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TOWN PLANNING IN NEW ZEALAND 1900 – 1933 : THE EMERGENT YEARS.

**CONCEPTS, THE ROLE OF THE STATE, AND THE
EMERGENCE OF A PROFESSION**

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ABSTRACT

Town planning in New Zealand 1900 – 1933 : The Emergent Years, is a study of the forces that shaped the development of town planning in New Zealand. The subtitle, concepts, the role of the state, and the emergence of a profession, highlight three themes or foci that are important in the emergence of town planning as a separate and identifiable activity. The existing paucity of planning history scholarship in New Zealand to date means that this period has generally been regarded as one of little achievement, merely a waiting period before 'real' planning began under the *Town and Country Planning Act 1953*. This thesis, which draws heavily on primary archival resources, instead reveals a period when the worth of town planning was recognised and a hardy band of enthusiasts fought to have the concept established through legislation. Legislation was not achieved until 1926 with the *Town-planning Act*, due to a number of factors in particular the decline of the Liberals and the on-set of World War One. When the legislation was achieved, progress was slow due to the apathy of local government, the Depression, and the lack of trained town planners. Nevertheless under the energetic leadership of John Mawson, Director of Town Planning, significant progress was made in laying the foundations for the planning systems that would follow.

During this period town planning as a concept developed from one which was focused on ameliorating slums and urban ills, to a future orientated concept intended to guide the efficient functioning of the urban system. This saw the interventionist powers of the state used to limit the private use of land resources in the interest of achieving 'good' for the community as a whole. Such intervention was however in keeping with other such state interventions of the time. As the concept of town planning found favour it was taken up first by self-trained enthusiasts, such as Samuel Hurst Seager, often drawn from existing city beautifying groups. When legislation established it as a separate activity there was the slow development of a small band of town planning professionals.

Thus the period of this thesis is one of quiet but gradual achievement that created acceptance of town planning as an appropriate intervention of the state and created the foundations of the planning profession.

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INTRODUCTION

The title of this thesis, *Town Planning in New Zealand 1900-1933, The Emergent Years*, and its sub-title *Concepts, the Role of the State, and the Emergence of a Profession*, identifies the three foci of the research that forms the basis of this work. These three foci are traced within a specific period to produce a narrative of the early planning history of New Zealand. Thus the foci become the means of elucidating that narrative, of taking it beyond a mere recounting of 'facts'. The expression narrative is a shorthand term representing the central research question, of how town planning as a specific pursuit of the state, and as a distinct group of people identifying themselves as representatives of a profession, came to be established in New Zealand in this period. It is, as such, an attempt to document the foundation both of planning as an activity and as a professional pursuit.

There are a number, of what I believe, are very sound reasons that make this approach not only necessary, but essential. The first and probably most valid reason is that New Zealand's planning history literature is essentially non-existent. Most of the work that has been undertaken to date is either limited in its coverage to a specific period¹, or addresses only selected aspects of the experience of planning². Ross's Diploma of Town Planning research essay, *An Introductory Study of the Origins and Evolution of Town Planning in New Zealand* produced in 1967, has become the foundation source for all subsequent work. This leads to a series of problems that stem from the lack of use of secondary sources and an over reliance on generalisations. The latter are derived from uncritical acceptance of limited research as representing the essential 'narrative' or 'truth' about New Zealand's planning history. Ross's work, while pioneering and careful in its coverage, has

been consistently accepted unquestioningly by later writers³, and has become the 'official' history of the period. However, even a limited examination of his work, which must be seen in context as being produced to fulfil a specific research exercise, reveals that it was produced with the little use of archival research and a dependence on newspaper materials that were available in Auckland. Hence there is a geographic bias within the work and a focus on the roles and achievements of certain Auckland based politicians. If this is an important caveat on the use of Ross's work, it is not one which has been explicitly recognised by those who have subsequently relied on it. Thus the weaknesses of Ross's work have been perpetuated and we have the almost bizarre situation of research undertaken in 1967 still being used, unrevised, and largely uncritically thirty years later. Thus the time would appear to be more than ripe to re-examine that period covered by Ross's work. This is not to automatically find fault or to denigrate it, for without his foresight New Zealand would effectively have no record of the period. However it does indicate that it is timely to examine it in light of the wider sources which are available, and of the general development of the distinct discipline of planning history, the interpretations that have arisen from Ross's work. This also provides the opportunity to include other material that has emerged since 1967 that addresses more general developments in New Zealand's history, especially in the area of political and social history. This would include Hamer's⁴ work on the Liberals which has significance for the early period up to 1912, and Bassett's biography⁵ of Coates, the Prime Minister who eventually gave New Zealand its first planning legislation in 1926, and his somewhat controversial work on the development of the role of the state in New Zealand⁶.

The second and almost as compelling reason is that for much of the balance of the period i.e. from 1926 to 1933 there is little or no research or charting of this country's planning history. An article by Miller⁷ that reviews the state of planning history in New Zealand reveals a very limited and uneven output. Memon's⁸ article, while suggesting it covers the period of this thesis in fact deals with it in the most truncated form and essentially as a preparation for his much more detailed discussion of the *Town & Country Planning Acts, 1953 and 1977*. He clearly maintains the view, that has become a part of the mythology of New Zealand's planning history, that there was no effective planning before the 1953 legislation. That was certainly the view that was communicated to me as a young practitioner in the 1980s and it would be one to which most practitioners would subscribe. While it is clearly premature, in an introduction, to discuss the nature of the achievements of planning or lack of them, in the period 1926 to 1933, suffice to say that there is extensive archival material that might allow one to paint at least a modest picture of achievement and progress. If planning in that period did nothing else it allowed both central and local government to come to terms with the concept and to test, albeit modestly and with limited enthusiasm, the potential of the idea in practice.

Perhaps the reluctance to acknowledge this period is derived from the tendency within the profession to see those who took up the potential of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1953* as the pioneers who established the present profession. They then started to fashion a system where planning was used as an effective tool to shape both the urban and rural world. It may also reflect a generational perspective in that the 1953 (and increasingly those from 1977) pioneers are those who now largely occupy the positions of responsibility, not only in the planning practice world. but until recently within the profession itself. In short much of the

'mana' and professional competence was drawn from being within that pioneer corps. To suggest there was perhaps a more logical though low key progression to the development of the planning system might serve to undermine that mythology, particularly where the work of that earlier period lay largely unrecorded and unexamined. This is not to suggest that the development of the myth of the hardy 1953 pioneer is inappropriate or in some way bad. Rather it is to suggest that it is largely understandable given the context within which planners and planning function in New Zealand. The profession was slow to establish in this country, attracting few practitioners, who, until 1957, had to find training either through distance education, working with overseas systems and processes, or by attending an overseas institution. Moreover most were totally dependent on the state either nationally or locally for employment as there were few consultants before 1953, and exceptions such as Ted Blake in Auckland were sole practitioners. They also often had to work with limited resources. One of John Mawson's (the second Director of Town Planning) major complaints was that he was not given sufficient resources to undertake the job he was given. This was compounded by the fact that it took a long time for the profession to develop a critical mass that allowed it to yield the type of influence over practice that we might expect on the basis of observations of other professional groups, such as lawyers and surveyors. Planners have never been as influential as these other professions in regulating their core activity. This lack of influence stems from the fact that there has never been in New Zealand, in stark contrast to the situation almost anywhere else in the world, any requirement for planners to be registered before they can undertake their professional or statutory duties. In fact anyone can and does claim to be a planner. In such a climate it was important that the core of the profession became a unified group with 'esprit de corps'. In that way they could exploit the new legislation that compelled

local bodies to plan and therefore to employ planners to deal with the consequences of accelerating and uncontrolled urban growth. That 'esprit de corps' came from the ethos of being a planning pioneer not from the dubious, and generally unrecorded achievements of the 1926 Act, where a planner's work might have been done by anyone. Thus for the profession to work and move forward from 1953, it was probably essential that it separate itself from the past, particularly as from 1957 there was a major move to encourage people to gain credentials as planners through the University of Auckland's Diploma of Town Planning.

The balance of the work in New Zealand's planning history is what might be characterised as partial views. The most important of these are the studies of housing and housing policy in New Zealand that inevitably touch on planning. Other partial views include the examination of the statutory origins of planning through to observations of the particular phenomena of planning. These present at best only partial glimpses of the development of planning because the focus is clearly on something else. This is classically demonstrated by the various short histories that precede the legal texts on town planning law produced by Palmer⁹ and Robinson¹⁰. The focus of those works was on how the law of town and country planning worked and thus the historic introduction was required only to explain and chart the development of that law. What emerges is a very partial view of the development of New Zealand planning because the introduction inevitably also charts the more general origins of planning particularly as a response to public health issues. There is no questioning of the appropriateness of an explanation based on public health concerns, derived from the viler aspects of the overcrowded industrialised cities of Britain. Why this is an explanation for the emergence of town

planning in the antipodean backwaters where slums, while they did exist were a more minor issue than the appropriate width of roads, is never explored.

The second type of partial view is even more inimical to the development of a planning history for New Zealand. This is where a concept or idea that was established or developed overseas is examined in its New Zealand context. This is classically illustrated by the work on the garden city/suburb concept in New Zealand¹¹. The reality is that there are only two very small examples of this concept in New Zealand, both designed by Samuel Hurst Seager and both representing very much the middle class response to towards genuinely revolutionary ideas, which turned a potential messianic concept into a vehicle for middle class suburbanisation. While this is not the place to examine the success of the concept in the New Zealand context nor to judge the appropriateness of the analysis, suffice to say that it is unlikely to be a major aspect of any study of New Zealand's planning history. The more important question that the partial analysis approach cannot and will never answer, is why was the rhetoric of the garden city/suburb movement so popular in New Zealand when in practice it had such little impact? That is a much more important question than worrying about the design and the success of two small residential developments in Christchurch and Wanganui. It is a question that goes to the heart of the development of planning in New Zealand and may do much to explain the unique character of New Zealand planning which has few urban design elements and an almost unhealthy fixation on statute, as Bang¹² so clearly identifies. These partial or single focus approaches may have much to offer ultimately but only after the broader landscape of New Zealand's planning history has been fully established. This is certainly the approach which has been taken overseas where works by Reps¹³ and Scott¹⁴ firmly established the essential

features of America's planning history well in advance of more detailed assessments of particular elements such as the City Beautiful movement.

The Coverage of This Thesis

The preceding and somewhat lengthy discussion was intended as an explanation of the paucity of research in this area, that in turn made this a valid area of intellectual investigation. The commencement date of 1900 to some extent represents a convenient start but equally reflects the international experience. Howard's pioneering *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, better known by its second title of *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* was first published in 1898 and republished in 1902, while England passed its first planning legislation in 1909. Thus the earliest origins of state directed planning through statutory instruments, which has largely been the New Zealand planning experience, commences in earnest in the early 1900s. While Hamer's¹⁵ work in New Zealand and a multitude of works overseas can and do trace these much earlier origins for planning, the planning they identify rarely reflects the consistent and long term application of laws intended to achieve specific town planning outcomes. Thus they do not represent an investigation of the nature of, and reasons for, the use of the powers of the state to intervene in the basic rights of the property owner. Rather they tend to reflect urban design or public health concerns. Further and perhaps most importantly the period before 1900 in New Zealand has been relatively well researched, particularly by Hamer, and is thus in less need of primary research of the type undertaken for this thesis.

The termination date of 1933 may look somewhat odd, marooned as it is towards the middle of the decade. It however represents the year in which John Mawson,

the second and ultimately last Director of Town Planning, resigned from his position in despair and returned to England. After his resignation the position remained unfilled and there was no effective direction from the central state with regard to the operation of the *Town-planning Act 1926*. Town planning was largely left leaderless, a situation which continued until 1937. As such it provided a logical point at which to complete the study. Moreover even the most preliminary overview of the archives indicates that there is more than adequate material to deal with in this period. There is certainly sufficient to produce a rich and complex narrative and to form the basis of some new interpretations.

The Three Foci

Having established the rationale for the period of coverage and for charting the essential narrative elements of the development of planning, it is now necessary to address the remaining aspects of the title, that is: Concepts, the Role of the State and the Emergence of the Profession. In shorthand form these denote the three questions which seem central to any explanation of the development of town planning within the period of this study. An obvious preliminary question is the reasons for selecting these three questions or foci. The first was almost inevitable, given that the concept of town planning that is used encompasses an agreed interpretation of what is to be included in the work of town planning. It is an essential and integral part of defining what town planning will try to achieve and what town planners will do. This becomes an essential aspect in addressing the other questions. Further in 1991 New Zealand was regarded internationally as having taken a bold and original step in instituting the concept of sustainable management as the foundation stone of its planning system. However, the most

cursory examination of New Zealand's planning history would suggest that this should not have been unexpected. While deriving concepts such as zoning from other systems, New Zealand had taken those concepts and welded them into a unique planning system, which reflected as much about the nature and size of New Zealand, as it did about the country's ability to develop our own brand of planning. New Zealand is a small country where professions are based on limited numbers of people who are generally exposed to only minimal alternatives in terms of their education and training. Hence New Zealand has been and always will be, very open to the influence of overseas ideas and concepts. The intriguing question that must then arise with regard to the development of planning, is why New Zealand with such a limited number of planners, bombarded with overseas concepts and models did not just adopt those models with little or no modification. That they did not may suggest that those who developed and operated the legislation had very clear concepts of what might be acceptable and workable in the New Zealand situation. Thus an examination of the concepts of planning and how they were modified and adjusted to meet the New Zealand context is an essential aspect of this study.

The second question focuses on what might be regarded as the operative elements within the process. For, having determined the concept of town planning that would define what planning would do in a practical form, the state in its various guises had to determine how it might exercise that power. Planning has always been by its very nature one of the most blatant forms of state intervention, which perhaps explains why it did not become a reality in most countries, at least in a statutory form, until the twentieth century. The exception was probably Germany where town planning was established in a relatively modern form, in terms of the regulation of

land use, in the latter part of the nineteenth century. It is the most basic type of intervention because it seeks to interfere with the right of the property owner to use land and other resources in any manner that suits their needs, subject only to the constraint of not damaging others. This right lies at the heart of the capitalist system. Paradoxically while planning seeks to modify and control this right it also simultaneously has the power to serve capitalism and a liberal political economy. This is recognised by the Marxist and Marxian authors who claim that those who wield the power economically and politically use planning to regulate that use, in their own interests. Even if one does not adopt a Marxian perspective it is apparent that for planning to be accepted and to develop, there must be an accompanying acceptance that there is a role for the state and that intervention by the state is in turn acceptable to the community it serves. The latter is of particular importance to planning as it interferes with the basic rights of the owner of property in the expectation of achieving better outcomes for the community as a whole. This raises questions not only about the role of the central state but also of the relationship of the central and local state. This is inevitable as no planning system outside those used in Central Europe and the Soviet Union in the communist era, ever tried to deliver planning on a day to day basis, except via the local state.

This all appears rational and reasonable in past eras where the role of the state was expanding on an almost daily basis as much as the result of the demands of the community as from its own volition. The New Zealand State housing programme launched in 1936 is an excellent example of this imperative. However this thesis is being written in a period when the mildest of state intervention is subject to question, and after more than a decade in which the state has retreated from the economic and social life of the community. If one tries to assess the

history of New Zealand's planning past in terms of the current philosophy of state intervention, then one faces immediate difficulties. This is a problem that Brooking¹⁶ refers to in the introduction to his biography of John McKenzie. Like Dr Brooking I am faced with steering an analytical path between the established dogma which judges planning to be an automatically bad intervention, and the somewhat unwieldy notion which Sandercock¹⁷ highlights, that planning being integrally associated with progress, must automatically be good. I would hazard a preliminary view which suggests that the truth lies somewhere in between. Perhaps as I have suggested above, much of the view of planning in the early twenty-first century in New Zealand is powered by a similar desire, by a new group of environmentally inspired planners to create a new, sustainably managed world by casting themselves in the role of pioneers, under the *Resource Management Act 1991*. As pioneers they have no need of a past which is flawed by adherence to a suspect and environmentally uninformed concepts. Equally it is important not to be overly coloured by the idea that intervention is automatically suspect just because that is the Neo Liberal view current in the late twentieth and early twenty first century.

In addressing the issue of the role of the state in planning it is not intended to set this question within a broad context that would require a more general examination of the reasons for the extension of the powers of the state, particularly in the area of regulation. To do this would extend the scope of this thesis out of planning history and into questions which are more properly the interest of the political theorist and political historian. Rather it is taken as read that the state does have powers which for various reasons it has chosen to exercise in specific ways. The state becomes the 'knowing' organisation that can and does make decisions on its role. The

interest of this thesis lies in how the decision was made to use those powers to establish and legitimise town planning powers and how the use of those powers in that area developed and changed within a specific time. This is a well established approach among the large body of international planning history which is the domain both of the historian and the planner educated and experienced in their discipline who is interested in the origins and development of their profession. This makes planning history a peculiar subset of two quite diverse disciplines, that has over time developed an existence of its own which is testified to by the four hundred members of the International Planning History Society and the maintenance of specific journals devoted to planning history.

The final question is one that follows naturally from the previous two. Having decided on the concept of town planning to be used and to use the apparatus of the state to institute it, then who will actually undertake this work? Hence the focus on the development of the planning profession, of which I have myself been a practising member. As is alluded to above, the profession in New Zealand was slow to develop and numbers of trained planners only really built up after the 1953 Act was passed. Even at that time planners continually competed with surveyors, in particular, who were always willing to take on planners' work and who often regarded themselves as more appropriately qualified and experienced to do that work. This late arrival of the profession combined with its lack of statutory recognition through registration, that is enjoyed by almost all other professional groups in New Zealand, has left the profession somewhat lacking in 'esprit de corps' and overall confidence. That position has been made worse in recent years with the criticism which has arisen from the advent of the *Resource Management Act 1991*, and the perceived inability of the existing profession to respond to that

Act's new directions. The history of a profession is essential to its continued existence and to its overall confidence. As Freestone and Hutchings observed "a confident profession is one that can examine its past philosophies, practices and products - warts and all - and, from the lessons learned, improve future performance."¹⁸. The fact that the New Zealand profession has failed to do this in such an essential area as its own professional history is an indication of its overall lack of confidence in itself. This is reflected in its present practices and inability to counter the recent flow of critical comment. Until the profession charts its own history it can have no real confidence about its abilities to meet future challenges.

Equally the profession and its development is also an integral and indivisible part of the establishment and growth of planning itself. Given professional planners existed only in small numbers within the study period, it was essential that they promote the uptake of the concept and practice of town planning, if they were to be sustained and to grow as a professional group. Moreover planning itself has always tended to inspire an almost missionary approach because it is essentially an undertaking that requires its participants to believe in what they do. It also assumes that planners always act in the 'interests of the community'. This tends to lead to what Sandercock styles as an "unproblematic" view when "it is assumed that planning is a 'good thing'" and that "planners know or can divine 'the public interest'"¹⁹. This clearly is not a view which can be accepted without question and the answers can partly be derived by examining the origins and development of the profession, for with the past lay the seeds of present actions and perceptions.

The Arrangement of the Thesis

This thesis consists of seven chapters in addition to this introduction. Chapter Two, explores the extensive, mainly overseas literature, that deals with the development of town and city planning. It also addresses the relevance of that literature to the development of town planning in New Zealand.

The following five chapters then deal with the development of town planning in New Zealand on a primarily chronological basis. The time divisions were selected to equate with a natural starting or terminating point, and some common themes within each. Thus Chapter Three deals with the period from 1900 to 1910, Chapter Four with 1910 to 1915, Chapter Five with 1916 to 1919, Chapter Six with 1919 to 1926 and Chapter Seven with 1926 to 1933. This approach serves to maintain some sense of narrative without precluding the opportunity to explore some explanations for the various events and developments. The last Chapter is intended as an overview of the period and a place in which to critically reflect on the overall research question and the three associated questions which are addressed by this thesis.

Conclusion

It remains to conclude this Introduction with at least a brief discussion of what this thesis is not about. It does not purport to be an in depth examination of every facet of the development of town planning within the period, within which will be faithfully reported the innermost working of every council committee who ever considered a town planning matter. Rather it establishes the broad framework of development, advances some reasons to explain these developments and where appropriate

illustrates them. In short it establishes a canvas on which it should be expected that further detail may be painted. Equally while some individual town planners are discussed in considerable detail because of their influence, this work does not contain detailed biographies of every town planner. Finally this is not a detailed exposition on why the new *Town and Country Planning Act* was formulated in 1953. To do that would be to perpetuate and reinforce yet again the mythology of the past and to diminish the intrinsic significance of the period covered. This is not something I would wish to do, given my comments to date.

Basically despite my somewhat critical comment on pioneers this must stand as a pioneer work of planning history which will lay the groundwork which I can only hope others will build on. It is an opportunity to both document the achievements and development of New Zealand's planning history in the period from 1900 and 1933, and to interpret it with the assistance of a large body of literature from the well established planning history community overseas.

The footnotes throughout this thesis are in a reduced form, to avoid the creation of excessive material. Full references are provided in the Bibliography. The journals are cited as they cite themselves in their running headings. As many articles were obtained via Interloan, this was the only reference available

¹ Ross, W. 1967 An Introductory Study of the Origins and Evolution of Town planning in New Zealand, Unpublished Diploma in Town Planning Dissertation, University of Auckland.

² See for instance Hargreaves, R 1990 The Grid Pattern of Our Towns, *Town Planning Quarterly*, No. 58, p10-12 and Schrader, B 1999 Avoiding the Mistakes of the 'mother country': the New Zealand garden city movement 1900-1926, *Planning Perspectives*, 14, p395-411

³ Memon, P. 1991 Shaking off the the colonial legacy ? – town and country planning in New Zealand, *Planning Perspectives*, 6, pp19-32

⁴ Hamer, D. 1988 *The New Zealand Liberals : The Years of Power, 1891-1912*, Auckland University Press, Auckland.

⁵ Bassett, M 1995 *Coates of Kiapara*, Auckland University Press, Auckland.

⁶ Bassett, M. 1998 *The State in New Zealand 1840-1984 : Socialism Without Doctrines*, Auckland University Press, Auckland.

⁷ Miller, C. 1998 New Zealand's planning history – Quo Vadis ?, *Planning Perspectives*, 13, p257-274

⁸ Memon, op. cit.

⁹ Palmer, K. 1984 *Planning and Development Law in New Zealand Vol.1*, The Law Book Company, Sydney.

¹⁰ Robinson, K. 1981 *The Law of Town and Country Planning*, Butterworths, Wellington.

¹¹ See Schrader, B. 1999, op.cit. and Schrader, B. 1991 *A Peaceful Path to Reform ; The Garden City/Suburb Movement in New Zealand?Aotearoa*, Unpublished B.A Hons. History Research essay, Victoria University

¹² Bang, B. 1994 Looking Forward to District Plans with the Benefit of Hindsight, in Selby, J, Morgan, R. & Memon A. 1994 *Environmental and Resource Management in New Zealand*, University of Otago, Dunedin.

¹³ Reps, J. 1965 *The Making of Urban America*, Princeton University Press, Princeton

¹⁴ Scott, M. 1969 *American City Planning Since 1890 : A History Commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the American Institute of Planners*, University of California Press, Berkeley,

¹⁵ Hamer, D. 1994 Town Planning in new societies in the nineteenth century : a comparative perspective, *Planning Perspectives*,9,p125-137 and Hamer, D. 1990 *New Towns in the New World : Images and Perceptions of the Nineteenth Century*, Columbia University Press, New York

¹⁶ Brooking, T. 1996 *Lands for the People : The Highland Clearances and the Colonisation of New Zealand : A Biography of John McKenzie*, University of Otago Press, Dunedin.

¹⁷ Sandercock, L. 1998 *Making the Invisible Visible ; A Multicultural Planning History*,, University of California Press, Berkeley

¹⁸ Freestone, R. & Hutchings, A. 1988 Planning History : Introduction, *Australian Planner*, Vol.26, No.3, p5

¹⁹ Sandercock, L. 1995 Introduction – Making the Invisible Visible : New Historiographies for Planning, *Planning Theory*, No.13, p15 - 17

PLANNING HISTORY – THE STATE OF THE ART, THE LINKS WITH PLANNING THEORY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROFESSION

INTRODUCTION

At the outset of this literature review it is important to establish exactly its role is in terms of this thesis and its structure. This is particularly important in a thesis that is so dependent, as this is, on primary research. Traditionally a literature review serves three purposes. Firstly, it allows the researcher to examine alternative methodological approaches. Secondly it permits a discussion of the various theoretical approaches that might be used to analyse and assess the primary information. The latter allows one to draw some conclusions from the often chaotic detail, and to offer some overall explanation for how and why these matters might have unfolded in the way they did. Finally, it provides the opportunity to review the research and conclusions of those who have 'ploughed the field before'. In the New Zealand context it also offers the opportunity to draw upon a wide and well-developed body of overseas planning history literature that does not presently exist in the New Zealand context.

In the Introduction it was clearly indicated that this work does not fit within a well-established and well-developed tradition of New Zealand scholarship. Planning history is not an established area of academic endeavour in New Zealand and there is correspondingly low interest in its nearest associated discipline of urban history.

This is in clear and stark contrast to the situation overseas. In 1998 the Eighth International Planning History Conference was held in Sydney, representing the latest in a sixteen-year history. While planning history is an orphan in New Zealand it is well established even in our nearest neighbour Australia where Freestone and Hutchings¹ date its emergence from the early 1970s. This has serious implications for any literature review because it poses the question of what needs to be covered in terms of the third role of a literature review, that is the assessment of previous works that address the area of study. This is not to suggest that there are no works of planning history that have been produced in New Zealand. Rather that most of it is partial or topical and not derived from extensive and on-going research intended to produce a comprehensive view. Clearly, as is discussed in the latter stages of this chapter, there are works of planning history, most notably Ross² and a range of other research, which while concerned with planning as an activity and its impacts would not represent themselves as planning history. In essence their primary focus is not on planning per se but on the products of planning for example the works of Schrader³ on the garden city/suburb in New Zealand. His interest is in the specific history of these small examples of the garden city movement and how they might be related to overseas examples. Thus there is less interest in how such developments might fit into the overall development of planning as a separate discipline and profession. It is largely a question of an interest in process rather than product, with the planning historians' focus being on the former more than the latter.

This leads to the question of how planning history differs from urban history when clearly both have a primary (though in the case of planning history not exclusive) focus on urban areas and how they function. This has been addressed by a

number of writers. Tunnard⁴ clearly saw what he called city planning history primarily as a product of urban history it would seem, as a result of his view of what city planning history involved. His vision of city planning history was heavily focused on the physical form of the city and how that might be described and explained rather than how a particular institutional entity, planning, influenced or directed that evolution. He was drawing on a long architectural tradition of the study of cities, which is typified by the work of architectural historians such as Pevsner⁵. Tunnard did not totally dismiss the role of planning as agency, but saw it as operating solely through the physical context, that is “the historian of city planning is concerned above all with the physical, yet behind each physical form lies an act of will of a social group or an individual”⁶. Presumably planning was broadly encompassed in the latter group.

More recently in the American context Burgess has addressed this question again and provides the rather equivocal answer, “that planning history includes almost any and everything”⁷. An analysis of Burgess’ two extensive review articles⁸ that chart the depth and development of American scholarship would certainly suggest this. Writers who pre-date Burgess, particularly Johnson and Schaffer⁹, linked urban and planning history and the recently published collection by Sies and Silver¹⁰ further stresses links not only to urban history but to broader multidisciplinary historical and cultural approach. There is also a clear movement to take the concept of city planning back into the period before the twentieth century when planning as an activity was officially recognised and gradually adopted as a form of state intervention. Home¹¹ looks at the development of the built environment and planning systems of the colonial world, and finds conscious town planning in the seventeenth century. There is extensive scholarship in both Britain

and the Americas that identify similar early examples of conscious town planning. Mandelbaum specifically addressed the relationship between urban and planning history, and stressed that while there was a shared interest between historians and planners there was an essential divergence. He advocated that planners should deal with “the inner history of the planning profession”¹², as planning history is the history of planning. This stressing of planning history as part of the history of the profession helps to highlight the clear divergence between planning and urban histories and how they might be distinguished from each other.

This is not an issue that has concerned the British planning historians in the same way. Writers such as Cherry¹³ and Sutcliffe¹⁴ take a more catholic approach that has urban history informing planning history. Cherry observed “the field of study, which has attracted the term ‘planning history’, represents a fresh, additional perspective on urban affairs, to go alongside the insight gained from our history, urban history, historical geography, industrial archaeology, construction history and the study of urban morphology”¹⁵. In this impressive list Cherry seems to almost hark back to the earlier view expressed by writers such as Tunnard that sees much of planning history grounded in the physical form of the city. Where he differs is that he sees planning as a major and significant influence on shaping and altering the physical form of those cities.¹⁶

The difference between the American and the British approaches seems partly to stem from their differing experiences of planning. In America the size and diversity of the country combined with a federal system and a system of strong, independent city government has spawned a plethora of planning systems. These often focused on single issues, such as the creation of skyscraper zoning in New York. Britain in

contrast developed a universal planning system which applied with minor modification, throughout Britain and was derived from the recognition of, and response to some countrywide problems. This reflects not only the British political system but also its position as the pre-eminent urban nation from the Industrial Revolution onwards. The British system is also one where the influence of the central state is still paramount and where the local state exercised only those powers and controls with which the central state directly endowed it. In these circumstances there is probably less of a gap between planning history and urban history and less of a necessity to distinguish between the two. However Cherry, and to a lesser extent Sutcliffe, stresses planning history as the history of the profession.

Australia probably lies somewhere between the American and British experience with a federal system which has spawned a range of State based planning systems. Freestone and Hutchings specifically reject the approach of Tunnard with its emphasis on city form and morphology, and talk instead of the 'new planning history' which "concentrates on recent antecedents and the historical evolution of contemporary practice"¹⁷. Later they extend this point and specifically recognise that the development of urban history and research in Australia particularly through the Urban Research Unit at the Australian National University was important in "legitimising modern planning history"¹⁸. Thus in the Australian context the difference between the two disciplines seem less important to the practitioners perhaps reflecting the small academic communities, which would make such divisions unhelpful. Certainly the two groups join together for conferences. The lack of a specific urban history community has been identified as hampering the development of planning history in New Zealand¹⁹. This problem was further

compounded by the myths that had developed within the New Zealand profession as to its early development.

The essential difference between planning history and urban history has been addressed in a slightly different way by Leonie Sandercock. While she acknowledges, like many others, the overlap between planning history and urban history, she highlights a clear difference between the two. In her interpretation urban histories “seek to make sense of the city in all its vast multiplicity” while planning histories “seek to make sense of planning interventions in cities and regions”²⁰. Her ability to distinguish the two is at least partly derived from her view of the origins and role of planning history. As she so succinctly points out “the sub-field of planning history has emerged as part of the discipline of planning (rather than as a sub-field of history, like urban history)”²¹. In fact many of those involved in the field are planners, such as the late Gordon Cherry, rather than historians. Perhaps more importantly she identifies planning history as serving dual purposes of chronicling “the rise of the profession, its institutionalisation, and its achievements”²² while contributing significantly to the development and maintenance of the profession’s ‘raison d’être’. This she observes often produces a self-justificatory motive²³ in the work of planning historians. Thus planning historians drawn from the profession that socialised them, in turn confine and define their research in relatively narrow ways. While this is a largely negative view of existing planning history scholarship derived from a particular post-modernist viewpoint, it does help to distinguish planning history from urban history. It also once again emphasises that planning history is fundamentally concerned with the history of the profession. It also however raises the question of how the profession in New Zealand has built its ‘esprit de corps’ in the absence of a fully documented planning

history, where students are not exposed to the history of their profession as part of the process of planning education or professional socialisation.

Sandercock's definition of planning history highlights the essential interests of the discipline that in turn help to distinguish its areas of concerns from those of urban history. Planning history inevitably is concerned with what planners do, how they exercise their power of intervention, and how the exercise of that power impacts on the city, the community and/or the individual. As such planning is an activity that is undertaken not by some neutral bureaucrat but by an individual who carries some commitment to a vision of what the world should be which is encapsulated within the commitment to a professional body. That commitment in turn is at least partially derived from the possession of a unique body of knowledge that makes planners what they are. As Sutcliffe points out this can lead to the "myth of super competence" whereby planners "are popularly blamed for a range of urban shortcomings which extend far beyond their actual sphere of activity"²⁴. This is perhaps why planning history has not been the sole preserve of the historian and has attracted as some of its luminaries, those who have been practitioners. The late Gordon Cherry is the classic example. Cherry was an experienced senior local authority planner who also served as president of the Royal Town Planning Institute and who continued to be involved in planning history research. Similarly Robert Freestone in Australia is another former practitioner who worked as a planning consultant before moving into an academic position which has focused some of his research interest on planning history. He also continues to publish and research on current city development issues. Sutcliffe in fact sees value in the involvement of the planning professional, while lauding the involvement of the trained historian in the area. He believes "the perceptions of trained architects and planners are

essential to the development of a full historical understanding²⁵. One could take this point further and say that the trained planner can better understand how those various regulatory interventions work and can recognise their success or failure. This nevertheless carries with it the danger that the interpretation will be justificatory or uncritical.

The potential problem of this approach is the issue identified by Leonie Sandercock and discussed earlier, that planning history can become introverted and unquestioning, part of a process of building professional identity and confidence. To fully understand the point that Sandercock makes one must accept two assumptions. Firstly, that planning historians are largely planners who are primarily interested in defending and upholding the profession to which they have made a commitment and into which they have been socialised. Secondly, that all planning history is underlain by the concept that planning "is a 'good thing' - a progressive practice"²⁶. The first contention is somewhat problematic. While it is true that many planning historians are or were planning practitioners, just as many have never practised or are academic planners whose place it is to question the appropriateness and legitimacy of planning and its practices. The second probably holds true in most cases and to some extent reflects the fact that this is the history of a profession whose practitioners, if they did not believe in what they were doing could hardly expect to operate successfully. Equally Sandercock's perceptions are very firmly rooted in the North American planning experience and given the distinctive aspects of that planning system, they may not have universal application. It would be a position that would be difficult to maintain in New Zealand where planning history is not a major aspect of any planning course. Where aspects of

planning history are taught, they usually consist of overseas planning history as there are no comprehensive New Zealand teaching resources available

This uncritical acceptance of planning and its performance also overlooks the very nature of most planning processes. If planning history is to some extent about what planners do, then it should be recognised that that 'doing' involves formulation, implementation, monitoring and review. This was a model developed by Geddes in the early part of the twentieth century and still exists in some form in most planning processes. Planners constantly seek to review what they have achieved, to identify the consequences of their actions and inevitably to judge their success or failure. While clearly such judgements are unlikely to be neutral they often involve political and community decision which may reject a planning professional's advice. Thus in some ways the planning historian who has practised as a planner may be better placed to assess the past and to accept that that assessment might not always be positive. Equally a planning historian also has to develop a range of research and writing skills to complement that technical understanding.

This is the point Kreuckberg made in reply to Sandercock's criticisms of planning history. While accepting the potential for planning history to make mistakes, he explicitly recognises that planning history itself is part of the planner's tool kit. "Plans and policies for the future are usually rooted in a story, a narrative understanding of events causing or leading to the present situation, which demand some future action"²⁷. It is in fact an approach which can be formalised, as is advocated by Abbott and Alder²⁸, whereby planning history becomes a tool of current practice. As Johnson and Schaffer state, "history often is an effective tool in formulating planning policy" It sets borders to the discussion and debates that

determine policy options; it provides powerful justification for a particular course of action; and through reinterpretation historical analysis casts new light on past policies"²⁹.

To conclude, planning history, while related to urban history and often informed by it and able to in turn inform it, is a separate undertaking. Planning history's salient features are that it is predominantly concerned with urban forms particularly cities because these are the complexes within which planning normally operates. This does not however exclude an interest in non-urban topics such as countryside and regional planning. It is also a study which centres almost exclusively on the operations and consequences of a single focus, planning, which is practised by a group of people who choose to identify and collect themselves under a professional banner which derives part of its existence from a claim to a unique body of knowledge. Thus a substantial part of planning history is concerned with the characteristics and operations of the planning profession. It is this which allows it to be clearly distinguished from urban history.

DEFINING PLANNING

An integral aspect of any discussion of planning history or planning 'per se' is how we define the term, planning. It is pertinent to note that while the term planning is almost universally used, in North America the tendency is to talk of city planning and in Britain and to a lesser extent Australia and New Zealand, particularly in the period up to 1950, the most commonly used term was town planning. While at times it may be possible to distinguish between the three concepts, in reality they

are usually used relatively interchangeably particularly in the context of planning history.

When writing planning history two essential and related questions must be addressed. The first is how planning historians define the term planning, as an activity and within the wider context of the functioning of the socio-economic system within which it is located. This would seem to presume that planning is simultaneously derived from, and part of the socio-economic system that it was created to control, primarily through land regulation. The second question arises with regard to the potential for the definition to change within the period under study, reflecting in turn the change in the socio-economic system within which it is located. If the situation posed in the first question can be logically sustained then the answer to the second question must be that the definition will change. If planning is a reflection of a socio-economic system, then, planning and any definition of it will change as that socio-economic system changes.

This questioning of how one might define planning within the context of planning history does not seem to be one which has concerned most planning historians. Sutcliffe defined town planning as “the concerted intervention by a public authority in the development and subsequent uses of urban land”³⁰. That intervention in turn being based on the “scientific analysis of the urban areas current conditions and future prospects” and “in certain standards of environment and amenity which are considered essential or desirable for the effective operation of the area as an economic and social unit”³¹. He suggests that planning is concerned with the construction and control of the urban fabric and urban space. That intervention in turn is required because, in what is largely a pluralist view of socio-economic

relationships, the market is unable to successfully mediate outcomes for the groups such as those involved in commerce, industry, etc, who are involved in using urban space. The market is equally as unsuccessful in achieving quality environments for the community who are poorly endowed with power in these circumstances.

Gordon Cherry in his last work *Town Planning in Britain Since 1900*, adopted a similar stance linking the emergence of town planning to the need to intervene “to secure lasting improvements to housing and environmental conditions in British cities for those (insofar as could be arranged) to whom those things would otherwise be denied”³². This leads to a definition which is not out of keeping with that proposed by Sutcliffe in that it contemplates intervention to secure better commercial and social outcomes which are largely the products of market failure.

Both Sutcliffe and Cherry represent the mainstream aspects of British planning history. An alternative approach is provided by Cliff Hague in *The Development of Planning Thought: A Critical Perspective*, a Marxian analysis of the development of town planning in Britain. It explicitly rejects the idea that “planning is a rational decision making process”³³. Instead he postulates a model for planning which requires explicit consideration of the economic, political and socio-cultural dimensions within which planning functions and which in turn shape what planning will be concerned with. He also points to the fact that until the 1960s there was little in the way of planning theory to independently shape planning. This is what leads Cherry to acknowledge that “the boundaries of town planning proved to be elastic” and that “town planning is what town planners do”³⁴.

Burgess in her discussion of the state of planning history in the United States indicates that within much planning history there is no definition, as such, of planning and that "...most works discussed imply a definition of planning rather than defining it explicitly"³⁵. This is perhaps best illustrated by Mel Scott's work³⁶, which represents a comprehensive overview of the development of planning in the United States. It proceeds without ever defining what is meant by the term "city planning" and instead concentrates on a plethora of detail that describes what this undefined activity did and did not achieve. Burgess believes a definition is an essential precursor to determining if planning has been successful and she explores this further in terms of why we undertake planning history. Her answer seems to largely focus on the analytical value of such work in terms of determining the success of planning. However at the end of her discussion she almost inadvertently present a simple definition of planning as an activity which "produce(s) a better urban environment for the intended benefactors"³⁷.

There are American writers who take an alternative interpretative perspective on planning history and who have discussed their definition of planning. Foglesong positions his work as one of "...political science, urban history, political economy and planning theory"³⁸, and adopts a Marxian perspective in his analysis of US planning history up to the 1930s. While he does not explicitly identify a single encompassing definition of planning the introductory chapters to his work effectively build a definition in which planning is circularly defined by what it does. This definition is effectively the same as Cherry's observation that planning is what planners do.

For Foglesong urban planning is a necessary adjunct of a capitalist system because “... in controlling and mitigating the effects of the market system on the urban fabric it contributed to the `maintenance of the capitalist system”³⁹. Planning is both a state intervention and a method of policy formulation with the two roles rarely being distinguished by those who practised the art. Nevertheless, while he ascribes specific motives to it, Foglesong does acknowledge that planning as an intervention is intended to secure a better living environment for those forced to live within the urban system⁴⁰. A simplified representation of Foglesong’s definition of planning would be state intervention necessitated by the needs of capitalism and intended to mediate and modify the less desirable aspects of living in the modern world. Thus planning like many other aspects of twentieth century society is an ameliorating activity, that ultimately involves some actions to secure better living environments for all. In this regard it mirrors some of the issues raised by Sandercock.

Boyer’s work in contrast is a “discussion of the discourse of planning”⁴¹ which is nevertheless set within a broader Marxian framework in terms of the manner in which it explores and explains the relationships within socio-economic time and space. While her work also does not contain an explicit definition of planning, she does define it through a specific discussion of the series of processes that she identifies as being involved in planning. Those processes start with the identification of a comprehensive and ideal plan for the city and then moves to the “disciplining of space”, that is assigning “...a functional location to every land use in order to separate conflicting land uses and increase the utility of the whole” to a “temporal ordering of land uses”⁴² which ensures that in the future that there will be sufficient land available for public use. Implicit in this definition is the concept that planning is a transformative activity which mediates conflict to achieve a disciplining

of space which in turn produces outcomes which are required and implicitly approved of by the community.

Peter Hall is the planning historian who attempts to take a global perspective and who should offer the best type of international or less tradition bound definition of planning. As expected he does address the “meaning of that highly elastic phrase, city (or town) planning”⁴³. However in addressing it he does not identify what it means but rather defines it in terms of what it encompasses, that it concerns planning for a geographically determined area, and he seems to leave undefined what in turn the nature of that planning might be. Hall’s definition of planning comes from a reading of his book as a whole, wherein he charts, not strictly chronologically, but in broad thematic terms, the development of planning to the mid-1990s. Planning for Hall seems to be intervention inspired by some theoretical or committed belief, to achieve improved social and environmental outcomes for the community. It is a definition that is not far removed from Cherry’s reflection on planning being what planners do.

The Australian literature also contains few explicit definitions of town or city planning. However Freestone and Hutchings in 1988 almost inadvertently defined it when they talked of public acceptance of the need for planning which is “... a job to be done with a range of development an environmental briefs based on public intervention in urban form and social process”⁴⁴. This is not a definition that is out of keeping with others discussed above.

The more recently developed approaches, largely derived from a Post-Modern interpretation, appear to be much stronger in terms of defining planning. The best

representation of these is to be found in *Making the Invisible Visible: A Multicultural Planning History*⁴⁵, edited by Leonie Sandercock. She and her contributors provide a variety of definitions of planning. Sandercock starts with a definition whereby planning is "...a state-directed activity, an agency of city and region building"⁴⁶ but goes on to include planning which occurs outside the ambit of the state. While I am sure she would feel uncomfortable with the definition, this seems to lead back to the concept of 'planning is what planners do' as this overcomes the necessity for the involvement of the state and allows for a broader interpretation of who might be a 'planner'. It is almost inevitable that each account produced within a post-modern analytical framework will carry with it its own definition of planning reflecting as it does the value of multiple voices and discourses.

Her contributors' produce various theoretical positions within which there are espoused various definitions of planning. For Holston planning is both the traditional aspect of urban design and "the application of social science to the management of society"⁴⁷. For Epstein planning is a "pathology of solutions"⁴⁸ infused with the belief that planning itself can correct, cure, or put right the wrongs through its interventions. In terms of the generally identified origins of planning in public health issues, this latter definition has some attraction. Finally for Hooper planning is largely defined as a rationalising activity which puts right and conquers the innate disorder of the city⁴⁹.

The question must arise if it is possible to identify a universal definition of planning which can function as an effective starting point for a planning history analysis. While there is no universal definition it is possible to identify some common or essential features from all of the definitions, which in turn suggests that there are

some aspects which will always form part of an implicit or explicit definition of planning. Planning involves intervention by the state in social, economic and political arrangements by the state. This largely explains its twentieth century origins. While there is debate as to why that intervention is undertaken, what it might attempt to achieve and its exact nature, there is in all definitions recognition that planning is an intervention. Equally there is also basic concurrence that planning involves mediating between differing interests in society with the intention of overcoming the negative aspects of living within an urban space and to achieve outcomes which favour community, and increasingly environmental 'goals'. Planning inevitably becomes process-driven but has its ultimate expression in the way it shapes urban space, as in Epstein's definition, it produces a "pathology of solutions". While specific authors may ascribe differing motives to planning they would all concur with the basic tenets of this definition. Thus planning in terms of planning history is concerned with a process of state intervention via a group who identify themselves as professionals, that shapes urban space to achieve outcomes acceptable in community or environmental terms.

Having addressed the issue of how planning historians have defined planning it now falls to consider the second question of the potential of the definition to change over time. The very nature of planning as an intervention in the social, economic and political arrangements of society, does leave it open to the potential to in turn be shaped by those same forces. At this juncture it is important to distinguish, as Hall does between theory in planning which he defines as "an understanding of the practical techniques and methodologies that planners always needed even if they once picked them up on the job", and the theory of planning where "planners try to understand the very nature of the activity they practice, including the reasons for its

existence"⁵⁰. Planning history almost inevitably is concerned with both aspects but it is important to distinguish between the two and this is not always done. For example Muller's otherwise excellent article on the evolution of planning methodologies tends to confuse the two in his discussion of the radical critique⁵¹. In essence Castells⁵², Harvey⁵³ and other Marxian and post-modern critics of planning are concerned with the theory of planning rather than the theory in planning which is represented by the various methodologies which Muller so competently explores.

It is within the theory of planning that there is likely to be the greatest impact of the transformative aspects of temporal change on any definition of planning. Cherry reflects on this at some length and observes "town planning has its myths: one of them is that the activity represents a long march forward to enlightenment from nineteenth-century philistinism⁵⁴. This he postulates is a myth because it ignores the fact that planning, largely because it is an intervention of the state, is only able to do what it is allowed to do - its definition is determined by the circumstances in which the state finds itself. Moreover implicit in this consideration is the recognition that town planning used rather than created the intervention by the state. Thus town planning followed the major interventions by the state that emerged out of nineteenth-century public health, and other concerns, and subsequent statutory interventions. Town planning was a player rather than a playmaker in terms of the emergence of the interventionist powers of the state. Thus in the British context the progress of town planning was erratic moving from a focus on housing and regulating the more obscene aspects of urban degradation through to the 'halcyon days' of the post-war period to the "short term managerialism"⁵⁵ of the late twentieth century. Planners in this regard almost emerge as opportunists who push out the boundaries and hence the definition of their activity when and where circumstances

allow this. Thus any definition of town planning will change over time though as suggested above it may involve some consistent themes or elements. This is an integral aspect of the fact that planning history is largely concerned with the history of a professional group.

Current planning theorists have reflected to some extent on this issue and given Leonie Sandercock's charge that there is a 'theoretical and historiographical innocence'⁵⁶ about planning history, it is important to make the link with planning theory.

PLANNING THEORY AND PLANNING HISTORY

The discussion above is intended to lead into an exploration, which has the potential to become quite complex, of how planning theory can be related to planning history. Why it is necessary to address this issue at all? The simple response would be that theory is, particularly with regard to a practice discipline such as planning, derived from and developed as the result of experience and observations of how the world functions. The Marxist would however demur from such a position. Their distrust of empiricism would lead them to require an analysis of the structural relationships that are not directly measurable and therefore must be explored through theory. Thus generally theory must ultimately be concerned with history because history is where theory is grounded. Some writers would go further, as Reade does, when he states that "a theory is not a theory at all, until it has been used in practice, over a considerable period of time"⁵⁷. The introduction of a temporal element in this view positively invites the connection to history. It also

stresses that planning theory is underpinned with a pragmatic element which sees theory being developed out of 'doing' rather than other ways of theorising.

The second and much more complex answer involves a discussion of the nature of and place of theory in planning, and how that might be related to the history of the discipline. Planning is in many ways an unusual discipline, in that the practice of planning began without the benefit of any theoretical basis which led, at least in the view of Reade in Britain, to a "premature legitimation of planning"⁵⁸. This is generally a confirmation of Cherry's point that planning is often defined as 'what planners do', in short the discipline itself represents a tautology. But how far this is true? Moreover what implications does this have for those whose focus is on planning history? Does it mean that inevitably those who engage in planning history are doomed to confirm Sandercock's view of their naivety and to merely chart the success (and failures) of planning as a discipline, without benefit of a critical framework which is derived from the theories which underlie planning itself? Equally, is this merely a sideline argument that overlooks the fact that planning history is a sub-set of history? As such it should have a clear and obvious connection not to planning theory that must be concerned with what planning is attempting to achieve, but to recording and explaining how and why planning was used in particular periods of the past. The last issue will be returned to but in the interim the first aspect still remains to be addressed.

This is then a work of planning history rather than an attempt at a contribution to the theoretical literature of planning. Perhaps more important is Hall's warning to distinguish the theory of planning from the theory in planning. Planning theory is

much more likely to be considered with theory in planning while planning history, while showing some interest in this, is more focused on theories of planning.

The discussion about planning theory which follows does not purport to be comprehensive, for while it had a late start, there is still almost forty years of scholarly endeavour to be addressed. This section is focused on aspects of planning theory which assist in understanding the scope and development of planning, and therefore might be relevant to the study of planning history. The connections between planning theory and planning history are recognised at the most basic level. Mazza, in his Introduction to *Explorations in Planning Theory* states that “for a long time, planners have been searching through their history to find the roots and meanings of their activity”⁵⁹. He goes on to say that this has been done because of the need planners often feel to “assign a domain to planning that can boost homogeneity and consistency”⁶⁰. This perhaps emphasises Reade’s conclusion about the premature legitimisation of planning before it had an appropriate theoretical base. However, Friedmann, a leading planning theoretician, points to the problem of defining this homogeneous and consistent domain for planning. His diverse and comprehensive overview tends to emphasise the derivative nature of planning in both theoretical and practice terms. It is these diffuse origins which perhaps tends to explain Hague’s view that “planning practice typically bears the imprint of direct national, legal and administrative systems yet discussion of planning theory tends to be placeless”⁶¹. Despite Friedmann and others’ efforts, the reality is that a specific body of planning theory only emerged in the United States, where it still remains very strong, in the 1950s, and in Britain in the 1960s. It emerged as such at least fifty years after planning itself began to be practised and

many years after substantial planning interventions were put in place, often in the form of planning legislation. What is perhaps most striking is that this occurred throughout the world and was a universal phenomenon. This has led Reade to observe somewhat acerbically in the 1980s that "...the planning profession in Britain still operates at the evangelical level, at the level of faith ... the level of belief, rather than at the level of search for knowledge"⁶². A related but more balanced view by Hall is that as the theoreticians became involved in ever more complex theorising they failed to engage the practitioners who "lapsed into an increasingly untheoretical, unreflective, pragmatic, even visceral style of planning"⁶³. While this is a damning reflection it does stress the role of theory in the practice of planning and the role of reflection, that is presumably on the past, in theory. In charting the history of the development of planning theory, writers such as Hague date the arrival of the "idea of planning theory" in Britain from the US, to the 1960s⁶⁴. This to some extent ignores the earlier themes typified by the garden city paradigm that were dominated, by what Yiftachel describes as a "belief in the ability of urban planning to affect social progress"⁶⁵. Planning was characterised by those who practised it or those who advocated for it, as an activity which was ultimately progressive and would lead to ever improved outcomes in the urban fabric and for those who lived in urban areas. This theoretical position (if it can actually be called that at all) was accompanied by what Yiftachel has characterised as universal reform and an interest in the institution of a "good planning process".

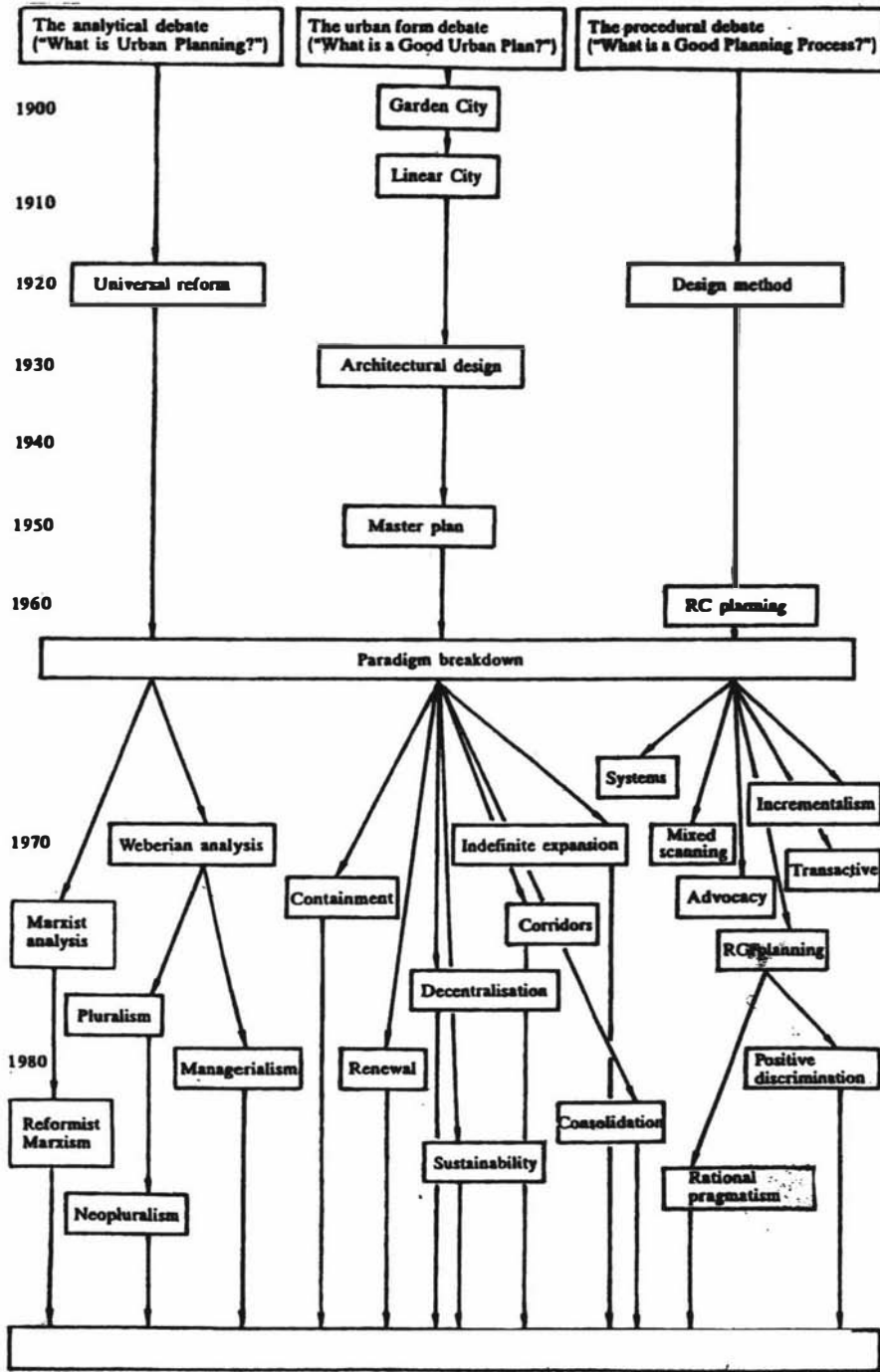
The 1960s saw the development of procedural models of planning which emphasised the rational comprehensive nature of the planning process that were typified by the systems approach of McLoughlin ⁶⁶. As Hague points out this, in the British context, led to the replacement of the view that planning was an art

dependent on the intuitive skills of the individual planner, to a situation where “procedural theory offered a claim to legitimacy for planning as a method of rational evaluation of choices”⁶⁷. Unfortunately having constructed this theoretical position, there was not universal acceptance particularly in the United States, and planning theory fragmented into a series of competing theories, which are so well illustrated in the diagrammatic version of Yiftachel⁶⁸ (see Figure 2.1). This situation was further complicated by the fact that radical commentators, often of a Marxian or neo-Marxian persuasion, “took planning theory into questions of social structure and power in society”⁶⁹.

The result was a fragmentation of planning theory to the point that most of it still remains caught in ever more complex debate which removes it from the ambit and understanding of most practitioners. Equally, as Poulton observes this leaves planning, in contrast to a discipline such as economics, not with a systematic and agreed body of theory but with “an ever growing compendium of ideas which can only be kept track of by frequent review or survey articles”⁷⁰.

At this point it is important to return to the difference between theories of planning and theory in planning. What planning practitioners had learned to do in the absence of theories of planning, was to develop often quite pragmatic theories in planning such as the Geddesian model of planning process, that gives quite clear assistance to those in practice. It also appealed to practitioners who were operating within the structure of a profession. As professionals they had to lay claim to a unique body of knowledge and to subject themselves and their activities to the rigours of professional discipline. Thus the professional context of planning could be seen to encourage a pre-occupation with rational normative models.

