchical divisive methods, both of which are different types of cluster analysis techniques. This fact can undermine the objectivity of quantitative methods and means that the groups they calculate are less reliable.

Secondly, and stemming from the above point, cluster analysis can impose structure on data rather than discovering the inherent structure within it (Aldenderfer & Blashfield 1984.). This means that groups of cases are not necessarily natural, and could be more a reflection of the techniques used than the data analysed. These artificial groupings, although statistically meaningful, have the possibility of being meaningless in terms of the context of the research. For example, although cluster analysis may generate several groups of plans, the plans in one group will not necessarily be noticeably similar to each other in terms of sustainable development, or noticeably dissimilar to plans in the other groups. This makes it very difficult to apply a label or description to each group.

The qualitative method adopted by this study, on the other hand, was driven by definition. Each of the categories has a unique meaning in terms of sustainable development and UDPs, and individual cases are allocated to each category on the basis of this definition. The categories created are therefore more meaningful to the aims and questions posed in this study than the groups generated by cluster analysis.

Thirdly, quantitative techniques run the risk of naive empiricism. Aldenderfer and Blashfield explain this point particularly clearly:

> "By 'naive empiricism' we mean the collection and subsequent analysis of as many variables as possible in the hope that the 'structure' will emerge if only enough data are obtained. .... Those [studies] that adopt a naive empiricist perspective are dangerous in the context of cluster analysis because of the heuristic nature of the technique and the many unsolved problems that have plagued its application (Everitt, 1979)." (Aldenderfer & Blashfield, p20)

The qualitative technique has the benefit of using only those dimensions (or variables) that are most important to the aims and context of this study. All other non-essential data

is ignored. Again this means that the qualitative method can be more meaningful to the research aims than the quantitative method.

Finally, and to summarise all of the above points, quantitative methods can lack the subtlety of qualitative methods when applied to a specific research context. This is particularly true if the data being analysed originates from qualitative sources. As the survey of UDPs used content analysis to generate numbers from a textual source, this is particularly relevant. The mechanistic nature of methods like cluster analysis may threaten or undermine the qualitative nature of the earlier stages of the survey (after Robson 1993). It is, therefore, easier to justify a continued reliance on qualitative techniques, rather than impose new quantitative techniques on the data.

7.5 Identification of the Case Study Local Authorities

The general approach of the case study stage, and its role within the study's research strategy, has already been explained and discussed in Chapter Three. Two local authorities need to be chosen for a more detailed investigation, and this will enable the study to answer its second and third research aims:

> 2. To identify the primary factors influencing the form and content of policies for sustainable development throughout the UDP making process.

> 3. To explain these results and so explain the position of sustainable development on the current UDP policy agenda.

In order to meet these aims, therefore, the two plans selected for further investigation must display three general characteristics. First of all, they must be generally typical of their particular category or position on the spectrum of sustainable development, as defined above. This will enable the results of the study to be generalised outside the two case study plans, and therefore suggest some conclusions that are relevant to UDPs as a whole. Secondly, the plans must also demonstrate some of the more interesting features found in the survey, for example particularly strong or more comprehensive policies for sustainable development, as discussed in Chapter Six. They should, therefore, have certain atypical features. This will enable the study to discover how or why UDPs adopt

some of the more innovative policies for sustainable development. Finally, both of the plans selected for the case study investigation should be addressing sustainable development to sufficiently different extents, as identified in the survey results. This will allow some interesting contrasts and differences to be highlighted by the case study stage.

There is clearly, therefore, a central dichotomy in the choice of two plans which have simultaneously to be typical of several other plans, and illustrate atypical features or innovative policies. For this reason, the categorisation scheme outlined above has been combined with other, more qualitative, observations to ensure an informed choice of case study UDPs. Therefore the choice will be made with the following criteria in mind:

- the position of the UDP on the spectrum of sustainability.
- the results of the UDP in the five Key Areas of sustainable development not used in the classification scheme.
- Particularly strong or more comprehensive policies noted in the analysis of the plan.
- the publication date of the plan surveyed.

The last point in this list is included to ensure that the case study plans can be compared and contrasted on an equitable basis. Comparing a very early UDP, written before the revised legislation and guidance on development plans, with a plan written after the publication of these documents (see Section 2.4) could threaten the validity of the case studies. Therefore the choice of case study UDPs will be made with the plans' publication date in mind.

Using this list of criteria two UDPs have been chosen for further investigation. In the interests of confidentiality, both plans have been coded and will be referred to in the following chapters as UDP, or case study authority A and B. The two plans lie at opposite ends of the spectrum of sustainable development, but were published at around the same time. To illustrate the diversity in policy content of the two plans, as well as some similarities between the two planning authorities, both case study UDPs are profiled below. To ensure confidentiality, some key dates, or similar information which

would identify the authorities concerned, are not used specifically. For example, documents published in January 1994 will be referred to as winter 1994. Similarly, specific references to the survey results for both plans will not be made, instead the two case studies' relationship to sustainable development will be discussed in relation to other UDPs.

7.5.1 Profile of Case Study A

UDP A was selected from the 'Very Weak' end of the sustainable development spectrum, Figure 7.2. The plan was distinguished as weaker than the majority of other UDPs in all three Key Area of sustainable development used to categorise the 36 plans. As Figure 7.3 illustrates, therefore, the plan's policies on Transport, Natural Resources and Solid Waste Management do not address the requirements of sustainable development as strongly as other UDPs.

In the remaining five Key Areas, this plan can also be seen to be relatively weak in terms of sustainable development. For example, the plan does not contain any policies addressing sustainable development issues in the area of Energy at all. It has only very weak policy content in terms of Land, Air and Water Quality, where only one relevant policy was identified in the survey, and fails to address the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development in the Built Environment Key Area as comprehensively as most other plans. Indeed, the profile of UDP A on Table 6.1 (Chapter Six) illustrates how the UDP occupies a position in the lower half of the population of plans for all eight Key Areas of sustainable development.
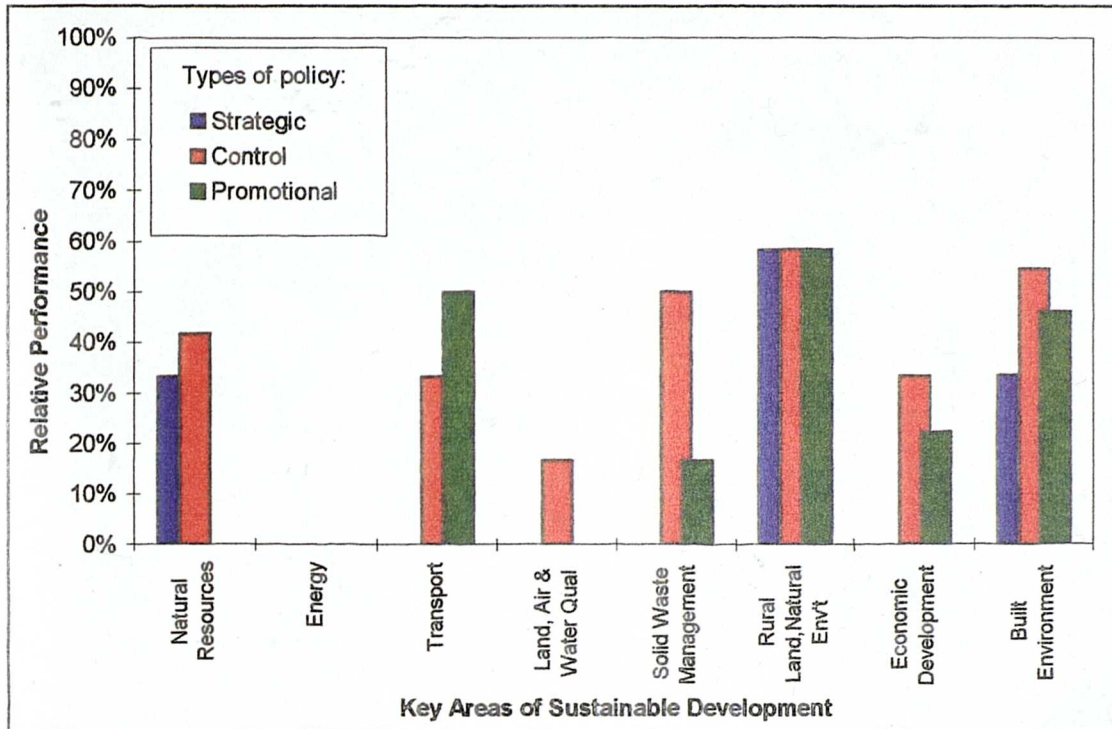
Figure 7.3: Graph to show the extent of policies addressing Key Areas of sustainable development in UDP A

The first, public consultation, draft of UDP A was published in Summer 1991. The plan was placed on deposit in Summer 1992 and was discussed at a Public Inquiry over the summer of 1993. The Inspector's Report from the inquiry was published in summer 1994. Therefore, it should be noted that the largest part of the plan process took place before the UNCED Summit and signing of Agenda 21 in 1992, and before the many of the Government publications on sustainable development, as discussed in Chapter Two. However, the post-public inquiry modifications to the plan were made as late as 1995, and this was the version of the plan analysed by the survey.

7.5.2 Profile of Case Study B

In direct contrast to case study A, UDP B occupies a much stronger position in all three Key Areas of Transport, Natural Resources and Solid Waste Management. The plan was selected for investigation from the 'Very Strong' end of the sustainable development spectrum. It therefore addresses the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development in the three Key Areas much more comprehensively than UDP A. In particular, plan B

contains very strong policies in the area of sustainable transport, and therefore addresses this Key Area much more thoroughly than most of the other plans surveyed.

This is well demonstrated in Figure 7.4, where the three columns in the Transport Key Area are much more prominent than those of Figure 7.3. UDP B also considers the Policy Directions in the Key Areas of Solid Waste Management and Natural Resources more comprehensively than the majority of UDPs, as illustrated in Figure 7.4.
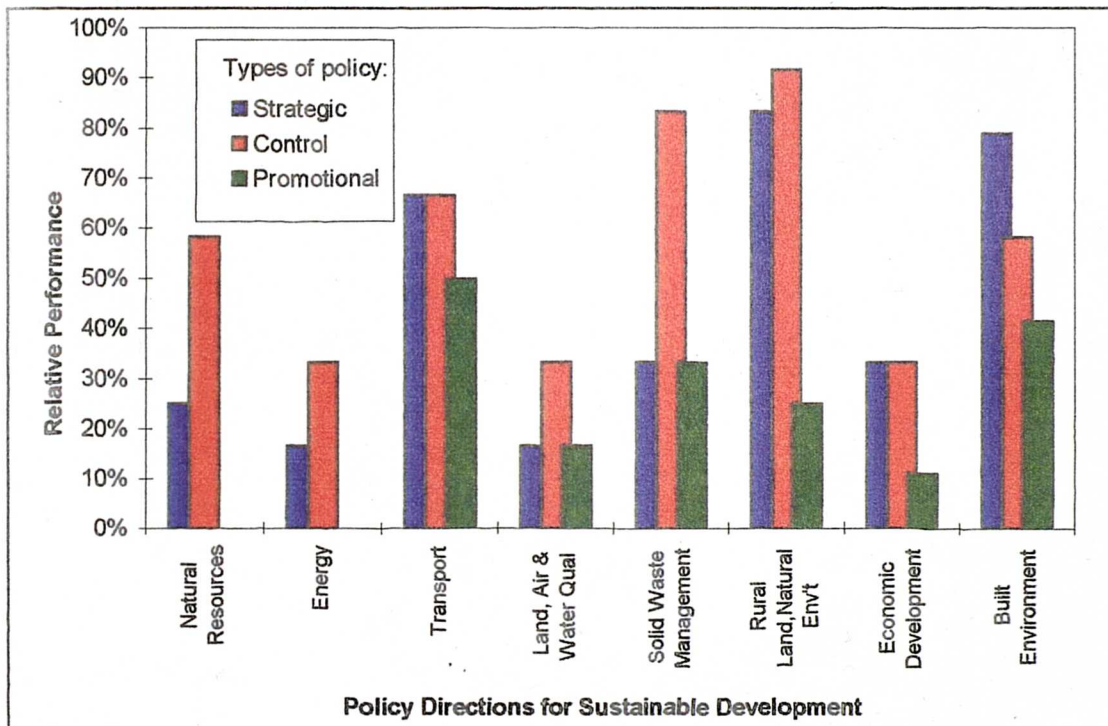
Figure 7.4: Graph to show the extent of policies addressing Key Areas of sustainable development in UDP B

In the five other Key Areas of sustainable development, UDP B is also more comprehensive in terms of sustainable development issues than other UDPs. In the area of Energy particularly, this plan contains stronger policies than other plans to encourage the use of renewable resources and set design standards for energy efficiency in new buildings. Therefore UDP B goes much further than nearly all of the remaining plans to include these issues within its policy remit. Likewise, the plan includes very comprehensive policies which address all twelve of the Policy Directions in the two Key Areas of Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Bio-diversity and Built Environment. This

contrasts well with UDP A, where a number of individual Policy Directions in these two important Key Areas are not addressed, or are very weakly addressed, by the plan's policies.

In terms of its publication dates, the public consultation draft of UDP B was made available in spring 1992, with the deposit version of the plan being published exactly twelve months later. The UDP's public inquiry was held over the winter and spring of 1995 and modifications, made in the light of this inquiry, were placed on deposit in the summer of the same year. This was the version of the plan which was surveyed for the research study in summer 1995. At the time of the survey the Inspectors report from the public inquiry had not been published.

Therefore, having used the survey's findings to identify two such differing plans, in terms of their policy content for sustainable development, it is now possible to carry out a much more detailed investigation. This investigation will identify *how* and *why* differences have occurred between the two UDPs, and in this way meet the remaining aims of the research study.

CHAPTER 8: A CASE STUDY INVESTIGATION OF TWO UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

8.0 Chapter Outline

This chapter marks the beginning of the second research stage - the case studies. Sections 8.1 to 8.3 discuss case study design, outlining a conceptual framework for the investigation as well as describing the primary sources of data for the research and the types of information they generate. The empirical results of the investigation are then presented in narrative form, with a factual account of how the two case study plans were written. From these two accounts, Section 8.7 isolates some of the main features and events that shaped the content of the two UDPs and their policies with regard to sustainable development.

8.1 Case Study Design

A case study can be simply defined as "a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence" (Robson 1993, p147). In terms of this dissertation, the case study investigation will be made within the broadly interpretative and qualitative methodological approach already outlined in Chapter Three (Section 3.3). In practical terms Chapter Three identified three distinct steps for the case studies:

- To investigate the UDP making process and the history behind the two case study UDPs.
- To identify the most important factors to influence the two UDP processes in terms of sustainable development.
- To analyse these in detail and explain the dynamics of the influencing factors.

These individual steps, however, need to be developed into a more robust research framework to ensure that the quantity and quality of data collection is comprehensive and sufficient to meet the study's aims. Although the process of case study design is inherently flexible, evolving through interaction with the case itself (Robson 1993), it is

possible to decide the basic format for the investigation prior to any data collection taking place. The following sections, therefore, outline a conceptual framework for the investigation, making explicit the rationale behind the case studies as well as discussing possible sources and generation of research data. Only after this has been done is it possible to present the case study results in a meaningful way, and therefore begin to answer the questions raised by the survey stage. The final sections of the chapter will fulfil these requirements and present a fuller understanding of the primary factors to influence UDP policies for sustainable development.

8.2 Conceptual Framework

The results of the survey of 36 UDPs suggest several broad questions which the case studies must answer:

- Why are some UDP policies consistent with some of the principles of sustainable development, and others not, as illustrated in the survey?

- Why do individual UDPs exhibit different levels of adherence to the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development, as illustrated by the spectrum of sustainable development in Chapter Seven?

- What are the barriers to planning authorities pursuing a wider spectrum of Policy Directions for Sustainable Development?

- What prevents planning authorities from pursuing their existing sustainable development policies with more rigour?

- What are the motivations and processes through which some authorities have adopted more innovative UDP policies. (Innovative policies are defined as policies which go beyond the range of common UDP policies in promoting sustainable development. They are identified in the survey as being new, or breaking new ground.)

These questions are all linked, as answers to one will provide part of the answer to another.

To be thoroughly addressed, these questions also require both factual information (information referring to actual events or occurrences in the UDP making process) and the opinions, or points of view, of those involved in the UDP process. The distinction between fact and opinion is reflected in the types of issues which will be considered by the conceptual framework. *First order* issues are factual, as they revolve around the 'what', 'who' and 'how many' aspects of the research. *Second order* issues are much more personal and rely upon the opinions of those involved. They will help to reveal deeper explanations of 'how' and 'why' certain events occurred.

To meet these demands the case studies are structured around more detailed questions which cover specific issues. These are organised by two areas for each case study:

1. The <u>process</u> of the UDP preparation - the events before the first draft plan was written (usually the public consultation draft) and the course of subsequent consultation drafts which led to the final content of the UDP.

2. The <u>content</u> of the actual plan analysed in the survey - a more detailed look at the relationship between the UDP and sustainable development, as well as the meaning of policies and interpretation of policies into practical decisions or actions by the planning authority.

Having considered the process and content of the UDPs, it would be logical for the study to investigate the implementation of UDP policies. However, a detailed consideration of the implementation of UDP policies is clearly not within the scope of this study. This type of investigation would require a much longer term research stage, reviewing the application and execution of the plans over some years. It would also require the UDPs under consideration to have been adopted and implemented over a number of years. As noted in Chapter Four and demonstrated in Appendix Three, most UDPs in the metropolitan districts were drafted relatively recently and were not formally adopted at the time of the survey.

This study concentrates on the events leading up to the writing of the UDPs, and the policy content of these plans at the present time. As noted in point two above, it may

well be possible to consider how different policies are currently being interpreted in the plans. This will provide information that will help establish how effectively the plan policies will be used in the future, although it will not be sufficient to judge either of the UDPs' implementation in any great detail.

8.2.1. Process of the Plan Preparation

With a prior knowledge of the UDP making process, as explained in Chapters Two and Three, this area of the case study covers three distinct stages:

- Before the first draft plan had been written - the events leading up to the writing of the first public consultation draft of the UDP.

- After the first draft plan had been written - the formal and informal consultation, both inside and outside the planning authority, of the public consultation draft and deposit draft UDPs.

- The Public Local Inquiry and modifications to the UDP made after an inquiry had been held.

In particular, the study needs to ascertain which of these three stages are most important for influencing the sustainable development content of the UDPs concerned.

Before The First Draft Plan Has Been Written.

It is clearly important to establish how the policy content of the two case study UDPs was first decided, and the level or types of participation and consultation taken before the plan was written. The types of detailed issues which need to be considered at this stage of the UDP process are:

- The level of background research carried out before the UDP was written.

- The individuals or teams who actually wrote each section of the UDP - who were the 'key players'?

- Which individuals or organisations were consulted about the remit and content of the UDP?

- The consultation or participation techniques used.

- Any educational elements designed to assist public participation in the process.

- The involvement of different council departments.

- The role of elected members.

- Whether or not the DOE or regional government offices were included at this stage.

- Any influences by national and international bodies or issues.

These types of issue are all concerned with assessing the relative influence of different groups and considerations on the UDP before the plan was actually drafted. The questions are therefore fundamental to an understanding of the plan's policy content for sustainable development. For example, it is possible to hypothesise that this first version of the plan sets the tone for the rest of the UDP making process, and that only very marginal or detailed changes were actually made to later drafts of the plan. If this is the case then these questions will discover how the sustainable development content of UDPs is shaped by the events leading up to the public consultation draft.

After The First Draft Plan Has Been Written.

Once general ideas, background research and any consultations have been 'firmed up' into a draft UDP, the case study will need to concentrate on a new set of detailed issues:

- The comments on the draft UDP made by statutory consultees.

- Efforts by the planning authority to go beyond statutory consultees and get more widespread opinions.

- The types of interest or local groups to formally object to the UDP, and which of these were seen as most important by the planning authority.

- The response of the DOE and statutory undertakers to the consultations.

- The effect of formal objections upon the rewriting of UDP policies, in-particular the scale of changes made to the UDP.

- How the elected members and officers discussed the UDP's consultation stages.

- The role of neighbouring planning authorities.

Much of this information can be ascertained from formal records of objections, letters to and from the local planners, and the minutes of committee meetings. Many of the changes or modifications to plan policies are also formally published for public consideration by the planning authority.

The Public Local Inquiry and Later Changes to the UDP

Again it is possible for each of the two case study UDPs to have seen a number of changes affecting their sustainable development content arising from their local inquiry stage. All modifications made to a UDP after the inquiry are contained in a formal modifications list, showing the original policies and their subsequent changes. Therefore the investigation should consider which representations at the inquiry were effective and led to the greatest changes in plan policy, as well as whether or not these changes effect the UDP's relationship to sustainable development.

In particular, it may be interesting to discover whether or not all the recommendations of the Planning Inspector were accepted by the planning authority, or whether certain principles in the UDP were seen as sacrosanct by the authority, meaning that they refused to change their plan. These types of principles may be based on planning or political grounds and could well impact upon the UDP's relationships with sustainable development.

8.2.2 The Content of the Plan

The survey stage of the study has already analysed the policy content of both case study plans in some detail, as explained in the preceding three chapters. However, it is possible for the case study stage to build on these findings by considering a number of very specific questions about the strengths and weaknesses of each UDP, and particularly the opinions of the local planning authority on their own plan and its relationship to sustainable development.

These questions should reflect some of the findings of the survey and focus upon the three Key Areas of Transport, Natural Resources and Solid Waste Management. These

areas were used to select the two case study plans and are all very strongly addressed in case study B, but relatively poorly addressed in case A. It may also be possible to discover why the two Key Areas of Energy and Land, Air and Water Quality are poorly addressed in the majority of UDPs through the opinions and actions of the actors involved in the two UDP case study processes.

In terms of the particular policies in the UDP, the case studies should also cover the wording of relevant policy statements, and seek to explore how this was decided and then interpreted by the planning authority. Any changes to the specific wording of policies may effect the UDP's ability to put sustainable development into practice.

All the questions for this particular element of the case study are made with the appropriate sections of PPG12 (DOE 1992a) and good practice guidance in mind (see for example DOE 1992b). For example, it may be suggested by planning practitioners that this guidance on sustainable development is not detailed or strong enough to be acted upon with any certainty by plan writers. This would lead to uncertainty and lack of conviction concerning sustainable development issues within the planning authority, and therefore effect the policy content of the UDP on this concept.

This element of the case study stage will also ascertain how the policies in a UDP are currently being interpreted for sustainable development. For example, the study may discover how closely the principles set out in control policies are being followed, as well as how far the proposals detailed in a UDP's promotional policies are being implemented. These types of issue will emerge when the UDP policies are used to make decisions upon conflicting interests, or regulate the negative effects of land-use developments. For example, the survey highlighted policies in UDP B which seek to minimise car use through the control of development. Factual or opinion based data on how the authority is now working towards this principle may provide some useful contrasts with authority A, where no policies of this kind were detected.

8.3 Sources of Data and Data Generation

It is important to make the distinction between sources of data on the one hand, and methods for generating data from these sources on the other (after Mason 1996). Having identified the main questions for the case studies to address, and the various issues that these questions involve, it is necessary to consider *where* answers to these questions may be found, as well as *how* the answers will be best elicited. Although the distinction between data sources and data generation inevitably blurs in a qualitative study of this nature, it can be a useful aid for considering the interactions between the phenomena under study and the research process itself. In the case of this study, the research is designed to try and obtain as wide a view as possible on the two UDPs and the processes which created them.

8.3.1 Sources of Data

Two major sources of data are used to explore all of the issues raised in the conceptual framework. These are documents and key actors. Documents mainly consist of the relevant minutes and reports from local authority committees. An inspection of all planning committee minutes from the date of the UDP commencement order enabled these to be identified for both authorities. Other pertinent publications can also be noted as and when they arise. For example Transport Policies and Programmes and Local Agenda 21 strategies may have some bearing on the UDPs.

As well as collecting relevant documentation, the target of the case studies is to interview key actors, with each actor being chosen for his or her role in the UDP making process. With a prior knowledge of the plan making process, most of the key actors can be identified before the research begins, and Table 8.1 provides a list of actors initially seen as important to the UDP process. This list is a good example of *purposive sampling* (Robson 1993), as it allows the research to be more focused by identifying those individuals who are most likely to answer the research questions. Therefore Table 8.1 concentrates on the professional officers and elected members who may be able to express an informed opinion on their UDPs.

Role ID	Role of Actor
1	UDP Team Leader
2	Chief Planner
3	Environmental Policy Officer
4	Economic Development Officer
5	Environmental Health Officer
6	Highways Officer
7	Another Senior Officer
8	Planning Committee - Chair
9	Planning Committee - Vice-Chair
10	Environment Committee - Chair
11	Environment Committee - Vice-Chair
12	Economic Development Committee - Chair
13	Economic Development Committee - Vice-Chair
14	Policy Committee - Chair
15	Policy Committee - Vice-Chair
16	The Council Leader
17 & 18	Opposition Party Leaders
19	Chair of Planning Committee in earlier stages of UDP
20	Vice-Chair of Planning Committee in earlier stages of UDP
21- 26	Planning Committee Members
27 - 30	Other Senior Politicians (if necessary)

Table 8.1: Key Actors in the UDP process

Clearly some of these actors are more likely to have had an input into the plans than others. However, the study is designed to include both environment and development interests within each authority to ensure that a range of opinions are collated on the plans. Of particular interest in Table 8.1 is the role of the environment committee in a local authority. These generally focused committees, which sometimes take the form of a less formal working group, reflect the rise of global and local environmental issues on the

174

local authority agenda, as discussed in Chapter Two. Although the roles and remit of such a committee in the local authority organisation are not necessarily well defined, they have led to a variety of environmental policy statements, strategies and action plans (see for example Ward 1993 or Webber 1994). Their potential input into the UDP is clearly relevant, therefore, and the existence of such a committee in the authorities may be an important factor in both case studies.

As well as the actors within the authorities themselves, a number of other individuals representing developers, environmentalists and statutory consultees could also be important to the UDP process. These are listed in Table 8.2, with their specific roles in the UDP process, and will be referred to where necessary.

Role ID	Organisation
31 - 32	Housing Developers Association
33	Passenger Transport Executive
34	National Environmental Pressure Groups
35	Local Environmental Pressure Groups
36	Regional Government Office

Table 8.2: Key actors outside the local authority organisation

Having identified the key actors in each case study, it is also important to leave some scope for extending the sample of interviewees. For example, some interviewees may be used as informants to identify other, previously unknown, individuals who have had an important influence on the two UDPs. This flexibility means that information from interviews can be used to extend the range of interviewees as and when new information becomes available.

8.3.2 Methods for Data Generation

As noted above, most of the data generated in the case studies is from interviews with key actors and analysis of relevant documents. The documents can only provide a background for the study, however, supplying some factual information such as dates

and statistics about the UDPs as well as a general context. It is the interviews with key actors involved in the UDP process that will provide more substantial data and an explanation of what has actually happened.

These interviews are organised around the stages and issues identified in Section 8.2, above, using the methods of semi-structured interviewing (Robson 1993, Mason 1996). This means that the actual interview will be relatively informal in style, thematic and topic based in structure, with only a general list of questions and issues that need to be covered (after Mason 1996). This style is in contrast to structured interviews, where a very detailed interview schedule sets out exactly what the interviewer will ask, and an open ended interview, where the interviewer allows the interviewee to dictate both the form and substance of the exchange.

The style and structure of the case study interviews is dictated by the nature of data required. Section 8.2 has already made the distinction between first and second order data, and this is reflected in the interview schedule. Appendix Four contains a copy of one interview schedule which is typical of the study. The schedule begins with some introductory comments and standard biographical questions designed to provide some factual information and develop a rapport between the interviewer and interviewee. Basic factual questions on the process of the UDP can then be asked before more open ended, opinion based, questions are put to the interviewee. These opinion based questions will obtain the type of data necessary to address second order issues and so meet all of the research aims.

Different actors are also able to provide different types of data on the UDP, and different insights into the UDP process. For example, one of the most informative sources of data is the UDP Team Leaders themselves. These individuals are responsible for managing the UDP process and overseeing the development of the plans on a day to basis - from their early research stages, through various drafts, to formal adoption. However the breadth of interviewees approached in the case studies enables a more comprehensive understanding of the UDP process that supplements the views of planning professionals with those of politicians, pressure groups and other consultees. It is therefore necessary to tailor the

interview schedule according to the role of the interviewee. As a result, the interview schedule for the politicians is slightly different to those of planning officers.

A possible problem with this approach is that it does not allow for any relative differences in the position, or status, of council officers and politicians to be accounted for. For example, the views of a junior highway officer interviewed in one authority cannot necessarily be equated to the views of the director of the highways department interviewed in the other authority. Similarly, the leader of a council will have a different perspective on the UDP process from that of a 'back-bench' councillor. Where this issue does arise, it will be addressed and commented upon, forming an important part of the analysis and an interesting research result in its own right.

8.4 Analysis and Presentation of the Results

Case study approaches to research are notoriously varied and often quite unstructured, relying upon 'emergent' evidence to arise from the data collected and explain the phenomena under study. For example, Robson (1993, Chapter 12) identifies eight different strategies for analysing qualitative data which would all be relevant to a case study approach. However, having identified and explained a conceptual framework for this investigation, as well as considering issues of data sources and data generation, the analysis of these case study results can be relatively well structured in the first instance.

The analysis will initially be structured around the various issues identified in the conceptual framework, Section 8.2, and will use the results from documentary analysis and interviews to address all of the first order issues on the process and policy content of the two UDPs. This will provide a narrative description of how the two UDPs were written, containing all the major empirical results found in the research.

The narrative, empirical results of the case studies are largely derived from the research data in a literal sense (Mason 1996). They are simply a re-writing of all the case study results into a predominantly descriptive framework. This framework is mapped out over the following two sections of this chapter. Section 8.5 describes the UDP process in case

A, whereas Section 8.6 provides the same for case B. Once this is available it is possible to look for a set of themes or features which run throughout the case description and represent the most formative aspects of the results (Robson 1993). This is the task of Section 8.7, where a small number of features, and their position throughout the two UDP processes, are discussed.