FIGURE 2.1 – The Origins of Planning Theory.



SOURCE : Yiftachel, O. 1989 Towards A Typology of Urban Planning Theories, *Environment and Planning B*, Vol. 16, p 26

These are well represented by procedural planning models that dominated planning theory until the early 1970s. This produced a “conceptualisation [which] relies on the assumption that there exists a distinctive type of planning thought and action which occurs without reference to any particular object, and which can be adopted within any societal context”⁷¹. This universal model that fitted so well with the planner as a professional, began to break down under the onslaught of theories of planning that more critically reflected the social, political and economic context of the time. As these frequently involved differing world or system viewpoints then theory became unattractive to the practitioner because it no longer helped to guide what planners might do on a day to day basis.

Thus planning theory does offer the study of planning history some useful insights, reflections and analysis as it does help to illuminate what ideas guided and justified the practice of planning. As Poulton observed theory should serve a dual purpose “it explains, describes and predicts behaviour and it provides a basis upon which to scrutinise, explore and judge the merits of other types of theorising”⁷². Such a description would fit planning history equally as well. Moreover planning theory emphasises that planning reflects rather than shapes the social, economic and political environments. This presumably arises out of its role as a tool of a pre-determined intervention of the state. In turn those who undertake this work, that is the planners, have only limited power to delineate the nature of the intervention. The arrival of planning theory after planning had commenced also serves to emphasise the professional history aspects of planning history and the inextricable links between planning theory and planning history. It is probably why planning history is often taught as part of planning theory courses⁷³. It may also help to

explain why at times planning practitioners operated in such differing manners, because they were not all motivated or informed by an agreed body of planning theory. It is perhaps the present schismatic nature of planning theory which makes the connection less apparent.

The period of this study i.e. 1900 to 1933, would in terms of Yiftachel's diagram, would fall in the period when there was merely agreement that planning was good and was progressive. Planning history must at first be concerned with planning practice because that is the means through which planning history was created. Planning history is concerned with examining the products of planning practice, its impacts, successes and failures and how these elements changed over time. Planning theory is important and relevant only as far as it can help to elucidate why planning tried to achieve what it did and why it chose to use particular methods to achieve those outcomes. The development of planning theory Hague observes inevitably reflects as much of the social and political concerns of the time, as the personal concerns of the theorists⁷⁴. Therefore current theory has some ability to explain the past. This connection becomes stronger if one adopts the position of Mandelbaum and Cherry who emphasise that planning history is primarily concerned with what planners do. As theory informs and shapes what planners do, then there will always be connections between the planning history and planning theory, though at times the connections will be stronger than at others.

CRITICAL FRAMEWORKS

At the heart of any assessment or analysis of the planning history of any country must be some form of critical framework which we can use to elucidate a series of

events which look place. Planning historians have perhaps been slow to develop such frameworks or perhaps more accurately to recognise that they are informed in their inquiries, by a particular framework or approach. The development of these frameworks would assist in the expansion of the small body of comparative studies.

Leonie Sandercock has been the most obvious critic of this lack of a critical faculty which might produce what she labels, after the work of Holston, as “insurgent planning histories”⁷⁵. She has developed this critique firstly through a special issue of the journal *Planning Theory*⁷⁶ and more latterly through a collection of ‘insurgent histories’ in *Making the Invisible Visible: A Multicultural Planning History*⁷⁷, and finally and less directly in *Towards Cosmopolis*⁷⁸.

Throughout her work Sandercock characterises planning histories and historians as a somewhat quaint group locked in a time warp of positivism and choosing “to ignore the major developments in historiography and social theory of the last thirty years”⁷⁹. This she appears to believe is a product of the origins of planning history which lie not in the discipline of history but in the planning profession itself. Thus planning history becomes part of the development of a uncritical professional mythology, designed to build and enforce professional identities and undertaken by those who have in turn been professionally socialised by the process of which they write.

This is trenchant criticism. It is the product of the author and her contributors’ own commitment to a Post-Modern perspective, which might be disputed on a number of grounds. Sandercock does identify two important questions that should lie at the heart of planning history viz. “what is the object of planning history? and who are its

subjects?"⁸⁰. Equally, while she claims that no single theoretical framework informs the essays that make up her edited collection, she does ignore the fact that the same collection could be viewed, in Post-Modern terms as a series of discourses. However she does correctly signal the lack of an explicit theoretical framework in the more positivist approaches which do not look beyond looking at what the profession did and how it developed, within a framework where planning was judged to be progressive and ultimately good.

Anyone who has read across the planning history literature to date, would have to have some sympathy with Sandercock's criticisms. Much of the material is premised on the belief that planning by its nature is good. Some would say that this is inevitable given its generally recent origins in addressing the excesses of the Victorian industrial city combined with its relatively recent professional status. This thesis focuses on what might be called systematic town planning which dates largely from the early twentieth-century rather than the 'planning of towns approach', derived from an architectural or urban design perspective. This latter concept takes the origins of planning well back into the past. As I have suggested in my Introduction the concept of planners as pioneers still appears to be strong within the profession. One might also ask if it is realistic to expect planning history, which as most writers would acknowledge is a relatively recent area of study, to immediately enter the milieu of historiography. Much of the social and historiographical theory to which Sandercock refers has been developed on the foundation of the review histories which established a framework of people, events and actions which could then be subject to various interpretations using whichever theoretical view one subscribes to. For planning history much of the last thirty years has been taken up with establishing that very basic framework of people, events

and actions leading to the development of the profession. Only when that was established was it possible to examine in what ways in which the picture may be less than a full account, to establish who and what it has overlooked or to postulate something more than the most basic explanation.

In a minor way Sandercock recognises this development pattern, for want of a better term, in the evolution of feminist history. There she observes “there has been a general pattern of first, detailed descriptive work discovering the activities and contributions of women, followed by a discussion and expose’ of patriarchal relationships and how the system of patriarchy has limited women’s participation in the public domain”⁸¹. What is perhaps planning history’s worst weakness is the length of time that has been spent in this first stage and the often slow and uneven journey to the next stages. In this respect Sandercock’s contention that the undeveloped nature of planning historiography reflects the close identification between planning historians and the profession may help to explain this slow progress. For if, as I suggested in my Introduction, planners in times of change serve to reconstitute themselves as ‘pioneers’ as part of maintaining themselves and their profession, this encourages a constant retelling of the latest pioneering planners’ tales and a reassessment of what has come before.

This is not intended as an excuse or to suggest that Sandercock’s criticisms do not have validity but rather to recognise the realities that exist in such a recent area of historical research. It is also to signal that any research will involve fundamental work to describe the nature of the material. When this description has been established it is then possible to go beyond the most constrained interpretations

which might be all that is possible to provide at the point where the record or framework is being established

This point has obviously been reached in Britain and the United States and it is from these sources that some of the more critical and challenging frameworks have emerged. A survey of planning history would reveal three broad approaches. The first, Liberal Planning History has produced the largest body of writing. It is often adopted by the former practitioners turned historians and tends to be organised around a descriptive account that also makes some claims that a knowledge of the past is useful to, and can inform present practitioners. This emphasises the history of the profession aspects of planning history where planning is defined by 'what planners do' in a particular situation or time. It is not a pure narrative approach but is one in which the establishment of the narrative tends to dominate and the interpretative aspects are sometimes less well established. The second major approach are the Critical Planning Histories, drawing on Marxian approaches that try to show how planning is connected to the forces of production. These make a stronger linkage to planning theory and produce a very vigorous interpretative debate that may be intended to challenge rather than laud the profession. The final and much more loosely constituted group could be labelled the Post-Modern Planning historians who use social theory, deconstruction, and discourse analysis to reveal the hegemonic planning discourses and suppressed voices that planning history, planning theory and the profession have overlooked.

The latter approaches, which are respectively more analytical and discursive, have developed where the Liberal Planning History approach is well established and there exists a strong base derived from the work of the Liberal Planning Historians.

In fact it is difficult to see how the other approaches could have emerged without this material, or at least how an informed critique might have been developed. Thus it is important to examine in more detail each of these approaches.

The Liberal Planning Histories

This approach, which Sandercock calls “time warp”⁸² history is firmly based on the notion that planning can be distinguished as an activity which has significant and recorded effects on the fabric of the city, and to some extent the progress of the city. Inevitably it is also often preoccupied with explaining the origins and establishment and growth of planning as a separate and identifiable profession.

Both in the United States and Great Britain there are classic texts in this area. John Reps *The Making of Urban America*⁸³, of 1965, was a seminal piece which was followed by the totally comprehensive *American City Planning Since 1890*⁸⁴ by Mel Scott in 1969, which was written under the direct patronage of the profession to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. Together these works produced a complementary account of urban history and the impact of the profession on those areas. These broadly based accounts have been followed by a plethora of more detailed works such as Kreuckeberg’s *Introduction to Planning History in the United States*⁸⁵ which covers the period 1840 to the 1980s through a series of targeted essays. These are also supplemented by a range of works that Burgess details in her review article⁸⁶, which focuses on particular aspects of that period of development. Kreuckeberg has also edited a volume of biographies of planners as diverse as Olmstead, Nolan, Bauer and Lynch⁸⁷. All of this provides a very full and diverse

picture of the development of the discipline, the profession and its practice in the United States.

Much of the same can be found in Great Britain where the genesis of the comprehensive review is to be found in the work of Ashworth⁸⁸ and Cullingworth⁸⁹. However a more diverse and more animated account can be found in the work of Gordon Cherry and Anthony Sutcliffe. Cherry has produced a series of overviews which commenced in 1974 with *The Evolution of British Town Planning*⁹⁰ and which had its final flowering in 1996 with *Town Planning in Britain Since 1900*⁹¹, but which was extended through specific studies such as the biographical series *Pioneers in British Town Planning*⁹². Like Mel Scott's work, the *Evolution of British Town Planning*, though not commissioned by the Royal Town Planning Institute [RTPI] was published on the sixtieth anniversary of that Institute, and to a large extent fulfils the role of an 'official' history.

Anthony Sutcliffe has been similarly fruitful though he has tended to take a more international view, attempting to link developments in Britain and Europe. This approach is typified in his work in 1960, *The Rise of Modern Urban Planning 1800-1914*⁹³, *Towards the Planned City*⁹⁵ and again in his contribution to *British Town Planning: The Formative Years*⁹⁶. While there does not, if Cherry's review article⁹⁷ is any indication, seem to have been the extent of scholarship apparent in America, these basic overviews and collections have been supplemented by a series of detailed studies such as Wright's⁹⁸ biographical approach and Aldridge's⁹⁹ history of the New Towns.

In Australia reflecting its federal structure that produces a different history for each state, there is no national overview. Perhaps the only one to go explicitly beyond the boundaries of the single state was Sandercock's *Cities for Sale*¹⁰⁰ in 1975. Even at the state level there is not a full coverage with Hutchings and Bunker's *With Conscious Purpose: A History of Town Planning in South Australia*¹⁰¹ being the most comprehensive of the state histories. As Freestone and Hutchings observe in their review article, individual cities have fared rather better as has the recounting of the colonial experience of town development¹⁰². The Australians have also produced a range of detailed studies such as Freestone's examination of the Garden City movement in *Model Communities : The Garden City Movement in Australia*¹⁰³ and Martin Auster's work on the development of the "planning idea"¹⁰⁴.

Regardless of origin, these Liberal Planning histories contain a significant body of descriptive material much of it being presented for the first time. The 'pioneering' aspects of such studies are always evident. Of necessity this, particularly with the early Liberal Planning histories, leaves little opportunity to reflect fully on why events happened, what motivated people, or what might have been achieved. Interpretation is frequently subordinated to description.

The early traditional accounts see the explanations as reasonably simple and straightforward. Ashworth and Cullingworth for instance see a clear and unequivocal origin for town planning in the uncontrolled growth of urban areas provoked by the Industrial Revolution which in turn produced massive public health and housing problems which threatened all those who lived in those cities. Cullingworth emphasises this when he states boldly in his first sentence, "Town and Country Planning as a task of government has developed from health and housing

policies”¹⁰⁵. Town planning is characterised in this context as an intervention made essential by the public health risks posed by unregulated growth and involved solely in regulating the nature of the urban fabric. This is little different to the approach of Ashworth’s pioneer history of town planning, *The Genesis of Modern British Town Planning*, that was the first to move beyond the aesthetic elements in addressing the growth and development of town planning. It was his intention, “to try to discover why there has gradually arisen a widespread public demand that town planning should be adopted as one of the normal functions of public activity”¹⁰⁶. His analysis was, however, largely dominated by the presumption that town planning was essentially a response to social or economic change and that it was accepted because it was ultimately progressive and beneficial. Much of his work is taken up with a basic narrative, but he does much to place it within a wider context by tying together the threads derived from the philanthropic movements with those from the great sanitation debates which dominated Victorian Britain.

This somewhat utilitarian and process-focused approach was however, as Sutcliffe observes, the dominant mode of analysis until it was extended by the work of Creese¹⁰⁷. His work stressed the design elements of British planning history and established an alternative to the “...socio-administrative tradition of Ashworth and his school”¹⁰⁸. This approach was enriched by the production of biographies of the main proponents of the movement. These assisted in elucidating the ideas and dreams that lay behind their actions. The classics here are Helen Meller’s biography of Geddes¹⁰⁹ and Cherry’s biographical collection *Pioneers of British Town Planning*¹¹⁰. Gordon Cherry’s final work published in 1996 provides an integrated approach which sustains a complex discussion of the development of British town planning primarily as a form of state intervention. It also links these to

the growth of the profession and the discipline, thus bringing together a number of narrative strands.

While the narrative element is still strong he does place the development of planning within a broader framework of social and economic change, particularly in terms of the role of the state. Cherry characterises the role of town planning in regulating both society and the urban fabric, as paralleling the growth of state intervention. While recognising that the need for the intervention was derived largely from the public health issues of the period, he also very firmly links it to the growth and development of local government particularly in terms of the expansion of their role, “to cope with the complexities of a growing society”¹¹¹. These strong, and ultimately unified units of local governance gradually took on, in a minimalist form, additional new functions which including education and housing where these became serious social issues. However the necessity for intervention became most pressing in what Cherry calls the “public environment”, and the role particularly of local government came to include not only public health engineering but roads, lighting and public works¹¹². This ultimately lead to what he characterises as social collectivism whereby the state broadly assumed some responsibility in the area of public and general health, education and housing. Along with this role of a new interventionist state went some acknowledgement of the need to modify the nature of the basic property right to recognise its contingent responsibility. This in turn also reflected the rise of middle class paternalism which stretched the “moral duties in public service”¹¹³. Within this discussion there is no suggestion the town planning itself assisted in expanding the role of the state. The intervention of the state is seen as being produced by a complex web of social, economic and political forces ,

with town planning being a mere opportunistic benefactor of the expansion of that involvement.

Having established a potentially innovative framework Cherry's explicit discussion of the development of town planning in Britain then returns to some very traditional descriptions and explanations. Basically he identifies two major origins for planning the first of which is the growth of philanthropy. This was exhibited in the development of new and better public housing by people such as Octavia Hill and brought to a pinnacle by the economic and paternalistic philanthropy which produced the model housing of Bournville and Port Sunlight. This philanthropic movement did not emerge of course from a void; but could trace its intellectual origins to the earlier utopian movement and as such provided the link which produced the more comprehensive garden city/suburb movement.

The second significant origin lay in the response of individuals and groups to living in the unregulated and often chaotic Victorian city and in particular their concern with overcoming the housing and public health issue which he characterises as a "late Victorian urban crisis"¹⁵. In this respect there are limited references to the eugenics movement that emerged from the concern that the poor urban conditions would produce a race unable to be depended on by an empire that was at its peak. There was also the fear that if conditions were allowed to deteriorate that the resultant social unrest would threaten middle class society.

Cherry then goes on to briefly explore the internationalisation of planning particularly through the various international conferences which were held from the 1890's onward. This in turn leads to a discussion of the institutionalisation of town

planning through the *Housing and Town Planning & Etc Act 1909*. In Chapter Three Cherry moves to more important ground in his attempt to explain the growth and extension of the State's role in the regulation of an increasingly complex industrial society, to replace what he calls the "laissez-faire individualism of the mid-Victorian years"¹¹⁶. He appears to believe that the growth of state intervention in Great Britain, which would eventually allow for, and promote town planning, was the product of the growth and divergence in the nature of political movements. It was also a product of what he characterises as the "crisis of liberalism... when it became recognised that the liberal state could no longer be reproduced by liberal policies"¹¹⁷. Political parties emerged and with them "new collectivist aspirations"¹¹⁸. These aspirations reflected the concerns of the groups involved. The Fabians and Labour Party supporters accepted and championed the extension of state power to undermine the capitalist market system. For the Imperialists the role of the state could be extended to secure a vigorous and efficient state and only the Conservatives appeared to see no value in such an extension. While this signalled acceptance of state intervention it did not, as Cherry points out, lead to any concerted programme of intervention. Rather to a series of ad hoc programmes, as "Government drifted into intervening roles"¹¹⁹ It was however this acceptance of state intervention which allowed the development of town planning in the period from 1919-1939.

Cherry's approach here in seeing the growth of state intervention as almost inevitable is similar to the view expressed by Auster who looked at the development of the idea of planning in Great Britain, USA and Australia in the period 1929-39. He concluded, having examined planning not only as town planning but in its broadest context, that "the purest laissez-faire society required some minimum

socially determined structure of laws and institutions to enforce contracts and safeguard property and person and as industrial society had advanced, the scope of government had perforce expanded"¹²⁰. This expansion of the state Cherry sees as being enforced, and perhaps legitimised by the advent of World War II, which made state control, particularly of the economy, essential. The unity brought by the external threat and the desire to reward those who had fought allowed a relatively unquestioning expansion of that role. The subsequent requirement for post war reconstruction connected both the role of the collectivist state and the role of planning as part of that intervention.

The connection that Cherry makes, in his later analysis, between the growth of planning and the relationship to property rights requires further exploration. Luithlen produces a complex discussion that sees town planning emerging as a response to the needs of land and property market. His thesis is that town planning "is an essential ingredient of a land/property market without which property investment would not be forthcoming."¹²¹ and that the property market itself was developed from private land law which had its origins in the feudal period. Through detailed discussion Luithlen traces the emergence firstly of land law which moved tenure from a leasehold to fee simple basis and came to define not only the "relations between owner and property" but "regulating the creation and transfer of property rights"¹²². The state became involved in ensuring that the land and property market, so created, was enhanced, after the Liberals resolved that "markets require collective action to function adequately"¹²³. This intervention started in the form of the state's involvement with providing infrastructural elements, Cherry's public health concerns, but moved into more complex relationships. This involved town planning, that served and enhanced the physical and other qualities of private

property. He seems to suggest that by addressing amenity and other issues through zoning and development control techniques planning effectively took over significant aspects of what previously formed part of estate management. Thus planning as a state intervention is not inimical to private property rights but rather enhanced them by removing from the individual property owner the responsibility and expense of securing “environmental controls, infrastructural provision and the administration of amenity”¹²⁴

Comprehensive and compelling as Cherry’s account is, there is an unquestioning acceptance that state intervention, of which planning was a part, was almost an inevitable event which appears to represent a maturing of the socio-political aspects of society. This would suggest that state intervention and the rise of the collectivist state was the product of a recognition that the adverse effects of the industrialised city could not be borne by individuals because they affected everyone. Equally they were unpalatable in an era of higher moral values.

“Town planning stood for extension of public control over private interests in land and property. Its case was that such an extension was justified in the public interest - health and fitness - and it was also able to claim moral supremacy in its appeal to the virtues of art and design and of equity”¹²⁵.

Equally the period in which town planning emerged paralleled the development of new political ideas based on a more humanist focus typified by the Fabians and Labour Party, which were willing to use the state to achieve social outcomes. Town planning which Cherry characterises as “elastic” at its boundaries was able, at appropriate times, to respond to these socio-political changes. It was however this tendency of town planning to follow or take up the opportunities made available by

socio-political change that ensured that progress in establishing the profession and discipline was slow and uneven.

While these observations are clearly true and partly explain the development of town planning, most particularly the fact that if growth and development was a reflection of the overall changes in the socio-political system, there is no real attempt to ask why this occurred. Why did the state decide or find itself compelled to pursue an interventionist policy? Cherry tells us much of the matters this triggered that response, be it public health issues or a world war, but he does not comprehensively explain the reasons for the state's response. If for instance the better-off in society even those motivated by an excess of moral duty and self protection, felt the need to correct the increasingly poor housing and urban environmental conditions, then why did they not merely offer charity and retreat to protected communities? The latter has been the response in the late 1990s with the growth in gated communities whereby the better off isolated themselves from the social ills elsewhere, at a time when the interventionist state was increasingly in retreat. To return to Auster, he at least offers a partial explanation. The state, particularly in terms of its economic base, could only continue to function if it intervened. In these terms intervention was the product of the state's interest in preserving itself through the minimalist of interventions. This does help to explain the lack of uniform progress in the development of town planning, which Cherry identifies, as the degree of intervention was tailored to the extent and nature of the threat and the political acceptability of intervention. Luithlen's theory also takes us to at least a partial explanation embedded in the maintenance and enhancement of property rights.

Anthony Sutcliffe, the other bastion of the British planning history, has also addressed the issue of why town planning emerged, primarily through the introductions to three separate collections he edited between 1980 and 1981¹²⁶. Sutcliffe's interest is broader based than Cherry's. He commences with a recognition that while the massive urbanisation, with all the attendant problems which resulted from the Industrial Revolution had its negative side, it also offered an unparalleled opportunity for workers to free themselves from the land and the feudal arrangements that were often associated with it. This Sutcliffe observes was not without a price, because the experience generated a process of conflict between various economic and social forces which the market alone could not successfully mediate. Further the conflict between the various interests could not always secure the optimal conditions for their production for three reasons viz.:

1. The market could not supply the essential infrastructure such as roads and drains.
2. The limited size of towns meant the market could not secure a "satisfactory physical arrangement of functions". The existence of environmental externalities that affected the generator and their neighbours, intensified this problem.
3. Labour as the weakest player was unlikely to be able to secure adequate residential environments which in turn produced a high incidence of disease which "detracted from the efficiency of the urban economy"¹²⁷

Thus at the outset the state had to intervene to correct market failure, to allow the market to function and to achieve the "...physical well being, political security and

peace of mind of existing owners and the prosperous professional classes who served them”¹²⁸

Consequently Sutcliffe is largely positioning planning as a product of the need for the needs of the state to intervene to preserve the full and relatively balanced functioning of the market, which positions it much more within a Marxian mode of analysis. There are, however, pluralist overtones in the emphasis on various parties battling to compete for their area of urban space. At the conclusion of *British Town Planning : The Formative Years*, Sutcliffe, seems to work towards a Marxian / Neo-Marxian framework of analysis which positions planning as a “not a progressive force but just one of a number of activities designed to shore up the State in the interests of its creator, the bourgeoisie”¹²⁹. He also identifies another analytical framework which he believes the Americans use, and which he describes as “functionalism”. This sees planning, and by implication any state intervention, as “a residual activity undertaken by the public authority in order to achieve what cannot be done cheaper, by more individualistic means”¹³⁰. This to a large extent seems a variant on a Marxian approach. He does not however adopt the hierarchical Marxian view or conclude that an interest in intervening in residential or living environments was produced from a desire to preserve the socio-economic relationships that predicate a Marxian view of society. Planning is once again cast as the handmaiden of the capitalist state.

In the American context the greatest of the overviews still remains Mel Scott’s *American City Planning Since 1890*, which provides a comprehensive and detailed account of the complex development of a planning system within a federal structure. This undeniably worthy book traces all aspects of both the development

of the diverse American planning system, from its earliest pre-occupation with the civic/city design aspects of planning illustrated so well by the City Beautiful movement, through the City Functional movement with its emphasis on infrastructural issues and planning, to the broadening of planning and the on-going domination of zoning as the prime regulatory mechanism. Throughout his work these developments are set within the broader framework of the complex nature of American political life reflecting the much more politicised nature of the American planning process. It also documents a somewhat dilatory and uneven development of the planning profession in American, perhaps reflecting the more diverse origins of planning in that country.

Scott's work fails to address the question of why planning was accepted both as a discipline and as a form of regulatory intervention. Given the dominance of zoning as a planning tool and the battles that were fought to establish its legality, this would appear to be a central question. It is however a question that is never really answered. While various reasons are advanced for the necessity for planning - urban growth, overcrowding and poor housing and design concerns, the same issues that appear so fully in the British accounts, there is no sustained or consistent critical analysis. There is a limited attempt to advance some broader explanations but these are at best partial comments. For instance when discussing the early development of zoning, Scott acknowledges the "designation of an apartment house zone as commercial zone conferred a new speculative value on properties in that zone"¹³¹. However, there is no resulting attempt to explain why the state decided to exercise its powers to benefit these particular groups. Similarly when talking later about the development of post-war planning he states, "in the post-war years the evolutionary exposition of the functions of American government

continued under the compelling force of the American dream of equality of opportunity and a more ample life for everyone"¹³². This does not represent a critical assessment as much as a somewhat sentimental attempt to explain that intervention and planning are intrinsically good and progressive, contributing as they do to the achievement of the American dream.

While the American accounts do not identify any real different origins for the emergence of city planning, they do provide a quite different description partly reflecting the federal nature of the American system. The accounts are also split by very specific chronological divisions which bear descriptive labels such as the City Beautiful and the City Functional. These two in particular reflect the two major themes in American planning that of civic design and that concerned with the infrastructure of the city which appears to include issues such as housing. One aspect that is not as clearly dealt with is the emergence of the strong legal framework for planning, that is the reliance on statute to create legally enforceable instruments. Equally there is little attempt to link together or to explain the broader scale regional planning typified by the New York Regional Plan and the work of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), to the city planning system. This perhaps reflects the very strict chronological approach taken by Scott, and the emphasis on the progressive nature of planning.

There is a tendency for writers to largely address the planning history or aspects of that history within the framework of a single country. While international and cross-border comparisons are made, these usually represent a minor part of the work. The lack of comparative work is one of the more intriguing aspects of planning history and may in itself reflect the relative youth of planning history and the pre-

occupation with recording national perspectives first. The exception to this is Peter Hall who has produced in *Cities of Tomorrow*¹³³ a work that attempts not to focus on a single country but rather to trace the evolution of planning ideas which have guided the development of cities since World War One. These ideas he sees as being able to be “traced back to the ideas of a few visionaries who lived and wrote long ago”¹³⁴. Thus his book attempts to expose those visionary ideas and to trace the manner and the outcomes of their application to the process of city planning. It is therefore as much a history of planning ideas and visions as it is a history of planning. Hall tends to focus on theories of planning whereby “..planners try to understand the very nature of the activity they practice, including the reasons for its existence”¹³⁵. He ascribes some of the perceived failures of planning in the late twentieth century to address the issues of urban decay and strife to an over pre-occupation with theories in planning rather than to addressing the idea of theories of planning.

In terms of a critical framework Hall's work is also a link between the generalists, single country focussed works discussed above, and the Marxians and Neo-Marxians of the Critical Planning History approach, discussed below. Basically Hall accepts that to a large extent planning ideas and activities emerge as a response to the socio-economic world's problems, which he calls “blindingly obvious”. Thus while clearly not a supporter of Marxian interpretations of planning he is able to accept a “Marxian basis of historical events”. This allows Hall to reflect on the particular stimuli to the willingness of the state to intervene through planning and consequently he is able to accept, as do the Marxists, that zoning for instance is largely intended to support and maintain property values¹³⁶. Hall's work provides a descriptive-interpretative approach where the narrative is defined by ideas rather

than chronology and presents the idea that planning, while a response to real world situations such as overcrowding and urban decay, developed characteristics that reflect the ideas and visions of men such as Geddes and Howard. Planning is therefore the product of intellectual concepts whose time has arrived. It does however once again position planning as a largely opportunistic undertaking that exploits the opportunities offered by established state intervention. It is equally an approach that takes greater cognisance of the interplay between the planning and economic conditions and forces.

The Critical History Approach

Hall's acknowledgement of the necessity to accept a Marxian basis of historical events "as a 'given', reflects the problems that must inevitably emerge if some attempt is not made to position planning within a broader framework of socio-economic and political developments. The Liberal Planning History approach discussed above, and demonstrated so well by authors such as Cherry, tended to see planning as an activity emerging as a response to the conditions generated by the overall development of the economy and society. While such explanations are useful and connect planning to the progression/development of society they do not always explain why such an intervention was deemed an appropriate response. It also almost inevitably suggests that planning is ultimately progressive, neutral and almost innately good, hence also the criticism raised by Sandercock. It excludes from consideration the contention that planning does not deal even-handedly with all groups in society. Inevitably some forms of planning intervention such as zoning or building restrictions significantly benefit certain groups and individuals within any

society, even while it may also simultaneously deliver some overall community benefit. This avoids questions of who benefits from planning interventions, or whose interests might be served by such processes.

The Critical Planning History, dominated by Marxist and Marxian approaches, in contrast tries to explain planning as an activity and an intervention within an account of historical development which emphasises socio-economic relationships within the context of class. Clearly it is easy for Marxian analysis to descend into a political polemic wherein the explanation that the theory can offer is lost within the need to use the explanation to achieve some political outcome. Nevertheless a Marxian approach is one which can produce a comprehensive and encompassing explanation of the emergence and use of planning, which simultaneously examines it within a framework of more general socio-economic and political history.

A number of authors have applied a Marxian analysis to planning history though none to date has produced a comprehensive history of the development of planning in one country, within a Marxian analytical framework. Perhaps the discipline has not existed for sufficient time to make such an undertaking realistic given the need at the outset to establish a solid largely descriptive account of planning history. Equally it may reflect the relatively small community of planning historians that produces a less diverse group of adherents to the full range of interpretative frameworks. Certainly the partial Marxian analysis of Foglesong¹³⁷ for the period up to 1920 in America is clearly dependent on both social theory and the descriptive material of the Liberal Planning historians.

One of the more comprehensive Marxian interpretations of planning history can be found in Cliff Hague's *The Development of Planning Thought: A Critical Perspective*¹³⁸ which is in essence an exposition on planning theory. Hague claims that to understand town planning one needs to study three related dimensions. These are the economic dimension arising out of the building and growth of cities, the political dimension that sees town planning as "part of the administrative system of the modern state"¹³⁹ and the socio-economic dimension "which concerns the way that the production and planning of places has been perceived and the interests that have structured that perception"¹⁴⁰. These dimensions lead Hague to an explanation of the development of the British planning system which commences its analysis by examining the more traditional 'Whig' interpretations, adopted by the Liberal Planning historians, that see planning emerging largely as a response to the conditions of the time. Such an interpretation he sees as flawed because while planning is described through the extension of government intervention, there is no "theory of the state at the centre of the analysis"¹⁴¹. Hague is seeking to set the development of British planning within a wider framework. This leads him to reject the notion that the origins of planning can be solely attributed to the skills and works of the early 'Idealists', such as Abercrombie or Urwin, a view which is in direct contrast to that espoused by Hall.

The theory that Hague produces is one where the state ensures that the market "remains the means of social organisation and the definitive basis of class structure" and intervenes "because of struggles over dysfunctional tendencies of the accumulation process"¹⁴². The state intervenes to help correct these dysfunctions in favour of the owners of capital and in the process spawns a new set of contradictions that require further intervention. The interventions are all however

intended ultimately to protect and enhance the role of capital and those who control it.

With this theory of the state Hague then goes on to examine the evolution of British town planning which saw minimalist early legislation gradually extended and broadened. This process he sees in the period to 1947 as an “attempt by the state to contain and manage contradictory class interests by extending state intervention through piecemeal adaptation to existing structures”¹⁴³. Hague’s concept of town planning sees it as a constrained intervention which is limited to controlling land use rather than dealing with “the two key factors in planning the equitable development of towns and regions namely land ownership and the movement of industry and employment”¹⁴⁴. These further observations emphasise that town planning is created to moderate the capitalist process and “only assists the process of capitalist accumulation indirectly and should be seen rather as a means by which the State itself attempts to organise its intervention in a more cost-effective and publicly acceptable manner”¹⁴⁵. Town planning is the subservient handmaiden of capitalism rather than the transformative mechanism that Hague might hope for. This would suggest once again that town planning as an activity does not expand the role of the state but rather is a beneficiary of any extension of the powers of the state.

Hague’s idea that town planning does not essentially contribute to capital accumulation but rather moderates, to an acceptable level, the contradictions of the capitalist system, contrasts with the position taken by Luithlen. Luithlen’s argument could be extended to suggest that town planning by substituting community/societal based environmental and amenity controls for individual estate management of these issues, allows land based capital as expressed through private property rights

to function more effectively and efficiently. Thus it presumably assists in capitalist accumulation where it is largely derived from a land base. A perhaps more complex but still partial Marxian analysis is contained in the work of Foglesong who opens with a bold statement that this is “a work of political science, urban history, political economy and planning theory”¹⁴⁶.

His is not to be merely an exercise in the chronicling of events, but rather one that assesses the events in the development of city planning within the context of political and social institutions and the changes which occurred within those institutions. At this juncture it is interesting to note that Foglesong, unlike many planning historians, is not himself a planner but is a political scientist. His Marxian model is derived from the works of Poulantzas, Offe, Castells and Harvey and consequently his analysis proceeds from the presumption that there are inevitable contradictions within the capitalist state. These are largely derived from the ownership and disposition of capital and the consequent class interests of those who own and control capital. At the outset he carefully defines some key terms and distinguishes two aspects of planning, as a state intervention, and a method of policy formulation. This seems to be a variant on Hall's concepts of the theory of planning versus theory in planning. While his concept of the state and its role is derived from the work of Poulantzas and grants the state the role of a ‘soother’ or ‘repressor’ of social discontent, that synchronises the various elements of society to ensure the continued functioning of the underlying capitalised structure¹⁴⁷. This contrasts strongly with the pluralist-liberalist view that sees the state as a neutral arbiter, protecting the rules of the game and ratifying the outcomes of a fair and balanced process. This concept of the state allows for the contention that capitalists do not always act collectively and that where this inevitable competition

between capitalism occurs, then the state can intervene to secure the collective needs of capitalism.

Using the work of Offe, Foglesong explores the role of planning within this capitalist state and suggests that planning facilitates and assists in the process of capitalist accumulation through its ability to produce rational decision making i.e. planning as a method of policy formulation. This, however, emphasises the technical aspects of planning that in turn mitigate against the maintenance of democracy. In essence planning can't simultaneously facilitate capital accumulation and maintain democracy largely because effective planning (a point with which Hague would concur), to facilitate capital accumulation, requires control over individual accumulating units which is a power the planners are not given. Drawing on this Foglesong derives a relatively simple model which sees planning as a state intervention which is needed and used to correct market failure and allows the state to "regulate, replace or mitigate the effects of the market system"¹⁴⁸. It is a complex discussion that produces a model to which the Liberal Planning Historians could subscribe, though they might define the motivation as being merely the attempt to correct market failure.

In terms of the production and management of urban space Foglesong largely derives his model from Harvey, Castells and Preteceille who see state intervention within this area as protecting the fixed capital invested in infrastructure that is itself needed for capitalist production. This to an extent highlights the essential contradiction of the capitalist system whereby land ownership creates a complex web of property rights which can come into conflict with the social character i.e. community benefit aspects of land and its use. The state must intervene in these

rights to protect them. Thus land is simultaneously a commodity and a collective good and this in turn leads to the creation of a property contradiction which planning must deal with without disturbing the essential values of property ownership. Finally, Foglesong identifies a third contradiction which emerges with regard to urban land. That is the capitalist-democracy contradiction whereby the state intervenes to create the conditions to maintain capitalism which in turn raises the potential for the democratisation of urban land which would turn over the control of land to the non-property classes.

Having established these basic premises about the state and its role to support capital accumulation, Foglesong then proceeds to use it to analyse the early origins of American city planning. Ultimately he comes to label urban planning as a form of “productive technology”, of “how to organise the urban built environment consistent with human needs.”¹⁴⁹ However, in true Marxian tradition, this urban technology is created and shaped by the relationships within society that mirror the political and economic structure of society. These in turn must address the three contradictions which “limit the possibility for compatible development of two elements of a system or structure”¹⁵⁰. The three contradictions detailed above, ensure that “urban planning is an imperfect solution to capital’s needs for some form of collective control of urban development”¹⁵¹. While Foglesong explores the relationship between planners and capitalism, inevitably planners and planning are presented as servants of capitalism. He stresses there remains a tension which is drawn from the perpetual struggle of the planners to organise and control the built environment while still securing the use of that environment to allow capitalist accumulation. Reluctant it might be, but inevitably capital accepts the intervention of planning because ultimately it helps correct some market difficulties which allow the

maintenance and enhancement of the accumulation of capital. In this respect his position is much more in line with Luithlen's work.

Fogelsong's work is messianic in its outlook and comes almost to be caught in the complexities of an analysis which does not always shed a great deal of new light on early American planning. Equally planning almost inevitably is cast as a part of Offe's soothing mechanism that keeps the capitalist system running and is tolerated only as far as it can achieve this outcome. While this casts planning in a subservient mould, it does at least try to explain its existence, development and use within a much wider concept rather than seeing it solely as a response to events in history. As such it represents on Hall's terms, a theory of planning. However as Reade observes, when discussing the Marxian approach to planning as a tool to secure the growth and maintenance of the capitalist system, this interpretation is based at least partly on the presumption that "planning can ensure *that* any development occurs" when in fact "it can only determine *where* it occurs"¹⁵². This clearly has validity particularly in the politico-administrative context in Great Britain and New Zealand, where planners are advisers to a political system which makes the ultimate decision, a situation which is in strong contrast to the highly politicised American system where planners exert a much more direct influence. It also overlooks the fact that planning is not defined solely as the activity of the planner, rather it is a tool which is utilised by the political system to achieve a particular outcome. That outcome in a capitalist system must include protecting and enhancing the accumulation of capital. It is also predicated on the view that there is one form or type of planning agreed to by all, whereas the professional base of planning would suggest that there will always be diverse and multiple professional opinions.

Post-Modern Planning Histories

Regardless of their particular approach, be it traditional or Marxian, all of the work and writers discussed previously, fall within what would largely be regarded as the modernist tradition. The only exception would be the work of Foglesong that to some extent stands at the pivotal point between modernism and post-modernism.

Post-modernism is obviously not a single all encompassing theory or approach, in fact its whole focus would find such concepts inimical given its emphasis on diversity, multiple voices and discourses. As a general and contrasting approach to the established modern progressive approaches, post-modernism has made significant strides in both history and the social sciences in the last decade or more. In the historical area the approach was neatly encapsulated by Evans as ones which "have their origins in the semiotic theories which argue that language is an arbitrary constructed system of verbal signifiers which bear no necessary relation to the things they signify"¹⁵³. Within this context history is no longer a search for a dominant hegemonic truth that will explain all, the oft described metatheory, but instead is a series of equally valid 'truths' determined from the particular perspectives of different groups who have all 'experienced' the same historical events. There is no longer an over-reaching metatheory or hegemonic narrative within a Post-Modernist analysis, discourse that is the creation and transformation of experience and meaning through language, becomes vitally important. While discernible Post-Modern writers and critics have arisen in most disciplines particularly within the social sciences, there is less evidence of their emergence among the planning historians. This leads Sandercock to her pointed criticism that "we (the planning historians) are squarely in the modernist tradition - a tradition

“we (the planning historians) are squarely in the modernist tradition - a tradition which equates planning with progress - not just in terms of subject matter, but also in terms of method.”¹⁵⁴

While planning historians have been slow to take a Post-Modern approach, there does exist an ever-burgeoning literature in this area. The movement, if such a broad term can and should be used, is led in the planning history area largely through the work of Leonie Sandercock. However this body of literature was predated by the work of Christine Boyer in *Dreaming the Rational City: The Myth of American City Planning*¹⁵⁵ which explored American planning from the late nineteenth century to World War II. Boyer utilises the work of one of the founders of the post-modern approach, Foucault. She focuses on critical discourses that reconstruct the various struggles that have been suppressed by the tyranny of global discourses. Thus her work is not a history of the planner and plans but rather an identification and explanation of “the origins of the discourse on planning”¹⁵⁶. These discourses in turn create the genealogy of Foucault, that is revealed through the examination of planners’ archives, which Boyer characterises as a “motley collection”. Boyer’s work takes the existing, and generally well documented sources of American planning history and subjects them to a new interpretation. However her analysis is not as revolutionary as might be suggested at the outset and increasingly she falls back on a quite mainstream Marxian analysis. For instance, when discussing the rise of municipal reform that was an integral part of the development of planning, she says “increasingly it was the function of the State to extract and organise a whole out of these isolated units, to ensure that the dominant capital interests prevail over political decision making even when these interests did not or could not represent themselves as a united front”¹⁵⁷. While her

constant focus on American planning bringing 'order' and her characterisation of the state's involvement in planning as the rise of a "planning mentality", there are few indications of who is conducting the many and varied discourses. Presumably this is why she effectively falls back on a Marxian analysis.

Boyer's work to some extent represents a very early approach to planning history through a Post-Modernist perspective and, as indicated above, the works of Sandercock and her contributors represent a more coherent and comprehensive literature. In *Making the Invisible Visible*, Sandercock makes the first concerted attempt to revisit planning history within a Post-Modern context, and in so doing elucidate what she calls the 'noir' side of planning. This 'noir' planning in turn produces a series of "insurgent planning histories" which reflect social, political, psychological and cultural dynamics and "the power relations implicit therein"¹⁵⁸, that underlie the modernist accounts of planning history. Sandercock lays much of the blame for the narrowness of existing approaches and the pre-occupation with heroic accounts of the achievements of progressivist planning at the feet of those who write the history. This problem she seems to largely trace to the fact that most planning historians are former planning professionals socialised to see planning as a heroic undertaking. Trapped in their own professional paradigm, Sandercock seems to suggest, they are unable to look much beyond a chronicling of "the role of the profession, its institutionalisation and its achievements"¹⁵⁹. Under such an analysis the descriptive will always dominate and planning will always be represented as intrinsically good and progressive with those who oppose it as "reactionary, irrational and just plain greedy"¹⁶⁰. Most importantly, in Sandercock's assessment, those accounts fail to answer two of the next fundamental questions which planning history should address, "what is the object of planning history? And

who are its subjects?"¹⁶¹. The first most clearly relates once again to Hall's need to distinguish theories of planning which might help to explain why planning is deemed a necessary and appropriate intervention. The second question Sandercock appears to answer by suggesting that planning history's pre-occupation with the history of the profession leads it to a narrow focus that excludes any examination of for instance, the role of women or people of colour. There seems to be the assumption that the Liberal Planning histories are concerned with exploring only the nature of planning as an activity within a context of those in society who traditionally hold power. She also makes the point that planning historians have been slow to adopt the theoretical tools and positions of Post-Modern historical approaches, a situation which she regards in an almost conspiratorial interpretation as "systematic exclusions" which "emerge from prior ontological and epistemological positions"¹⁶². This in turn leads her to advocate a move away from the laudatory celebration of the planning profession and its achievement to a more inclusive approach based on a broader and more inclusive of groups, definition of planning. The value of this discussion lies in the clear point it makes with regard to the necessity to recognise that research in any area is likely to be unbalanced and that it is very easy to overlook or express alternative perspectives and interpretations. It also emphasises the potential for shallowness that can emerge from a purely descriptive approach based on pre-determined or pre-conceived definitions of planning and its achievements.

Making the Invisible Visible is divided into two parts, the first which deals with the application of a post-modernist approach to and selected examples and the second which deals with "Textual and Theoretical Practices". Within that second part the contribution by Borden, Randell and Thomas, explores some essential theoretical

contribution by Borden, Randell and Thomas, explores some essential theoretical considerations in terms of the study of planning history. They make the point quite bluntly that "...for any planning history to provide a critical interpretation of planning, its theoretical grounding must not come just from within the planning discourse. The master will not provide the rope to place around his own neck"¹⁶³. This observation once again emphasises the difference between planning history and history, and stresses the history of the profession aspects of the former. In terms of choosing the appropriate theory the authors provide broadly based guidance, recommending multiple perspectives, from that of Anthony King, through the work of Lefebvre, to more geographically derived concepts of space. In terms of a Post-Modernist approach we are left with multiple layers of interpretation derived from a single interpretative framework. To some extent this brings into focus some of the frustrations of that approach which is not intended to produce an all pervasive and accommodating metatheory but rather to allow various discourses and voices to emerge in equal prominence and to be treated as being equally contestable.

Nevertheless from the diversity of perspectives provided by this volume several important concepts emerge. The first deals with how planning as an activity might be described or defined, which in turn elucidates what planning as an activity is intended to achieve. Dora Epstein's chapter which applies a psychoanalytical approach to the issue of safe places in the city, talks of planning as "a kind of pathology of solutions - an implicit belief that built environment and social interactions can be "made right", resolved through "current" actions."¹⁶⁴ In this definition and analysis planning becomes the mechanism through which the negative aspects of urban life are corrected and put right. In this respect it is similar to the Liberal Planning historians approach, only in this case the evil planning will

planning conquering the disorder of cities – “the poverty and misery that were the effects of industrial capitalism and rapid urbanisation”¹⁶⁵. Hooper’s definition explicitly recognises that the public health and urban growth origins of planning and once again is not far removed from the Liberal Planning Historians. Both these studies emphasise that regardless of the fact that the Post-Modern analysts commence at a different starting point they do come to much the same conclusions as the Liberal Planning historians as to the origins and justifications for planning.

Finally Holston in a footnote to his chapter discusses in some detail two definitions which he believes emerge from an examination of planning’s history. The first is a definition derived from architectural/civic design roots within which planning is defined as urban design intended to achieve “an idealist project of alternative futures”¹⁶⁶. A second definition involves practitioners who are often critical of the practical outcomes of the first definition, seeing planning as part of the “application of social science to the management of society”¹⁶⁷. The most important point to emerge from these two definitions is Holston’s contention that it is the first definition that has dominated planning in the past and although not made explicit, the presumption that the second definition is largely created through a response to the perceived failures of the first. Moreover what the two definitions do is to focus planning history on planning being what planners do, which returns us to the concept that underlies Cherry’s work. This once again stresses the similarity of these two different schools of analysis.

Overall the Post-Modernist approach offers not a single critical analytical framework but a series of views and interpretations that might assist in revealing otherwise overlooked aspects of planning’s development. As such the Post-Modern planning

overlooked aspects of planning's development. As such the Post-Modern planning historians while broadening and extending the coverage of planning history still frequently subscribe to the same explanations of how and why planning emerged. While they may object to the over focusing on the professional aspects of planning history this seems to be largely inspired by a desire to bring a more critical perspective to this area rather than to deny its central position in planning history. Much of the Post-Modernists approach is based on a re-evaluation of existing work or a revealing of a formerly overlooked aspect of planning's history. The emphasis on discourse makes it a difficult approach to use if there is a dependence on primary sources because of the diversity of 'voices' that are likely to be revealed and difficulty in trying to adequately represent those voices. In the New Zealand context there is also the problem of simultaneously describing and deconstructing those primary sources.

Other and New Zealand Literature

The discussion to date has tried to address the major streams of critical literature. There is however an extensive literature that addresses specific aspects of the development of planning. Most of these works are focused in a single area and do not as such offer an over-riding critical framework, thus their contribution must come within the body of the thesis when the relevant development or aspect is discussed.

A review article, by Miller¹⁶⁸ stresses the fact that in New Zealand both urban and planning history have been poorly addressed, and consequently there is a thin body of relevant literature in the area. The only attempt to produce a limited overview for the period up to 1926 lies in the undergraduate dissertation of Ross¹⁶⁹. His work,

limited research, relying very heavily on newspaper sources. While newspapers reveal important insights they are also limited in terms of revealing the ideas, arguments, which never entered the public arena and are buried in departmental files. Nevertheless he does advance some ideas within a chronological account, as to why planning emerged when it did in New Zealand. For Ross, actors such as Myers and Parr become the key to planning's development with little reflection on what might have motivated them beyond a sense of civic duty and concerns that the urban problems, so apparent in Britain and Europe, might be replicated in New Zealand. Ross extended his earlier work when he produced a brief factual history of the development of the New Zealand profession in 1974¹⁷⁰ but it contained little analytical assessment.

All of the discussions of overseas material have inevitably involved some concept of the state. In most of the accounts the existence of a state that wields power in certain ways is taken as a given. There is no explicit suggestion that planning either as an activity or as a professional group attempted to shape the state. All planning professionals managed to do, in quite erratic fashion, was to persuade the state that it was in its interest to modestly extend its intervention, already established in the public health area, into the sphere of controlling some aspects of the development of the urban fabric. In this respect town planning 'piggy backed' on other concerns as it would have had trouble in progressing its case independently.

These discussions do however highlight the need to consider the development of the state and its role as an adjunct to any planning history. In New Zealand there is a surprisingly modest literature in this area. In a broadly based overview Wilkes¹⁷¹

characterises the state in New Zealand as the product of social factors that ensure that it reflects what is happening in that society. However he also recognises that the state has an existence as itself and this causes an inertia that tends to enshrine the policies of the state. Further those who serve the state, the bureaucrats, also have some interest in what the state does and how it exercises its powers, though he does not develop this as a dominant theme. From this starting point he postulates a periodization of the formation of the state in New Zealand. The Minimalist State (1849-90); the Pre-Fordist State (1890-1935); The Fordist State (1935-84), and the Post-Fordist State (1984-93). This periodization draws on international models that define 'Fordism' as a socio-economic system that is characterised by standardised mass production and consumption and the hegemony of large firms and the state. In the Post-Fordist period flexible work and labour processes, agglomeration and integration of product development and marketing, emerge to meet the problems of the previous era. In this period the role of the state tends to reduce. Helpfully the period of this study falls within the Pre-Fordist period that Wilkes states was "founded upon qualitatively distinct conditions to those which had underpinned the government structures of the nineteenth century"¹⁷². It is a period in which the early welfare functions of the state begin to emerge. There may be some value in viewing town planning, that sought to improve the quality of the urban living environment, as part of a bigger extension of the powers of the state to achieve social welfare outcomes. Wilkes' work certainly provides a sustained and discussion of the emergence of the state in New Zealand and will be returned to at appropriate points.

The other major study of the emergence of the state in New Zealand is Bassett's *The State in New Zealand: 1840-1984*.¹⁷³ While that book is largely a

chronological account of the nature and growth of state activity over the identified period, Bassett does, in the Introduction, discuss in broader terms the emergence and acceptance of what he calls “government omnipotence.”¹⁷⁴ The use of this term is significant as it conveys the breadth of state intervention in New Zealand’s society and economy. He however characterises that intervention as being developed in the absence of any theory or doctrine, even in the heady days of the First Labour government between 1935 and 1949. Rather the state and its power to intervene emerged out of a type of practical pragmatism — help was needed and the state was the only organisation able to deliver the assistance, combined with what an earlier historian, Sinclair called an “idealisation of the state”¹⁷⁵. This, Bassett demonstrates, led political parties of all hues to accept a dominant role for the state that included intervention to regulate aspects of society and the economy. One is left with the feeling that this approach emerged as an integral aspect of the New Zealand character and was cemented in place by the limited size of New Zealand’s society and economy. The balance of Bassett’s work deals in detail with the nature of state activity within specified periods and, like Wilkes’ work, will be further addressed within subsequent chapters of this thesis.

Towards A Critical Framework

At the conclusion of a literature review the question must be posed as to how the literature which has been addressed above both informs and elucidates an answer to the research question described in the Introduction. Ideally the literature would provide the archetypal analytical framework which could be taken up and used as a framework within which to consider and explore the planning history of New Zealand in the period 1900 to 1933. It is possible to detail three alternative

approaches; the Liberal Planning History approach with a major emphasise on facts and modest interpretation, the Critical Planning History largely predicated on a Marxian/ Neo Marxian interpretation which represents planning as a unthinking handmaiden of capitalism, and Post-Modern approach of multiple voices and insurgent discourses and histories. As the discussions above reveal, none of these approaches seems very attractive unless one is prepared to be uncritical and to accept that one approach has a demonstrated value that is greater than all others. All of the critical frameworks discussed above do offer valuable or particular insights and explanations to inform the subsequent discussions within this thesis but all can and would benefit from some specific modifications and alterations. The Liberal Planning Histories approach's main attraction lies in the sheer volume of comparative material that has been produced. This in turn would allow this work to fit within a framework of established and potentially comparative scholarship. It is also, moreover, not as 'uncritical' as its detractors would suggest, merely more accepting of the status quo. This is particularly noticeable in the work of Cherry that progressed from largely chronicling, to much more complex explanations by 1996. The latter occurred partly, presumably because the years of research and scholarship by Cherry and others had produced a firmer, and correspondingly more complex, set of 'facts' from which to work. This points directly to the problem that faces this thesis. There is simply very little material on which to base any analysis. The work by Ross is heavily dependent on secondary sources and makes no attempt to examine the extensive archival material that is available. As observed above the Critical Planning historians and the Post-Modern planning historians are heavily dependent on the material produced by the Liberal Planning historians. It is this material which allows them to produce their alternative analyses and to suggest that other discourses need to be heard.

Thus in terms of this thesis the prime focus is producing an informed account of the development of town planning in New Zealand that must include an account of the development of those who undertook the activity. Thus it will be largely positioned within the Liberal Planning history school, but in its most developed form. Thus there will, of necessity, be description unified by a chronological frame. However the people, processes and events so described will be assessed using an analytical approach which is useful and provides an explanation or interpretation. This is to suggest that at times the balance between the descriptive and interpretative will vary in an attempt to produce an informed account. This is an approach that makes the best use of the research material while also filling an identified gap in New Zealand's planning history. Thus like the overseas accounts it will involve a history of the profession. Equally town planning did not develop within a vacuum and many of the authors discussed above stress that town planning grew out of and reflected changes in society and the economy. Hence any account of New Zealand's planning history that purports to adopt a critical perspective, should relate the development of planning to the nature of, and influences that are shaping society at that time. This in turn means that while like most writers in the area it is necessary to take the existence of the state as given, it remains important to assess why, in specific periods, the state chose or was persuaded to use its interventionist powers to allow town planning to influence the development of the urban fabric.

The decision on the approach to be taken in this thesis goes beyond the pragmatic. There is a wealth of material in many locations which help to both describe and explain the nature of the development of town planning in New Zealand. It also contributes significantly to the history of the profession in New Zealand and provides comparisons to development elsewhere. To produce a thesis which

contributes significantly to the history of the profession in New Zealand and provides comparisons to development elsewhere. To produce a thesis which overlooked this material or subjected it to analysis without some underlying description, poses two dangers. Firstly, that only the material supporting the chosen critical / analytical framework would be revealed. Secondly, that a fractured and partial account would emerge. The latter would do little to progress New Zealand's planning history or allow planners to better understand where their profession came from. In short, in the New Zealand context a degree of description is essential. It is interesting to note that in Ireland where planning history in terms of scholarship is only slightly in advance of New Zealand's, a largely descriptive approach has been taken in *Planning :The Irish Experience 1920-1988*¹⁷⁶.

Moreover, planning history is a relatively new discipline with perhaps barely thirty years of its own history. While Sandercock may regard planning historians as a relatively conservative and unadventurous group who have failed to note the changes in historiography and the more general nature of social science research, this may reflect the newness of their calling. To date there is no comprehensive analysis of any country's planning history outside the traditional descriptive approach which draws on modernist explanations whereby the development of planning is seen largely as a response to events generated in the socio-economic sphere. Thus one must fall back on the partial analysis of authors such as Hague or Foglesong.

One must however be careful to distinguish between more chronological reportage and an informed commentary which explains why some of the events which took place, did occur. This allows the use of a number of perspectives to produce a

of sources. While there is a danger that one will as Sandercock suggests produce an “allegedly impersonal/objective voice” as the “sole point of view”¹⁷⁷ but awareness of this potential must surely also enlighten. As a former practitioner it is also important that I ensure that I am not trying to create the heroes which so alarm some writers.

Clearly however an essential aspect of this work will be, at each point to identify the definition of planning which is being used either explicitly or implicitly. For it is these definitions which will help to elucidate the goals of planning and planners. It is also important to bear constantly in mind the two questions posed by Sandercock viz. “What is the object of planning history”, and here the answer must be more than to provide a narrative of heroic achievement, and “Who are its subject “. Here the answer must surely be all who were affected by planning rather than merely those who wielded planning power or who benefited from its exercise.

Thus the aim of this thesis in terms of its use of theoretical perspectives is to cast a wide net and to recognise that while the narrative must dominate it should not do so to the exclusion of interpretation.