The features to be discussed in Section 8.7 are inferred from the empirical case study results, as such they are much more typical of the interpretative approach to analysis (Mason 1996) as it is explained in Chapter Three. Although this characteristic precludes the reduction of the research to a defined formula (Robson 1993), it is still possible to ensure that this level of analysis is carried out systematically and transparently. Therefore this level of analysis will consider many of the second order issues discussed in the conceptual framework above, and offer a firmly argued justification of its results. This is continued in the following chapter of the dissertation, when each of the features identified in Section 8.7 are explored in more detail and tested from the perspective of the research results. The cumulative effort of Chapter Nine and Section 8.7 will be to isolate the major influences on the policy content of the two UDPs and therefore meet the second research aim of the study:

> To identify the primary factors influencing the form and content of policies
> for sustainable development throughout the UDP making process.

Before moving on to the empirical results, however, it is worth considering something of the mechanics of data analysis. This will explain how the analysis is carried out in a practical sense, as well as illustrate how the methodological considerations, outlined above, are actually applied and helped to form the case study results.

All of the interviews made in the two case studies were initially recorded on audio cassette. These recordings was then transcribed onto computer disk, either in full or in part, with some of the less relevant material being condensed into note form. More general notes were also made around the titles and questions of the interview schedule to summarise lengthy discussion or emphasise key points. Appendix Four contains a typical

example of the results from these interviews and the form in which they were recorded. Transcriptions and notes like this were developed for each of the key actors interviewed.

All of these transcriptions and notes were then transferred into the QSR NUD.IST software package for desk-top computers (Sage 1995). NUD.IST is an acronym for Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching and Theorising. This software package is designed to assist researchers in organising and indexing qualitative data. As such, all of the data from the interviews could be stored in a document database organised on the lines of the two case study authorities. This allowed the interview transcripts and notes to be managed without oversimplifying their content or losing their complexity and context.

Once this had been done, ideas about the data could be developed using the NUD.IST indexing system. This allows the researcher to create and manage an unlimited number of index categories, each of which are organised in a hierarchical tree structure. For the needs of this study, the categories were organised around the elements of the conceptual framework, as explained in Section 8.2 above. Segments of the interview transcripts were indexed and stored within each of these categories so that all of the relevant data relating to each stage of the UDP, and the content of the UDP, could be viewed together.

However, important features of the case study results were also indexed individually as and when they were identified from the data. These features are discussed in Section 8.7, below. The flexibility of the NUD.IST package allows the index system, and all the data within it, to be re-structured as new ideas emerge. Therefore an iterative research process could be developed, where ideas about the research data are tested and interpreted, scanned and refined, until they become coherent and credible (Powney and Watts 1987). The final structure used for the indexing of the interview data is reproduced in Appendix Five.

Clearly the abilities and characteristics of the software package used in the data analysis will have some impact upon the analytic process itself, and therefore the final conclusions

to be drawn from this process. A full discussion of these issues is made by a number of authors (see for example Richards & Richards 1987 or Seidel 1991). In the case of this study, the software package enabled a greater amount of textual data to be handled more efficiently and structured in a variety of ways that explored various ideas and interpretations. In a similar way to the content analysis process, explained in Section 4.3, this meant 'de-contextualising' the data, taking it out of the original interview transcript context, and 're-contextualising' it into a new context dictated by the needs of the research aims (after Tesch 1990). Therefore the qualitative research methods used in both the survey and case-study stages of the project remain consistent with each other, and the application of the NUD.IST software is appropriate to the overall methodological approach of the study.

A final step in the analytical process was to test the empirical findings of the research by sending a copy of the results to the UDP Team Leaders in both case study authorities. This was done in September 1996 and replies from both officers were received the following month. Comments on the empirical results of the project were favourable in both cases.

8.5 Empirical Results From Case A

A total of 21 actors were contacted in Case A. 11 agreed to a face-to-face interview, and three answered questions over the telephone. As several senior politicians chair more than one committee, these initial 21 actors covered all of the roles identified in Table 8.1. Appendix Six contains a list of the key actors interviewed in Case A, including their actual job title or committee position in the authority and the corresponding role identified by the study. For reasons of confidentiality and clarity, the actual names of actors are not included in Appendix Six, and actors are referred to throughout the study by their role rather than their name, job title or committee position.

As well as actors within the authority itself, a number of other individuals were also interviewed. These have been identified in Table 8.2, above, and will be referred to where necessary.

8.5.1 Process of the Plan Preparation

As in the conceptual framework, these empirical results are structured under headings corresponding to stages of the UDP and the policy content of the plan.

Before the First Draft of the Plan was Written

Early work on the UDP began in 1987 when planners from the UDP and Planning Research Teams of the Council began to discuss its content. Explicit sustainable development issues were not discussed at this time, although relevant issues, such as conserving the natural environment and improving the built environment, were always an important part of the agenda. The content of these discussions was reflected in the Reports of Survey presented to the Planning Committee (see below).

Ward councillors were first brought into the process through 'member groupings'. These were sessions attended by a planner and the councillors of a particular ward, arranged to give councillors the opportunity to raise issues important to them and their electorate. One session was held for each ward. Although members of all parties tended to raise very local site specific issues in these groupings, different types of issues were important in different types of ward. For example, councillors in outer wards stressed the need to protect the green belt, whereas this issue was not as important to members in the inner (urban) wards. Outer wards have more Conservative and Liberal Democrat members, whereas the inner wards are Labour dominated. This illustrates how local differences, relating to geographic location rather than political ideology, have the potential to become party political issues in the UDP process.

A joint member and officer UDP Corporate Working Party (CWP) was established by early 1989. Its members included the Chair and Vice-Chair of Planning, and the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council. Officers on the CWP included senior UDP planners as well as policy officers from the Chief Executive's Department and the Assistant Borough Solicitor.

Reports of Survey were presented to the CWP and Planning Committee between October 1989 and April 1990. These had been prepared by the UDP Team and covered housing, population, transport, shopping, the economy, recreation, minerals and waste disposal and open land. These topics represent the key issues to be addressed by the UDP at this time and were to form the plan's chapter structure.

It is difficult to assess the level of discussion about the UDP at the CWP and Planning Committee from their minutes alone, particularly as the CWP meetings, and their minutes, were not generally made public. However, interviewees indicated that debate concerned site specific issues, particularly a large waste disposal site, and housing sites linked to green belt boundaries. This view is supported by the fact that most councillors talked about site specific cases or examples when interviewed for this research.

The green belt appears to be the only area of strategic disagreement between councillors and officers at this stage of the plan process. Councillors of all parties were very keen to see the green belt extended to protect open land near existing housing from development. However, planners thought that any extensions would be temporary and therefore unable to fulfil green belt criteria. This led to councillors on the Planning Committee voting for five green belt extensions to be included in the UDP, against the recommendations of planners.

The actual writing of the UDP was then carried out. This was performed by a small group of planners, each of whom were responsible for one or more individually themed chapters. The CWP's main input was to set the timetable for the plan and discuss drafts. This was done before the drafts were presented to the Planning Committee.

After the First Draft was Written

After the first draft plan had been approved at Planning Committee, it was presented to Full Council for the first time in autumn 1990. No significant changes or comments were made at this meeting and Planning Committee approved the public consultation details.

Other council departments were also consulted for the first time at this stage. Environmental health officers commented upon noise, opencast coal mining and contaminated land. These were all areas where the Environmental Health Department had some expertise, having worked with development control planners on specific planning applications. Their points were largely technical, relating to topics such as stand off distances for housing from opencast coal mines for example. All their recommendations were accepted into the UDP. Although it was not possible to get an interview in person with a highways or economic development officer, telephone conversations confirm that their comments were also limited to technical issues. These did not question the strategic approach of the plan or any of its policies.

Public consultation was carried out in line with guidance and legislation (see Chapter Three). A number of non-statutory organisations, chosen by the planners from experience in similar consultations, were also sent a copy of the plan. The UDP Team Leader was personally invited to make presentations to a range of organisations, and a 'developers forum' was held to explain the plan to local development interests. The plan was presented to the three district town councils in the borough and public meetings were held in these areas.

Over 250 letters of comment were received on the public consultation draft plan. They mainly concerned six distinct issues: the five green belt extensions; the proposed waste disposal site; poor policy coverage of the smaller district town centres; housing land in town X; policy guidance areas for major redevelopment; and canals for recreation.

Many of these comments were 'nimby' (Not In My Back Yard) in nature - local people or landowners objecting to the allocation of sites in their own areas. This is particularly true at town X, which was identified under the Expanded Towns Act in the 1950's for major expansion. The master plan for the town, written in the 1960's, was never fully implemented and this led to suburban development around the town without matching increases in infrastructure. Local people were therefore very concerned about any further housing development in the area.

However, other comments were clearly motivated for other reasons. For example residents from all three district towns in the borough demanded more detailed policy attention in the UDP for their town centres. This is a much more positive response to the plan, and represents the importance attached to it in these areas as well as the success of the public meetings held in creating a dialogue about the plan's content.

Changes to the plan, made in response to these comments, were developed through intensive work by the planning professionals and presented to Planning Committee in winter 1992. However, the deposit plan was not approved at this meeting and further changes to limit new housing in town X were requested by the Committee. Therefore, in response to local public pressure, land in the town was re-allocated from housing to a 'Policy Guidance Area'. This delays housing development on the site until other housing sites in the borough have been taken up. This, and other changes to the UDP, were then agreed upon by the Planning Committee.

Deposit plan publicity was similar to that at the public consultation, with the addition of a mobile exhibition. Nearly 1500 representations were made to the deposit plan, over 400 of which were objections. These generally raised the same issues and sites as the public consultation exercise. The five green belt extensions received a lot of support from local people but objections from landowners. There were also a significant number of objections to the existing green belt. On these, and most of the major issues, the planners saw little room for further amendments and the issues were left to be settled at the public inquiry. More minor objections were settled in meetings between planners and objectors, but these changes did not affect the aims of the plan and were agreed by the Planning Committee.

An application to develop the waste disposal site was made during the deposit stage of the plan, increasing the proposal's significance and unpopularity. Although this is a site specific policy in the UDP, it does raise wider questions of strategy, waste regulation and minimisation. The waste disposal proposal also divided councillors along both party and geographic lines. Officers and senior Labour members saw the proposal as an answer to the serious problem of waste disposal in the region and therefore supported it. Lib-Dem

members, on the other hand, disputed the proposal because most of their seats are in the outer wards and adjacent to the site.

As more details about the development became known, and public resentment grew, Labour members in nearby wards also began to turn against the proposal. However, the council leadership persisted with its policy and it remained in the plan. Several interviewees linked this decision to the fact that, as landowner, the council could generate a large amount of money from the scheme.

Negotiations between planners and objectors, held after the deposit stage and before the inquiry started, helped to settle a lot of objections (see below). One interesting change made at this time was the rewording of a strategic policy to include a commitment to sustainable development. This strategic policy had previously been focused on the conservation of natural resources and provision of infrastructure. It was changed in response to an objection by a national conservation organisation, who were concerned that the UDP did not identify sustainable development as a central objective. Government guidance in the form of PPG12 was used to support this objection and it was taken on board by the council and led to the rewording of the policy. However, no changes to the plan's other policies and proposals were made to support this.

The Public Inquiry and Later Changes

Plan A was the first UDP in its metropolitan area to reach the public inquiry stage. Before the inquiry was held, all the district councils in the area prepared joint position statements on housing and the green belt. These are strategic areas of concern which have possible repercussions for all authorities in the area. They therefore needed to present a united front to the Planning Inspector and objectors on both these issues.

The Inspector's report contained nearly 200 recommendations, only 40 of which had not already been settled by the planners in the negotiations mentioned above. Most importantly the Inspector found against the council on all of its green belt extensions. As anticipated by the planners, these additions did not fulfil green belt criteria and the Inspector's recommendations were accepted by the authority. However, all the green

belt deletions suggested by objectors to the plan were also refused, meaning that the green belt remained in its existing state. The Inspector also agreed with the council's housing policies. Green belt and housing issues were closely related to each other. Once the green belt boundary was settled, housing sites and objections to housing figures also fell as most green belt objections were for new housing development.

With one exception, the Inspector's remaining recommendations were minor and were all accepted by Authority A. Again, nearly all these modifications relate to specific sites, the most contentious being linked with housing development.

The exception to this situation was the large waste disposal site, which continued to be an important issue after the inquiry. Whilst the UDP process was entering its final stages, the site was allocated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, the SSSI designation was quashed by the High Court, and so no changes were made to the plan. English Nature and the DOE continued to object to the lack of nature protection on the site though. This was finally settled when the Secretary of State for the Environment made a direction to modify the plan to include the SSSI. Negotiations between local planners and the Government Office established acceptable wording for the plan that was agreed by the Planning Committee. These changes were then placed on deposit and the plan was approved for adoption by all the Planning Committee, except one dissenting Lib-Dem member, in 1995.

8.5.2 The Content of Plan A

Many of the questions set by the conceptual framework in Section 8.2 concern the values and opinions of the interviewees rather than factual data. These questions will be fully analysed in Chapter Nine of the dissertation. This section summarises data relating to the plan's content. The section is divided into two, the *general policy content* of plan A, and more specifically the plan's *relationship with Key Areas of sustainable development*.

General Policy Content

Existing plans appeared to have had an important influence on UDP A. The UDP Team Leader pointed out the legal and practical requirements for referring to previous plans, dating back to the 1960's for some sites. For example, the actual wording of a few policies can be traced back to older plans. One experienced councillor on the Planning Committee thought that this was the main method through which the Planning Department had written all their development plans. The same councillor also credited research and reports produced in the late 1970's for shaping the UDP's approach to regeneration and redevelopment. During the late 1970's and early 1980's the Labour Group undertook a lot of research and wrote long term strategy documents as it prepared to take control of the council. It appears that some fundamental principles, such as concentrating retail development and housing in the town centre, were established then. As Labour have controlled the council since that time, many of these basic principles have survived to appear in successive planning documents.

The importance of this historical perspective was also emphasised in several interviews with senior politicians. They claimed that no initial and wide ranging review of the UDP strategy was made because the planners writing the UDP knew exactly what the controlling group expected to see in terms of strategy and direction. In a similar way it was claimed that individual policies could be written without direct political involvement, as planners drew on the site histories of areas and previous debates held in Full Council meetings or committees.

Relationship with Key Areas of Sustainable Development

Although it was often quite difficult to get the actors to talk about the specific Key Areas of sustainable development, certain implications for sustainable development issues can be identified from these case study results. For example, the area of Land, Air and Water Quality was not seen as part of the planning remit by the UDP Team Leader, as it duplicates the role of the Environment Agency and other statutory undertakers. This was also the view of the housing developers interviewed, whose representative had very firm ideas about the limits of the planning system. Therefore the statutory limits of the current

planning system, and how they are perceived, appear to have a large part to play in deciding the content of a UDP.

Both politicians and officers also stressed the limitations placed on local government's ability to be proactive in other policy areas. For many politicians this was linked to party political issues and the centralisation of government power. In practical terms it meant that the ability of the UDP to develop its transport policies was limited because of the deregulation of bus services. In terms of natural resource issues, one senior councillor noted how local authorities in the region paid for their waste disposal by head of population, rather than by volume. This gave authority A no financial incentive to decrease its waste going to land fill. Time was also a factor linked to several areas of sustainable development policy. The UDP Team Leader claimed that the UDP would look very different if it was being prepared now, post 1992 and after new planning guidance had been published.

Another reason put forward by the interviewees for the shape of the UDP's policy content relates to the role that the plan must play once it is adopted. In some senses the UDP has to be a very precise quasi-legal document, which can be defended in a quasi-judicial public inquiry and offer very strict interpretations for development control purposes. Therefore the plan's content can only reflect certain issues which are strictly defined by the planning system. In another sense though, interviewees noted the breadth of issues covered in the UDP and its long time period. Therefore interviewees appreciated the need for the plan to keep its policies general so that they could be applied and interpreted flexibly to cover many different types of application over several years.

Both of these interpretations can be seen to work against sustainable development as defined in this study. For example, the definition calls for a wide ranging policy agenda encompassing issues in eight Key Areas, and requiring very specific policy measures to address all of these issues. Full discussions in Section 8.7 and Chapter Nine will consider the implications of this.

8.6 Empirical Results From Case B

A total of 22 actors were contacted in Case B. 14 agreed to a face-to-face interview, and two answered questions over the telephone. As in case A, several senior politicians chair more than one committee, and therefore these 22 actors cover all of the roles identified in Table 8.1. The list of key actors interviewed in Case B, including their actual job title or committee position in the authority and the corresponding role identified by the study, is contained in Appendix Six. Actors outside the local authority will also be referred to where necessary.

8.6.1 Process of the Plan Preparation

As in the conceptual framework and Section 8.5, these results are structured under headings corresponding to stages of the UDP process and the policy content of the plan.

Before the First Draft of the Plan was Written

Much of the background work for the UDP appears to have been prepared by the UDP Team to be presented to special meetings of the Planning Committee. An important emphasis was made at the start of the process on verifying and defining a clear strategic approach for the plan, which is an interesting contrast with plan A.

The Planning Committee of the council first considered the UDP's content at a special meeting in spring 1990, when a strategic overview report was presented to them by the UDP Team. The report presented four options for the strategy of the UDP, each concentrating on different future scenarios, their effects on the quantity of development and use of land.

The underlying theme of the strategic overview report was one of balancing economic growth with environmental considerations, particularly traditional environmental issues such as open land and agriculture. The Planning Committee chose the continued growth option, committing them to meeting the demands of housing and economic development at similar levels to that experienced by the previous development plan - a 'carry on as before' decision. However, councillors also wanted the plan to have a 'bias towards' the

189

slower growth option within its time scale, and therefore consider environmental protection as a central theme.

On the basis of this decision the UDP Team prepared 'topic choices papers' which were considered at another special meeting of the Planning Committee. The papers, covering environment, economy, housing and transport, were designed to form the framework for the policies and proposals of the plan, and were approved by the Planning Committee with only minor comments on general issues.

According to the UDP Team Leader, wider environmental considerations in the plan should be attributed to the planners, who encouraged sympathetic councillors to support elements of the new environmental agenda. Members' interpretations of 'the environment' were mainly limited to the green belt, which they were very keen to protect along with other areas of open space. Problems of traffic growth were also brought up by members in discussions at this time. Most points raised by councillors concerned specific sites or areas in the borough. These findings would seem to support the view that most members, not holding a committee chair, vice-chair or similar position, have a narrower understanding of the environment, confining their opinions to specific sites, especially in their own wards.

Attempts at early public consultation on the UDP were another interesting element of the plan preparation exercise. Here, strategic overview and topic choice reports were sent to a number of individuals and organisations, and made available for sale to the public. Although it is unclear whether comments were invited from the public at this stage, the response from organisations to this exercise was poor, and this highlights an interesting theme. Both planners and councillors note the lack of response to consultation exercises, unless they involved an actual proposal which could have a direct physical effect on an area. For example, the lack of response at the strategy stage of UDP B is in stark contrast to later consultation exercises, after applications had been made by developers on some sites in the plan.

Once the strategy of the plan had been established, it was drafted between mid 1990 and the end of 1991 by the UDP Team using the strategic overview paper, topic papers and the existing borough-wide local plan. Six area based teams, containing officers from Planning, Highways, Environmental Health, Leisure, Economic Development and Estates, were also involved in establishing the UDP's technical proposals for specific settlements.

During this period officers from other departments also appear to have been informally consulted on the policy content of the UDP. This meant draft policies being sent to different departments for comment. Although the policies were already in draft form, they had not been pulled together into a plan, and interviewees remember giving their comments before the formal public consultation stages. For example the Highways Department of the council reworded certain policies and raised specific issues on parking in the town centre.

After the First Draft was Written

Once the UDP was in draft form it was mainly discussed at Full Council meetings rather than Planning Committee. In introducing the plan to the council, planners placed particular emphasis on global environmental issues, such as energy conservation and waste disposal, as well as their local implications. These types of issues had been integrated into the plan from the topic choices report. Most of the discussion at Full Council, however, concerned traditional environmental issues such as the green belt. Firm green belt policies from the existing borough plan were carried forward in the UDP, as were other initiatives such as the protection of existing shopping centres. The public consultation draft of the plan was approved by Full Council without objections.

In addition to the statutory consultees, many other organisations were also sent a copy of the UDP at the public consultation stage. These include religious organisations, ethnic groups and interest groups such as the Ramblers Association and Transport 2000. The top 500 firms in the borough, defined by number of employees, were also sent a summary sheet and letter explaining the plan. However the response to this exercise was poor. Other council departments were also formally consulted at this stage.

The consultation exercise did generate over 900 representations, nearly half of which were from statutory consultees or others on the council's consultation list. General support for the plan's environmental policies, the protection of open space and transport policies was matched by significant opposition to the overall amount of housing land, restrictions on out of town shopping and non-retail use in shopping frontages. Site specific objections concerned new housing in smaller settlements, green belt designation to the east of the borough and a proposed out-of-town retail centre to be built on existing playing fields.

Town Y and the east of the borough emerge from the plan's consultation as being under significant pressure for development. This town is in an attractive upland area, and many of the comments on the UDP were from landowners demanding release of their land from green belt for housing. There is also significant competition between industrial and housing uses for allocated sites in the area. The UDP addresses this problem by protecting green belt, confining new housing to existing settlements and encouraging local industrial development to ensure that settlements can provide work for local people. In 'Primary Employment Zones' (PEZ) UDP policies attempt to subsidise industrial land use with some housing development. This approach was promoted by the planners, whereas economic development officers were opposed to the principle. The Economic Development Department were happy to see housing built on industrial sites in eastern areas, so long as further industrial sites were made available in the flatter, western side of the borough, seen as more attractive to industry.

Most of the critical comments at the public consultation stage appear to be generated by nimbyism from local people or development interests. Changes to the UDP were made by the UDP Team. However, these were mainly minor with a few major changes concerning the proposals map and particular PEZ sites in the east of the borough. These changes may indicate a decisive influence by the Economic Development Department and its objections to PEZs.

Interesting policy changes concerning pollution, energy and transport were also made at this stage. A new policy was introduced to the plan to encourage developers to reduce absolute levels of pollution where possible, and a policy on energy was modified to encourage the use of renewable energy through wind turbines. A new strategic policy was also added to the UDP, emphasising the links between land-use and transport needs. It appears that these policy changes evolved from thinking in the UDP Team itself rather than comments from other departments or outside the council.

All the changes were approved by Full Council with some objections by opposition councillors on site specific issues including housing sites. The UDP Team saw the deposit plan as their 'perfect plan', and therefore, saw only limited scope for negotiation over the content of the plan with most objections being settled at the public inquiry.

Whilst on deposit the plan received just over 1000 objections. These concerned similar issues to those raised at the public consultation, and in particular housing and the green belt in the area of town Y continued to be controversial, with objections on demographic grounds from house builders. Several individual sites for housing or open land designation also received many objections from local people or developers. The DOE made objections on mainly technical issues. In terms of this research, the most interesting of these concern what the DOE call non land-use policies or 'corporate statements' in the UDP, and the flexibility of some development control policies. Because of these objections, three policies were deleted or merged with other policies on the grounds that they were not directly linked to land-use issues. These were on rail freight development, public transport and traffic safety. Again though, most of the policies objected to remained unchanged.

In terms of the flexibility of development control policies, the DOE's position was that policies should be in line with the fundamental presumption in favour of development. This has led many development plans to include words like 'normally' in policies, so that it is flexible enough to be defensible at a public inquiry. However, authority B's UDP Team Leader questioned this approach on the grounds that it undermines policies, and

that a plan cannot envisage all exceptional circumstances to its development control policies. Therefore no further changes were made to the plan in light of these objections.

The Public Inquiry and Later Changes

The majority of the Inspector's recommendations supported the plan or changes to it negotiated after the deposit stage. For example, the Inspector found in favour of the UDP on its PEZ policies around Town Y, on its corporate statement policies and against the use of the word 'normally' in control policies. Several changes were later made to the plan to remove this word from control policies. In terms of sustainable development, this meant that they were interpreted as being much stronger during the survey of the UDP, and this is one reason why the plan 'scored' higher than other UDPs in this survey.

The Inspector also supported the UDP's housing policy allocations, dismissing the objections of house builders. Once this had happened objections to green belt boundaries also fell. Releases from the green belt can only be sustained if they have some exceptional circumstances, such as for housing development. As noted in case A, there is a direct link between housing and green belt land, with a 'domino effect' on green belt objections when housing sites are settled at a public inquiry. In fact housing and green belt issues accounted for the majority of time at the public inquiry, but only two changes were made to the plan's green belt policies, whereby one site was removed and another added.

Modifications to the plan were made in light of the Inspector's report, and these received further objections when placed on deposit. The DOE continued to object to corporate statement policies and this led to further word changes and the deletion of two policies relating to conservation. It is not clear whether changes stemming from the DOE's objections will actually make any difference in the plan's interpretation, but they do make the wording of policies more flexible and limit the plan's remit, therefore making it appear weaker in terms of some sustainable development issues.

8.6.2 The Content of Plan B

As with plan A, this section is sub-divided into two parts, the *general policy content* of plan B, and more specific material concerning the plan's *relationship with Key Areas of sustainable development* identified in the study. Note that UDP B was chosen for a case study because of its relatively strong policies in the Key Areas of Natural Resources, Transport and Solid Waste Management. Therefore the analysis attempts to establish positive influences which led to this situation.

General Policy Content

In a similar way to plan A, the policy content of the plan B appears to have been largely shaped by the UDP Team. This is suggested in the above analysis of the UDP process and supported by the results of interviews with officers and councillors. However, there are several other features which helped to shape what the planning team put into the plan, and what remained in the plan as it progressed to adoption.

For example, the UDP Team Leader said that he was constantly pushing 'new environmental issues', including global environmental issues, onto the plan's agenda. This was because he saw sustainable development as a natural extension of planning's traditional concern for amenity. The White Paper *This Common Inheritance* was also mentioned by the UDP Team Leader as one example of the change in government thinking which had raised the profile of the environment for planners.

One channel through which planners introduced their environmental concerns into the UDP was the strategy overview document. This document, which enabled the basic strategic direction of the UDP to be established before anything else was written, formed an important part of the framework for all individual policies. As noted above, the politicians on the Planning Committee chose to follow the existing growth option, but with an additional bias towards slower growth and greater environmental considerations. This appears to be an acceptance of some kind of environmental constraint on development at a very early stage in the plan's process. Therefore all future policies and proposals in the UDP are influenced by this.

Another important influence to the UDP policy content was the existing borough-wide local plan. Authority B was one of the few metropolitan districts to have an up to date, adopted, borough-wide land use plan in place at the start of the UDP process. For example, the fact that the extent of the green belt had been established in the borough plan meant that nearly all challenges to green belt policy fell at the public inquiry. As most of these challenges to the green belt concerned housing development, the borough plan also aided the UDP's housing policy. Therefore, some of the potentially most time consuming and intricate objections to the UDP, which could have effected its overall approach to the level of development, were neutralised.

Relationship with Key Areas of Sustainability

Overall, UDP B appears to contain strong policies in the Key Areas of Natural Resources, Transport and Solid Waste Management because of the UDP Team's willingness to extend the remit of the plan's policies, and get 'new environmental' considerations into the plan right at the start of the process. The UDP Team Leader was very clear in stressing the need to be pro-active in introducing new issues onto the UDP's agenda. This was exemplified by the mention of 'global issues' in the plan's strategic overview, as well as concern for the impact of traffic growth mentioned in the topic papers written for the plan.

Such concerns often made their way into the plan through the 'corporate statement policies' in the UDP. These policies provide a general expression of support for a wide range of principles and types of development covering the Key Areas of sustainable development. The council sought to defend these policies against DOE objections at the public inquiry. Although some policies on public transport, for example, were removed from the plan, most remained and were supported by the Inspector - albeit with some word changes.

This emphasis on establishing a clear strategic direction may explain why UDP B covers a wider set of issues than UDP A, with corporate policies referring to issues in all eight of the Key Areas of sustainable development. For example, although UDP B fails to

address the Key Areas of Energy and Land, Air and Water Quality to a level demanded for sustainable development, there are at least some references to renewable energy and support for water quality improvements in the corporate statement policies. Indeed, without some of the word changes made because of the DOE's objections, the UDP would have used much stronger vocabulary in these policies.

As noted above, the existing borough-wide plan also introduced some important and well established principles into the UDP policies. The principle of concentrating new development in existing settlements for example, and protecting the vitality and viability of existing shopping centres, are important sustainable development issues which can be directly linked to the borough plan and are part of the planning tradition at case B.

8.7 Summary of Key Findings and Issues Raised

Results from the case studies indicate some interesting similarities between the two UDP processes, as well as significant differences. The two plan processes clearly share a common course in so much as they both involved the same activities of research, public consultation, formal deposit and public inquiry; with many modifications to their policies being made in-between. The actual details of these activities are also strikingly similar in many instances. Figure 8.1 summarises the empirical results from both case studies. It seeks to emphasise the key findings of the research so far and draw some comparisons and contrasts between the two UDP processes.

The first point to be drawn from the two case studies is that both plans seem to have been predominantly led by the planners themselves. The UDP teams in each authority appear to have been the most influential factor affecting the plans, carrying out research and then writing their respective UDP's. For example, in case B, the UDP Team Leader emphasised his promotion of 'new environmental issues', including global environmental issues, onto the plan's agenda. The White Paper *This Common Inheritance* was quoted by the UDP Team Leader as one example of the change in government and societal thinking which had helped reinforce the importance of environmental issues. It was also used to justify some of the UDP's environmental considerations. This proactive approach

by the UDP team in authority B is mirrored in authority A, where both the Chair of the Planning Committee and a former Leader of the Opposition saw the UDP process as purely technical, the responsibility of qualified professionals within a tightly defined legislative framework.

UDP A   UDP B

Beginning of UDP process

UDP teams
- research & write plan
- technical & professional
- early research under topic headings

Local political input
- greenbelt & housing
- site specific issues

Local planning history
- emphasis on previous plans

Land-use planning system
- extensions to greenbelt removed

UDP teams
- research & write plan
- 'new environmental issues'
- strategic overview

Local political input
- job creation & regeneration, but with environmental bias
- site specific issues

Local planning history
- existing borough-wide plan
- greenbelt & housing

Land-use planning system
- DOE objections to 'corporate statements'

End of UDP process

Figure 8.1: A Summary of two UDP processes

A corollary of this feature is the observation that other officers or departments in the two authorities do not appear to have played a large part in the two plans. For example, the environmental policy officers in the two authorities do not appear to have influenced the

plans at all, whereas the economic development and transport officers commented on largely technical issues throughout the UDP processes.