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⁶ *ibid.*,p219

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put in place by that government. Thus there remains the suspicion that some of the conclusions of this volume are a preparatory justification for the next

¹⁷⁴ *ibid.*, p15

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SETTING THE SCENE: THE EARLY TOWN PLANNING MOVEMENT IN NEW ZEALAND

1900 - 1910

Introduction

The year 1900 has been selected as the starting point of this study for several reasons. In 1898 Ebenezer Howard produced *To-Morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, which Hardy characterises as marking the first step in a pragmatic adaptation of the diverse ideas of utopian town building¹. Re-issued in 1902 under its more popular title of *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, it marked the beginnings of a practical, and above all a twentieth century, response to the needs and problems of those who dwelt in the ever growing cities, created and sustained by the Industrial Revolution. Howard's book produced in the most basic form, a guide to creating a new city, limited in size but offering all the economic opportunities of established cities in combination with healthy and pleasant living conditions. The enthusiasts who were gripped by this concept and who eagerly met the test of attempting to create new cities, recognised that there was also a challenge in controlling and modifying the nature and extent of the growth of existing towns. This latter recognition spawned the associated town planning movement that ultimately helped to create a profession that would eclipse the garden city/suburb movement. In the New Zealand context it would be the town planning movement that would offer the greatest opportunity to those who were to be caught up in the international interest in this area. Thus 1900, lying as it does between the two dates of Howard's

publications offers an appropriate starting point, given that it is also at the beginning of a century. Further that was also a period when there was much reflection on how the new century would develop and an interest in the new ideas and concepts that might shape that century.

Internationally this is also a period when the modernising or upgrading of the urban infrastructure was gaining momentum. As Cherry observes “mounting concern over the health of towns and the need to secure sanitary improvements.....obliged successive governments to promote measures whereby elements within the urban environment were controlled and regulated to ever higher standards”². Cherry³ demonstrates that after brief and unsuccessful attempts by private companies to provide basic infrastructural services, these by the turn of the century had become the responsibility of local government. These services gradually extended to include gas, electricity and public transport. In New Zealand the experience was similar. While local government here was still fragmented into small units most were “fully occupied with providing basic physical services: streets, water, and drainage were at the forefront, closely followed by transport and lighting”⁴. This meant that there existed, at the local level, organisations that were intimately concerned with securing the better functioning of the urban fabric. While the original interest was in infrastructure it was only a small step to move to more regulatory interventions in the form of town planning.

In New Zealand terms the period from 1900 to 1910 coincides with the political dominance of the Liberals who held power from 1891 to 1912. The Liberal era, particularly from 1900 to 1912, saw significant extensions of the state into the economic life of the country and to secure the welfare of its people. As Bassett

observes the Liberal reformers displayed “ an implicit faith in the ‘goodness’ of State action”⁵. He believes the willingness of the Liberals to use the powers of the state was derived from the implicit contract that the settlers had with the state, that it would assist where required and would create a fair and balanced society. Thus they were not motivated by any theory or doctrine, but rather by a healthy pragmatism. Hamer’s earlier work on the Liberals largely concurs with this view and he observes that any attempt to use doctrine to guide the actions of the state would have been an anathema to the Liberals. In simple terms the Liberals believed “ the State was the people”⁶ and was thus empowered to intervene where and when appropriate to secure a better life for those people. This approach produced a wide range of state interventions that ranged from public health to tourism. Further it produced a socio-political environment in which the intervention implicit in town planning was less likely to be regarded as a problem.

This chapter will deal primarily with the early town planning movement and in particular the groups such as the Beautifying Societies that might be seen as having spawned and supported that movement. Consequently it often focuses on ideas and personalities, though there must always be recognition of the institutional structures that they both shaped and worked within. It also provides an introduction to the next chapter that deals with the actions which arose from the acceptance and promotion of those ideas. Thus by 1911 we see the first legislative attempts to establish town planning, a mere two years after the legislation was passed in Britain.

The Beautifying Societies

The Beautifying Societies present some difficulties, as they do not fit neatly into any interpretative framework. Lochhead's thesis⁷ represents them as the first nature conservation organisations, the forerunners of present day conservation and environmental groups. She traces their origins to a combination of civic awareness and pride and "a common conviction that protection of open space and the beauty of nature was an essential attribute of civilised society"⁸. Ross, in his pioneer study of the origins of town planning in New Zealand, devotes little coverage to the Beautifying Societies, mentioning, only briefly, the Auckland Scenery and Conservation Society. It would however be remiss to overlook them because at times they took an active interest in civic design and town planning, and in turn introduced their members to these issues. While beautifying societies were established in many towns⁹ the most active ones were confined to the major cities. The exceptions were Wellington where a society was formed in 1895 but quickly faded, and the town of Wanganui that sustained a very active group over a number of years.

The oldest of these societies is the Dunedin Amenities Society which was founded in 1887 by two prominent Dunedin citizens, Thomas Brown, a merchant and First Church elder, and Alexander Bathgate, a barrister and company director. The impetus for the Society's formation was the attempt the previous year to commemorate the jubilee of Queen Victoria, by the creation of a new park. In contrast to similar organisations overseas, the Dunedin Society and others like it, aimed "to bring both trees and parks to the city and to protect natural areas beyond

the city”¹⁰. It was not until 1915 that the Society became the Dunedin Amenities and Town Planning Society. Both Vine and Lochhead¹¹ stress that the success of the Dunedin Society can be traced to Bathgate’s ability to engage the support of the social and financial elites of Dunedin. This linking of the societies with civic and business elites was not confined to Dunedin. Mabon’s work indicates that 82%¹² of the membership of the groups he looked at, that included groups in Auckland and Dunedin, were from the business and professional classes. In Christchurch these connections ensured a close working relationship with the City Council that included a financial grant to that Association.

The Christchurch Beautifying Association, was probably the biggest and most successful of the societies. Established at a public meeting held on 8th September 1897, like the Society in Dunedin it included many prominent citizens. The meeting had been called by Mr Louisson, the mayor of Christchurch and created a committee that included prominent citizens such as Leonard Cockayne, Samuel Hurst Seager and Mrs J. Deans. By 1904 membership had risen to one hundred and sixty-five, including corporate members who paid a membership fee of £100¹³. This financially secure position did not continue. In 1908 the City Council’s contribution was reduced to £50¹⁴ and the proposed prize of £150 for the Cathedral Square Improvement Competition was reduced to £20 when the competition was finally reconsidered in 1913¹⁵. However as with the Dunedin Society, much of the practical work was achieved through the physical efforts of members in tree planting and the development of open space.

The last of the beautifying societies in larger cities was the Auckland Scenery Conservation Society, founded in 1899, was defunct by 1905¹⁶. While inspired by those in the South Island, it was ambitiously “formed to embrace a greater range

and variety of useful work than was contemplated by the Sister Societies in the South"¹⁷. Like its "Sister Societies in the South" it included among its members a number of leading citizens, including politicians George Fowlds and Arthur Myers who, in 1905, were recorded as Life Members¹⁸. Prominent businessmen H.E. Mitchelson and H. & E. Horton were also among its members.

The picture that emerges of these societies and associations is one of a group of prominent local residents who saw their civic responsibilities as including the developing an aesthetic sense. This would be given visible form in the beautification of their city. Their efforts frequently took practical forms. Vine's study includes a detailed breakdown of the work of the Dunedin and Suburbs Reserves Conservation Society that demonstrates a concentration on tree planting and the establishment, maintenance and upgrading of reserves and the extensive Town Belt land¹⁹. The Christchurch Beautifying Association was similarly preoccupied with tree planting schemes and general landscaping. This was in keeping with their foundation aim "to beautify, by suitable landscape gardening the various waste and partially improved spots within our City and its immediate Suburbs"²⁰. The plantings of Moorhouse Avenue, for instance, took up much time and effort from 1908 to 1909²¹. The Auckland Society was similarly involved with tree planting schemes, though the Waitakere Ranges provided a unique focus. In 1905 a group from the Society visited the "Waitakere Ranges with a view to its recommendation for purchase by the Scenery Preservation Commission"²².

It would be simplistic to dismiss these Societies as only a group of local worthies interested in planting trees and tidying up parks and other undeveloped areas. While it is true that much of their practical efforts focused on such projects, they

were active in a number of other areas, particularly related to the health and development of the city. In 1900 for instance, the Dunedin Society opposed the disposal of nightsoil at Lawyer's Head²³, while the Christchurch Association in 1907 convened a public meeting to discuss the alterations being made to the old Provincial Council Chambers²⁴. The latter was so successful that on 13th April 1907 the Under-Secretary for Public Works wrote to the Society that "...it is not proposed to have any further alterations made to these buildings at present"²⁵. All of the groups were also firmly united in their opposition to advertising hoardings that began to proliferate in the early years of this century. As early as 1904, the Christchurch Association was lobbying the City Council to use "that power that had been conferred by the Government, enabling the Council to deal with Public advertising"²⁶. Similarly in 1913 the Dunedin Society sent a deputation to the Minister of Railways to oppose the use of advertising hoardings, a campaign which brought action by 1914²⁷. The Christchurch Society was also successful in promoting a competition to upgrade part of Cathedral Square to accommodate a new tram shelter. Samuel Hurst Seager, an architect and leading member of the Association, hoped it would become "an international design competition to improve Cathedral Square and its traffic circulation"²⁸. While this competition took many years to come to fruition, as it was first mooted in 1912²⁹ and only went ahead in 1915/16³⁰, it did provide one of the earliest attempts at civic redesign. Equally while the Association tried to influence the public through practical examples they also involved themselves in some broader educational strategies. In 1909 the Christchurch Association, ran a children's essay competition on "How to make Christchurch More Beautiful"³¹.

The Beautifying Societies also had connections to the general conservation movement that was developing in the same period. There were some shared personalities. Harry Ell, who was an important and active member of the Christchurch Society, was also prominent in the scenery preservation movement, which, by 1903, had secured the *Scenery Preservation Act*. Thus in 1904 both the Christchurch and Dunedin Societies responded positively to a letter from the Auckland Scenery Conservation Society which sought “to induce the Government to consider suggestions to be made for the better control and preservation of forest, scenic and climatic reserves through the Colony”³². Lochhead certainly views them as the earliest examples of the conservation movement and much of their work was intimately concerned with preserving remaining areas of native bush in and around urban areas, or enhancing open space. Thus Strongman talks of members of the Christchurch Association as being “among the first conservationists in New Zealand”³³ and counts among their most significant achievements the gaining of reserve status for “remnants of native bush at Riccarton, Arthurs Pass and on the Port Hills”³⁴. In Dunedin the Town Belt offered the Society there the opportunity to undertake active tree planting programmes that simultaneously preserved and beautified. The conservation and general amenity planting schemes that the societies promoted also offered practical works that members could directly participate in, and which in turn produced visible contributions to the urban landscape. Thus the civilising influence of nature could be brought back into the city. This was a widespread belief of the time and as Lochhead³⁵ demonstrates was a major motivation for members of such groups.

The most important issue here is to determine just how these Beautifying Societies linked to the emerging town planning movement in New Zealand and how reflective

they were of overseas developments. The links to the town planning movement are discussed in depth in a later chapter. Suffice to say at this point that the clearest and most obvious linkage was through the small group of shared enthusiasts who made up the membership of both groups. Hurst Seager was a devoted and vigorous member of the Christchurch Beautifying Association, and an equally vociferous proponent of town planning. By around 1910 he had become a 'de facto' town planning consultant to the New Zealand government. Arthur Myers, the author and promoter in 1911 of the Town Planning Bill for Auckland, and his political opponent but fellow town planning enthusiast, George Fowlds, were active foundation members of the Auckland Scenery Conservation Society.

The most obvious international linkage is to the City Beautiful movement. While Hall traces the origins of this movement to the vast city reconstruction programmes of Hausman and Napoleon III and links it to the development of colonial capitals such as New Delhi, he does acknowledge its essentially American roots³⁶. Wilson says "the taproot of the City Beautiful ... lies in nineteenth-century landscape architecture, personified by Frederick Law Olmstead"³⁷. Krueckeberg suggests, "it was not a simple social whim for cosmetic veneer, as it is often misrepresented, but a complex set of forces bidding to expand civic consciousness as well as raise standards of public design"³⁸. The movement therefore combined a concern with bringing nature into urban areas (the landscape design aspects) with improvements to the built environment, to achieve a better urban living environment. The movement was at its height between 1900 and 1910, and its achievements were often the product of a series of small community based projects, with the leaders of the movement encouraging citizens "to think of each victory for beautification as an incremental gain for a broadly conceived vision"³⁹

The City Beautiful movement was complex both in its nature and its focus. As with the Beautifying Societies in New Zealand it was made up primarily of small local groups who found a national focus in the National League of Improvement Associations, which in 1901 was renamed the America League for Civic Improvement⁴⁰. The large-scale civic improvement side of the movement was grounded in an America Peterson characterises as "... a place of booming prosperity, big public improvements, grand-business mergers, titanic railroad empires and a new assertiveness on the world stage"⁴¹. This side of the movement would culminate in large-scale urban redesign and development plans such as that prepared by Burnham for Chicago in 1909. The movement faded by 1909, the year of the First National Conference on City Planning, when it came under increasing attack for its concentration on the visual and the aesthetic. The movement was largely displaced by the City Practical movement which was the forerunner of the professional town planning movement, and which was better able to accommodate the rising concern with the social aspects of city development such as housing and slums. The need to directly ameliorate the worst aspects of city living had become more important than beautifying the city in the hope that this would improve the moral and physical demeanour of the city dweller.

Obviously the 'grand' aspects of the City Beautiful movement have little in common with the work of the New Zealand Beautifying Societies. Despite Hurst Seager's hopes, the redesign of Cathedral Square was not the subject of an international competition. It represents the only recorded attempt of a larger scale civic improvement programme being advocated by these societies. While New Zealand was highly urbanised by this period⁴², the main cities were hardly the busy metropoli of Petersen's description. In 1896 Auckland had a population of 57,616

which only rose to 157,757 by 1921, while Christchurch's rose from 51,330 to 105,670 in the same period and Dunedin's from 47,280 to 72,255⁴³. New Zealand's cities were hardly old enough, or wealthy enough to produce the pressure and support for large scale civic improvement designs which in Australia produced the competition for the new federal capital and the 1908 Royal Commission on the Improvement of Sydney⁴⁴. As was suggested in the introduction to this chapter, much of the focus of New Zealand cities at the time was in upgrading or establishing basic infrastructural works. Where the Beautifying Societies reflect the City Beautiful Movement is in the modest scale activities undertaken by organisations in smaller communities. These small groups, established in towns and cities throughout America, communities of a size more consistent with their New Zealand counterparts, "commonly pursued piecemeal programmes, sometimes favouring big projects, but often stressing small feasible goals"⁴⁵. By 1905 there were 2,426 affiliated civic improvement groups in smaller cities and towns in America⁴⁶. Under a banner of municipal art and civic improvement, these groups, whose activities were publicised through the writings of the popular journalist Charles Mulford Robinson, encouraged tree planting, the development of fountains etc. and opposed the scarring effects of billboards. Similarly in Australia the work by Freestone on the City Beautiful movement and Melbourne shows that despite there being a focus on a major civic upgrade there was still an interest in the on-going problem of advertising billboards and tree planting⁴⁷.

The members of these groups were often motivated by complex concerns. Petersen talks of "the pompous middle and upper-class element of towns and cities who gave this movement its force who seized the long established belief in the morally uplifting value of beauty and placed fresh energies behind it"⁴⁸. There are resonances here among the New Zealand societies which drew on the local elite

and espoused, in theory and practice, a concept of a beautified and naturalised urban fabric. There the less pleasant aspects of the urban world were hidden by street trees, and where citizens were offered the opportunity to enjoy pleasantly planted urban parks. The work by Mabon clearly identifies members of the Dunedin Amenities Society as firmly middle-class professional and businessmen, while a detailed examination of the Christchurch Association membership is likely to reveal a similar pattern. Certainly prominent local citizens such as Dr Charles Chilton of Canterbury University College, Harry Ell and Samuel Hurst Seager, were continuing and prominent members. Hurst Seager who was at the forefront of the Association was particularly well connected in Christchurch society partly through his wife. Mrs Hurst Seager was the sister of Mrs Macmillan Brown, whose husband was a foundation professor at Canterbury University College. This produced a tightly connected group who were probably expected to be involved with a range of groups. As with the American movement, this served to give the Association the right connections both to get their work accepted, and to pressure local government to take notice of their concerns. In the case of Christchurch the Association maintained strong links with the City Council, with several Mayors being President of the Association. As Vine concludes in regard to Dunedin, “without the contact of that elite that its membership represented, the Society would not have achieved a fraction of the things that it did”⁴⁹.

Differences are also apparent in the motivations of the City Beautiful movement. Assessing the contribution of the City Beautiful Movement in America, Wilson characterises it as appealing “to yearnings for an ideal community”⁵⁰ which “assumed “ much of the Olmsteadian rhetoric about the value of urban beautification”⁵¹. This suggests some theoretical or doctrinal underpinnings to the

American movement. This is not so apparent in the New Zealand societies that seemed to pursue multiple objectives, including bringing nature to the city through planting and park development, conserving natural areas and proposing smaller scale design improvements to the urban fabric. As Lochhead concedes “the very range of objectives encompassed by these groups posed a difficulty in finding a name to adequately describe their purpose”⁵². These multiple objectives were apparently to be at least partly achieved through the demonstration effect. Thus when documenting the history of the Christchurch Beautifying Association in 1924, Charles Chilton stressed that one of the objectives of the Society at the outset was “to influence by example, suggestion and assistance, others to help in making our city beautiful and attractive”⁵³. The outcome of this work was intended to create a more pleasant environment “to instil in all the citizens a sense of civic pride and patriotism”⁵⁴. It was this that brought concern at the constant “larrikinism”, symptomatic of a dysfunctional urban society, leading to the damage of trees the Society had planted⁵⁵. This sense of civic and social responsibility extended beyond mere tree planting. By 1908 the Christchurch Association managed a number of reserves for the city⁵⁶ and in 1909 the Society used £25 donated by Ballantynes “for special work in aid of the unemployed”⁵⁷. There was, as alluded to earlier, the constant battle of all the Societies and Associations to oppose on the scourge of advertising. In terms of civic improvements, the attempt at redesigning Cathedral Square was a failure. The rather modest entries failed to impress the critical Tramways Board and the matter seems to have faded into obscurity⁵⁸, thereby robbing the Association and other groups of a successful example of enlightened civic design.

Ferguson touches on the City Beautiful movement in New Zealand, identifying it with the various Beautifying and Amenities Societies and deriving most of her limited material from Schrader⁵⁹. She clearly views such organisations quite negatively and states that “civic improvement groups often became closely associated with the growing pressure to remove slums”⁶⁰. She goes on to illustrate this with reference to the removal of slums adjacent to Myers Park in Auckland and she further states that “the Municipal Corporations Act of 1900 recognised the concerns of ‘city beautifuls’”⁶¹.

This linking of the beautifying societies with slum clearance is not supported by a detailed reading of the archival material of neither the Christchurch Beautifying Association, nor the Dunedin Amenities Society. There are extensive records of planting, reserve and park developments but no evidence of the advocacy of slum clearance. Ferguson’s flawed assessment seems to be based on the example of the slums cleared in Greys Avenue to create Myers Park in 1915. While the park was financed with a generous donation from Myers, it formed part of the Auckland Mayor, Christopher Parr’s, “policy of a positive, almost compulsive acquisition of parks”⁶². At that point the Auckland Scenery and Conservation Society had ceased to exist and while the Auckland Civic League had taken over some of its interests, the supposed slum clearance was obviously part of a private crusade by Parr. She also refers to *The City Beautiful* magazine that was launched by the Christchurch Beautifying Society in 1924. In doing this she is, in effect, mixing discourses from a later period with the actions of groups in the period up to 1919 to 1920, when the various societies were at their most active. Her criticisms also seem to reflect the Marxian interpretation of the City Beautiful movement that it was “responding to imperialistic impulses and economic cycles”⁶³. This is an interpretation that would

be difficult to sustain in New Zealand where the work of the groups was focused on small-scale amenity programmes that often involved planting and park developments. In Marxian terms the worst that the groups could be accused of is paternalism, or of providing another opiate to soothe the worst of worker exploitation. While the membership of the societies was drawn from the social and economic elites of their various towns and cities, no society was successful in advancing the sort of large-scale civic redevelopment scheme that would have brought them the type of economic advantage suggested. Rather what emerges is a picture of a group of practical and hardworking enthusiasts who were labouring towards their capitalist aims through some considerable physical effort on their own part. This does not ignore the suggestion that some of the motivation behind the members' efforts may have been derived from a desire to replicate the symbols of civic achievement of larger cities overseas. Hurst Seager⁶⁴ gave frequent lectures that lauded overseas civic redevelopment schemes which always contained the hint that these were appropriate models for New Zealand cities to emulate. It is doubtful, given the amount of investment that would have been required, that they ever were. While there was a significant gap between image and reality, the societies may have viewed these models as educational or inspiring, to be adapted to local conditions.

In New Zealand the Beautifying Societies fared better than their American counterparts. While most continued their 'core business' of planting, which in the case of the Christchurch Association would eventually transform it into a horticultural group, some broadened their interests to include town planning. The Societies provided a useful home for the new movement, representing as they did a group of dedicated and prosperous men and women with a strong concern for the quality of the urban environment and imbued with a social and civic conscience. In

accommodating those interested in town planning the societies also had the opportunity to tap into a new group who might help shore up their often declining memberships. While clearly the New Zealand societies were not exact replicas of the American City Beautiful and civic improvements groups they did exhibit some similar features and were all to be, at least partly, overshadowed by the newly emerging town planning movement.

Garden Cities and Suburbs – The Birth of A Movement

Ebezener Howard, who by the time he wrote *To-Morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform* in 1898, had failed in a number of careers, was an unlikely candidate to launch an internationally influential movement. I do not intend to produce a wealth of detail on either Howard or his organisation, as they have been well dealt with by others⁶⁵, but it is important to detail some of the development both of Howard's ideas and the work of the Garden City Association in promoting their ideas overseas. In this way it is possible to chart the acceptance of the concept in New Zealand and to assess its impact on the development of town planning in this country. While Howard was a man of modest education he was a wide reader who over many years in both Britain and America became familiar with writings ranging from the socialist Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backwards* to the works of the anarchist, Kropotkin. The London in which Howard lived "was a city in social and intellectual turmoil"⁶⁶ created by the magnitude of urban problems and the plethora of solutions proposed to deal with those problems. Howard was drawn into these circles and became deeply involved in the land question, which, in simple terms, was concerned with the growing difference between the value of rural and urban land. This was partly the product of the agricultural depression of the late nineteenth

century that drew more people into the towns and cities. The complex issues involved in the land question and the answers proposed to it, are well traversed by Hall and Ward⁶⁷ and demonstrate the vast array of literature that Howard drew on. Howard's contribution was to bring together others' ideas which he combined to produce a model city form that was based on a co-operative model of land tenure.

Howard's solution was the creation of the purpose built Garden City that would combine the attractions of the town with the health-giving benefits of the country. Such Garden Cities would command an area of six thousand acres, would cover an area of one thousand acres, be circular in form, and accommodate some thirty-two thousand people. The new city would feature "mixed-use, medium density, fixed size development: jobs, schools, shops, parks, countryside all within walking distance"⁶⁸. The result was a city where work, living and shopping areas were integrated and readily accessible. This was complemented by the provision of a variety of parks and open space, social and cultural facilities. In this way the social, economic and moral aspects of the human character were dealt with in a positive manner, overcoming the negative aspects of life in the city. Most importantly, Howard was to devote more chapters to this aspect than to the physical design of the garden city. It was to be developed and run in a co-operative manner and was "a vision of anarchist co-operation"⁶⁹. It was these latter aspects that were to cause the greatest concern and sustained criticism. "The most vitriolic were those, like the Fabian Society, who were also looking for ways to improve the government and welfare of the cities but who believed that this was all too fanciful"⁷⁰. Thus while the design aspects survived, the governance proposals were watered down and never instituted.

Howard's ideas and concepts were not necessarily revolutionary, and by 1898 there was a significant utopian literature on the building of improved settlements. This literature included the classic, *National Evils and Practical Remedies* written by James Silk Buckingham in 1849, which advocated the creation of new towns and a Model Town Association. Enlightened, usually non-conformist, industrialists also built model towns for their workers. The industrialist's motivations building were not totally charitable. Good quality housing produced contented workers who were tied to their employer through their tenancy. Lever "held that the devotion of a portion of the firm's profits to what he called 'prosperity sharing' – good houses, social services, community buildings, parks – was better than any profit sharing scheme"⁷¹. The classic examples are Port Sunlight built by the Lever family for their workers between 1887 and 1907, and Bournville built by the Cadbury family between 1893 and 1900. The last of these, Eastwick, developed by Joseph Rountree from 1904 onwards, adopted the title of "Garden Village"⁷² demonstrating how quickly Howard's ideas were taken up and became a motif for appropriate and socially responsible action. Diverse solutions were proposed to Britain's urban problems. "Howard's was one of dozens of projects for dispersing the masses away from the terrible vortex of the big city – to the colonies, to the frontier, back to the land, off to the far end of the District Line, to plant them anywhere that stopped the teeming"⁷³.

While it might have been competing with a plethora of alternative solutions, Howard's idea struck a receptive audience. The Garden City Association that had links to the National Housing Reform Council, a society that agitated for better use of housing and sanitary legislation by local authorities, was formed in June 1899. By 1903 the site for the first Garden City, Letchworth, was purchased and development began. The Association commenced with the simple aim of "promoting' the

discussion of the project suggested by Mr Ebenezer Howard in "Tomorrow" and ultimately to formulate a practical scheme on the lines of that project"⁷⁴. These aims were broadened in 1903 with new aims being adopted in July 1909. These included aims of promoting town planning and associated legislation and "the education of public opinion by lantern lectures, cheap literature, and conferences for example"⁷⁵. This change in the Association's aims reflected important changes in the organisation. As Hardy's work⁷⁶ shows, from 1906 onwards the Association was moving gradually from a focus on individual self reliance within a basically co-operative framework to one which gradually recognised the power and potential of state intervention to achieve these outcomes through legislation which could compel developers to adopt good practice. The acceptance of the latter saw the Association become a "champion of legislation"⁷⁷ and move towards direct lobbying and involvement in the development of the 1909 *Town-planning, Housing & Etc. Act*. Hardy seems to suggest that the use of the interventionist power of the state became acceptable to the Association because housing developments were still not meeting their ideals. This in turn coincided with a Liberal government that was willing to consider using its powers in this direction. Equally it also reflects a broadening of the concerns of the Association beyond the development and promotion of garden cities as the only solution to urban problems. This was also marked in the change of the Association's name in 1907 to the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association (GC&TPA). Above all, by 1909 the Association had become an active and persistent propaganda organisation that "had taken coherent shape and from the start had very great influence on the planning movement"⁷⁸.

Transmitting the Message

The propagandist nature of the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association raises the question of how these ideas were transmitted overseas. The study of how planning ideas are diffused has received revived interest by planning historians in recent years. The seminal work in this area is that of King⁷⁹ that tends to focus on the transmission of such ideas to dependent colonies were they could be dictated as part of the development of imperial power. This theme was dealt with in more detail by Home⁸⁰. He demonstrates how effectively the message was imposed on dependent colonies, through town building and legislation. Ward⁸¹ is, however the writer who has most comprehensively addressed the process and mechanisms of diffusion. He tries to explain how planning ideas were transmitted and the ways in which they were altered in the transmission process. His work stresses that diffusion can take a number of forms, from uncritical borrowing through 'good practice' models, to more complex borrowing and adaptation to local conditions and concerns. From this he produces a simple typology of episodes of diffusion "based essentially on the power relationships between the 'importing and 'exporting' nations"⁸². Within this typology authoritarian, contested and negotiated impositions, are all dependent on the direct exercise of imperial or colonial power. These categories are therefore not strictly relevant to New Zealand that was self-governing through the period of this study in all but international relations. It would however be wrong not to acknowledge that of all the self-governing colonies, New Zealand was the one that maintained the strongest ties to Britain. Thus there was a strong identification with Empire and British models of appropriate practice. There was a reluctance to accept full separation from the 'mother country'. New Zealand delayed ratifying the Statute of Westminster until 1947. In practical terms this may have

meant that while British planning models could not be imposed, they were more likely to be looked on as appropriate models for New Zealand. The final three categories of undiluted borrowing, selective borrowing, and synthetic innovation are all more directly relevant. These processes of diffusion range from an unquestioning adoption of ideas and techniques, through a more discerning process of selection, to the last level of diffusion where the ideas from outside essentially provoke the development of an approach appropriate for the conditions in that country. Obviously at different times a country may experience one or more of these diffusion processes. This is important in the New Zealand context, as within this period the country was moving, albeit slowly, towards taking more direct responsibility for all aspects of governance including trade and overseas relationships. New Zealand was probably slower than other self-governing colonies in the Empire to take these up as the existing arrangements were economically very beneficial.

Ward's work is also important in emphasising that in the diffusion of planning ideas there were the exporters (the developers of planning ideas) and the importers (the recipients of those ideas). In the early 1900s "British expertise was at the cutting edge of theory and practice"⁸³ and books, conferences, illustrated lecture tours and even private correspondence became the means of transporting that message. For the Garden City and Town Planning Association there was an "evangelistic zeal to spread the message"⁸⁴. Hardy sees it as a major force in the export of planning ideas which were seen as "intimately related to that of reinforcing imperial values and interest"⁸⁵. As a consequence the GC&TPA were quick to found a journal *The Garden City* and to sponsor and facilitate both conferences and overseas tours, in many cases responding to invitations. It was this zeal that produced the 1914-15

Australasian Town Planning Tour, which is dealt with in the next chapter. New Zealand could also be seen as an enthusiastic importer of such ideas, emanating as they did from the 'mother country'. Even the most desultory scan of the newspapers of the time, reveals an intense pre-occupation with British and Imperial news including domestic British news. Editorials were often written on the latter and this focus on things British was increased by the start of World War One. The effect was also compounded by, in contrast to Australia, the slow development of a New Zealand culture in this period, explored by Phillips⁸⁶, and the equally as tardy development of a "distinctive sense of national identity"⁸⁷. This served to make New Zealand very open to the adoption of ideas from Britain which was regarded as an appropriate source of knowledge from which to derive answers to New Zealand problems.

The Early Promulgation of Planning Ideas in New Zealand

Thus New Zealand had the opportunity to quite rapidly receive the new message of both the Garden City and the town planning movement that developed with it. As Freestone so ably demonstrates in the Australian context, it is not easy to trace the exact path of diffusion, particularly in the period up to 1909⁸⁸. In New Zealand this is particularly hampered by the lack of a comprehensive collection of the papers and correspondence of Samuel Hurst Seager who is the most central and influential member of the growing band of town planning enthusiasts. The early town planning movement in New Zealand was never really led by any single person, rather at various times certain people gained prominence and/or influence, usually to be rapidly replaced by another.

Samuel Hurst Seager was born in London in 1855. He emigrated to Lyttelton in 1870 and from 1874 ran his father's construction company. After returning to studying architecture from 1882 to 83 at University College London he became an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1884 and a Fellow in 1907. Having travelled in Europe after his studies he returned to Christchurch where he won the competition to design the new, Christchurch Municipal Buildings. After marrying in 1887 he spent a brief period in Sydney from 1891 to 1893, before taking up a position as a lecturer in architecture and decorative design at Canterbury College School of Art, a position he retained until 1918. He continued to undertake architectural commissions and was by 1900 a "leading designer of large houses in the English style"⁸⁹.

Almost paradoxically, given his interest in grand house designs, Hurst Seager maintained a consistent and continuing interest in the social aspects of architecture particularly the design of workers' dwellings. This concern was to flare in his designs produced for the Labour Department in 1905, which were built as part of the Heretaunga Settlement at Petone⁹⁰. This interest in housing was to remain throughout his career and may have inspired his early involvement in town planning that was, overseas, inextricably linked to the housing issue. He was also, like many of the middle and upper class men of his time, a man with a well established sense of civic and social duty which lead him to become involved in a number of practical organisations. He was a founding member of the Christchurch Beautifying Association and a consistent and active member of that Association. Under the influence of Harry Ell, and through membership of the Summit Road Association, he also became part of the scenery conservation movement, designing the three rest houses on the Summit Road. These interests reflect the enhanced social and

economic status of the professional groups within society, so well described by Perkin⁹¹ in the British context. It is also the period of the Liberal ascendancy in New Zealand. This is a period in which Hamer demonstrates that there was a slowly emerging sense of a New Zealand nationalism, rooted in the desire to ensure that this country did not experience or perpetuate the shortcomings of the Old World⁹². Pragmatically this image of New Zealand as a superior colony was an important marketing tool in the bid to attract migrants. As most of the politicians were migrants themselves this was probably a compelling argument. Most importantly in terms of this work, the Liberals showed a willingness to take up direct legislative instruments and to use the powers of the state to achieve a range of social and economic outcomes. These ranged from the *Old Age Pensions Act 1898* to public works programmes. Thus in New Zealand in the 1890s there was recognition of what Perkin, who writes on the development of state bureaucracies, calls “the social and economic implications of poverty” and with it the development of the political will “to provide administrative solutions for them”⁹³.

Assessing the diffusion of the ideas of the garden city movement to New Zealand presents some intriguing problems. The Garden City and Town Planning Association employed two main propaganda devices. The first was the production of written material, lectures and lantern slides that were aimed at broadening the appeal of the movement. At the time illustrated lectures were a popular form of entertainment particularly as they could also be regarded as educational or fulfilling social responsibilities. The second was the creation of physical examples of the movement’s solutions to urban problems. Hence the development of Letchworth and the modification of the concept to produce the garden suburb so well illustrated by Hampstead Garden Suburb. These two examples also provided ‘shrines’ that the

local and overseas visitor could visit and hopefully laud on their return to their homes.

In New Zealand the evaluation of the diffusion of garden city/suburb ideas has been limited and at times naïve. The most consistent discussion in this area has come from Schrader who has moved from assessments based on the minor examples of the movement, at the Spur and Durie Hill⁹⁴, to a more complex consideration of the effect of the movement on the development of urban planning⁹⁵. The latter assessment moves away from Schrader's earlier approach, perpetuated by writers such as Haarhof⁹⁶ that commences with a generalised discussion of the movement and its aims and then examines the Spur and Durie Hill as examples of the movement in New Zealand. In his latest article Schrader tries to assess the impact of the movement on the development of the 1926 legislation primarily through an examination of the propagandist work of Reade and the material presented at the 1919 Town Planning Conference and Exhibition. Ultimately, in contrast to his earlier work, he sees little impact of the movement in New Zealand beyond the development of Durie Hill and concludes "it was unable to effect any great change in New Zealand's urban morphology" and labels it a "temporary enthusiasm"⁹⁷. The weakness of this assessment is that it relies on secondary sources and does not acknowledge that the garden city movement changed and moved away from Howard's original vision, and by 1908 it "no longer had the single-minded quality Howard had invested in it"⁹⁸. He also fails to explain why a movement with allies as powerful as Fowlds and Myers failed to make an impact. In this he has not recognised that methods of diffusion may include adaption or synthesis of the idea to better meet the conditions in the importing country. These are all explored later in this thesis.

Garden Suburbs in New Zealand

The first development to claim garden city/suburb status in New Zealand is The Spur, located on a cliff top site at Sumner, then thirty-seven minutes from Christchurch. Subdivision commenced in 1902, with nine of the twelve sections being developed by the time the whole subdivision was sold in 1914⁹⁹. The houses were quite accurately called 'cottages', as they were modest dwellings with two bedrooms. Hurst Seager himself lived on the estate until 1907¹⁰⁰ and several of the houses belonged to relatives and acquaintances.

The Spur is usually regarded as the first example of a garden suburb in New Zealand but there is little evidence to support this. The advertising brochure of 1914 trumpets this rather modest design as "an ideal spot for carrying out his (Hurst Seager's) ideas of an garden suburb"¹⁰¹ and this is used by Haarhof and Schrader to confirm the origins and derivation of the subdivision's design. Neither the newspaper advertisements for the sale¹⁰² nor the report of the auction¹⁰³ mention the term 'garden suburb' but instead extol the locational qualities of the development. Moreover, given that the development began in 1902, Hurst Seager would have had to be able to translate the writings of Howard on issues of broad strategy and governance into a design strategy. This becomes quite difficult to accept given that it was not until 1907 that Hampstead was developed by Unwin. The possible source of this rather optimistic interpretation lies in the work of Lochhead, who states that "Seager's familiarity with the garden city movement dated from his period of study in England between 1882 and 1884"¹⁰⁴. This interpretation is in turn repeated by Shaw in the superbly illustrated, *A History of New Zealand Architecture*¹⁰⁵. Given Howard did not publish the first version of his book until 1898 and the Association was not

established until 1899, this is clearly doubtful. In his article Lochhead alludes to the “pioneering English garden suburb of Bedford Park”¹⁰⁶. Bedford Park, which featured an “informal street pattern, trees and cosy arts and crafts cottages”¹⁰⁷, was developed in 1875 by Norman Shaw. Freestone suggests that this dormitory suburb used the later ‘cache’ of the garden suburb movement to sell itself. Such misuse of the term by those seeking to sell subdivisions, led by 1921, to a considerable concern that there was “... misrepresentation of the name ‘garden city’ by numerous local councils and speculative builders. The thing itself is nowhere to be seen at the present date, but in Hertfordshire, at Letchworth and Welwyn Garden City”¹⁰⁸.

It does not seem inappropriate to suggest that Hurst Seager undertook a similar revision of his original motivations. There is certainly nothing about the development, which suggests that The Spur was more than a pleasant development of an interesting site, where attractive rustic cottages were located on modest sections. With the exception of three of the sections, one of which contained Hurst Seager’s own home, the sections were of modest size, with the larger undeveloped sections reflecting the complexities of slope and location. A more compelling candidate for the proper garden city/suburb labels is Hurst Seager’s other development at Durie Hill, Wanganui, which commenced in 1919, and the Orakei Garden Suburb competition of 1925. Both are dealt with in later chapters.

The Transmission of Ideas

If there is no concrete example of garden city/suburb principles in New Zealand before 1919, how fared the other aspect of diffusion, that is the transmission of

ideas through print? Once again Freestone demonstrates in the Australian context that “spreading the word” involved an erratic process, heavily dependent on individuals, with the “most intensive coverage between 1913 and 1920”¹⁰⁹.

The situation in New Zealand seems much the same with the Charles Reade an early and influential disseminator of town planning knowledge. Reade was born in Invercargill on 8th May 1880 into a comfortable middle class family, his father being a lawyer. The family moved several times, including a possible stay in Australia¹¹⁰, and Reade completed his secondary education in Wellington. His early working years are uncertain but he probably worked as a journalist after leaving school. Late in 1905 he departed for Great Britain, where he remained until 1911, contributing articles to various New Zealand newspapers¹¹¹. In 1909 he produced *The Revelation of Britain*¹¹², subtitled *A Book for Colonials*, which brought together those articles in a small book. Reade made it clear that this was a crusading book, intended to reveal the social, economic and political problems which beset England. It was produced in the belief that New Zealand could “derive examples of what to avoid, to prevent and to encourage, if ‘The Greatest Good for the Greatest Number’ is still to be a catchword”¹¹³. It was, without apology, a hard hitting, socialist-leaning critique of the causes of the poverty, disease and general malaise that afflicted the poor in their slums. The cause of the problem was quite clearly, in his analysis, capitalism unconstrained by appropriate and socially responsible and reasonable laws. Although he did acknowledge that “New Zealand has in many directions modified much of the grosser individualism which today” allow “the capitalistic and land-owning classes to accumulate the bulk of wealth produced”¹¹⁴. He then went on, in a series of chapters, to identify the ills of English urban society and to advocate a

series of solutions which vary from the garden city movement to the German town planning system.

The tone of the volume is socialist and emancipatory with an acceptance that the state had an important role at both the central and local levels to mediate the worst excesses of capitalism. While Reade ends by talking of Britain moving slowly “.. in the direction of collectivism”¹¹⁵, he stops short of advocating full state control of the type that might have been advocated in the Fabian and Socialist circles within which he moved. In the foreword there are acknowledgements to Sidney Webb, T.C. Horsfall and the early town planner J.S. Nettlefold¹¹⁶. While clearly Reade was motivated by the desire to see real improvements for the poor and the urban workers, he did not always seem to be aware of the contradictions which might arise from the paternalistic approaches of some of those whom he admired. Discussing Port Sunlight and the involvement of Mr Lever (later Lord Leverhulme) he writes positively of the fact that Lever acknowledged that the provision of better quality worker housing “increased (the) industrial efficiency of the workers”¹¹⁷. This seems to ignore the more cynical view of this, seeing it as a canny capitalist making a measured investment to ensure that workers in whom he had increasingly invested skills’ training remained productive for longer periods. This would certainly be the interpretation of Hague and Fogelson.

While in England Reade also discovered the GC&TPA and, as *The Revelation of Britain* shows, he became a strong advocate of both garden city and town planning ideas. In 1911 he returned to New Zealand to become the Editor of the *Weekly Graphic and New Zealand Mail*. As a journalist with propagandist zeal, Reade

provided both a focus for the magnification of interest in housing, town planning and the broader concern of slums, and a venue in which to air those concerns.

However, Reade was not the only conduit for these new ideas. In 1911 Hurst published as a small book, a detailed speech that he had presented to the Christchurch Beautifying Association, called *Our Beautiful World: Man's Work in the Making and Marring of It*¹¹⁸. While much of the volume is devoted to exploring his concepts of nature and beauty, which he links to quality of New Zealand's scenery¹¹⁹, he clearly states that he had visited several garden cities¹²⁰. He uses the term quite loosely, as it is evident that he is in fact referring to Port Sunlight and Bournville that really predated the formal garden city/suburb movement, though some of their later development was guided by those ideas. While it is not obvious when he made these journeys, they were common among the circle within which he moved. As early as 1906, there is evidence of extensive travel in America, Canada, Europe and Britain by Beautifying Association Members¹²¹. Later in the volume Hurst Seager makes it clear that he is familiar with American efforts to control billboards and advertising, that focus of concern of the Beautifying societies¹²². The final paragraphs appeal to New Zealand's cities to embrace the pursuit of beauty to avoid the disfiguring mistakes of overseas cities. The concept of planning presented in this book is firmly embedded in an aesthetic view which relied more on City Beautiful concepts than the more practical approach of the City Functional movement, or the Garden City movement for that matter. Most importantly however it demonstrates the diverse sources of ideas that were being drawn upon by those interested in the new movement. While the imperial connection might be the strongest there was also a knowledge and understanding of some of the ideas being developed and used in America and Europe. Thus while the method of diffusion

was the written word and the personal observation, the sources were much more diverse.

Among the developing professional communities there was a similar interest in town planning which in the first decade of the century began to receive coverage in their journals. The New Zealand Institute of Surveyors was established in 1888 with its journal, *The New Zealand Surveyor*, being published for the first time the following year. While members were not regulated by legislation until 1900, it is evident from McRae's history¹²³ that the Institute maintained a strong and active membership. The first town planning article by an unnamed author appeared in the *New Zealand Surveyor* in September 1910. The article, which advocated the "passing of legislation to regulate the laying out of Cities and Towns"¹²⁴, then went on to recommend that readers become familiar with the article on German town planning which appeared in *Scribner's Magazine*. Readers would hardly have needed to go to the bother, as the author gives extensive details of its contents. There are however signs that the author was not totally 'au fait' with all overseas developments as he indicates that he believed legislation is to be passed in Great Britain "but I am not aware if this has been accomplished"¹²⁵.

Further articles followed, with the publishing of *The Town Planning Review*, in 1910, being announced in the *New Zealand Surveyor* in March 1911. It was judged "an excellent periodical"¹²⁶. In the same volume by an article by H.R. Aldridge on Town Planning in Great Britain, reprinted from *Worlds Work* of October 1910¹²⁷. This clearly inspired some debate and discussion as the June 1911 journal carried a letter from "Esoter" which advocated controls on subdivision to improve the quality of urban development. It concluded with "In a flat country, what about the modern

“Garden City’ idea now in concrete form and existence” to which the Editor replied “How would a good Town Planning Act suit the ideas of Esoter?”¹²⁸. The Institute ultimately pursued this idea and passed a resolution at its Annual General Meeting of January 1911, on the “desirableness of legislation in the matter of City Building and Town Planning on the lines of the English Act”¹²⁹. What these discussions demonstrate is that there was a wide variety of journals, mainly from overseas, which were circulating in New Zealand at the time, albeit probably within limited circles. They provided an important though probably somewhat erratic tool of diffusion. The other professional group with a potential interest in town planning, was slower to become involved in the area. The Institute of Architects journal appears to have only been intermittently published until around 1917, and there is no mention of town planning until 1913. Thus it falls within the next period of coverage.

The interest of the surveyors in town planning is not difficult to understand. As a new colony New Zealand was still at the point where practising surveyors might be involved in, or have had earlier experience of, laying out a town or small settlement. Both Ross’s thesis and Hargreaves¹³⁰ chart the various pieces of legislation that regulated the physical layout of towns. *The Plans of Towns Regulation Act 1875* is the classic example, though its impact was significantly reduced by the fact it only applied to Crown owned land. Further, the surveyors of the day were likely to also work as engineers and sometimes architects. Thus they were likely to be both theoretically and practically associated with the issues of public health engineering. McRae’s history of the surveying profession gives details of a number of surveyors of the period who were qualified in a number of professions, such as August Mason who worked as a mining engineer and surveyor¹³¹. Sometimes individuals were

individuals were members of several professional bodies. George Barr, a surveyor, for instance, was also a member of the Institute of Civil Engineers¹³¹.

This early interest by the surveyors is paralleled in the development of the town planning profession in Britain. Hawtree¹³² highlights this in his discussion of the origins of the British town planning profession. He points out that if town planning had remained merely a value system, rather than a separate undertaking, then each of the professions could have served it through their existing professional roles. Each of the professions of engineering, architecture, and surveying, would have developed their own concept of town planning, which would have been derived and achieved through the existing instruments and practices of their professions. However this didn't happen and instead "individual professions became increasingly attracted to the idea of town planning"¹³³ and attempted to 'colonise' or at least dominate its development and practice. At this point a veritable 'range war' broke out among the professions with a possible interest in town planning, that is the surveyors, engineers and architects. As we will see in subsequent chapters, a similar situation would develop, but at a much later stage, in New Zealand.

It is also important to reflect at this point on what concept of town planning underlay the surveyors' interest and understanding. It was very clearly derived from their professional ethos and practice in designing urban layouts. This explains their interest in the garden city/suburb approaches that they would have recognised as being adaptable to the design of urban extensions. The surveyors equally believed in the power of legislation with first article on town planning in the *New Zealand Surveyor*, in 1910, specifically identified the need for legislation to regulate the laying-out of towns. Further, the attraction of the German model expounded in the

balance of the article, while lauding the value of good layout in achieving health and wellbeing, also concentrates on the more mundane matter of street widths, which brings the cry of, "O! If Wellington had been protected from narrow streets"¹³⁴. The letter from 'Esoter' in 1911 makes physical layout the central focus of concern, and seeks "a clear law and acknowledged principles of action"¹³⁵. The use of the term 'garden city' in the article is used as a shorthand term for an acceptable physical layout of a new town.

Harder to gauge is the impact of the various books which quickly emerged from the British town planning movement. There is certainly little evidence of early town planning books being held in New Zealand libraries. Equally there are no holdings of journals such as *The Garden City* (the journal of the GC&TPA), in this country. This is not however decisive evidence given the proclivity of New Zealand libraries to discard historic material very readily. It also overlooks the potential for people such as Hurst Seager to maintain private libraries that he might circulate among friends and fellow adherents. Hurst Seager kept up his contacts in Australia, and presented two papers on *The Disfigurement of Towns With Placards and Advertising and Architects' Responsibilities in Relation Thereto*¹³⁶ and *The Planning of Entrances and Exits For Theatres and Other Places of Entertainment*¹³⁷ to the 1904 Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science. The Proceedings of this and later meetings of that Association were readily available in New Zealand.

Conclusion

So how should the period 1900 to 1911 be viewed in terms of the development of town planning in New Zealand? It was definitely not a period of sustained

development in which the concept of town planning was received, understood and acted upon. Given New Zealand's location at the far edges of the Empire that would hardly be expected. It was not moreover, a dependent colony where the new message could be diffused via imperial or colonial imposition of the type described by King and Home. Such a path becomes all the more unlikely if one also recognises that even in Britain, despite the 1909 legislation, there was still not an agreed view of what the concept of town planning actually meant. There was equally no consensus on how it should be related to the broader concept of garden cities/suburbs and exactly who should undertake this work. Sutcliffe provides a detailed and complex account of the conflict which arose in Britain, between the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association and the National Housing and Town Planning Council, as to who should exercise the prime responsibility for advancing the cause of town planning¹³⁶.

Similar problems did not arise in New Zealand primarily because there was no single group that could claim ownership of the idea in the way the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association did. This was clearly because the cause in New Zealand was not formally organised and was largely dependent on a diverse and physically disparate group of enthusiasts who were open to new ideas and concepts. They were not numerous enough in any locality to form an effective pressure group. Many of these people, such as Bathgate, Ell and Hurst Seager would develop their interest through their participation in the various beautifying societies. These groups served to bring together like-minded individuals who pursued their perceived and self-imposed civic responsibility through practical programmes of tree planting and reserve development. That these developments contributed to improving the quality of urban life is only peripherally acknowledged in

the existing literature. It is possible that through this work the members may have regarded themselves as giving physical expression to some of the ideas that underlay the garden city concept which they could not achieve through the development of an actual garden city or suburb. These organisations and their interests clearly paralleled the City Beautiful groups in America, particularly if one looks beyond the monumental urban redesign aspects of the movement to the complex network of local amenity and improvement groups which existed throughout America. The work such groups did was often very little different to what was pursued by the Christchurch Beautifying Association and the like. In terms of the diffusion of ideas these amenity-based concerns may have had similar appeals in New Zealand because they were about improving a relatively recently urbanised area. For once a town or city had grown beyond the basic settlement stage when the infrastructure and institutions were established, there is the opportunity to beautify and improve the urban environment. In both countries the economic base of the town or city was probably not sufficient to undertake large-scale projects to achieve the improved urban amenities they were seeking, so they fell back on more modest programmes of tree planting and reserve development. This approach would have been given extra impetus in New Zealand by the obvious connections with the nature conservation and scenery preservation movement that saw value in bringing nature into the city. There it would exercise its civilising influences.

When the garden city/suburb concept was promulgated with vigour from 1899 onwards, it offered a message that was always going to have limited appeal in New Zealand. Howard's Garden City was a response to the untrammelled growth of London in particular. It also highlighted the limitations on further technical solutions, with any further achievements in that direction likely to be modest and incremental.

In the British context, and in fact in any country with old well-established cities, it probably offered a compelling and attractive solution. In New Zealand however, with its later settlement pattern the idea was unlikely to have found such fertile soil in which to take root. While there were urban problems they were not of the scale and intensity to be expected in Britain and elsewhere in the Old World. Moreover even in Britain by 1920 there was only one garden city completed at Letchworth, a garden suburb at Hampstead Heath, and the beginnings of a second garden city at Welwyn Garden City. All in a country with more pressing problems than those in New Zealand, and a much larger capital base. New Zealand also lacked wealthy individuals like the Cadbury or Lever families who, motivated by a combination of Non-Conformist charitable urges and a recognition that a healthy worker was a productive worker, supported the new movement and expanded development of their villages in the spirit of Howard. In contrast to other writers I see no need to establish a direct path of evolution of town planning as a concept in New Zealand that necessarily involves the garden city/suburb ideas. In New Zealand these ideas seem to have sparked an intellectual interest rather than being regarded as a directly applicable solution. Thus the principles rather than the practice of the garden city/suburb movement that were of importance, hence the lack of built examples. The need for individual commitment to town planning ideas in New Zealand was probably lessened by the modest legislative interventions of the Liberal Government, particularly in terms of municipal governance and housing. Ferguson details some of this in the housing area, demonstrating the willingness of the Liberal government and its Reform successors to become involved in housing via legislation. A series of Acts from 1894 to 1905 aimed “to improve housing conditions and reduce housing costs at no long-term expense to the government”¹³⁹. In Wilkes’ periodization, the state in this Pre-Fordist period was responding to “the

increasingly urbanized political climate, in which its activities spread rapidly into new areas of responsibility”¹⁴⁰. Such interventions were, as Bassett and others have discussed, not based primarily on any well-developed doctrine but on a simple desire to ‘do good’ and to strengthen society. What this early intervention seemed to do was to exclude the emergence of housing advocacy groups of the type that developed in Britain and in America and ‘took up’ the new concept of town planning. The City Beautiful movement in America, as Wilson so cogently demonstrates¹⁴¹, withered in this period under the attacks of the City Practical which was more centrally concerned with broader urban issues such as urban poverty and slum housing.

Thus in New Zealand during this period enthusiasts of this new concept of town planning could develop their own understanding and interpretation of it, representing Ward’s diffusion mode of the adaptation of ideas to local conditions. This probably allowed the movement to gain a wider audience than it might otherwise have achieved, as each individual could and would develop an understanding that equated with their particular interests. In Post-Modern terms, during this period we see the emergence of a series of parallel discourses derived from an interpretation of a fairly broadly based overseas concept which was diffused somewhat erratically to New Zealand. Thus Hurst Seager in 1911 in *Our Beautiful World* would feel no concern at calling Port Sunlight and Bournville, garden suburbs, when their development pre-dated the formal development and establishment of the garden city movement. The term garden suburb so used became a loose metaphor to establish an image of a pleasant and healthy living environment rather than representing a specific meaning system.

What the period did do was establish the pre-conditions for the development of a more organised town planning movement that would in the next period attempt to articulate and give specific direction to its desires through legislation. Those pre-conditions included an interested and educated audience, organisations which could be adapted to the new causes, and most importantly the acceptance that this new concept of town planning had something to offer New Zealand. In so doing it started to develop a climate of acceptance of the concept and to start to build a constituency for town planning, something which was essential if the movement was to make any headway or if it was in fact to form itself into an identifiable movement.

¹ Hardy, D. 1991 *From Garden Cities to New Towns: Campaign for Town and Country Planning, 1899-1946*, E & FN Spon, London and Hardy, D. 1998 *Quasi Utopias: Perfect Cities in an Imperfect World* in Freestone, R. (ed.) *Conference Proceedings: The Twentieth Century Urban Planning Experience*, 8th International Planning History Conference, Sydney, July 1998, p341-346

² Cherry, G. 1996, *Town Planning in Britain Since 1900: The Rise and Fall of the Planning Ideal*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, p9

³ *ibid.*, p14-16

⁴ Bush, G. 1995 *Local Government and Politics in New Zealand*, Second Edition, University of Auckland Press, Auckland, p19

⁵ Bassett, M. 1998 *The State in New Zealand 1840-1984: Socialism Without Doctrines?*, University of Auckland Press, Auckland, p96

⁶ Hamer, D. 1988 *The New Zealand Liberals: The Years of Power 1891-1912*, University of Auckland Press, Auckland, p45

⁷ Lochhead, L. 1994 *Preserving the Brownies Portion: A History of Voluntary Nature Conservation Organisations in New Zealand 1888-1935*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Lincoln University

⁸ *ibid.*, p82

⁹ The Annual Report of the Christchurch Beautifying Society in 1904 recorded that it had received considerable correspondence from towns and cities about "setting up.....similar Societies to our own". Thus in the early decades of the twentieth century most towns could boast such a group. Records of Christchurch Beautifying Society, 1904, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch.

¹⁰ Lochhead, *op.cit.*, p85

¹¹ See Lochhead, *op.cit.*, p92 and Vine, G. 1973 *Doing A Good Work: The Origins and History of the Dunedin and Suburbs Reserves Conservation Society, 1888-1915*, Unpublished BA Hons. Thesis, University of Otago, p43-49 and Appendix One.

¹² Mabon, R 1991 *Vision and Process: The Genesis of Town Planning in New Zealand 1840-1926*, Unpublished BA Hons. Thesis, University of Otago, Table 3, p32

¹³ Report of Annual General Meeting, 12 May 1907, Records of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch.

¹⁴ Minutes of Executive Committee 6th October, 1908, Records of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch.

¹⁵ Minutes of Executive Committee 12th February, 1913, Records of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch

¹⁶ Adam, J *The Auckland Scenery Conservation Society and the Auckland Civic League: A snapshot of Two Pioneer Conservation Societies*, *Newsletter of the Auckland Branch, NZHPT*, p1-4

- ¹⁷ First Annual Report of the Auckland Scenery Conservation Society, 29th June, 1900, Auckland City Library, Auckland, p3
- ¹⁸ Sixth Annual Report of the Auckland Scenery Conservation Society, June 1905, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington
- ¹⁹ Vine, op.cit., Appendix 3
- ²⁰ Chilton, C 1924 The History of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, *The City Beautiful*, Vol.1, No.3, Nov, p11-12
- ²¹ Minutes of Annual General Meeting 12th March 1909, Meeting of General Committee 17th August. 1909, Records of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch
- ²² Seventh Annual Report, Auckland Scenery Preservation Society, op.cit., p5 Turnbull Library. *The Scenery Preservation Act* was passed in 1903 with the intention of creating the Scenery Preservation Commission to once and for all, preserve New Zealand's scenery. It led to the reserving of significant areas of the remaining bush, outside the National Parks system for scenic and scientific reasons. The system so established still largely remains in the *Reserves Act 1967*.
- ²³ Vine, op.cit., Appendix 3
- ²⁴ *The Press* 29th March 1907
- ²⁵ Minutes of the Christchurch beautifying Society, 1907, Records of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch.
- ²⁶ Annual Report of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, 1904, Records of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch
- ²⁷ Vine, op.cit., Appendix 3
- ²⁸ Strongman, T 1999 *City Beautiful : The First 100 Years of the Christchurch Beautifying Association*, Clerestory Press, Christchurch, p22
- ²⁹ Minutes of General Committee, Christchurch Beautifying Society, 1st April 1912, Records of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch
- ³⁰ Minutes of Meeting, Christchurch Beautifying Society, 27th July 1916, Records of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch
- ³¹ Minutes Executive Committee, Christchurch Beautifying Society, 6th April 1909, Records of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch
- ³² Vine, op.cit., Appendix 3 and Annual Report of Christchurch Beautifying Association, 1904, Records of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch
- ³³ Strongman, op.cit., pxii
- ³⁴ *ibid.*, pxii
- ³⁵ Lochhead, op.cit., p83-84
- ³⁶ Hall, P 1996 *Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century*, Updated Edition, Blackwell, London, p175-176
- ³⁷ Wilson, W 1989 *The City Beautiful Movement*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, p9
- ³⁸ Krueckberg, D. 1983 The Culture of Planning in Krueckberg, D (ed.) 1983a *Introduction to Planning History in the United States*, Rutgers University Center for Urban Policy Research, New Brunswick, p4
- ³⁹ Wilson, op.cit., p2
- ⁴⁰ Peterson, J 1983 The City Beautiful Movement: Forgotten Origins and Lost Meanings in Krueckberg, D. (ed.) 1983a, op.cit., p48
- ⁴¹ Peterson, J. 1996 Frederick Law Olmstead Sr and Frederick Law Olmstead Jr : Visionary and the Professional, in Sies, M. & Silver, C *Planning in the Twentieth –Century American City*, The Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, p47
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- ⁴³ Oliver, W. 1960 *Oxford History of New Zealand*, Oxford University Press, Auckland
- ⁴⁴ Freestone, R. 1989 *Model Communities : The Garden City Movement in Australia*, Thomas Nelson, Melbourne, p223
- ⁴⁵ Peterson op.cit., p41
- ⁴⁶ Peterson, op.cit., p5
- ⁴⁷ Freestone, op.cit., p225-226
- ⁴⁸ Peterson, op.cit., p49

- ⁴⁹ Vine,op.cit.,p106
- ⁵⁰ Wilson,op.cit.,p3
- ⁵¹ ibid.,p302
- ⁵² Lochhead,op.cit.,p86
- ⁵³ Chilton,op.cit.,p11
- ⁵⁴ Chilton, C 1925 History of the Christchurch Beautifying Association, *The City Beautiful*, Vol.1, No.6, 10th March p6
- ⁵⁵ Annual Report of Christchurch Beautifying Association, 1905 and Report to Annual General Meeting of Christchurch Beautifying Society, April 1913, Records of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch
- ⁵⁶ Minutes of Christchurch Beautifying Association, May 1908, Records of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch
- ⁵⁷ Minutes of the General Committee Meeting, August 1909, Records of the Christchurch Beautifying Society, Canterbury Museum Archive, Christchurch
- ⁵⁸ Chilton, C 1926 History of the Christchurch Beautifying Association, *The City Beautiful*, Vol.1, No 11, 10th August, p12-16
- ⁵⁹ Ferguson, G 1994 *Building the New Zealand Dream*, Dunmore Press/Historical Branch Dept. of Internal Affairs, Palmerston North, p50-51. Her assessment is referenced to Schrader, B 1991 *A Peaceful Path to Reform: The Garden City/Suburb Movement in New Zealand/Aotearoa*, Unpublished B.A. Hons. History Research Essay, Victoria University.
- ⁶⁰ ibid.,p50
- ⁶¹ loc.cit.
- ⁶² Bush, G 1971 *Decently and In Order: The Centennial History of the Auckland City Council*, Collins/ACC, Auckland, p170
- ⁶³ Wilson,op.cit.,p296
- ⁶⁴ See for instance the report in *The Press*, 27th February 1906, which indicates that Hurst Seager read a paper on town planning and civic design to the AGM of The Christchurch Beautifying Association on 29th February, 1906. Over the years he gave numerous presentations to all types of groups including the WEA.
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- ⁶⁷ Hall & Ward,op.cit.,p7-12
- ⁶⁸ Hall & Ward,op.cit.,p20
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- ⁷⁹ King, A. D. 1976 *Colonial Urban Development : Culture, Power and Environment*, Routledge, London
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- ⁸² Ward, 1999,op.cit.,p58
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- ⁸⁵ loc.cit.
- ⁸⁶ Phillips, J 1983 Musings in Maoriland – Or Was There a *Bulletin* School in New Zealand?, *Historical Studies*, Vol.26, No.81,p520-535
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- ⁸⁹ Lochhead .I 1996 Seager, Samuel Hurst 1855-1933 in Orange, C (ed.) 1996 *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* , Volume 3, Dept. Of Internal Affairs, Wellington, p464
- ⁹⁰ Lochhead, I 1987 The Architectural Art of Samuel Hurst Seager , *Art New Zealand*,No.44, p99
- ⁹¹ Perkin, H 1989 *The Rise of Professional Society : England Since 1880*, Routledge , London
- ⁹² Hamer, op.cit.,p51-56. The emergence of New Zealand nationalism was slow and erratic and did not until recently demonstrate the strength associated with Australian nationalism.
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PROMOTING TOWN PLANNING AND EARLY LEGISLATIVE ATTEMPTS 1910–1915

Introduction

By 1909-1910 the concepts espoused by the town planning movement overseas, were beginning to be conveyed to New Zealand, where they found an enthusiastic audience. The period from 1910 to 1915, is one of significant activity when the concept of town planning in New Zealand, became very fluid. A variety of groups and individuals adopted the concept and moulded it to their particular needs or interests.

It is also a period in which there were efforts to popularise the concept through a national tour undertaken in 1914, that built on the interest created by the limited lecture series undertaken by Reade in 1911. Most importantly, in this period we see the first attempts to legislate for town planning. This marked an important turning point because it put town planning on the political and legislative agenda. Town-planning¹ Bills were produced in 1911 and 1917, demonstrating a commitment to the concept that transcended party boundaries. The recognition of town planning through attempts at legislation also marked the beginning of acceptance of a role in this area for both the central and local state. While this built on the earlier land subdivision and public health legislation, it was a new and important way of regulating simultaneously both urban space and the nature and development of the urban fabric. From 1914 onwards, somewhat erratically, it is

possible to identify files from government departments, primarily Internal Affairs, which deal with town planning².

Politically this was a complex period that saw the gradual disintegration of the Liberals and their “activist state...that had produced a number of social policy initiatives”³ and their replacement with a conservative administration under William Massey. The war in 1914 produced a coalition National Ministry between 1915 and 1919. A product of the disintegration of the Liberals was the emergence of what Hamer identifies as ‘fads’⁴, representing everything from temperance to single-tax theories. Prime among these ‘faddists’ was George Fowlds who was to become a significant proponent of town planning. Thus the emergence of ‘fads’ would seem to have the potential to facilitate the acceptance of town planning in political circles. There was however the danger that it could be easily disregarded as just another ‘fad’.

The activist Liberal government had also produced a corresponding growth in the instruments of the state, government departments. Their performance and professionalism at times left much to be desired and the Massey administration was quick to act on their long campaign to reform the public service. A Public Service Committee was set up in 1912. Ironically reforming the public service probably served to strengthen and professionalise it. In Internal Affairs, at the time a major government department, this produced one of the public service’s first mandarins, James Hislop, who was there to efficiently serve his political masters whatever their hue.

The interventions of the state in social and economic life continued, despite the change in government. Bassett demonstrates that while there was a steady flow of literature about the state and its role, circulating in New Zealand at the time, this was not the basis of any doctrine of state intervention. This also held for the conservatives of the Massey administration who “without any adherence to any conservative philosophy ...simply went along with policies they deemed good for ‘men of property.’”⁵. Massey’s ministry featured few intellectuals beyond Downie Stewart and Bell. Thus there was no real questioning of the ‘rightness’ of state intervention but rather a question of who might benefit from it. This meant that there could be a similar flexibility when it came to deciding what state intervention would try to achieve. Thus town planning had just as much chance at making use of the state’s powers as any other cause did. Further, as Wilkes⁶ demonstrates, changes in the economy, the growth of the Labour movement and the arrival and aftermath of war ensured that even a conservative government was drawn into new state interventions.

Slums and Reade’s 1911 Lectures

Reade’s book *The Revelation of Britain*, mainly concentrated on the slums and overcrowding which occurred in the ‘Old Country’, and which he suggested could just as quickly develop in New Zealand. This growing interest in slums and the housing problem was exploited by the town planning enthusiasts to promote their cause and town planning as a solution. This moved town planning from a focus inspired by city beautifying concerns, to a new focus which related town planning to the bigger and more important social and economic concerns of the time, and reflected the growing social conscience of the increasingly well established, and

comfortable middle and upper classes. This was paralleled by the public housing programmes, the motives of which were not always altruistic. As Ferguson demonstrates, they often tried to promote home ownership through unrealistic schemes⁷ which merely created a huge mortgage burden and significant travel costs to work.

In 1911 Reade returned to New Zealand he became the editor of the *Weekly Graphic and New Zealand Mail*, which had a national circulation. This was very much a middle class 'life style' magazine, to use a current description, where thoughtful and informative articles were interspersed with society gossip, sport, music, drama, and gardening news. It was not above featuring sensationalist articles such as "Will the Airship Destroy Civilisation?"⁸. The advertisements it carried reinforce the view that it was aimed very much at a secure and comfortably wealthy audience. Over a number of years it carried regular advertisements for the jewellers Stewart Dawson & Co in Auckland, and W. Littlejohn & Sons in Wellington. The latter company in 1911 included in its advertisement a brooch for £125⁹. It was also a journal which celebrated the innovative and progressive nature of the age, which was often illustrated in its extensive photographic section. This included in 1911 photos of the work of the Nelson Beautifying Society in "making the city attractive"¹⁰, suggesting the magazine was read by those who supported such organisations. It clearly maintained some political connections, particularly in Auckland. Thus when Arthur Myers retired as Mayor of Auckland, a full-page spread detailed his achievements¹¹. Generally it was local politics which received the greatest coverage, in some contrast to the newspapers of the time. The 1911 editions carried news of the local body elections in Auckland and Wellington.

From the *Weekly Graphic* Reade launched a concerted and consistent propaganda campaign to promote town planning. In July and August 1911 he arranged the first two of his public lectures on town planning, in Auckland and Wellington. The focus of those lectures was, as the advertising poster boldly proclaims, “SLUMS”¹². These were followed in October by a lecture on “Town Planning in Practice”, given in each of the main centres. This lecture, extensively illustrated with lantern slides was presented as a product of “most thorough and exhaustive investigation” that would provide “illustrated proofs and figures and facts” to demonstrate “most serious overcrowding”¹³. The balance of the advertising went on to emphasise both the serious nature of this slum problem and the qualifications of Reade to comment on them.

Such public lectures were a feature of the time and could deal with a variety of popular topics. In the same year Miss C. W. Christie presented a series of lectures on life in India and Indian mysticism¹⁴. In a world without radio or television such diversions were welcomed by those, with the time and the resources to attend. The audience was very likely to be securely middle class, a presumption supported by the flyer for the Wellington lecture. The organiser of the lecture in Wellington was Charles Wheeler, the editor of the *New Zealand Times*, who used that newspaper’s address in the advertising material. Further the advertisement advises “cars and carriages for 10.10 pm”¹⁵ which suggests that attendees had private transport and staff to drive the vehicles.

The first of the lecture series was a considerable success, with the advertisement for the next speaking of “quite 1500 persons unable to gain admission”¹⁶. In Wellington the lecture attracted politicians such as Stout, Myers and Fowlds, a

range of local body politicians and eight hundred members of the public, with “500 being disappointed”¹⁷. While the reports of the lecture suggested that Reade spoke of the “uprise of the slum evil”¹⁸, illustrated with lantern slides and local examples, they also indicated he addressed the separate but related concerns of town planning. He made a clear distinction between the two issues when he stated:

“The term town planning required to be defined. It could only be employed to give systematic and well ordered designs to those areas of our cities not yet developed or built upon. It had nothing to do with the clearing out or improvement of overcrowded areas in cities themselves, for this was a distinct problem, the remedy for which had no connection with town planning”¹⁹.

Reade was offering a concept of town planning that separated it from slums and housing, the outward representations of the failure of the urban system. The concept he expounded involved the application of what were essentially design principles to the expansion of existing urban areas. That meant town planning had little to offer in the way of solutions to the problems of the developed urban areas, and suggests that the slum imagery was being used to demonstrate what would happen if town planning was not instituted. This concern to define town planning as applying to newly developed areas was brought into better focus in the second set of lectures in October which were duly reported in the *Weekly Graphic*. While those lectures once again raised the spectre of the slums, Reade did concentrate more on town planning in practice. He stressed that town planning was not concerned with “the securing of nice homes with broad streets and pretty gardens for poetical people”²⁰. Instead he suggested using illustrative slides of overseas examples, as diverse as Dresden and the garden cities. These showed that town planning “resulted in orderly convenient designs, provided land and houses at reasonable

cost, also parks open spaces and garden plots and ensured the community getting the benefit of the surplus value instead of finding its way, as it does in New Zealand today, into the pockets of individual land speculators”²¹. With regard to the latter charge he emphasised that it was the community, through local government, who had to pay to put right the deficiencies of the land developers, particularly in providing basic services such as roads and sewerage connections. These points were backed with illustrations in the same edition with provocative captions such as “Five to Seven Years Growth – What the Jervois Estate Cost the Public”²². The concept of town planning presented here by Reade has clear garden city/suburb underpinnings, as town planning is concerned with new areas and with securing pleasant living environments. However that is a rather simplistic rendition of his concept of town planning. What Reade did was to take Howard’s original concerns with the uncontrolled growth of British cities and the associated problems that produced, and cast them in a New Zealand context. Reade’s message was effective because it was grounded within the New Zealand experience, not of uncontrolled and excessive urban growth but of more modest growth, poorly planned and serviced. This he made real with local examples that appealed to the everyday concern of the ratepayers who ultimately paid to put right the oversights of the land developer/speculator. In short “town planning was invariably a sound business proposition”²³. Reade ended his lecture with a call to appoint a “highly qualified expert” before any town planning schemes were attempted. He seemed to suggest the need to establish a “town planning Board” under the guidance of that expert and “an experienced lawyer who had made it his speciality to understand local government law”²⁴. This suggested a town planning model where the prime responsibility would lie at the local level with some oversight from a central body. Equally it suggests that at the very least, a semi-independent administrative body

would need to be set up, advised and guided by an 'expert'. It also suggests that there was a group of people who could claim such expertise, thus prefiguring the emergence of the planning profession.

The Slums – Symbols or Reality?

If Reade wanted to avoid the idea, as he suggested in one lecture, that town planning was ultimately not associated with slums and poor housing, then he probably failed. The issue of slums had gained increasing coverage and concern in New Zealand in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This was not only a New Zealand phenomenon. Garside traces in some detail the use of 'planning' to remedy slums and poor housing, in Britain between 1890 and 1945.²⁵ As she points out, by the 1890s "housing reform in Britain seemed to reach an impasse: the missionary zeal of the Victorian public health campaigns faltered as their confidence in sanitary measures was undermined."²⁶ Given the limitations of direct philanthropic help and of sanitary engineering, there was a need for something to fill the vacuum. The answer was found, as Cherry demonstrates in Britain, in town planning which "gained an identity as a response to certain pressing problems of the day which spoke of deep dissatisfaction with the late Victorian City"²⁷. Thus the suburbs were viewed as "a means of alleviating conditions in the slums"²⁸. In turn town planning would ensure that the new suburbs were well laid out and provided with the open spaces, gardens and parks which would reverse the physical and moral decline of slum dwellers. There were in Britain, as Garside illustrates, clear connections to the newly formed Eugenics Movement that was given a boost by the emergence of local eugenics societies between 1907 and 1914²⁹.

New Zealand audiences and the press were very receptive to the idea that there was a slum problem in this country. In 1900 a group of Wellington inner city residents wrote to the City Council about the “unsatisfactory state of Haining Street” which was “the scene of open vice” and demanded that “something ought to be done to prevent the growth of slums in the midst of the City”³⁰. They were equally clear on the solution: “if the occupants were sent to the outskirts of the City their new surroundings might improve their present mode of life. The present state of affairs is a cause of moral and material injury to neighbouring residents”³¹. The spectre of slums inducing moral decay was a popular one and was linked to bigger societal concerns about the nature of a post-Victorian society, faced by increasing and accelerated change. Thus it was the slum aspects of Reade’s lectures that caught the public’s attention. The Editorial in the *New Zealand Times* said, “a slum is something more than a menace to public health. It is a place where citizenship perishes, where human life decays”³². The same Editorial goes on to suggest that “in some of the smaller towns the slum is an established institution”. The solution, the Editor suggested, was not the purchase of slum houses which was an “unsound policy”, but making “the ownership of such places unprofitable”.

Other papers carried similar reports of Reade’s lectures with the *Evening Post’s* coverage being headed “Slum-Making” and dwelling on the examples provided with the assistance of lantern slides³³. A letter to the Editor some days later clearly agreed that in other cities, investigation would reveal “the existence of deplorable, degrading and demoralising conditions such as emphatically ought not to exist in “Gods Own Country”³⁴. This generalised concern with slums had a number of facets that are explored in detail below.

In the public mind at least, New Zealand had slums and it was time to do something about them, to avoid the obvious physical and moral decay that would affect the populace. References to slums and slum conditions would continue, as we will see, right through to the early 1920s. But did these slums actually exist? Or should we agree with Mayne who says, “Slums are myths. They are constructions of the imagination”³⁵. From this bold statement Mayne goes on to discuss the use of the term ‘slum’ in modern historiography as a type of shorthand for the “material reflection of the disequilibrium between wealth and poverty”³⁶ and thus a reflection of the consequences of unregulated capitalism. He then goes on to undertake what is a Post-Modern discourse analysis of the press in Britain, Australia and America to reveal how the term ‘slum’ was used. He also explores how the concepts that it embraced, of a people living “upon the margins of tolerable living conditions and acceptable behaviour”³⁷, were used to promote change based on this middle class interpretation which reflected little of the life of those who actually lived in the slums.

Some of the concerns that Mayne addresses have been discussed in a much more conventional manner by Freestone in his writings on the garden city/suburb movement in Australia. The Australian experience of adapting planning ideas diffused from Britain provides useful insights for New Zealand. Freestone stresses that the focus of the British movement on the creation of new towns was unlikely to find favour in Australia as “recent settlement, small population, limited rural-urban migration and a relatively high standard of living all impeded the emergence of a genuine movement for new towns”³⁸. Instead, as was apparent in New Zealand, the message was converted to a more generalised one that linked unplanned development, slums and poor housing to the decline in physical and moral health, a lack of social stability and uneconomic urban development³⁹. This may help to

explain why in both countries the proponents of town planning used the image of the slum so frequently, as it produces a readily understandable symbol of the perils of unplanned growth rather than excessive growth. In Mayne's terms it allowed the imposition of models of middle class respectability on the urban poor, justified by the need to achieve a healthy and socially cohesive urban society.

This interest in slums by the newspapers was however more than an attempt to shock readers. Stories about big-city life were the bedrock of journalism and helped to reinforce the universal experience of the city and city life and slums offered the opportunity to bring dramatic elements into play. The slum discoveries of the newspapers offered more, however, and often reflected what Mayne calls "bourgeois concerns about the indeterminacies of urban scale"⁴⁰, such as the fear that the slums would produce disease, which would affect the whole of the city. This was certainly a concern in New Zealand. The advertising flyer for Reade's Wellington lecture spoke of "the recent recurrence in Auckland of the dreaded bubonic plague", while the Auckland District Officer of Health, in response to Reade's lecture, stated that if something was not done "The plague and other disease would be extremely hard to combat"⁴¹. Concerns over disease were partly linked to the fear that the prevailing conditions would breed an unfit and racially inferior population. These concerns, as Garside illustrates, when combined with Darwinism, created an interest in eugenics and the founding of groups to pursue their interests. New Zealand was no exception.

The New Zealand Eugenics society was formed in 1910 and branches were established in Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and Timaru, only three years after the foundation of its parent body in Britain. It survived only until 1914, though the

ideas retained currency among its adherents through the 1920s⁴². While the movement was primarily concerned with genetic and 'breeding' fitness, it did take some interest in town planning. This may have reflected the fact that George Fowlds, who was at the time prominent among the town planning enthusiasts, was the Vice-President of the Society⁴³. This interest in town planning, Fleming suggests, was derived from their concern with "the important role played by environment in shaping society and the people who comprised it"⁴⁴. In 1911 the President of the Society tried to encourage members to take an active role in the emerging town planning movement⁴⁵. The movement was essentially anti-urbanist in its sentiments, often promoting country living as a solution to the problems of the city⁴⁶. What town planning offered was a means to at least ameliorate the worst aspects of the urban areas. The movement went into recession in 1914 with the onset of war but its concerns were still articulated by a hardy band of followers into the 1920s and 30s, though at this time they lost their interest in town planning.

The concern with the impacts of slums on people's moral character was also of concern. In New Zealand in this period there was clear evidence of the promotion of 'civic citizenship' derived from and reinforcing the well established national and imperial spirit. This concern was addressed at length by George Fowlds in a presentation to the New Zealand conference of the Methodist Church in Christchurch in February 1911. He defined civic citizenship as "the duties and responsibilities of people to the city or the district in which they dwelt", to produce a "model National and Imperial citizen"⁴⁷. Fowlds then went on to link these civic citizen responsibilities with town planning and the work of the beautifying societies. He focused particularly on slums, berating developers and others for their creation and advocating the use of town planning legislation to cure the problem. More

responsibility was also needed from those who developed land to ensure “the best and most sanitary conditions for the development of child life and for the maintenance of strong and healthy manhood and womanhood”⁴⁸. The solution, Fowlds expounded, lay with local bodies and individuals rather than requiring the direct intervention of the central state. This latter point brought vociferous complaint from Editorials in the *Evening News* and *The Dominion*⁴⁹ who pointed out that Fowlds’ party had been quick to produce “district spoon feeding”⁵⁰ to secure votes, and presumably to stress the necessity for the intervention of the central state. This aside, the speech was significant in establishing the importance of the concept of civic citizenship and responsibility which clearly slum dwellers could not be expected to either exercise or contribute to. It also once again proposed town planning as a solution to slums.

The various discourses that emerged out of the press and politicians’ treatment of the slums have some wider importance. While slums did exist in New Zealand they were hardly of the scale experienced in Europe and America. Mayne suggests their importance was as symbols of what the city could become, signals of an early infection that could undermine the health and moral character of the urban dweller. Urbanisation was the enemy, slums a symptom. If the infection was allowed to spread then it would eventually undermine the ability of people to discharge their civic, national and imperial duties. In New Zealand, with its recent immigrant population and its national image firmly rooted in the rural, such concerns found a receptive audience. They were drawn from the very negative views of the city, that Fairburn demonstrates permeated all aspects of New Zealand society. In this construct “civilising the country was wholesome” while “the city was parasitic and predatory”⁵¹. Rural life and agriculture became visions of arcadia and bastions of

family life, cities something that must be tolerated and tamed. Town planning offered a taming device, particularly garden city/suburb concepts that would bring a modified version of rural arcadia into the city. Suburbia and home ownership would recreate the physical and moral strength of the countryside. It is the power and pervasiveness of these ideas that Fairburn explores in detail that helps to explain the popularity of the slum discourses in New Zealand society.

Reade did employ photographs to assist him in his campaign. As Mayne observes, photographs “were carefully composed so as to complement the genre of the slumland exposé and substantiate the reformers’ message of moral environmentalism”⁵². While the lantern slides have not survived, the advertising flyer has and included pictures of slums in Wellington. An earlier article by Reade, reporting on Myers meeting in Auckland to promote town planning to local authorities, featured a picture of an Auckland slum at Freeman’s Bay⁵³. At the lectures the impact was enhanced by showing contrasting slides of tidy workers’ dwellings at Bournville, Port Sunlight, or the new garden city developments at Hampstead Heath and Letchworth. The message was clear. Town planning would bring order to the chaos and degradation of the slum.

Evocative as these photographs were, they may have exaggerated the true extent of slums in New Zealand. At the beginning of the twenty-first century it is very easy to apply current standards and find the conditions featured to be appalling, and to see all of the evils that those in the last century saw. However, while the pictures from the *Weekly Graphic* in 1911, are of a small untidy yard with some haphazard arrangements for ‘privies’, the buildings themselves are of reasonably sound construction. Equally, the District Officer of Health for Auckland, Dr Makgill, would

state only that "slums did exist in scattered spots in Auckland"⁵⁴, at the time New Zealand's largest city. Olssen's work on Caversham, that includes a study of the early socialist movement, reveals a distinct lack of concern with slums or poor housing as a political issue. Discussing the social structure of Caversham, Olssen stated that there were no monotonous rows of tenements and that "almost everybody owned or rented enough land to run a few hens and grow vegetables."⁵⁵ Equally Ferguson, while using the term quite loosely, presents no quantitative information to back her statements about slums. Rather she points to the development of local authority powers to deal with overcrowding that arose in boarding houses rather than in ordinary housing areas⁵⁶. In fact in the early 1900s the main problem was "the apparent rise in housing costs, rather than poor housing conditions, which brought the most pressing problems for many wage workers"⁵⁷. While there was an upsurge in concern with municipal public health in 1900, this was triggered by reports of an outbreak of bubonic plague in Australia⁵⁸. Thus in New Zealand there is little evidence to confirm the existence of extensive areas of slums. Rather it was a fear that such problems would emerge if nothing were done to prevent them. A more practical approach to the overcrowding in the cities through workers housing programmes achieved only limited success. These schemes as Ferguson demonstrates, often involved suburban developments that were located far from jobs and with no adequate public transport, were doomed to be unattractive to workers⁵⁹. While public transport was developing steadily through the period according to Watson⁶⁰, workers still tended to live and work in close proximity, as in Caversham⁶¹. Equally the newly developed suburbia rarely featured industry to employ the workers. If such schemes could not meet the needs of workers they were hardly likely to meet the needs of slum dwellers whom frequently seemed to have no legitimate income source. Dr Makgill observed that where he had

displaced people from overcrowded situations “being poor people they have simply gone and formed congested areas elsewhere”⁶².

In reality Reade’s lectures never recognised that progressive as the age might be, urban problems were still products of the inequalities between rich and poor. They were however an imaginative and probably largely successful propaganda and publicity tool. As Mayne observes in this regard, “the imagined slum was constructed as an agent of mobilization”⁶³. In Reade’s case he was however perhaps too successful with his slum images. Despite his warnings that town planning was not the cure for overcrowding, he inextricably linked town planning to the perceived slum problem. It is also easy to over estimate the public response to Reade’s lecture. Such lectures were, after all, also entertainment and the *Dominion* reported the event on its entertainment page, next to a *Woman’s World* report on the vexed question of maids and housework and above a report of a lecture on Robert Burns⁶⁴.

Maintaining the Propaganda

Reade clearly recognised the danger of letting the fire go out under the kettle which had just started to bubble. He continued his own crusade in the *Weekly Graphic* in both written and illustrated form. The report of his October lecture was accompanied by an annotated diagram of the Wellington suburb of Kilbirnie, to illustrate “the need for systematic town planning”⁶⁵. This was followed in November by “The Example of Bournville: Lessons for New Zealanders – What Sir Joseph Ward Thinks”⁶⁶. The article opens with a description of an English slum which is then contrasted to the superior qualities of Bournville, the product of sound town

planning. The balance of the article is an interview with Sir Joseph Ward, then the Liberal Premier, who had toured Bournville. While expounding the qualities of Bournville, he observed “the workers are cheered and invigorated by their conditions and environment”⁶⁷. Ward is reported as saying that while the town was proof of the value of a private firm dedicated to its workers “The Liberal party in New Zealand has merely insisted that what a private firm can do, the state can help the people to do for themselves”⁶⁸. In this statement Ward was explicitly acknowledging an appropriate role for the state in controlling and directing the development of the urban fabric. The article ended with support for town planning to secure in New Zealand’s newly developed town extensions “model communities following the lead given by Bournville”⁶⁹. It was hoped this would overcome the growing and acknowledged problem of slums. The penultimate paragraph was particularly interesting as it defined an agenda for town planning. The evils of slums could, Ward said, be avoided if we defined town planning as being concerned with “the maximum number of houses that could be built, the creation of open space, parks and something like orderliness and convenience in the designs of our growing suburbs”⁷⁰. Ward did not recognise that the solution he proposed and the role assigned to town planning would only apply to newly developed areas and would not solve the ‘slum problem’ which he suggests created the need for town planning in the first place. This is quite consistent with Reade’s position but is clearly not a distinction that was always recognised. The definition and role of town planning expressed in the quote is also largely driven by the garden city/suburb concerns which focus on regulating urban space while ensuring that some aspects of its development create ‘good’ urban living environments.

Two further articles on town planning matters were carried in the *Weekly Graphic* of 6th and 27th December 1911. The first appears to be an undated report from the *Daily Mail* which is a laudatory interview with Ebenezer Howard. Having established that Howard was motivated by rural depopulation and the growth of towns which caused overcrowding which “spells bad health, inefficiency, the degeneration of the race”⁷¹, the reporter then waxes lyrical about the quality and success of Howard’s garden city concept. Letchworth and Hampstead Health are both discussed and it is observed that both “are being developed on proper ‘town planning lines’”⁷². This seems to suggest that by 1911 there was a concept of what might equate to “town planning lines” which was part of but which also might be separated from the pure garden city model. The final article, a largely descriptive account of the good planning and use of open space in Adelaide, was as much a travel article as one on town planning⁷³.

Reade was not however the only advocate of town planning in 1911. In January of that year an Editorial in the *Dominion* lamented New Zealand’s lack of attendance at the Town Planning Exhibition and Conference held in London in October 1910⁷⁴. It boldly stated that “the town-planning movement is no mere artistic fad. It is part of a great social development which is going on in all parts of the world”⁷⁵. In this respect the *Dominion* was right, as by this time town planning had developed an international network of adherents and had had its role cemented in place through legislation in Britain and elsewhere. It then goes on to give a detailed report of the Conference and tried to relate some of its concerns to the situation in New Zealand. It postulates a quite comprehensive definition of what town planning involves. The urban design/layout aspects are compared to the design of a house. However in this case “consultation, co-operation and a reasonable subordination of individual

wishes and interest” are required to ensure “the town can be made as comfortable, as pleasant, as healthy and as beautiful as it ought to be”⁷⁶. It then goes on to see a role for town planning in the “organisation of city life”, including “the housing of workers, the location of industries, the provision of parks and playgrounds, sanitation, lighting, transit, architecture, markets, meeting places, postal and telephone services – everything in fact which goes to make up the sum of the necessities and amenities of an urban community”⁷⁷. This was the most comprehensive picture yet of the role of town planning and combined the emerging American and German approaches on the location of industry and the more familiar concerns of the English movement. Imbedded in this definition is a comprehensive understanding of the complex and inter-related aspects of a modern urban system. The balance of the Editorial went on to advocate appropriate legislation, town planning becoming a part of the Public Works Department, and the creation of comprehensive town plans for each city and town, to allow for the gradual improvement of existing urban areas. This would be supported in turn by the efforts of private individuals along City Beautiful lines. Given the relative newness of the concepts in New Zealand this Editorial represents a sweeping interpretation of the concept of town planning. One that bridges the problem of how to apply town planning to both the developed and undeveloped parts of urban areas while suggesting an appropriate structure to achieve these multiple outcomes. This clarity of vision and purpose would not be seen again for some time.

On a lesser scale an Editorial in the *Evening Post* advocated the creation of a town plan for Wellington, arguing the idea has most hope of success if the various local bodies in the area could be persuaded to join in the effort⁷⁸. An article in the *New Zealand Herald* in January 1911 dealt with a similar theme, reporting that the Mt

Roskill Roads' Board was advocating a meeting of all Auckland local authorities to look at the issue of town planning for the city. While both pieces are underlain by a concept of town planning that is concerned with organising the physical fabric of the urban area and introducing parks and open space, they are also making the link to the need for local body co-operation as a first step in achieving town planning.

First Steps to Legislation – Myers' Bill

The move towards legislation was prefigured in 1910 when the recently elected Member of Parliament (MP) for Auckland East, Arthur Myers asked in Parliament that, "given the evils that arise when cities grow without any definite plan" if

"the government will bring in Legislation establishing a definite policy of town planning, especially for the larger cities throughout the Dominion, making provision for the ultimate growth, and for such matters as arterial roads, open spaces, standard width of streets to meet the requirements of each locality, heights of buildings, workers' dwellings, sites for schools, churches, etc".

In reply, the Prime Minister Sir Joseph Ward stated, "this is a matter that requires very careful consideration, and I am not prepared to move in the matter this session"⁷⁹. Arthur Myers was a prominent Auckland businessman and managing director of the brewing firm of Campbell and Ehrenfield. As a successful Mayor of Auckland from 1905 to 1910, he launched an extensive programme, financed by loans, to improve the city's basic infrastructure⁸⁰. A sense of civic duty seems to have been well established in the Myers' family, with his wife and daughter being prominent in the early kindergarten movement.

Ward's reluctance to address the issue of town planning legislation is understandable. The Liberal government, in power since 1890, was facing a difficult and fractious period. The 1908 elections had seen the emergence of a strong group of Labour candidates who undermined support for the Liberals among the urban working classes. In this period Ward escaped the 'shadow of Seddon' to become "the dominant figure in the government" and controlled a Cabinet which "to a large extent acquiesced"⁸¹ to his often autocratic decisions. The persistent land question continued to put Ward and the party under strain and the period from 1909 to the Liberals eventual fall from power in 1912 is a slow path to defeat marked by a difficult environment in which to make and advance policy. In short it was hardly an ideal period to try to launch new directions such as the adoption of town planning as a state and local state responsibility.

The cause of town planning did have other parliamentary champions. One was George Fowlds, a former clothier who became the MP for Grey Lynn in 1902 and Minister of Education in 1906, a position he held until his electoral defeat in 1911. Both Myers and Fowlds were Liberals, however by 1909 when the Liberal party was beginning to factionalise, Fowlds was both publicly and privately, "very critical of Ward's style of leadership"⁸². Both Fowlds and Myers also represented urban seats in the country's largest city and were thus likely to be coming under direct challenge from the urban based socialist and Labour political movements, for their right to represent the concerns of the urban working classes. Thus in Parliament the cause of town planning was to rely on two members, one of whom was relatively junior and the other openly critical of the existing leadership.

Myers however was convinced that town planning legislation was essential, particularly for Auckland, and early in 1911 he took the initiative and produced a Bill for that city alone. In promoting a joint approach by all local bodies in Auckland, Myers was also promoting another of his interests, local government reform. This aimed to remove the small boroughs that made up much of the city, to create an amalgamated Council and was generally known as the 'Greater Auckland' movement. The Greater Auckland movement was launched at a conference of local bodies called by the then Mayor, Edwin Mitchelson, in 1904. Myers had stood for Mayor on an amalgamation platform in 1905. It was hoped that by amalgamating the various local bodies, that included a number of Roads Boards, Auckland would be better able to address the infrastructural problems that were emerging from its growth. The movement never achieved its aims, and some of the small boroughs such as Newmarket, that were of concern in 1905, did not disappear until 1989.

The Conference to discuss this Auckland Town Planning Bill and the Bill itself is generally given little coverage in earlier accounts of the development of town planning. It is seen largely as a precursor to the national Bill produced later the same year and based on the English legislation of 1909. Myers himself also confused the account in 1919, when at the Town Planning Conference and Exhibition he declared that "I convened a conference of municipal bodies for the purpose of considering a Town-planning bill"⁸³. Myers, who was by then a Minister, had clearly rewritten history. The meeting was in fact convened at the "request of the Mount Roskill Roads Board"⁸⁴. The Chairman of that Board, Mr Begley, explained that his Board was seeking "some comprehensive piece of reform... in order that Auckland should be the most beautiful and best laid out city in the

Dominion”⁸⁵. The meeting chaired by the Auckland City Mayor, Mr Bagnall, attracted representatives from most of the relevant local bodies in Auckland as well as Myers and Dr Makgill, the District Officer of Health. Myers seized the opportunity to present his proposed Town Planning Bill that was produced in full printed form complete with introductory comments. This suggests that Myers had very early notice of the meeting to allow the preparation of such a polished document, or that he manipulated Begley into requesting the meeting thereby avoiding any criticism of his involvement in local politics. Equally it also points to his awareness of the popularity of town planning at the local body level and the potential to use this to propose legislation. This is however largely speculative as none of Myers’ papers have survived in a public repository.

Myers’ draft Bill, “An Act to Regulate the Planning of the City of Auckland”, was prefaced by a five page introduction in which he argued that “the welfare and progress of a city demand that it be regarded as a whole, and that the growth and development of all its parts be regulated with a view to their relationship to the whole”⁸⁶. He then goes on to trace the development of town planning regulation from Germany and Britain and to reinforce the need for similar legislation so New Zealand could deal with the problems of urban growth at “a comparatively early stage”⁸⁷. He also tried to link the legislation to New Zealand precedents such as the *Plans of Towns Regulation Act 1875* that he claimed could have achieved more if it had been applied to other than new Crown settlements. Myers also raised the issue of town planning and the creation of an attractive and healthy city for all, as a matter of “civic patriotism”, raising the spectre of physical and moral degeneration as a consequence of not doing this.

“If we are to live our common civic life to any noble ends we must not condemn the mass of our people to pass their lives in surroundings destitute of beauty, in those mean streets which, Mr John Burns said in his address to the Town Planning conference, produce mean men”⁸⁸.

Myers went on, in the introduction, to be mildly critical of Ward’s rejection of his request in 1910 for town planning legislation for the whole country and signalled that he had already received support from Fowlds. At this point he also seems to suggest that a national bill was in the offing. He cautioned that “we should not sit with folded hands in the meantime”, as “this is a question that especially concerns the local authorities and the more interest they show in the matter the more likely the Government are to take it up and carry it through”⁸⁹. The paragraph that follows then details Myers’ strategy. He will introduce this Bill but will abandon it if a Town Planning Bill is brought in for the whole country. There is the suggestion that if this occurs, the Auckland bill and the Conference discussions will form a valuable starting point for the development of a national bill. This suggests that Myers had evolved a complex strategy to ensure that some form of town planning legislation was created, even if it was only applicable only to Auckland. He may in fact have done this to force the government’s hand, to avoid the creation of piecemeal legislation.

Perhaps of greater interest is that the content of Myers’ Bill has received scant attention from Ross⁹⁰, who is one of the only authors to address the Bill in detail. The Bill was comprehensive in its approach, running to some thirty-five sections. It would have created an Auckland Town Planning Board of seven members elected by the local bodies of the District (of Auckland) who would be given the power to regulate their own conduct. The Board would in turn prepare a town planning

scheme for the Auckland Town Planning District. This town planning scheme would control land development “with the general object of securing proper sanitary conditions, amenity and convenience”⁹¹, and would also deal with the issue of city growth. The development of the scheme was to be guided by the contents of the First Schedule that included the following:

1. Streets, roads, and other ways, and stopping up, or diversion of existing highways.
2. Tramways.
3. Buildings, structures, and erections.
4. Open spaces, private and public.
5. Schools and playgrounds.
6. Public buildings.
7. Baths.
8. Reclamations.
9. The preservation of objects of historical interest or natural beauty.
10. Ancillary or consequential works.

The Scheme would then be subject to approval by the Governor in Council who would be given the opportunity to modify it and subject it to conditions. Local authorities and individuals were given the opportunity to make objections to the scheme, and while the Bill itself does not make this clear, it was envisaged that central government would resolve these objections⁹². These latter provisions were important because they signalled a lack of faith in the competence of local authorities. While a locally based Board was to be entrusted with the initial writing of the schemes, the executive arm of the central state retained the power to alter and approve the final plan. The issues of injurious affectation and compensation,

as well as betterment were also dealt with to reduce fears of adverse effects on private property rights. Clause twenty-six would give local authorities, in the absence of a secure fiscal base for the Town Planning Board, the authority to acquire land to carry out town planning schemes. While the latter term was not defined it would appear to cover civic improvement schemes such as street widening. Finally, with an eye to the future, clause thirty-four would give the Board the power to prepare town planning schemes for districts outside their area, if so requested.

The concept of town planning in the Bill was not fully elucidated, though clearly it was intended to deal mainly with city growth, ensuring that new areas were laid out with appropriate street widths and supplied with the required facilities such as reserves and schools. It was very much an urban design concept of planning which only gave passing reference to the issues of housing and overcrowding. The omission of the latter is somewhat unexpected given the time that was devoted to these issues by publicists of the cause. The only explanation is that such schemes would have been covered under the undefined "town planning improvement scheme" which might also have been an innocuous reference to slum clearance. Equally the explanation may lie in the existence at the time of legislation and of schemes that dealt specifically with the housing issue.

Of greater importance was the connection that was emerging between town planning and local body reform. This connection was explicitly recognised in a generally positive editorial in the *New Zealand Herald*, that called the existing system "our antiquated system of local government"⁹³. The Editorial was however careful to distinguish the proposal from the wider concerns of the Greater Auckland

district". It is probably the best rendition of the concept of the garden suburb at the time in New Zealand, and certainly demonstrates more of the concerns of the movement than does Hurst Seager's development at The Spur. It was a misleading example, as there was nothing in Myers bill that would have required a developer to adhere to these design principles.

The Bill achieved wide circulation quite quickly and by mid-April a report appeared in the Gisborne press⁹⁹ based on an examination of the Bill's contents. However, this wider circulation brought with it more detailed and critical analysis of the Bill. A rather tart Editorial in the *New Zealand Times*, while complimenting Myers on his moves to introduce the Bill, raised some important points. Most fundamentally and for the first time, it raised concerns about the impact of legislation on private property rights. Particular concern was expressed over the parts that would have given the Board "the power to place an embargo upon the lawful use of land"¹⁰⁰. The Editorial ends by stressing that town planning is ultimately linked to "command of the land". This is the first real questioning of the practical effects of town planning if and when it was to be given some statutory authority. Up to this point individuals were able to construct their own concept of town planning and see it employed to achieve their desired outcomes. The early focus on the slum and the costs of urban development were comforting foci for what town planning could achieve because they represented a practical and moral threat to all of society. While there were no real legislative proposals the town planning enthusiasts and the large group of interested citizens on whom they depended for support could imbue this new concept of town planning with the focus or qualities of their choosing. When concrete proposals emerged in the form of Myers' Bill, town planning seemed to represent an extension of the power of the local state to limit or restrain private

movement. Myers' Bill and the Editorial both effectively begged the question of how a town planning scheme could be formulated for a city with such a fragmented local government system. In many ways the proposed Bill bypassed the more complex and divisive issue of local authority reform to focus on the single issue of town planning. Perhaps Myers and his supporters thought that if the Auckland local authorities could be compelled to co-operate on one issue then they would see the value of co-operation in other areas. This was a matter that attracted comment from a correspondent to the *New Zealand Herald*. In a passionate letter, it welcomed the Bill but openly wondered how the seven members of the Board would be elected from the nineteen constituent authorities and how the Board would manage to finance its activities without an obvious source of revenue⁹⁴. Shrewdly the writer also saw advantages in the Bill's approach to "restrict the powers of local government and impose upon them duties and liabilities at the dictates of a central authority"⁹⁵. However the correspondent did take exception to the effective veto powers of the executive through the Governor in Council, that seemed to run contrary to the general powers of competency that local bodies currently exercised.

The linking of the bill to local body reform was continued by other correspondents⁹⁶ and highlighted the problems that any attempt to institute town planning legislation would face, that is, how to graft this new responsibility onto a local body system badly in need of reform. Equally it also raised fundamental questions about the relationship between the central and local state. For while a town planning scheme clearly had to be written within the community it would control, there were obvious concerns that the same community through a lack of technical competence, or worse still maladministration, would fail to adequately discharge those responsibilities. Hence the final approval power and more importantly the power to

resolve objections and alter the scheme, were granted to the central state. The reasons for this procedure were not explicitly addressed by Myers but the arrangement was in keeping with approach elsewhere. The *Workers Dwelling Act 1905*, for instance, made housing provision a central state responsibility when overseas it was traditionally a local government responsibility. This again seems to reflect the inability of central government to reform local government and thereby make it competent to discharge new duties. Seddon had attempted such reform in 1890 and again in 1895, with no success. Faced with an unresolved problem the central state seems to have responded by taking on the responsibility itself, as with housing, or by giving the local state a restricted power subject to central state oversight, as is proposed in Myers' Bill. While the latter was a neat solution, it was one that was guaranteed to raise local ire, as a back door means of achieving local government reform.

Myers ensured that the issue remained in the public eye, or at least in the eye of the influential, through an extensive article in the *Weekly Graphic* on 8th March 1911. In that article Myers' address to the Auckland Conference was called "statesmanlike" and the event "epoch making"⁹⁷. The article then reproduced the Introduction to Myers' Bill in its entirety. The accompanying illustrations included the usual slum photographs from Britain, one from Freemans Bay in Auckland and a contrasting picture from Hampstead Garden Suburb. These were what one would expect. The article however also featured "an imaginary plan showing some of the main principles of town planning"⁹⁸ which was a redesign of a part of recently developed Grey Lynn. The plan was obviously derived by Reade from the garden city/suburbs concepts. There is ample provision for civic facilities and open space. The workers dwellings are discretely separated from the "villa district" but adjoin the "factory

district". It is probably the best rendition of the concept of the garden suburb at the time in New Zealand, and certainly demonstrates more of the concerns of the movement than does Hurst Seagar's development at The Spur. It was a misleading example, as there was nothing in Myers bill that would have required a developer to adhere to these design principles.

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property rights while raising the spectre of compulsory purchase of private property. This gave the issue a new, and some might say more practical, focus. It becomes even more complex when the issue of central state control over the final form of town planning schemes is also included. The Editor of the *New Zealand Times* was right. Town planning would largely revolve around the command of land, not necessarily the purchase of it, but certainly the relinquishing of some of the inherent private property rights to use land as the owner saw fit subject only to the obligation not to transgress the rights of others. These rights were not to be abrogated but rather were to be limited for the greater good of the community. This is fine while it looks likely to apply to the 'speculators' of the propaganda but less palatable when applied to ones' own property. The limiting of the private property right that is partly compensated for by communal benefits, is an integral aspect of planning. It was a timely signal of things to come.

Fowlds' 1911 Town Planning Bill

Criticisms also emerged from the local bodies who would administer this new legislation. The Mayor of the Borough of Grey Lynn, while predicting that "the whole thing would end up in smoke", put a motion that urged the Government to introduce legislation covering the whole of New Zealand at the next session of Parliament¹⁰¹. The same meeting then went on to discuss the councils' role in town planning. This provides an interesting insight from the perspective of a small urban local authority that was on the still developing suburban fringe of a major city. It was also the type of local authority which might be best able to make use of the powers contained in the Bill to plan new areas. The meeting passed motions covering four related points:

1. That the Council should secure better conditions for its citizens through the provision of general sanitation, open space, public baths, and children's play areas.
2. That the Council would work with other local bodies to secure "the general betterment" of the people as a whole and would prevent congestion in its district and the erection of slums.
3. That Council was of the opinion that town planning "can be effectively carried out under one united head rather than by a large number of local bodies".
4. That the Council supported Myers' Bill with "certain alterations"¹⁰².

These resolutions present a picture of a sympathetic local body which had taken up the concerns of the populist town planning movement while recognising that it may not have the resources to do that work. Good living environments are defined by open space and sanitation, inadequate ones by slums and congestion. Intriguingly point two seemed to suggest that slums could be created rather than being the products of decay over time. This is very much a 'new world' perspective, which shows some evidence of the adaptation of 'old world' concerns. In this case the local body should be proactive in avoiding the creation of slums by using town planning to create 'good' living environments. It is a simple responsible vision which overlooks the potential problems of implementation which were highlighted in the *New Zealand Times* Editorial.

On the 5th April the Town Planning Committee that had emerged from the original Auckland Local Body Conference in March, met under the chairmanship of Mr Begley. This was the same Mr Begley of the Mt Roskill Roads Board who had called the original conference. The meeting resolved not to pursue Myers' Bill as George Fowlds had intimated that a bill covering the whole of the country would be introduced in the next session of Parliament. They concluded the motion with the hope that Parliament "will pass into law a measure of so much value to the health, beauty and best interests of the community"¹⁰³. Myers accepted this strategy, reiterating that this had been his original intention and that if a national bill was not introduced the local one could be revived.

Fowlds had taken some interest in the fledgling town planning movement and was a more experienced MP than Myers. He was at the time Minister of Education. Sent to the opening of the South African Parliament late in 1910, he returned to Auckland saying he had "a message burning hot from the plains of Africa". That message was, "Get busy on the question of town planning, and the provision of adequate parks and recreation grounds for the great city that is to be"¹⁰⁴. While much of the article dealt with specifics such as open space provision, he also set his views within an imperialist and progressive framework. He boldly stated that five years previously he had regarded Britain to be twenty-five years behind Europe in such matters and New Zealand to be twenty-five years behind Britain. Fowlds then proceeded to commit himself "to this question for the next few years" and declared "I shall not rest until I see some substantial progress made"¹⁰⁵. He ended by mentioning the new Town Planning course at the University of Liverpool and stated that the new journal, *Town Planning Review*, "ought to be in the hands of every City Councillor throughout the English speaking world"¹⁰⁶. These latter comments

indicate the speed at which new material on town planning came into the hands of the proponents of town planning¹⁰⁷ and points to the multiple methods of dissemination, including an overseas visit.

As Fowlds had an interest in town planning and was a Minister, it was almost a necessity that he, and not Myers, introduced the bill. Myers had entered Parliament by a by-election, unopposed, stating he was “an absolute independent candidate, bound by no political party”¹⁰⁸. He also said he was a Liberal and spurned the advances of the Reform leader, William Massey. Myers decided not to attend Liberal caucuses during his first term, but by 1912 he was involved in the machinations to unseat Ward as leader and was considered as a potential member of the Cabinet that might have been formed the same year, under Laurenson. He certainly was not in a position to introduce such potentially contentious legislation at a time when the Liberals were under increasing pressure from their own adherents and the opposition.

Fowlds prefigured the introduction of the Bill in July 1911, in an interview in *The Dominion* in May. He stated that the Bill would “widen the existing powers and authorities but that unless the work was taken up by the citizens with true public spirit, the legislation would not be as far reaching as was desirable”¹⁰⁹. He was critical of the lack of action over matters such as under-width streets, by local bodies using existing powers. There was also some suggestion that in the Auckland situation at least, effective town planning would require local body amalgamation and reform.

Fowlds' Town-Planning Bill was much simpler than Myers', running to a scant thirteen clauses. Under its provisions each borough or town districts could prepare a town-planning scheme that would provide for basic infrastructural elements such as roads, water supply and sewage schemes, and amenity elements such as parks and public buildings and facilities. There was also provision to preserve objects of historical and natural beauty. Crucially the scheme had to detail how the "responsible authority" would acquire land for these schemes and how it would pay for them. A full copy of the Schedule is included in Appendix 1.

While the scheme could be prepared for the whole borough, it could also be prepared for any defined part of it and could include "land adjacent to the borough" (c3). The scheme would then be made available for public objection over a period of a month or more (c5), with the objections being forwarded to the Town-planning Board who could conduct "such inquiry as it thinks fit" (c8), which seemed to include another round of objections. The Board would then approve or modify the scheme before forwarding it to the Governor in Council for approval. The Governor in Council could approve the scheme, modify it, or return it to the Board for further enquiry. The Town-planning Board itself was to be headed by the Surveyor-General and was to include four other members, appointed by the Governor in Council for a five-year period.

In an attempt, probably aimed at the Auckland situation, to promote planning beyond borough boundaries, a clause provided for a joint committee of the affected local bodies to undertake an appropriately modified version of the standard process. As with Myers' Bill, the issue of compensation was dealt with, though betterment was not. However clause 9(4) made it clear that compensation would not extend to

provisions in any scheme that controlled the space about buildings, limited the number of buildings which could be erected or prescribed the length and character of buildings. This was important, for two reasons. Firstly, it was an early signal of the type of site controls that might be expected to restrict private property rights and be regarded as so essential that they did not trigger any compensation. This was the first definition of the controls that were vital in creating a 'good' urban living environment. Secondly the Bill acknowledged that private property rights would be constrained and that this gave rise to the need for the community, through the local body, to compensate for those constraints. The Bill also gave a clearer idea of what might be included in physical work undertaken as part of a town planning scheme. Clause 8(1)(a) again prefiguring later legislation, allowed anyone who disputed a local body's interpretation of what was covered by a town planning scheme, to appeal the matter to the Town-planning Board.

The proposed Bill embodied a comprehensive concept of town planning. While new developments were to be planned for, there would be regulation of the development of existing urban space, complemented by physical improvement works which would presumably have included urban renewal projects such as slum clearance. This was certainly the interpretation placed on it by some members. Mr McLaren, an Opposition¹¹⁰ member from Wellington, while largely supporting the Bill at the Second Reading, said "he did not want to see the community saddled with the cost of undertaking improvement works in badly-congested areas"¹¹¹. The concept of town planning embedded in Fowlds' Bill was one that brought together the two related strands that had emerged within the town planning movement to that date. Firstly, concern with the inadequate operation of the existing urban system which gave rise to slums, and secondly the need to ensure that newly developed areas

reflected the best of the design standards established by the garden city/suburb movement and interpreted by men like Urwin and Parker.

Earlier assessments by Ross, repeated by Memon¹¹² assume the Bill was based very firmly on the British equivalent, that is the *Housing, Town Planning and Etc Act 1909*. *The Evening Post* reported that Fowlds himself characterised the Bill as a “well considered proposal taken from the British Act and adapted to New Zealand conditions”¹¹³. Certainly section 57 of the British Act was transferred word for word into Clause 8(1) (a) and (b) of the Fowlds’ Bill. The contents of the British Fourth Schedule and the only Schedule of the Fowlds’ Bill are largely similar, though the Fowlds version gives a little more detail and excludes issues not relevant to New Zealand such as the extinguishment of private rights of way. The compensation issue is similarly dealt with, which is unsurprising given its controversial and difficult nature.

There were however major differences in what we would now refer to as the process of ‘scheme or plan formulation’. Under the British system the preparation of a town-planning scheme was, as in Fowlds’ Bill, a decision of the local body. They were not compelled to prepare such schemes. However in Britain a scheme could only be prepared if authorised by the Local Government Board. The latter organisation already existed and was empowered to approve or modify the scheme after the conduct of an inquiry that included seeking public objection to the proposal. There were however significant differences. The British legislation gave the Local Government Board a central role in setting the processes and procedures. It also tended to limit the public’s involvement in the process, confining it to the latter stages. Fowlds’ Bill gave the local body responsibility for the process and

involved public submission throughout, though the final decisions lay with the Town-planning Board.

However in both pieces of legislation, as Cherry observes of the British Act, “what town planning actually constituted was uncertain”, though a major focus in that legislation was “controlling the development of new housing areas”¹¹⁴. This also serves to highlight a major difference between the two pieces of legislation. The British legislation was especially concerned with the issue of housing – the town planning provisions do not appear until section 54. From this we can assume there was the expectation that the two aspects would be dealt with in tandem under the guiding hand of the Medical Officer of Health whose appointment became mandatory under section 68 of the same Act. Read together, the various parts of the Act have the local authority being involved in the provision of housing, slum clearance, civic upgrades and planning for new developments. These were certainly connections that were not present in the Fowlds’ Bill. There was also a potential under the British Act, not provided for in Fowlds Bill, for the Local Government Board to “prescribe a set of general provisions..... for the carrying out the general objects of town planning schemes” (s55 (1)). There was no provision in the Fowlds’ Bill to give similar powers to the Town-planning Board. On balance the differences seem to out-weigh the similarities and thus it becomes a little trite to write off the New Zealand Bill as some shadow of the British equivalent, which Cherry describes as having “mild, almost timid provisions”¹¹⁵.

The Progress of the Bill

The Town-Planning Bill was introduced by Fowlds for its First Reading on the 28th July 1911, with Fowlds moving the Second Reading, when substantive debate would take place, on 8th August 1911. At that Second Reading Fowlds called “the question of town planning one of the most urgent problems before the Dominion today”¹¹⁷. He set town planning within the context of the large-scale urban redesign works of Hausmann in Paris and L’Enfant in Washington. These were visions of grandeur which, while attempting to connect the New Zealand efforts to a more monumental system of urban design, reflected little of the Bill’s real contents. After lauding the efforts of Continental Europe in town planning, he constructed a case for it in New Zealand. He pointed to the problem of uncontrolled subdivision in which “considerable tracts of country (are) being cut up in the most higgledy-piddledy fashion, without any consideration of proper means of transit, etc for the future”¹¹⁸. He went on to say “this Bill will tend to secure a better system of cutting up land for settlement”¹¹⁹. At this point the rhetoric of much of the introduction gave way to the practicalities of town planning in New Zealand.