As illustrated in Figure 8.1, the second feature common to both case studies concerns local political input, which had important influences on the shape and content of both UDPs. On two occasions in case A immediate political issues had a direct effect on UDP policies. The first occasion concerned the extent of green belt designation in the plan. Councillors of all colours in authority A were willing to ignore the recommendations of their planners and vote for five extensions to be made to the green belt. This political initiative was driven by local public pressure. The second occasion concerned housing development. The Planning Committee demanded a change to the deposit version of the UDP to delay housing development in a district town. This is one of three district towns in the borough, and the initiative demonstrates the level of political sensitivity in these towns. Many smaller, site specific issues were also raised by councillors during the 'member groupings', held with councillors in every ward of the borough.

In case B the local politicians had a less direct, but just as important influence, on their plan's policies. A common opinion amongst the politicians in case B was the over-riding importance of job creation and regeneration in their area, grounded in the recent decline of local manufacturing employment. This is perceived by most councillors as a stark choice of *either* environmental protection *or* more jobs, there is little perception in the authority (with the exception of the environment officers) of any positive relationship between the two. Faced with this polemical situation, most of the councillors interviewed would choose the jobs option, and this was an important issue throughout the plan process. As in case A, the councillors in authority B also raised many smaller site specific issues relating to their own wards.

The local planning histories of the two plan areas is the third feature to have had a bearing on the course and content of the two UDPs. For example, previous development plans had an important influence on the UDP Team in case A. Planning authorities are legally required to refer to existing plans in writing their UDPs. In the case of authority A, which had no up to date borough-wide local plan, this meant considering a range of

previous planning documents, including old town maps dating back to the 1960's, which hadn't been superseded by later plans. There may also have been a good practical reason for consulting existing plans. The planners in case A were facing the challenge of being the first authority in the region, and one of the first in the country, to write a comprehensive planning policy document in the new UDP format. In these circumstances it was sensible practice to look to previous plans to supplement government guidance on the subject.

Also illustrated in Figure 8.1 is the influence of existing plans on the UDP in case B. Authority B was one of the few metropolitan districts to have an up to date adopted borough-wide local plan in place at the start of its UDP process. This meant that the position of local green belt boundaries had been precisely established in the borough plan, and therefore all the challenges to green belt policy fell away quickly at the UDP's public inquiry. This fact also supported the UDP's housing policies. Therefore, some of the most time consuming and intricate objections to the UDP, which could have affected its overall approach to the level of development, were effectively neutralised. As noted above, the borough plan also introduced some important sustainable development principles into the UDP such as the principle of concentrating new development in existing settlements, and protecting the vitality and viability of existing shopping centres.

Finally both UDP processes were also shaped by the influences of the land-use planning system itself, and this had an effect on the content of both plans. This was particularly marked in the case of plan B, where the DOE objected to some policies on the grounds that they were 'corporate statements' and not directly concerned with land-use issues. This led to some policies, particularly on public transport, being removed from the plan and word changes to other policies. In case A, several extensions to the green belt were removed from the plan at the public inquiry as they failed to meet the strict criteria for this type of policy allocation.

Of course, both plans also exhibited some significant differences in addition to the four similarities outlined above. For example, background research for plan A had begun very early, in 1987, around two years earlier than in other authorities. This was before the

'new environmental agenda' (in the shape of publications like *This Common Inheritance*) had started to make its way into national Government documents as a valid consideration for development plans. Detailed reports of survey were then carried out for the plan under general topic headings such as population, transport, and open land. These were researched and produced separately, however, without an overall strategy or general aims to link the topics and the issues they raised.

In contrast, authority B formulated a 'strategic overview document' before any research was carried out, and this formed an important contextual element for all the individual plan policies. As noted above, the Planning Committee in authority B chose to follow the existing growth option in the strategy document, but with an additional bias towards slower growth and greater environmental considerations.

In terms of sustainable development, and particularly the definition of sustainable development used in this study, these results have begun to illustrate some interesting characteristics. Although both UDPs have quite different relationships to sustainable development, both plans share many similar features. Each of these features has had an impact on the plans' policies for sustainable development and this influence needs to be explored in more detail to understand the precise extent of this impact in each case. Similarly, the findings from this chapter need to be investigated further to explain their apparent importance and why they have featured so highly in the two case studies. Therefore the following chapter will take each of the four features identified in this section, as well as other observations, and analyse them in more detail. This can then move the dissertation towards its final research aim:

> To explain these results and so explain the position of sustainable development on the current UDP policy agenda.

CHAPTER 9: INFLUENCES UPON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

9.0 Chapter Outline

This chapter will develop the results from the case studies and explore their main features in more detail. The analysis reveals how and why these features occur, as well their influence upon the sustainable development policies of the two case study UDPs. The first section of the chapter explains how the analysis will take place as well the role of this type of analysis in the wider research exercise. Each of the key features identified in Chapter Eight are then examined one by one, using quotes and references from the interviews to illustrate the discussion. The final section of the chapter contrasts the differences between the two case study UDPs, and relates the case study results to sustainable development.

9.1 Key Features of the Case Studies

Chapter Eight provided a narrative account and initial analysis of the results from both case study investigations. It answers the first order questions set by the conceptual framework of this stage of the research. These questions are largely factual, revolving around the 'what', 'who' and 'how many' aspects of plan formulation. For example the questions revealed 'what' happened and 'who' was involved during the plan making process, as well as 'how many' objections were made to 'which' policies in the draft UDPs. The most important issue to emerge from this analysis is that the policy content of both UDPs appears to have been primarily defined, researched and written by the professional planners in each local authority, with only a limited input from politicians.

This chapter will build upon the results of Chapter Eight to back the findings up with further interview data, and then answer some of the second order questions set by the conceptual framework. These questions focus less upon factual detail and more upon the personal accounts and insider views provided by interviewees. Such accounts reveal deeper explanations of 'why' and 'how' certain decisions were made or events occurred,

and in doing this it will then be possible to discuss the implications of the findings for sustainable development and UDPs.

The structure of the chapter is based around four important case features, each of which has already been raised by Chapter Eight. The first feature is the *Planner Led* aspect of the UDP process. This was the main attribute to emerge from Chapter Eight. As mentioned above, it will be the starting point for this chapter and the remaining features are all seen to derive from this theme. The second feature revolves around the *Local Political Input* into each UDP, and includes a discussion of the formal political structure, informal political influences and the consequences of public consultation for the two plans in terms of a ward level political input. The third feature to be discussed will be the importance of the *Local Planning History* in each case study, and how this impacted upon each plan. The final feature is the influence of *Structural Factors*, the legislative-bureaucratic framework within which the UDPs were prepared.

Although both plans were seen to exhibit very similar features in the previous chapter, it is important to remember that these two cases were chosen for research because of their very different relationships to sustainable development, identified in Chapters Six and Seven. Therefore the deeper level of analysis provided in this chapter will go on to compare the results from each case in more detail, to reveal exactly why the two plan making processes led to such differing plans. This analysis takes place in the final section of the chapter.

Of course it would be simplistic to see the four features of this chapter as totally discrete themes which each had an important, but quite separate, bearing upon the two UDPs. In reality each feature has at least one interesting relationship with one or more of the other features. These relationships, and the tendency for one feature to be mutually supportive of other features, forms an important part of the ensuing analysis. Emphasising each feature individually, however, does provide an initial structure with which to organise such an analysis before more general conclusions can be made in the final chapter of the thesis.

9.2 The Planner Led UDP

Chapter Eight identifies the leading role played by UDP teams in both authorities. At all of the preparation stages identified for the plans, but particularly at the early creative stages, UDP planners were seen to be most active - preparing background papers and research quite independently from political interference. Although these exercises were then reported to the Planning Committee or Full Council for debate or ratification, the evidence from Chapter Eight indicates that these reports, and then the first draft plans which evolved from them, set the remit for the UDPs as well as the tone of the ensuing debate.

This observation is supported by interviewee accounts of the UDP processes. Every actor interviewed made at least one reference to indicate that the UDP process in which they were involved was very much led by the planners. For example, both UDP Team Leaders commented on the fact that initial discussions about the UDP began in their respective planning departments, and these discussions led to the first draft plans being written without the majority of the work going through a committee. This led to the situation where "We went away to write the draft plan .... [and] they [the members] generally looked at what we came up with and agreed." (Case B, ID1).

This view is corroborated by many back-bench councillors in the ruling and opposition parties of both authorities. Opposition councillors interviewed in case study B were particularly keen to stress the officer led culture of the whole authority. When asked if he had an input into the UDP process, the Leader of the Opposition immediately said:

> "No, because basically what happens is that it's an officer led authority, and
> we're in the opposition, so the majority party determine whether officers
> generate the first draft document for this sort of exercise, or whether there is
> a political input either just from the majority party or from the opposition as
> well. The way that Labour run our authority is very much an officer led
> authority. So these sort of issues are given to the officers to draw first draft
> up before the committee can have an input." (Case B, ID17)

This point of view was echoed by all the other opposition members in this authority. Of course, opposition councillors have a political interest in criticising the ruling Labour

Group, but their view on this issue is supported by other accounts. Officers stressed the lack of issues brought into the UDP by elected politicians:

> "A lot of issues just aren't raised by councillors, they are raised at some stage by councillors but it tends to be later. The draft UDP was prepared and went to committee and there was some comments on that .... to my knowledge there weren't a vast number of issues raised by councillors. The draft UDP as submitted to members was reasonably acceptable, there weren't any vast changes suggested by councillors as far as I know." (Case B, ID6)

And even senior Labour councillors, when shown a list of possible influences on the UDP and asked to name the most important, said:

> "Its got to be planners themselves, and then local politicians." (Case B, ID11)

Case study A provides an almost perfect reflection of this situation. One Labour councillor described the workings of the UDP process as "They [the planners] put the ideas together and they feed it down to committee and councillors." (Case A, ID22); so that what was produced is "... a professional document written by professionals." (Case A, ID27). A Labour politician, who could provide an inside perspective, having spent some years as vice-chair of the Planning Committee, described the plan making process in simple but enlightening terms:

> "The officers will say this is the plans, these are the criteria we have to meet, now certain decisions have to be made. Most of it is that. I can't think of a new issue plucked out of the blue that has been brought in [by councillors]" (Case A, ID26)

To understand how and why this situation developed in the case study authorities, and its implication for sustainable development in UDPs, it is important to consider some of the beliefs and the attitudes towards planning and sustainable development displayed by the interviewees. Two major reasons for the planner led UDP process are evident from an analysis of the case study data. This first relates to perceptions of the professional expertise of planners, the second to perceptions of planning practice and its relationship to sustainable development.

9.2.1 Perceptions of the Planning Profession - Technical Expertise

A very strong theme to emerge from nearly all of the interviewees was the respect of councillors towards the professional capabilities of planning officers. Of all the officers in a typical local authority, planners were perceived as some of the best qualified and most competent to act independently (Case B, ID13). This belief is summed up by an Environment Committee chair who expresses a fairly typical point of view:

> "I mean planning, whether we like it or not, there's a lot of technical aspects to it, you probably know that more than me. ...... So if you've got a highly paid professional technical officer who says 'This is what you should be doing', unless you want to go to the barricades about something then normally (and he knows the way you're thinking) then you're going to listen to that advice." (Case B, ID10)

The emphasis here is upon the technical side of planning practice, and the importance of ensuring that planning policy is technically correct so that the UDP, and the decisions based on it, are in line with central Government guidance. The relevance of the DOE and central Government influence is discussed further in Section 9.5.

In some, more extreme, examples councillors even went as far as saying that the whole UDP process was a purely technical exercise, almost all of which was within the capability of the planning team alone (Case A, ID21; Case A ID8). For the most part though, councillors saw two distinct elements to the UDP - the technical side, and the political side (Case B, ID10). The fact that input from the political side tended to be confined to individual sites, as discussed in Section 9.3 below, meant that the technical side (and therefore the planners) was in the ascendancy throughout most stages of the plans' preparations.

A number of interviewees saw distinct advantages to this. The fact that the plan was written by technical officers meant that more strategic, and often unpopular, considerations could be made over the top of parochial public attitudes. As one councillor described the plan writing process in her experience:

> "It wasn't a case of saying to people 'what do you want in your area, how do you see these open spaces being developed?' Etc. Now there's a very good reason for that, as you well know, everyone wants green open spaces and nobody wants industrial or housing development. And that's why it's done top down." (Case A, ID27)

The argument is that, without this type of top down analysis carried out by technically proficient planners, unpopular decisions, such as where to allocate new housing or industry, could not be made by politicians who have to respond to the views of their local electorate. This was certainly seen to be true in authority A, where a very contentious land-fill site was proposed in the UDP. Local residents, and the opposition members, objected to the site, and, as details of the scale of the development became known, Labour ward members in the vicinity of the proposal also began to come out against it. The council, however, was able to justify their actions using technical arguments based upon planning requirements and legal requirements to provide waste disposal facilities (Case A, ID1).

This view of planning, common to many councillors interviewed, clearly has very strong parallels with the technical view of planning practice. The technical view of planning, introduced in Chapter Two, conceptualises planning as merely a rational and disinterested decision making process. This explanation first became established in the 1960's, it has since been re-appraised as a means of understanding planning practice (see Chapter Two, Section 2.4; Morphet 1995; Tewdwr-Jones 1996), and clearly remains relevant - helping to explain important perceptions of the current planning system.

However, although a very similar technical point was also made by the Leader of the Opposition in authority B, his cynicism towards the planning process raises doubts about the legitimacy of technocratic planning in these case studies:

> "In a sense the Labour chairs hide behind officers. When there's anything unpalatable like building on a bit of open land, which is the only bit of open land in an area, they get the officers to say it is vital for employment ... so they use the officers as a shield, and in that respect the officers are essentially being told what to do." (Case B, ID17)

This suggestion, that politicians use technical arguments to service their political aims, raises important issues. An exploration of these issues is made Section 9.3 below, when the relationship between local politics and UDP policy is discussed.

9.2.2 Perceptions of Planning Ideology - Planning is Sustainable Development

Very closely linked to the perception of technical expertise in the planning profession is a strong sense of esteem for the planning view on environmental policy and practice. For example, planning officers can be seen to have a leading role in the development of environmental policy in case study A:

> "Planners also tend to have very strong policy views. People do planning degrees because they are interested in environmental issues and so they tend to have strong, and normally progressive views, in the process. So unless the councillors were reactionary, and slow down the process, the planners original briefs would tend to be quite radical." (Case A, ID13)

Therefore, if this is the case, as well as taking the lead role in designing the technical aspects of a UDP, planners were also responsible for fixing its policy remit with regards to the environment. This is because:

> "Planning is a very professional, very ideological department compared with some others, in most local authorities." (Case A, ID13)

Nearly all of the councillors interviewed complemented this perspective with their opinions. For example, when asked how their UDP compared to the definition of sustainable development (see Chapter Four for the definition of sustainable development used in the study), many saw no difference between the issues in the definition and those covered in the plan:

> "Yes, there was more than a passing reference to them [sustainable development issues]. The professionalism of the officers took on board quite a lot of this." (Case B, ID24)

> "Yes, because basically that's what the UDP is all about, sustainability. Because if we've got a plan that we can't sustain then the plan isn't much use

to the town or the area, is it? .... A lot of the problems you've got down there [the definition of sustainable development] are all definitely covered in here [the UDP]." (Case A, ID 22)

Even opposition councillors in case study B were quick to praise the UDP's content, albeit with a political dig at the ruling Labour Group:

"Yes I think it does [try to address sustainable development], I think the UDP tries to address the issues but I don't think that the implementation of the UDP in our town will deliver that, for the reasons above." (Case B, ID17 Leader of Opposition)

Or:

"I think the document is quite good. What frustrates me is that it isn't applied rigorously." (Case B, ID25)

A strong impression to come from these interviewees and their perception of the UDP, as well as from interviews with the planners themselves, was that planning (and with it the UDP), is largely synonymous with sustainable development. Certainly both UDP team leaders made strong indications towards this. Initial discussions on the UDP in case study A did not mention sustainable development explicitly, but the UDP Team Leader saw the concept as an having an implicit influence on all stages of plan preparation (Case A, ID1). The UDP Team Leader in case B, however, was far clearer about planning and sustainable development:

"A lot of sustainability issues is what land use planning has been involved in traditionally...... Sustainable Development is a natural extension of amenity issues." (Case B, ID1)

Perhaps the clearest indication of a professional domination by planners in the area of sustainable development policy emerged in case study B. This authority had recently organised a number of councillor training courses in a wide range of environmental and economic issues. The session for councillors on sustainability was taken by a leading planning officer, rather than by an officer from the council's Environmental Policy Unit

or Economic Development Department. The implication of this being that planning officers were the most qualified to educate members on sustainable development.

Again this theme, that planning is broadly equivalent to sustainable development, has already been identified as an important part of current thinking on planning sustainable development (Chapter Two, Section 2.4). Its significance in these results, particularly on the part of practising planners and planning committee members, was a major finding of the research. The presence of this belief would seem to rely on the fact that issues of environment, society and economy have traditionally been discussed at the local level by planners, and within the remit of the planning committee. Whereas several writers have pointed out inconsistencies between British planning and sustainable development (again see Section 2.4), the majority belief in these two case studies finds in favour of planning and its ability to ensure sustainable development.

Even among those individuals who recognised a shortfall between UDPs and sustainable development, most had great faith in their UDP (and the planning system) to be able to meet the challenge of sustainable development. Many councillors emphasised the central role of the plan in meeting both economic and environmental aspirations for the town, and high expectations for the plan were held by many in both authorities. From back-bench councillors to more critical and aware professional officers, the opinions of the majority of interviewees generally seemed to be that a UDP should address all aspects of sustainable development, otherwise it is not worthy of the name 'development plan' (Case B, ID3). As one councillor put it, if sustainable development issues are "not addressed in a UDP, it's pointless having a UDP" (Case A, ID18). Therefore the general opinion of councillors and officers seems to be that the UDP, even if it has its faults at the moment, has the potential to implement sustainable development for their town and in the local community.

9.3 Local Political Input to the UDP Processes

If planners are the initiators of the UDP and its policy content, then politicians could be seen as being largely secondary in importance. Of course, this is too simplistic a view

point. The local political situation had a direct input into the two UDP processes in three distinct ways.

Firstly, although the UDP teams initiated the very first stages of the UDP without any overt political input, from the planning committees for example, it would be wrong to imagine that there was no consideration of political priorities at all. Both case studies exhibited examples of what may be termed an implicit political agenda. And this implicit agenda was to set the framework within which the planners were able to operate.

Secondly, after the majority of the research and creative work had been carried out on the plans, results and recommendations were reported to committee and draft plans sent out for public consultation. Both these exercises resulted in a very explicit, but largely reactive, input to the UDPs from individual members and the party system as different sites and policy proposals became politically charged.

Thirdly, an important input to both UDPs revolved around a very local, ward level, understanding of the plans. It was at this level that back-bench ward members were most active. Therefore, implicit, explicit and ward level politics, and the relationships to each UDP are discussed in this section.

9.3.1 Implicit Political Influence - The Green Belt and Regeneration

The suggestion of an implicit political influence on the UDP process began to arise as councillors and officers were questioned more generally about how policy was developed in their authorities. Although questions specifically about the UDP had indicated a very planner led exercise, broader questions about political relationships and political styles of government suggested that some policy areas may have had more of a political influence.

Senior Labour members in both case studies spoke of the length of their term in office, and the quality of relationship with chief planning officers that had developed over this time. These relationships ensured that officers, having worked closely with the party leaderships over many years and different issues, knew exactly what the ruling party required in the UDP:

> "I would hope our officers - with the relationship we've got, because I think it is a pretty good relationship in all departments - would know which way we're going forward, if that answers it. Because I think in all departments we've got a good officer-member relationship, I'm speaking with regards to the Labour Group now." (Case B, ID10)

Various opposition members also supported this point of view:

> "They [the ruling Labour Group] don't have a manifesto and give it to the officers and say 'turn that into action.' They attempt to influence the officers before the reports are drawn up." (Case B, ID24)

Although most of the references to this implicit agenda were found to exist in authority B, parallels can also be drawn to authority A. When asked about his opinions on the UDP and sustainable development, the Chair of the Planning Committee at the time of the UDP process simply referred all research questions to his UDP Team Leader as "he knows all my opinions" (Case A, ID19).

An implicit political agenda, and its implications, brings the concept of power into the UDP processes. Although the preceding section indicates the presence of a more technical UDP process, the suggestion that the planning process was constrained and influenced on some issues undermines this. Such influence by politicians indicates an element of non-decision making, where certain preferences are suppressed to ensure they do not reach the decision making agenda (See Chapter Two, Section 2.4; Ham & Hill 1984, Chapter 4). In this case it is suggested that certain options for both UDPs were suppressed or limited by politicians. Power, especially non-decision making or non-observed power, is, by its very nature, not immediately open to research (Ham & Hill 1984, Chapter 4). Therefore the existence of an implicit political agenda could have important consequences for the concept of a planner led UDP discussed in Section 9.1 above.

For example, it is possible to argue that, as the politics of the leading parties in both authorities were implicitly communicated to planners through senior politicians, both

UDPs were more politically led than officer led. Indeed, this argument was used by senior councillors of the ruling Group in authority B:

"...... you do get one or two on the outside that say 'Bloody hell you're chairmen are no good, they're all officer led and just do what the officers say'. And basically what happens is, if your officers are good enough, they know what you want. So if someone comes to me and says this report is obviously an officer's report and not a chairman's, its basically because that chairman has got an officer which he knows will produce something that is politically sympathetic to what he's aiming for. And it is that closeness that has informed the whole business of how policy evolves .. it's an evolution of policy. What is it 17 or 18 years of [time that Labour have had in] control now?"

However, although this may be the case for some policy areas, both UDPs can be shown to have had only limited political constraint before the first drafts of the plans were written. Implicit political input in both case studies was limited to certain issues and particular principles. For both plans, the most important principles communicated by members to planners were to protect the green belt and prioritise job creation through regeneration (Case A, ID1; Case B, ID1). These two points recur in all the interviews held with Labour councillors, as well as many of those held with opposition Liberal-Democrat members, and appear to represent something of a party political consensus in both authorities. In authority B, the current Planning Committee Chair saw green belt as 'sacrosanct', admitting that, on this point, "our thinking is not that different from the Liberal Democrats" (Case B, ID8). His vice-chair, talking about the officer-member relationship also mentioned the green belt and regeneration for jobs:

"In terms of simple things, in terms of wanting to protect the green belt, which is a fairly general one anyway - that's coming through all the time through day to day contact with planning officers through planning decisions. ..... In terms of the industrial development, they'd be very, very conscious of the fact that from a political point of view the Labour Group has, for 10 years at least, believed that jobs are one of the top priorities .... The general political climate of what the Labour Group were wanting would be informing the formation of the UDP. If you read the UDP, it tries to set the whole thing in not just the planning context, but the whole context of the development of the borough." (Case B, ID11)

Again, very similar opinions were also expressed by councillors and officers in authority A. This council had been promoting the redevelopment of its built areas since the Labour Party first came to power in the early 1980's (Case A, ID26); whilst the political importance of the green belt is reflected in the fact that councillors actually decided against their planners advice to vote for the inclusion of five green belt extensions in their draft plan. Although Chapter Eight describes how this initiative was unsuccessful in the end, the very fact that this was the only borough-wide policy initiative to originate from the politicians, illustrates the importance of the green belt to councillors.

In this sense, the power to limit the approach of planners, and so suppress certain policy options in the UDP, can be identified in both case studies. Such political influence, however, has also been seen to be very limited, concentrated in two key areas - the green belt and regeneration. This interpretation, therefore, is still compatible with the idea of a planner led UDP. And all the remaining UDP policy areas, many of which are relevant to sustainable development, as well as the introduction of other potential policy initiatives, remain the prime responsibility of the UDP teams.

9.3.2 Explicit Political Influence - Site Specific Issues

Very clear political influences began to be directed towards the two UDPs after draft plans, containing clear policies and proposals, were made available to members and then the public. Whereas the implicit politics of the UDPs were largely consensual and surrounded green belt and regeneration issues, these explicit issues were much more likely to become party political and result in confrontation.

Chapter Eight has already made the point that explicit politics in the UDP process tended to surround site specific issues. In authority A this was exemplified by the large waste disposal site proposed by the plan; in authority B it was exemplified by an out of centre retail proposal on existing playing fields and housing development on an adjacent farm. All of these issues became very politically charged as the ruling Labour Groups in both authorities defended the policies, and opposition parties began to use them as campaigning issues. When asked to recall any particular UDP issues which caused real political debate or differences in the council, all the members interviewed, and most of

the officers, tended to mention these or similar sites. For example, one back-bench Labour councillor in case study A, whose ward was adjacent to the waste disposal site, explains the phenomena:

> "Well, what it was about, and this is being honest about it, the Liberal Democratic Party they used it [the waste site] as a very political issue. Quite rightly, they're entitled to do that, that's what a political party is entitled to do. And they certainly engendered a lot of hate through the leaflets they put out, through the discussions in the council which are obviously reported in the press. As you know the press in general, if they can pick up any controversial issues they certainly will do. And that has generated quite a problem in the area. And I've been amazed, especially this last three or four months, with the anger against it. I've experienced it more this last three or four weeks as I've just been re-elected and I've been out on the doorsteps and this is where I've picked it up from ....." (Case A, ID22).

This quote also demonstrates how the UDP process becomes linked to other political arenas. In this case the Liberal Democrats used the waste disposal site as ammunition in local elections held whilst the UDP was being prepared.

The importance of site specific political initiatives is also demonstrated by the fact that a number of councillors, when interviewed about the UDP, insisted on talking about particular developments which had actually been proposed after the UDP, and were therefore not directly part of the plans' policies. Both authorities contain a number of recently contentious sites which are obviously at the forefront of many politicians minds in the planning field.

A feature of this site related planning politics is that it tends to be more reactive than pro-active. In the majority of cases, councillors and political parties were found to respond to proposals put forward in the UDP or proposals made by private developers. A Labour back-bencher explained the situation like this:

> "It's not so much the issues, but the decisions about them. I use the waste disposal site as an example, this is an issue, it is an issue that requires the council to deal with it ... Its not really a direct input, its really a *response*. The officers will say this is the plans, these are the criteria we have to meet, now certain decisions have to be made." (Case A, ID26. My italics)

A very similar opinion was also expressed in authority B:

> "I think that what's happened on something like this is that most of the time its the officers that are the driving force. But the Labour Group take things which they think, either they're their pet projects, or they think its an issue which will have some political sensitivity. But they're not terribly fussed in the matter of the detail. I'm not trying to condemn them for that, I'm just trying to say what I think happened. I may be wrong, but that's my view."
> (Case B, ID27)

Once an issue does become political, the ruling group tends to commit itself to the particular policy and seek to ensure its implementation through applying the whip in debates (Case B, ID25). How far these differences in opinion between political parties represent an ideological position is difficult to establish. Over several UDP issues it became impossible to separate political electioneering by the opposition from their true intentions if elected to power. For example, one opposition councillor simply described the Labour Group's reasons for going ahead with the out of centre retail development as "bloody mindedness" (Case B, ID21), whilst other opposition members sought to draw an ideological distinction between themselves and the Labour Group on environment and development issues:

> "Well its a difference in the basic philosophy of the party. Our basic philosophy includes a stronger commitment to the environment, which means we are more sensitive to these issues. Labour always justify their development of these sort of open space on the grounds that it brings employment." (Case B, ID17)

It is certainly the case that, as discussed in Section 9.3.1, jobs and regeneration are very important to the Labour parties in both authorities. Whether this represents a difference in political ideology between the local Labour and Liberal Democratic parties, however, is difficult to assess. The fact that the Liberal Democrats use environmental issues, based around specific sites, as a tool to damage the ruling Labour Group makes this type of assumption unreliable. Drawing an ideological distinction between the two parties would mean separating 'political posturing' from real policy intentions (Case B ID1). This is not within the remit of the research as it is impossible to assess how Liberal Democrat councillors would have influenced the UDP if they had been in power. Therefore the

influence of political ideology on the two UDPs will be restricted to the areas of green belt conservation and regeneration, as discussed in Section 9.3.1.

9.3.3 Ward Level Political Influence - Nimbyism?

One area of political concern surrounding the UDP which exhibited little, if any, indication of ideology were the numerous references to ward level issues made by all of the councillors interviewed. Political representatives, especially those who do not hold chairs, vice-chairs or similar senior positions, had a very perceptible ward level conceptualisation of the UDP and its policies. This was demonstrated in the research interviews by immediate references from councillors to their own wards and specific sites that had become locally contentious. Most councillors seemed to need the specific references of their own ward to be able translate a large and complex document like a UDP into something tangible. Several councillors commented on this, and saw it as their main role in terms of the UDP. One experienced planning committee member explained the situation very clearly:

> "People can home in on the specifics, and we [the councillors] spend a lot of time on this. Whereas the strategy goes through on the nod." (Case A, ID26)

This approach clearly has several implications for the UDP process, and compliments the idea of a planner led exercise. It points to a very reactive political input, where ward members, supported by their local electorate, attempt to influence the progress of a UDP in terms of very specific proposals such as development site allocations or green belt boundaries. Rather than party political divisions, these political confrontations tended to be decided by the geographical situation of each ward. For example, inner wards, situated in the existing urban areas of the two boroughs were less likely to contain very controversial sites. One councillor said he didn't have to raise very many issues on the UDP as his ward was "fairly settled" and no new developments were planned so that little would change (Case B, ID8).