Having dealt with the development of new urban areas, Fowlds then moved to the issue of developed urban areas. With references to Port Sunlight, the work of Reade, and the rebuilding of Chicago (presumably Burnham’s plan), he appeared to be building a case for the Bill to deal with slum clearance and urban redevelopment. However he stopped short of that, saying “I want it to be clearly understood that town planning and town improvement are not necessarily part and parcel of the same subject”¹²⁰. This suggests that Fowlds didn’t see the Bill as comprehensive in its coverage. It would not tackle all the issues that to that date had been part of the

debate. Of slums, that 'agent provocateur' used to mobilise and focus public opinion and support for the new concept of town planning, there was no mention in the bill. This may reflect some acknowledgement by Fowlds, by now often at odds with his party, that the Liberals had addressed the housing issue through specific programmes¹²¹. Fowlds ended by linking the Bill to its British precedent in the *Housing, Town-planning & Etc. Act 1909*, before admitting rather lamely that the Bill in essence provided only a shell and that "The most reasonable thing for Parliament to do is to affirm the general principle, embodied in the Act and then leave the administrative details to be fixed by regulation"¹²². It was a rather indecisive note on which to end the introduction to debate what might have been expected to be a landmark piece of legislation establishing new powers and directions.

If Fowlds expected a positive response to the Bill he was to be disappointed. A concerted and quite divisive series of questions were raised by other Liberal members, led by George Russell's claim that "there is too much centralisation about that"¹²³, in response to Fowlds' statement with regard to the reliance on regulation. Fowlds responded that this offered the most flexible approach which avoided embedding in the legislation "administrative detail that is found to be unworkable and unwise"¹²⁴. While this may have been true, it also raised the potential for a myriad of approaches to emerge as each local body produced its own interpretation of the legislation.

This pragmatic approach failed to still the tide of debate that was taken up by Luke, Fisher, and Davey. Through a series of questions they established that the Town-planning Board would consist largely of government servants, which was most likely to include the Chief Officer of Health and the Under-Secretary of Public Works. The

potential for the Board to consist of government servants clearly caused these members concern, as did the prospect that the local authorities who would develop and bear the cost of the schemes, particularly improvement schemes, would be subject to the control and decision of this central board. Fowlds tried to reply with reasoned debate, pointing out that he saw a major function of the Board as giving “the benefit of expert knowledge and advice in criticism and suggestions regarding the plan itself”¹²⁵, rather than acting as some carping and interfering watchdog. Of interest here is Fowlds’ promotion of the Board as a repository of ‘expert knowledge’. This first presumes that such knowledge existed with regard to town planning, a presumption that might be suspect for the time¹²⁶, and second that there were any such experts in New Zealand. The only named member of the Board was the Surveyor-General, suggesting that if he represented ‘expert’ town planning knowledge, then it focused solely on the physical layout of the urban fabric. This identification of town planning ‘expertise’ with surveyors and engineers was repeated in the debate on the Bill, with a call from one member for it to be referred to local authorities to obtain “the expert opinion of all the City Engineers and Surveyors”¹²⁷. Fowlds also pointed out the Board would be useful where more than one authority area was included in a scheme. This still led Russell to proclaim “That is not trusting the people”, reflecting a distrust of the expert or bureaucrat. While the public service had grown under the Liberals there were constant criticisms of it, particularly regarding political appointments, by Opposition politicians. Reform of the public service became an election plank for Massey’s (the Opposition Reform party leader) successful election bid in 1912¹²⁸. Fowlds tried to end the debate by asking “members to give the proposal their serious and favourable consideration”¹²⁹ and referring once again to the real problems New Zealand faced which made such legislation necessary.

Debate on the Bill continued from the 8th to 11th August before it was referred to a Committee for further consideration. Many of those who spoke on the Bill were complimentary about its intent, though not all were convinced that such controls were necessary for their own town or city. Russell, the MP for Riccarton, suggested that while such measures were need for Auckland they were not required for a well laid out city such as Christchurch. Myers, who might have been expected to give vigorous support to the Bill, while fulsomely complimentary at the outset, then went on to produce a detailed critique. The main cause of his complaint was the exclusion of urban improvement schemes that were made necessary by continued urban growth, and such works' ability to secure the physical and moral health of the community¹³⁰. More specifically he wanted town-planning schemes to be made mandatory, ratepayer polls for improvement loans, and a rewriting of clause 8 that dealt with development while the scheme was being prepared. This mixture of acceptance of the Bill's intent but misgivings over specific aspects, became a feature of much of the debate.

Those misgivings were derived from three main concerns. The first was a clear apprehension that the system proposed would undermine local democracy and control, hence the calls to refer the Bill to local authorities for comment. This was at least partly derived from the immediate connection that was made between the Bill and the need for local body reform. This was summed up by Russell who stated "it appears to me that this Bill more than anything else emphasises the need for an entirely new and efficient measure dealing with the local government of this country"¹³¹. This linked the Bill to a troublesome area. After the abolition of the Provinces in 1876 local government units including ad hoc bodies such as fire districts, grew significantly. Between 1892 and 1910 the number of local

government units increased by some 86%¹³² and Seddon's attempt at significant reform in 1895 was defeated by his own party. This highlights the difficult relationship that always exists between the local and central state. Local government is a 'creature of statute', given its existence and powers by the central state. It was also ideally located to deliver services such as water or sewage or to exercise regulations such as public health controls, in a way the central state, particularly at this time, was not. A strong, self reliant local state, as Bassett observes, provided "a solid constitutional tier of government" but carried with it the possibility that central government would be blamed for "any substantial increase in local charges for services"¹³³. This rather fraught relationship between the two levels of government was complicated by the fact that many MPs were current or former local body politicians, which probably ensured that they maintained close links with their local constituency and were less likely to vote for local body reform.

The concern with local body reform was not confined to the proliferation of local body units but also touched on governance issues. In this area the potential conflict between the central and local state was at its most vibrant and focused on 'centralism'. Centralism which Hamer describes as "a predisposition on the part of people concerned primarily with the interests of their own region to favour the kind of government practised by the Liberals in the 1890s"¹³⁴, that is substantial economic help from the state. As Hamer demonstrates this centralism was favoured by town dwellers who benefited most from the opening up and development of new areas¹³⁵. The Opposition, who had roots firmly in a rural and farming constituency, tended to accept centralism and state intervention but wanted it administered "efficiently and honestly"¹³⁶.

However centralism was being questioned in some areas where perhaps its positive aspects were less easily identified. This was well demonstrated in the debate on this Bill. The main concern was with the powers given to the Town-planning Board and the executive wing of government through the Governor in Council. Russell called this "centralisation run mad"¹³⁷ and Massey the Leader of the Opposition, criticised the Bill for its "centralising tendency"¹³⁸. Given his comments it is surprising that Massey also advocated that the New Zealand Bill should better follow the imperial example of Britain, ignoring the fact that the British legislation placed even greater control in the hands of the central state. These misgivings over centralism spilled into a broader concern that the Bill undermined the competence of local government, hence the varied calls for the Bill to be referred to them for comment. Paradoxically there was also concern expressed about the ability of local bodies to raise loans for town planning works without a ratepayer poll, labelled a "very undemocratic proposal"¹³⁹ by Russell. The complex and contradictory nature of the debate in this area points to the problem of trying to pass legislation on a single issue that was in turn dependent on problematic area of government.

The final concern, that was less well expressed and less central to the debate but fundamental to town planning, was the effect of the Bill on property rights. This was brought to prominence when George Forbes declared

"Town-planning means, more or less, the restraint of wealth - the restraint of the individual; the individual is not to be allowed a free hand in the way in which he cuts up land and leases it for the dwellers in the cities. That means that this legislation is a restraint upon the individual and a restraint upon wealth"¹⁴⁰.

Forbes, the long serving Reform MP for Hurunui, eventually Prime Minister in 1930, was an unlikely person to identify such a profound aspect of the bill. He was described by Oliver as a “South Island farmer of dogged sincerity and limited imagination”¹⁴¹ who as Prime Minister was to drive the country further into the Depression. It is perhaps for this reason that this point was not taken up by others as it was seen as merely a conservative and extreme reaction to the broader issue of centralism. It did, however, for the first time explicitly link town planning to some basic modification of the private property right via legislation.

At several points during discussion of the Bill there were attempts to modify it. In the final stages of the debate on 8th August for instance an attempt was made to alter the timeframes for preparing town-planning schemes to avoid speculative activity and to alter the proposed system of betterment for developing urban areas, to one of “incremental taxation”¹⁴². By the 10th August it was becoming clear that the Bill was in danger. While there was unanimity on the importance and need for town planning there were clear apprehensions being expressed with regard to the machinery being proposed to administer it. The criticism came as much from fellow Liberal members as it did from the Opposition, reflecting the factionated nature of the Liberal party of the time. On 11th August 1911, in a move which the *Evening Post* Editor called “courage – or was it recklessness”¹⁴³, the Bill was sent for consideration in Committee. At this point the Bill was subject to a welter of proposed amendments which included a major concession on Fowlds’ part. He proposed that the Governor in Council be replaced by the Town-planning Board, a change that was agreed to. The Committee consideration continued on the 15th August at which time Russell moved another major amendment that would have revived some of the provisions of the old *Plans of Towns Regulation Act 1875* with regard to the laying out of towns

and town extensions. It was obvious that the Bill was in trouble when a division that day saw Myers and Russell vote with Massey and the Opposition against the Bill. At that point Fowlds withdrew the Bill and the next month he resigned from Cabinet.

Assessing the Defeat

Ross's assessment of the failure of the 1911 Bill suggests that it represents some rejection of town planning and that the provision was premature¹⁴⁴. This could be disputed. Throughout the debates on the Bill there were real demonstrations of support for the concept of town planning, although there was no agreed view of what town planning was, or could achieve. Members however reassured themselves that this was an important issue for other members' cities, though it might offer few benefit to theirs. Thus Ell, resident of the well planned Christchurch, saw value in the Bill as a means of providing for control of subdivision of land on the periphery of the city¹⁴⁵. There is certainly little evidence to support a universal rejection of the concept of town planning, particularly when the meaning of that concept could be subject to individual interpretation.

Of concern, and this is reflected in some of the quite strident Editorials which followed the withdrawal of the Bill, was the mechanism proposed for instituting town planning. There was real concern about the reliance on regulations which, as one editorial pointed out, "not infrequently,.... embody the really important part of the law" and thus it was "undesirable .. that Parliament should give the Government too much latitude in respect to those regulations"¹⁴⁶. There was a clear distrust of central government and how it exercised its powers to reject or amend schemes.

The granting of such a fundamental power to the Governor in Council was seen as a blind because that "means the Minister"¹⁴⁷. Hence Russell's charges of centralism, that would see the decisions of a local body being altered or overturned by a Minister based in Wellington. This was seen in Dunedin as another example of an attempt to "get hold of all the power and patronage it was possible to get for General Government purposes"¹⁴⁸. These concerns were not without foundation. In the debate parallels were drawn with the regulations that emerged from the *Tramways Act Amendment Bill 1910*, which removed local body supervision over the tramways companies and replaced it with regulations drawn up by the Public Works Department. While some of the provisions of that Bill were eventually overturned, some after the legislation came into operation, it was viewed as a prime example of centralism run riot and the undermining of local government competence. The issue was to cause continuing angst in Auckland¹⁴⁹.

Generally there was support for empowering local bodies to deal with this issue, without the necessity of such direct interference from central government. There was also, a little quixotically, a determination that the same local bodies should only be able to raise money with the sanction of their ratepayers. This suggests a rather perverse view of local bodies but emphasises their primary role in reflecting local needs and concerns through essentially democratic processes. Fowlds' amendment giving power of approval to the Town-planning Board was clearly of concern to many. *The New Zealand Herald* saw it as "bureaucratic government' giving power to individuals, who unlike the Minister, were not answerable to Parliament"¹⁵⁰. Fowlds himself expressed similar concerns when he stated "the Town-planning Board composed mainly of Government officials would be entrusted with the discharge of duties and given the responsibility of administrative Acts, which only

responsible Ministers of the Crown should discharge and bear". Further that the establishment of such an approach would mean the "establishment of bureaucratic Government.... A revolution in constitutional government"¹⁵¹. While the latter was a rather extravagant statement, it does serve to highlight the tensions that emerged as the central state's intervention moved from what might be regarded as generally beneficent, into areas where the intervention was instead viewed as a means of establishing central control.

Fowlds did not reintroduce the Bill, when Ward returned. In September 1911 he resigned as a Minister and by the end of the year had lost his seat. An Editorial in *The Spectator* seemed to trace his resignation to the failure of the Town-planning Bill and its inclusion of provisions which were "destructive of liberty and freedom in local self-government"¹⁵². His resignation might also reflect the divided state of the Liberals, for both Myers and Russell took leading roles in undermining the Bill and its contents.

Local Body Competence and the 1912 Local Government Bill

In the course of the abortive attempt to pass the Town-planning Bill much had been made of the inappropriateness of the relationship that it would have created between the powers of the central and local state. Much was made of the perceived attempt by central government "to limit the powers of municipalities in the arena of local government"¹⁵³. In even more inflammatory terms the *Evening Post* produced an Editorial headed "Local Bodies and the State", wherein the Bill is characterised as yet another example of the "increasing tendency to govern the

country by Ministerial regulation instead of well considered laws passed by Parliament”¹⁵⁴.

The Timaru Herald expressed similar sentiments, again drawing parallels with the *Tramways Act*, and the replacement of local with central state control. The proposals in the Town-planning Bill coming so quickly after this were seen as part of “an ongoing abuse of power by the Government which resulted in the subordination of local government powers”¹⁵⁵. The implication was that this was just more evidence of a concerted campaign to reduce local government powers. What this suggested is that Parliament, which like local bodies represented more directly the preferences of the people, should exert the control, not an elite board within the executive. As such it was a much more complex matter than a simple central / local state dispute. Rather it concerned what part of the central state should exercise power. There was in the press at least, a clear preference that this power be exercised by those subject to direct control by Parliament rather than a specific group. That group seemed to be viewed in the same manner as the bureaucratic Town-planning Board, as subject to undemocratic influences, where unfettered power was exercised. In this the central state moves from simple concept of the ‘rightness of state intervention’, where the state is seen as a unified whole, to one where the central state is seen as being made up of a number of parts. Of these parts the executive and the bureaucrats are no longer seen as always being ‘right’ or appropriate exercisers of power. It is also a situation where the intervention of the central state has moved from one of intervening to achieve specific programmes to one where it intervenes to regulate. This all becomes more complex when set against the backdrop of a growing and strengthening local state.

This praise for local bodies to some point paralleled the general growth in civic pride and awareness which was so evident in the early propaganda work undertaken by the town planning movement. Civic responsibility, which manifests itself in the interest in town planning, was an integral part of civic pride. An Editorial in the *Evening Post* made the connection between the two, encouraging Wellingtonians to exhibit a competitive civic spirit vis-à-vis Auckland, and to demonstrate this by adopting a clear policy of town planning¹⁵⁶. This indicates the increasing complexity and sophistication of local government that allowed it to move from the provision of basic services such as water supply, to an interest in what may be characterised as the finer aspects of civic life. This was first seen in the work of voluntary groups such as the Beautifying Societies that encouraged and supported local body efforts to develop parks and other open space. In time it expanded to a desire by local bodies, particularly in the main cities, to develop and control all aspects of urban life. Hence their concern at the regulatory intrusions of the central state that seemed to underline the misunderstanding at the central government level of the all encompassing concerns of the local state. Those concerns linked civic pride with civic competence. The two were inseparable.

Local government was in a period of both consolidation and change. Most authorities had been in existence for three decades, and were faced with major infrastructural problems¹⁵⁷. They were beginning to serve a broader and more vociferous ratepayer population who often chose to manifest their concerns by introducing party politics to the local level. It was also a period of continued increase in local government units, which seemed to proliferate at will, often covering limited parts of a larger urban area or particular services, such as the Roads Boards. In 1892 there were ninety boroughs, seventy-eight counties and

forty-five town districts. By 1910 these had increased to one hundred and eleven, one hundred and ten and fifty-four respectively¹⁵⁸. The Greater Auckland movement was one of many attempts to overcome the problems of these small units that were a persistent difficulty in Auckland.

In 1912, in the dying days of the Liberal administration, Ward proposed extensive reform of local government, led by Russell as Minister of Internal Affairs. He wrote to all local bodies stating that “the Government proposed to materially reduce the number of local governing bodies by increasing the areas and enlarging the functions of the local bodies set up”¹⁵⁹. This proposal, presented in the Local Government Bill 1912, would have created a Local Government Board of seven members appointed partly by the Government and partly as representatives of the Municipal and Counties Association, which would supervise a system of twenty-four Provincial Councils. Existing boroughs and counties would survive, but small town districts and roads boards would be abolished. The provinces would have responsibility for providing all major infrastructural services such as water supply and roads, and would also take on the responsibilities of hospital and charitable boards. They would have in effect been a regional level of government, and as such were to be given extensive financial powers to raise rates and borrow money.

Ward’s government fell before the matter could be advanced but the special Local Body Conference, already called, proceeded to consider a modified Bill presented by the interim Minister of Internal Affairs (in the McKenzie ministry), Russell. They ultimately resolved that “some measure of local-government reform was desirable”¹⁶⁰. The Bill also included, in Part XVI, provisions for town planning that were essentially a hybrid version of Myers’ and Fowlds’ Bills, with some interesting

additions. Town planning schemes were to be prepared voluntarily or on the orders of the Local Government Board. Schemes would deal with the same topics detailed in Fowlds' bill. If the scheme included improvement proposals, the Council had to justify them, cost them, and detail the effects on rates and loan repayments (C1, 5a and 5b). The public was to be given the opportunity to object both at the Council level and to the inquiry undertaken by the Local Government Board, which was to recommend approval or modification of the scheme. Final approval again lay with central government. The balance of the Bill dealt with compensation and improvement schemes in much the same way as Fowlds' Bill, however any loans for improvements could be subject to a ratepayer poll on the request of ten percent of ratepayers.

Given the mistrust of central power expressed in 1911, it seems unlikely that the approval of the Governor in Council would have been any more acceptable in 1912. The provisions were not extensively discussed by the Conference. It merely resolved "that special legislation to provide for town planning was urgently needed"; and that "any town-planning authority should be representative of the local authorities affected or likely to be affected, with the addition of special experts on the subject"¹⁶¹. This resolution, while asserting the primacy of the local state, also recognised that town planning was a technical undertaking where expert assistance would be required. While the proposed Part XVI of the bill did address some of the concerns about Fowlds' Bill, the amended Bill that Russell produced after the Conference contained other less palatable changes including the removal of the new provinces and the rationalisation of the boroughs. At this point the vociferous and concerted objections of local authorities combined with the rather chaotic nature of politics at the time saw the defeat of Russell's reforms. As Bush

observes, "with the government chastened, restraints on fragmentation, already worn ragged, lost all effectiveness. Boroughs, counties and town districts proliferated and new classes of ad hoc boards emerged"¹⁶².

At this point the hope of getting town planning legislation passed also faded. In August Myers asked if the new government would pass such legislation. He was told by Massey that "the Government has already considered the question of town planning and have asked for reports from the Departments concerned" but he was "very doubtful, however, whether the matter will be sufficiently advanced to enable them to introduce a Bill during the present session"¹⁶³. Myers asked the question again on 21st August, when a new reply was forthcoming. The Government, Massey stated, would, if such a course was regarded as appropriate, first call "a preliminary conference of experts and local bodies"¹⁶⁴. No action was forthcoming and Myers raised the issue again in 1913 when he asked again about legislation and if the Government would make use of the "expert town planner from the Garden Cities and Town-planning Association" who was shortly to visit. Massey said a bill would be depend on "the progress being made with more urgent business" and if given details, he would consider the use of the expert¹⁶⁵.

While Massey seemed to suggest that Internal Affairs were working on the issue in 1912, there is no real evidence of this. The file series from Internal Affairs, the Department that was to take a leading role in this area, do not really commence until 1914. Town planning was clearly not an interest of Massey, and he appears to have procrastinated, probably in the hope that the matter would die a natural death. In Parliamentary terms it might have, but for the persistence of Myers in raising the issue on a regular basis.

The Second Wave of Propaganda: The 1914 Australasian Town Planning Tour

Charles Reade, always interested in keeping his name before the larger town planning circles in Britain produced an article for *Town Planning Review* in April 1912, called "Town Planning in Australasia"¹⁶⁶. While most of the article addressed Australia, there was some coverage of New Zealand, particularly Auckland, and the failure of legislation was put down to a "constitutional issue"¹⁶⁷, presumably an inaccurate reference to concerns over the powers of the central state. Reade ended the article with a suggestion that the Garden Cities and Town Planning Association "send out an emissary to Australia and New Zealand" to provide "expert and up to date information on Modern Town Planning in Europe today"¹⁶⁸. Such a tour he assured readers, would be welcomed by all groups with an interest in town planning. Reade was here manoeuvring to be this emissary¹⁶⁹.

The Garden Cities and Town Planning Association saw such propaganda work as central to their mission to export their idea to other countries. While there were clear attempts to establish extensive links, there was also a focus on Empire. Speaking in 1913, Sir Ralph Neville, the Chairman of the Association, said "Glad as I am to see the idea spreading and the efforts made to carry it out in other countries, I must say that with me the Empire stands first, and I should be sorry to find in this respect the Empire lagging behind"¹⁷⁰. This led to a concentration on exporting the idea to what the journal of the Association referred to as "the Dominion beyond the Seas"¹⁷¹. Such imperialist notions would likely have found a fertile audience in New Zealand that still seemed to express some ambivalence, in terms of developing an individual policy direction, about its existence as a fully

independent country. New Zealand achieved Dominion status in 1907 but this left trade and foreign affairs under the guidance of London. While New Zealand gained the right to negotiate its own trade treaties in 1923, it did not choose to accept full independence under the *Statute of Westminster Act 1931*, until 1947¹⁷². References in the paper to the “Mother Country” abound well into the twentieth century and during the debates on the 1911 Bill there were strong calls that the lead of the British legislation should be followed¹⁷³. What was good for the “Mother/Old country” was almost unquestioningly accepted as being good for New Zealand. Given the size of New Zealand and its dependence on trade with Britain, this was probably a sensible course. In New Zealand, unlike Australia which in 1914, saw visits from a range of town planning emissaries, including Lever¹⁷⁴, there was likely to be little competition from other speakers. There was already an interested audience of town planning enthusiasts primed by Reade’s earlier lecture tour, his articles, and the work of groups such as the Beautifying Societies.

The Garden Cities and Town Planning Association agreed to the tour and in 1913 arranged several publicity events which were attended by Australian and New Zealand dignitaries, including Thomas McKenzie, then High Commissioner in London¹⁷⁵. While Reade succeeded in becoming part of the Tour he was accompanied by W. R. Davidge, a surveyor and foundation member of the British Town Planning Institute¹⁷⁶, who by 1914 was an experienced town planner with recognised technical expertise. The Association was perhaps shrewd in sending Reade and Davidge. While Reade was a gifted speaker with recognised publicity skills he was really only a more confident enthusiast than those he addressed. It was Davidge who was invited to lecture at the Universities of Melbourne and Sydney¹⁷⁷. At the Conference of the Municipal Association Davidge was called

“pre-eminent in his profession ... a man of vision and action” while Reade was styled as “the organiser of the tour” who “was well known in Wellington”¹⁷⁸.

While the Association met the costs of preparing the material for the Tour, the actual costs when the pair arrived in Australasia had to be met locally. Here Reade did an excellent job of making contact with New Zealand enthusiasts, local authorities and central government, to both facilitate arrangements for the Tour and raise the necessary funds. The Government was approached to assist in funding¹⁷⁹, with Bell, the Minister of Internal Affairs, replying that “The Government of New Zealand will offer every possible facility in its power and is also prepared if necessary to aid financially in giving full effect to the project of the Association”¹⁸⁰. By April 1914 Reade was in Australia and was arranging the New Zealand Tour, assisted by a group in New Zealand headed by J.L. Arcus, a Wellington accountant¹⁸¹. Reade estimated that £500 would be required¹⁸², and shrewdly he wrote to each local authority in New Zealand seeking their assistance while encouraging them to write to the Government seeking support for the Tour¹⁸³. The ploy worked. Supportive letters from local authorities prompted the Government to grant £350 towards the Tour¹⁸⁴. The money was extracted from the New Zealand Government with some difficulty. A deputation called on Bell as Minister of Internal Affairs, “to ask for assistance in making a success of the town planning mission of Messrs C. C. Reade and W. R. Davidge”¹⁸⁵. At that meeting Bell took the opportunity to tell the deputation that adequate powers already existed to allow local bodies, to “control the development of towns in accordance with the rational principles of town planning” and he thought that “any attempt to stimulate interest in the subject was a matter for the local authorities rather than for the central government”¹⁸⁶. His response however reflected the lack of interest in town

planning by the Massey ministry that saw it relegated to local bodies and achievable through existing legislation. In many centres local groups such as the Otago Institute of Architects, became the organisers, managing to extract £10 from the unlikely source of the Otago Harbour Board¹⁸⁷.

The New Zealand leg of the Tour commenced in Auckland on 6th July 1914 and covered a range of twenty-five North and South Island centres. These included not only the main centres, but also smaller provincial towns such as Rotorua, Palmerston North, Timaru and Invercargill. Freestone calls the New Zealand leg of the Tour “a rehearsal for the main event”¹⁸⁸, which somewhat under-sells the event in New Zealand terms. The organisers made much effort to garner substantial audiences. The lectures, illustrated by lantern slides, were free and the posters advertising them featured the Freemans Bay slum picture from Reade’s *Weekly Graphic* articles of 1912. The posters also proclaimed the patronage of government, local bodies and public and professional societies in case there was any doubt in the public mind that they dealt with anything but the most important topics. The reference to the public and professional societies also helped to link town planning to main stream intellectual and progressive thought, to bring it within the ambit of recognised institutions. The two men appeared to give one or more of three basic public lectures:

Town Planning for New Zealand

Garden Cities and Municipal Town Plans

What German Town Planning Can Teach New Zealand

There were also two technical lectures on The Garden City Movement, and Economic and Aesthetic Aspects of Town Planning¹⁸⁹. Prior to each lecture the

speakers would tour the city or town “becoming acquainted with local problems and difficulties”, with their reflections becoming part of the lecture¹⁹⁰.

Reade arrived early in New Zealand, in May. Being the good publicist that he was, he provided an interview to newspapers to bring them up to date with developments in Britain and Europe and the forthcoming Tour¹⁹¹. One such interview with the *New Zealand Times* on 28th May 1914 followed an article in the same paper the previous day strongly advocating town planning for New Zealand. It contained a very advanced concept of town planning, which it explained

“does not mean, exclusively, the designing of new towns; it includes the improvement of towns along lines intelligently drawn, with due regard for probable developments, it means a scanning of the past, present and future”¹⁹².

It was a concept of town planning that moved away from the reliance on slums and garden cities, to characterise town planning as future oriented and diverse in its concerns. It contrasted markedly with the more simplistic vision offered elsewhere by Reade and Davidge. They baldly stated that “the ideal of the town-planner is fairly well recognised as being to foster the growth of suburbs and cities designed on health lines with ample ‘breathing spaces’ and ‘elbow room’, as opposed to overcrowded and unsanitary conditions”¹⁹³.

The carefully orchestration of the Tour ensured that there were good attendances. Most papers ran an article in the days preceding the lectures¹⁹⁴, back-grounding the Tour and stressing both its worthy and scientific i.e. ‘progressive’ values, before carrying a report of the lecture¹⁹⁵. Both lecturers were careful to include local examples to illustrate their points. Thus in Palmerston North they presented a redesign of some major streets along town planning lines¹⁹⁶, in New Plymouth they

lauded Pukekura Park¹⁹⁷, and in Napier they spoke of Marine Parade, rivers and lagoons¹⁹⁸. In the larger centres they were often, as in Christchurch, treated to a Civic Reception¹⁹⁹ and usually gave a series of two to three lectures.

At each of the lectures the speakers distributed their “Recommendations in Regard to Town Planning”, which are reproduced in Appendix 2. They were an interesting but essentially generalised set of recommendations, showing only limited understanding of New Zealand conditions. Point two for instance linked, as in the British model, housing and town planning, a model that had already largely been discounted in the 1911 and 1912 legislative proposals. Equally 5(b) seemed to stress the need for cheap public transport, which was probably a relevant issue only in the larger centres in New Zealand. Further the stressing in 5(c) of Garden City principles, again hardly surprising given the speakers’ alliances, had probably been moved away from at this point in New Zealand because it was largely inappropriate. In fact, identical recommendations were produced for Australia²⁰⁰, suggesting they had been developed not to reflect Australasian concerns but those of the Garden Cities Association, particularly their ‘brand’ of town planning.

The two lecturers produced a cheering account of the success of the Tour. They stated that during their meeting at Parliament with MPs, they were “invited to submit their recommendations in regard to formulating a Town Planning Act and procedures”²⁰¹. They went on to say that they forwarded their recommendations, presumably those reproduced in Appendix 2, to each MP. Reade in fact took the matter further and offered to prepare a Town Planning Bill for New Zealand at an estimated cost which “would probably not exceed £100”²⁰². Massey, the Prime Minister, forwarded the offer to the Minister of Internal Affairs. He declined the

offer, saying "I have to state that I am of the opinion that this is unnecessary as such a Bill can, I feel sure, be efficiently drafted by the Law Draftsman"²⁰³. Such an offer undoubtedly offended Bell who was a distinguished lawyer in his own right.

The success of the Tour is rather harder to assess. In Australia Freestone observes that its message "was not uncritically accepted by all at whom it was aimed"²⁰⁴. This appeared to stem from the 'slur' that the lecturers tended to throw on the cities they visited, in the never-ending search for slums. There was also some questioning of the technical aspects of the lectures and an ideological conflict with George and Florence Taylor, leaders of the town planning movement in Sydney. While Freestone credits the Tour with inspiring the formation of town planning associations in several states, he regards it as less success "as an agent of cultural and technical imperialism"²⁰⁵. This he traces to the lack of understanding, despite the cherished imperial links, of the post-colonial nature of Australasian society, of political and social institutions and the competing discourses already being received from America.

In New Zealand, with a smaller professional population of architects and surveyors, a lesser band of enthusiasts, and a natural tendency to politeness, there was probably less potential for critical comment to arise. Most of the newspaper reports tended to be factual accounts of the lecture rather than critical commentaries. In several places the accounts appeared on entertainment pages rather than within the main part of the newspaper²⁰⁶. The entertainment aspect, in the absence of other readily acceptable alternatives, should not be overlooked, particularly given the use of lantern slides. There were some questioning comments in Dunedin at the second lecture. Mr Salmond²⁰⁷, who introduced Davidge, referred to the lecture

as opening people's eyes to conditions that they may "have perhaps overlooked"²⁰⁸, thereby suggesting that while such conditions might exist in Dunedin, they were not so obviously bad or 'slum like' and that they could not be overlooked. There was a challenge at the last lecture for "Dunedin people to see to it that, if there are any parts that might ultimately develop into slum areas so immediate steps are taken to eradicate the evil"²⁰⁹. The Mayor of Dunedin, Mr Shacklock, was also not slow in seeing the lack of local body reform and the proliferation of local authorities as a barrier to the adoption of town planning²¹⁰, therein harking back to some of the concerns that had emerged in the 1911 and 1912 proposals.

More questioning or critical comment might have been expected to come from some of the potentially allied professional groups. *The New Zealand Surveyor*, a well-established journal, carried no comment. At the time the architects did not have a regular journal, but the *Proceedings* that appeared irregularly from 1913 onwards showed very little interest in town planning. A more general journal, *New Zealand Building Progress*, which styled itself "A Journal for Progressive men interested in the development of New Zealand's Architecture, Building, Engineering and Industries"²¹¹, was edited by Charles Wheeler, formerly of the *New Zealand Times*. It was also the official organ of the Local Government Engineer of New Zealand. A diverse journal, it featured practical articles on new building products and the like, and from 1911 onwards some articles on town planning topics. Hurst Seager, for instance, wrote a series of articles on British town planning in August and September 1911. As a general journal it probably had a wide readership among those who might expect to have been interested in town planning. However while *Building Progress* praised the Tour, it also observed that "It is not to be expected that such a mission would attract enormous crowds"²¹². This also tends to

confirm the suspicion that the town planning movement in New Zealand had a narrow base and was hardly a populist movement.

There was also the question of how relevant and practical the message was in the New Zealand context. Reade himself appeared to partly acknowledge this. He is reported as saying that, "undoubtedly there was in New Zealand a big feeling in favour of town-planning advances" but that "he did not believe it was desirable that New Zealand should follow too closely upon the lines laid down by both Germany and England, although there was undoubtedly much there that would be of use to it"²¹³. Davidge made a similar point, saying that "it was the men with the local knowledge who could best prescribe (with a little expert help) what was good for a town"²¹⁴. This appeared to overlook that town planning in any period must, as writers such as Cherry and Sutcliffe have suggested, reflect the society, the institutions through which it works and public opinion. All the Liberal's reforms "proceeded only as fast and as far as public opinion would allow"²¹⁵. Society must accept the need for, and relevance of town planning due to its interventionist nature, if it was to be successfully adopted and instituted. An imposed mode of planning only works, and is likely to be used in a largely colonial society where some outside agent has the power to determine institutional arrangements in the society concerned. New Zealand may still have been at the stage of talking of 'Home' and 'the Mother Country', but it was self governing in internal affairs and had a well developed Parliament and permanent, locally appointed, public service.

During and after the Tour the Garden Cities Association magazine ran a series of articles which included a report that Reade would return to New Zealand to deliver more lectures in January to March 1915²¹⁶. This never occurred, presumably

because of the War. The reports of the New Zealand Tour were, of course all positive, and much was made of the intention in a number of centres to form Town Planning Associations. This ignored the existence of groups such as the Christchurch Beautifying Association that was already, under Hurst Seager's encouragement, taking an interest in town planning. Once again this demonstrates the lack of preparation for this Tour, that should have seen greater co-ordination with such groups, to maximise the effect of their endeavours. Davidge also produced in September 1915, an article that looked at town planning in New Zealand. The article was quite short, was largely descriptive, and made few really pertinent observations. However while he acknowledged that some of the problems New Zealand cities faced arose from natural characteristics and the poor placement of railways, there was no mention of the slums that took up so much of their lectures and so much of the press's interest. He was, in fact, quite complimentary about the town belt system in several cities and the "great advance made in New Zealand legislation by the introduction of a special Government department for the preservation of beautiful scenery and "scenic reserves"²¹⁷.

The Flowering of the Town Planning Associations

One of the noticeable effects of the 1914 Tour was the new enthusiasm for town-planning groups in a number of centres. In Timaru there was a proposal at the Tour meeting to form a Timaru Town Planning Association²¹⁸ and no doubt other centres were inspired to do the same. However if these Associations did emerge most left no records and probably had a short life. It is certainly impossible to document their activities.

In the larger cities however the Associations did have long lives and the potential to be influential. *New Zealand Building Progress* reported on the development of these Associations in Wellington, Auckland and Dunedin, under a heading of "Town Planning Stirring" and called it "welcome news"²¹⁹. It expressed the hope that these Associations would provide the stimulus for legislative action as "most Parliamentarians have better time and inclination for the pursuit of ideals outside the everyday"²²⁰. The same article also regarded the time as ripe for pressure to be brought to bear.

In Dunedin, the Dunedin Amenities and Suburbia Reserves Conservation Society had assisted the local branch of the New Zealand Institute of Architects with the 1914 Tour²²¹, contributing £5 towards the cost²²². In February of that year the Society was approached by the Otago Branch of the Institute of Architects with a proposal that the town planning branch of the Institute join the Society and "form a separate Committee of the joint bodies, to deal especially with town-planning"²²³. While discussions were agreed to, it was not clear what happened, and if the Town Planning Branch that was subsequently formed was a joint effort with the architects. The architects' approach in itself is interesting. It appears to mark a growing awareness among them of town planning and perhaps the challenges that it might offer, not to say the potential it might also offer. As Hawtree comments, discussing the early years of the movement, particularly up to the point at which a statute defined what town planning would address, it was a rather fluid movement, an untidy collection of "values, powers, principles and methods"²²⁴. As such it was open to colonisation by other professions, particularly in its formative stages. In Britain the architects were active at this time in promoting the civic design aspects of town planning²²⁵. In this case the architects were attaching themselves to a well-

organised group, run by well connected and influential people who would, in all probability, determine the nature and direction of town planning in the city.

Thus at the Annual General Meeting on 19th March 1915 the Society formally changed its name to the Dunedin Amenities and Town Planning Society and included in its objects "town planning and the management of the means of healthy and elevating recreation for it's inhabitants"²²⁶. A separate Town Planning Branch was set up within the organisation and a sum of £5 was voted to assist in "educating public opinion by lectures, (and) literature"²²⁷. The Town Planning Branch appeared to function separately from the Society as a whole and would seem to have been created to try to revitalise the Society by tapping into a new concern. This was not to be achieved, and by 1918 it was reported that it was "disappointing that the formation of the town planning branch had not led to a large increase in membership"²²⁸. The Town Planning Branch busied itself with lectures in 1915. In 1916 it was actively encouraging the City Council to take a stronger line over subdivision, using examples which illustrated "everything which town planning should not be, and will stand for all time as a blot to our fair City"²²⁹. Thus the Town Planning Branch seemed to involve itself mainly with educational work and concentrated on a simple concept of town planning which revolved around better planning of the city expansion paths, avoiding the complex and potentially expensive city improvement schemes which might arise out of a concentration on slums. There is, however, little evidence that the heady enthusiasm of the 1914 Tour created more receptive Councils or created a public voice to back the message of the enthusiasts.

The Christchurch Beautifying Association, like the Dunedin Society, contributed £5 to the 1914 Tour²³⁰ and later provided a further £2 to help with the £30 shortfall in the City²³¹. However there is little from their Minutes that indicate that there was any real change in the focus of the Society as a result of the Tour. They continued their beautifying work and the ever-present issue of the redesign of the Tramways Shelter.

In Wellington in May 1914, the existing Greater Wellington Municipal Electors Association, voted to alter its name to become the Greater Wellington Town-Planning and Municipal Electors Association (GWTP & MEA)²³². This move just pre-dated the Tour. There seemed to be the expectation that the Tour would spark public interest and therefore it was time to “make it quite clear to the public that town planning is the leading feature of the Association’s work”²³³. The same article claimed that the Association had a membership of one thousand, and was thus a force to be reckoned with. This change seems to reflect the enthusiasm of the most vibrant and eclectic of the town planning enthusiasts, A. Leigh Hunt. If his autobiography is to be believed there was little that Leigh Hunt was not involved with both in his public and business life²³⁴. He did however represent the enthusiastic progressive spirit of the time and in many ways was the archetypal planning activist – a man who was willing to write, speak and agitate with vigour for his various causes. As with Hurst Seager, in Christchurch he was an on-going advocate for the cause of town planning at the local level.

An undated pamphlet from the GWTP & MEA has survived and probably dates from 1914/1915. It bears many of the hallmarks of Leigh Hunt, who was President, particularly in the one line ‘tags’ which are at the foot of each page – “Town

Planning is Practical Economy” and “Town Planning Ensures Better Housing” are two examples²³⁵. Perhaps more interesting are the tags which move away from the obvious appeals to housing and healthy children, to link town planning to the modern progressive nature of society – “Town Planning Is True Progressiveness: Town Planning means National Prosperity”, and links it to the concept of civic responsibility – “Town Planning makes Better Citizens”. These various appeals link town planning at the local level to national and universal concerns in the manner of “think globally act locally”. It also elevated town planning from an interest to a civic responsibility.

The pamphlet also details the eleven aims of the Society, which are reproduced in Figure 4.1. These are an interesting collection. In one and three there is an attempt to establish the statutory authority for town planning through an Act and then to set up the administrative structure to institute it. That seems to involve some central control under the guidance of the neutral but “scientifically trained” town planner. Clearly town planning was seen as a science not an art, which presumes the existence of universal and replicable standards. Other aims, mainly two, nine and ten were concerned with the housing aspects of town planning and advocate co-operative ownership schemes. Perhaps the most important aspect is the call under five and six for effective zoning that is likely to have been derived at this point, from Germany rather than American models. It is the first explicit call for the use of a specific town planning technique beyond the generalist requests for the use of “garden city principles”, whatever they might be.

FIGURE 4.1 –Aims of the Greater Wellington Town Planning and Municipal Electors' Association.

1. The immediate passage of an up-to-date Town Planning Act applicable to all parts of the Dominion, providing for Garden City principles being applied to existing and new towns and town extensions, whether laid out by the State, local bodies, or private persons.
2. State advances at low rates of interest for financing approved Town Planning and Housing schemes, whether carried out by the State, local bodies or public utility societies.
3. The creation of a Town Planning Department, central Town Planning Commission, local Town Planning Boards, and the appointment of a scientifically-trained Town Planner who shall be free from political influence.
4. Substitution of modern schemes of town planning, housing and garden city development in place of haphazard or defective growth and extension of existing towns and cities, with the general object of securing health, convenience and amenity.
5. Securing, under town planning, separate factory areas, which include provision for the requirements of industry, commerce and transportation.
6. Application of the modern practice of "districting" or "zoning," whereby the different parts of towns or their environs may be classified under town planning into different districts for either industrial, commercial, residential, recreational or other use, including limitation of houses to the acre.
7. Provision of parks and open spaces, including children's playgrounds and the proper planning and use of these, and the encouragement of social welfare generally.
8. The planning and development of the Town Belt, making it available for sports, playgrounds and scenic reserve.
9. The promotion of Public Utility Societies or Tenants' Co-partnership Associations for the purpose of forming garden suburbs on town planning lines.
10. The encouragement of the formation of garden suburbs or village settlements by large industrial firms.
11. To endeavour by lectures, literature, conferences, exhibitions, demonstrations or other means, to realise these objects

SOURCE : GWTP & MA Pamphlet, Hocken Library, Dunedin, pp2-3.

It also took town planning beyond the regulation of the residential urban space which was largely the focus of earlier work, into an approach which viewed the urban system as a whole and recognised the effects of one part on another. In a modest way, it represented an extension of the concept of town planning. It did not however recognise that zoning was also a formalised and enforceable modification of the private property right.

The balance of the pamphlet is taken up with discussion of the aims and membership of the various sub-committees. At this point there is a divergence between the aims and the focus of the committees. They returned to what we might expect to appear i.e. Garden Suburbs Society (Formation): Garden Suburbs Society (Lay-out): Housing and Improvement: Transit Facilities: Reserves and Forestry: School Playgrounds: Women's Committee: Legislation and Finance. The latter committee was probably essential if the lobbying and educational aims were to be met. It was an organisation with potential as its membership included national figures such as H. Von Haast, Kate Sheppard and Elsdon Best, a positive plethora of architects and engineers, and patrons such as Sir Robert Stout.

No records seem to have survived from the GWTP & MEA. The only evidence of their work is in the communications they had with the Wellington City Council. Most of these, from 1916 onwards, show more concern with local authority expenditure than town planning²³⁶. The only obvious town planning matter raised was a request in 1917 to increase minimum frontages to avoid slums²³⁷. J. Arcus, who had helped organise the 1914 Tour, was active in the GWTP & MEA and with Leigh Hunt organised the 1917 Town Planning Association Conference, covered in the next chapter. In many ways the GWTP & MEA was an organisation which promised

much, particularly given its location at the political heart of the country, but in reality achieved little.

In Auckland there are again scant records of the Auckland Town-Planning League which was founded in June 1914 as a consequence of the 1914 Tour²³⁸. Parr, the Mayor of Auckland was President, and Arthur Myers was the Patron and an active member. The Committee elected in 1915 after an initial period when little had been done, included activists such as Ellen Melville and local businessmen such as H. E. Vaile (a land agent), the City Engineer, W. E. Bush, with William Gummer, a leading architect, as Secretary. At the Annual General Meeting in 1915 there was no call for legislation, but for the "Government to appoint a town-planning board"²³⁹. This overlooked the lack of legislation but was a move towards reflecting on what mechanisms would deliver the practical product of town planning. As such it parallels some of the similar concerns expressed by the Wellington Association and might be seen as evidence of the maturing of the concept of town planning.

The Auckland League produced a set of Rules in 1915 which, with some later work on the preservation of the city's volcanic cones, is all that really survived of its work. As with the Wellington group, there are no remaining records. The objects of the League were a well-defined mixture of regulating urban space, promoting better development of new areas, including the advocacy of garden cities, combined with the civic improvement and the beautification objectives of the older Scenery Preservation Group. Most is what might be expected, including the dedication to an educational role. What is different is the move to establish a "Chair of Architecture and Town Planning"²⁴⁰ at Auckland University and the explicit linking of town planning to local authority reform and the Greater Auckland movement. Myers'

influence and persistence is not hard to miss. There are, however, notes of compromise. While objective five seeks additional legislation there is a clear call, to use in the interim what powers were available. In short, the lack of legislation is not to be used as an excuse for inaction. The proposal for university based town planning education was a step towards establishing both a specific area of expertise and a profession. Further it was a very progressive view, given that Auckland University College was still struggling to have a School of Engineering recognised, and had only opened a School of Architecture in 1913²⁴¹.

In contrast to the Wellington Association, the League had only four sub-committees: Vigilance concerned with identifying both bad town planning examples and any threats to “Auckland volcanic hills, the beaches and other natural beauties”²⁴²; Parks and Playgrounds, concerned with acquiring and upgrading reserves, street planting and playgrounds; Legislation, including not only town planning legislation, but natural preservation legislation for Auckland and “abatement of all nuisances that may become inimical to public health and comfort”²⁴³; and Publicity, to disseminate information, maintain contact with kindred groups, provide a library and collect material on Auckland, for use when town planning actually began.

The Publicity Sub-committee was also charged with maintaining a “Press Campaign”²⁴⁴. This probably points to one of the roles of such groups. They provided the workers who helped to keep the issue before the less committed members of the public. Given their usually privileged social status they probably had the contacts to ensure that the press covered their activities and continued to address the issue of town planning. They were also probably important in helping to disseminate town planning information. By 1915 *New Zealand Building Progress*

was carrying advertisements for “Up to Date Literature on Town Planning”²⁴⁵, including Unwin’s *Nothing Gained by Overcrowding* and other classics by Pepler, Nettlefold and Culpin. It also offered subscriptions to both *Town Planning Review* and *Garden Cities and Town Planning*. Myers also used the magazine itself to push town planning, producing an article in April 1915 which tended to reflect the objects of the Auckland League with its appeal for local government reform to be linked to town planning legislation and its interest in Auckland’s natural beauties and their preservation. Moreover there are obvious connections with similar movements in Australia. The Constitution of the Town Planning Association of New South Wales, which was founded in November 1913²⁴⁶, contains exactly the same objects as those adopted by the Auckland League in 1915. The similarity does not end there. The sub-committees had some identical concerns, e.g. the parks and playgrounds, and were charged with similar if not identical tasks. Clearly a case of adaptive borrowing that also indicates the existence of an exchange between Australia and New Zealand, perhaps between Myers and others and John Sulman, prominent in the New South Wales town planning movement. This also brings into question whether the 1914 Tour really was the main promoter of such organisations, or if there was a coincidental maturing of the previously largely unorganised town planning enthusiasts. This made such groups a realistic option, particularly if they could build on the strength of existing organisations, as in Dunedin.

However despite the very worthy aims of all of these Associations and their obviously influential membership, there is little evidence of their achievements. The War and its unexpected continuation probably did much to explain their lack of achievement. In the face of a major issue such as a world war, town planning may have seemed a rather self-indulgent pastime particularly given that increasingly, the

same people might have been expected to be involved in war-related patriotic committees and the like.

The Response of Local Government to the Advocacy of Town Planning

In the Auckland League's objects there is some suggestion that there were powers that could already be used in pursuit of town planning outcomes. There had been similar suggestions from the Minister of Internal Affairs in the Massey ministry. Local government seemed to have a rather ambivalent attitude to town planning. The 1912 Local Body Conference considered the proposed legislation and the matter was also discussed at the Twelfth Conference of Municipal Associations in the same year. Held biannually, this Conference was urged, in an address by the Governor Lord Islington, who would become Patron of the 1914 Tour, to consider town planning as part of civic administration.²⁴⁷ While it contained little new, it was a direct advocacy of town planning to local government politicians and administrators.

Most however showed some reluctance to take up the challenge. In the enthusiasm which surrounded the aftermath of the 1914 Tour, an attempt was made in Dunedin to get the City Council to appoint a mixed councillor/outside expert committee to deal with all subdivisions as a way of "taking active steps towards town-planning"²⁴⁸. The motion was lost, the Council baulking at the inclusion of outsiders and the lack of legislative justification. They were clearly not willing to extend or operate powers where there was no clear legislative mandate. The exception was the New Plymouth Borough Council which, prior to the 1914 Tour, engaged Davidge to

redesign and improve New Plymouth, particularly the seafront area. The Report and Plan were produced in 1916 after a long delay. This Report and Plan was probably the first and earliest application of the design aspects of town planning in New Zealand. Unfortunately the delay meant that the Plan was never implemented and its existence is rarely acknowledged even in New Plymouth²⁴⁹. It is however the first example of a local body identifying a problem associated with urban growth and development, and seeing town planning as the answer.

There may also have been fears of a lack of the required expertise. Fowlds seemed to be aware of this. In a letter in 1915, reflecting on the 1911 Bill, he said that it was “my intention, if the Bill had become law, to recommend to my colleagues in the Government to arrange the engagement in Europe or America of a highly qualified Town Planning Expert, whose services for consultation and advice would have been available to all the Town Councils of the Dominion, free of cost”²⁵⁰. Without such assistance local government might have felt a limited ability to operate without specific legislation. This was after all an era when the technically trained, particularly engineers, were gaining a significant role in local government, with the City/Borough Engineer being second only to the Town Clerk in importance. Unless these engineers were willing to take on a role in promoting town planning at the local level, then the cause was unlikely to be advanced, as it lacked an appropriately ‘qualified’ advocate. These engineers might however have felt constrained by their lack of knowledge, or more likely the demands of their existing jobs.

Conclusion

So what can we make of this complex and often confusing period when town planning appeared to be about to move forward secured by legislation, only to suffer a significant setback? Politically this was a very confused period. The demise of the Liberals was slow and complex, with at times supposed Liberals appearing to be engaged in defeating their own. This 1911 Bill failed partly as the result of the effective attacks of Myers and Russell, both at the time nominal Liberals. The last true Liberal ministry of Ward²⁵¹, was followed by the McKenzie ministry, that lasted a mere three months and included both Myers and Russell. Moreover town planning had never been official Liberal policy and Fowlds introduced the bill more in the manner of a private members bill as it did not fall within his area of ministerial responsibility. The Town-planning Bill receives no coverage in Hamer's comprehensive coverage of the Liberal administrations, despite the fact that its failure undoubtedly contributed to Fowlds' resignation. Bell, the Minister of Internal Affairs in the Massey administration, clearly demonstrated his lack of interest in the subject. By the time the champions of town planning were back in power in a wartime coalition government, the country was pre-occupied with the first great War in which New Zealand had ever been involved. Newspapers, that excellent barometer of public interest and concern, were dominated by war news. In the past they had been strong supporters of town planning and had provided access to a wider range of people beyond the hardy enthusiasts. It was hardly the time for promoting the non-essentials of life, such as town planning.

The war probably also diverted that hardy group of town planning enthusiasts, such as Leigh Hunt and Hurst Seager, who could be relied on to promote the cause.

These men and women, drawing on overseas models and concepts sought to make town planning a New Zealand issue. However they were largely dependent on material and images imported from another time and place, therefore not always appropriate or evocative in New Zealand. While New Zealand had slums, that would become clear in the 1918 influenza epidemic, they were not a prominent feature of every town and city. Citizens probably could, and did avoid them. Nevertheless, the “imagined slum” of Mayne’s work was a powerful image, used repeatedly by Myers, Hurst Seager, and most obviously, by Reade, as a type of *bête noir* that only town planning could banish. Effective in the short term, it probably became an overused metaphor, which like the garden city concept, the average semi-interested citizen might have had trouble relating to their everyday environment.

This raised some interesting questions about the diffusion of town planning ideas. King raises the important point that “the history of urban planning in any society demonstrates a long continuity – in terms of emerging ideas of social policy, social and cultural values, the distribution of economic and social power and the development of political institutions”²⁵². This seems to suggest that town planning in any setting reflects the character and concerns of the society that it purports to serve. Marxian planning historians such as Hague would suggest that town planning has a lesser existence and is created to reinforce the operation of the market and the accumulation of capital. This is a rather simplistic explanation for which there is little evidence, in this place and time. It is an explanation that also suggests that town planning is an imposed form of state intervention rather than one which is at least implicitly sanctioned by those communities which receive it. While this may be true in dependent colonial societies, as Home demonstrates, it is less

likely in a largely self-governing New Zealand society. Hence in the New Zealand context, the reluctance of local authorities to move forward with town planning using existing legislation, and the loss of the 1911 Bill over the question of the relative powers of the Executive, represented by the Governor in Council, and local bodies representing, putatively, the voice of the people. How real this threat was, is difficult to assess. In many ways the central state only intervened in local body affairs when it was forced to do so, either from lack of competence at the local level or because of parochial and poor quality management by local government. Further, the central state was hardly totally dominant at the time, to which the failed attempts at local government reform attest.

The period also demonstrates that in terms of the categories Ward proposes, New Zealand was at the time at the stage of "undiluted borrowing, still largely unmodified by local considerations"²⁵³. The borrowing came through literature, though personal contacts, hence the borrowing of the New South Wales example by the Auckland League, and the promotional tour. The latter, while invigorating for the speakers and audience alike probably only served to constrain the development of the debate and the adoption of a more appropriate New Zealand based concept of town planning, less dependent on the slum image and a focus on housing. While town planning was so firmly attached to the latter, which was already being addressed by separate legislation, then its efforts were doomed, caught in a wide and potentially divisive focus. The attachment to the "improving" aspects of town planning for ratepayer, local body and government always raised the unfortunate spectre of potentially unlimited expenditure. Even the control of urban expansion seemed to be fraught with the problem that it might have to conform to the usually unstated, garden city principles, which again seemed to have the potential for private and

public cost. There was also the unquestioning acceptance that the garden city principles, developed as a response to the untrammelled growth of London, were the appropriate model to control New Zealand's urban growth. Their acceptance perhaps reflects what Fairburn calls New Zealand's "imported middle class suburban tradition"²⁵⁴ and stresses again the cultural dependence of New Zealand, at the time, on Britain.

This all developed in a period when local bodies were being recognised as bodies with potential power but badly in need of reform. Myers fixation, that was probably quite justified, that town planning required local body reform may have frightened away some local body support particularly after the fiasco of the 1912 Local Government Bill. For larger authorities there must have been some frustration in realising that the city's expansion path was under the control of yet another 'tin pot' borough council. For the Aucklands of this world, it left nothing but the unappealing prospect of the expensive civic improvement aspects of town planning. Equally in Britain town planning was advanced by the creation of concrete examples such as Letchworth, and the operation of the 1909 Act. In the absence of such examples in New Zealand the enthusiasts had no means to encourage the doubters.

The period did however see the emergence of some new concepts of town planning which moved away from the dependence on garden cities, slums and housing improvements. Towards the end of this period, seen particularly in the aims of the town planning associations and groups, there appears to be an evolving concept of how town planning might be operationalised. It was an important step forward in the emergence of a more New Zealand concept of town planning. It also needs to be acknowledged at this stage that the garden city approach to planning while

popular, was not without its critics. *The Town Planning Review* carried a series of exchanges over 1913-14 between A. T. Edwards, and others²⁵⁵ that some may have been aware of in New Zealand.

In terms of comparative studies, Canada and Australia at the time had varying experiences. Ward's discussion of the development of Canadian planning sees in this period the influences of the City Beautiful approach giving way to a garden cities/ town planning focus²⁵⁶. The latter was achieved largely through the work of Thomas Adams who encouraged the development of British style legislation in most Provinces. In 1912 Adams reported on progress in Canada, indicating that where legislation existed it was tied to housing legislation²⁵⁷, reflecting the British model. New South Wales and South Australia, like New Zealand, had a mixed experience and did not secure legislation until the 1920s. As in New Zealand most Australian states had hardy bands of town planning enthusiasts who were given a lift by the competition to design Canberra. Thus New Zealand's experience seems to fit a pattern of experience of the more independent colonies.

The frustrations over the 1911 and 1912 legislative proposals do point to the problems which would emerge from the new relationships that town planning would create between the central and the local state. While in New Zealand the local state is the creation of the central state, to be modified at its will, in this period we can see some real demonstrations of the growing power and independence of the local state. Enraged by the effective interference of the central state in what was by then regarded as the local state function of regulating public transport, through the *Tramways Act*, there was clear resistance to repeating this through the powers of the Governor-in-Council (for which read Minister) in the Town-planning Bill. Fowlds

clearly regarded this as the Bill's downfall²⁵⁸. Thus in 1911 the Bill was lost not because of a rejection of town planning but because of an unresolved conflict between the power of the local and central state. Equally, as observed by Forbes in the 1911 Debate, while the institution of town planning itself would modify the private property right, this was an aspect which seemed to pass unnoticed by most of those who participated in the debate

Perhaps what characterises this period most is the ascendancy of the town planning enthusiasts who were willing and able to promote the cause where and when needed. Drawn from the influential and moneyed layers of society, they pursued this new interest with enthusiasm and unswerving vigour. While for these people the 1911 tour by Reade and the 1914 Tour by Reade and Davidge offered the opportunity to refresh and reinforce their views, they were not essential. There is clear evidence that the Town Planning Associations were probably well in gestation prior to the 1914 Tour. Their creation in fact reflects the maturing of the movement and the perception that it needed to create permanent institutions to organise its efforts and to ensure it had a clear focus. These enthusiasts seem to have largely replaced the experts drawn from allied professions, who overseas seem to have taken up town planning at a relatively early stage. As Cherry demonstrates, in 1913 the provisional committee of the British Town Planning Institute included eleven architects, four surveyors, four engineers and a sociologist²⁵⁹. In New Zealand there is less evidence of interest in this period from these allied professions, perhaps because they were still at the stage of organising themselves or because, as relatively small bodies, they had other more pressing pre-occupations. Only at the time of the 1914 Tour is there any real sign of the participation of the Institute of

Architects branches. It was the period of the triumph of the enthusiast, who would reign supreme for a number of years.

¹ In this period the term town-planning with a hyphen begins to appear quite inconsistently in the literature in New Zealand and was used in the title of all the proposed legislation. The use of the hyphen gradually disappeared but was given continued life in New Zealand when the 1926 Act was passed using this form. This however did not promote the use of the hyphenated form outside the Act's title. In this thesis the unhyphenated form is used except where it is a quote the author uses the hyphenated form. It should be noted that some writers were quite inconsistent and used both forms.

² While there are files from this early period they are quite erratic in their chronological order with identifiable gaps. This careless record keeping was probably reflective of the problems in the civil service that the Reform government highlighted when they came to power.

³ Bassett, M. 1997, *The Mother of All Departments: The History of the Department of Internal Affairs*, Auckland University Press/Historical Branch, Internal Affairs, Auckland, p49

⁴ See the discussion in Hamer, D. 1988, *The New Zealand Liberals: The Years of Power, 1891-1912*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, pp262-263

⁵ Bassett, M. 1998, *The State in New Zealand 1840-1984: Socialism Without Doctrines?*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, p97

⁶ Wilkes, C. 1993, The State As An Historical Subject: A Periodization of State Formation in New Zealand, in Roper, B. & Rudd, C.(ed.) *State and Economy*, Oxford University Press, Auckland, p67-69

⁷ Fergusson, G. 1994, *Building the New Zealand Dream*, Dunmore Press/Historical Branch Dept of Internal Affairs, Palmerston North, p 62-67

⁸ *Weekly Graphic and New Zealand Mail* (WG&NZM), 3rd February, 1909

⁹ WG & NZM, 24th February, 1909

¹⁰ WG&NZM, 11th October, 1911

¹¹ WG & NZM, 24th February, 1909

¹² Advertisement for Reade's 1911 Town Planning Tour, Fowlds' Papers, University of Auckland Library.

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ *New Zealand Times*, 4th July 1911

¹⁵ Advertisement for 1911 Town Planning Tour, *op.cit.*

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ *New Zealand Times*, 8th August, 1911

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ WG&NZM, 1st Nov 1911, p16

²¹ *ibid.*

²² *ibid.*, p28

²³ *ibid.*, p16

²⁴ *ibid.*, p16

²⁵ Garside, P. 1988, 'Unhealthy areas': town planning, eugenics and the slums, 1890-1945, *Planning Perspectives*, 3, pp24-46

²⁶ *ibid.*, p26

²⁷ Cherry, G. 1996, *Town Planning in Britain Since 1900: The Rise and Fall of the Planning Ideal*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, p24

²⁸ Garside, *op.cit.*, p27

²⁹ See *ibid.*, p27-29

³⁰ Wellington City Council (WCC) Early Correspondence Series, 1900/43, Wellington City Council Archive.

³¹ *ibid.*

- ³² Editorial, *New Zealand Times*, 8th August 1911
- ³³ *Evening Post*, 8th August 1911
- ³⁴ Letter to Editor, *Evening Post*, 14th August, 1911
- ³⁵ Mayne, A. 1993, *The Imagined Slum : Newspaper Representations in Three Cities, 1870-1914*, Leicester University Press, London, p1
- ³⁶ *ibid.*, p2
- ³⁷ *ibid.*, p4
- ³⁸ Freestone, R. 1989, *Model Communities: The Garden City Movement in Australia*, Thomas Nelson, Melbourne, p79
- ³⁹ See, *ibid.*, p83-85
- ⁴⁰ Mayne, op.cit., p150
- ⁴¹ *New Zealand Times*, 9th August 1911
- ⁴² Fleming, P. 1981, *Eugenics in New Zealand, 1900-1940*, M.A. Thesis, Massey University, p1
- ⁴³ *ibid.*, p21
- ⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p23
- ⁴⁵ *ibid.*
- ⁴⁶ See Fleming, op.cit., p23-24
- ⁴⁷ *Lyttelton Times*, 25th February. 1911
- ⁴⁸ *ibid.*
- ⁴⁹ See Editorials in *Evening News*, 27th February 1911, and *The Dominion*, 26th February 1911
- ⁵⁰ *The Dominion*, 26th February, 1911
- ⁵¹ Fairburn, M. 1975, *The Rural Myth and the New Urban Frontier: An Approach to New Zealand Social History, 1870 – 1940*, *New Zealand Journal of History*, V.9, No.1, p4
- ⁵² Mayne, op.cit., p152
- ⁵³ *WG & NZM*, 8th March, 1911, p35
- ⁵⁴ *New Zealand Times*, 9th August, 1911
- ⁵⁵ Olssen, E. 1995, *Building the New World : Work, Politics and Society in Caversham 1880s-1920s*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, p233
- ⁵⁶ See Ferguson, op. cit., p 49-51.
- ⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p45
- ⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p49
- ⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p45-46
- ⁶⁰ Watson, J. 1996, *Links: A History of Transport and New Zealand Society*, Ministry of Transport/GP Print, Wellington
- ⁶¹ Olssen, op.cit., p18
- ⁶² *New Zealand Times*, 9th August, 1911
- ⁶³ Mayne, op.cit., p137
- ⁶⁴ *Dominion*, 8th August, 1911
- ⁶⁵ *WG & NZM*, 25 October 1911, p29
- ⁶⁶ *WG & NZM*, 8 November, 1911, p33
- ⁶⁷ *ibid.*
- ⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p60
- ⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p60
- ⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p60
- ⁷¹ *WG & NZM*, 6th December, 1911, p32
- ⁷² *ibid.*, p60
- ⁷³ *WG & NZM*, 27th December, 1911
- ⁷⁴ *Dominion*, 14th January, 1911
- ⁷⁵ *ibid.*
- ⁷⁶ *ibid.*
- ⁷⁷ *ibid.*
- ⁷⁸ *Evening Post*, 22nd April, 1911
- ⁷⁹ *Journal of the House of Representatives (JHR)*, V 149, July 1910, p683
- ⁸⁰ Bush, G. 1971, *Decently and in Order : The Centennial History of the Auckland City Council*, Collins/Auckland City Council, Auckland, p210-211

- ⁸¹ Hamer ,op.cit., p315
- ⁸² Hamer ,op.cit. p315
- ⁸³ Hurst Seager, S. 1919 *Proceedings of the New Zealand Town-Planning Conference and Exhibition*, Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington, p46
- ⁸⁴ *New Zealand Herald*, 2nd March, 1911
- ⁸⁵ *ibid*
- ⁸⁶ Draft Bill “ An Act to Regulate the Planning of the City of Auckland” A Myers, 1911, Turnbull Library, Wellington, p1
- ⁸⁷ *ibid.*,p1
- ⁸⁸ *ibid.*,p2
- ⁸⁹ *ibid.*,p2
- ⁹⁰ Ross, W 1967 An Introductory Study of the Origins and Evolution of Town Planning in New Zealand, Unpublished DTP Research Project, University of Auckland.
- ⁹¹ Myers Bill,op.cit., clause 17(a)
- ⁹² See Introduction to Myers’ Bill,op.cit. The term Governor-in-Council referred to the Governor and the Cabinet. While the Governor retained a largely ceremonial role, the real power was with the politicians who made up the Cabinet.
- ⁹³ Editorial, *New Zealand Herald*, 2nd March 1911
- ⁹⁴ Letter to the Editor, *New Zealand Herald*, 4th March, 1911
- ⁹⁵ *ibid.*
- ⁹⁶ See Letters from P. Ellis and M. Walsh, *New Zealand Herald*, 6th March ,1911
- ⁹⁷ *WG & NZM*, 8th March 1911,p22
- ⁹⁸ *ibid.*,p36
- ⁹⁹ *Gisborne Times*, 18th March, 1911
- ¹⁰⁰ Editorial, *New Zealand Times*, 20th March, 1911
- ¹⁰¹ *New Zealand Herald*, 28th March 1911
- ¹⁰² *ibid.*
- ¹⁰³ *New Zealand Herald*, 6th April, 1911
- ¹⁰⁴ *WG & NZM*, 25th January 1911
- ¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁷ *Town Planning Review* was published for the first time in April 1910(Wright, M. 1982, *Lord Leverhulme’s Unknown Venture*, Hutchinson Bentham, London, p57
- ¹⁰⁸ Myer quoted in Hamer, op.cit., p324
- ¹⁰⁹ *Dominion*, 18th May 1911
- ¹¹⁰ The term Opposition is used in this thesis but at the time in New Zealand it had a rather loose meaning. A two party structure had only emerged from the 1890s onwards when the Liberals themselves became a unified group, and thereby created a remainder who “ found themselves obliged to become ‘the Opposition’ . Nothing unified them except that status” (Hamer,D op.cit.,p25). By the period covered in this chapter the Opposition were more unified probably because it was clear that the Liberals themselves were disintegrating as a party.
- ¹¹¹ *Evening Post*, 9th August 1911
- ¹¹² Ross, W. op.cit., and Memon, A. 1991, Shaking of the Colonial Legacy? – Town and Country Planning in New Zealand, 1870s – 1980s, *Planning Perspectives*, 6,p19-32
- ¹¹³ *Evening Post* 9th August, 1911
- ¹¹⁴ Cherry, G. 1974, *The Evolution of British Town Planning*, Leonard Hill Books, Leighton Buzzard,p63
- ¹¹⁵ *ibid.*,p64
- ¹¹⁷ Parliamentary Debates (PD), 8th August 1911,p261
- ¹¹⁸ *ibid.*
- ¹¹⁹ *ibid.*,p262
- ¹²⁰ *ibid.*, p263
- ¹²¹ Fowlds was by all accounts a difficult, though principled man. By 1910 Hamer describes him as “ constantly trembling on the brink of resignation” (Hamer, D. op.cit., p 319). By 1911 he was also coming under electoral challenge from Labour, which surprised him as he firmly believed he was a

radical. The Liberals had addressed the housing issue through the specific *Workers Dwelling Act* of 1905, though in practice it had little impact. They had also strengthened public health controls.

¹²² PD, *ibid.*, p263

¹²³ *ibid.*, p263

¹²⁴ *ibid.*, p263

¹²⁵ *ibid.*,p265

¹²⁶ This leads back to the discussions in Chapter 2 about how planning theory developed and how town planning might be defined. Reade makes the point that town planning began largely without the benefit of theory and Cherry points to the fact the town planning for many years was defined as 'what planners do'. If that is the case then in this context the Board, having never been town planners could not as such offer expert advice in town planning but rather could offer advice from their own area of expertise in the hope that in combination this would produce town planning advice.

¹²⁷ PD, *ibid.*,p266

¹²⁸ This is dealt with in some detail in Bassett,.1997,op.cit.,p69-71

¹²⁹ PD, *ibid.*,p265

¹³⁰ PD, *ibid.*, p270

¹³¹ PD, 9 August,1911,p350

¹³² Derived from the Table in Bush, G op.cit.,p23

¹³³ Bassett, M,op.cit.,p72

¹³⁴ Hamer, D op.cit., p47

¹³⁵ See the discussion in Hamer, D *ibid.*,p48

¹³⁶ *ibid.*,p48

¹³⁷ PD,9th August,1911,p351

¹³⁸ PD,*ibid.*,p 353

¹³⁹ PD, *ibid.*,p352

¹⁴⁰ PD, 11th August, 1911,p381

¹⁴¹ Oliver, op.cit., p178

¹⁴² PD, 8th August, 1911, p278

¹⁴³ *Evening Post*, 12th August, 1911

¹⁴⁴ Ross, W. op.cit., p158-160

¹⁴⁵ PD, 8 August,1911, p386-387

¹⁴⁶ *Southland Times*, 10th August,1911

¹⁴⁷ *Spectator*, 12th August,1911

¹⁴⁸ Editorial, *Evening Star*, 16th August,1911

¹⁴⁹ For a discussion of this issue see Bush, op.cit., p201-202

¹⁵⁰ *New Zealand Herald*, 16th August,1911

¹⁵¹ *Dominion*, 16th August,1911

¹⁵² *Spectator*, 9th September, 1911

¹⁵³ *New Zealand Times*, 12th August,1911

¹⁵⁴ *Evening Post*, 12th August,1911

¹⁵⁵ *Timaru Herald*, 14th August,1911

¹⁵⁶ *Evening Post*, 12th August,1911

¹⁵⁷ For a discussion of this see Bush,G.1995, *Local Government and Politics in New Zealand*, Second Edition, Auckland University Press, Auckland, p20-23

¹⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p23

¹⁵⁹ Quoted in Local Government Conference, AJHR, Vol. IV, H-14,1912,p2

¹⁶⁰ *ibid.*,p19

¹⁶¹ *ibid.*,p84

¹⁶² Bush,op..cit. p24

¹⁶³ Journal of House of Representatives (JHR), Vol. 158, August 1912,p623

¹⁶⁴ JHR, Vol. 159, 21st August 1912

¹⁶⁵ JHR, Vol 162, 9th July,1912, p297-298

¹⁶⁶ *Town Planning Review*, Vol.III, No.1,p1-10

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*,p10

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.*,p10

- ¹⁶⁹ See Garnaut, C.1998, Charting An Odyssey: Charles Reade, from Reporter to Reformer, Unpublished article, p10-11
- ¹⁷⁰ Neville quoted in Hardy, D. 1991, *From Garden Cities to New Towns: Campaign for Town and Country Planning, 1899-1946*, E & FN Spon, London, p 94
- ¹⁷¹ *ibid.*, p100
- ¹⁷² For a fuller discussion of this see Ringer, J. 1991, *An Introduction to New Zealand Government*, Hazard Press, Christchurch, p21
- ¹⁷³ PD, August 1911, p354-55
- ¹⁷⁴ Freestone, R. 1998, An Imperial Aspect: The Australasian Town planning Tour of 1914-15, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, V.44, No.2, p162
- ¹⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p164
- ¹⁷⁶ Cherry, G. 1974, *The Evolution of British Town Planning*, Leonard Hill Books, Leighton Buzzard, p57
- ¹⁷⁷ Anon. 1915, Australasian Tour of Mr Davidge and Mr Reade, *Town Planning Review*, Vol V, No.4, p339
- ¹⁷⁸ 1914, *Proceedings of 13th Conference of Municipal Associations of New Zealand*, p21
- ¹⁷⁹ Letter GCTPA to Bell, 1.1.14, on IA Series 1 File 19/275/2 Pt.1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁸⁰ Letter Bell to GCTPA, 16.2.14, on IA Series 1 File 19/275/2 Pt.1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁸¹ Letter Arcus to PNBC Mayor, 11.5.14, PNCC Archive F1/5/7 Box 4, Series 78, PNCC Archive, Palmerston North
- ¹⁸² Undated letter Reade to Arcus, File 3/1/1A, New Plymouth District Archive (NPDA), New Plymouth.
- ¹⁸³ Reade to Christchurch City Council, 9.1.14, on IA Series 1, F 19/275/2 ,Pt.1, National Archives, Wellington
- ¹⁸⁴ Letter Reade to Mayor PNBC, 30.5.14, F1/5/7 Box 4, Series 78, Palmerston North City Council Archive, Palmerston North
- ¹⁸⁵ *Timaru Herald*, 20th May 1914
- ¹⁸⁶ *ibid.*
- ¹⁸⁷ Otago Harbour Board: Town Planning, AG-200-11/04/4970, Hocken Library, Dunedin
- ¹⁸⁸ Freestone, *op.cit.*, p165
- ¹⁸⁹ Undated letter Reade to Arcus, File 3/1/1A, NPD Archive, New Plymouth
- ¹⁹⁰ Reade, C. 1914, Our Australasian Lectures, *Garden Cities and Town Planning*, V.4, No.11, p255
- ¹⁹¹ *New Zealand Herald*, 1st July 1914 and *New Zealand Times*, 28th May 1914
- ¹⁹² *New Zealand Times*, 27th May 1914
- ¹⁹³ *New Zealand Herald*, 1st July 1914
- ¹⁹⁴ See for instance *Manawatu Daily Times*, 8th July 1914 and 13th July 1914
- ¹⁹⁵ See *Manawatu Daily Times*, 14th July 1914
- ¹⁹⁶ *ibid.*
- ¹⁹⁷ *Taranaki Herald*, 10th July 1914
- ¹⁹⁸ *Hawkes Bay Herald Tribune*, 13th July 1914
- ¹⁹⁹ *The Press*, 21st July 1914
- ²⁰⁰ Freestone, *op.cit.*, p176
- ²⁰¹ Reade, *op.cit.*, p255
- ²⁰² Memo Myers to Massey (PM) on IA Series 1 F 19/275/2, Pt1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁰³ Memo MIA to PM, 15.9.14, on IA Series 1 F19/275/2 Pt.1, National Archives. Wellington.
- ²⁰⁴ Freestone, *op.cit.*, p169
- ²⁰⁵ *ibid.*, p173
- ²⁰⁶ See for instance *The Press*, 21st July 1914 and *Otago Daily Times*, 27th July 1914
- ²⁰⁷ The Mr Salmond referred to was likely to be James Salmond, architect and later President of the Dunedin Amenities Society
- ²⁰⁸ *Otago Daily Times*, 30th July 1914
- ²⁰⁹ *ibid.*
- ²¹⁰ *Otago Daily Times*, 27th July 1914
- ²¹¹ *New Zealand Building Progress*, July, 1915
- ²¹² *New Zealand Building Progress*, August 1914, p1183

- ²¹³ *The Press*, 21st July, 1914
- ²¹⁴ *ibid.*
- ²¹⁵ Hamer. *op.cit.*, p46
- ²¹⁶ Reade, *op.cit.*, p257
- ²¹⁷ This appears to be a reference to the *Scenery Preservation Act 1903* and the later creation of a separate section, the Scenery Preservation Department, within the Department of Lands and Survey. See Davidge, W. 1915, *Town Planning in Australia and New Zealand, Garden Cities and Town Planning*, Vol.5, No.8, p162
- ²¹⁸ *Timaru Herald*, 25th July 1914
- ²¹⁹ *New Zealand Building Progress*, July, 1915
- ²²⁰ *ibid.*, p357
- ²²¹ Minutes of Meeting, Dunedin Amenities and Suburban Reserves and Conservation Society, 18th May 1914, Hocken Library, Dunedin
- ²²² Minutes of Meeting, Dunedin Amenities and Suburban Reserves and Conservation Society, 30th June 1914, Hocken Library, Dunedin
- ²²³ Minutes of Meeting, Dunedin Amenities and Suburban Reserves and Conservation Society, 20th February 1915, Hocken Library, Dunedin
- ²²⁴ Hawtree, M. 1981, *The Emergence of the Town Planning Profession in New Zealand*, A. British Town Planning: *The Formative Years*, Leicester University Press/ St Martin's Press, Leicester, p71
- ²²⁵ *ibid.*, p72-75
- ²²⁶ *Otago Daily Times*, 20th March, 1915
- ²²⁷ Minutes of Meeting, Dunedin Amenities and Suburban Reserves and Conservation Society, 4th June 1915, Hocken Library, Dunedin
- ²²⁸ Report of AGM, *Evening Star*, 13th April, 1918
- ²²⁹ Annual Report, Dunedin Amenities and Suburban Reserves and Conservation Society, 1916, Hocken Library, Dunedin
- ²³⁰ Executive Committee Minutes, 16th June 1914, Christchurch Beautifying Association, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch
- ²³¹ Executive Committee Minutes, 18th August 1914, Christchurch Beautifying Association, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch
- ²³² *New Zealand Times*, 20th May, 1914
- ²³³ *ibid.*
- ²³⁴ Leigh Hunt, A. 1951, *Confessions of a Leigh Hunt*, AH & AW Reed, Wellington
- ²³⁵ GWTP & MCA: A Brief Outline, Wellington (Undated), Hocken Library, Dunedin
- ²³⁶ See for instance Town Clerks Correspondence File 1916/1443, 1917/1108, 1917/1056, Wellington City Council Archive, Wellington
- ²³⁷ Town Clerks Correspondence File 1917/793, Wellington City Council Archive, Wellington
- ²³⁸ *New Zealand Herald*, 27th May, 1915
- ²³⁹ *ibid.*
- ²⁴⁰ Rules of the Auckland Town Planning League, Auckland Heritage Centre, Auckland City Library, Auckland, p4
- ²⁴¹ Sinclair, K. 1983, *A History of the University of Auckland: 1883-1983*, Auckland University/Oxford University Press, Auckland, p114-115
- ²⁴² ATPL Rules, *op.cit.*, p7
- ²⁴³ *ibid.*, p7
- ²⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p28
- ²⁴⁵ *New Zealand Building Progress*, April, 1915
- ²⁴⁶ Constitution of the Town Planning Association of New South Wales, Paper of J. S. Sulman, MLMSS 4480, Box 71(8), Mitchell Library, Sydney
- ²⁴⁷ *Proceedings of the 12th Conference of Municipal Associations*, Turnbull Library, Wellington, Appendix IX, p30-32
- ²⁴⁸ *Otago Daily Times*, 25th November 1914
- ²⁴⁹ Davidge produced a very large scale coloured plan that has subsequently suffered water damage. Its size and colour make it impossible to reproduce. A copy of the Report is available W.R. Davidge *Report and Suggestions For A Preliminary Town Planning Scheme For the Borough of New*

Plymouth, New Plymouth District Archives, New Plymouth. The Report and Plan are discussed in detail in Miller, C.2000, New Zealand's First Civic Design Scheme: W.R. Davidge and New Plymouth, *Planning History*, (in press)

²⁵⁰ *New Zealand Building Progress*, April 1915,p261

²⁵¹ Hamer comments on this saying that for many the election of MacKenzie was “ proof of the final bankruptcy of the Liberal tradition”(Hamer,op.cit.,p351)

²⁵² King, A 1980, Exporting planning: the colonial and neo-colonial experience in Cherry,G. *Shaping an Urban World*, Mansell, London, p205

²⁵³ Ward, S. 1999, International Diffusion of Planning : A Review and Canadian Case Study, *International Planning Studies*, Vol.4,No.1, p57

²⁵⁴ Fairburn, M. 1974, The Rural Myth and the New Frontier : An Approach to New Zealand Social History, *New Zealand Journal of History*,V.9,No.1,p17

²⁵⁵ See Edwards, A 1913, A Criticism of the Garden City Movement, *Town Planning Review*, Vol. IV,No2,July 1913, Edwards, A. 1914 A Further Criticism of the Garden City Movement, *Town Planning Review*, Vol. IV No4, January 1914 and Reade, C. 1913 A Defense of the Garden City Movement, *Town Planning Review* ,Vol.IV, No.3,

²⁵⁶ Ward, op.cit.,p59-60

²⁵⁷ *Town Planning Review*,Vol IV,July 1916,pp20-26

²⁵⁸ *New Zealand Building Progress*,April 1915,p261

²⁵⁹ Cherry, 1974, op.cit.,p57

LABOURING FOR TOWN PLANNING 1915-1919 AND THE 1919 TOWN-PLANNING CONFERENCE

Introduction

By 1915 town planning, as a concept, was probably familiar to the interested public as the result of the 1914 Tour and the work of the dedicated town planning enthusiasts. These enthusiasts had now often organised themselves into formal associations and societies. In the years covered here, culminating in the 1919 Town Planning Conference and Exhibition, there was a maturing of the movement. This was paralleled by a persistent campaign to achieve legislation and to see town planning in action. Thus while there is still a concern with promoting the idea of town planning and its usefulness, there is the development of some sophisticated models of how town planning might be instituted. The Conference in 1919, which brought together, probably for the first time, the town planning enthusiasts, the "experts", and those who would institute town planning at the central and local levels, thus had a more practical focus.

Positive enthusiasm was underlain by the belief that legislation was achievable, and town planning could be effectively instituted. It is also a time which is overshadowed by the continuing War and the arrival of the predicted 'plague', in the form of the 1918 influenza epidemic. The War however did bring a settled period in politics with the formation in August 1915, of the National Ministry under Massey. Formed as a coalition of all parties to guide New Zealand through the War period, it included two town planning advocates in prominent roles – George Russell as Minister of Internal

Affairs and Public Health, and Arthur Myers as Minister of Customs and Munitions and Supplies. The great political survivor, Sir Joseph Ward, was Minister of Finance. Given the provisions of his 1912 Local Government Bill, which would have reformed local government and introduced town planning, he might also be seen as a politician with an interest in town planning, or at least one who might be sympathetic to the cause.

The conservative Reform Party remained in dominance, even in the coalition National Ministry, but did little to reverse the Liberal's interventionist role of the central state. At a time of war the government's role was clear and focused on responsibilities to Empire. Its tasks were "to enlist, train and despatch men overseas, and to keep foodstuffs moving to an embattled Britain"¹. When the inevitable inflation resulted, the government moved into new areas of economic regulation including price controls. As a result "confidence that public intervention in the market place could ensure good outcomes had become axiomatic"². The interventionist role of local bodies also grew during the period, and ranged from the purchase of fishing boats to drive down fish prices, to greater interest in regulatory and inspectorial roles particularly with regard to housing³. Thus both the central and local state saw a growth in and widening of their roles in the time covered in this chapter.

The War however, did not bring as much change as might be expected. As Oliver observes, "it could not be said that the course of development, either economic or political, was radically altered by four years of fighting overseas and inflation at home. Rather existing features were emphasised, existing trends were accelerated"⁴. The development of town planning would reflect this comment well.

Building Support and Diffusing the Message

The creation of the various associations and societies dedicated to publicising town planning, produced a variety of publications and activities. *New Zealand Building Progress* continued to carry articles and snippets of news on the various groups. The War presented the town planning enthusiasts with something of a dilemma. In June 1916 *New Zealand Building Progress* carried an article headed "Should Town Planning be Postponed on Account of the War"⁵, detailing some of the discussion which had occurred at the GWME & TP Association. This had been prompted by Russell's response to a deputation from the Association seeking legislation, "that in his opinion the time was not opportune to bring up Town Planning legislation"⁶. The article then went on to quote an example in Britain where a town planning scheme was to be commenced to ensure that the post-war building boom was appropriately controlled and directed. This interpretation of the post-war importance of town planning paralleled an earlier comment in the same magazine in December 1915. It said that "war has not dampened the ardour of Town Planning advocates; rather it has stimulated them to prepare for the time when, the world being free from the hampering influence of the great struggle upon domestic development, things will go ahead at a fast pace"⁷. Having suggested, rather cold bloodily, that devastated Belgium would offer a free field to practice town planning on, it went on to observe that, "as far as Australia is concerned, the movement was never better organised nor more alive"⁸. These articles very clearly represent town planning as a progressive activity, that could and would contribute positively to building a better post-war world. Town planning activity should therefore continue during the period of war so it was well prepared for what would follow. Town planning was no longer

primarily pre-occupied with the problems of the past but is seen as having a role in creating and shaping the future.

In Christchurch while Samuel Hurst Seager continued his work with the Beautifying Association, he also presented a series of six lectures for the Workers' Educational Society (WEA)⁹. They received press coverage in Christchurch and featured, in summary form, in *New Zealand Building Progress*. In these papers, Hurst Seager combined his beautifying interests in trees and open space, with specific observations about the use of town planning to create more interesting subdivisional and roading layouts. He even included the heretical notion that a straight road was not necessarily the ideal and that curvilinear streets might have something to offer¹⁰. This series of lectures embodies two important developments. Firstly, while Hurst Seager did employ the usual English examples, there were also some Australian examples, particularly from Canberra. This demonstrates that ideas on town planning were now being diffused not only from Britain, Europe and America but also from a close neighbour in Australia. This means that New Zealand was using ideas that had already been through an adaptive process in another country. Thus the town planning message was becoming potentially more diverse and complex. Secondly, there is a greater attempt in the lectures, at least from what was reported, to demonstrate the use of town planning in New Zealand, in this case Christchurch. This marks a clear step towards identification of how town planning might be implemented in New Zealand. It may reflect also the style of the 1914 Tour lectures, which generally tried to bring in some local comment and examples. The launching of the lectures under the patronage of the WEA, could be seen as an attempt to broaden the appeal beyond its usual adherents among the influential middle class. Alternatively it was, given the origins of the WEA, an attempt by the middle classes

to spread the word to other classes¹¹. For many years there had been much pontification about the conditions in the slums and urban life in general, without any involvement with the people of whom they spoke. This may further reflect the broader changes within New Zealand society at the time, with the strengthening of the organised labour movement and its emergence as a political force. Wilkes points to the fact that by the 1920s New Zealand was strongly urbanised and this had eroded the political base of Massey's Reform Party that largely represented rural interests¹². The article in *New Zealand Building Progress* was used as publicity material, with the Christchurch Beautifying Association purchasing 500 copies for distribution in October 1917¹³.

This broadening of the sources for town planning ideas, to include Australia, can be seen elsewhere. The Auckland Town Planning Association developed a Constitution and Objectives from the model provided by the New South Wales Association, suggesting trans-Tasman contacts. Equally, *New Zealand Building Progress*, in December 1915 carried quite detailed news of the development of town planning in Tasmania, South Australia and Victoria¹⁴. This connection was enhanced by Charles Reade's return in April 1916 to become Government Town Planner for South Australia. In 1917, he organised the first Australian Town Planning Conference in Adelaide, and at its conclusion produced a comprehensive set of Proceedings. Reade, it would seem, then wrote to most New Zealand local bodies enclosing a flyer offering the Proceedings for purchase¹⁵. The Wellington City Council helpfully distributed the flyer to adjoining local authorities and bought twenty copies of the Proceedings¹⁶. As the Proceedings cost 10/- this was quite an expense, given that there was no compulsion at the time to undertake town planning. So a variety of Australian material was being received, potentially

widening the nature and style of the ideas which might in turn influence New Zealand concepts.

These sources of information were however wider than Australia. There is scattered and often incomplete evidence to suggest that there was, by 1917, a wide variety of town planning literature circulating. The Town Clerk in Dunedin in 1911, was able to quote extensively from Unwin's *Town Planning in Practice*, which had only been published in 1909, demonstrating the speed at which such ideas were disseminated to such far flung parts of the Empire¹⁷. The first of the files kept by Internal Affairs on town planning include a variety of town planning pamphlets and examples of Australian legislation¹⁸. In 1914, the Library of Congress in the United States sent, at his request, an extensive list of books on city planning held by the library, to A. L. Herdman, then Minister of Justice¹⁹. In 1915 the Dunedin Society reported that it had purchased a "certain amount of town planning literature" for use by its members²⁰.

While it is not possible to accurately assess who received such material and how it was used, it does suggest that there was a lot circulating. Much of the information concerned how town planning was being implemented elsewhere, basic guides on the actual practice of town planning and news of the progress of overseas town planning promotion groups. These resources were probably paralleled by people's personal collections, and their actual observations while on overseas trips. Such travel was probably more common than we imagine with all the main daily papers carrying lists of departures and arrivals and snippets of society news on such trips. For those who subscribed to *Town Planning Review*, Patrick Abercrombie provided several articles which would have kept them abreast of developments in the practice

of town planning, internationally²¹, and aware of the great diversity of literature available²².

The Town Planning Associations Conference 1917

There is also evidence that the various groups of town planning enthusiasts which had tended to operate in isolation were beginning to work more co-operatively. Publications such as *New Zealand Building Progress* did make each group aware of the work of the others, and provided a truly national forum for their ideas. Possibly, as a result of the 1914 Tour, they seemed to recognise the benefits of working together. The Dunedin Society for instance, reported in 1915 that it had “been in communication with the other chief centres” with regard to promoting another Town-Planning Bill²³.

This growing co-operation led the Wellington Association, under the forceful and persistent guidance of A. Leigh Hunt, to organise a Conference of Town Planning Associations in Wellington in August 1917. The attendance at that Conference gives us some idea of the geographic extent of these associations. In addition to the expected representatives from Dunedin, Christchurch (from the Amenities Society and Beautifying Association), Wellington and Auckland, there were delegates from Wanganui (again from a Beautifying Society), Napier, Invercargill and Timaru²⁴. This suggests that outside the major cities that there was probably little in the way of town planning activity and where it occurred, it tended to build on existing beautifying groups. This strengthens the conclusion of an earlier chapter that these beautifying societies were important forerunners of the later town

planning groups, and often became the first point of involvement for those who would be interested in town planning.

The delegates included all the prominent town planning enthusiasts: Leigh Hunt, Hurst Seager, Charles Wheeler, and James Parr, who was elected President of the Conference²⁵. Parr was a former mayor of Auckland, who in 1915 had become the Reform MP for Eden²⁶. The Conference had been called with the explicit intention of agitating for legislation, and Parr observed that it was “necessary to show the Government a united front”²⁷. There are no surviving records of the Conference, but the *New Zealand Building Progress* report seems to suggest that it turned into an effective strategy session about bringing pressure to bear to have legislation passed. Much of the time seems to have been taken up with “discussing in a general way the prospects of influencing the Government”²⁸. They did decide that Reade was the man to draft the legislation, probably because he was now resident in Australia and was known to most of them. The Conference was also willing to facilitate Reade’s involvement, saying that, “to show their earnestness in a practical way, they were prepared to offer to pay half the cost of the expected visit”²⁹.

The Conference ended by sending a deputation to call on the Prime Minister, though it would appear that they spoke to Russell, the Minister of Internal Affairs³⁰. Russell was, *New Zealand Building Progress* reported, “obviously impressed by the influential nature of the deputation”³¹ and appeared more than willing to revive the 1912 Local Government legislation with its town planning requirements and to present this to Cabinet, without waiting for the end of the war. This in turn impressed the deputation, who were hoping only that a bill might be prepared “for consideration by Town Planners during the recess”³². This begs the question of who

these town planners were who were to consider the bill, beyond the enthusiasts. They also pressed for the employment of Reade to write the legislation. Russell responded, it was reported in the press, by saying “his predecessor in office, Sir Francis Bell, had already committed the Government to a promise that it would pay as much as £350 towards the cost of Mr Reade’s services”³³. He also voiced support for town planning legislation and said that after the War, care had to be taken over speculators, “particularly with regard to sanitation”, and that provision had to be made for schools and sites for public buildings³⁴. This positive outcome to the meeting must have given heart to the associations who recognised that they now had a champion, once again, in the Cabinet. Russell’s positive response to the employment of Reade is also surprising given the rather tart answer that had been given to Myers’ similar suggestion in 1915. Equally as impressive was the promise of money. This probably inspired the Conference to telegram Reade to request his immediate arrival³⁵. This invitation was, as discussed below, premature, as ultimately the 1917 Bill was prepared in New Zealand. The Conference did however give “a splendid lift to the movement”, and delegates left believing that “real progress is about to begin”³⁶.

The Australian Town Planning Conferences of 1917 and 1918

While the New Zealand Conference lasted for a day and was really no more than a meeting of like-minded individuals, in Australia two substantial conferences were held in 1917 and 1918. Such large scale propagandist conferences and exhibitions had their origins, as Meller shows, in the great European exhibitions, particularly in France, and helped to “sustain an international discussion on the future of life in

large cities”³⁷. She traces the export of, and the dilution of the Garden City to the more achievable garden suburb, through these conferences³⁸. The first International Town Planning Conference was held in London in 1910 and they were held regularly into the 1930s. The venues changed for each conference thereby offering the opportunity for local supporters to mix with international attendees. These conferences provided not only an opportunity to discuss ideas but to mount exhibitions, illustrating the real or potential achievements of town planning while demonstrating them to a wider public audience.

Charles Reade, now firmly established in Adelaide, was already working on the plan for the Mitcham Garden Suburb. In October 1917 he organised the First Australian Town Planning Conference in Adelaide. It attracted “250 delegates from all parts of the Commonwealth”, to what was generally deemed “a brilliant personal success for Reade”³⁹. The Conference was accompanied by a major exhibition. While Reade wrote to local bodies in New Zealand encouraging their attendance⁴⁰, the only New Zealander recorded was Hurst Seager⁴¹.

Hurst Seager appears to have attended at his own behest and cost. Developments in New Zealand were covered briefly in the Introduction to the Conference, (though Fowlds’ contribution was ignored and credit for the 1911 Bill given to Myers), with Reade crediting the 1914 Tour as being “responsible for the formation of Town Planning Associations in different cities, both in Australia and New Zealand”⁴². As seen in the previous chapter this is, in the New Zealand context at least, questionable. However the Tour, and this Conference, had largely educational aims. One of the main objects aside from bringing together interested parties, was to allow discussion “relating to the principles of Town Planning and Housing and

their application to Australian conditions”⁴³. As such it marked a clear step in the process of adapting overseas models and concepts to the antipodean conditions. Despite the disparity in the size of urban areas, it was clear that these Australian adaptations would, potentially, suit New Zealand conditions better than British or American models.

A wide array of papers was presented to the Conference, on everything from town planning legislation, to specific design schemes, to housing. The Conference was held, Reade firmly stated, “partly with a view to bringing home to the various governments the necessity for preparing in advance for post war developments in towns and cities”⁴⁴. Material covered not only British models but also included information from America, and Canada. Hurst Seager appears to have kept a relatively low profile at the Conference, and there is no evidence that he participated in the questions that ended each session. New Zealand did receive some mention in a paper by Crawford Vaughan, formerly the Premier of South Australia. He claimed that a conference of “Municipal Councils” had discussed town planning for two days, and “unanimously approved the principles of the South Australian Bill as the basis for the proposed measure in the Dominion, namely, a Commission of experts working in conjunction with existing authorities”⁴⁵. It seems likely this was the Town Planning Associations Conference in August 1917, or alternatively a reference to the 1912 Municipal Conference, though the latter seems unlikely. If this was the case it was a gross misrepresentation but may reflect the politicking which surrounded Reade’s attempt to get legislation passed in South Australia. The conference did however present some excellent and very up-to-date material, with papers showing a wide knowledge of British and American techniques, including

zoning. If Hurst Seager, as it would seem, went to further his knowledge, he would not have been disappointed.

The 1917 Conference had hardly finished when arrangements began for the Second Australian Town Planning Conference, this time to be held in Brisbane. Hurst Seager was once again the only New Zealand delegate, but this time he attended courtesy of the New Zealand government. The GWTP & ME Association had written to Russell in April 1918 advocating that the government send “some well known New Zealand authority on town planning... to represent this Dominion”⁴⁶. Simultaneously they contacted various groups around the country seeking donations towards the expenses of sending a delegate to Brisbane, presumably to represent the associations and societies rather than as an official representative⁴⁷. The Government’s initial response was slow and hardly encouraging. Thought was given to sending the New Zealand Government Agent in Sydney, Mr Blow, because, as Russell said “I do not think at the present juncture that it is necessary that the representative, if any, should be versed in the subject which is, of course, as far as New Zealand is concerned, only in its infancy”⁴⁸. Russell continued to resist the pressure, including a delegation from the Wellington Association in June⁴⁹. Late in that month, Blow was told by Hislop, the Under-Secretary for Internal Affairs, that there would be no official delegate⁵⁰. Eventually it took a letter from Harry Ell, a long term MP and member of the Christchurch Beautifying Association, to the Prime Minister, to convince the government to relent and to subsidise Hurst Seager⁵¹. Eventually, £25 was given to Hurst Seager on the condition “that he prepares a report collating matters of official interest to New Zealand”⁵².

The selection of Hurst Seager as the delegate marks the beginning of his career as in effect a ‘de facto’ town planning advisor to the New Zealand government. He had

impeccable credentials for the position, as a well read, well travelled accomplished architect, who had been a bastion of both the city beautifying and town planning movements from their conception. At the time he was probably the closest New Zealand had to a town planner, and it was these skills that were recognised. In October 1918, for instance, he was approached by the Minister of Mines to design new mine settlements⁵³. Hurst Seager took display material with him to Brisbane and fifty copies of Russell's Town-Planning Bill, in the hope that they would become the basis of discussion by delegates⁵⁴. Such overseas comment was obviously, from the same letter, deemed useful.

The Conference at Brisbane was held between 26th July and 6th August 1918, and attracted a wide range of delegates, mainly from Australian States and local government organisations. There was however, a range of people attending, representing associated groups such as the Children's Welfare Association and the Queensland Institute of Surveyors⁵⁵. Most States were also represented by delegates from their Town Planning Associations, reflecting the growth of these organisations in Australia. The breadth of attendance reflects the fact that while the town planning movement now had an independent existence, its concerns were also of interest to those with a focus in the wider social welfare and local body administration areas. Hurst Seager this time appears as representing both the New Zealand Government and the Town Planning Associations in New Zealand. He produced a comprehensive report of the Conference, that more than repaid the funding that the Government had made available. The Report made clear that this was to be an on-going organisation that would hold regular conferences. He indicated that New Zealand had been invited to form part of the new group to be called the "Federal Council of the Australian Town-planning Conference and

Exhibition”⁵⁶. This expectation was, however, never fulfilled and no further conferences were held.

The Brisbane Conference focused on two broad themes. The first was governance and what were the appropriate institutional arrangements for town planning administration. The second was planning for the housing needs of returning soldiers, clearly a very topical issue. The first was dealt with in some detail with a number of alternative arrangements being suggested. Hurst Seager himself proposed a model where town planning schemes would be prepared by local Town-planning Boards consisting of experts such as architects nominated by their Institute. These would be submitted to the Minister of Internal Affairs for approval, advised by a Town-Planning Commissioner “who shall be an expert town-planner of proved administrative ability”⁵⁷. Regardless of whether the town planning scheme was carried out by a private or public authority, the Town Planning Commissioner would, after discussions with the local body or proposer, have the power of veto. It was a very centralist model, which, while allowing local participation and involvement, placed the crucial decision making power with regard to the scheme as a whole, and subsequent developments, in the hands of the central state and its nominees. This was emphasised by the requirement that all town planning schemes receive the approval of both Houses of Parliament. This provision was taken directly from the 1909 British legislation. Administratively it would appear to be cumbersome and quite beyond the ambit of the single Commissioner. It is however interesting that at this point there is implicit in the model the concept of expert knowledge and the recognition that there now existed individuals who could claim particular professional skills in town planning. While the enthusiastic amateur might

be harnessed at the local level, the expert would prevail where the real decision-making power lay.

Housing was dealt with in some detail and was well illustrated in the Exhibition that accompanied the Conference. This interest in housing was underlain by the belief “that housing should form an integral part in all Town-planning Acts”⁵⁸, despite the fact that none of the town planning bills produced to date, had linked these two issues. This may have reflected Hurst Seager’s interest, in designing settlements for returned soldiers. This was a popular theme at the Conference with a number of papers being presented by Australian participants. Hurst Seager’s proposal involved an almost arcadian approach whereby the soldiers would be placed in villages set among small holdings, with “small factories for industrial workers”⁵⁹. The proposal included a leasehold arrangement rather than purchase of the sites by the returned soldiers. It was a strangely paternalistic, almost utopian vision that had little or no relevance to life in New Zealand at the time, and it is hard to see that it would have been attractive to the returning soldiers. It would, however, have reflected the rural arcadian concepts that were expressed in the *Discharged Soldiers Act 1915*, and the broader aim of recognition of the sacrifices of the returned soldiers. The association of rural with ‘good’ was certainly not new, as was discussed in a previous chapter. Hurst Seager’s proposal apparently found no adherents in New Zealand and the soldier settlements that were developed took a much more traditional form of individual farm ownership⁶⁰. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the Conference was the diversity of resources that it drew from. There was clear knowledge of the work in America being proposed by Nolen⁶¹, and the Exhibition that accompanied the Conference featured exhibits from Britain, Germany, America and India. Thus delegates were exposed to a variety of planning

ideas, while the Exhibition demonstrated the achievements of town planning to the general public. The Conference also probably helped to develop contacts between the enthusiasts and the increasingly professional groups in Australia.

Hurst appears to have taken an active role in proceedings, presenting a paper and commenting, usually positively, on others. As discussed above he was also part of the main commentary at the beginning of the Conference, on the papers by J. Garlick from Sydney and Charles Reade from South Australia on different models of governance for town planning⁶². This commentary seemed to revolve around Hurst Seager's alternative model, discussed above. At the close of the Conference, Hurst Seager, while apologising for the low attendance from New Zealand, called the Conference "an object lesson to New Zealand, which I think and which I hope, they will take very much to heart."⁶³

Legislative Attempts – The 1917 Bill

The optimism expressed by Hurst Seager in his Report on the Conference, seems to suggest that another attempt to pass legislation might succeed. Certainly the growth and organisation of the town planning enthusiasts into an Association which could lobby and agitate consistently for legislation, seemed to suggest that the time was ripe for legislation. The debate was now less concerned with justifying the need for town planning or defining it, than how it would be put into practice. The battle for acceptance of the concept of town planning had been won, now it was a battle to institute it.

Before turning to the 1917 Bill there is the 'mystery' Bill of 1914 to be dealt with. In the archival and secondary material there is no reference to such a Bill. However, in the papers pertaining to the 1914 Tour in New Plymouth, there is a typed Bill called *the Town-planning Act 1914*, to come into law on 1st March 1915. Given its location, the presumption must be that it was written by Reade or Davidge, probably Davidge as he was the person with the connections to New Plymouth. A copy is attached as Appendix 3. While at first glance the Bill appears to repeat many aspects of Fowlds' 1911 Bill, it was in fact dramatically different. In this Bill, a town-planning scheme was to be subjected to a twenty-eight day objection period at the local level. The final approval was to be given by a Town-planning Board, made up of the Surveyor-General, three Borough Councillors, elected by the citizens of "such Local authorities", and two nominated by the Governor in Council to represent the Public Works and Railways Departments. If this Board disapproved of any part of the town-planning scheme or the scheme as a whole the matter was to be returned to the local authority concerned which could decline to adopt the Board's recommendations. In that case the Board had to convene a meeting at which the public could, override the local authorities rejection. If they did not, then by majority vote, they could constitute a local poll to determine which version would proceed. Further the works of Government departments were to be submitted for the local authority's approval, and the Schedule of Matters to be Covered in the Scheme included

"The laying out or erection of any Railway, Tramway, Public Lifts, Wharf, Dock, Tunnel, Bridge, Viaduct or public buildings"

The town-planning scheme also included subdivision. It appeared to advocate zoning in

“The defining of any residential and industrial areas and the building and other conditions relating thereto”.

It is a Bill which is almost breathtaking in its approach, particularly the relationship that it defines between the local and the central state. In this version the local state is given parity with the central state, which would also be bound by the Act and the resultant town-planning schemes, in its everyday operations. This binding of the Crown is a major step that was in effect avoided by the central state, in the planning area at least, until 1991. The Bill would also have provided for a high degree of direct citizen participation and a very limited role for the executive arm of the government, in that the Minister's role was largely non-existent. His nominees on the Town-planning Board could be out voted by the local representatives. Moreover the way clause 12(1) is written, it seems to suggest that each Borough would effectively create a Town-planning Board as the three members were to be “members of the Borough Council” and were directly elected by local body voters for a period of two years. The Bill adopted, largely unmodified, the provision of Fowld's bill on compensation for injurious affection. However the extensive provision for citizen involvement throughout the initiation, approval, and operation of the town-planning scheme, would presumably have made such issues easier to deal with. This should have produced a higher degree of consensus about the scheme, and the degree of intrusion into private property rights required to achieve this. It is doubtful if such a system could have worked, as there appears to be considerable potential for delay and profitless debate. Nevertheless it was a revolutionary piece

of proposed legislation that seems to bear no real resemblance to local or international models. There appears to be some influence from German and American models in that advocacy of what, was in effect zoning, but the balance seems to be a unique development. Unfortunately it was a Bill that never proceeded and seems not to have been known of by others within the movement.

Agitation for legislation continued in the face of political determination to do nothing. In 1913 James Allen, then Minister of Finance, after a trip to Britain and exposure to the horrors of unplanned development, was moved to promise a bill to deal with town planning in the Financial Statement for that year⁶⁴. The effect was however, temporary and in the following year the same Minister, in a waspish reply to Myers, indicated there was no necessity for such legislation as there were “ample powers in the present law to deal with this question”⁶⁵. This was a constantly used argument and appeared to be based on the idea that local bodies had a range of powers particularly through public health legislation. These did allow them to regulate and control sub-standard housing and to institute public health works. They also had limited powers to regulate subdivision though this often required special legislation, such as the *Wellington City Empowering Act 1917*, that allowed the Wellington City Council to control section sizes, frontages and road reserves. The fact that special legislation was required to undertake the most basic subdivision controls points to the weakness in Allen’s and others claims. It also highlights the presumption that underlies Allen’s statement, that town planning was concerned with housing and slums, when in fact it had moved on to be more concerned with guiding the development and redevelopment of the urban fabric. Only town planning legislation could provide the powers to deal with this in an integrated manner.

Various groups kept up what could be characterised as 'organised agitation'. A deputation from the Otago members of Parliament met Russell in August 1917 at the behest of the Otago Expansion League, the Amenities and the Town Planning Association and the Chamber of Commerce in Dunedin. Russell alluded to the earlier deputation from the Town Planning Association Conference, saying that a bill was being prepared based on the abandoned 1912 provisions in the *Local Government Act*, but incorporating "the latest discoveries in connection with town planning"⁶⁶.

Russell introduced his Bill later that year, just two days before the end of the session. At the Bill's First Reading, Russell alluded to the impact of "a very large and influential deputation, representing the chief cities of New Zealand"⁶⁷, suggesting that the agitation had paid off. The Bill's late introduction was to allow it to be considered by local bodies and other interested parties in the recess, to avoid the criticisms which had greeted and eventually sunk the 1911 and 1912 proposals. In a draft Memo written in the following year, Russell reflected on the necessity for the Bill. While acknowledging that legislation already existed that dealt with town planning issues, he stated that the process was in the wrong order at present, and that "the practice of town planning should precede – not follow – the laying out of a town"⁶⁸. Moreover a specific piece of legislation was "an important phase of social development", by which he presumably meant that it was a sign of a progressive nation, recognising that it must regulate to ensure basic living environments. In the same Memo he talks about the need for the Bill to be brought "prominently before the people" and suggested it was not going "as far as is desired by some town planners". This contrasts strongly to the earlier approach, that the central state had all the expertise in this area and therefore could create the best model to establish

town planning. Equally there is the presumption that there was a group of people called 'town planners' who could and should make comment on such a Bill. This suggests some concept of a group of people with skills and knowledge that could be distinguished from other allied groups such as the surveyors. At the time it was probably a bold statement with little justification, as there was no one with any formal town planning although many self taught enthusiasts. Russell also seemed to view the Bill as a means to "lead and educate, not to force the people, in order that they may become gradually imbued with the necessity of following the principles of town planning"⁶⁹.

The 1917 Town-planning Bill – The Contents

The 1917 Bill was more substantial than its predecessors. It is, in many ways, more like later planning legislation, with its careful listing of key definitions in Clause 2. The Bill set up a complex system that separated subdivision in its broadest definition, including the division of land and the provision of physical and social infrastructure, from the writing of a town-planning scheme. In areas covered by these provisions, either by proclamation or by resolution of the City Councils in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin, all subdivisions of land exceeding ten acres in area could be subdivided, without the approval of Minister or a Local Body Conference. The latter was to be formed if the area extended over local authority boundaries. At this point the Crown could also take one tenth of the area, at government valuation, to provide for public facilities such as post offices and drill halls, and to provide for recreation.

The preparation of a town-planning scheme was again to be voluntary, and was to deal with the matters detailed in the Schedule. The Schedule this time was truly comprehensive prescribing the specific matters to be addressed such as the provision of roads, parks, public buildings and facilities, and civic improvement schemes. It also allowed the local body to deal with administrative issues such as “the power of entry and inspection” (Clause 16) and the “power of a responsible authority to make agreements with owners and of owners to make agreements with one another” (Clause 20). This intensely detailed Schedule appears to have emerged out of discussions Russell had with the deputation from the New Zealand Town Planning Association, who had criticised Russell’s original proposals as containing, “very little machinery for smoothly carrying out complete town planning schemes, or controlling other town developments on sound lines”⁷⁰. This, the same article suggests, was necessary because local bodies with “a good sprinkling of large ratepayer and land speculator in their enterprise” were not “disposed to interfere with private enterprise”⁷¹. In short the local body was the weak link in the process. While the resultant Schedule may have met the Association’s desire for detailed direction to local bodies, it was prefigured with the instruction that these were “matters that may [my emphasis] be provided for in a Town-planning scheme”. This meant while it was likely to be used as a model by local bodies thus providing very similar town-planning schemes throughout the country, there was no compulsion on local bodies to undertake town planning. It is a reflection of the Association’s standing as quasi town planning experts, that these suggestions were incorporated into the Bill.

Town-planning schemes would be subject to public objection and would include cost estimates for civic improvement projects, of the type provided for in the 1912 Local

Government Bill. Schemes were to be submitted to a Town-planning Commission which would, after a public submission process, make a recommendation to the Minister of Internal Affairs. The Minister had the final say over the scheme and any modifications to it. Every scheme was ratified by way of an Order in Council. Fowlds concern over the influence of the bureaucrats seemed to have been overcome. The Town-planning Commission was to consist of the Surveyor-General, Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department, Government Architect, Valuer-General, Chief Health Officer, Under-Secretary of Internal Affairs and three other people appointed by the government, one of whom would be the nominee of the Municipal Association and one the nominee of the Institute of Architects. It would be very much a public service dominated Commission, reflecting the growth and increasing importance of the permanent government bureaucracy.

Massey had moved quickly to reform the civil service. The *Public Service Act 1912*, created the Public Service Commissioner, who was directly answerable to Parliament. The Commissioner and his office produced new classifications for public servants and subjected them to more efficient management practices, thereby emphasising the 'professionalism' and permanence of the public service. In the Town-planning Commission there would also have been an interesting but very slight bias towards the architectural profession perhaps reflecting the views of advisors such as Hurst Seager who was himself an architect. The use of the term 'Commission' rather than Board reflects the influence of Australian and American models. The Ministry of Internal Affairs certainly had a copy of Reade's comprehensive discussion of the 1916 South Australian Town Planning and Housing Bill⁷² which uses that term. The Bill also, for the first time, uses the term 'replan' to describe what was in effect civic improvements. Reflecting the previous

concerns over how such projects would be financed, there were extensive provisions on this topic. A town-planning fund was to be established by each local body to finance town planning works, and any loans raised were to be subject to the standard provisions of the *Local Bodies Loans Act 1913*.

This Bill reflected a different relationship between the local and the central state, to that apparent in the Fowlds' Bill. While the Bill was centralist in its approach, where necessary compelling the preparation of town-planning schemes, and approving them, aspects of the Schedule's contents suggest that not all elements of this relationship with government were pre-determined. Clauses 16 to 30 of the Schedule deal with an eclectic collection of issues, some of which, such as clause 22, seem to deal with the most basic relationship between the two levels of government. That clause states that a town-planning scheme may deal with "co-operation between the responsible authority and the Government or any public or statutory bodies or authorities, including Councils". Further clause 22, quoted above, seemed to leave open the definition of a fundamental power of a local body. It is unusual to see such matters being left to determination through a legislative process, even one so centrally dominated, because of the potential for variation to emerge or worse still to create an unexpected extension of the power of the local state. It also stands in contrast to the very explicit details contained in the Bill about the operation of the Town-planning Commission, including the regularity of its meetings, its seal and its functions. It was perhaps a ploy to leave some contentious issues poorly defined and thereby make the Bill more palatable to local bodies. It may have also reflected Russell's "minimalist approach to government" that promoted local over central government, an approach he took in 1920 over public health⁷³. This was not an approach that appeared in any subsequent bills.