In some of the outer wards, however, situated on the urban-rural fringe and incorporating large areas of open countryside, many councillors were able to talk about

at least one particular site that had caused local concern, and on which they had campaigned. In a similar way to the implicit political agenda, green belt and regeneration proved to be the largest issues, as housing and industrial development threatened valued open space around the towns. Comments concerning housing development by one particular planning committee member in authority A are quite typical. When asked about the UDP and his input into the process, he replied:

> "Basically what we were trying to do is to protect the green area. ...... And we felt that enough was enough, really. A lot of us, myself included, moved here for a bit of green on our doorstep. Its obviously why we like it, that's the reason why we live here!" (Case B, ID21)

The primacy of this ward perspective towards the UDP was also emphasised by the same councillor's argument on housing allocation. Authority A was required to provide for around 4400 houses in its UDP, and:

> "We thought that we had fulfilled our 400 houses. The parish is 10% of the borough, so [10% of] 4400 houses is 400 houses." (Case B, ID21)

In this sense, ward level politics can be understood as negative 'nimbyism' getting in the way of positive discussions. It prevents politicians from conceiving an overview of the whole UDP strategy and therefore restricts their appreciation of issues (like housing) which need to be addressed on a district wide scale. UDP team leaders in both case studies complained about this deficiency in their UDP process (Case A, ID1; Case B, ID1), and further evidence of it was certainly found to exist in the interviews:

> "Now this renewable energy sources [a Policy Direction in the Key Area of Energy], near where I live they've put a mast up to measure wind-speed with a view to putting these windmills up. Now these windmills are just horrendous. Whilst I'm in total agreement with encouraging renewable energy sources, they've got to be compatible with the public's enjoyment of an area." (Case A, ID18)

However, the local knowledge and close relationship of councillors to their wards was also quite a productive element of the UDP processes. It enabled some councillors to

link national or international sustainable development issues to their local situation, and place their local debates into a wider context. For example:

> "... One of the reasons I got involved in council work was because of this - 'reduction of non-renewable resources' [a Policy Direction in Key Area of Solid Waste Management]. I live right next to a quarry that had been planned to re-open, and it took a fight from 1981 to ... well its actually just finishing. And we won." (Case A, ID18)

Other councillors argued that the only way that the public and local party members, as well as councillors themselves, are able to understand development plans is on a ward by ward basis. This is where the most widespread debate on plan policies takes place, as was demonstrated in Chapter Eight's analysis of the UDPs public consultation stages. In fact, even wards can be seen as too large an area of analysis for some issues:

> "Because, basically its such a big document, and trying to present things to [political party] branches you have to break it down into just that ward. But then wards themselves are quite large, if you have a piece of land over 2 or 3 miles away, it could well be nobody at that actual meeting really cares one way or another, but the people who live around there might be extremely worried. It's so local." (Case A, ID 27)

Therefore, although a ward level appreciation of the UDP did restrict the input of members into the plan process, the fact that councillors were able to make this input is an important aspect of the local nature of the plans. The consequences of this for individual areas of sustainable development again support the idea of a planner led UDP process. As the individuals with the only overview of the whole plan, they are clearly in an important position to influence the plan's wider aims and general strategic approach. The impact that this had for each of the two plans is discussed in Section 9.6 below.

9.4 Importance of the Local Planning Histories

An important point to emerge from both case studies is that neither UDP started off from a 'blank sheet of paper' (Case B, ID17). Although the planner led feature has been demonstrated to be the most important aspect of the UDP process, with a limited influence made on it by politicians, underlying both these features of the results is the

importance of the local planning history of each plan area. The local planning history is important to planners in a professional sense; new development plans are required to consider existing plans, and previous planning application decisions set precedents for future plan proposals (DOE 1992a). The local planning history is also important to politicians in the sense that their previous experiences with the planning system, and confrontations between local and central government, shape their attitudes to new and familiar planning issues. This section, therefore, will highlight how elements of the planning histories interact with each UDP process.

Both plans drew heavily upon previous and existing planning documents as well as individual planning applications and decisions. This was seen as good practice by the planners for a number of reasons. As mentioned above, on a site specific level existing planning proposals and decisions had already defined some of the site decisions for the UDP. Although this may be seen as relatively marginal to the wider strategy of the plans, the cumulative effect of many sites can have a significant impact upon their policy content. For example, Chapter Eight has already noted how authority B's existing borough-wide local plan helped establish the green belt boundary as well as a number of housing sites, therefore avoiding some of the potentially more time consuming objections to the plan. Authority A, on the other hand, drew elements of its policies from older plans. Particularly in policy areas like the green belt, district towns and the local river valleys, which each had an existing local plan. In this way older policies were 'woven in' to the new UDP (Case A, ID1).

One councillor described this process in more extreme terms:

> "Oh they [the planners] dig up the last plan and then just tinker round to make a new one, its simple! ... You look at the UDP and there's the South West Fringe Plan, the Green Belt Plan, they're all in there but they obviously just review them and take account of whatever changed circumstances there are and redesignate it. Otherwise it would mean doing some work wouldn't it!" (Source A, ID26)

Results from the study also indicate that both plans were also influenced at the strategic level, as well as the site specific level, by their local planning histories. In a similar way to

an implicit political influence, most councillors suggested that planners knew the general direction that the plan should take from their experience of previous debates and decisions. For example one councillor referred back to a Labour Party policy document on economic development written in 1978, as the party was about to take control of the authority (Case A, ID 26). This document, he claimed, was the origin of UDP policies on out of town shopping and regeneration in the town centre. Another interviewee talked about the 'rolling forward' of the council's existing policies without any clear aims, objectives or mission statements (Case B, ID24).

Having said this however, a clear distinction should be made at this stage between authority A and authority B. Whereas authority A did not have an overt discussion about the strategic direction of their UDP anywhere in the plan's process to adoption, Chapter Eight highlights the strategic overview report taken by the UDP Team to Planning Committee at the very start of the UDP process in case study B. The four strategy options presented in this document were titled the continued growth option, the accelerated growth option, the slower growth option and the constrained growth option. And the Committee voted on which option the UDP should follow. As described in Chapter Eight, the Planning Committee chose the continued growth option, committing the UDP to meeting demands for land at similar levels to those experienced by the previous borough wide plan. Therefore, although different strategic options were discussed for the UDP in case study B, it can be seen that the plan followed a broadly similar land use strategy to the existing plan.

This decision by the members of the Planning Committee in case B raises the importance of the local planning history to politicians. The UDP team leaders from both authorities noted the important influence that the traditional 'Labour values' of the ruling group had made on their plans (Case A, ID1; Case B, ID1). Section 9.3, above, has already described how the values of the ruling groups emphasise regeneration and job creation. This emphasis can be seen to have derived from the economic recession that had been experienced in both authorities, and numerous references to the recent recession were made by nearly all the councillors:

"In Britain environmental issues take second place to employment issues when there are lay offs and unemployment problems and economic problems nationally. And they are given more centre stage when the economy is doing reasonably well. And that was certainly the case here because from 1990 onwards we lost industry after industry." (Case B, ID17)

"We need jobs in this town, I firmly believe that without what the Labour Groups done in the last ten years unemployment would be 4 or 5 % higher ...... its important for the economic development of the town, but its also important for the social development." (Case B, ID12)

Chapter Eight has already noted how a decision against authority B by the Secretary of State over a housing application drove politicians to try and extend green belt coverage in their UDP. This, and the above examples, illustrate how the history of an area can shape the current perceptions of planners and members, and so shapes the policies of their UDP. As such it could be observed that both plans were largely products of what had gone before, and this suggests a distinct element of incrementalism to both UDP processes. As Chapter Two noted, comprehensive decision making is rarely possible, and the experience of past mistakes or reactions to current problems often set a precedent and guide policy making (Lindblom 1979).

To view incrementalism purely in terms of the two plans' historical features, however, suggests that it may have been a disinclination to the inclusion of new issues in the plans, and to new approaches for setting their priorities. In terms of sustainable development, this disinclination is clearly a handicap to planning authorities who wish to incorporate a radical and new concept into their plans. For example, prioritising regeneration was a principle followed by the ruling Labour groups in both authorities. And in both cases this principle was perceived to have been followed to the detriment of certain sustainable development issues, such as protecting open space and conserving natural habitats. Therefore the historical, incremental elements of the two UDP processes worked against the inclusion of sustainable development principles in both plans.

However, as stated in Chapter One, the most important characteristic of the sustainable development concept is that it should bridge the traditional gap between economic development, or regeneration, and environmental protection and priorities. Therefore

these historical influences on the two UDPs need not necessarily militate against an incremental adoption of sustainable development. Indeed, the fact that job creation and regeneration remain separate from the environment in the minds of the councillors interviewed suggests that they have not yet grasped the full meaning of the concept of sustainable development. Lindblom (1979) also points out that an incrementalist approach to policy making does not preclude the adoption of radical ideas - the cumulative total of many small steps in one general direction can result in a radical departure from the original position. Therefore, an incrementalism which is the result of local planning history does not in itself necessarily militate against the adoption of sustainable development in the UDPs. However, when incrementalism is combined with other features, such as the structural factors discussed in Section 9.5 below, the net result can be seen to work against the adoption of sustainable development principles.

9.5 Impact of Structural Factors on the Content of the UDPs

The fourth and final feature to emerge from the case study research is an extension of the three already discussed. This section refers to certain structural factors of the British land-use planning system, the legislative framework within which UDPs are prepared, and how actors involved in both UDP processes perceived the impact of these factors for their plans' policy content.

Many interviewees referred to a number of factors in the planning system, and the limitations that they placed on UDPs for particular areas of sustainable development. These factors can be categorised into three main types: the strict land-use focus of planning; the focus on controlling development in land-use planning; and the legal considerations of land-use planning. As the first two of these factors are very closely linked, they are discussed together. The third factor is the net result of a land-use and development control focus in planning, and is therefore discussed separately in Section 9.5.2.

223

9.5.1 The Land-Use and Development Control Focus of British Planning

As Chapter Two explained, the scope and objectives of the British planning system are set by central Government through legislation, policy guidance and regional guidance notes which are interpreted at the local level. This section is concerned with the way in which central Government attempts to define the remit of UDPs through these mechanisms, and the limitations this can mean for sustainable development in UDPs.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, some of the clearest criticisms of the constrictions placed on UDPs by central government guidance, were voiced by the local planners themselves. The UDP team leader in authority B noted that, although recent Government guidance has given explicit support to the aim of sustainable development in UDPs (see Chapter Two, Section 2.4), the 'artificial distinction' by central Government on what constitutes a land-use issue can exclude many sustainable development issues from the plan (Case B, ID1). For example, authority B included a number of policies in its UDP to try and 'encourage' other environmental agencies to improve local environmental quality. These policies referred to the need to improve water quality in river valleys and air quality in the town centre. As Chapter Eight explained however, the DOE objected to these policies on the grounds that they were not strictly trying to control specific types of development, and were therefore not land-use issues. This was perceived to be a 'particularly poor and unnecessary' objection by the planners in authority B, part of a 'farcical' debate on the specific wording of plan policies (Case B, ID1).

To other groups involved in the plan process this emphasis on strict land-use concerns meant that some of the 'longer chain' possibilities of UDPs, that is issues not directly linked to the physical development of land but clearly of consequence to land-use in general, were being 'chopped out' of plans by DOE objections designed to limit a UDP's policy remit (ID 34). This interviewee illustrated his argument in terms of minerals. Mineral extraction has very clear land-use consequences, it involves the exploitation of non-renewable resources and has a very tangible impact on the quality of rural landscapes and local amenity. Central Government in the shape of the DOE, however, discourage development plans from pursuing policies to ensure that new developments

re-use minerals in their construction, thereby helping to decrease the demand for fresh mineral extraction, on the grounds that this is not a direct land-use issue.

Similar points were also acknowledged by a few of the more experienced and senior councillors in both authorities. These tended to stress the limitations to their UDP from the DOE:

"..... there is regional guidance on what should go into a UDP. So in a sense if you start with a shopping list, and you address that shopping list, you would expect to see much of it in the UDP at the end of the day because the DOE may comment upon the UDP before it's adopted, and they are involved at various stages along the line. So it's not a total surprise to them what comes out. Most of the items are in not just because the individual officers and councillors want them in, but because the DOE has said 'These are the items that should be in the UDP'." (Case B, ID17)

"This plan is like a great big monologue, you can influence it at the margins but not much of it, obviously they are operating to DOE circulars. So a lot of it is constrained by that, and by the fact that things are the way they are." (Case A, ID26)

Some of the most articulate and informed criticisms of the UDP and its land use limitations, however, came from local environmental policy officers in both authorities. The Environmental Policy Officer in authority A identified the primacy of concern for land-use as the main deficiency of UDPs in terms of sustainable development. He maintained that many important sustainable development issues, such as energy, water quality and waste for example, are beyond the considerations of narrowly defined, land-use development. He also noted that this problem is further complicated by the fact that the planning system considers each individual application in isolation, so that cumulative land-use impacts on the environment of several developments over a period of time are not considered by the UDP (Case A, ID3).

The Environmental Policy Officer in authority B criticised the UDP along similar lines. However, she talked in more general terms, about the difference between sustainable development and a traditional land-use view of the environment. She emphasised the need to expand the meaning of sustainable development to highlight some of the more

social aspects inherent in the concept, in addition to more traditional land-use/environment concerns. Therefore, using this analysis, the main fault of UDPs (and the land-use planning system as a whole) is to ignore the social dimension of policies and objectives. This she saw as not just limited to planning, but common to all areas of the authority's work:

> "They [chief officers in the authority] said 'Oh yes, that's very interesting,' but they all talked about the environmental issues, and didn't talk about the Agenda 21 plan. So to my mind its always been split between environmental issues and Agenda 21 - which is all about empowerment, social, political, those types of things. .... The environmental issues are being talked about a lot, I mean credit where credit's due yes they are taking it on board. That's because damage to the environment is starting to hit at the economics, and when it does that people sit up and take notice. So yes there is an awareness of the fact that they cannot destroy the environment." (Case B, ID3)

This limited scope of the UDP, defined by a focus on strict land-use issues, is compounded as a problem in many interviewee's perceptions by the fact that the plan also focuses upon controlling new development, rather than improving existing built areas or implementing its own development schemes. At its most extreme, one officer's pessimistic view was that UDPs are only concerned with around 5% of the total built environment, as this is the average proportion of new development in the built environment as a whole (Case A, ID3). Viewed in this way, the UDP is seen to be able to effect only very limited moves towards sustainable development as new developments replace old buildings to gradually and incrementally change the pattern of cities and other urban areas.

Such points were clearly at the forefront of officers' minds in both authorities. When the draft UDP was passed to the environment unit in authority A, for example, officers criticised a number of policies in the plan for their unrealistic expectations:

> "We'd throw their policies back with the word 'HOW' written on." (Case A, ID3)

In authority B this issue was taken into account in the wording of policies:

> ".... So we were very wary of putting things in the UDP we couldn't fulfil.
> We didn't want to put policies in there which sounded very fine but we
> weren't able to fulfil and equally we'd have quoted to us - 'well you said in
> the UDP you'd do this' and when it came to it we didn't really mean that.
> We didn't want to get into that position and the wording was chosen very
> carefully." (Case B, ID6)

Councillors, on the other hand, tended to emphasise particular topics which were not being addressed, rather than the wider issue of implementation. Many of those interviewed clearly wanted, even expected, more immediate and comprehensive action from their UDP. Most were, however, only able to provide examples where their UDP couldn't meet these expectations. Energy, Transport and Land, Air and Water Quality were each mentioned by several interviewees as important policy areas in which they would like to see some more pro-active moves made by the authority. The main obstacle to the UDP in these areas is its lack of power and resources to implement change.

The area of transport policy appears to be especially relevant in this respect. For example, many of the politicians interviewed mentioned the inability of the whole authority, not just the UDP, to implement positive initiatives in support of public transport. The lack of an ability to support public transport through allocating land was one problem highlighted (Case A, ID 27); whilst the impossibilities of introducing schemes like 'park and ride' and similar public transport projects without financial resources and legal powers was largely resented by politicians who blamed the deregulation of transport provision for their paralysis (Case A, ID9 and ID15; Case B, ID4 & ID6).

These concerns about the land-use and development control focus to UDPs are significant features of the research, and were clearly very important considerations for both the councillors and officers interviewed. Their cumulative effect upon the actors in both UDP processes raises another separate, but closely related, feature of UDPs - that the plan, and all the regulatory decisions based upon it, should be defensible in case of appeals by applicants or public inquiries into planning decisions.

9.5.2 The Legal Focus of Planning

The reasoning of this feature appears to be especially prominent in the minds of planners in particular, but also in those of senior politicians and other council officers. Their concern was that the UDP, and development control decisions based on it, should not be open to the challenge of developers, or called in to question by central Government, as this would undermine the status of the plan and cost the authority money in terms of legal proceedings and damages. As politicians were quick to point out:

> "You must realise that any time you take things [i.e. planning decisions based upon the UDP] to the DOE these days, nine times out of ten local authorities are going to get stuffed aren't they. .... You're not going to get much out of the UDP when you go there" (Case B, ID10)

This need to restrict the UDP in terms of tightly defined land-use and development control considerations impressed upon many actors the importance of ensuring that the plan itself is very tightly defined and strictly worded around these foci. This was particularly emphasised by both planning officers and environmental policy officers who stressed, almost to the point of obsession, the quasi-legal status of the plans' written statement and maps. As one environmental policy officer pointed out, the sheer cost of printing the UDP, with its maps and carefully worded text, was a clear indication of the legal precision required of the document, and that all planning policy is decided with a legal defence in mind (Case A, ID3). This much was admitted by one senior councillor in the other case study authority:

> "At the end of the day the UDP is probably used to help the council against appeals" (Case B, ID 21)

The implications of this for sustainable development in the two UDPs studied were generally understood by interviewees to be negative. To some extent this is because the need to be legally defensible means that planners are too wary of including policies that may lead to expensive and damaging appeals against development control decisions. As discussed in section 9.5.1 above, planning is weak in areas like energy, pollution and waste because they lie outside the land-use and development control focus, and councils feel that such policies will not be upheld by planning inspectors concerned to ensure such

a focus. Many of the quotes in Section 9.5.1 illustrate how this can make the UDP a very conservative document, with authorities unwilling to take their plans outside the remit defined by central Government. Indeed it may move the plan towards the defensive, with the local authority unwilling to take the chance of losing a legal battle over a particularly innovative policy.

In another sense though, the legal focus of UDPs has a much more fundamental impact on the whole character of the two plans. The need for legal clarity and precision means that the text of UDP policies has a strongly quasi-judicial style, requiring detailed points and precise definitions. Although this is not necessarily an impediment to the sustainable development aspect of a plan's policy content, it can mean that the whole plan is somewhat divorced from the understanding and everyday life of the local community, at the cost of public understanding and accessibility.

This point was not lost on some of the actors interviewed. For example, a member of a local environment group in case study A complained that the public inquiry for the UDP was far too legalistic to really involve local people (Case A, ID35), and even the ruling party's deputy leader saw public consultation as more of a "rubber stamping exercise" than a real involvement of the local people (Case A, ID13).

In case study B, the clearest evidence for the same phenomenon came from the environmental policy officer who drew an important distinction between the UDP's legalistic format and the impression she wished to produce with council's LA21 document:

> "We all know that people don't comment upon the UDP, they just react to things done in the environment. Its only very interested groups that take the time and effort to look at the UDP - and it does take a lot of time and effort. That's why I don't want our document to look like the UDP, we want it to be different to the UDP, we want it to be user friendly. And definitely not full of jargon and everything else, it has to be accessible." (Case B, ID 3)

Section 9.2 has already emphasised the perceived technical expertise of planners, and clearly the need for a UDP to conform precisely to the rules and regulations of the

British planning system reinforces such a perception of the planning profession. The ability for the UDP to meet these criteria, reach adoption and function successfully in the legally based planning system relies on the planner's professionalism, and like all of the features so far discussed this helps to ensure that the UDP process remains largely a planner led exercise.

At this point it is also important to note the links between this legalistic perception of the UDP process, and the points raised in Section 9.3.3 concerning the reactive involvement of the public, the majority of which was motivated by nimby concerns. The legalistic, 'jargonised' style of the UDPs and their policies can be seen to reinforce the tendency for only a limited public involvement in the UDP process. Again, this is another example of how each of the individual features to emerge from the case study research are very often linked by common elements and can be seen to be mutually supportive of each other.

9.6 A Comparison of the Two UDP Processes

As a means of drawing together each of the features discussed above, this final section of the chapter draws a comparison between the two case study authorities rather than between the individual features to emerge from both case studies. In doing this it is possible to discover how each feature impacted on the two separate UDP processes, and to distinguish exactly why the two plans were found to display such different approaches to sustainable development in the original survey stage of this research.

It is important to remember that the two case study authorities were originally chosen from the wider population of 36 metropolitan districts because their UDPs demonstrate such different characteristics in terms of sustainable development. The survey stage of the research found plan A to contain relatively weaker policies in terms of sustainable development, whilst plan B was identified as one of the strongest of the 36 UDPs in terms of sustainable development (see Chapters Six and Seven).

Therefore, having established the common features to emerge in both UDP processes, it is now necessary to explain the operation of these upon the two separate plans. Although

each of the four features discussed above are common to both UDPs, their actual dynamics within the two separate UDP processes provide some significant contrasts. And it is these contrasts that help to explain the differences between the two UDPs.

9.6.1 UDP Teams

Having placed such an emphasis on the planner led aspect of the two UDP processes, a major part of the difference between the case studies can be explained in these terms. A planner led UDP process suggests that it is the planners themselves who are one of the most important variables effecting the content and characteristics of individual UDPs. This means that the uptake of sustainable development in UDPs, and its successful operationalising through their policies, relies to a very great extent upon the understanding and commitment of individual planners towards the concept. In relation to the two case study authorities, this is demonstrated by the different approaches of the two UDP team leaders.

At every stage of the UDP process the UDP Team Leader in case B was instrumental in introducing elements of sustainable development into plan policies. For example, although this study has shown explicit and implicit politics to have some influence on the UDP process (Section 9.3), the Team Leader in case B sought to ensure that the new environmental agenda, and sustainable development, was not impaired by other political priorities:

> "We had to push them [the councillors] towards the environment ... It
> became clear quite early on that this wasn't going to be politically driven.
> This was at the time a feature of the Council." (Case B, ID1)

In this way the planning officers in case B can be seen to have been developing their own pro-active policy agenda for the UDP. The fact that this policy agenda focused upon sustainable development can be explained by the evidence discussed in Section 9.2, which highlighted the link between the planners' sense of professionalism and sustainable development in case B. The UDP Team Leader's view was that "sustainable development is a natural extension of amenity issues" (Case B, ID1), and therefore his professional perception of the concept became an important issue for the UDP.

This perception also led the UDP team in case B to address some of the structural barriers to operationalising sustainable development in UDPs. Although both UDP team leaders perceived serious legislative limitations to the implementation of sustainable development in UDPs (Section 9.5), the Team Leader in authority B went on to stress the importance of the UDP's role in getting sustainable development issues onto the wider local authority agenda. He identified specific policies in the UDP as important for "putting the kernel in peoples minds" (Case B, ID1) - that is, attempting to encourage an awareness of important sustainable development issues to be addressed at the local level.

For example, although waste has already been identified by many interviewees as an area in which UDPs are somewhat limited by the structure of the British land-use planning system (see Section 9.5.1), planners in authority B made a conscious effort to try and address it as fully as possible in the plan. Their UDP policies on the re-use of waste materials were "as far as we thought we could go" (Case B, ID1) within the boundaries of the current planning system. This impetus from the UDP Team was reflected in the survey results of plan B, where policies in the Key Area of Solid Waste Management are notably stronger than those of plan A (see Section 7.5.2).

In contrast to this, sustainable development issues were never actually discussed in the preparatory stages of Case A (Case A, ID1). Although they were facing a similar structural regime, the planners in this authority appear far more conservative than those of B towards including sustainable development policies in UDPs. This may be partly explained by the fact that the initial research for UDP A began as early as 1987, before the re-appraisal of PPGs and similar guidance by central Government (see Chapter Eight, section 8.5). The UDP Team Leader in authority A emphasised this point. He claimed that he would "seriously want to rewrite" the UDP in the light of new guidance on transport, for example (Case A, ID1). Similarly, the authority's Environmental Policy Officer also noted the importance of timing on the UDP team and their work. He suggested that we could "only judge the UDP on where it came from," and the UDP was a product of the ideas around at its very early inception, before the publication of Government guidance on sustainable development (Case A, ID 3). Therefore, although

UDP A and B were both approaching the final stages of their plan making process at around the same time, the longer history of UDP A meant that its UDP team were less likely to include sustainable development issues than the team in authority B.

9.6.2 Strategies

Another significant difference between the two UDP processes occurred at their very inception. Chapter Eight has already noted the preparation of a 'strategic overview report' and 'topic choices papers' in authority B. These were considered by the authority's Planning Committee as well as other council departments and were made available for public consultation. This initial stage did not occur in authority A.

The strategic emphasis in authority B can be seen as a conscious effort to establish a new and contemporary UDP, rather than repeat the principles of older land-use plans. And it was at this strategic stage that environmental issues were first integrated into the plan when the Planning Committee voted for it to contain a 'bias towards' slower growth and environmental protection (Case B, ID 1; Chapter Eight, Section 8.6). In this way, therefore, 'the environment' and sustainable development issues became an important element of authority B's UDP agenda from the very start of the plan process.

Although it is difficult to ascertain the direct effects of this strategic effort, its significance can be seen when case B is compared to case A. The early work on plan A did not involve any strategy discussions with councillors, so that the first drafts of the plan were produced without a separate or distinct consideration of strategy or overall aims. This meant that the detailed reports of survey for the UDP were researched and produced separately under general topic headings, such as population, transport, and open land, without an overall strategy to link the topics and the issues they raised.

The UDP Team Leader in authority A also explained how the themes and policies from previous plans were "woven into" the new UDP as each chapter was written by planners (Case A, ID1). He emphasised the importance of consistency and continuity in land-use policies, making reference to the legal requirements for this, as well as the assistance such an approach provides for development in the area. Such a continuity between old

plans and the UDP was demonstrated in several instances where the actual wording of some policies could be traced back to older plans (Case A, ID1).

The clear strategic approach defined in case B did not exist in case A, therefore, and without it the possibility of introducing new concepts to the plan, such as sustainable development, were much reduced. Although authority A did change the wording of one policy to include a reference to sustainable development (Chapter Eight, Section 8.5), this was done towards the latter stages of the plan process, and in response to public consultation. No other changes were made to the plan's control or promotional policies to harmonise its content with the concept. Therefore it must be concluded that this single sustainable development policy did not make any significant difference to the UDP's ability to operationalise sustainable development in real terms.

9.6.3 Existing Plans

A third and final contrast that may be drawn between the two UDPs revolves around their historical influences, and particularly the use of existing land-use planning documents (see Section 9.4). In the case of authority B, the local planning history of the area was directly addressed by the UDP planners in favour of sustainable development:

> "We [i.e. the planning team] took a very clear conscious decision from the start that we weren't just going to repeat the borough-wide plan. There were new agendas coming through. ... We started to say that we need to 'think global, act local' and we wanted to broaden the scope of the borough plan and its traditional approach." (Case B, ID1)

This philosophy, and the desire to move away from a 'traditional' planning approach, was reflected in the emphasis by the planners to define a clear strategy for the UDP, as discussed above. Their existing borough-wide local plan also enabled the planners in authority B to avoid many of the more usual barriers to producing a land-use development plan. For example, Chapter Eight has explained how the established green belt limits in the area allowed the UDP to pass smoothly through its public inquiry, with nearly all the challenges to green belt and housing policies in the plan falling quickly.

In contrast, authority A did not have an existing borough-wide land-use plan in place as it came to develop its UDP. The planners were therefore forced to draw upon older plans, some dating back to the 1960's. As well as considering such dated material, this also meant that the planners had to conceptualise a borough-wide land-use plan for the first time. It is appropriate to remember that UDPs were a new development plan, and authority A was one of the first authorities in its region to attempt to write a UDP. As noted in Chapter Eight, therefore, the local planners looked to older plans, for very sensible and practical reasons, as a source of guidance in this task. The consequences of this for sustainable development appear to have been negative, imposing older land-use policies into the UDP and militating against the inclusion of newer ideas focused around sustainable development. These older ideas were focused around regeneration and job creation, with environmental protection as a separate, and relatively less important, policy area for the UDP to address. As noted above, sustainable development did not form any part of the early discussions for plan A.

9.7 Final Remarks

This chapter has moved the research project away from a simple description of the UDP process in two metropolitan local authorities, towards an understanding of the particular elements in these processes which account for the sustainable development content of the two plans. The analysis has provided an explanation of how different features in both processes shaped the final plans, and in doing so identified the four most important features to impact upon the policy content of those plans.

Of the four interconnected and mutually supportive features, the most important single variable to emerge has been the actions and opinions of the planning officers themselves. As well as leading the whole UDP process from start to finish, planners have also been shown to shape the extent and coverage of UDP policy in terms of sustainable development. And in this way the distinction between UDP B and UDP A was seen to be largely a result of planner, rather than political, historical or structural influences. When considered in relation to the strategic phases of the two plan's processes, and the use of

existing land-use plans to develop new UDP policies, it is possible to explain why the two UDPs contain such different sustainable development policies.

However, despite the differences between UDP A and UDP B, it is also important to remember the structural factors which limit the extent to which all UDPs can integrate the full spectrum of sustainable development issues. These factors have been shown to influence both case study UDPs and their respective planning teams to the detriment of sustainable development.

The insight provided in this chapter makes the link between the survey and case study stages of this research project in that it explains why different UDPs demonstrate certain characteristics in terms of sustainable development. The results and analysis provided in this chapter also have some serious implications for the original assumptions made in Chapter Three of the dissertation. Therefore Chapter Ten, the final chapter of the dissertation, reviews the research findings with reference to the wider project, and revises the initial understanding of sustainable development and UDPs in the light of this research.

CHAPTER 10: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

10.0 Chapter Outline

This final chapter of the dissertation begins by summarising all the key findings of the study and assessing their contribution to current knowledge. The following section then reflects upon the meaning of these findings for sustainable development and UDPs, highlighting the context in which policies to operationalise sustainable development are made, the entrepreneurial role of planners and the implications of this for sustainable development and the land-use planning system. Various recommendations are then made to improve the current situation and realise the potential of UDPs to fully operationalise sustainable development. The final sections of the chapter evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the research process, and highlight the needs for further research in this area.

10.1 Summary of the Research Findings and Their Contribution to Knowledge

The empirical material presented in the results chapters of this study have illustrated some of the complexity surrounding the relationship between UDPs and the concept of sustainable development. There is no doubt that this is a very rich and productive area for research, and valuable insights into the application of sustainable development can be made by focusing on the use of the concept for a particular implementation mechanism such as unitary development plans. With the benefit of these research results, it is now possible to reach a much more informed understanding of the potential for UDPs to operationalise sustainable development than that initially offered in Chapters One to Three of the dissertation.