Russell's Bill did not however significantly alter the proposals in Fowlds' Bill. In most cases the wording of the two Bills is identical. All Russell did was to slightly modify or extend some provisions. For instance, the clause dealing with compensation for injurious affection arising from the operation of town-planning schemes or works was identical to the earlier Bill. All that was added were two new sub-clauses, one dealing with betterment, which was to be paid to the local body, and the other stating no compensation would be paid for the realignment of streets or rights-of-way. These proposals did not noticeably undermine private property rights in the provision of betterment. In contrast to the requirement to pay compensation, betterment was to be sought at the local body's discretion and at "one-half of the amount of such increase" (Clause 19(7)).

A Memo from Russell confirmed that housing had been excluded from the Bill because "New Zealand has already legislation on this phase of the matter" and "already a great deal of work has been done in this direction"⁷⁴. This was despite a strong case being put to Russell by the Deputation from the Town Planning Association, to include housing in the Bill along the lines of the British legislation ⁷⁵. The Deputation was similarly unsuccessful in having the Town-planning Commission include an expert town planner. Response to the Bill was muted, and effectively spread over an eighteen-month period up to, and including the 1919 Town Planning Conference. This reflects the manner in which the Bill was introduced and the lack of commitment on Russell's part to keep the process moving. This may partly be symptomatic of the times with the pre-occupation with the War gradually being replaced, in the politician's mind at least, with concerns about post-war arrangements, when the National Government formed as a war measure, was dissolved. The fact that by 1918 there was clear and open talk at the

Brisbane Conference, of dealing with the issue of the repatriation of troops, was a pointer to the unfortunate co-incidence of the Bill, with this potentially uncertain social and political period, when centrist views were weakening.

Most of the comments on the Bill were garnered through 1918. Later that year Russell explained to the Attorney-General that he had intended to reintroduce the Bill in the 1918 session, presumably with some amendments reflecting the rather quixotic public consultation process (to use a very modern term). Probably what distinguishes this Bill from previous ones, is the amount of comment that came from 'experts'. Even this low level 'expert' comment reflects the maturing of the town planning movement into a group which could make informed comment on any legislation, and in some cases offer alternative models and approaches. The comments were not all positive. In a letter in June 1918, the Auckland City Council was "of the opinion that there is no necessity for the Bill as a separate measure along the line drafted therein, and that a better means of arriving at the desired end would be by enlarging, in the direction indicated in the Bill, the existing powers already contained in the various Acts under which the City Council now works"⁷⁶. The argument made here does have some validity, as is discussed above. However it overlooked the fact that while the Auckland City Council might undertake comprehensive town planning under scattered pieces of legislation, other less well-resourced Councils may not be doing so well. It equally begged the question why other countries with similar allied legislation had felt the need to pass specific town planning legislation. The strength of the response also undoubtedly reflected the growth of local body roles in the period that might have led them to resent the centralism inherent in the Bill.

Another comment was more positive. The Wanganui Workers' Educational Association was, "strongly in favour of the Town Planning Bill at present before the Government, and urges the Minister in charge of the Bill to have same passed into law as soon as possible, in view of the great development which will take place in our cities after the War"⁷⁷. In this submission town planning is seen as bringing order at the War's end. Hurst Seager prepared a detailed critique of the Bill, apparently prior to his departure to Brisbane⁷⁸. This very long critique⁷⁹ falls into two parts, the first a very wide ranging discussion of town planning and what professionals should be involved in it, and the second an analysis of the Bill. The first part is discussed later in this chapter. Of major concern, to Hurst Seager, was the lack of provisions in the Bill, to compel local bodies to exercise their powers. Hurst Seager pointed out that the problem was that there were a number of Acts with real planning powers in them, which were useless, because the local bodies concerned did not use those powers. In this discussion Hurst Seager expounds a very modern view of planning, as promoting an agreed rather than imposed view of the community interest. This, he says, is "What is best to be done in the interests of all"⁸⁰, that is the subordination of the individual to the community good. His solution to this dilemma of non-performance was to include a provision that would allow a central agency to do the work if the local body refused. In this respect Hurst Seager demonstrated that he had no problem with the central state playing the dominant role. He went on to advocate greater powers for the Commission, not only to compel local authority performance but also to allow them to undertake actual town planning work. Under expert guidance, the Commission should prepare "all schemes for settlement and housing proposed to be carried out by the Government"⁸², along the lines of Reade's South Australian Act. He also wanted the Bill to compel all councils including County Councils and Roads Boards to prepare

plans of their city and establish local Town-planning Boards to ensure this work was carried out. He was also doubtful if cross-boundary planning could be dealt with by a conference of the local bodies involved, and suggested in that case the use of a Town-planning Commissioner. There was also concern with the power of the Minister to approve or modify schemes, which could result in the work of a local committee being overturned particularly if a future Minister has not “seen the light of town planning”⁸³. His solution was to have schemes submitted directly to Parliament from the Commission, as in the British legislation. In all, Hurst Seager’s comments seemed to be an attempt to advocate and use strong centralist powers while still trying to avoid upsetting local sensitivities. The financial aspects of the Bill, however, did receive some positive comment.

The proposed structure of the Town-planning Commission was of concern. He thought that in the case of engineers, in particular, that they would lack an appreciation of, and “sympathy with Town Planning objects”⁸⁴. He was equally concerned that members would not have the time to devote to the work, and that the structure really provided for the appointment of only one person with town planning qualifications. At this point he acknowledges the lack of a professional group in the town planning area, but said that there were a number of non-university qualified people who “have fitted themselves thoroughly to give advice by reason of their earnest study of the subject both from the literary and practical side”⁸⁵. Thus the amateur is to be raised to the professional and the possessors of the ‘truth’ are identified. There was also no consistency in Hurst Seager’s arguments. In one part he is advocating a greater role for the Commission while later worrying that they will not have the time and skills to do their assigned tasks.

Hurst Seager's final comments focus on the fact that the Bill does not deal with housing which "is one of the most important schemes to be considered by Town Planners and should unquestionably form an integral part of the Act"⁸⁶. The critique ends with a hope that it will form a part of discussion for members of the Town Planning Association, and Institutes of Architecture and Engineering. Surveyors are noticeable by their absence. The model which is implicit in Hurst Seager's critique is one in which the expert is given prominence, the operation of town planning is removed from possible political interference, and local bodies are compelled to perform. It is also a slightly less centralist model in Russell's original Bill.

The Internal Affairs analysis of the critique has survived complete with the hand written annotations by Russell. Russell marked a number of the matters raised with "No" or "No action". These included the suggestion that the Board should include a town planner and lawyer, that a Town-planning Commissioner prepare a town planning scheme, that the Minister not have to approve schemes and that housing be included in the Bill. The rejection was often in opposition to support from Internal Affairs, as in the requested alteration to the poll requirements⁸⁷. Russell was more positive about the suggestion that the Minister be empowered to act where the local body would not, the Town Planning Commission prepare all government housing and settlement schemes, and the formation of local Town-planning Boards. At the end of the Memo Newton is instructed by hand written note to produce a revised Bill, presumably incorporating the matters that had found favour with the Minister. Newton, the likely author of the Memo, could in places see what might be called 'bigger picture' issues that were implicit in the changes being requested. In the modification of the proposed Commission, he recognised the potential for the Commission to have "executive power", which at the time may not have been acceptable.

The Bill was also discussed, as Hurst Seager had suggested at the time, at the Brisbane Conference. Given the attendance of Reade, who was known to Hurst Seager from the 1914 Tour and probably earlier, it is also possible that there was quite extensive private discussion of the Bill. The Conference had also provided the opportunity to observe other attempts at legislation. Surprisingly there was already recognition that legislation had to reflect the country it served and could not be copied unchanged from other legislation. On his return Hurst Seager reported that “The English Town-planning Act disappointed those who had looked forward to its help in realising their town planning dreams. Its procedure was extremely cumbersome...”⁸⁸. The remark probably reflects the fact that like all Acts, the British Act was embedded in the existing institutional structures of local government, structures that did not exist elsewhere.

Hurst Seager reported, he was given the opportunity to make comment on Russell’s Bill as part of a more directed comment on the two papers by Garlick and Reade. In that commentary Hurst Seager stated that he had “arrived at the opinion that the methods proposed in the Bill are not the best”⁸⁹. His main concern was that the procedure for the writing and approval of town planning schemes “would lead to a vast amount of quite unnecessary expenditure of time and money and may lead to some friction such that further movement would become impossible”⁹⁰. In short, that a type of planning gridlock might emerge. He also questioned the likelihood of the Government being able to appoint a Town-planning Commission of the appropriate quality, and clearly still favoured the single expert approach. He claimed backing for this view from Reade. Hurst Seager ended by proposing a model that placed an expert town planner as a replacement for the Commission and created local Town-planning Boards, as discussed earlier.

At this point the passage of, and criticism of the Bill becomes difficult to follow. In effect a year had passed since Russell had introduced the Bill and this allowed much discussion of it, some continuing, but little in the way of an agreed solution. It is difficult to determine, if Russell was trying to quieten criticism and calls for legislation by diverting the various interested parties into endless debate over the appropriate format, or if he hoped that sufficient division would develop to kill the measure. Perhaps he intended neither and merely hoped to gain acceptance of some measure, but was overtaken by events. Russell was a long serving Liberal politician, who had been associated with the more 'radical' wing of his party, particularly in his early days as an MP. However, as a member of a wartime coalition Cabinet he may not have had the backing to carry through his plans. An article in the *Dominion*, reporting, "is the Cabinet as a whole giving this movement the consideration and support that it deserves?"⁹¹. Without Cabinet support such a measure was unlikely to make progress, regardless of what Russell did. It was also competing with the more pressing concerns of the end of World War One and what that might mean for New Zealand.

Comment on the Bill continued, with a substantial critique from the Dunedin Amenities and Town Planning Association in October. Their concerns were diverse and often practically based. One was that the proposed Commission was too big, that its members would already have commitments and that "to secure expedition in the consideration of submitted schemes, the smaller the personnel of the Commission the better"⁹². They felt that three efficient officers were enough to form such a Commission, and should include the Surveyor-General and two appointees of the Governor-General who should be "from the ranks of the highest and experienced all round experts in Town Planning"⁹³. Like Hurst Seager they also

were concerned that at the local level there would be resistance. The solution was a local town planning committee in each local authority area, as “at present little or no interest is taken in Town-Planning by members of Local Bodies”⁹⁴. They also questioned the limiting of subdivision control under the Bill and wanted all subdivision brought under control of the legislation. There was also a worry, again reflecting Hurst Seager’s concern, that the process of considering town-planning scheme was too cumbersome. They suggested that the local objection stage should be eliminated, and that the Commission’s committee should hear submissions. Further, they advocated that the Commission consult with the local body when preparing a town-planning scheme and assessing objections. They ended with a request that the Bill also include, in the ‘Schedule of Matters to Be Dealt with in Schemes’, “the erection of ugly buildings which may destroy local amenities”⁹⁵. This reflects the concerns of a group largely concerned with urban amenities and beautification, though it does overlook the fact that the Schedule in the Bill specifically mentioned that ‘bêtè’ noire of the group, advertising. For the time, and considering there was no real experience of town planning in practice, it was a very practical and pragmatic critique which recognised, in particular, the realities of the institutional context of local body administration. While citizen participation might be a worthy ideal, it might prove difficult and cumbersome in practice. There was also the clear impulse to focus attention on the practical problems that faced local bodies on a daily basis, such as controlling subdivision.

Suggestions for modifications flowed on, unabated. In November a joint meeting of the Wellington Branch of the Institute of Architects, and the Institutes of Surveyors and Civil Engineers, and Town Planning Association, produced another spirited critique of the Bill. They were willing to see the Commission retained, but wanted to

include representatives of the Institutes of Architects, Surveyors and Civil Engineers, and the Town Planning Associations, under the Chairmanship of “an expert and experience Town Planner”⁹⁶. They also wanted the creation of local Town-planning Boards, compulsory preparation of town planning schemes, and the creation of a government Town Planning Department to approve and offer assistance for the writing of these schemes. All of these suggestions amount to advocacy for the professionalisation of town planning. In particular, placing the decision making power in the hands of a Commission chaired by an expert town planner and the creation of a specific government department would have given recognition and status to the emerging profession. Finally they called for the creation of an Advisory Appeal Board to deal with disputes between the local authority and the Town Planning Department over the preparation of town planning schemes. This body was to consist of central and local body representatives and representatives of the Town Planning Association and “the relative Professional and Scientific interests affected by Town Planning”⁹⁷. While the existing professions were willing to recognise an emerging profession, they were also quick to protect their own position. They ended with a request that housing and the formation of garden suburbs and villages be explicitly included in the Bill. This reflects the pre-occupations of the early movement, that constantly linked town planning and housing being given renewed life by the concern to produce ‘a land fit for heroes’, for the returning soldiers.

Support for the Bill came from some unexpected quarters. In Auckland, the Civic League, an early feminist group which “provided a voice on local and national issues”⁹⁸, appeared to mount a campaign in its favour. Russell received a letter from the Borough of Devonport after a visit from the League, supporting the Bill⁹⁹.

The League itself sent a deputation to see Russell, and followed up with a strong letter of support for the Bill and town planning¹⁰⁰. The interest of the Civic League in town planning was not unexpected. As Adams shows¹⁰¹, the League, while created to assist the progress of women in local government, particularly the political career of Ellen Melville, a City Councillor, took a strong and active interest in scenery preservation and beautification issues in Auckland. Interest was sufficient that a Mrs Weller felt moved to write to the Prime Minister extolling the qualifications of her son, A.G. Weller, then studying in America, and nominating him as a suitable member of the Commission¹⁰². Articles on the value of town planning in general also started to appear in the press¹⁰³.

There is also evidence that, anticipating the passing of the Bill, those with an interest in town planning were beginning to try to organise their activities on a more formal basis. In December 1918, Hurst ewrote to Russell as, Vice President of the Federated Town Planning Associations of New Zealand¹⁰⁴, promoting his long held idea of bringing together groups in each town to form local Town-planning Associations. Each Association would then send a representative to a national association, presumably the Federated Town Planning Associations of New Zealand¹⁰⁵. These local Associations would act as advisory bodies for the new central and local Town -planning Boards. Another role envisaged for them was the collection of material on their town or city, to be used for planning the location of roads, reserves, etc., and the correlation of that material into a book of reference for town planning activities. Hurst Seager linked this approach to such practices in American cities, but it was very similar to a civic survey, developed by Geddes, that preceded the writing of town planning schemes in the British system. Once again there was mention of the town planning expert who would assist in such work.

While Hurst Seager's proposals seem complex, they were a realistic response and an attempt to avoid the failure of town planning due to the unwillingness of local bodies to put the legislation into action. The local Town-planning Associations would provide the local bodies with a work force while also ensuring that they received active encouragement to undertake the work. They also promoted a degree of citizens' participation along American lines that was largely absent from the British system.

The letter is also interesting in the light it throws on the increasing diversity in the concept of town planning that was emerging. The term town planning complained Hurst Seager, was not self-explanatory and was often understood to deal only with the physical layout of towns and their roads. This was a mistake, he suggested. Town planning "includes the whole range of activities which make for the betterment of life and for the happiness and well being of the people"¹⁰⁶. From this very wide concept it was almost inevitable that "scarcely any Association of citizens, does not at some point touch upon the interests of Town Planning"¹⁰⁷. By proffering this all-inclusive interpretation, Hurst Seager was reversing the trend that was becoming apparent up to this point, to narrow the concept. This was an essential first step to the creation of a professional group of town planners who could claim a body of expert knowledge that in turn defined their professional capabilities. Hurst Seager's may have been a pragmatic response, reflecting the still unsettled nature of the movement in New Zealand and the lack of an identifiable group of experts. Further, in the absence of actual legislation, Hurst Seager may also have seen the necessity of maintaining as broad an appeal as possible, to ensure that pressure was maintained from the most diverse groups possible to get the legislation passed. There was also concern that it might be some time before appropriate training would

be available to develop a group of professional town planners in Australasia. The 1918 Brisbane Town Planning Conference passed a resolution to the effect that university training was desirable for “all who are proposing to engage in the work of town planning”¹⁰⁸ and that a course should be set up in each university. Hurst Seager took the opportunity to point out in his Report that such courses had already been established for engineering and surveying, and by implication one should also be established for town planning. He would however be long dead before the course was established at Auckland University in 1957.

Organising A Conference

Thus by the end of 1918 there was renewed and widespread interest again in town planning which now with legislation in prospect, seemed to have something to offer post-war New Zealand. There was a confidence after Brisbane that this would be the first of a series of conferences to be held over the following years. This dream was never achieved with no other Australian wide Conferences being held after 1918. Hurst Seager may have realised that even if further conferences were held in Australia there was little chance that representatives of New Zealand local bodies could be expected to attend. No representative of a local authority had attended either the 1917 or 1918 Conferences, despite Charles Reade, in the case of the 1917 Conference, writing to a large number of local bodies encouraging them to attend.

The first suggestion of a New Zealand Conference came in a letter from Hurst eto Russell in September 1918. It suggests that the Ministry of Internal Affairs organise the Conference and that he would arrange a speaking tour to precede it, and to

'drum up' support for it¹⁰⁹. It was to be a thoroughly modern Conference, using lantern slides to "lighten' and illustrate the speaker's papers"¹¹⁰. Hurst Seager was offered the job of organiser in December 1918 and took it only after considerable thought because the Conference

"must be made a great success. The people are ready now to act on well-defined town planning principles. These principles can be placed clearly before them by the Conference and the Exhibition proposed"¹¹¹

Clearly Hurst Seager saw this Conference as an opportunity to cement the gains made in having a new Bill produced and to recruit a broader base of support for town planning. Given the position of Honorary Organising Director, he proceeded to arrange a large Conference for a fee of £100, plus a daily allowance of 21/- and some typing and clerical assistance¹¹². In retrospect it was a truly heroic achievement.

Hurst Seager threw himself heart and soul into organising the Conference. True to his original intent he visited most of the significant centres in the country to speak about town planning and to urge local body representatives to attend. Each local body was also contacted by letter, to encourage them to attend. In an undated Memo to George Newton, Assistant Under-Secretary of Internal Affairs, probably from May 1919, Hurst Seager reported on the Conference arrangements and the success of the speaking tour. He suggested that there was enthusiasm for him to speak in a number of towns that were missed on the first sweep through the country, and that they should now be visited. Newton's note in response stated, "I quite agree with the desirability of lectures being given in the above towns, though I am not quite sure whether the Department would be justified in incurring any expense"¹¹². The note went on to acknowledge that Hurst Seager was only getting

travelling expenses for his speaking tour. This parsimonious approach is evident elsewhere, and there was considerable concern with the cost of other aspects of the Conference expressed elsewhere in the Memo. Clearly however, Russell was quite closely involved in the everyday aspects of the Conference, and demonstrated his commitment to it as long that is, if it could be done on the cheap.

The Memo also reports on a number of other aspects of the Conference. Hurst Seager wrote that while “a vast number of people will now be anxious to give town-planning lectures. Very few indeed have any correct knowledge of the subject”¹¹³. This suggests that Hurst Seager now believed, from the welter of ideas and concepts that represented town planning at the time, that “correct knowledge” could be identified. This reflects once again the maturing of the movement and the solidifying of the concept of just what town planning actually was. It is also, as has already been suggested, a vital step in the emergence of a true professional body.

Hurst Seager was also eager to ensure that the Exhibition featured the best of overseas examples, a concern he had expressed when he accepted the position of Conference Director¹¹⁴. The idea was that this material would form the basis of a permanent collection to assist the development of New Zealand town planning and would “be attached to a complete town planning reference library”¹¹⁵. At this point there was the first official, or at least bureaucratic acknowledgement, from George Newton the Under-Secretary of Internal Affairs, that an expert “town planner from England” might be appointed. Hurst Seager himself went on to push for the appointment of such a person, who was to be fully trained “at one of the English Universities”, and “who has had some experience in practical work”¹¹⁶. The notes from Newton indicate agreement, and a hand written note from Russell suggests

that the proposal to appoint an expert town planner “be included in recommendations for Cabinet”¹¹⁷. It was the first unequivocal commitment of a politician to the appointment of an expert town planner and the acknowledgement that such a person was needed.

The First New Zealand Town-Planning Conference and Exhibition

The Conference was held in Wellington, from the 20th to the 23rd May 1919 and was attended by some three hundred delegates representing over one hundred different institutions and organisations. Hurst Seagar’s pre-Conference advertising tour had clearly paid dividends. Those attending included representatives of sixty-five local bodies from Gore to Whangarei, including representatives of fifteen County Councils which were unlikely ever to be obliged to undertake town planning. There was a diversity of representatives of special interest groups, ranging from the expected Town Planning Associations, to the Royal New Zealand Society for Health of Women and Children. Schools and the universities were present, as were a range of professional groups including the architects, civil engineers, surveyors, lawyers and accountants. Government sent relatively few, with the biggest contingent coming from the Public Works Department. Perhaps what is most noticeable is the participation of women. While as might be expected, they represented welfare and education groups such as the Kindergarten Associations, some also attended as delegates of official or established organisations, such as Mrs Baume of Auckland Education Board, and Mrs Ferner of the Auckland Civic League. Some forty-nine woman attended the Conference, a matter that Russell referred to in his opening speech, saying “the day when women was (sic) regarded of minor importance and influence in connection with our national and municipal life has gone for ever”¹¹⁸. To

recognise this participation, a specific session was run at the Conference to “for the purpose of considering town-planning from the point of view of the woman, the child and the home”¹¹⁹. Predictably this relegated women to the domestic and home-based sphere, but this did not stop them providing papers and commentary at other sessions, such as those on the roles of universities and schools in “the inculcation of town-planning principles”¹²⁰. In comparison to the Australian Conferences, the New Zealand Conference probably attracted as wide, or wider an audience to its deliberations. The interest of groups with what may be called a social welfare agenda in the Conference again demonstrates the fluid nature of town planning in New Zealand. The lack of legislation to define a specific role for town planning allowed each group to see it as an instrument that might help their particular cause. The continued public association of town planning with housing and slums probably strengthened this, despite the fact that Russell had already rejected the proposal to link the two in one piece of legislation. The euphoria at the end of the War was now tempered by the onset of economic depression, and with it the associated social problems. Labour unrest was common, and by September returned soldiers were marching on Parliament¹²¹.

The objects of the Conference, which are reproduced in Appendix Two, were largely concerned with educating the attendees by giving them access to exhibits which illustrated good town planning practice. The Conference, as object three indicates, was also to be used as a forum to further discuss legislation, presumably Russell’s 1917 Bill which had still not proceeded beyond the First Reading and seemed to exist in some type of statutory limbo. Seven competitions were run in conjunction with the Exhibition. Interestingly no entries were received for “the outline scheme for a garden city”¹²². However the place-getters in the other classes included people

who would later gain prominence in the town planning and architectural world. Reginald Hammond, later the first Director of Town-Planning, received a Diploma for his civic improvement scheme, while Heathcote Helmore got a Silver medal for his garden suburb design, and C.R. Ford, latterly a prominent Auckland architect, gained a Silver medal for his workers' homes design.

The Conference Sessions

The Conference was opened with speeches by the Governor General, Lord Liverpool, the Acting Prime Minister, Sir James Allen, the Minister of Internal Affairs, George Russell, and the Mayor of Wellington, Mr J. Luke. The attendance of such a distinguished group indicates the status of the Conference. While Lord Liverpool made an appropriate speech, linking town planning to better housing and living conditions for returning soldiers, the Acting Prime Minister used it to announce details of soldier war memorials and war graves overseas. He was honest enough to acknowledge that he knew little of town planning, and that these were not matters of direct relevance to the Conference. Russell, in a very short speech merely complimented Allen and moved that a Committee be formed to develop such memorials, saving his comments for the paper he presented later at the Conference. Mr Luke made a speech expected of the Mayor of the host city, advocating the use of town planning to secure better living environments. Given Allen's speech there must be the suspicion that the Conference was seen as an early campaigning opportunity, as the coalition was to end in early August, rather than marking a deep seated interest in town planning. He had certainly demonstrated that in 1914 when he had rejected Myers' request for legislation.

Papers at the Conference were grouped under some broad descriptive headings. The longest session was that, run on the first day which dealt with town planning legislation. The other sessions dealt with Garden Cities and Suburbs, the City Beautiful, Rooding, Housing, Parks, Playgrounds and Open Spaces, and Universities, Colleges and Schools: Their Responsibilities in Relation to the Inculcation of Town-planning principles. Following the style of the Australian Conference, speakers presented papers, had them critiqued by invited commentators and then answered any questions from the floor. Committees were also formed to report on the following specific questions :

Town-Planning Bill - principles and powers

Town-Planning Bill – functions and machinery

Improvement of Towns and Cities

The Housing Problem

Reserves for Public Utilities, Parks, Domains

Playgrounds and open spaces

Financial Aspects

Town-Planning As it Affectsthe School, the

Colleges and the Universities

Town-Planning As it Affects the Woman, the Child and the Home

Town-Planning As it Affects the Arts, the Sciences, the Crafts

Town-Planning As it Affects the Returned Soldier and the Worker

Town-Planning As it Affects the National Utilities and Services

The resolutions of these Committees were reported to Parliament later in the same year.

Russell presented the first paper that set the scene for the Conference. Three quite clear themes emerged. The first was a refocusing on the issue of housing, inspired no doubt by the concerns as to how the repatriated soldiers were to be integrated back into society and the economy. The little of Allen's speech not dealing with soldier memorials and graves, focused on this. The second theme, not unexpectedly prominent in Russell's speech, was the need for legislation particularly now the War had been successfully concluded. This fulfilled the promise Russell made when he introduced the Bill, to deal with it "after the war has come to an end"¹²². The third theme, linked to the first, was the concern with defeating the slum and creating healthy living environments. The slum which had gradually slipped from the forefront of the movements propaganda, was back with renewed vigour in the wake of the 1918 Influenza Epidemic Commission. The Report of the Influenza Epidemic¹²³ was presented a few days before the Conference, and its hearings had been well covered in the press. Poor urban living conditions were identified as a contributing cause of the spread of the epidemic. After inspecting some areas of congested housing the Commission stated, "we are confident that considerable improvements are required in respect to the conditions in which large numbers of people in our cities are required to live"¹²⁴. This provided a focus for the concerns of the Conference and probably helped to revive interest in the housing aspect of the movement.

The quality of the papers presented varied considerably. A rambling paper by J.F. Munnings, formerly Government Architect of Bihar and Orissa, on the City Beautiful, brought a tart comment from Phoebe Myers that "she wished to come back to our own conditions because they were what concerned us most"¹²⁵. As a teacher with an interest in charity work¹²⁶, Phoebe Myers went on to seek a more practical focus

on securing decent food and living conditions for urban workers. This demonstrated that delegates expected a practical Conference focused on New Zealand problems and solutions. Others were much more competent. The paper by Reginald Ford on garden suburbs showed knowledge of the work of Purdom and went beyond the usual views of Letchworth and Port Sunlight to look at Australian examples such as Daceyville. Other papers dealt competently with technical issues such as roading.

However again and again, often in the comments made at the end of the papers, the issue of housing re-emerged. M.J. Reardon of the Workers' Educational Association said after a paper on the future of town planning that "no resolution the Conference might come to on the subject would be satisfactory unless it included the great question of housing"¹²⁷. Russell raised the housing issue as a commentator, linking it to the fact that "64 per cent of the men who came forward were found to be unfit for military service"¹²⁷. Mr Nash, the Mayor of Palmerston North, commented that "it was much to be desired that the condition of things with regard to the housing of the people should be altered in the near future"¹²⁸. The reasons for the reassertion of housing in the movement, at a time when Russell had made it clear that housing would not be part of the town planning legislation can be traced to a number of sources. The most obvious was the effect of war, which Russell's statistic indicated, had demonstrated that a significant number of New Zealand's men were unfit for military duties. This unfitness he traced to a combination of poor housing and health standards in urban areas. That allowed a return to imperialistic appeals combined with the desire to reward those who had fought. As Ferguson stated, "it was unthinkable politically that returning soldiers should be faced with appalling housing conditions"¹²⁹. The Report of the Influenza Epidemic Commission, produced further fuel, though interestingly while identifying

poor subdivision as a cause of sub-standard housing, it also found fault with a number of other matters including decaying buildings, high rents, housing shortages and the lack of dwellers personal hygiene¹³⁰. At this Conference renewed concern with housing often resulted in the promotion of idealistic housing schemes, including Hurst Seager's arcadian soldiers' settlement. In many ways housing had always been the populist face of the town planning movement and once again it had found a place, reflecting the concerns and interest of the time over physical and moral fitness, and a post-war desire to create from the sacrifice of many, a better world. Unfortunately perhaps for the movement, these concerns with housing found a more practical and direct outlet in the Board of Health and Industries Select Committee's enquiries into housing, later the same year, and the Massey government's increased spending on its housing programme, again initiated in 1919¹³¹. This independent addressing of housing was confirmed in the *Housing Act 1919*.

Arthur Myers' paper on the "History and Justification of Town Planning"¹³² had a very self-congratulatory theme. It identified him with the pioneers of town planning and focused on the housing and public health aspects of town planning. He also produced the usual statistics from Britain to demonstrate the health giving aspects of garden city/suburb developments which would ensure "the evolution of a healthier and more efficient race"¹³³. This would in turn serve the military needs of the State and produce a citizen able to fulfil their civic duties. This was not an isolated linking of planning with the need to produce a superior race, and as discussed in an earlier chapter, there were links, through individuals with the more extreme views of the eugenics movement.

George Newton's paper on "Existing and Proposed Legislation Dealing with the Question of Town-Planning"¹³⁴, set the scene for discussion on legislative issues. Newton's paper covered existing legislation in excruciating detail and must have been tedious to listen to. However, it carefully identified provisions in a vast range of legislation that might be said to deal with town planning. It provided cast iron evidence of the oft-repeated ministerial advice to local bodies that they already had town planning powers if they just cared to use them. This was a line which was repeated many times over the coming years, based, on the evidence provided by Newton's paper. I have already suggested that this contention was questionable, and revolved around the question of how town planning was defined. While Newton's paper produced evidence of extensive powers for local bodies to undertake public health roles, to determine the width and construction of roads, and even control rifle ranges, this does not amount to a power to plan in a comprehensive and integrated manner. That was what town planning offered, particularly with regard to town extensions. Moreover, the Report of the Influenza Epidemic Commission seriously questioned the effectiveness of present public health legislation (mentioned in Newton's paper), and recommended its review¹³⁵. In the discussion that followed Newton's paper, only T. F. Martin, solicitor for the Municipal Association, and H.R. Smith the Town Clerk of Christchurch, were brave enough to pass comment on it and that was brief and generally laudatory¹³⁶.

Despite the clear intention of the Conference to deal in detail with the Town Planning Bill of 1917, there was surprisingly little discussion on its contents. The only substantial discussion of the Bill was produced by H..F. Von Haast¹³⁷. His paper spent much time looking at overseas legislation and how it was used. While stressing that town planning could achieve economies in urban development, he

also acknowledged that it need to be community based —“The whole success of town-planning schemes depends not upon the provisions of the Statute-book but upon the spirit that pervades the Council and the citizens”¹³⁸. There was really little comment on the New Zealand Bill and he recommended the adoption of some aspects of the British legislation of 1909. He did, however, strongly advocate the creation of local town-planning boards that would involve experts whom he defined as “architects, engineers and surveyors”¹³⁹. He also used the terms ‘re-planning’ which meant altering and improving the existing city, and ‘pre-planning’ which meant planning extensions to the city. Both aspects together formed town planning. This concept of town planning reinforced the approach taken in the proposed legislation, that it should deal with both the existing urban fabric and any extensions of it. This overcame the problem which might have emerged if town planning became totally dominated by the concept of the garden suburb, particularly as the latter had been slow to gain any hold in New Zealand. Von Haast’s paper provoked little discussion beyond a fixation on the appropriate width of roads, and much repetition of the justification for town planning.

The Exhibition displayed items from Hurst Seager’s own collection, from various Australian authorities, New Zealand local bodies and groups, and from Charles Reade. Reade and other Australians had been invited to attend the Conference but none arrived, though several, including Reade sent papers to be read. Reade was still held in high esteem some eight years after he left the country, reflecting the influence derived from his journalistic efforts and the 1914 Tour.

The Conference Resolutions

The Committees established at the Conference were asked to consider specific aspects addressed in the papers presented, and to report back during the Conference. This suggests that there was little time for detailed discussion among the delegates who made up each Committee, unless they effectively excluded themselves from the very busy Conference schedule¹⁴⁰. The resolutions of the Committees were also officially reported to Parliament later in 1919¹⁴¹. The Report in the Proceedings of the various Committees' recommendations, is however the more interesting as it includes the delegates' discussions of those recommendations.

The two Committees which had been set up to consider aspects of the Town-Planning Bill were amalgamated, and presented a single set of recommendations. The recommendations were clear and unequivocal. New Zealand needed legislation immediately, and town-planning schemes should be prepared without delay. A separate Town-planning and Housing Department should be created, headed by an experienced town-planner "who is recognised by civic authorities as a town-planner of eminence"¹⁴². That Town-planner was to head a Central Town-Planning Commission assisted by four experts in engineering, architecture, surveying and public health. At the local level Town-planning Boards were to be formed. If a local authority refused to prepare their town-planning scheme, the central government department should undertake this on their behalf. Determination of buildings to be preserved for heritage reasons was to be the responsibility of the Central Town-planning Commission. All subdivision was to come under the control of the Act. Civic improvement schemes were also to be protected from the threat of

a ratepayer poll. The Committee ended by suggesting that the Committee become a permanent one, "to further the passage of the proposed Bill through Parliament"¹⁴³.

The message was quite clear. There was unanimity that legislation was needed, that town planning was to be compulsory, centred at the local level, and subject to review and control by competent men with professional expertise. Speaking to his report, C.J. Parr indicated that the two Committees, originally set up to consider the Bill from the city/borough and county point of view, had amalgamated "in order to reconcile any differences"¹⁴⁴. This was a rare example of local body unanimity. They also strongly advocated the dominance of expert knowledge, and Parr spoke in some detail of the qualifications, and possible salary that the town planning expert would require. A. Leigh Hunt also proposed, in quite a radical approach, that the Town Planner when appointed be subject to removal only by Parliament. Not surprisingly, given that only the Judges of the Supreme Court and the Controller and Auditor-General were presently in this position, this proposal was defeated. The depth and diversity of discussion, including a spat between the engineers and surveyors as to which had the greater right to representation on the Commission, points to the increasing importance of the role of the expert planner. Once it became apparent that there might be legislation giving planning powers, then the question of who might exercise those powers became pressing. It is clear from this and earlier discussions that there was a belief that town planning was a separate discipline and that there were those with expertise in that area whose knowledge and skills should be used. The discussions however fell short of excluding the self-taught from the ranks of the expert.

A. Leigh Hunt tried to get the Committee to endorse the Wellington Town-planning Association stance that the government and its developments should be covered by the Act's provisions. However while there seemed to be support for this view, Russell stated quite boldly that "such a provision would not be passed by Cabinet"¹⁴⁵, and that a better ploy would be to move an amendment to that effect when the Bill returned to Parliament. Russell's response was quite mild in retrospect, as much of what had been suggested would have seemed an attempt to reduce the influence of central government, and to reassert that of local government. While there was acceptance of approval by central government, this was via an expert Commission, rather than through any obviously politically controlled body. The threat to have town planning schemes written by central government when local bodies did not perform was likely to be sufficient to make the local body fulfil its obligations. This is certainly what happened when a similar provision was put in the *Town and Country Planning Act 1953*. Overall there was general support for the proposed recommendations.

Other Committees combined to present their recommendations, confirming perhaps that there was little time to have the necessary discussions and produce the recommendations. Committees three and five, which respectively considered civic improvements and reserves and open space, provided a combined report in which they admitted having difficulty in finding time to meet. They concluded "that as these matters comprised nearly the whole of the scheme of garden cities and suburbs it was hopeless for the committee in the time at its disposal to discuss details"¹⁴⁶. This was an indication that either the Conference was too ambitious in its approach or that there was not the knowledge to make meaningful recommendations. They merely supported the passing of legislation and resolved

that under the Act, where a site of five acres or more was subdivided, 10% of the area should be gifted to the local bodies for reserves.

The two Committees which were to consider housing and the requirements of workers and returned soldiers, also combined to produce seven resolutions. These emphasised that there was both a growing housing shortage and that the provision of adequate housing should be the responsibility of the government, in co-operation with local bodies. This advocacy of central state involvement in housing was not new. The Liberals had produced the *Workers' Dwellings Act 1905*, which created six hundred and forty-six dwellings in the period up to 1919¹⁴⁷. The idea of a central-local state partnership in housing was partly taken up in the *Housing Act 1919*, which tried to encourage both local government and private involvement. Thus it would seem that these resolutions were reflecting ideas in currency at the time. They did, however, want any such developments to be undertaken on garden city principles "on the lines laid down by Mr S. Hurst Seagar in his paper"¹⁴⁸. Not surprisingly these resolutions while supported, created extensive debate, much of political point scoring, with little to do with town planning. It did however serve to demonstrate that housing was by 1919, a quite highly politicised subject where adherence to a certain ideological position explained much of the approach of the groups involved. In New Zealand there was a much less obvious connection to town planning. In Britain and Europe improved housing often meant slum clearance, which linked to the civic improvement and urban design aspects of town planning. In these circumstances there was likely to be regular opportunities to employ the design principles of the garden suburb. There was also likely to be the opportunity to lay out a totally new city or suburb, in response to continued high urban population growth. This was much less likely to be so in New Zealand and

Australia, a point that Reade had begun to make in the paper he contributed to the Conference. He highlighted the differences between “Old and New-World Cities”, as “the New Zealand and Australian town or city offers a marked contrast to those of older countries”¹⁴⁹. This was an important point, generally lacking in Reade's earlier work, which tended to suggest that what was good in Britain would be equally appropriate in New Zealand. This change in attitude may reflect his experience in actually trying to institute town planning in South Australia, and in actually designing a garden suburb for Australian conditions. However, if Australian conditions required an adaptation of garden suburb and other town planning ideas, there was likely to be an even greater need in New Zealand with its smaller cities and slower rates of development.

Committee Six reporting on the financial aspects of town planning, made it clear that the cost of the new Town-Planning Department and the expert town planner, now apparently seen as a ‘fait accompli’, should be borne by central government. In addition, funds at attractive rates should be made available to local authorities to carry out town planning works. While most of the discussion focused on the last resolution which would have required rating on unimproved values, Mr J. McCombs, MP, did observe that “a very small proportion only of the cost of housing and town planning should fall on the Government”, in contrast to the situation in the “Old Country”¹⁵⁰. This observation was not pursued but did raise an important point that became even more important, if, as this Conference was suggesting, housing and town planning were inextricably linked. If this was the case then McCombs was correct in identifying a significant financial burden for local bodies.

One of the Committees came up with little in the way of resolutions. Committee Eight that was considering the effects of town planning on women, children and the home. The Conference decided it would be “premature and ill-advised to enter into details of town-planning in respect to the needs of women and children”¹⁵¹, though they gave no reasons for this suggestion. Instead they advocated that the Committee be kept on to arrange a later Conference to focus on these matters. The lack of material from this Committee either reflects a lack of time or a lack of relevant issues on which to report. Committee Nine which was to consider town planning, the arts, sciences and crafts, while advocating the dissemination of town planning via the School Journal and exhibitions, devoted much time and detail to the issue of war memorials. Given Allen’s opening speech and the times generally, such a focus was not unexpected. Finally, Committee Seven which considered town planning and education, perhaps surprisingly, devoted most of its attention to details with regard to the appropriate provision of school sites and buildings, as well as the education of children in town planning principles. They ended by recommending “to the University Senate that town planning be added to the Curriculum”¹⁵². This recommendation may have been facilitated by Hurst Seager to reinforce the recommendation from the Brisbane Conference on the need to establish university-based town planning training.

Despite the lack of time for any real discussion and consideration, Hurst Seager must, with Russell, have been satisfied with the outcome of the Conference. It ended with the clear expectation that legislation was close and that all that remained was to sort out the fine details. It further demonstrated that the concept had broadly based support at the local and national level and among a range of special interest groups. It also probably succeeded in capturing the attention of a wide range of

local bodies which previously, had shown little or no interest in town planning. As an educational and promotional exercise it was probably a great success, though there is the overwhelming impression that the pace of the Conference and the work expected of the delegates gave little opportunity for discussion outside the boundaries of the various themes/questions posed at the outset.

Responses to the Conference

The Conference was given good coverage in the newspapers¹⁵³. The provincial press, provided coverage often well after the event. In Wanganui for instance, aspects of the Conference pertaining to parks and playgrounds were dealt with in some detail in the report on the A.G.M. of the Wanganui Beautifying Society, two months after the Conference¹⁵⁴. The concentration of groups such as this on the issues that interested them does emphasise that not too broad a presumption should be made about the educational impact of such a Conference. While attendance may have opened new areas of knowledge for some, for many it may well have just reinforced existing interests and concerns.

The most detailed report was carried by the *New Zealand Building Progress*, probably because Charles Wheeler attended as the only listed delegate of the press, though clearly other journalists attended to report it as a news event. He reviewed the material presented, and produced an extensive Editorial¹⁵⁵. The opening words of his Editorial probably summed up the Conference as a whole. "There was a natural lack of interesting exchanges of views regarding methods but no dearth of enthusiasts to urge the importance and the advantage of town planning"¹⁵⁶. Wheeler was, however, in no doubt that the Conference had done

much to convince local body politicians of the need for, town planning. Like Reade, he was also beginning to reflect on the necessity for the movement to start to apply and adapt their town planning principles "to New Zealand conditions"¹⁵⁷. Confident that the analysis of the Town-Planning Bill had proved useful, he was equally confident that when settled government returned, legislation would be forthcoming. In the interim, he seemed to be encouraging the various town planning groups to make it an election issue.

This optimism may have been misplaced. While the Conference was a success there is little evidence that it inspired new town planning activity by the interest groups or local bodies. The Dunedin City Council, for instance, reported on attendance and said the Conference "was helpful and interesting"¹⁵⁸, but this did not lead to further activity in the area. Similarly, the decline in membership of the Dunedin Amenities and Town Planning Society, which was reported in April 1919¹⁵⁹ seemed to continue. Perhaps the only positive note came from Christchurch, where just after the Conference, the Canterbury Progressive League wrote to the Mayor asking to discuss its intention to hold a conference, on town planning in the city¹⁶⁰. The purpose of such a Conference was to build strong public opinion in support of a town planning scheme. However as Hurst Seager, a central figure in any such scheme in Christchurch, was about to do work in Wanganui before going to Britain for a year¹⁶¹, the matter did not progress. The Government procrastinated on making a travelling exhibit available, and this attitude would have done little to assist local initiatives. The reason given for this reluctance to tour the Exhibition material was that this should be a matter for the new Town Planning Department¹⁶². It is doubtful whether the Conference's resolution would have found favour with all. The University of New Zealand Senate had made it clear prior to the Conference, in

response to the resolution from the Brisbane Conference, that "it is not at the present desirable to make further provision for Town Planning than that already provided for..."¹⁶³.

Hurst Seager moved quickly to publish the Proceedings of the Wellington Conference, with copies dispatched to all local bodies, including Harbour Boards. Copies were also distributed to all Ministers in the Australian States, to the leading members of the British town planning movement such as Purdom, Howard and Davidge, and to the various university planning schools in America and Britain¹⁶⁴. The Proceedings were well received, with the Invercargill Borough Council requesting eleven extra copies¹⁶⁵. They continued to be requested as late as 1927, perhaps indicating both that their early distribution made them well known locally, and the dearth of New Zealand based material at the time¹⁶⁶. Intriguing is the evidence of the international exchange of planning material. Requests for copies of the Proceedings came from people as diverse as Cyrus Kehr of the Joint Board on National Planning¹⁶⁷ and Charles Mulford Robinson, the veteran campaigner, both of the United States. Even Lewis Mumford requested a copy, stating, "we can profit in America by following New Zealand's vigorous initiative and I should like to be able to put your exemplary work at the disposal of American readers"¹⁶⁸. Some of these requests probably reflect the personal contacts that Hurst Seager had, as he was a perpetual traveller and correspondent, but they also point to the close nature of the international town planning movement. This allowed information to be passed among adherents relatively quickly, and for relationships to be built in unexpected ways. For instance, Emanuel Mische of Portland Oregon requested a copy of the Proceedings on the recommendation of Charles Reade¹⁶⁹. What is more surprising is that this request was made less than two months after the Conference was held.

All these requests emphasise the variety of channels for the diffusion of planning ideas at the time, and the speed of those interchanges.

The Proceedings also contained a bibliography of books, reports, and town planning schemes. This included classics such as Nettlefold's *Practical Town-planning*, Pepler's *What Town Planning Means*, along with some very current American texts such as Ford's *Building Zones* and Shurtleff and Olmstead's *Carrying out the City Plan*¹⁷⁰. While the recommended town plans were both British, the recommended reports included those from Australia, Calcutta, Bombay and New York. This suggests that in these formative years those who were taking an interest in town planning, were drawing from a wide and range of sources. While in legislative terms New Zealand might look to British models, this probably reflects the fact that Britain offered an appropriate institutional context that the federal systems of Australia and America could not offer.

This internationalisation of the sources of town-planning ideas is attested to in an article by John Strauchon, the President of the Institute of Surveyors, in the *New Zealand Surveyor* in 1919. The article was intended for the Conference, but apparently missed the deadline. The detailed and very practical paper discussed what town planning schemes should deal with, how they might be implemented, and what structure should be put in place to undertake town planning work. The author demonstrated a close familiarity with European planning law, planning practice in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania in the United States, and planning legislation in Canada. Among the detailed prescriptions he provided was advocacy for the creation of an American style, local Town Planning Commission, and a fairly comprehensive zoning system which included two different variants of residential

zones¹⁷¹. He also was the first New Zealand writer to clearly distinguish garden cities, garden suburbs and garden villages¹⁷². Publication of the article in a professional journal such as the *New Zealand Surveyor* inevitably reduced the extent of its circulation.

The Demise of the Town Planning Bill

The conclusion of the Town Planning Conference was marked by a high level of optimism. In his closing speech Russell signalled that this was the first of many conferences, some of which in the future could be held in provincial centres¹⁷³. He also promised, "I shall bring before the Cabinet for its decision, the question of the appointment of a Town-planner without waiting for Parliament"¹⁷⁴. While such a sentiment may have inspired the delegates, it did express the worst of centralism, with its focus on executive power. It almost went without saying that town planning legislation would be passed in the next few months, particularly given that a Bill already existed which had now been through an extensive process of public critique and comment.

Almost prophetically, C.J. Parr as President of the Federation of Town Planning Associations, which had emerged out of the Wellington meeting in August 1917, in his closing address, complimented Russell on his furthering of the movement. However he stated that the town planning advocates would despair "if they had to start and educate another Minister in the matter of town-planning up to the high standard now reached"¹⁷⁵. Russell himself also raised the possibility that "it may not be my duty to try to pilot the Town-planning Bill through the House"¹⁷⁶. That a long term advocate of town planning such as George Russell might not be there to see

the legislation through was probably not something that any of the delegates had seriously contemplated. However, given the chaotic nature of politics at the time, anything was possible. The cracks that had been papered over from the splits in the Liberals in 1912, in the wartime National Ministry, were rapidly re-emerging. The National Ministry was dissolved in August 1919, to be replaced by a conservative Reform Ministry. Russell lost his seat in the elections in August 1919 and while that other supporter of town planning, Arthur Myers, held his seat until 1921, he was now in the Opposition. The influence and power of the Liberals was effectively at an end, with a string of conservative ministries governing until the then emerging Labour party took power in 1935. C.J. Parr, a Reform MP, remained as a town planning advocate in Parliament. Parr was Minister of Education and Public Health in Massey's Ministry¹⁷⁷, but was never directly involved in the Internal Affairs portfolio, where town planning was by now firmly located. In fact Internal Affairs was from then on served by a series of short lived or quite nondescript Ministers, most of whom, as we will see, took little interest in town planning. The first of these was John Hine, who lasted only months before being defeated in the 1919 elections. He was followed by Sir Francis Dillon Bell for a period of three months (3rd February 1920-14th May 1920), W.D. Stewart for almost two years (1st March 1921-27th June 1923), and finally R.F. Bollard for the balance of the term of the Ministry to 1926.

This succession of ministers was hardly conducive to promoting the new undertaking of town planning. In confused political times, with a conservative government, it was also probably not seen as a vote catching measure. There is some evidence of this within the Internal Affairs files. Prior to the Conference, for instance, the Soldiers' Mothers' League wrote to the Under-Secretary of Internal Affairs. They said that, "while applauding your proposal the League felt that until a

complete settlement has been made of the great and just demand upon the finances of the Dominion by the returned Soldiers for their future welfare, it could not in justice advocate any expenditure of public moneys in a direction of so little necessity as town planning"¹⁷⁸. The concern that had emerged during the War that town planning was an extravagant luxury was given new life by the economic problems that emerged at the War's end. This may explain the Conference delegates enthusiasm for connecting town planning and housing, a prospect that was lost later in 1919 with the introduction of separate legislation. This was the beginning of a widening split between the two issues. By 1936 an independent and large-scale housing programme was developed which ultimately came to undermine the achievements of the fledgling land use planning system that was being instituted under the planning legislation.

Some work was done on modifying the Bill prior to Russell's departure. From that material it was evident that a modified Bill would have emerged but that not all the changes sought by various proponents would have been achieved. For those who felt that British models provided the answer, there was a note of caution from the Solicitor-General. He pointed out to Newton that "New Zealand differs considerably from other places, particularly from England, in respect of existing legislation, local bodies already having very wide powers in the Dominion which similar bodies do not possess to such an extent in other places"¹⁷⁹. Such claims are hard to verify as there is little comparative work in the local body area. However the remote and isolated nature of early settlement in New Zealand was "not the stuff from which powerful centralised supervision was easily carved"¹⁸⁰. Thus there was a tendency to devolve tasks to local and ad hoc bodies, but this did not include major functions such as education that were a local body responsibility in Britain and a central

government one in New Zealand. Equally in New Zealand local body functions were often spread over a range of bodies such as the single purpose roads boards that emerged all over the country. There was nothing in New Zealand resembling the Local Government Board that played such a central role in Britain in town planning and a quite different distribution of responsibilities between the two levels of government. The Solicitor-General's claim led to an argument in the same Memo, that the issue in New Zealand would be to compel, through mandatory provisions, local bodies to use these powers. A draft Memo from the Law Draftsman to Newton seems to suggest only limited alterations to the Bill, mainly giving the proposed Town Planning Commission further powers, a strengthening of the provision requiring local bodies to prepare town planning schemes, and some redrafting of the financial provisions¹⁸¹. There is also, on the same file, an annotated copy of Bulletin Four from the Conference dealing with the resolutions from the Conference. In regard to the Recommendations of Committees One and Two which dealt with the Bill, it marks resolutions four, eight, eleven, and twelve, which dealt with reducing the Town Planning Commission to four persons, betterment, and the limits to the areas to come under subdivision control with "no comment". Similarly resolution three that would have included housing in the Act, had the words "and Housing" struck out¹⁸². While it is not clear who made these annotations they do suggest the Bill would have gone ahead with only minor modifications and that it would not have included housing.

The Professions and Town Planning

If by 1919 New Zealand did not actually have town planning legislation, there was at least, among some groups a feeling of inevitability that legislation would be achieved

in the near future. That feeling was, to some extent, fed by the propaganda which suggested town planning was the answer to a number of urban ills. It was the only comprehensive answer that could address both the problems of the existing urban fabric and that of the developing urban area.

The existence of draft legislation brought with it the prospect of work, but for whom? The answer was reliant on the concept of town planning that was adopted. Hurst Seager had addressed this in his critique of the Bill in July 1918, that has already been partly discussed above. He discussed at length what the term town planning meant, and acknowledged that various professional groups might have their own interpretation. For a civil and municipal engineer it was an efficient and economical means of supplying services; for a Health Officer and Council, a means of transforming slums; for the architect a way of achieving artistic urban layouts ; for the philanthropist a means to secure better conditions for workers and to the general public, "I fear it means nothing"¹⁸³. This acknowledgement of the existence of a series of competing views of the meaning and nature of town planning is interesting. It highlights the problem of producing a universal concept or understanding, which is necessary at the point town planning is implemented. At this stage however the existence of these different views allowed the concept to proceed as any group was always confident that their particular view represents the 'truth' which would, in turn, be implemented. In the absence of a group that could claim knowledge of that truth that is professional town planners as emerged so quickly in Britain, these competing views could and would continue.

Hurst Seager's comment on the lack of public understanding was followed by an almost despairing observation on the failure to establish that comprehension,

despite the time and money devoted to town planning propaganda. This tends to confirm the conclusion, that the 1914 Tour, while popular at the time, was largely regarded as interesting entertainment. All it did was to give a lift to, or a reaffirmation of the commitment of those enthusiastic amateurs who were already involved. Equally it meant that the concept of town planning used would be determined by the interested professions and the involved enthusiasts.

Britain had gone through a similar stage from 1900 onwards when legislation became increasingly likely. At that point, "The three interested professions of architects, civil engineers and surveyors began to dispute the right to direct it"¹⁸⁴. Each of these professions might regard themselves as having the primary interest because they all dealt with the development of land and the built environment. In Britain the battle for supremacy was to some extent thwarted by the early emergence of what could be called "town planning knowledge", which was propagated through journals such as *Town Planning Review*. Most of this knowledge was very much "how to do knowledge" as a glance at Nettlefold's *Practical Town Planning* would confirm. The Town Planning Institute was formed in 1914 and drew members from all three professions. The early movement was also sanguine as to the training that town planners required. There was an emphasis on what Cherry calls "a generalist approach as opposed to a specialist viewpoint"¹⁸⁵, that was based on the practitioner having some professional qualification in architecture, surveying and engineering which would be enhanced by specific post-graduate town planning training. It was no doubt a realistic approach as it is doubtful if there was a sufficient body of knowledge or a universal understanding, to produce a comprehensive course of study. However, what did quickly emerge in Britain was a group of people with professional qualifications in one of the three

areas, who by study or practical experience, had developed town planning skills and who now largely identified with and worked in the area.

The situation in New Zealand was quite different. New Zealand 's first member of the British Town Planning Institute was Samuel Hurst Seager, who was elected in October 1919¹⁸⁶, and was New Zealand's only member for a number of years. There was not a group of people who could claim specific specialist skills as town planners, so the field was open to the other professions. The delay in legislation probably served to further discourage development of a separate profession. The most obvious contenders, on overseas experience, were the architects. As a group they had only recently organised themselves into a recognised profession. The Institute of Architects was founded in October 1905, bringing together, in an association, the various voluntary groups of architects which existed around the country¹⁸⁷. The architects themselves found it difficult to achieve recognition of their profession through compulsory registration. Beauchamps-Platts details the struggles to convince Parliament to pass legislation to create a Registration Board and to require compulsory registration, but the Act was not passed until 1914. At the time, and in fact through the 1920s, architects trained largely in an apprenticeship-style scheme whereby students worked with practitioners while attending some lectures at Auckland and Canterbury Universities.

The civil engineers and surveyors, who had such an early and significant impact on the development of New Zealand, were professionalised at an earlier stage. The Institute of Surveyors had existed since 1888, with compulsory registration being achieved in 1900, again after a long struggle. For many years there was no clear distinction between the work of the surveyor and the engineer, and many would be

qualified in both. In fact as early as 1892 “gentlemen holding a Certificate or Diploma as Engineer”¹⁸⁸ were eligible to be Associate Members of the Institute of Surveyors. The surveyors fought a long and largely unsuccessful, battle to have surveying taught at a university, and instead had to rely on an apprenticeship scheme¹⁸⁹. However, they maintained an active and vigorous profession and conducted their own rigorous examination system. The engineers established a significant place in New Zealand, derived from their early and continuing contribution to the development of urban settlement and basic infrastructural elements such as roads, bridges and harbour works. This led to the rapid establishment in local and central government, of public works departments¹⁹⁰. University based training was also achieved by the engineers at a much earlier stage, with Canterbury University College, establishing a specialisation in engineering training, by 1905¹⁹¹. These professions like others could make a strong case for recognition and registration. The consequences for society and the economy were significant if an engineer produced a sub-standard design of where a surveyor’s plan was inaccurate. Despite this the technically based ‘newer’ professions did have to fight vigorously to secure the sanction of the state via registration. Town planning would always be at a disadvantage in this regard because their role was not yet established or could be regarded as encompassed in another profession’s work. Further the consequences of poor performance from a town planner may have been seen as easily able to be remedied and of little real consequence.

Hurst Seager, as an architect himself, was not surprisingly was in favour of architects leading the way. In a paper read to the Annual Meeting of the Institute of Architects in January 1919, he made a case for their involvement. Having traced the development of New Zealand cities and the prime role of architects in this, he

said “all this [ie layout of towns] was an architect’s work in the past, and it must be the architect’s work in the future, but it must be that of architects especially trained to include in their practice Town Planning activities”¹⁹². He excused their present lack of interest in such work as the consequence of their not being asked in the past, which has meant they “have not prepared themselves to give advice”¹⁹³. With a stunningly inaccurate observation about the existence of surveying and engineering schools at each university, overlooking the fact that the first Diploma of Surveying was not offered until 1930¹⁹⁴, he goes on to advocate that these subjects, with architecture and municipal law, become the basis of town planning training. It is very much the generalist approach that also marked the beginnings of the British profession.