The main conclusions to arise from Stage I of the research are based around several observations of the relationship between UDP policies and sustainable development. All UDPs have been shown to promote sustainable development in some of the more 'traditional' areas of land-use planning, where strategic planning principles correspond with sustainable development and are put into effect by a combination of development

237

control and promotional policies. These areas tend to be focused around physical environmental issues, and policy objectives in the areas of the built and natural environment which are common to both sustainable development and all UDPs.

In other, 'less traditional', areas however, UDPs are not supporting sustainable development to the same degree. The research results indicate a lack of UDP policy, or only very weak UDP policies, addressing issues in the areas of energy and land, air and water quality. Chapter Six suggested that many of these differences between sustainable development and UDPs could be explained by distinguishing between the 'traditional' and 'newer' (or emergent) aspects of land-use planning. Sustainable energy, for example, is clearly a newer concern for the British land-use planning system, PPG23 on renewable energy was not published until 1994 (DOE 1994b), and it is therefore not surprising to see that most UDPs are not addressing issues of energy efficiency, renewable energy or combined heat and power to any great extent in their current policies.

However, the relationship between UDPs and sustainable development is more complex than this description suggests. Two other important features also influence the way in which UDPs are currently operationalising sustainable development.

Firstly, UDPs are unable to achieve many of their stated objectives, even in the areas they have in common with sustainable development, because of a limited capacity to promote *positive* change or development. For example, the lack of local government power in the area of public transport means that the ability of UDPs to promote a shift from private transport to public transport is very limited. As a result many UDPs contain only very general policy commitments to public transport, and fail to contain a programme of promotional policy initiatives for implementing this commitment. In effect this means that UDPs have very little impact on this part of the sustainable development agenda, even though Chapter Five initially identified Transport as a strongly addressed Key Area.

UDPs were found to be far more successful on specific sustainable development issues that require a more *negative*, controlling, influence. Therefore, for example, UDPs are strongly in-line-line with the sustainable development agenda on issues of protecting

valuable natural habitats from further development or conserving important features of the built and natural environment. These types of issues require a restraint on development, as opposed to a promotion of development, and are much more within the scope of UDPs.

Secondly, a small number of UDPs do go on to develop policies in other, more innovative, areas of sustainable development. In policy areas such as transport, waste management and natural resource use different UDPs pursue sustainable development objectives to very different degrees, and the research results were able to point to a number of particularly innovative plans in certain areas of sustainable development. These differences between individual plans enabled the whole population of 36 UDPs to be placed on a single continuum, or spectrum, relating to their coverage of the full breadth of the sustainable development agenda (see Figure 7.2).

To the left of the spectrum, six plans were identified as addressing sustainable development to a 'very strong' degree. These UDPs address sustainable development through the traditional planning concerns of the built and natural physical environment, and also go on to support sustainable development issues in the areas of natural resource use, transport and solid waste management. To the right of the spectrum, four plans were identified as addressing sustainable development to a 'very weak' degree. These plans only promote sustainable development in the policy areas of the built and natural physical environment. They have few, or only very weak, policies addressing issues of natural resource use, sustainable transport and solid waste management. In between the very strong and very weak positions of the spectrum, the majority of UDPs occupy a more central position, addressing sustainable development issues to a moderate degree.

Stage I of the research has therefore been able to meet the projects first aim and establish just how far UDPs are currently addressing the sustainable development agenda.

From this point, Stage II of the research went on to identify four major features of the UDP process which influence the policy content of UDPs and their relationship with sustainable development. These features are the UDP planners who write the plan, the

239

implicit and explicit local political agenda, planning precedents set by an area's local planning history and specific structural factors which are an inherent part of the planning system, namely the land-use, development control and legal focus of the whole UDP process.

Although these features are listed separately, they each have a number of complex relationships between one another. These relationships generally support the idea of a planner led UDP process. Therefore the planning professionals themselves were identified as the most decisive factor to distinguish between individual UDPs in terms of sustainable development. In this way Chapters Eight and Nine of the dissertation met the second research aim of the study by identifying the primary factors to influence sustainable development in the two case study UDPs.

The third research aim, to explain the position of sustainable development in UDPs, has partly been met in the analysis sections of Chapter Nine. These illustrate that the current position of sustainable development in UDPs can largely be explained by the planner led nature of the UDP process. Put simply, this explanation states that planners are the most influential feature throughout the course of the UDP making process, and therefore their attitudes to sustainable development determine to a large extent how far the concept is currently being integrated into individual UDPs. Planners initially carried out the research which formed the background for writing the plans. Much of this was not discussed by councillors before it was drafted into the UDP format by the planning team. These first draft plans then set the terms of reference for the ensuing UDP consultation stages. All of the comments and objections to the plan made at the public consultation stages of the processes were generally discussed and addressed by the planning team, before being incorporated into the plans' policies or rejected.

The cumulative effect of all these points is that the planning team were the only individuals to have a fully comprehensive and strategic view of the UDP and its general scope of activity. Therefore they set the remit of the UDP with regards to sustainable development, and generally determined how far its policy content should go in operationalising the concept.

The central role of the planning professional for sustainable development is also supported by the nature of the planning process and the perceptions of other actors in the process, particularly councillors, towards planning and sustainable development. The majority of local politicians see the UDP as a technical process, to be managed by planners on the basis of their professional status. This professional status is also largely equated with environmental and sustainable development aims, so that land-use planning is seen as the logical or rational mechanism for putting sustainable development into practice. Therefore this job, putting sustainable development into practice through the UDP, is left to the professional planners. Political input into the UDP process appears to be limited to two key strategic issues, regeneration and the conservation of green belt areas. Apart from these two issues most political concerns were very local site specific reactions to the proposals put forward by the planners in the UDPs. Again, this illustrates how the planning professionals are the only actors in the UDP process to appreciate the overall strategic direction of plan policies, and Section 9.6 of the dissertation illustrated how this strategic vision was vital for incorporating sustainable development policies into a UDP.

10.2 The Planner Led UDP Process and Sustainable Development

These findings still leave some room for further explanation and reflection. For example, the planners in case B took a very positive and pro-active attitude to sustainable development. Whereas, the planners in case A took a much more conservative attitude to including sustainable development in their UDP. The policy content of their two UDPs reflected this difference in approach. To understand these case study results therefore, to explain the position of sustainable development in UDPs and assess how planners are currently interpreting sustainable development, this section will expand on the research findings to provide a more considered understanding of the sustainable development concept and its position in UDPs.

10.2.1 The Policy Gap Surrounding Sustainable Development

Having accepted the important influence of individual planners to sustainable development in UDPs, it is important to define the context in which the UDP planners are operating. The UDP process, like that of any other local strategy working towards sustainable development, takes place within specific institutional, organisational and political contexts (Selman 1996). Indeed, this has been a major theme of the whole research project which rejected a normative explanation of sustainable development in UDPs, and looked instead at the deeper, structural and qualitative influences which frame the UDP making process. Therefore, the very positive analysis of sustainable development and UDPs taken in the first two chapters of this dissertation has been moderated by the empirical results of the survey stage and qualitative results of the case study stage.

In many ways the sustainable development policy making context facing planners has been shown to be tightly defined, set by the legislation and guidance which makes up the British land-use planning system. Therefore Chapters One and Two of the study were able to identify a clear requirement for UDPs to contribute towards sustainable development, as stated in planning guidance. The case study stage of the research then went on to illustrate how the planning system delineates some of the form and content of UDPs through limiting their policy content to a specific, and narrowly defined, land-use and development control focus, a focus which is strengthened by the need for every plan to be legally defensible if challenged during the plan making process by either the DOE or a private objector.

In a similar way, most politicians who took part in the two case study UDP processes also placed limits upon the scope of the plans by setting explicit and implicit political barriers for UDP policy in the areas of economic regeneration, the green belt and on a multitude of site specific issues. The local planning history of the area was also seen to set a number of precedents in the shape of existing land-use policies and planning permissions which narrow the scope of options available to the planners.

However, in many other ways the policy making context has also been revealed to be very imprecise, with very little detailed Government or political guidance. As noted in Chapter Two, central Government guidance still requires interpretation by the local planners in order to make it relevant to a specific situation and UDP format. This is a particularly challenging task for local planners considering the concept of sustainable development, which is by its very nature imprecise and difficult to define. Chapter One has already emphasised the difficulties of defining sustainable development in specific terms, and the challenge of applying such an inexact principle to a specific situation or local context are problems which were an original motivation for the whole research project.

The local political agenda in both case studies was also found to be quite loosely defined. As noted above, most politicians limited themselves to the issues of regeneration and green belt preservation, along with the very local, site related, concerns which became politically sensitive. Although the politicians may have expressed a very general level of political support for sustainable development, this still required translating into meaningful and precisely worded policies for the UDP. Indeed, detailed political and public interest in the plans only became really apparent towards the end of both UDP processes, after the broad strategic framework had been decided and when only detailed site specific policies remained to be finalised. In both case studies, the general public and politicians tended to become involved in specific policies at the end of the planning process, and failed to get involved in the creation of the strategic framework which led to the production of such policies.

Therefore, once the emphasis for sustainable development in UDPs has been placed fairly and squarely within the remit of individual planners, operating within a limited but nevertheless extensively defined policy making context, it is possible to explain the position of sustainable development in UDPs much more clearly. Inadequately articulated political values, and loosely defined Government guidance, have combined around the difficult to define concept of sustainable development to leave a large gap in the UDP policy making agenda. And this research has shown that the policy gap is being filled by the planners themselves. The planners are forced to interpret sustainable development in

their own way, using their own knowledge and understanding of the concept. Even the influence of the local planning history, found to be an important feature in both case study plans, is, by its very definition, limited to what went before, and therefore offers very little guidance on the implementation of a 'new' concept such as sustainable development.
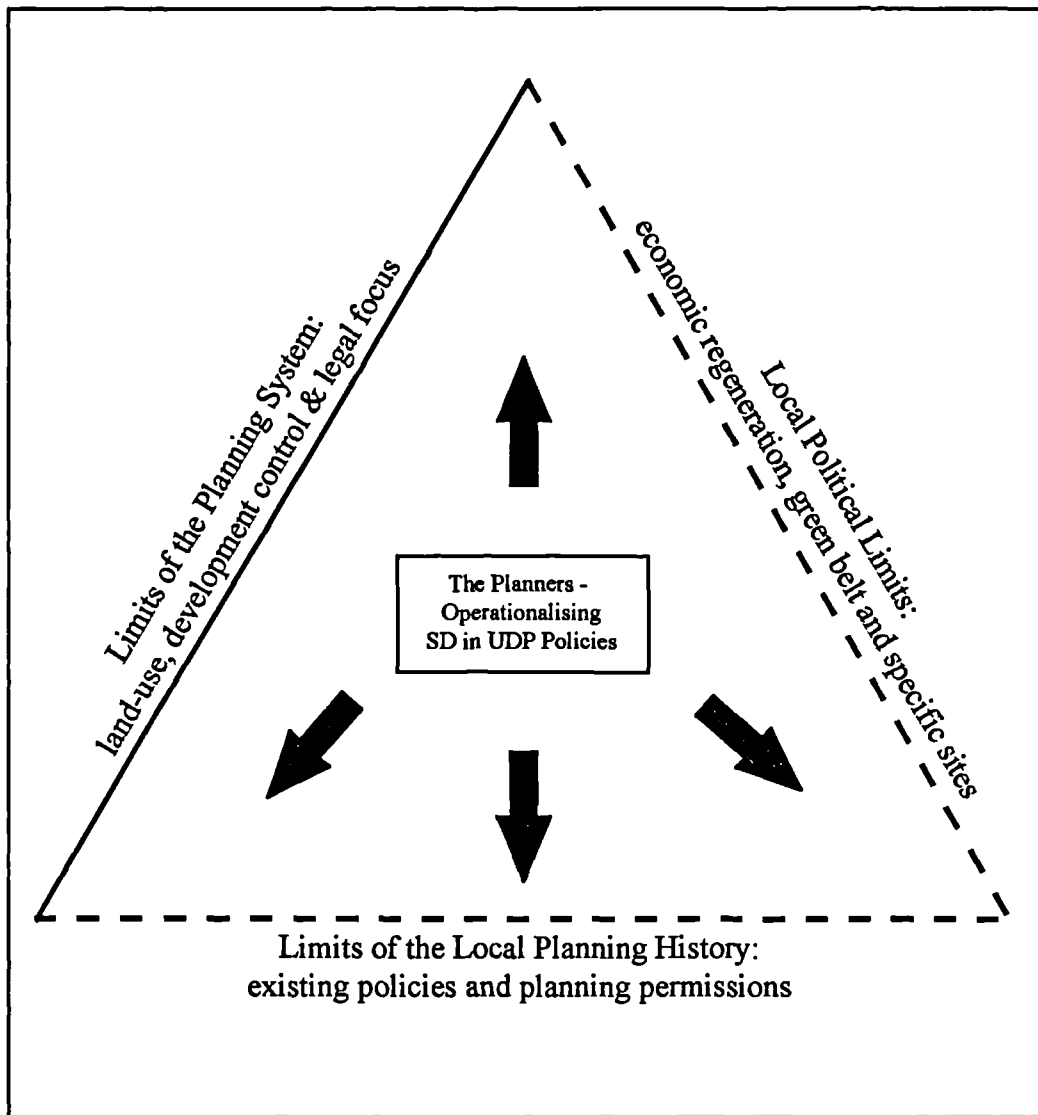
Figure 10.1: The Policy gap in which UDP policies for sustainable development are made

In this way the freedom to initiate policy for sustainable development in UDPs can be seen to be both limited and extensive at the same time. Figure 10.1 illustrates the situation in a simple diagrammatic form, where the policy making context can be seen to define some absolute limits to the imposition of sustainable development in UDPs, but

leave a gap around the concept of sustainable development. And it is within this gap that the local UDP planners are attempting to put sustainable development into practice in their plan. Where local politics and the local planning history cover only a very narrow range of sustainable development issues, Figure 10.1 indicates this by a dashed line signifying an incomplete or fuzzy relationship with sustainable development.

10.2.2 The Entrepreneurial Role of Planners

Of course, this apparent anomaly for policy makers, between a freedom to innovate and set limits to innovation, is not new and has been a well established feature of land-use planning for some time (see for example Blowers 1980). The implications of the situation for sustainable development, though, are much less clear because sustainable development, and its position in development plans, is a relatively recent phenomenon. Therefore it is necessary to consider the role of the planner in making policies for sustainable development a little further.

As noted above, the research results clearly identified a general desire to operationalise local sustainable development in UDPs within both case study local authorities. Both councillors and local government officers involved in the two UDP processes demonstrated a general level of commitment to the idea of sustainable development, and recognised the important role of the UDP in putting that idea into practice for their local environment. However, this general level of commitment to sustainable development was only translated into meaningful UDP policy through the pro-active work of the planners who actually wrote the plans. This implies that the planners themselves should be seen in a more entrepreneurial role, actively developing and extending the remit of the UDP, and their traditional approach to development plan policies, in favour of sustainable development.

This conclusion does not mean that sustainable development in UDPs is simply the product of the UDP team, or that other local and national factors do not influence the policy content of the plans at all. The case studies have also demonstrated how features such as the local planning history, the local political situation and the structure of the planning system itself can influence the sustainable development policy content of UDPs.

It does mean, however, that the relative importance and influence of the planners, as a group of individuals, is paramount when understanding the relationship of UDPs to sustainable development. Put another way, it is the enterprising work of the planners which turns a general commitment to sustainable development into meaningful UDP policies for sustainable development.
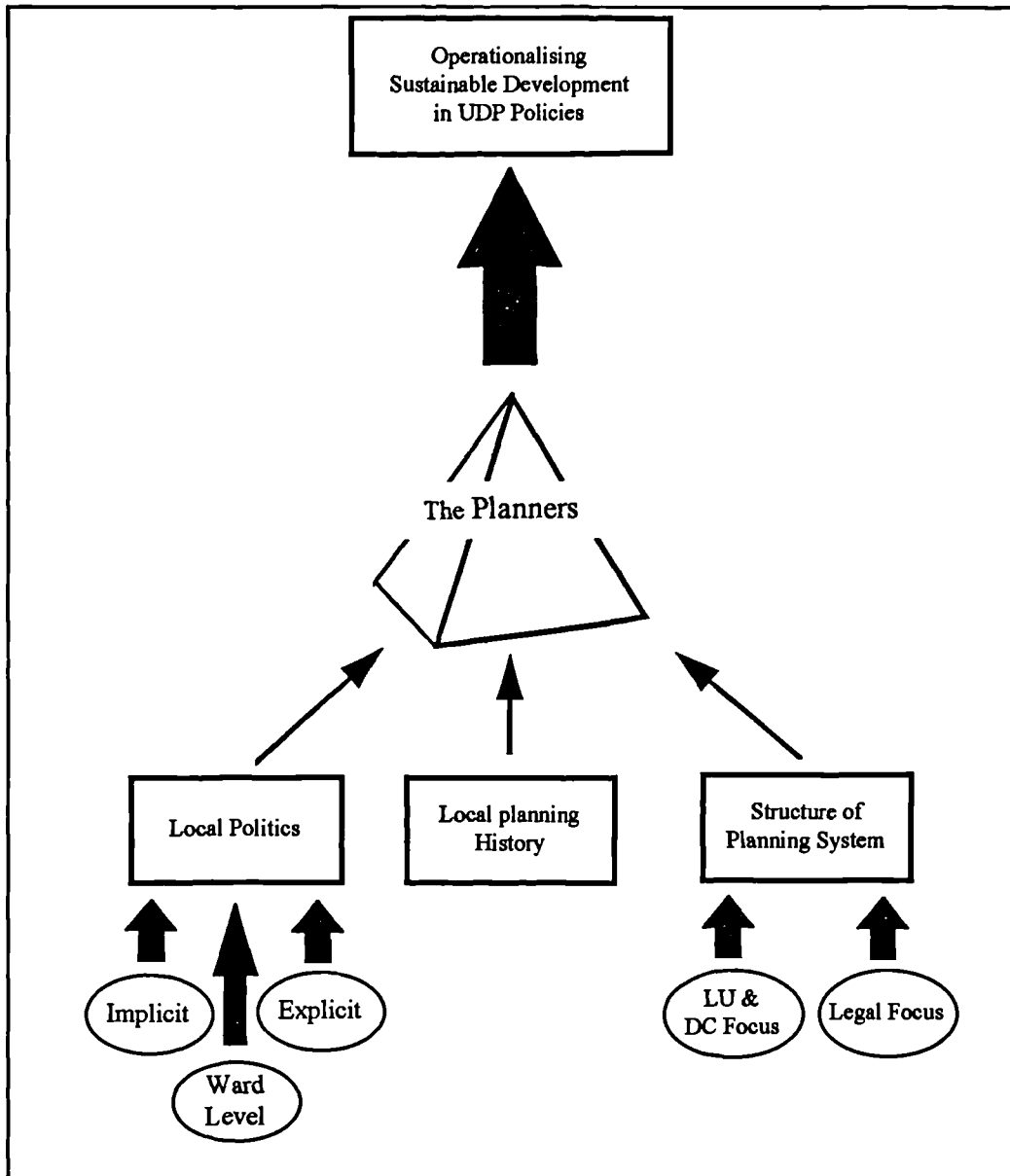
Figure 10.2: Influences on the formulation of UDP policies for sustainable development reconsidered

Figure 10.2 models this idea and illustrates the most important features to influence sustainable development in UDPs. The UDP Team, or 'The Planners', take the most

central position in the model, whilst the local political input, local planning history and structural features of the planning system are depicted as being of secondary importance, indirectly influencing sustainable development in UDPs.

Several of the influences modelled in Figure 10.2 were first introduced in Chapter Three of the dissertation, when Figure 3.1 identified a number of possible factors to influence how well sustainable development is addressed in UDP policies. There are clearly some significant differences between Figure 3.1 and Figure 10.2 however, and these differences reflect the changing appreciation of the relationship between sustainable development and UDPs to arise from this research. The most important change to our understanding of sustainable development in UDPs has been the revised appreciation of the importance of the planner.

The corollary of this increase in status for the role of individual planners is a decrease in the relative importance of the structural features identified in Chapter Three. Figure 3.1 placed a great deal of emphasis upon the process of the plans' formulation and the possibility that the nature and structure of this process would have a great deal of influence upon the sustainable development content in UDPs. Although some important structural characteristics were shown to have influenced the status of sustainable development in both case studies, namely the strict land-use, development control and legal focus of British planning, Figure 10.2 illustrates how this influence was filtered through the UDP Team. Therefore the precise extent and impact of structural factors on sustainable development in UDPs was seen to be controlled to some extent by the perceptions and actions of the individual planners at the local level. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the local interpretation of central Government legislation and guidance is an important principle of the British land-use planning system. And in terms of sustainable development, this principle was also of central importance in dictating the different levels to which the structural limits of the planning system imposed themselves upon the final policy content of the UDPs.

Therefore Figure 10.2 depicts the planners as a 'prism' filtering and focusing a range of other influencing factors towards the operationalising of sustainable development in

UDPs. Although these other influences have been demonstrated by the case studies to be very important factors in limiting or promoting the impact of sustainable development on UDPs, their precise effect can be seen to be focused through the UDP team and onto the UDP, rather than directly on to the plans themselves.

The prism analogy has several similarities to that of the policy 'filter' and similar selection mechanisms in the policy making process (Ham and Hill 1984). These operate by narrowing down the scope of events to influence policies, screening out unsuitable demands and limiting the effect of some influences whilst increasing the effect of others. For sustainable development, this means that the 'top down' pressure for sustainable development in UDPs, in the shape of Government guidance, European legislation and Agenda 21, and 'bottom up' support for sustainable development from councillors and the local community, are only as important as the planners themselves allow them to be. It is their reactions and decisions on these differing pressures or influences that decide how far sustainable development is put in to practice.

For example, Chapter Eight of the dissertation has already found the two case study UDP teams to react in quite different ways towards the influences for sustainable development in UDPs. Team B drew direct parallels between the land-use planning tradition and sustainable development, citing *This Common Inheritance* as an example of 'new agendas' which their development plan should include. This feature was shown to be largely responsible for the more comprehensive coverage of sustainable development issues in UDP B. In contrast, Team A placed more emphasis on the need for consistency and continuity in their plan, based upon their perception of legal constrictions and the power of central Government. This was largely responsible for the narrower range of sustainable development issues addressed in plan A, and the lack of innovative policies it contained.

10.2.3 Professionalism and Legitimation

Missing from the above discussion, and therefore absent in Figure 10.2, are several key features which could have influenced sustainable development in both plans. For example, Chapter Two and Figure 3.1. emphasised the high profile of the Local

Government Association in promoting sustainable development through the UK Local Agenda 21 Campaign and disseminating ideas of best practice. The campaign provides support and guidance for LA21 and sustainable development initiatives aimed specifically at local authorities. Although this guidance and best practice has addressed many land-use planning issues and emphasises the important role of the development plan in implementing sustainable development (see for example LGMB 1992, 1993a and 1994b), none of the actors interviewed in the case study authorities cited this as an influence on their attitudes to sustainable development in UDPs.

Similarly, many of the European initiatives for sustainable development, such as the Sustainable Towns and Cities Campaigns and the Fifth Environmental Action Programme (see Chapter Two, Section 2.4) have important implications for the British land-use planning system. Again, these initiatives do not appear to have had a specific bearing on the local level of plan-making, as demonstrated by the two case studies. Any effect from the European Union upon the sustainable development content of the UDPs, therefore, must have been made indirectly through the limited changes it has inflicted upon central Government guidance to local authorities (see Marshall 1996).

It can be concluded, therefore, that the entrepreneurial element of the two UDP teams was largely limited to the technical and professionally based perception of their role, which has been such a prominent feature in both case studies. Both UDP teams looked to British Government guidance to compose the sustainable development content of their plans, and interpreted this on the basis of their technical and professional backgrounds. As the planning system has left UDP planners to interpret and apply this new concept of sustainable development for their plan, this conclusion is unsurprising, and explains why the majority of plans produced in local authorities tend to concentrate upon more traditional planning issues and policies.

Such a finding also confirms the fears of Healey and Shaw (1993a & b), that the current land-use planning agenda in Britain falls short of the sustainable development agenda. However, the results of this study have been able to extend the debate by identifying the reason for the shortfall as the failure of the planners to appreciate the full breadth of

sustainable development and the issues it involves; as well as the failure of the planning system to provide the guidance and support for planners to be able to do this in their UDPs. Although planners and local politicians both require and expect their UDPs to operationalise sustainable development, UDPs are not achieving this aim in several important policy areas.

While the UDP process relies so heavily upon the professional and technical skills of individuals in the planning profession it is difficult to see this situation changing. Both sets of case study actors repeatedly emphasised the professionalism of planners in producing UDP policies, and this perception is clearly valid - planners have a very strong sense of how land-use planning should be carried out. This is not a new fact, and it has been repeatedly recognised, analysed and defined by both planning practitioners and academics alike (see for example Blowers 1986; Healey 1985; and Rydin 1993, Chapter 9). For sustainable development however, it means that the concept is being reduced to a purely technical consideration, subsumed into the role of the planning professional and his or her ability to exercise planning skills in environmental management (see also Mathews 1996).

In fact, the existing dominance of the planning profession may be so well established that, instead of land-use planning changing to adopt the new mantra of sustainable development, the concept of sustainable development itself may be subtly altered to fit the existing planning agenda. Chapter Eight illustrated a small, but instructive, example of this process when an additional strategic policy was included to the UDP in case study A *after* its first public consultation stage. Although no other significant policy changes were made to the plan, this new policy committed the whole plan to be working towards the aims of sustainable development. The message from this example suggests that sustainable development is seen by some planners as being capable of inclusion in UDPs with little or no fundamental changes to the existing contents of the plans. At the very least it suggests that sustainable development is seen as an add-on concern to the UDP, as opposed to a more fundamental strategic principle underlying all other policies.

This was not the case in UDP B where the planning team were motivated by the concept of sustainable development to extend the remit of their plan and include more innovative policies on energy, transport and waste from the outset. As well as contrasting the differences between these two approaches, it may also be useful to see the actions of both UDP teams as part of one continuum. Both UDP teams reacted to the sustainable development by trying to absorb the concept into their UDP and therefore into their professional remit. Therefore both UDPs and their policies are a reaction to sustainable development. Whereas the planners in case A tried to absorb sustainable development by producing fairly negative and conservative policies, the planners in case B absorbed the concept in a much more positive and innovative sense, producing quite different policies.

This is not an unfamiliar process and Chapter Two has already raised the question of whether sustainable development is being used by the planning profession to legitimise their role in local government after the threat presented to it during the 1980's by the New Right (Hague 1991). Clearly the results from this study suggest that the answer to this question is a resounding yes! The desire to embody sustainable development within the UDP was a common thread linking both case study experiences. It is also interesting to note that this desire by the planners was never questioned in either local authority, indeed it was supported by many councillors who took it for granted that the UDP would be adopting and operationalising sustainable development principles. Therefore we can see that the concept of sustainable development, and the 'territory' that goes with it, is being claimed at the local authority level by the planning profession (Mathews 1996).

Mathews underlines the inevitability of the process, in the current local government climate of spending cuts and job losses, by her matter-of-fact observation that "careers as well as communities are in the balance, depending on the outcome of claims to possession of 'the key to sustainability'" (Mathews 1996, p38). However, the consequences of a claim to ownership of sustainable development by one particular profession remain very unclear at the local authority level. This theme is taken up again in Section 10.5 when the need for further research is discussed. As local authorities 'race towards' sustainable development and LA21 (Tuxworth 1996), the role and ability of development plans to operationalise the concept must be kept in perspective. Whilst

planners' skills in many areas of sustainable development should not be doubted, their current success in adopting the full breadth of the sustainable development policy agenda can be seen to be limited.

10.3 Recommendations: Improving the Position of Sustainable Development in UDPs

This study demonstrates that the position of sustainable development in UDPs has significant scope for improvement. There are several areas in which UDPs could extend their remit to promote the principles of sustainable development. Similarly there are also a few issues on which UDPs could promote sustainable development issues more emphatically than they do as present. This section will therefore address the problems and weaknesses of UDPs identified by the research.

As the planning professionals have emerged from this study as one of the key features for explaining sustainable development in UDPs, it would seem logical to address the capabilities of the profession as a first step to improving sustainable development in UDPs overall. For example, Wood and Pitkethley (1994) note that the quickest way to improve the quality of environmental management is by improving the environmental managers themselves. And the same principle could apply to UDPs and sustainable development - the quickest way of improving the way in which UDPs operationalise sustainable development would be to improve the understanding and knowledge of the concept by planners.

In many ways planners are appropriately educated and trained to appreciate the implications of sustainable development. As noted in Chapter Two, planners are familiar with the demands of combining social and economic goals with environmental considerations, and therefore have some of the skills required to operationalise sustainable development. This issue has already been considered by many writers. Kidd (1994) identifies the importance of ensuring that the planning profession is literate in the concept and issues of sustainable development. This research not only underlines the need for sustainable development to become a central element of the planning

curriculum, it also emphasises the need for planners to be able to translate the abstract principles of sustainable development into policies that are applicable to their own development plans.

For example, this research demonstrates that both Government guidance and political support for sustainable development requires detailed translation into a form of policy that is relevant to a specific UDP and planning authority. As well as being literate in the wider debate on urban form and sustainable development, therefore, planners will also need to be able to apply this debate to the physical settlement patterns, socio-economic basis of those settlements patterns and mainstream political imperatives in their own plan area. Where politicians state a general desire to move towards sustainable towns and cities, the planners need to interpret this desire into an achievable programme of action in many distinct policy areas through their development plan. This inter-disciplinary requirement, for the UDP to incorporate and co-ordinate several discrete policy areas is also an important finding of the research.

If UDPs are to achieve this aim, the planners who write the plans must appreciate the full breadth of the concept and move away from their current pre-occupation with narrow (physical) environmental issues. Therefore the UDP planners must broaden their perception of 'environment' to include natural resource use and management, solid waste management, land, air and water quality and transport management. These are all areas which were shown to be poorly addressed by most UDPs.

However, it would be a mistake to 'blame' the planners alone for the poor relationship between UDPs and sustainable development. Both Chapters Eight and Nine of the dissertation note how public and political interest in UDP policies is very limited, tending to be concentrated upon site specific policy implications rather than the strategic direction which generated these policies in the first instance. This is one of the main reasons for the pre-eminence of the planner, being the only individual in the whole UDP process to appreciate the UDP in its strategic whole. In addition to this, the research results also illustrate a distinct lack of understanding of sustainable development outside of the planning profession and small group of specialists referred to as 'environmental

policy officers'. In particular, most of the politicians interviewed in this study still appear to emphasise the conflict between environmental quality and regeneration, rather than the common factors that both these goals contain and that the concept of sustainable development attempts to unite.

Therefore it is wrong to address the failings of UDPs in terms of the planners alone. After all, one of the main requirements of Agenda 21 is that the process for making sustainable development policies is participatory, involving the 'bottom up' approach to agenda setting rather than the imposition of a policy agenda by technically proficient specialists (see Chapter One). In this way it becomes necessary to consider how the wider UDP making process, as modelled in figure 10.1, can be improved to facilitate more participation and integration, thus changing the context in which planners make UDP policies. This may be attempted in two ways.

Firstly, the strategy of the UDP needs to be discussed and then outlined in a more explicit and inclusive process. Chapter Eight of the dissertation illustrates how the strategic approach of UDP B was determined right at the very start of the plan process, before any detailed or site specific proposals were made. This gives local politicians the opportunity to set the general approach of the plan in a rational and abstract way, so that environmental aims are enshrined in the UDP along with economic regeneration at the very outset of the plan's process. From this point on the UDP's policies and proposals are able to be channelled towards these joint aims before the conflicts and compromises of site specific issues are raised.

The strategic choices available to UDP B were also made open to public consultation, through a report and set of strategic options which were distributed to local businesses as well as the general public. The fact that this consultation exercise received a poor response from the general public and local firms does not necessarily mean that public consultation is unnecessary at this stage of the plan process. On the contrary, it suggests that the form and style of public consultation needs to be changed and made more open and participatory. 'Moving participation from consultation to involvement' (Anderson et al 1994) should therefore be a particularly important consideration of the planning

process at the earliest stages of the plan's formulation. If this were to be achieved the reactionary and 'nimby' objections which appear to dominate the formal public consultation stages of UDPs may not be so polarised and lead to unconstructive policy discourse.

Secondly, the UDP needs to become more corporate and inter-disciplinary in its formative stages. This recommendation refers to the machinations of the internal local authority organisation. In both case studies, the two UDPs investigated for this study were prepared by the UDP teams in isolation from other Council departments and their respective professional expertise. The inclusion of environmental policy officers, or transport planners, during the very early research and conceptualising of the plan would help broaden its remit to include more than the physical environmental issues identified in the study. In particular, the involvement of environmental policy officers, who appear to draw on a wider background and knowledge of sustainable development, could help the UDP to interpret sustainable development concepts into practical policy initiatives.

Whereas planners mainly refer to central Government guidance in formulating their UDP, the broader application of local, national and international thinking on sustainable development (as discussed in Chapter Two) would obviously assist in the inclusion of sustainable development principles in the plans. As this does not appear to be happening in current planning practice, it needs to be brought in with the help of other professions and traditions in the local authority. For example, this may mean inter-departmental working groups to help establish the broad strategy of the UDP. At the present time the involvement of local authority departments outside of planning appears to be limited to consultation on specific policy proposals, as opposed to participation in setting the general direction of the UDP.

If these inter-departmental groups were to become common practice, the policy remit of the UDP could develop to include wider considerations beyond the physical environmental focus which limits today's generation of UDP. UDPs may then begin to make more explicit the political links and practical connections that exist between land-use planning policies and the implementation of these policies. For example, UDP

policies are relatively weak at promoting change for sustainable development, as distinct from controlling change for sustainable development. If UDPs were to become more corporate, this type of deficiency could be addressed by other local authority roles.

Of course, this type of recommendation does not take into account the structural limits to including sustainable development in UDPs, as identified in this study. It is salient to remember that authority B was challenged by the DOE for the character and content of the 'corporate statement' policies in its UDP. This type of limitation to the policy remit of the development plan suggests that, ultimately, UDPs are not the most effective tool to operationalise sustainable development in terms of the current political and legislative framework. Therefore, the most realistic and pragmatic recommendation for sustainable development, in the current legislative context, could be to abandon any concentration upon land-use planning or UDPs. In contrast to the above discussion, it may be necessary to accept the fact that metropolitan local authorities need to develop other mechanisms to put the concept into practice.

This research project started from the premise that UDPs are a suitable mechanism to operationalise sustainable development because they are an existing tool in the control of local authorities which have all the necessary specifications for addressing the concept. Chapter Two noted the similar focus of the land-use planning system with that of sustainable development, and suggested that UDPs could be used to address the concerns of sustainable development without having to make any significant changes. However, this research has shown that UDPs are too restricted by legislation, too weak at promoting change, and too dominated by the traditions of the planning profession to be able to operationalise sustainable development in its widest sense. Even if a more radical and comprehensive UDP were to be prepared to address all the requirements of sustainable development, the possibility of the plan's policies being fully implemented are not guaranteed. The plan would still bear the restrictions of the land-use planning system.

Therefore, rather than attempt to re-focus or re-design an existing, but fundamentally flawed, policy tool, sustainable development may be better served by a new, custom-tailored mechanism, such as LA21 (see Chapter Two). In this way UDPs could be seen

as a necessary but insufficient ingredient in operationalising sustainable development. Necessary in the sense that they are still one of the most important powers exercised at the local authority level, and therefore need to be in line with the general aim of sustainable development. But insufficient in the sense that local authorities cannot rely on them to operationalise sustainable development in its fullest sense.

10.4 Reflections on the Research Process and the Need for Further Research

Having identified the strengths and weaknesses of UDPs for sustainable development, as well as some of the potential improvements required in the wider UDP making process, it is possible to suggest a number of productive areas for further research. Equally, it is also necessary to highlight the restrictions and lessons learnt from this research study, as these will also have to be addressed by future investigations. Therefore this final section of the dissertation will reflect on the problems and limitations encountered by the methodology of the study, before suggesting ways in which these can now be avoided.

Stage I of the research, the survey, applied the methods of content analysis to UDPs and the concept of sustainable development. This was largely successful in that it enabled 36 disparate UDPs to be compared collectively and individually to the concept of sustainable development. The content analysis system developed for the survey also involved a system to qualitatively 'grade' UDP policies for their sustainable development content. Although this enabled the research process to be carried out, the actual definition of sustainable development used in the survey was limited to largely environmental and economic issues. This definition should be seen as a product of its time, written in 1994 before the UK Local Agenda 21 Campaign began to emphasise the important social aspects of the concept. For example, Section 4.2 of the dissertation, emphasised the fluidity of sustainable development and evolution of our understanding of the concept.

Therefore future research projects into the application of sustainable development in British local authorities need to acknowledge this fact. Indeed, the interpretation of

sustainable development in different local authorities, and the emphasis of social factors in the concept, could be a useful indication of the state of progress of that authority. For example, it may be argued that less advanced or less sophisticated local authorities concentrate more upon environmental and economic aspects of the concept, whereas the more advanced or more experienced authorities would be addressing the social implications of furthering sustainable development (see for example Webber 1996).

Stage II of the research, the case studies, used interviews with key actors to explore the history of the two UDP processes and the events leading up to the writing of the plans. As well as revealing the most important factors to shape the sustainable development content of UDPs, the interviews also provided some interesting lessons for future research. The most informative interviews of the investigation, in terms of meaningful research results, were held with middle ranking Council officers such as the two UDP team leaders and principal officers in highways, economic development and environmental policy units. In contrast to these interviews, more senior officers, such as department heads or chief planners, were often unavailable (or unwilling) to be interviewed, whereas more junior officers were unable to provide sufficient insight and experience to answer all of the research questions posed to them.

In particular, heads of departments in both authorities tended to pass any initial letters requesting an interview onto their more junior colleagues for answering. And, in a similar way, a number of leading politicians passed initial contact letters on to planning officers to deal with. Other data, for example from UDP working group sessions of both authorities, was also unavailable to the researcher. In this case the working group sessions were not minuted or officially noted. Or if they were minuted, these documents are not made available to the general public.

These types of occurrence clearly have some important consequences for the research results and the type of findings they reveal. There is a distinct risk that the lack of information and insight from the chief planner in both authorities will skew the results of the study away from possible influences on the two UDPs and their policy content. Without being able to analyse the events or debate in the UDP working groups, there is

also a threat of incomplete data collection, particularly in the case of issues which were discussed in the working groups but consciously kept out of UDP policies for whatever reason. For example, it is impossible to determine the precise extent of the discussion between political and professional members of the working groups, and whether politicians actually blocked important sustainable development principles from entering the UDP on grounds of economic regeneration.

Nonetheless, the breadth and depth of the interviews with other important actors, along with the analysis of committee meeting minutes, ensure that these threats to validity do not undermine the conclusions of the study. By interviewing the UDP team leaders of both authorities in such depth, and supplementing these results with the views of governing and opposition politicians, a rounded understanding of the events and key decisions in each UDP process was achieved. In future research projects however, it will be important to acknowledge the possible inaccessibility of some actors, particularly senior managers or political leaders, and therefore more definitive efforts to counter-act these limitations with data from other sources should be made. For example, approaches to senior officers and political leaders may be more successful in a larger scale research exercise which benefits from the credibility of another organisation respected by practitioners.

Therefore future research projects may be more successful if they were able to team up with the Local Government Association, the Local Government Management Board or a similar body in order to gain more access local authorities and their officers. For example, successful surveys of local authority LA21 initiatives have been made by academics such as Tuxworth (see Tuxworth 1996; and Tuxworth & Carpenter 1995) through partnership with the LGMB. In this way information and results from the exercise are shared with local authorities and these authorities receive a tangible return for their time and effort.

Another solution to this situation would be to employ a more 'action research' methodology, where the researcher is actually involved in the phenomena he or she is researching. This approach was adopted by Blowers (1980) when he was able to use his

position as a local councillor to analyse the power and influence brought to bear upon the Bedfordshire County Structure Plan and several planning decisions based upon it. Indeed, it may even be argued that this is the only true method by which a fully comprehensive insight into the planning process can be gained, so that the 'how and why' of certain decisions are fully explained (op. cit. page x). However, this method is clearly not available to most academic research investigations, particularly those carried out for a doctorate or similar qualification.

Therefore, having detailed some of the limitations of the study, it may be useful to consider how these can be addressed by further research. The discussion in this chapter has also revealed a number of related research fields which could prove to be very important for understanding sustainable development in UDPs. Both these factors mean that there is considerable scope for further research and academic work that could develop some of the ideas and conclusions of this particular project. The following points summarise and outline the need for further research:

- **The planning profession and the motivation of individual planners:** having emphasised the importance of individual planners to sustainable development in UDPs, further research is required to focus on the personal and professional motivations of planners to sustainable development. A useful line of investigation would be to find out exactly how planners perceive sustainable development and relate the concept to their professional values and training. This would require more in-depth interviews with a wider number of planning practitioners than was possible for this study, as well as a historical study of the primary issues in British land-use planning. For example, authors such as Broadbent (1977, from Rydin 1993) argue that the planning profession has a poorly established body of knowledge which allows them to be swayed by new theoretical approaches. Similar suggestions are also made by Selman (1995) who notes the serendipity between the rise of sustainable development and the need for land-use or environmental planning to re-establish itself. These professional characteristics could clearly have important implications for sustainable development in planning policies, and could form a central feature in

motivating individual planners to apply sustainable development approaches to their work.

- **Local Agenda 21 and UDPs:** This study has concentrated upon the role of UDPs in operationalising sustainable development in local authorities, and identified some important deficiencies in the plans. Having established the fact that sustainable development will not be totally operationalised by a UDP, therefore, it is important to discover how other local strategies are achieving this objective. LA21 processes are clearly intended to develop policies for sustainable development (see Chapter Two), and many studies are currently analysing their success in this. However, it is also necessary to find out how the LA21 is impacting upon UDPs, and, conversely, how UDPs may be influencing LA21 initiatives. Both the UDPs and LA21s provide important strategies which shape environment and development initiatives at the local level. At the present time, however, the relationship between the two is unclear. In this study very little reference was made to LA21 in either case study authority, and it would appear that they have not influenced the policy content of the UDPs. Whether or not this will change as the present generation of UDPs are reviewed remains to be seen. Equally, the LA21 process is often carried out by the planners of a local authority and the final LA21 plan may be significantly influenced this fact. Therefore the relationship between UDPs and LA21s needs specific research.

- **Implementing UDP policies for sustainable development:** There has been insufficient time and space in this study to analyse how UDP policies and proposals are actually carried out and applied on a day to day basis. Although the history and influences of UDP policies have clearly explained a great deal about how well sustainable development is being operationalised in the plans, further work is required to explore how closely the plan policies are adhered to in local authorities. For example, it has already been suggested that very radical UDPs, which address the whole remit of sustainable development in their policies, have very little chance of being fully implemented in the current legislative context. In contrast to this, it is possible that UDPs which have been identified as weakly addressing sustainable development could be interpreted in a particularly progressive fashion which embraces

many of the principles of sustainable development. Although the results of this study indicate that this is unlikely, such questions still need to be answered fully. This type of research can only be carried out with the benefit of hindsight, when the existing generation of UDPs have had several years to be implemented. A number of development control decisions can then be investigated and analysed to look for sustainable development issues and arguments on which the judgements were made.

Addressing these three areas of research should therefore be a priority for future investigations into local sustainable development initiatives and UDPs.

REFERENCES

1. Adams W M (1990) *Green development, environment and sustainability in the Third World.* Routledge, London.

2. Ageyman J and Evans B (1994) "The new environmental agenda." In same authors (Eds.) *Local environmental policies and strategies.* Longman, Harlow.

3. Ageyman J and Evans B (1997) "Is anyone listening?" *Local Environment,* 2 (1) pp. 6.

4. Ageyman J and Evans B (Eds.) (1994) *Local environmental policies and strategies.* Longman, Harlow.

5. Aldenderfer MS and Blashfield RK (1984) *Cluster analysis.* Sage, California.

6. Anderson M, Meaton J and Potter C (1994) "Public participation: an approach using aerial photographs at Ashford, Kent." *Town Planning Review,* 64 (1) pp. 47-58.

7. Archibugi F (1996) "Towards a new discipline of planning." *Socio Economic Planning Science,* 30 (2) pp. 81-102.

8. Barbier E B (1987) "The concept of sustainable development." *Environmental Conservation,* 14 (2) pp. 101-110.

9. Barton H and Bruder N (1995) *A guide to local environmental auditing.* Earthscan, London.

10. Berg P (1990) "A green city programme for San Francisco Bay area cities and towns." In Andruss V, Plant C, Plant J, and Wright E (Eds.) *Home! A bio-regional reader.* New Society Publishers, Philadelphia.

11. Blowers A (1980) *The limits of power: the politics of local planning policy.* Pergamon, London.

12. Blowers A (1993a) "Environmental policy: the quest for sustainable development." *Urban Studies,* 30 (4/5) pp. 775-796.

13. Blowers A (1993b) *Planning for a sustainable environment.* Earthscan, London.

14. Bosworth T (1993) "Local authorities and sustainable development." *European Environment,* 3 (1).

15. Boulding K (1966) "The coming of spaceship Earth." In Jarrett H (Ed.) *Environmental quality in a growing economy.* Johns-Hopkins University Press. Reprinted in Markayanda A and Richardson J (Eds.) (1992) *The Earthscan reader in environmental economics.* Earthscan, London.

16. Brand J (1995) "Policies, projects and partnerships in sustainable development: a critical review of progress in the city of Glasgow." Presented at *The International Sustainable Development Research Conference.* Manchester, March 27-28.

17. Breheny M (Ed.) (1992) *Sustainable development and urban form.* Pion, London.

18. Breheny M and Rookwood R (1993) "Planning the sustainable city region." In Blowers A (Ed.) *Planning for a sustainable environment.* Earthscan, London.

19. Broadbent A (1977) *Planning and profit in the urban economy.* Methuen, London.

20. Bruff G (1996) "Sustainable development and unitary development plans: a comparison of the two agendas." Presented at *The International Sustainable Development Research Conference.* Manchester, March 18-19.

21. Bruff G and Wood A (1995a) "Sustainable development in English metropolitan district authorities: an investigation using unitary development plans." *Sustainable Development,* 3 (1) pp. 9-19.

22. Bruff G and Wood A (1995b) "Sustainable development in English metropolitan district authorities: an investigation using unitary development plans." Presented at the Planning and Environment Study Group. of the *Annual Conference of the Institute British Geographers.* University of Northumbria, January 2-5.

23. Bryman A (1998) *Quality and quantity in social research.* Unwin Hyman, London.

24. Buckingham-Hatfield S and Evans B (1996) "Achieving sustainability through environmental planning." In same authors (Eds.) *Environmental planning and sustainability.* Wiley, Chichester.

25. Carson R (1962) *Silent spring.* Houghton Mifflin, New York.

26. CEC (1990) (Commission of the European Community) *Europe 2000: outlook for the development of the community's territory.* COM (90) 544, CEC Brussels.

27. CEC (1992) *The EC's 5th environmental action programme: towards sustainability.* Brussels.

28. CEC (1994) *European sustainable cities part one.* EC Expert Group. on the Urban Environment. Brussels.

29. Cloke P. (Ed.) (1992) *Policy and changes in Thatchers Britain.* Pergamon, Oxford.

30. Conway G (1983) *Agro-ecosystem analysis.* Imperial College Centre for Environmental Technology. Series E. ICL, London.

31. Conway G (1985) Agro-ecosystem analysis. *Agricultural Administration,* 20 pp31-55.

32. Countryside Commission et al (1993) *Conservation issues in strategic plans.* CoCo, Cheltenham.

33. CPOS (1993) (County Planning Officers Society) *Planning for sustainability.* CPOS, Winchester.

34. CPRE (1993) (Council for the Protection of Rural England) *Sense and sustainability: land use planning and environmentally sustainable development.* CPRE, London.

35. Cullingworth J B (1988) *Town and country planning in Britain 10th edition.* Unwin Hyman, London.

36. Davidoff P. and Reiner T A (1973) "A choice theory of planning. In Faludi A (Ed.) *A reader in planning theory*. Pergamon Press, Oxford.

37. Dixon B R, Bauma G D and Atkinson, G B J (1988) *Research methods in social science*. OUP, Milton Keynes.

38. Dobson A (1996) Environment sustainabilities: an analysis and a typology. *Environmental Politics*, 5 (3) pp. 401-428.

39. DOE (Department of the Environment) (1988) *Town and country planning (assessment of environmental effects) regulations*. HMSO (S1 1988/1199), London.

40. DOE (1989) *Local government and housing act*. HMSO, London.

41. DOE (1990a) *Town and country planning act*. HMSO, London.

42. DOE (1990b) *This common inheritance*, HMSO London.

43. DOE (1991) *Planning and compensation act*. HMSO, London.

44. DOE (1992a) *PPG12: Development plans and regional planning guidance*, HMSO London.

45. DOE (1992b) *Development plans: a good practice guide*. HMSO London.

46. DOE (1993a) *Environmental appraisal of development plans: a good practice guide*. HMSO London.

47. DOE (1993b) *PPG22: renewable energy*. HMSO, London.

48. DOE (1994a) *Sustainable development: the UK strategy*. HMSO, London.

49. DOE (1994b) *PPG23: planning and pollution*. HMSO, London.

50. DOE (1994c) *PPG13: transport*. HMSO, London.

51. DOE (1997) *PPG1: general policy and principles*. HMSO, London.

52. Earp. J H, Headicar P, Bannister D and Curtis C (1995) "Reducing the need to travel: some thoughts on PPG13. *Oxford Planning Monographs*, 1 (2).

53. Ehrenfield D (1978) *The arrogance of humanism*. OUP, London.

54. Elkin T, Maclaren D and Hillman (1991) *Reviving the city*. Friend of the Earth, London.

55. Environ (1996) *Local sustainability*. Environ, Leicester.

56. Everitt B (1979) Unresolved problems in cluster analysis. *Biometrics* 35, pp. 169-181.

57. Faludi A (1973) (Ed.) *A reader in planning theory*. Pergamon Press, Oxford.

58. Foley D (1973) "British town planning: one ideology or three? In Faludi A (Ed.) *A reader in planning theory*. Pergamon Press, Oxford.

59. Friends of the Earth (1989) *Environment charter for local government*. Friends of the Earth, London.

60. Georgescu-Rogan N (1971) *The entropy law and the economic process*. Harvard, Cambridge.

61. Gibbs D (1993) *The green local economy: integrating economic and environmental development at the local level*. Centre for Local Economic Strategies, Manchester.

62. Gibbs D (1994) "Towards the sustainable city". *Town Planning Review*, 65 (1) pp. 99-109.

63. Gibbs D, Longhurst J and Braithwaite C (1995) "Towards a sustainable local economy? Presented at *The International Sustainable Development Research Conference*. Manchester, March 27-28.

64. Gilbert R, Stevenson D, Girardet H and Stren R (1996) *Making cities work*. Earthscan, London.

65. Goldsmith E et al (1972) *Blueprint for survival*. Houghton-Miffin, Boston.

66. Grayson L and Hobson H (Eds.) (1994) *INLOGOV informs on sustainability*. Institute of Local Government Studies, Univ. of Birmingham 1(4).

67. Grubb M, Koch M, Munson A, Sullivan F and Thomson K (1993) *The Earth Summit agreements*. Earthscan, London.

68. Hague C (1991) "A review of planning theory in Britain." *Town Planning Review*, 62 (3) pp. 295-310.

69. Hall P, Hebbert M and Lusser H (1993) "The Planning Background." In Blowers A (Ed.) *Planning for a sustainable environment*. Earthscan, London.

70. Ham S and Hill M (1984) *The policy process in the modern capitalist state*. Harvester-Wheatsheaf.

71. Hams T (1992) in Raemakers J (Ed.) *Local authority green plans: a practical guide*. Proceedings of a seminar held at Edinburgh School of Planning, 22 May.

72. Haughton G and Hunter C (1994) *Sustainable cities*. Jessica Kingsley, London.

73. Healey P, McDougall G and Thomas MJ (1981) "Theoretical debates in planning: towards a coherent dialogue." In same authors (Eds.) *Planning Theory: prospects for the 1980's*. Pergamon Press, Oxford.

74. Healey P. and Shaw T (1993a) "Planners, plans and sustainability." *Regional Studies*, 4 (8) pp. 769-776.

75. Healey P. and Shaw T (1993b) *The treatment of the environment by planners*. Working paper Department of Town and Country Planning, Newcastle upon Tyne University.

76. Holliday J (1993) "Eco-systems and natural resources." In Blowers A (Ed.) *Planning for a sustainable environment*. Earthscan, London.

77. Hollins M and Percey S (1995) "A local approach to sustainable development: the Reading experience. Presented at The *International Sustainable Development Research Conference*. Manchester, March 27-28.

78. ICLEI (International Council for Environmental Initiatives) (1997) *Local Agenda 21 survey*. ICLEI, Ontario.

79. IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature), WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) and UNEP. (United Nations Environment Programme) (1991) *Caring for the Earth.* IUCN, Geneva.

80. IUCN, WWF and UNEP(1980) *World conservation strategy.* IUCN, Gland.

81. Jacobs M (1991) *The Green Economy.* Pluto Press London.

82. Jacobs M and Stott M (1992) "Sustainable development and the local economy." *Local Economy,* 7(3) 261-272.

83. Jordan A G and Richardson J J (1987) *British politics and the policy process.* Allen and Unwin, London.

84. Keating M (1993) *The Earth summits: agenda for change.* Centre for Our Common Future, Geneva.

85. Kidd C V (1992) "The evolution of sustainability." *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics,* 5 (1) pp. 1-26.

86. Kidd S (1993) *Environmental policy in the English metropolitan districts.* Working Paper 51, Department of Civic Design, University of Liverpool.

87. Kidd S (1994) Planning, education and the new environmental agenda. Paper presented to *New Academics in Planning Conference.* Manchester, 25-26 March.

88. Kidd S and Fitzpatrick P. (1992) *Liverpool: economy, environment and health.* Working Paper 46, Department of Civic Design, University of Liverpool.

89. Kingdom J (1991a) "Reappraising local government: the political dimension." *Politics Review,* November.

90. Kingdom J (1991b) *Government and politics in Britain: an introduction.* Polity Press, Cambridge.

91. Krippendorf K (1980) *Content analysis: an introduction to its methodology.* Sage Publications, London.

92. Leese R (1994) "Setting the context." Paper presented to 1st plenary session of *Global Forum.* Manchester, 24-28 June.

93. Leggett J (1990) *Global Warming: The Greenpeace Report.* OUP, Oxford.

94. LGMB (Local Government Management Board) (1992b) *A statement on behalf of UK local government to UNCED.* LGMB, London.

95. LGMB (1993a) *A framework for local sustainability.* LGMB, London.

96. LGMB (1993b) *Greening economic development.* LGMB, London.

97. LGMB (1993c) *The EC's fifth environmental action programme on the environment: a guide for local authorities.* LGMB, London.

98. LGMB (1994a) *Taking Rio forward: a review of the Government's strategy documents in response to the Rio Earth Summit.* LGMB, London.

99. LGMB (1994b) *Local Agenda 21 round table guidance.* LGMB, London.

100. LGMB (1995) *Sustainability indicators research project: indicators for Local Agenda 21, A Summary.* LGMB, London.

101. LGMB (Local Government Management Board) (1992a) *Environmental practice in local government 2nd edition*. LGMB, London.

102. Lindblom C (1979) "Still muddling not yet through." *Public Administration Review*, 39 pp. 517-232.

103. Marsh G P. (1864) *Man and nature, or physical geography as modified by human action*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA.

104. Marshall T (1992) *Environmental sustainability: London's unitary development plans and strategic planning*. Occasional paper 4/1992, Faculty of the Built Environment, South Bank University, London.

105. Marshall T (1996) "British land-use planning and the European Union." in Buckingham-Hatfield S and Evans B (Eds.) *Environmental planning and sustainability*. John Wiley and Sons, Chichester.

106. Mason J (1996) *Qualitative research*. Sage, London.

107. Mathews J (1996) "Social processes and the pursuit of sustainable urban development." In Buckingham-Hatfield S and Evans B (Eds.) *Environmental planning and sustainability*. Wiley, Chichester.

108. Meadows D H, Meadows D L, Randers J and Behrens W W (1972) *The limits to growth*. Pan Books, London.

109. Millichip. D (1993) "Sustainability: a long established concern of planning." *Journal of Planning and Law*, Dec. 1993 pp. 111-119.

110. Mitlin D (1992) "Sustainable cities - a guide to the literature." *Environment and Urbanisation* 4 (2) pp. 111-124.

111. Mitlin D and Satterthwaite (1994) *Cities and sustainable development* (Background paper to Global Forum). IIED, London.

112. Morphet J (1995) "Planning research and the policy process: a discussion document." *Town Planning Review*, 66 (2), pp. 199-206.

113. Myerson G and Rydin Y (1996) "Sustainable development: the implications of the global debate for land use planning." In Buckingham-Hatfield S and Evans B (Eds.) *Environmental planning and sustainability*. Whiley, Chichester.

114. Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (1993) *Interpreting sustainable development - a working paper*. NLP, London.

115. Newcastle upon Tyne City Council (1993) *Unitary development plan: deposit stage*. Newcastle upon Tyne City Council.

116. Nijkamp. P. and Perrels A (1994) *Sustainable cities in Europe*. Earthscan, London.

117. OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) (1990) *Environmental policies for cities in the 1990's*. OECD, Paris.

118. Owens S (1991) "Energy efficiency and sustainable land use patterns." *Town and Country Planning*, 60 (2) pp. 79-105.

119. Owens S (1992) "Energy, environmental sustainability and land-use planing." In M J Breheny (Ed.) *Sustainable development and urban form*. Pion, London.

120. Owens S (1994) "Land, limits and sustainability: a conceptual framework and some dilemmas for the planning system." *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 19 (4) pp. 439-457.

121. Owens S (1995) "Land use planning as an instrument of sustainable development", *The Globe*, Issue 23.

122. Patton D and Worthington I (1995) "The development of the Local Agenda 21 initiative: a case study of 5 local authorities." Presented at The *International Sustainable Development Research Conference*. Manchester, March 27-28.

123. Pearce DW (Ed.) (1991) *Blueprint two: greening the global economy.* Earthscan, London.

124. Pearce DW (Ed.) (1993) *Blueprint three: measuring sustainable development.* Earthscan, London.

125. Pearce DW, Markayanda A and Barbier E B (1989) *Blueprint for a green economy.* Earthscan, London.

126. Pezzey J (1989) *Economic analysis of sustainable growth and sustainable development.* Environment Department Working Paper no. 15, World Bank, Washington.

127. *Planning 1038* (1993) "Councils work on green base." 1 Oct.

128. *Planning 1047* (1993) "Authorities struggling to deliver sustainable plans." 3 Dec.

129. *Planning 1092* (1994) "Under no obligation?" 28 Oct.

130. Porritt J (1993) "Sustainable development: panacea, platitude or downright deception?" In Cartledge B (Ed.) *Energy and the environment.* OUP.

131. Poulton M C (1991) "The case for a positive theory of planning part 1: what is wrong with planning theory?" *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*, 18 pp. 225-232.

132. Powney J and Watts M (1987) *Interviewing in educational research.* Routledge, London.

133. Punter et al (1994) *Sources for design policy: a bibliographic guide.* Centre for Planning, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

134. Raemakers J (Ed.) (1992a) *Local authority green plans: a practical guide.* Proceedings of a seminar held at Heriot Watt School of Planning and Housing.

135. Raemakers J and Wilson E (1992b) *An index of local authority green plans 2nd Edition.* Research Paper no 44, Edinburgh College of Art.

136. Raemakers J, Cowie L and Wilson E (1991) *An index of local authority green plans.* Research Paper no 37, Edinburgh College of Art.

137. Ravetz J (1995) "Manchester 2020: strategic planning for sustainability in a northern city region." Presented at The *International Sustainable Development Research Conference*. Manchester, March 27-28.

138. Redclift M (1987) *Sustainable development: exploring the contradictions,* Routledge, London.

139. Rees W (1994) "Resource use and management." Presented to 1st plenary session of *Global Forum*. Manchester, 24-28 June.

140. Reid D (1995) *Sustainable development: an introductory guide*. Earthscan, London.

141. Richards S L and Richards T (1987) "Qualitative data analysis: can computers do it?" *ANZJS*, 23 (1), pp. 23-35.

142. Roberts P. and Hunter C (1991) "Managing the metropolitan environment: the challenge for European cities." *Planning Outlook*, 34 (2) pp. 57-60.

143. Robson C (1993) *Real world research*. Blackwell Oxford.

144. Rydin Y (1993) *The British planning system: an introduction*. Macmillan Press, Basingstoke.

145. Sage (1995) *QSR NUD.IST 3.04 (for Windows)*. Sage, London.

146. Seidel J (1991) "Method and madness in the application of computer technology to qualitative data analysis." In Fielding N and Lee R (Eds.) *Using computers in qualitative research*. Sage, London.

147. Selman P. (1995) "Local sustainability: can the planning system help us get from here to there?" *Town Planning Review*, 66 (3) pp. 287-301.

148. Selman P. (1996) *Local sustainability*. PCP, London.

149. Shaw G and Wheeler D (1985) *Statistical techniques in geographical analysis*. John Wiley and Sons, Chichester.

150. Shayler M and Lairner D (1994) "Business support and sustainability: a case study of Bradford MDC." *Eco-Management and Auditing*, ?? , pp25-30.

151. Simon D (1989) "Sustainable development: theoretical construct or attainable goal?" *Environmental Conservation*, 16 (1) pp. 41-48.

152. Simon J L (1969) *Basic research methods in social science*. Random House, New York.

153. Smith L G (1992) *Impact assessment and sustainable resource management*. Longman, New York.

154. Stewart J and Stoker G (Ed.) (1989) *The future of local government*. Macmillan, London.

155. Stoker G and Young S (1993) *Cities in the 1990's*. Longman, Harlow.

156. Stone P. J, Dexter C S, Marshell S and Ogilvie D M (1966) *The general inquirer: a computer approach to content analysis*. MIT Press, Cambridge MA.

157. Tesch R (1990) *Qualitative research: analysis types and software tools*. Falmer Press, London.

158. Tesch R (1991) "Software needs for qualitative researchers: analysis needs and program capabilities." In Fielding N G and Lee R M (Eds.) *Using computers in qualitative research*. Sage, London.

159. Tewdwr-Jones M (1996) "Reflective planning theorising and professional protectionism: a reply to Allmendinger. *Town Planning Review*, 67 (2), pp. 235-243.

160. Thornley A (1993) *Urban planning under Thatcherism 2nd Edition*. Routledge, London.

161. Turner R K (1993) *Sustainable environmental economics and management*. Belhaven Press, London.

162. Tuxworth B (1996) "From environment to sustainability: surveys and analysis of Local Agenda 21 processes in UK local government." *Local Environment*, 1 (3) pp. 277-297.

163. Tuxworth B and Carpenter C (1995) *Local Agenda 21 survey 1994/5 - results March 1995*. LGMB, Luton.

164. UN (United Nations) (1992) *Agenda 21*. UN, New York.

165. UN (1995) *World urbanization prospects: the 1994 revision*. UN, New York.

166. Vidal J (1994) "Radical changes needed to maintain quality of life." *The Guardian* 26 January, p. 6.

167. Ward B and Dubos R (1972) *Only one Earth: the care and maintenance of a small planet*. Penguin, London.

168. Ward S (1993) "Thinking global acting local? British local authorities and their environmental plans. *Environmental Politics*, 2 (3) pp. 433-470.

169. WCED (World Commission on Environment and Development) (1987) *Our common future*. OUP, Oxford.

170. Webber P. (1994) "Environmental strategies." In Ageyman J and Evans B (Eds.) *Local environmental policies and strategies*. Longman, Harlow.

171. Webber P. (1996) "A new model for sustainability auditing: beyond environmental assessment." Presented to *The International Sustainable Development Research Conference*. Manchester, 18-19 March.

172. Welbank M (1993) *Sustainable development: a discussion paper*. RTPI, London.

173. Whitehead A (1996) "Can local authorities deliver local Agenda 21?" In *Interdisciplinary Strands*, 5 (2), pp. 17-21.

174. Wijkman A and Timberlake L (1984) *Natural disasters: acts of God or acts of man?* Earthscan, London.

175. Wood A and Pitkethley A (1994) "Principles and methods in environmental management". *External Programme MSc. in Environmental Management*. Wye College, University Of London.

APPENDIX 1: CRITERIA FOR GRADING UDP POLICIES IN TERMS OF POLICY DIRECTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In order to capture the qualitative differences between UDP policies, the survey stage of the research graded policies on the extent to which they address each of the Policy Directions for Sustainable Development. Therefore relevant policies in each of the 36 UDPs were graded from 1 to 3 using the criteria overleaf.

Criteria For Grading UDP Policies in Terms of Policy Directions for Sustainable Development

Policy Type - Strategic

Definition: Strategic policies outline the overall approach of the authority to their development plan and form the guiding principles of the plan. They are found in part one of a UDP (DOE 1992b).

1 (Weak):   General implicit indication that a Policy Direction is being partly addressed by one of the guiding principles or objectives around which the UDP was written.

2 (Moderate):   A clear positive relationship with a Policy Direction, through which that Policy Direction can be seen to be being addressed.

3 (Strong):   A strategic policy which directly and comprehensively addresses a policy direction, and illustrates that this policy direction was one of the guiding principles with which the UDP was written.

Policy Type - Development Control

Definition: Policies which provide the criteria or standards for controlling the form, location and types of individual developments, and from which specific conditions on those developments can be made (DOE 1992b).

1 (Weak):   Partial consideration of the implications of the Policy Direction. No obligatory criteria, along with caveats allowing developments to avoid planning conditions and obligations. Example vocabulary - *Proposals will not normally be acceptable...* and *Proposals should have regard to...*

2 (Moderate):   The majority of the Policy Direction is addressed, although criteria in the policy do not provide obligatory conditions on developments and include caveats allowing developments to avoid these conditions. OR Only part of the policy direction is addressed but the conditions of the policy are obligatory without caveats and get out clauses.

3 (Strong):   The whole policy direction is addressed and all the criteria in the policy are obligatory and lead to planning conditions and obligations on developments without caveats and get out clauses. Example vocabulary - *Development proposals must be compatible with...* and *Proposals for new surface mineral workings, ... will only receive favourable consideration if...*

Policy Type - Promotional

Definition: Policies which propose some form of development, or are designed to assist a particular type of development, or particular features in developments, with the intention of promoting it in the plan area (DOE 1992b).

1 (Weak): A general wish to see, or a general expression of support for, a particular development or type of development which promotes a Policy Direction for Sustainable Development. A policy which illustrates some sympathy, or consideration, to any proposals involving this type of development, but without the allocation of resources to ensure or assist such development. For example: *The Council will, subject to the availability of resources and where appropriate, support and encourage energy efficient modes of transport especially public transport provided that the proposal involves no unacceptable loss of amenity.*

2 (Moderate): Proposal for a specific development, or type of development, which promotes a policy direction for sustainable development, with reference to some form of practical incentive such as: advice or guidance (for example a development brief), finance, allocated responsibility, allocated land, a time scale with targets. For example: *The Council will publish detailed guidelines in respect of measures to assist in the protection, enhancement and planting of trees.*

3 (Strong): Proposal of a specific development which promotes a policy direction for sustainable development, in association with all of the triggers (where applicable) of: finance, responsibility, time scale, location. These may be allocated in the policy or referred to as part of another existing council document.

APPENDIX 2: EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETED UDP SURVEY FORM

POLICY DIRECTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE CATEGORIES FOR ANALYSIS (after LGMB 1993)

Authority **Kirklees**............   Plan state **Deposit** (Mar-Apr 94)..

Policy Direction	Relevant Policy		

Natural Resources	Strategic	DC	Promotional
Production minimisation for non-renewables resources	1	1	
Production limits for renewable resources		1	
Protection of sensitive sites from extraction	2	3	
Mitigation of environmental impacts	2	2	

Energy	Strategic	DC	Promotional
Improve energy efficiency in existing buildings			
Set design standards for energy efficiencey in new developents	1	1	
Encourage renewable energy sources			
Encourage combined heat and power schemes			

Transport	Strategic	DC	Promotional
Mixed land use policies to reduce travel demand in new developments	3	1	
Increase availability and attractiveness of public and non-motorised transport	3	2	2

Land, Air and Water Quality	Strategic	DC	Promotional
Set local pollution limits	1		
Identify and treat contaminated land	1	1	

Solid Waste Management	Strategic	DC	Promotional
Encouragement and planning conditions concerning waste reduction, re-use, recycling and recovery.			1
Ensure responsible disposal, minimise impact and costs of waste disposal	3	2	

Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Biodiversity	Strategic	DC	Promotional
Absolute protection of nationally designated sites of landscape and habitat importance	2	2	
Designation and protection against development of locally important sites	2	3	
Encourage re-use of already developed and derelict land, promote compact settlements	3	3	2
Management of recreation, lowering impact of use and access in countryside	2	2	

Economic Development	Strategic	DC	Promotional
Design standards for durability and repairability of new developments			
Conditions of landscaping and compensation to new industrial developments		3	
Re-use of already developed and derelict land	3	2	2

Built Environment	Strategic	DC	Promotional
Investment in environment and facilities of inner cities	3		2
Strengthen and concentrate facilities in inner cities	3	2	2
Integrated land use, provision of all immmediate needs locally	3	1	
Preference for medium rise, high density developments			
Site new developments on redundant and vacant sites	3	2	2
Protect and enhance urban greenspace	3	3	
Protection of buildings and areas of cultural and historic interest		3	
Invest in public and non-motorised transport/ restrict car use	3	2	2

(21-10-94)

APPENDIX 3: PUBLICATION DATES OF THE UDPS SURVEYED

Table 3X.1 contains details of all the UDPs surveyed in Stage I of the research. The survey was carried out over the summer of 1995, and in all cases the latest possible version of the UDP was analysed. In most instances this meant analysing a full draft of the UDP along with various lists of proposed changes or modifications to that draft and its policies.

Authority	Public Consultation Draft	Deposit Draft	Proposed Changes (1)	Proposed Changes (2)	Public Inquiry Start Date	Inspectors Report	Modifications	Adopted
Barnsley MBC	April 1993	November 1994						
Birmingham CC	January 1990	April 1991			November 1991	January 1993	March 1993	July 1993
Bolton MBC	Summer 1991	September 1992			May 1993	September 1994	January 1995	
Bradford CC	Spring 1993	November 1993			January 1995			
Bury MBC	November 1992	October 1993	June 1994	September 1994	October 1994			
Calderdale MBC	August 1991	February 1992	May 1992		August 1992			
Coventry CC	June 1990	April 1991	October 1991		November 1991	November 1992	November 1992	March 1993
Doncaster MBC	November 1992	June 1994	April 1995		June 1995			
Dudley MBC	Not known							November 1993
Gateshead MBC	February 1992	July 1994	April 1995		Sum 1995			
Kirklees MC	February 1993	March 1994						
Knowsley MBC	Not known	October 1993	September 1994	January 1995	June 1995			
Leeds CC	May 1992	June 1993						
Liverpool CC	September 1994							
Manchester CC	September 1991	October 1992			July 1993		February 1995	July 1995
Newcastle-upon-Tyne CC	May 1991	November 1993	June 1994		November 1994			
North Tyneside MBC	October 1993							
Oldham MBC	March 1992	March 1993			January 1995		July 1995	
Rochdale MBC	April 1993	January 1994	January 1995	April 1995	May 1995			
Rotherham MBC	December 1993							

Salford CC	July 1991	June 1992			Not Known	Not Known	May 1995	May 1995
Sandwell MBC	March 1991	May 1992	January 1993		April 1993	January 1994	May 1994	January 1995
Sefton MBC	July 1990	October 1991			September 1992		Not Known 1994	May 1995
Sheffield CC	Not known 1991	June 1993	September 1994		March 1995			
Solihull MBC	Not known	September 1990						
South Tyneside MBC	June 1992	June 1995						
St Helens MBC	January 1993	April 1994	November 1994		February 1995			
Stockport MBC	Not known	February 1994	November 1994		April 1995			
Sunderland CC	Not Known 00	July 1994						
Tameside MBC	November 1991	January 1993	September 1993	November 1993	September 1994	January 1995	August 1995	
Trafford MBC	February 1992	April 1993	November 1993		February 1994		Not Known 1995	
Wakefield CC	February 1991	November 1991			May 1992		August 1994	December 1994
Walsall MBC	October 1990	November 1991			July 1992	September 1993	May 1994	
Wigan MBC	Not known	April 1993	November 1994		Spring 1994	Summer 1995		
Wirral MBC	Not known	October 1994						
Wolverhampton MBC	June 1990	May 1991			April 1992	January 1993	April 1993	September 1993

Table 3X.1: Publication dates and other key dates of the 36 UDPs surveyed

APPENDIX 4: EXAMPLE OF AN INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND THE FORM OF DATA GENERATED IN THE INTERVIEWS

This appendix contains an example interview schedule, handouts used in the interview and the transcribed results of this interview. However, all personal names and place names have been removed from the text of the schedule, handouts and transcription for reasons of confidentiality.

Case Study: B
Interviewee: XXXXXXX

Role of Interviewee: Highways Officer

Date: Fri 7 June 1996

Materials Used in Interview: The 29 Policy Directions Towards Sustainability
                                          (H/O1)
                                          : List of possible sources for UDP issues (H/O5)
                                          : Examples of policies for sustainable development in
                                          UDP (H/O6)

<u>Introduction</u>

Thankyou for agreeing to see me. I gave you a letter outlining the areas I am interested in. As I said in this letter, I am particularly interested to hear *your opinions* about the *process of* the UDP's preparation, and obtain your advice about other key actors, beside yourself, with whom I should talk.

<u>1) Check details and create dialogue</u>

1a) What is your role in the Council?
1b) And how long have you been working at this post

<u>2) How exactly have you worked with the UDP?</u>

2a) Were you consulted before the actual first draft of the plan was written?
2b) What issues did you raise then? I.E. BEFORE THE PLAN WAS WRITTEN
2c) Why was this? Why did you see these issues as important?
2d) Where/how did you raise issues - working groups, meetings, commitees?
2e) How else have you been involved in the production of the UDP?

<u>3) Sustainable Transport issues to be addressed in the plan and why?</u>

Show H/O1

I am primarily interested in the idea of sustainable development. And these are the types of issues and policies I am particularly keen to talk about. There are 8 general headings or policy areas, under each of which are a list of specific policy directions or suggestions that may have been included in the UDP. This is taken from the LGMB's *Framework for Sustainability*.

3a) Are you familiar with these types of issues, do you know the LGMB Framework document?
Note particularly the Key Areas of Transport and Built Environment

3b) Do you see these transport issues as something the <u>UDP is, or should be</u>, addressing?
3c) If so, why is the UDP <u>addressing, or not addressing</u>, such issues?

3d) My research seemed to indicate that the XXXXX UDP had relatively strong policies addressing Transport. Do you know why this is, do you agree? Where do these policies derive - Was it from Highways Department?
(Show H/O6 to demonstrate types of policies referred to)

3e) Do you support these types of polcies? - XXXXX seemed to suggest that Highways resisted some policies on traffic calming (wouldnt allow them to use the word) and cycle use.

4) Influences on the UDP

I've got a list of possible sources for these issues, were any of them important in influencing the content of the plan, and esp the policies in Tpt

Show H/O5

- the planners themselves
- officers from other departments
- local political issues
- local politicians - party issues
- existing development plans
- regional guidance or planning legislation
- which particular organisations outside the Council approached?

Match each of areas to each source - which source of influence on the UDP promotes which Area (or type) of issues in the plan and why.

4a) At What stage of the UDP preparation were these issues important?

- Before the draft plan was written, have they been locally important for a long time?
- During its public consultation or deposit stages - did people object to the transport policies?
- During its implementation i.e. when planning decisions were being made using the UDP

5) Where were all the issues you've mentioned above mainly discussed? - in the Planning Department, the Planning Committee?

6) Did anyone object to these issues, did they cause division between Council departments, or between councillors and prove controversial?

7) Do you have any views or experience on the other Key Areas of sustainable dvelopment

10) Are all of these specific sustainable development issues (i.e. in my definition) able to be addressed by UDP policies?

10a) Go through each area/Policy Direction - What types of sustainability issues are really outside the realms of a UDP, or don't really belong in a development plan?
10b) Just how good is a UDP as a vehicle for sustainable development?

- getting things on the agenda - esp. issues in my definition
- implementing policies

10c) Is this changing with the new PPG's, for example are real transport changes likely to happen in XXXX after PPG 13? Will XXXX's UDP be fundamentally different when it is reviewed in the next 4 or 5 years?

Thank you very much for your time, and the help you have given to my research.

Handout 1: Policy Directions Towards Sustainability by Policy Area

Policy Area	Policy Directions for Sustainable Development
Natural Resources	• Production minimisation for non-renewable resources • Production limits for renewable resources • Protection of sensitive sites from extraction • Mitigation of environmental impacts
Energy	• Improve energy efficiency in existing buildings • Set design standards for energy efficiency in new developments • Encourage renewable energy sources • Encourage combined heat and power schemes
Transport	• Mixed land use policies to reduce travel demand in new developments • Increase availability and attractiveness of public and non-motorised transport
Land, Air and Water Quality	• Set local pollution limits • Identify and treat contaminated land
Solid Waste Management	• Encouragement and planning conditions concerning waste reduction, re-use, recycling and recovery • Ensure responsible disposal, minimise impact and costs of waste disposal
Rural Land, Natural Habitats and Biodiversity	• Absolute protection of nationally designated sites of landscape and habitat importance • Designation and protection against development of locally important sites • Encourage re-use of already developed and derelict land, promote compact settlements • Management of recreation, lowering impact of use and access in countryside
Economic Development	• Design standards for durability and reparability of new developments • Conditions of landscaping and compensation to new industrial developments • Re-use of already developed and derelict land
Built Environment	• Investment in environment and facilities of inner cities • Strengthen and concentrate facilities in inner cities • Integrated land use, provision of all immediate needs locally • Preference for medium rise, high density developments • Site new developments on redundant and vacant sites • Protect and enhance urban green-space • Protection of buildings and areas of cultural and historic interest • Invest in public and non-motorised transport/ restrict car use

Handout 5: Possible Sources of Influence on Issues in the UDP

- the planners themselves

- Officers from other departments

- Members - local political issues

- Members - party issues

- Existing development plans

- Regional guidance or planning legislation

- Particular organisations outside the Council?

Handout 6 - Examples of policies for Sustainable Development in the XXXX UDP

Transport

increasing availability and attractiveness of public and non-motorised transport, restricting car use.

TN1 THE COUNCIL WILL ENSURE THE INTEGRATION OF LAND USE AND TRANSPORT IN ITS CONSIDERATION OF INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND IN TERMS OF POSSIBLE CHANGES IN WIDER LAND USE AND TRANSPORT PATTERNS.

TN1.1 The Council, in allocating land for development and in determining planning applications, will take into consideration whether the site:

a. can make the best use of the existing transport network; and
b. can be served by public transport.

TN2.2 The Council will support developments by British Rail and others to improve provision, both within and outside the Borough, for rail freight, and in particular for future continental freight services to/from the XX region through the Chunnel.

PT1 THE COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE THE MAINTENANCE, IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT THROUGHOUT THE BOROUGH, INCLUDING:

A. IMPROVED ACCESS TO XXXX AIRPORT
B. DEVELOPMENT OF THE METROLINK LRT SYSTEM AND, IN PARTICULAR, CONVERSION OF THE XXXX-XXXX-XXXX RAILWAY LINE AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A DIVERSION THROUGH XXXX TOWN CENTRE

PT1.2 The Council will seek, at the earliest opportunity:

a. the conversion of the XXXX-XXXX-XXXX railway line to LRT operation; and
c. the implementation of an LRT diversion through XXXX town centre.

Development which would prejudice these the implementation of the proposed diversion through XXXX town centre ...... will not be permitted.

> **RV1.3** The Council will seek to encourage safer and more effective use of the road network and greater use of public transport by the following means:
>
> a. the removal of through traffic from residential areas and a reduction in traffic speeds by measures including road humps, access controls, chicanes, selective road closures, speed restrictions and width restrictions;
> b. bus priority measures;
> c. appropriate traffic management measures to control them movement of heavy goods vehicles where these cause environmental problems; and
> d. higher long stay car park charges in and around the Town Centre Shopping Core.

Natural Resources

production minimisation for non-renewables, mitigation of environmental impacts.

> **LR3** THE PRINCIPAL MINERALS OF ECONOMIC VALUE WITHIN THE BOROUGH ARE SAND, GRAVEL, SANDSTONE AND GRITSTONE.
>
> THE COUNCIL CONSIDERS THAT PROPOSAL RELATED TO THESE MINERALS SHOULD BE REQUIRES TO:
>
> A. CLEARLY ESTABLISH THAT THERE IS A NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT;
> ....

Note also very strong and detailed DC criteria (LR3.2 & LR3.3) to protect sensitive sites and mitigate environmental impacts.

Solid Waste Management

encourage waste reuse, reduction & recycling, minimise the impact of waste disposal.

> **W1** THE COUNCIL CONSIDERS THAT DEVELOPMENT MUST BE SUSTAINABLE IN TERMS OF ITS EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT. TO THAT END IT WILL:
>
> A. .... SEEK TO REDUCE THE PRESENT RELIANCE ON LANDFILL AS THE MAIN METHOD OF WASTE DISPOSAL OF UNTREATED WASTE, BY ENCOURAGING PROPOSALS WHICH REDUCE THE NEED TO DISPOSE OF UNTREATED REFUSE, AND WASTE TREATMENT METHODS WHICH REDUCE THE VOLUME OF WASTE ....
> B. SEEK TO MINIMISE PRACTICABLE LEVELS OF GROUND, AIR, WATER AND NOISE POLLUTION ..... AND TO ENSURE THAT EXISTING LEVELS OF POLLUTION IN THE BOROUGH ARE PROGRESSIVELY REDUCED AS RESOURCES OR OPPORTUNITIES PERMIT; AND
> C. TAKE ACTION TO CONSERVE ENERGY IN OPERATING ITS OWN SERVICES, AND ALSO ENCOURAGE INNOVATIVE PROPOSALS WHICH AIM TO CONSERVE AND EFFICIENTLY USE ENERGY ..

W1.1 In determining a planning application for a waste disposal or waste handling site, the Council will take into consideration the provision made for recycling and reclaiming waste materials .... Facilities which include such measures will be permitted ....

W1.6 The Council will support the use of waste materials including colliery shale and pulverised fuel ash from railway embankments, as alternatives to newly won minerals.

S1.12 In determining a planning application for a retaol development with a gross floorspace of 1000 square metre or more, the Council will take into consideration:

c. the provision made for domestic waste recycling facilities.

Innovative policies in other areas:

Energy: W.10 In determining a planning application for development, the Council will take into consideration the provision made for the conservation and efficient use of energy, through thoughtful location, landscaping, design, use of materials, layout and orientation of buildings.

Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 17 also available.

Energy: W1.11 The Council will normally permit a proposal for the development of a sustainable energy source, or for the commercial extraction of methane gas from landfill, landraising or sewage treatment site subject to the following considerations ....

Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 18 also available.

Case Study: B
Interview with XXXXXX - Section Engineer, Transportation Section
Thu 6 June 1996

Note also schedule and handouts used in interview.

S - Interviewee   I - Interviewer

Tape starts with some discussion about one of councillors, Dr XXXX.

I - What exactly is your post in the Highways department?

S - Section engineer, Transportation Section.

I - And this is the Transportation Section?

S - Yes. We were involved with the planning dept in the UDP.

I - And you've been working here throughout the making of the UDP?

S - Yes. I worked closely with XXXXX in the preparation of the policies and investigation of the sites.

I - Really? I was going to ask you if you were formally consulted before the first draft of the plan was written?

S - Yes. The policies were sent across and we read them and altered those in accordance with Council policy on what we thought was advisable, or what we thought was achievable within that period. Which is the crucial thing.

I - Did you raise any particular points or issues?

S - There were ... a lot of it we weren't consulted on, or we were consulted but weren't interested in and had no particular comment. A lot of the policies we don't have very much to say on [flicks through UDP]. Waste, pollution, energy not very much. But some aspects of those, I mean we did read through it all.

I - This is when there has been a written draft prepared.

S - No, before that. We saw it 2 -3 years from now, we were involved in the early days in the preparation of the policies.

I - Before the public consultation?

S - Yes, very much before, probably a year before that.

I - But after draft policies had been prepared?

S - No, probably at the same time. We were involved with XXXXX in formulating the draft policies. Particularly on the transport ones. The sections on transport - PT, the general one on transport [i.e. chapters of UDP] WE had a lot to do with and a lot of the wording was joint compromise.

I - How did that work? Was it officer meetings, did you have departmental meetings?

S - Not really, they tended to send suggested drafts and we send alterations. Leaving some things out, altering the wording, suggesting new wording. Mainly with the aim of getting something achievable in this period. There wasn't much point in saying that, although something looked very fine in terms of words, it didn't achieve anything.

I - I was going to ask if you raised any specific points or issues.

S - Yes, like on say parking provision. Now PPG 6 and 13 is suggesting maximum parking levels, this [UDP] was produced before PPG 6 and 13 were altered. So it was pre the change in government guidelines on out of town shopping centres, it really could do with a rewrite now to take that into account. In some ways that probably helped us as traditional engineers in a traditional transportation department. A lot of this [UDP content] is traditional thinking, and it hasn't taken account of alterations in the last year or two. Which made it easier for us, this is the type of thinking we've had for the last 15 years, it wasn't a great alteration for us, whereas we'd probably find it more difficult now.

There's bits in the TPP that its probably worth you taking away. Just jumping ahead a little now, Greater Manchester transport policies, there's a summary and then the strategy, that probably takes more account of the planning guidelines. So that is an alteration.

I - So do you see that [TPP] as significantly different to the UDP?

S - I think it is yes, there's the cycling policy and public transport policy. Not particularly parking policy, were still having problems with parking policy ..... we have a problem in XXXX in getting a parking policy acceptable to all parties. These [TPP] are produced by planers and engineers together. The planners are wanting to restrict parking and reduce out of town centre development. The engineering side are very wary of that as they're concerned the implications of parking on the highway for road safety. If you cant park in a car park you're going to park somewhere if you go to the centre. We don't accept that you wont got to the centre, in the short term - you might in the long term. So you're going to park on the highway, and you're going to have a safety problem then. And highway safety is paramount as far as were concerned.

So you've got a problem there. There's a clash with planners. I understand what you're trying to achieve, but I think the engineers would see themselves as more practical.

I - Did this debate come out in the UDP?

S - It wasn't because PPG 6 and 13 hadn't been amended when this came out - it [UDP] got in just before then .... So I think its lacking now and doesn't address these concerns..

I - Right, I'm interested in sustainable development and UDP's, this is my definition of sustainability for UDP's [show H/O1].

S - It is pretty difficult to define.

I - Yes, and I've tried to do that, I'm sure you're familiar with the issues.

S - Yes, all these are the kind of thing you'll find in here [TPP] ..... that gores into what SD means in transport terms. There are a lot more points in it [than you're definition], there's the twelve points rather than just the two points for SD ... were trying to make public transport more attractive for people who have a car, never mind people who haven't ...

I - So do you actually se these [my definition] transport points as something the UDP should be addressing?

S - Yes, very much so. And I think it probably does. The land use policies saying we'll try and put new development by public transport, well tray and put a heavy industrial use where it can be easily served by freight traffic not on side roads but near motorways. Land use is crucial, its got to be.

I - And you think the UDP should be promoting PT as well?

S - Yes.

I - You said before that this UDP isn't as good as the TPP.

S - I don't think it goes far enough, it was fairly forward thinking when it was produced 2 years ago. But then fairly suddenly PPG 6 and 13 came on scene and things jumped ahead a lot unexpectedly They were unexpected documents, especially from a conservative government, well I thought so, it was a change of position you wouldn't have imagined.

I - So these issues aren't addressed well in the UDP?

S - Well I think it has but it just doesn't go far enough.

I - Why is that?

S - Because things have just moved ahead since then ... If we were writing it now wed have liked to go into more detail. I think the TPP booklet is of some help for you, it suggests the ways things should be going. The particular policies need to be brought back into the UDP ....

I - So if I was to compare the UDP and TPP ...

I - think you'd find some changes there, that is the kind of evolution and change in policies you'd find - by carrot and stick approach. You're trying to encourage greater

bus and cycle use, but you're also trying to force people into that by trying to restrict available space for car use on highway, by putting in bus lanes or increasing car parking charges. The nut you're going to have to crack is car parking charges. That's the crucial one were having problems with. Members and officers are concerned about the financial viability of the town centre. Traditional thinking is that you need a lot of parking to service it ...

I - Yes, I was going to ask if particular issues proved to be contentious.

S - There's two or three. There's one on car parking, it has to be addressed by lots of districts, XXXX needs a consensus. Other wise you're going to get some districts like XXXX which used to have free car parking, and other districts were concerned that they would steal a rise by having free car parking. ... So you'll get a lot of pressure, not just from officers but from particularly members ... members are particularly concerned and quite rightly. The retail strength is vital to the town, it isn't just somewhere to go shopping it employs a lot of people and there's a lot of knock on effects in that.

I - So you're saying that this debate didn't really come out in the UDP?

S - That hasn't really ... its just coming out in the TPP now. There were some objections at that time in the UDP, whether we just put a couple of bland statements in, I cant remember now.

With the TPP having developed apace, although it says Transport Policies and Programmes, the policy was particularly bland, it was never really addressed. But the government are pushing us now to say more about the policy side, particularly now they're asking for a package approach .... We wanted something that addresses, goes down the same route as sustainability. bringing together public and private transport into a package of measures which, as a whole package, achieves more than the individual items. Now that by necessity has to address things like parking, things that weren't addressed before. So the policies are becoming very important. So the policies in the TPP, I think, are taking over from the UDP.

Because the UDP is for a 10 year period, you'll find that the TPP are coming up with relevant policies, because thinking is changing so quickly on this. The UDP needs updating, now ... I think its in sore need of it now, particular sections - maybe not the housing side but the transport. I don't think we say much at all at all about parking do we? .... [quotes parking policy on p118] ... it doesn't really say very much does it?

I - Interesting you should say that because I've surveyed the 36 UDP's outside London and XXXXX came out as stronger in terms of sustainable transport. [show H/O6] These are some policies I've highlighted, its got lots of public transport policies, integrating land use, I was really interested in these types of policies.

S - I think integrating land use is a strong point in our UDP. But I think in the parking side we were a bit too cautious, and maybe rightly so at the time because of concern from members.

I - So if these policies were going to be stronger, it was the members that were objecting to it?

S - I don't think particularly on land use, they weren't particularly concerned on land use policy. Land use is maybe too difficult an idea to grasp hold of. Whereas everybody can understand parking policy, its how much do you pay - how much does it cost? It when you come down to detail, Ill think you'll always find that with councils. Its when you come down to the detail which is understandable, which is understandable by the public, you'll have strong arguments on it.

The capital programme for instance, ooh about 5 million pounds of capital programme, probably 4 and a half million will be approved with no question. And yet the half million pound spending on footways in Failsworth will take hours to discuss, and yet you've rubber stamped 2 million pounds to be spent on XXXXX Way! You'll find the same in the UDP, the things that are a bit distant and a bit boring you don't really get much attention. Its only when it comes down to things that obviously affect people - like where am I going to park! It when you come onto sites as well, particular housing sites. It was the housing sites which led to the long discussions at the PI stage. Whereas the policy side was probably only 2 days out of the 3 weeks, the rest was about the particular sites. The only people that objected tended to be the house builders, who would object to, I don't know .. restrictions on parking provision.

- Another officer enters with questions - pause for a couple of minutes.

I - In regard to the policies, my research seemed to indicate that the XXXXX UDP had relatively stronger policies than other UDP's. Why is that, where do those kind of policies [H/O6] come from?

S - XXXXX's got a lower car ownership than XXXX and the rest of the country, bus travel has always been fairly important and will continues to be. Its a fairly compact town and PT is able to serve it adequately. I think probably that sort of reason. There's always been a good relationship with the PTE.

I - Was it the planners who were bringing up these policies, or was it you or was it the members?

S - I would say that on the transport a lot of wording came from this department. I think its quite likely that it was things that was done by this department with alterations from the planning department. It wasn't particularly member led, but was discussed with the PTE at the final draft stage. So there were formal and informal discussions with the PTE, they're a formal consultee as well.

Things like this on the channel tunnel, with some kind of freight service in this area, is something the Association of XXXX Authorities has discussed ..... something that they've taken for their Association of XXXX Authorities P&T, the Planning and Transportation Committee. They had a similar resolution which we were aware of and we sought to have it in here.

I - So these initiatives are from highway engineers?

S - I would think so yes. And going onto the PT1, item B on the Metrolink ... we are particularly keen in this department, but also in the planning department, to get a Metrolink to XXXXX. And we saw the UDP as a useful pressure, or useful place to repeat that policy. Our members would have expected something like that, it was in before they saw it, but no doubt if it hadn't been in they would have said 'why aren't you putting this kind of thing in?' And its repeated strongly in the TPP. So its really something that's been to committee in the past and it was consistent with Council policy to keep putting it in. So maybe, having only worked for one district I don't know, but maybe we are more forward thinking .... you tend to assume that everyone does it this way but maybe they don't.

I - This is another handout, from the top of my head I thought that these could be certain things that influence the UDP [show H/O5]. I don't know if you'd like to highlight and particular one.

S - A lot of issues aren't just raised by councillors, they are raised at some stage by councillors but it tends to be later. The draft UDP was prepared and went to committee and there was some comments on that .... to my knowledge there weren't a vast number of issues raised by councillors. The draft UDP as submitted to members was reasonably acceptable, there weren't any vast changes suggested by councillors as far as I know.

I - Yes, I was just trying to tie down whether it was officer led, councillor led, or party ideologically led.

S - ...... the chairman of committees in particular, so there would be lots of discussion with them. The broad outline of what we were thinking of saying in each section would be discussed with them, and the officers would go away write that and come back and have informal discussions with one or two members. The leaders of the committees, rather than go to the whole committee. The whole committee would be consulted later on at a further stage of the draft. I don't think that the councillors played , as I'm aware, a big a part as your suggesting .... they did informally, but at the formal stage at committee there were a vast number of changes.

I - So you cant recall any particular issues?

S - NO, I didn't go to committee anyway, but I cant recall from reading the press at the time ...

I - They weren't demanding public transport or anything like this.

S - No that I remember. I think that because councillors had already asked for committee reports on things like LRT, and that was incorporated in the UDP. So we were aware of what they wanted and we incorporated in it. They'd already made their feelings known previous to UDP ..... it tended not to be party issues on general matters of policy, there were on individual sites but party matters didn't come to the fore on policy. Seemed to be a general consensus on that. It was more when you came to particular sites, particularly housing sites, but some industrial as well ...... Its changing to some extent

now, it's been a strong Labour Council, but its not as strong labour now. The LD have a strong presence and they want to make their strength felt. But even so there tends to be a broad agreement ...

I - You obviously agree with a lot of the policies in the UDP ... I wondered if at that time the Highways weren't as keen on using terms such as traffic calming, XXXXX suggested that there was a bit of debate around that.

S - [laughs] Yes there was. I think that's probably what I was touching on with the new PPG 6 and 13 guidelines, but things have moved on since then. Which is why I was thinking it is time to have a rewrite. The wording is very carefully chosen, as a compromise between what the planners wanted and what we wanted ... A lot of time was spent on what words to choose ... The word traffic calming, at the time three years ago, it was seen as a planning term. The highway term ... was more road safety. Traffic calming was more a planning term to reduce impact of traffic for environmental grounds and that was not seen as an engineering concern. Whereas I think that's gone now.

I - So the highway engineering view was in conflict?

S - I think there was, I think that the two have come together now. But there was ....

I - Was it the same with cycling as well?

S - To some extent. There aren't a lot of cyclists in XXXXX, and our concern as officers was (and we'll come onto this with bus lanes later) that we didn't want to be seen to be in front of public opinion. If you were you may put in measures that didn't get widespread approval and you would lose a lot of time and effort and up worse than you were in the first place.

Some PG's are quite strong, as are cyclists. The number of cyclists in XXXXX, is minimal, it will increase. And we are doing more, we've got a cycle way study in XXXXX which got £20,000 this year. Which is a big movement from three years ago. But we were concerned that with a fairly low capital budget we didn't want to spend a lot for a small number of people - and quite rightly why should we? We were there to look after the people of XXXXX as a whole, if there was only 1/2% of people cycling we would only spend 1/2% of money on them.

I - And it wasn't really seen possible to try and increase that 1/2% of people at the time?

S - Not particularly. We were there to make sure they were safe, not to increase the usage. I think things have moved ion since then. We were wary that trying to be in front of public opinion we may lose it.

I - would particularly feel that way on bus priority lanes. There are a lot of people who use busses, but the roads here are congested. The principle way of producing a bus lane is by taking space away from that for the car traffic, and this would further increase congestion of car traffic. If you do that too far, too much, yore going to be under pressure from members and from members of public to take it out. So you're going to lose what you put in. So it's really a softly softly approach, you do what you can and

councillors take this attitude as well. They respond to public concerns, and they get people ringing them up, it happens .... So we were very wary of putting things in the UDP we couldn't fulfil. We didn't want to put policies in there which sounded very fine but we weren't able to fulfil and equally we'd have quoted to us - 'well you said in the UDP you'd do this' and when it came to it we didn't really mean that. We didn't want to get into that position and the wording was chosen very carefully.

I - And that was done between you and XXXXX?

S - Yes. That will continue .... it took a long time on the wording of those chapters, it may seem bland now but it took several months .... now none of that came out later on, this was at draft stage so the final stage wasn't really altered.

I - At the deposit draft stage or PC draft stage?

S - ...... As far as policies on transportation were concerned they weren't dramatically altered .... We came to an agreement before it went into there [i.e. before policies in any PC draft] and it wasn't particularly altered afterwards. There were some changes, but not to the policies, to the sites themselves. Particularly housing sites.

I - OK, I think that's covered nearly all the questions. You haven't got any particular comments on other areas?

S - The public consultation, I wasn't so much involved in. Apart from the fact that, all the objectors were listed. XXXXX would read through them all, I had lots of meetings with him, and we discussed the particular ones that had some relevance to transport, and I would write proofs of evidence for them. Most of those were to do with housing sites, a few were to do with policy ..... there were a few things on policies, it tended to be minor ones. A few from the HBF, there was one on bridleways ... not serious matters.

There was some from the PTE on traffic calming. They were concerned that traffic calming on minor roads would effect bus services. It slows them down, damages the busses and is uncomfortable for the passengers. Again we had to alter the wording at PC stage on that particular one ...... [goes on at some length about disadvantages of traffic calming to busses] - its not generally acceptable to bus services, it has a negative effect ...

I - don't think there's anything else.

I - Can I just ask one final question ..... you know that definition I had of sustainability, I just wondered if you thought it all should be covered in UDP's?

S - I think it should. Everybody thinks they know what they mean about sustainability, which is maybe an advantage - it can mean whatever you want it to mean! We tried to cover it a bit more in the TPP we says about sustainable regeneration, I don't know of any particular definition that is generally acceptable .....

I - What about this [definition], this may be a bit more controversial, as I said this is from the LGMB work - I don't know if you're familiar with their *Framework For Local Sustainability*?

S - No not that one ....

I - This one [Policy Direction] actually says you should be restricting car use.

S - I think you have to yes. Its a carrot and stick approach really. The carrot is to make PT more acceptable to users ...... [goes onto describe several methods -, bus lanes, etc.] .... You've then got to bring the stick approach in tandem with it, in particular parking charges I think. Restricting car use is difficult in a democracy. The best way to do it is probably by restricting the number of car parking places available and the charges for them. You may want to close access to the town centre CAR PARKING until 10 o'clock in the morning. So your not going to get any commuters in it, your going to save it for the shoppers. You'll definitely have a different parking structure .... its that sort of thing. But on CAR PARKING you have to have agreement between adjacent districts. In a conurbation you cant have one going out by itself ... we seem to be getting there in XXXX. At the moment I think its the greatest failing in the TPP .... it isn't through want of trying, we are trying, its one particular matter that the members are particularly concerned about .... normally members aren't that concerned on most matters, if officers have looked at it and made a recommendation members will tend to agree. They will not on parking ....they will send policies back because they don't like them. They think CG should take a role on it as well, they think they've been left carrying the baby .. its a national problem and they want more input from CG.

[refers to ICE booklet which also called on CG to take a lead role]

I - And do you have any views on the other areas in this definition, I know there not really in your field ...

S - I think strengthening and concentrating things in inner cities - which is what were trying to do in XXXXX ... and it seems to have worked in XXXXX .... a better use of the TOWN CENTRE.

I - Is there anything that is maybe outside the realms of a UDP? Maybe a UDP cant really address.

S - ... There's nothing they shouldn't be doing, but I think you'll find its out of date now, its using ground and needs updating .... I thought that it should be updated every 5 years. We were a bit unfortunate that PPG 6 and 13 were issued just after the UDP was finished ... The other matters I don't know really.

I - OK I think that's covered everything we need in a lot of detail. I appreciate it.

APPENDIX 5: NUD.IST DATABASE USED TO INDEX CASE STUDY RESULTS

The structure of the database used to store information from the case studies is reproduced overleaf. This 'tree structure' (Sage 1995) consists of various linked nodes where categories and sub-categories are stored. The name and definition of every node is reproduced overleaf.

Once the index system has been designed, specific documents and text units from the case study interviews can be referenced at each node. Therefore the nodes store results from the case study and ideas about these results, helping the researcher to organise his/her analysis. In this way the NUD.IST database enables a structured analysis of a large amount of qualitative data to take place.

301
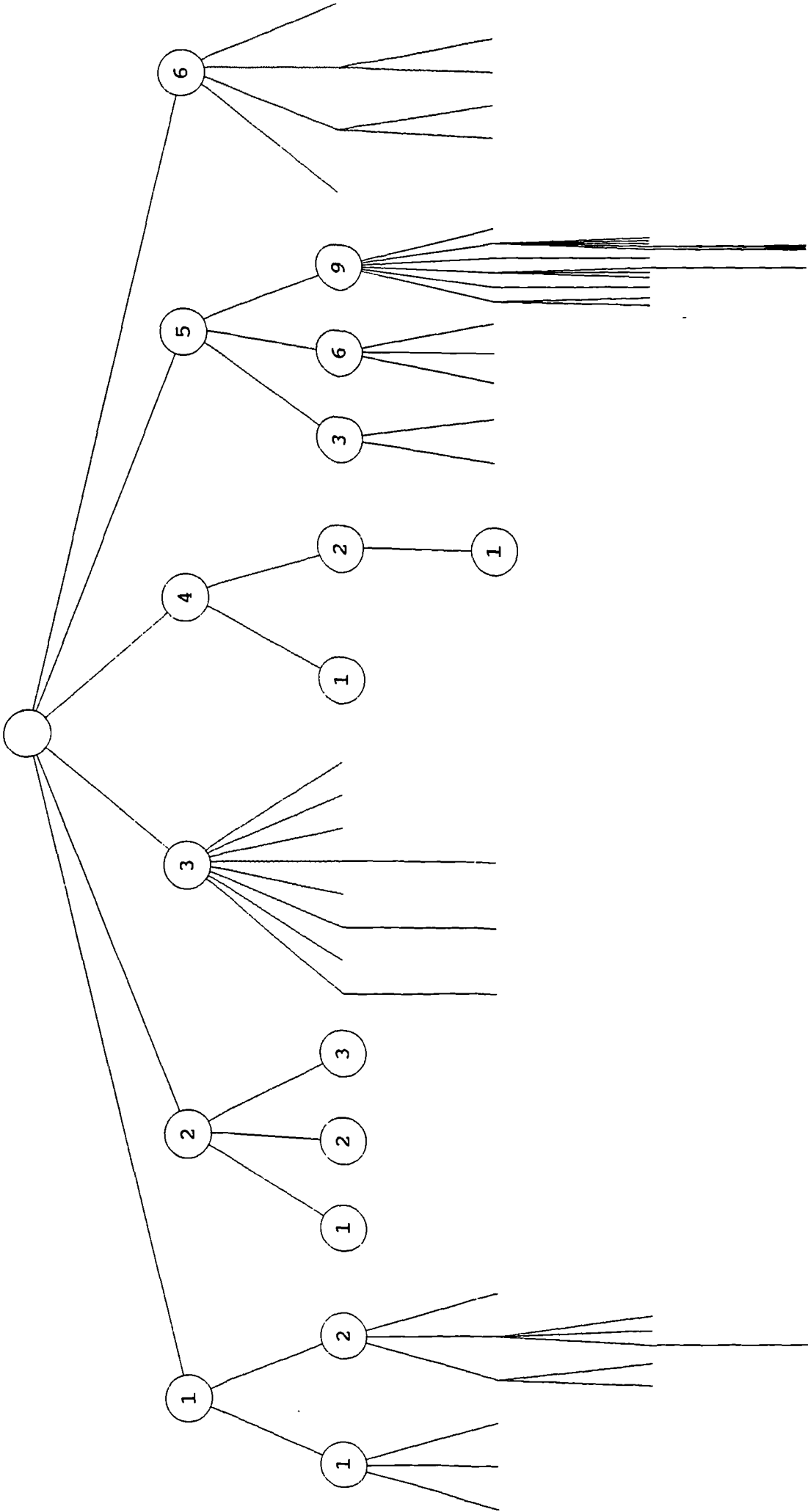
Name and definition of nodes:

Q.S.R. NUD.IST Power version, revision 3.0.4 GUI.
Licensee: Garreth Bruff.

PROJECT: SDUDP1, User Garreth Bruff, 10:32 am, 23 Aug, 1997.
****
(1)   /Basedata
*** Definition: Contains the factual (facesheet) info on all interviewees
****
(1 1)   /Basedata/Authority
*** Definition: The local authority in which the interviewee was an actor.
****
(1 1 1)   /Basedata/Authority/A-XXXX
*** Definition: This node contains all the interviewees who played a role in case study A.
****
(1 1 2)   /Basedata/Authority/B-XXXX
*** Definition: This node contains all interviewees who played a role in case study B.
****
(1 1 3)   /Basedata/Authority/A&B
*** Definition: This node contains interviewees who played a role in both case study A an
****
(1 2)   /Basedata/Role
*** Definition: This node contains the role of each interviewee in the UDP process.
****
(1 2 1)   /Basedata/Role/Officers
*** Definition: This node contains all the local governmnet officers interviewed.
****
(1 2 1 1)   /Basedata/Role/Officers/Planner
*** Definition: Contains the planning officers interviewed.
****
(1 2 1 2)   /Basedata/Role/Officers/Other Officer
*** Definition: Contains all officers interviewed who are not planning officers.
****
(1 2 2)   /Basedata/Role/Members
*** Definition: This node contains all the elected members interviewed.
****
(1 2 2 1)   /Basedata/Role/Members/Senior
*** Definition: This node contains senior members interviewed ie Lab Chair, V-C or simil
****
(1 2 2 1 1)   /Basedata/Role/Members/Senior/Poor Data
*** Definition: Comments on how senior politicians less likely to give insights, only fac
****
(1 2 2 2)   /Basedata/Role/Members/Back-bencher
*** Definition: Contains the back-bench members of the ruling Labour parties.
****
(1 2 2 3)   /Basedata/Role/Members/Opposition
*** Definition: Contains oppostion members interviewed, ie Con or Lib-Dem
****
(1 2 3)   /Basedata/Role/Other Role
*** Definition: This node contains all the interviewees who were neither local governmnet
****
(2)   /Process
*** Definition: Contains all references to the process of each UDP. See memo.
****
(2 1)   /Process/Befor1st
*** Definition: Contains data on the events before 1st draft UDP written.

.

302

****

(2 2)   /Process/After1st
*** Definition:
Contains data on events after 1st draft written.

****

(2 3)   /Process/PI
*** Definition: Contains data on events during & after PI stage.

****

(3)   /Content
*** Definition: Contains refernces to the content of the UDP's.

****

(3 1)   /Content/NatRes
*** Definition: Contains refs to the Key Area of Natural resources.

****

(3 1 1)   /Content/NatRes/Case B Better
*** Definition: Contains refs to suggest why Case B is better in these Key Areas.

****

(3 2)   /Content/Enrgy
*** Definition: Contains refs to Key Area of Energy.

****

(3 3)   /Content/Trnspt
*** Definition: Contains refs to Key Area of Transport.

****

(3 3 1)   /Content/Trnspt/Case B Better
*** Definition:
Copy of node (3 1 1) .

****

(3 4)   /Content/LA&WQ
*** Definition: Contains refs to Key Area of LAnd, Air & Water Quality.

****

(3 5)   /Content/SWM
*** Definition: Contains refs to Key Area of Solid Waste Management.

****

(3 5 1)   /Content/SWM/Case B Better
*** Definition: Refs that naswer question why Case B is better in this Key Area.;

****

(3 6)   /Content/Rural
*** Definition: Contains refs to Rural Land, Natural Habitats & Biodiversity.

****

(3 7)   /Content/EDevt
*** Definition: Contains refs to Key Area of Economic Development.

****

(3 8)   /Content/Built
*** Definition: Contains refs to Key Area of Bulit Environment.

****

(4)   /Implementation
*** Definition: Contains refernces to the implementation iof the UDP policies.

****

(4 1)   /Implementation/A-sites
*** Definition: Refs to contentious sites in case study A.

****

(4 2)   /Implementation/B-Sites
*** Definition: Refs to contentious sites in case study B.

****

(4 2 1)   /Implementation/B-Sites/Beal- Dugdale
*** No Definition

****

(5)   /Themes

*** Definition: Emerging themes about SD and UDP's are grouped in this node. See memo.
****

(5 3)   /Themes/Participation
*** Definition: Contains references to community participaion in UDP process.
****

(5 3 1)   /Themes/Participation/Negative
*** Definition: Contains refs to -ve/reactive involvement of public in UDP process.Nimbys
****

(5 3 2)   /Themes/Participation/Positive
*** Definition: Contains refs to positive/proactive involvement of public in UDP process.
****

(5 6)   /Themes/Opinions
*** Definition: Contains refs to specific & interesting opinions on SD and udp.
****

(5 6 1)   /Themes/Opinions/Negative.
*** Definition: Contains refs to negative opinions of SD as a concept.
****

(5 6 3)   /Themes/Opinions/Plg Should = SD
*** Definition: Refs suggest that although UDP doesnt meet SD needs, it could or should.
****

(5 6 4)   /Themes/Opinions/Positive
*** Definition: Contains refs to positive view of SD as a concept.
****

(5 9)   /Themes/Planner Led
*** Definition: Contains refs to support idea that UDP's were led by the planners.
****

(5 9 2)   /Themes/Planner Led/Professionalism
*** Definition: Refs indicate sense of professionalism in planners as driving their input
****

(5 9 2 1)   /Themes/Planner Led/Professionalism/Balancing
*** Definition: Contains refs to idea of plg balancing envt/econ/society.
****

(5 9 2 5)   /Themes/Planner Led/Professionalism/Plg=SD
*** Definition: Contains refs on plg=SD, or UDP=SD.
****

(5 9 3)   /Themes/Planner Led/Other Depts
*** Definition: Influence of other departments in the same authority on the UDP.
****

(5 9 3 2)   /Themes/Planner Led/Other Depts/Integration
*** Definition: Contains refs to integration, or lack of it, in Council.
****

(5 9 4)   /Themes/Planner Led/Remit of UDP
*** Definition:
Refs identify factors which define the remit of the UDP.
****

(5 9 4 1)   /Themes/Planner Led/Remit of UDP/Barriers
*** Definition: Refs to institutional/structural barriers to incorporating SD in UDP .
****

(5 9 4 2)   /Themes/Planner Led/Remit of UDP/Innovation
*** Definition: Refs innovative policies or ideas in relation to SD and UDP's.
****

(5 9 4 4)   /Themes/Planner Led/Remit of UDP/Central Govt
*** Definition: Contains refs to cenral govt influences and considerations of ppg's.
****

(5 9 4 4 2)   /Themes/Planner Led/Remit of UDP/Central Govt/Critique of Plg System
*** Definition: Refs criticise planning system and its constraints.
****

(5 9 6)   /Themes/Planner Led/History

*** Definition: Contains refs to influence of existing plans or local plg history on UDP.
****

(5 9 6 3)   /Themes/Planner Led/History/Timing
*** Definition: Contains refs to timing of UDP and how this effected its content..
****

(5 9 7)   /Themes/Planner Led/Members
*** Definition: Contains refs to member led issues on UDP.
****

(5 9 7 1)   /Themes/Planner Led/Members/Party Political
*** Definition: Contains refs to party political motivations to getting involved in UDP.
****

(5 9 7 1 1)   /Themes/Planner Led/Members/Party Political/A-Sites, politcl
*** Definition: Search for (INTERSECT (5 9 7 1) (4 1))-party political issues and sites
****

(5 9 7 1 2)   /Themes/Planner Led/Members/Party Political/B-Sites, politcl
*** Definition: Search for (INTERSECT (5 9 7 1) (4 2)) - party political issues and sites.
****

(5 9 7 3)   /Themes/Planner Led/Members/Elite
*** Definition: Contains suggestions of a powerful political elite, also implicit politic
****

(5 9 7 3 1)   /Themes/Planner Led/Members/Elite/Implicit politics
*** Definition: Contains refs to idea that political agenda is implicitly fed to planners.
****

(5 9 7 3 2)   /Themes/Planner Led/Members/Elite/A-Elite
*** Definition: Search for (INTERSECT (5 9 7 3) (1 1 1))-political elite in Case A.
****

(5 9 7 3 3)   /Themes/Planner Led/Members/Elite/B-Elite
*** Definition: Search for (INTERSECT (1 1 2) (5 9 7 3))-political elite in Case B.
****

(5 9 7 4)   /Themes/Planner Led/Members/Other
*** Definition: Contains refs to on motivations for members to get envtl issues in to UDP.
****

(5 9 7 5)   /Themes/Planner Led/Members/Wards
*** Definition: Contains refs to a ward level view of UDP by members.
****

(5 9 7 7)   /Themes/Planner Led/Members/Consensus
*** Definition: Contains refs to SD issues which did not split parties.
****

(5 9 8)   /Themes/Planner Led/Regional
*** Definition: Contains refs to regional influences on UDP.
****

(6)   /Results - Extra
*** Definition: Sub-tree contains results of extra searches made on indexing.
****

(6 1)   /Results - Extra/A21
*** Definition: Search for 'A21', no restrictions.
****

(6 2)   /Results - Extra/Imlicit agenda
*** Definition: Cotains refs indicating implicit pol agenda influencing UDP's.
****

(6 2 1)   /Results - Extra/Imlicit agenda/A-Implicit
*** Definition: Cut from node (5 9 7 3 2 1) .
****

(6 2 2)   /Results - Extra/Imlicit agenda/B-Implicit
*** Definition: Cut from node (5 9 7 3 3 1) .
****

(6 3)   /Results - Extra/Planner led
*** Definition: Sub-tree contains data to support argument that process was planner-led.

****
(6 3 1)   /Results - Extra/Planner led/A-Planner-led
*** Definition: Cut from node (6 1 1) .
****
(6 3 1 1)   /Results - Extra/Planner led/A-Planner-led/Barriers
*** Definition: Mention of bariers by UDP Team Leader in Case A
****
(6 3 2)   /Results - Extra/Planner led/B-Planner-led
*** Definition: Cut from node (6 2 1) .
****
(6 4)   /Results - Extra/A&B-Sites, politcl
*** Definition: Contains refs to sites becoming party political .

APPENDIX 6: KEY ACTORS INTERVIEWED IN THE TWO CASE STUDY AUTHORITIES

Role ID	Role of Actor	Actual Title in Case A	Contact Type
1	UDP Team Leader	Principal Planning Officer, Policy & Transport Planning Section	Interview
2	Chief Planner	Director of Planning & Engineering Services	None
3	Environmental Policy Officer	Environment Team Leader	Interview
4	Economic Development Officer	Head of Economic & Physical Development	None
5	Environmental Health Officer	Principal Environmental Health Officer, Pollution Control	Interview
6	Highway Officer	Head of Highways Planning & Regulation	Telephone
8	Planning Ctee Chair	Planning & Environment Ctee, was Planning & Engineering Services Ctee	Telephone
9	Planning Ctee Vice Chair	Planning & Environment Ctee, was Planning & Engineering Services Ctee	Interview
10	Environment Ctee Chair	Environment & Consumer Sub	Interview
11	Environment Ctee Vice Chair	Environment & Consumer Sub	None
12	Economic Development Ctee Chair	Nearest is Urban Regeneration Working Party	Letter
13	Economic Development Ctee Vice Chair	Nearest is Urban Regeneration Working Party	Interview
14	Policy Ctee Chair	Policy Sub of Management & Finance	Letter
15	Policy Ctee Vice Chair	Policy Sub of Management & Finance	Interview
16	Council Leader	Leader of Council	Letter
18	Conservative Party Leader	Leader of Conservative Group	Interview
19	Chair Planning at time of UDP	Planning & Engineering Services Ctee	Telephone
20	VC Planning at time of UDP	Planning & Engineering Services Ctee	Interview
21	A Planning Ctee Member 1	Planning & Environment Ctee	Telephone
22	A Planning Ctee Member 2	Planning & Environment Ctee	Interview
23	A Planning Ctee Member 3	Planning & Environment Ctee	Interview
24	A Planning Ctee Member 4	Planning & Environment Ctee	None
25	A Planning Ctee Member 5	Planning & Environment Ctee	Interview
26	A Planning Ctee Member 6	Planning & Environment Ctee	Interview
27	Other Senior Politician 1	N/A	Interview

Table 6X.1: Actors contacted and interviewed in case A

Role ID	Role of Actor	Actual Title in Case B	Contact Type
1	UDP Team Leader	Principal Planning Officer - Strategic Planning Information	Interview
2	Chief Planner	Director of Environmental Services	None
3	Environmental Policy Officer	Principal Officer - Environmental Policy Unit	Interview
4	Economic Development Officer	Economic Development Directorate	Interview
5	Environmental Health Officer	Borough Health Officer - Food Control & Health Education	Telephone
6	Highway Officer	Section Engineer - Transportation	Interview
7	Other Senior Officer	Assistant Borough Planner (Forward Plg/Policy)	None
8	Planning Ctee Chair	Environmental Services Ctee, was Development Services Ctee	Interview
9	Planning Ctee Vice Chair	Environmental Services Ctee, was Development Services Ctee	None
10	Environment Ctee Chair	Environment & Recycling Sub, now called Environment Sub of Env'tl Serv	Interview
11	Environment Ctee Vice Chair	Environment & Recycling Sub, now called Environment Sub of Env'tl Serv	Interview
12	Economic Development Ctee Chair	Economic Development Sub of Policy Ctee	Interview
13	Economic Development Ctee Vice Chair	Economic Development Sub of Policy Ctee	None
14	Policy Ctee Chair	Policy Ctee	Letter
15	Policy Ctee Vice Chair	Policy Ctee	Interview
16	Council Leader	Leader of the Council	Letter
17	Lib Dem Party Leader	Leader of the Opposition	Interview
18	Conservative Party Leader	No Cons on Oldham	N/A
19	Chair Planning at time of UDP	Development Services Ctee	None
20	VC Planning at time of UDP	Development Services Ctee	None
21	A Planning Ctee Member 1	Environmental Services Ctee, was Development Services Ctee	Interview
22	A Planning Ctee Member 2	Environmental Services Ctee, was Development Services Ctee	Telephone
23	A Planning Ctee Member 3	Environmental Services Ctee, was Development Services Ctee	None
24	A Planning Ctee Member 4	Environmental Services Ctee, was Development Services Ctee	Interview
25	A Planning Ctee Member 5	Environmental Services Ctee, was Development Services Ctee	Interview
27	Other Senior Politician 1	N/A	Interview

Table 6X.2 Actors contacted and interviewed in case B