The civil engineers and surveyors felt they had similar and better claims to primacy. This produced a quite hard-hitting exchange at the 1919 Town -Planning Conference between W. Ferguson, President of the New Zealand Society of Civil Engineers, and John Strauchan, President of the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors. It commenced with Ferguson’s claim that the Town-planning Commission should include two city engineers, as “engineering was the foundation of all town-planning”¹⁹⁵. He then went on to suggest that the surveyor’s representative could be removed, as surveying was only “part of the machinery put into operation after the engineering-work was done”¹⁹⁶. This ungenerous assessment and contingent proposal received support from two Reform MPs, A. K. Newman and J.P. Luke (who was also Mayor of Wellington) with the latter calling engineers “the principal ones in the Dominion; their experience on such a Commission would be invaluable”¹⁹⁷. A defence of surveying was raised by R.W.S. Ballantyne, of the Wellington Labour Representation Committee and former

employee of the Survey Department, who upheld the surveyors and stated that “there were engineers in the Dominion who were not qualified and their work had to be regarded with caution”¹⁹⁸. Strauchan gave a very measured reply that acknowledged the importance of both professions. The issue was eventually defused by Mr Paul, who said, that such specific decisions could be left to the time of the appointment of the Commission. He also pointed out that the Bill had somewhat loose wording in that it did not speak of an engineer or surveyor but “an expert in those matters”¹⁹⁹. While this was true, given the existence of their professional bodies, it was unlikely that they would not be consulted, and would not nominate one of their members.

Clearly there was careful thought by surveyors as to how they might operate the Act. They were, however, aware that the interest in the achievement of their client’s subdivisional plans might conflict with the greater community good which was such an integral part of town planning. A resolution put to the 1918 Annual General Meeting of the Institute of Surveyors, seeking to broaden the focus of the Institute’s activities from a material and pecuniary interest, to a broader interest including the ‘greater public interest’, at least partially acknowledged this²⁰⁰. This potential conflict between the private and public interest was something which limited the British surveyors’ involvement in colonisation of town planning, for they had “no universalising art with which to transcend the private interests of their clients”²⁰¹.

Nevertheless the surveyors continued to take an interest in legislation. One of the problems in this period was educating specifically trained town planners to form the core of the profession. The first university course in town planning, run by the Department of Civic Design at the University of Liverpool was established in March

1909 under Stanley Adshead²⁰². Adshead went on five years later to head the second university town planning course, at University College, London. In the period of Adshead's leadership at Liverpool, "the novelty of town planning as a subject of study meant that he never had more than ten students"²⁰³, and in the war years of 1916 and 1917 numbers dropped to three and seven respectively²⁰⁴. However, "Adshead like all the rest of town planning's first teachers and practitioners, had to learn the job as he went along"²⁰⁵. There was little in the way of town planning theory, and few examples of practice to represent a disciplinary or unique body of knowledge, on which to base a profession. Those who purported to teach or practice town planning, were inevitably influenced by their original professional training. This tendency was to persist for many years.

There was no clear belief in New Zealand, at least among the interested press, that the architects should be the natural recipients of the town planning role. Wheeler stated quite pointedly that "we have always looked to the architectural profession for the greatest help in forwarding the principles of town planning but experience from the Conference shows that in the main, the architects of New Zealand sadly failed to grasp the opportunity"²⁰⁶. He added that, "the lack of active interest in great questions such as town planning and housing tends to lower them in the regard of the general public"²⁰⁷. Engineers, in contrast, were deemed "well in evidence" and "very useful members of the Conference"²⁰⁸. This was a very harsh assessment given Hurst Seager, an architect, was the Conference organiser and another architect, Reginald Ford, had given an excellent paper at the Conference. Other architects did promote town planning and a piece in the *Evening Star* by Edward Anscombe, a leading Dunedin architect, tried to emphasise that town planning was more than the expensive and artistic remodelling of cities²⁰⁹. He also claimed, in the

same article, that he had tried to initiate a Town Planning Committee in Dunedin and that the idea had been forwarded to the Amenities Society. This seems to be supported by the minutes of the Amenities Society²¹⁰. The various branches of the Institute of Architects had also played an important role in organising Davidge and Reade's Town Planning Tour in 1914. Perhaps what the architects suffered from was too close an association in the public mind, with the potentially more expensive aspects of town planning in the form of civic improvement. Certainly in the British context the architects saw town planning as a means of "forcing an entry into the realm of public, municipal works"²¹¹.

Which profession would triumph and colonise town planning, in the absence of a separate dedicated town planning profession, depended very much on what it was to deal with. If town planning was to be linked to housing and general municipal upgrades and improvements then the architects had to have a strong case for dominance, given their design skills. If town planning was to focus on layout of new urban areas and their linkage to existing urban areas then the surveyors had an equally rightful claim. The engineers, however, had an interest in both cases as they had the skills to create the physical service infrastructure to allow the new and existing urban areas to function. If however, town planning was to involve all these skills then clearly all the professions needed to be involved under the co-ordination of a single person – "the town planner". Alternatively, we return to the generalist approach which was current in Britain, where a person with existing professional skills would take further training in town planning. Whatever the case, until the legislation was finalised, all the professions could lay claim to town planning with no outright winner being immediately evident.

In America a professional institute emerged in 1917, made up of a plethora of professions. Of the fifty-two charter members, “14 were landscape architects, 13 engineers, 6 attorneys, 5 architects, 4 retailers, 2 publishers,”²¹² and the rest were drawn from assorted interest groups. Diverse in their backgrounds, they represented the people who “had prepared most of the city plans commissioned by American Municipalities and civic organizations since 1905”²¹³. In this case the professional organisation grew not out of a single professional group but from those who had actually worked in city planning. In short, it was an approach of ‘learn as you go’, which appeared to value practical experience over training. It was a model where the profession grew out of the enthusiasts who took up the cause and who created the knowledge as they went. Other than the involvement of landscape architects, who were slow to gain recognition in Britain, it is not a model that is very dissimilar from that in Britain. This rather casual approach to professionalism in planning reflected a prevailing view of the time. In America John Adams, used to the more formal structures which were created in Britain and which were recreated in Canada, was surprised by the attitude of his friend G.B. Ford who “argued that planning was too broad a subject to be a separate profession”²¹⁴. As Simpson observed, the American City Planning Institute eventually organised itself on a more professional basis in 1927 but did not become “purposeful” until 1938²¹⁵. They did, in short, survive for a long time without any formal approaches to qualifications or registration, two essential hallmarks of a profession. It was a model that New Zealand, through force of circumstances, might come to replicate.

Leigh Hunt: The Gadfly Propagandist

No discussion of this period would be complete without reference to A. Leigh Hunt's booklet "*Town Planning: What Is It?*" Leigh Hunt was a prosperous entrepreneurial businessman who was very much caught up in the progressive spirit of his time. For Leigh Hunt, progressivism would have meant economic development that brought wealth and improved life styles to everyone. He was a vigorous advocate of town planning through his role in the GWTP & MEA, and can only be described as a veritable town planning gadfly. With the confidence that marked all his work, he intruded upon arrangements for the 1919 Conference, pushing for a greater involvement for his Association²¹⁶. This led Hurst Seager to write, in exasperation, after the Conference that "if the movement is to succeed there must be no dissension among those who have its interests at heart"²¹⁷. Ultimately Leigh Hunt got his way and was allowed to distribute a copy of his publication to each delegate. He also took a full part in the Conference, though as a commentator rather than as a paper presenter.

The pamphlet, while positioning itself as a part of the "naturally progressive community of New Zealand"²¹⁸, produced a rather eclectic discussion of various aspects of town planning including fulsome quotes from all sorts of sources, including literary ones. It did, however, have a quite detailed description of what should be included in a town-planning scheme, which appeared to combine a basic zoning system, separating different types of land uses, with some garden suburb type considerations. It also made modest suggestions about "the re-planning of existing towns"²¹⁹. He was in no doubt that New Zealand immediately needed both a Town-planning Act and an expert town planner. He ended with a plug for the

“recently formed Federation of Town Planning Associations”²²⁰ and gave some local examples where improvements might be made in and around Wellington. The concept of town planning in Leigh Hunt’s pamphlet, is one where planning would deal with both the existing and emerging parts of the urban fabric. In so doing it would create efficient and healthful urban areas developed in an effective and competent manner. There is much more concentration on aspects of implementation than in earlier town planning propaganda. There is certainly a strong resemblance to some of the matters that were proposed in Strauchan’s paper of the same year.

Durie Hill: A Second Attempt At A Garden Suburb

New Zealand’s second acknowledged attempt at a garden suburb came in 1919, after the Conference, and in the most unlikely location of Wanganui. While records of the development are sparse, it is likely Hurst Seager was engaged to do the work due to his earlier associations with Wanganui as the judge of the Art Gallery competition in 1916. He maintained an involvement with Wanganui civic centre developments and the Borough Council well into the late 1920s²²¹. The land in question bordered the outer edge of Wanganui’s urban development. It belonged to W.F. Polson, a local farmer and landowner who had been active on the Wanganui County Council and other local groups²²². The question must arise as to why Polson, as Hurst Seager was so quick to point out, “desire[ed] that the estate should be developed on true garden suburb lines which gave the greatest possible benefit to those who will occupy the houses, rather than to lay out the sites in the ordinary way in which the greatest amount of return is given to the vendor”²²³. The obvious explanations are that it was either a marketing ploy or philanthropy. Polson certainly

did not seem to have any connections with town planning groups or even the local beautifying society. The explanation may be more complex, and lie in Polson's earlier life and his marriage. Born into a farming family he did not get on with his father. After a few years of farming with him, and in the face of a "threatened nervous breakdown", he moved into journalism from about 1880 to 1906²²⁴. In that profession he worked for the *Evening Post* and *The Press*, eventually becoming night editor of the *Evening News*. This may have brought him into contact with some of the ideas of the early town planning propagandists. On his return to Wanganui he married, in 1909, Florence Wilson of Melbourne, and in July 1919 it was reported that he and his wife had returned from an extended visit to Queensland. There was a suggestion that this stay had exceeded six months²²⁵, which may have allowed him to visit the Exhibits at the Brisbane Town Planning Conference. He would certainly have been able to view examples of garden suburbs in Australia at the time. This however must remain speculative.

The site was located on elevated land above Wanganui that is still quite removed from most of Wanganui's development and accessible only by steep and winding roads. The development of such a site was made possible by the installation of the famous Durie Hill Elevator that was financed by Polson and his brother-in-law, Brigadier-General Wilson. Originally envisaged as a cable car, it was described at the time as an "unique enterprise" and a "community asset"²²⁶. Discussing the design of the subdivision, Hurst Seager stated that "in carrying out the principles of a garden suburb not only must the site be subdivided for the houses but there must be a good preparation laid out for the amenities of life"²²⁷. The plan, which was reproduced for *New Zealand Building Progress*, marked the large gullies that cut through the site as being developed for "vegetables and fruit growing" and "

orchards and dairy farms²²⁸. These were presumably to contribute to the amenities of the area of which Hurst Seager spoke. At this point one must ask if Hurst Seager was at all familiar with the site. The gullies concerned were typical deep gutted gullies that grow little except gorse. The large one between Eastway and Westway that was earmarked for fruit and vegetable was hardly a likely candidate without extensive terracing. In this respect Hurst Seager appeared to be harking back to the arcadian rural layout of his soldier settlement design of 1918. In this he was showing his ignorance of site layout, as his 1918 design was definitely not usable on anything but a flat site, and patently unsuitable for subdividing to produce urban sections. There is no evidence that the subdivision was anything but a commercial undertaking intended to produce sections for those who worked in Wanganui. It certainly was not an attempt to create a rural village, and was probably land from which Polson gained little return from farming.

Hurst Seager did emphasise narrow and curvilinear streets in his design, which would have been unusual in an era of grid-iron layouts. This perhaps was as much a response to the topography as a specific design feature. It is that narrowness however, that makes them difficult roads in the era of the motor vehicle. The plan was lauded in the local paper as “a true garden suburb” which “will act as an object lesson to New Zealand”²²⁹. In a letter in the same month Hurst Seager praised the involvement of the Council, which was in fact quite minimal, saying “the first Garden Suburb of New Zealand is at Wanganui and will be under the direction of Mr Staverley (Borough Engineer) and a sympathetic Council”²³⁰. What was never mentioned in the newspaper report was Hurst Seager’s idea, explained in *New Zealand Building Progress*, that the suburb be developed as a co-operative association with leasing rather than individual ownership of sites. Freeholding, he

stated, was a “system.....not in favour with those who wish to see the suburbs developed on sound and artistic lines”²³¹. In this respect he was trying to replicate the co-operative ownership models of the early garden city movement, where any profit made from the development was retained within the community. This seems quite unrealistic an approach as even Letchworth, a much bigger undertaking, took a decade to pay a dividend²³². It seems doubtful that any private developer at the time, particularly with such a small development, as Durie Hill was hardly a suburb, would have entered such an arrangement.

Hurst Seager, as both Schrader and Haarhof accept, was disappointed with the outcome at Durie Hill, and blamed it on the owner not keeping “control over the whole estate by leasing sections under proper building covenants”²³³. As an inspection of the area shows, development hardly raced away. There are relatively few houses from the 1920s in the suburb and many from the decades that followed, including State houses. Hurst Seager, must have departed on an extended tour of Britain almost immediately after the scheme was drawn up. He had so little contact with the development that in 1925 he wrote to the Town Clerk in Wanganui to borrow a copy of the plan, because “he did not know the agent to whom the plan was given”²³⁴. All of this suggests that Hurst Seager was not closely associated with Durie Hill and that Polson, as the developer, was as much interested in a ‘modern’ layout for his project, as creating an example of a garden suburb.

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with a relatively short period. It was however a period in which the town planning movement both grew and matured. The town planning

enthusiasts who had depended so much on the overseas examples with their emphasis on slums, and the concerns of the older and more decayed cities of the Old World, had begun to formulate a New Zealand concept of town planning. While that concept still often contained a distinct element of housing or civic improvement, it also was more positive and looked forward to how town planning might be instituted. The process of adaptation of overseas ideas was well underway and the beginnings of a New Zealand concept of town planning, was emerging. That inevitably reflected the nature of New Zealand society and government. Hence the concern in New Zealand with ensuring the legislation compelled local bodies to use their new powers.

Perhaps what is most surprising is the range of sources from which the enthusiasts drew. There is clear knowledge of, and adaptation of, ideas from the United States, Canada, Britain and Australia. While the two Conferences in Australia probably provided relevant material from a similar culture, and established Hurst Seager's role in the early movement, they were a small part of the overall diffusion of planning knowledge to New Zealand. There is certainly no indication that New Zealand was not, at least in a minor way, part of the international town planning movement, connected by personal relationships, correspondence, and an increasing array of literature. The latter included the journal *New Zealand Building Progress* that kept readers aware of developments in New Zealand and overseas.

It was also a period when agreement was achieved among such diverse players as Russell and A. Leigh Hunt that there was a need for a trained town planner to be employed in New Zealand to progress town planning. This in turn emphasised the on-going role of the central state in town planning, for that person, in the various

models proposed, was to be part of a specific Town-planning Department. There was however an equal recognition, reflected in the proposed legislation, that town planning through town planning schemes was essentially a local activity and had, therefore, to be located in the communities it served. While the legislation proposed in 1917 would have created an uneven relationship between the central and local state, with the former playing a supervisory role, it did reflect the fact that local government in New Zealand had developed along different lines and was probably undertaking fewer functions than in Britain. It was the lack of a unified local government structure, and the small size of most local body units, that made the independent City Planning Commission model, so widely used in America, an unlikely option in New Zealand. The need for local body reform was recognised early by men such as Myers, and the lack of progress in achieving this always impeded the progress of town planning.

Once again in this period, legislation was close but never quite achieved. Equally, once again it failed not because of any real rejection of the concept of town planning and what it might do or not do, but because of politics. Russell's 1917 Town-planning Bill was only going to gain acceptance if it was continually and forcefully advocated within party and Parliamentary circles. Russell fulfilled that job admirably and the 1917 Bill was probably subject to more consultation and comment than most Bills of its time. What was wrong was the timing. The chaotic political conditions that followed the demise of the National Ministry, which was compounded by Russell's defeat, ensured that a low priority Bill such as this would be lost. As in 1911, when Fowlds had left, there was no advocate in the right place to push for the measure. The lack of a broader constituency within Parliament, and within the

community itself, allowed the measure to be dropped. This highlights the danger of overestimating the strength and depth of commitment to town planning at the time.

In his speech to the 1919 Conference Myers said “the present Conference marks the opening of a new era in the history of town planning in New Zealand”²³⁵, while Russell in his concluding address called it “a large step forward”²³⁶. In fact the Conference was a terminal point, the first and last time that the enthusiasts would join together to discuss their commonly held views and to debate the issues. The Conference was largely an opportunity for the enthusiasts who had powered the movement to develop and expound their ideas and, hopefully, to persuade the local body delegates to adopt the version of planning they expounded, when they received their powers under the soon to be passed legislation. As Schrader acknowledges²³⁷, there was little room for radical voices. The environmental determinism which underlay the garden city movements, that is the belief that open healthy surroundings would effectively cure all social ills, was still generally taken as given. The only really cautionary note was sounded by Reginald Ford who pointed out in his garden suburb paper, that gardens were all very well but what if the workers didn’t have time to maintain them?²³⁸ On a sharper note, M.J. Readon of the Workers Educational Association, pointed out that if there was real concern about housing then why were existing powers not being used to build houses for returned soldiers and workers?²³⁹ Such views were in the minority, and were probably lost among the enthusiasm of the majority. Such enthusiasm was undoubtedly enhanced by the almost euphoric hopes for the post-war world. There was a strong desire to ensure that the sacrifices of war would not be in vain. Generally the Conference was long on ideas but short on practical solutions. Given the solid middle class nature of the movement this was hardly unexpected. They

were the only group who had the time and resources to devote to the movement. Town planning must also at times been in danger of being seen as just a means of papering over the crack of an inherently unjust society, though its untested nature meant that it remained as a potential solution to some real and urgent problems. There may also have been the suspicion that town planning would only place an extra cost on new housing, despite its advocates stressing its efficiency, and that this would become another reason to slow the delivery of housing and improved urban environments to the workers who needed them.

One must also question how the 1917 Bill might have worked in practice. It included complex arrangements to deal with development that traversed local authority boundaries, a situation which was almost inevitable given the disorganised and fragmented nature of local government, particularly in the large cities. The concerns that had been around for many years over the disorganised nature of local body administration were always a hurdle to the institution of a logical and workable planning system. This was to be an on-going problem. There was also the question of who might actually do the town planning work proposed by the Bill. There were no trained town planners in the country at the time and the various professional groups were still jostling for position as to which would take on this new responsibility. If the Bill had been instituted there may, despite the enthusiasm being expressed in 1919, have been mass non-compliance when the reality of the work involved was realised. Given there was no accepted universal concept of what town planning was, let alone what and how a scheme would institute it, it was probably a situation where each local authority made the most optimistic assessment of what had to be done and how it might be achieved. In many ways

this was the heyday of the movement, when the magnificence of the vision was unsullied by the realities and costs of implementation.

¹ Oliver, W. H 1960 *The Story of New Zealand*, Faber & Faber, London, p171

² Bassett, M. 1998 *The State in New Zealand 1840-1984: Socialism Without Doctrines?*, Auckland University Press, p130

³ See Bassett, M 1997 *The Mother of All Departments :The History of the Department of Internal Affairs*, Auckland University Press/Historical Branch, Dept. Of Internal Affairs, Auckland, p72 and for specifics of the situation in Auckland, Bush, G 1971 *Decently and in Order: The Centennial History of Auckland City Council, 1840-1971*, Collins/ACC, Auckland,p211-216

⁴ Oliver,op.cit.,p168

⁵ *New Zealand Building Progress*, June,1916,p638

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ *New Zealand Building Progress*,December,1915, p 490

⁸ *ibid.*,p498

⁹ *The Press*,24 July 1916

¹⁰ *New Zealand Building Progress*, September,1916,p716. The fixation on straight streets was well established in New Zealand by the surveyors who used, almost exclusively grid iron street layouts. This represented the surveying orthodoxy of the time and was regarded as providing for efficient use of land, economical servicing and creating healthy environments. This is more fully discussed in Hargreaves, R, 1990 *The Grid Pattern of Our Towns*, *Town Planning Quarterly*, No.58, March ,p10-12

¹¹ The WEA had secure middle class origins. For discussion of this see Shuker, R. 1984 *Educating the Workers ? : A History of the Workers' Education Association in New Zealand*,Dunmore Press, Palmerston North.

¹² Wilkes, C 1993 *The State as an Historical Subject* in Roper, B & Rudd, C(ed.) *State and Economy* Oxford University Press, Auckland, p 200

¹³ Minutes of Executive Committee,15 October,.1917, Christchurch Beautifying Association, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch

¹⁴ *New Zealand Building Progress*, December, 1915,p490

¹⁵ Reade to WCC,31st January, 1918,on WCC: Town Clerks Correspondence File 1917/1354, Wellington City Council Archive.

¹⁶ Letter Town Clerk to Reade, 29th January 1918, on Town Clerks Correspondence File 1917/1354, Wellington City Council Archive.

¹⁷ City of Dunedin Departmental Reports, 1919-11, Dunedin City Archive, Dunedin

¹⁸ See for instance IA Series 1, File 19/275/2 Pt.1, National Archives, Wellington.

¹⁹ Letter Library of Congress to Herdman, 5th May 1914, on IA Series 1 F 19/275/2 Pt.1

²⁰ Report of Town Planning Branch 1915, Dunedin Amenities and Town planning Society, Hocken Library, Dunedin

²¹ Abercrombie, P 1913 *International Contributions to the Study of Town Planning and City Organisation*, *Town Planning Review*, Vol VI,No 12, July,p98-117

²² Abercrombie, P 1915 *Town planning Literature : A Brief Summary of Its Present Extent*,*Town Planning Review*, Vol. VI, No2, October,p77-100

²³ Annual Report of Town Planning Branch 1915, Dunedin Amenities and Town Planning Society, Hocken Library, Dunedin, p9

²⁴ *New Zealand Building Progress*, August 1917,p.1038

²⁵ *Dominion*, 18th August,1917

²⁶ Parr had been a very active and progressive Mayor of Auckland from 1911-15, having been a Councillor from 1899 –1911. He was a firm believer in town planning and tried to promote its institution in his time as Mayor – see Bush op.cit.,p216 –217 for further discussion. He was also the first local body politician to promote the development of Orakei as a model of a garden suburb – see

- Miller, C. 1996 Reginald Hammond and the Development of Orakei in Dingle, T. 1996 *Proceedings of the Third Australian Planning History/Urban History Conference*, Monash University, Melbourne, 27
- ²⁷ *Dominion*, 16th August, 1917
- ²⁸ *New Zealand Building Progress*, August 1917, p1038
- ²⁹ *ibid.*
- ³⁰ There is some confusion on this point. *The Dominion* reports that the Deputation spoke to the Prime Minister (see *Dominion* 18th August, 1917). However the more detailed report in *New Zealand Building Progress*, probably written by Charles Wheeler, who may have been part of the deputation and who was certainly at the Conference, the Deputation spoke to Russell, the Minister of Internal Affairs. This seems the more likely given Massey had little interest in the area and the Deputation appeared to arrive with little notice.
- ³¹ *New Zealand Building Progress*, August 1917, p1038
- ³² *ibid.*
- ³³ *New Zealand Herald*, 18th August 1917. Note that Reade's name is mis-spelt in the article.
- ³⁴ *ibid.*
- ³⁵ *New Zealand Building Progress*, August 1917, p1038
- ³⁶ *ibid.*
- ³⁷ Meller, H. 1995 Philanthropy and public enterprise: International Exhibitions and the Modern Town Planning Movement, 1889-1913, *Planning Perspectives*, 10, p295
- ³⁸ *ibid.*, p 303
- ³⁹ Hutchings, A. & Bunker, R. 1986 *With Conscious Purpose: A History of Town Planning in South Australia*, Wakefield Press/RTPI (SA), Adelaide, p53
- ⁴⁰ See for instance Reade to Mayor of Wellington, 7th August 1917, WCC Town Clerks Correspondence File, 1917/1354, Wellington City Archive.
- ⁴¹ Reade, C 1917 *Official Volume of Proceedings of the First Australian Town Planning and Housing Conference and Exhibition*, Adelaide, South Australian Government Printer, Adelaide, p15
- ⁴² *ibid.*, p8
- ⁴³ *ibid.*, p7
- ⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p8
- ⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p82
- ⁴⁶ GWTPA&MEA to Russell, 19th April 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington
- ⁴⁷ Minutes Executive Committee, 19th June 1918, Christchurch Beautifying Association, Canterbury Museum, Christchurch and Minutes Town Planning Branch, 27 July 1918, Dunedin Amenities and Town Planning Society, Hocken Library, Dunedin
- ⁴⁸ Memo MIA to Under-Sec. Internal Affairs, 1st June 1918, on IA S1 F19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁴⁹ *Dominion*, 11th June 1918
- ⁵⁰ Memo Hislop to Blow, 13th June 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁵¹ Letter Ell to PM, 20th June 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington. Ell was a Liberal and would have been a colleague of Russell's for many years.
- ⁵² Handwritten note Russell to Hislop, 26th June 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁵³ Letter Hurst Seager to Director of Mines, 31st October 1918. on IA S1 File 144/1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁵⁴ Letter Hurst Seager to Russell 27 June 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt. 2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁵⁵ Anon. 1918 *Official Proceeding of the Second Australian Town Planning Conference and Exhibition*, Queensland Government Printer, Brisbane, p17
- ⁵⁶ Hurst Seager, S. 1919 *Town-Planning: Report to Hon. The Minister of Internal Affairs on the Brisbane Town-Planning Conference and the Dominion*, Government Printer, Wellington, p 1
- ⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p1
- ⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p 9
- ⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p 17

- ⁶⁰ For a discussion of these settlements see Powell, J. 1971 Soldier Settlement in New Zealand 1915-1923, *Australian Geographical Studies*, 9, 144-160 and Gould, A 1992 Soldier Settlement in New Zealand after World War I : A Reconsideration in Somers, J & Ward, T (eds.) *An ANZAC Muster : War and Society in Australia and New Zealand 1914-18 and 1939-45*, Monash University, Melbourne, p114-129
- ⁶¹ Proceedings – Queensland ,op.cit., p189
- ⁶² *ibid.*, p87-99
- ⁶³ *ibid.*, p191
- ⁶⁴ Financial Statement, 1913, *Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives (AJHR)*, B6.
- ⁶⁵ New Zealand Parliamentary Debates(PD), 30th June 1914, Vol. 168, p125
- ⁶⁶ Report of the Deputation to the Minister of Internal Affairs, 23rd August, 1917, on IA S1, File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁶⁷ PD, 30th October, 1917, Vol. 181, p655
- ⁶⁸ Memo from Russell, 25th June 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁶⁹ *ibid.*
- ⁷⁰ *New Zealand Building Progress*, September, 1917, p5
- ⁷¹ *ibid.*, p 6
- ⁷² On IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁷³ Bassett,,op.cit., p140. Further discussion on Russell's stand in the public health area is covered in the same book particularly p 140-141
- ⁷⁴ Memo Russell to Unknown, 25th June 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington
- ⁷⁵ *New Zealand Building Progress*,op.cit.,p6
- ⁷⁶ Letter Town Clerk, ACC to Russell, 18 June 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁷⁷ Letter WWEA to Russell, 10th July 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁷⁸ The dates for this are a little confusing. A copy of Hurst Seager's critique is initially by Russell on 18th July 1918 and the analysis of the critique is dated 31st July 1918. Hurst Seager appears to have traveled via Sydney suggesting that the critique must have been written prior to 18th July 1918 to allow him sufficient travel time. The critique is undated
- ⁷⁹ Critique, 18th July 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁸⁰ *ibid.*
- ⁸² *ibid.*,p4
- ⁸³ *ibid.*,p5
- ⁸⁴ *ibid.*,p4
- ⁸⁵ *ibid.*,p3
- ⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p5
- ⁸⁷ Memo Newton(?) to Russell, 31st July 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁸⁸ Hurst Seager, op.cit.,p6
- ⁸⁹ *ibid.*, p104
- ⁹⁰ *ibid.*,p104
- ⁹¹ *Dominion*, 5th September,1918
- ⁹² DA&TPA to Russell,8th October,1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2,National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁹³ *ibid.*
- ⁹⁴ *ibid.*
- ⁹⁵ *ibid.*
- ⁹⁶ Letter GWTPA&ME to Russell, 5th November, 1918, IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁹⁷ *ibid.*
- ⁹⁸ Macdonald, C., Penfold, M. & Williams, B 1991 *The Book of New Zealand Women*, Bridget Williams Books,Wellington,p437
- ⁹⁹ Letter DBC to Russell,15th November,1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.

- ¹⁰⁰ Letter Civic League to Russell, 29th November, 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁰¹ Adams, J. 1994 *The Auckland Scenery Conservation Society and the Auckland Civic League : A Snapshot of Two Pioneer Conservation Societies, New Zealand Historic Places Auckland Branch Newsletter*, July, p1-2
- ¹⁰² Letter Weller to Massey, 29th November, 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁰³ See *Evening Post*, 17th October, 1918 ; *Evening Star*, 25th November. 1918.
- ¹⁰⁴ The central body of the Town Planning Associations seemed at this stage to have undertaken a name change and were now styling themselves the Federated Town Planning Association of New Zealand rather than the simpler Town Planning Association of New Zealand. The lack of records makes the tracking of such changes difficult. In this thesis the title used is the one given in the quoted correspondence.
- ¹⁰⁵ Letter Hurst Seager to Russell, 11th December 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt3, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁸ Hurst Seager, *op.cit.*, p14
- ¹⁰⁹ Hurst Seager to Russell, 25th September, 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹¹⁰ *ibid.*
- ¹¹¹ Hurst Seager to Russell, 13th December, 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹¹² Note Dated 14 December 1918, Letter Hurst Seager to Russell 13th December, 1918, on IA S1 19/275/2, Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹¹² Comment Newton, on Undated Memo Hurst Seager to Russell, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.4, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹¹³ *ibid.*
- ¹¹⁴ Hurst Seager to Russell, 13th December, 1918, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹¹⁵ Memo Hurst Seager to Russell, May? 1919, on IA S1 File 19/275/2 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹¹⁶ *ibid.*
- ¹¹⁷ *ibid.*
- ¹¹⁸ Hurst Seager (ed.) 1919a *Official Volume of Proceedings of the First New Zealand Town-Planning Conference and Exhibition*, Government Printer, Wellington, p39
- ¹¹⁹ *ibid.*, p9
- ¹²⁰ *ibid.*, p7
- ¹²¹ This period and the unrest of the time is well covered in Burdon, R. 1965 *The New Dominion : A Social and Political History of New Zealand*, AH & AW Reed, Wellington, p26-31
- ¹²² Hurst Seager - Proceedings, *op.cit.*, p7
- ¹²² PD, Vol.158, 30th October, 1917, p656.
- ¹²³ Report of the Influenza Epidemic Commission, 1919, AJHR, H-31A,
- ¹²⁴ *ibid.*, p31
- ¹²⁵ Hurst Seager - Proceedings, *op.cit.*, p167
- ¹²⁶ Scholefield, G. 1932 *Who's Who in New Zealand*, 3rd Edition, Rangitira Press, Wellington, p268
- ¹²⁷ Hurst Seager - Proceedings. *op.cit.*, p133
- ¹²⁷ *ibid.*, p158
- ¹²⁸ *ibid.*, p172
- ¹²⁹ Ferguson, G. 1994 *Building the New Zealand Dream*, Historical Branch, Dept of Internal Affairs/Dunmore Press, Wellington, p83
- ¹³⁰ Report of Influenza Commission, *op.cit.*, p31
- ¹³¹ See Ferguson, *op.cit.*, p80 -91
- ¹³² Hurst Seager - Proceedings, *op.cit.*, p44-58
- ¹³³ *ibid.*, p46

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- ¹³⁴ *ibid.*,p51-77
- ¹³⁵ Report of the Influenza Commission,op.cit.,p36-40
- ¹³⁶ Hurst Seager-Proceedings,op.cit.,p96-100
- ¹³⁷ *ibid.*,p78-89
- ¹³⁸ *ibid.*,p87
- ¹³⁹ *ibid.*,p87
- ¹⁴⁰ See Hurst Seager-Proceedings,op.cit., p5-7
- ¹⁴¹ Town-Planning Conference,op.cit.
- ¹⁴² Hurst Seager-Proceedings, op.cit.,p195
- ¹⁴³ *ibid.*,p195
- ¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*,p196
- ¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p198
- ¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*,p226
- ¹⁴⁷ Ferguson, op.cit.,p64
- ¹⁴⁸ Hurst Seager-Proceedings, op.cit.,p227
- ¹⁴⁹ *ibid.*,p281
- ¹⁵⁰ *ibid.*,p206
- ¹⁵¹ *ibid.*,p204
- ¹⁵² *ibid.*,p274
- ¹⁵³ See *Evening Post*, 21st May,1919, *New Zealand Times*, 24th May 1919, *Dominion*, 23 May 1919.
- ¹⁵⁴ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 11th July 1919
- ¹⁵⁵ *New Zealand Building Progress*, June 1919,p 517-527
- ¹⁵⁶ *ibid.*,p517
- ¹⁵⁷ *ibid.*,p517
- ¹⁵⁸ Dunedin City Council Departmental Report 1919/20, Dunedin City Council, Dunedin City Archive, Dunedin,
- ¹⁵⁹ *Otago Daily Times*, 5th April, 1919
- ¹⁶⁰ Letter CPL to Mayor CCC,28th May 1919, on CH342CPO,CCC Inward Correspondence, National Archives, Christchurch
- ¹⁶¹ Letter Hurst Seager to Mayor CCC, 16th Junc 1919,on Ch342CPO CCC Inward Correspondence, National Archives, Christchurch
- ¹⁶² Memo Newton to Russell, 2 May 1919, on IA S141 File 141/9, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁶³ Letter University Senate to Hurst Seager, 31st March 1919, on IA S141 File 141/12, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁶⁴ See IA S1 File 34/11, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁶⁵ IBC to Internal Affairs, 6th December,1919, on IA S1 File 34/11, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁶⁶ See IA S1 File 34/11, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁶⁷ Letter to Hurst Seager 29th November 1919,on IA S1 File 34/11, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁶⁸ Letter Mumford to Hurst Seager, 18th October 1919, on IA S1 File 34/11, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁶⁹ Letter Mische to Hurst Seager, 8th July 1919,on IA S1 File 34/11, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁷⁰ Hurst Seager-Proceedings,op.cit.,p287
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- ¹⁷² *ibid.*,p161
- ¹⁷³ Hurst Seager-Proceedings, op.cit.,p276
- ¹⁷⁴ *ibid.*,p276
- ¹⁷⁵ *ibid.*,p 271
- ¹⁷⁶ *ibid.*,p277
- ¹⁷⁷ Parr served as Minister of Education under Massey, and then Coates from 1920 to 1926. He was Minister of Public Health from 1920 to 23, Minister of Justice from 1923 to 26 and spent shorter periods with a range of other responsibilities including the position of Post-Master General.
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- ¹⁷⁹ Memo Newton to Russell, 5th May 1919, on National Archives, Wellington,on IA S1 File 34/4, National Archives, Wellington.

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- ¹⁸² Bulletin Four, on IA S1 File 34/5 Pt. 1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁸³ Critique, July 1918, op.cit.
- ¹⁸⁴ Sutcliffe, A. 1981a *Towards the Planned City : Germany, Britain, the United States and France, 1780-1914*, St Martin's Press, New York, p75
- ¹⁸⁵ Cherry, G. 1974 *The Evolution of British Town Planning*, Leonard Hill Books, Leighton Buzzard p 56
- ¹⁸⁶ Personal Communication, Membership Secretary, RTPI, 2nd Sept. 1999
- ¹⁸⁷ Beauchamps-Platts, W. 1919 The Profession of Architecture in New Zealand, *Journal of the American Institute of Architects*, Vol.7, January p22-24
- ¹⁸⁸ McRae, J. 1989 *New Zealand Institute of Surveyors 1888-1988*, New Zealand Institute of Surveyors, Dunedin,p 134
- ¹⁸⁹ Parton, H. 1979 *The University of New Zealand*, Auckland University Press/ Oxford University Press, Auckland,p145-146
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- ¹⁹¹ Parton,op.cit., p33
- ¹⁹² Hurst Seager, S 1919b Town Planning and Architects Responsibilities in Relation Thereto, *New Zealand Institute of Architects Proceedings*,p41
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- ¹⁹⁴ McRae,op.cit.,p136
- ¹⁹⁵ Hurst Seager-Proceedings,op.cit.,p199
- ¹⁹⁶ *ibid*.,p199-200
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- ¹⁹⁸ *ibid*., p200
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- ²⁰¹ Hawtree, M 1981 The Emergence of the Town Planning Profession in Sutcliffe, A. (ed) *British Town Planning : The Formative Years*, Leicester University Press/ St Martins Press, Leicester,p78
- ²⁰² Wright, M 1982 *Lord Leverhulme's Unknown Venture : The Lever Chair and the Beginnings of Town and Regional Planning, 1908-48*, Hutchinson Benham, London
- ²⁰³ *ibid*.,p75
- ²⁰⁴ *ibid*.,p 91
- ²⁰⁵ *ibid*., p87
- ²⁰⁶ *New Zealand Building Progress*, 1919,June,p518
- ²⁰⁷ *ibid*.,p518
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- ²¹⁰ Minutes Dunedin Amenities and Town Planning Society, 26th February 1915, Hocken Library, Dunedin.
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- ²¹³ *ibid*.,p166
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²²² Obituary W.F. Polson, *Wanganui Chronicle*, 10th October,1990
²²³ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 4th July 1919
²²⁴ Obituary,op.cit.
²²⁵ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 12th July 1918
²²⁶ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 4th July 1918
²²⁷ *ibid.*
²²⁸ *New Zealand Building Progress*, November 1919,p640
²²⁹ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 4th July,1919
²³⁰ Letter Hurst Seager to Town Clerk,WBC, 20th July 1919, on Wanganui Borough Archive 1919/2227, Wanganui District Council Archive, Wanganui
²³¹ *New Zealand Building Progress*, November 1919,p641
²³² Hall, P. & Ward, C. 1998 *Sociable Cities : The Legacy of Ebenezer Howard* ,John Wiley & Sons, Chichester,p 36
²³³ Hurst Seager, S 1921 *Town Planning in New Zealand : Its Present Position and Possibilities, Garden Cities & Town Planning*, Vol. XI, No.5, p122
²³⁴ Letter Hurst Seager to Town Clerk WBC, on WBC 24111/25, AAf72/114, Wanganui District Council Archive, Wanganui
²³⁵ Hurst Seager-Proceedings,op.cit.,p44
²³⁶ *ibid.*,p276
²³⁷ Schrader, B.1991 *A Peaceful Path to Reform : The Garden City/Suburb Movement in New Zealand/Aotearoa*, Unpublished BA.Hons. Research Essay, Victoria University,p34-35
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THE INTERREGNUM AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF LEGISLATION

Introduction

The 1919 Town Planning Conference and Exhibition closed on a high note of optimism powered by the almost unshakeable certainty that legislation was just round the corner. Hurst Seager, that tireless labourer for town planning, was confident enough to leave the country by late 1919 for a prolonged stay in England and Europe. While he was in England he was elected as the first New Zealand member of the British Town Planning Institute. However this optimism was short lived, as the change of government and the loss of Russell as Minister of Internal Affairs took the impetus out of the movement. In the end, it took until 1926 for legislation to be passed.

Thus the period from 1919 to 1926 is one of lobbying and agitation for town planning legislation, with often little to show for it. It was also a period when the nature of the movement changed. It became less populist in its appeal and started to clearly differentiate itself from the bigger issue of housing. To some extent the town planning advocates became trapped in a noose of their own making. For a number of years, certainly from 1911 onwards, they had advocated legislation as the prime means of instituting town planning in this country. Thus when legislation could not be achieved they were effectively left without a means of implementing their ideas, and thereby demonstrating the benefits of town planning. In the absence of any privately funded developments of the Letchworth or Hampstead

Heath variety or voluntary use by local bodies of the scattered legislative powers that might pertain to town planning, there were no positive models to demonstrate the efficiency and practical achievements of town planning. Without them there were real difficulties in building a popular base for it. In turn the lack of a constituency for town planning, beyond the hardy band of enthusiasts and interested professionals, made legislation even less likely that it would become an election issue.

The nature of the times may also have contributed to the long wait for legislation. While the newspapers of the 1920s were filled with advertisements for new consumer products such as cars, clothes and electrical gadgets, this was more reflective of the growth of advertising as a marketing tool, than of overall community prosperity. In fact after the immediate post-war boom, New Zealand faced falling overseas prices by 1921, and fluctuations through the 1920s. As Brooking states “the 1920s were a time of widespread disillusionment and political instability as well as economic insecurity”¹. The economic situation was complicated by a vibrant agricultural sector, and associated land speculation. The latter had been set off by the government’s assistance to returned soldiers, to allow them to purchase farms, combined with the intensification of farming encouraged by technological change and new markets. This land buying by the government combined with the extension of credit to fuel inflation in rural land prices already started by the War. Thus when product prices fell in the early 1920s there were numerous farm failures. These and the continuing fluctuation in prices for agricultural products led the farmers to seek government help. A series of laws were passed, starting with the *Meat Export Control Act 1922*, that by 1926 would bring under the aegis of export control boards, meat, dairy produce, fruit, honey and kauri gum. These export

control boards “allowed producers to use the powers of the State to regulate their own affairs without surrendering complete control to the Crown”². This acceptance of the interventionist powers of the central state to assist farmers was, paradoxically accompanied by a questioning of other forms of state intervention in the economy. As Bassett³ discusses, this mainly arose from business concerns that the state was not an adequate manager of state assets such as the railways and coal mines. Thus in the early 1920s efforts were made by the Government to keep “a tight rein on expenditure and...to improve the effectiveness of governmental activity”⁴. This suggests that the previous acceptance of the general ‘goodness’ of state intervention was gradually replaced by a questioning of the quality of the management associated with the intervention. State intervention was now more targeted to meet the needs of a particular group. Thus intervention to protect or enhance economic performance or markets may have still been seen as very acceptable. This was because it yielded benefits to groups such as farmers and the community in general. Attempts at efficiency were also made in the context of a substantial war debt. By September 1919 newspaper advertisements were exhorting investors to subscribe to the £10 million Victory loan at the attractive rate of 4.½% for 20 years⁵. Thus economically the 1920s was a trying time for New Zealand with average national wealth falling away in the decade from 1924⁶.

Politically it was a difficult period, with the conservative Reform governments of Massey and Coates dominating. While the election of 1919 had provided Massey with a comfortable majority, the poor economic times quickly produced problems. In 1921 the salaries of public servants were cut and in 1922, the Arbitration Court, having allowed only modest increases the previous year, provided for a wage reduction. The result was increased labour militancy and strikes that were used by

the Reform party in their election advertising in December 1922 as a sign of Bolshevism⁷. In such a divisive political climate the old style Liberals began to lose electoral support. By 1925 the remaining Liberals, after Massey's death, had negotiated with the new Prime Minister, Gordon Coates, to amalgamate with the Reform party. By April 1926 Labour with growing support from the urban workers became the official opposition, outnumbering the twelve National opposition members by one. If the wage cuts and precarious economic conditions were not sufficient, there was a growing rental housing crisis. The rent controls of the war years had been continued but this and the attraction of returns from war loans, meant that there was little investment building, taking place. As a result rents rose and overcrowding and substandard housing became common. The housing shortage and overcrowding increased in the towns and cities. A Committee established in 1919 by the Central Board of Health, estimated "that the country needed at least twenty thousand five-roomed houses immediately to relieve this overcrowding"⁸. The situation was compounded by the continued urbanisation of New Zealand's population. By 1926 "over half of the population of New Zealand lived in the main urban areas, with another 14% living in secondary or minor urban areas"⁹. This urban growth was not evenly spread and the accelerated growth of Auckland continued. Thus "while New Zealand between 1916 and 1945 recorded an annual average increase of 1.6%, the Auckland City figure was virtually double this"¹⁰. Housing problems were only one facet of this growth, which also brought transport and servicing issues to the forefront. It was a time when there seemed to be an ever pressing need for town planning to help control and order this growth. However at the same time the advocates of town planning were faced with promoting their cause in uncertain times where the outward patina of progress hid the potential for economic collapse.

The Role of the Town Planning Enthusiasts

The 1919 Conference was attended by representatives of seven New Zealand groups calling themselves Town-planning or Beautifying Associations¹¹, and gave a boost to these groups, doing much to bring together like-minded individuals. This built on the work that had been done in 1917 when the Federation of Town Planning Associations had met for the first time in Wellington. However after the 1919 Conference there is little evidence that the groups formed an effective co-operative association which would have actively harnessed both their contacts and increased their potential to lobby and influence the politicians.

For some of the longer established groups there is evidence of a decline in membership, probably reflecting the ageing of those who had founded them. The Dunedin Town- Planning and Amenities Society for instance, had reported early in 1919, a decline in membership and income¹². By 1921 the Town-planning Branch of the Dunedin Society reported that “for the past year the activities of the Town-planning Branch have been very small owing to the stagnation of business and the curtailment of practically all enterprise in and around the town”¹³. By 1923 the Society had dropped the term ‘Town-planning’ from its name, though it reappeared in 1927, probably as the result of the passing of legislation¹⁴. This illustrates how dependent town planning was on the maintenance of prosperous times. It was viewed as something that required the expenditure of money, a concept embedded in civic improvement, and a luxury rather than an everyday practical activity.

The Conference seemed to briefly inspire the Wanganui Beautifying Society to widen its interests. At the A.G.M held in July 1919 the Society resolved to join the

deputation from the local Labour Conference to lobby for more government involvement in housing¹⁵. The very firm answer from Sir James Allen, then a senior Minister in the Massey administration, was that it was "not the duty of the Government to take the matter up"¹⁶. This new interest in town planning extended in 1920 to the Society affiliating with the Town-planning Association (presumably the Federation of New Zealand Town-Planning Associations)¹⁷, apparently at the behest of the Hope Gibbons, the Chairman, and Mayor of Wanganui. The flirtation with town planning was however brief, and after 1920 there is little evidence in the A.G.M reports of any interest beyond reserves and planting. As with groups elsewhere, they had trouble maintaining an active membership. Less practical work was done than in the early days of the Society, despite the evidence of their success in projects such as the development of Virginia Lake.

In Christchurch, the Beautifying Association that had briefly considered changing its name to include town planning¹⁸, had instead nominated a member to join a separate Town Planning Association which had been formed in the city¹⁹. The Association however, given the active membership of men such as Samuel Hurst Seager, did maintain a continuing interest in town planning. This was in the face of a reduction in the activities undertaken by the Association, again probably because of an ageing and declining membership. Meetings of the Executive Committee became less frequent from 1920 onwards²⁰, with A. Kaye, a founding and active member of the Association, dying in October 1920. The Association tended to confine itself to the older issues that had dominated its earlier days. Advertising hoardings remained a 'bête noir', and in 1924 the Association resolved that "the City Council be respectfully requested to gradually eliminate all hoardings in the suburbs and residential areas"²¹. It was a sign of the times and the growth of advertising

that the fight against hoardings was now essentially confined to residential areas, the battle having been lost in the commercial and industrial areas.

It is surprising in these circumstances that on the 1st October 1924 the Christchurch Beautifying Association published the first copy of *The City Beautiful*, a monthly magazine which was to be its official organ. The editor, a long-time member of the Association, Dr Charles Chilton, was a well-known medical practitioner, botanist and Rector of Canterbury University College. The introduction to the first issue, while stressing that the magazine would focus on the Association and its activities, indicated it intended to look beyond public beautifying. Chilton wrote, "it is the intention of the promoters of this magazine that any subject that will tend to make life a brighter and sweeter thing for the citizens of Christchurch, jointly or individually, shall be considered as within the aims of "The City Beautiful"²². From 1924 to 1927 the magazine carried an eclectic selection of articles ranging from a history of the Association, to gardening hints, to quite technical articles on aspects of town planning. Above all, it provided an outlet for those with an interest in town planning to make their views and ideas known. It also probably served to keep people in contact with developments in the town planning movement.

The establishment of *The City Beautiful* magazine was facilitated by a change, in the same year, of the editor of *New Zealand Building Progress*. The latter had proved to be a vigorous advocate and critic of the town planning movement and its efforts. This interest reflected the editorship of Charles Wheeler, who by all accounts was a skilled journalist and was very much at home in the Wellington political scene²³. He was a member of the Wellington Municipal Electors and Town Planning Association and probably worked with Leigh Hunt to produce local

propaganda for the town planning movement. He certainly was, in most of his work, a vigorous advocate for the movement. He joined the Parliamentary Press Gallery in 1906, and was the only official press representative at the 1919 Conference²⁴. He went on to have a significant career as a print and radio journalist in the Parliamentary Press Gallery, and on this death his casket was carried by both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition²⁵. Not surprisingly neither his *Who's Who* entry or Obituary refer to what must have been a transitional interest in town planning. However, the loss of Wheeler and *New Zealand Building Progress* by the mid-1920s did rob the movement of a critical voice. For as we have seen, Wheeler was always willing to make clear and decisive comment on the movement's ideas and its progress. While *The City Beautiful* magazine partly took its place, it was a much gentler publication, sometimes given to somewhat rambling and romantic pieces such as the Rev. Gray Dixon's "Concerning the City Beautiful" of 1925²⁶. Moreover, despite some effort to carry news from elsewhere, it was a magazine that focussed very much on Christchurch. It did so to such an extent that in April 1925 it carried a quite defensive editorial which in effect denied the charge that Christchurch alone was claiming to be "the City Beautiful"²⁷. It did however carry snippets of information from overseas about town planning, and these at least served to keep those interested aware of overseas developments. Somewhat surprisingly the passing of legislation seemed to undermine the magazine, and by 1928 the horticultural/gardening elements overwhelmed it. It ceased to be a magazine with any interest in town planning or civic development. This may again reflect the 'ageing' of the Association and the less active involvement of the original enthusiasts.

Thus by the mid-1920s many of the traditional supporters of the town planning movement in the Beautifying Societies were taking less interest in town planning. This reflects both an overall reduction in memberships and the deflation that resulted after the oft-promised legislation, which seemed almost a foregone conclusion in 1919, was not passed. This meant that there was a much less effective propaganda voice for town planning to build the public constituency to support the introduction and work of town planning. This had been explicitly recognised at the 1919 Conference with a whole session being devoted to the need for and the ways of 'inculcating' town planning ideas in students from primary school to universities. As one speaker put it, town planning education would ensure that "the children would naturally acquire the proper sentiment, and it would have a very valuable effect upon the life of the nation"²⁸. This approach via education again reflects the maturing of the town planning movement, which could no longer depend on the power of the 'slum lecture', complete with lantern slides. That largely entertainment market was now crowded with the arrival of radio and the cinema. Further Sinclair points to the popularity and growth in the period of a variety of causes that ranged from 'funny money' currency cranks, to 'medical' cures, to "some of the odder and American religions"²⁹. This crowded market with its emphasis on the individual was less open to the community centred message of the town planners.

The institution of a more pro-active housing policy by the government from 1919 onward also helped to sever the link with town planning and effectively robbed the movement of one of its best propaganda tools. While the approach of the Reform government of Massey was to support private ownership, the 1923 Amendment to the State Advances legislation made 95% of the cost of a house and section

available from the State Advances Office. This programme was extended in the mid-1920s and “fed a housing construction boom and subsequent increase in prices during the 1920s”³⁰. A report in the November 1924 *Journal of the New Zealand Institute of Architects* carried positive comment on the Auckland City Council’s involvement in developing housing and stated that “ in September it let a contract for the erection of 50 workers’ dwellings at Grey Lynn, the first big batch of some hundreds it is intended to build”³¹. While this and other programmes probably did little for the real poor who were the likely residents of the slums of the town planners’ propaganda, they did assist significant numbers of workers. As such it did much to lessen the public perception of a ‘housing crisis’ while at the same time enhancing the value and importance of individual land and home ownership. This emphasis on private property and the rights associated with it, was potentially inimical to the concepts which underlay town planning, that is a restriction or limitation of property rights in favour of the greater good of the community. Overall it seems an era in which appeals to community or civic responsibility were less likely to strike a chord, reflecting perhaps the sacrifices of the war which might have seemed to absolve the young at least, from a further responsibility. Finally the severing of a clear link with housing also ended the link between town planning and the creation of physically and morally uplifting environments. This ‘high moral ground’ position had served the movement well and its loss meant that new justifications for the value of town planning had to be identified. In turn these were likely to be less able to be derived from overseas examples. While poor housing had been a universal problem whatever the country, other justifications for town planning such as controlling urban growth were likely to have a quite different character in each location.

Local Government – A Slow Response

One of the successes of the 1919 Conference was to expose local body politicians, other than those like Parr who were already involved, to the message of town planning. Their attendance was good and a smaller provincial centre such as Palmerston North sent the Mayor, a Councillor, the Town Clerk, the Supervising Engineer and the Curator of Reserves³². New Plymouth, which had already shown some interest in town planning, commissioning Davidge's civic improvement plan, sent the Mayor and the Town Clerk³³. That early interest was not however sustained, and there is no evidence of any further town planning activity in New Plymouth until after legislation was passed. The situation was much the same in Palmerston North. In 1919 the Reserves Committee used the term 'Town Planning' in its Annual Report but the material under the heading dealt with the provision of reserves³⁴. The city in fact did not get a town planner until 1951. Even in large cities such as Christchurch and Auckland there is only limited evidence of any interest by the City Council in town planning, though like the provincial cities they were happy to send representatives to the 1919 Conference.

A little more interest was shown at the national level through the Municipal Association Conferences. At the Fourteenth Municipal Association Conference in 1919, the Government was urged to further circulate the 1917 Town-planning Bill, as "this offered local authorities the full opportunity of considering its provisions before they are placed on the Statute Book"³⁵. The same meeting however recorded its disapproval of the mandatory provisions of the Bill with regard to the preparation of town planning schemes. A similar remit was moved in 1921, and in 1923 Mr Tapley of Dunedin and Miss Melville of Auckland proposed "that the

government be asked to proceed with their town planning bill³⁶. These remits fell on deaf ears at central government level and although the matter was raised again at the Municipal Conference in 1924, it was not until 1926 that it received further consideration and more detailed attention. At the 1926 Conference a series of remits sought not only a new town planning bill, to be submitted to the Ministry of Health, but also, what in effect amounted to a power to define areas which could be used for residential and business purposes³⁷. This request represented a combination of very old fashioned and very sophisticated concepts of town planning. The old fashioned element lay in referring the bill to the Ministry of Health, which conceived of town planning in terms of public health, slums and substandard housing. The sophisticated concept is in the advocacy of zoning, a tool of the established town planning movement, used to control private property use. Zoning, which had originally emerged in Germany, was in the 1920s being developed to its fullest potential in the America. In the American constitutional context, zoning was characterised as an extension of the police power of the state that was traditionally only used to secure "health, safety and the suppression of nuisances"³⁸. To be accepted within this context, zoning had to be demonstrated to be "designed to promote the public good"³⁹. As Power shows, zoning through a series of complex court decisions, managed to meet that test, and went on to be used for a variety of purposes that went well beyond "promoting the public good". In New Zealand zoning seems to have been accepted as a town planning tool with little reflection on its potential power to modify the private property right. This was perhaps because it was seen more as a positive tool that protected features associated with land, such as amenity and effectively enhanced land values. While these remits were consistently passed to the Minister of Internal Affairs, there is no evidence of the Association making a particular effort to pursue the matter of town

planning legislation. A cynical interpretation of this might be that passing a remit was an easy way to demonstrate a commitment to a worthy undertaking which fulfilled the delegates responsibilities to their constituents without binding them to persistently lobbying for the concept.

The relative lack of interest by local bodies in town planning at this stage can in part be explained by their pre-occupation with other issues. New Zealand's population had been growing and becoming more urban from at least the beginning of the century. In 1901 45% of the country's population lived in city and borough areas. By 1921 this had risen to 56% and by 1926 to 58%⁴⁰. New Zealand was well on the way to becoming the highly urbanised country that it is today. The major cities, particularly those in the North Island sustained strong growth. Auckland's population grew from 57,616 in 1896 to 157,757 in 1921, with Wellington and Christchurch's populations in the same period rising respectively from 41,758 to 107,488 and 51,330 to 105,670⁴¹. At the local body level this led to a proliferation of small Boroughs, some of which, as Bush observes, "had barely enough people let alone funds to support their existence"⁴². The Government's attempts during the war to control prices created new opportunities for local government. The *Cost of Living Act, 1915*, which created the Board of Trade to regulate prices on major goods, also increased, substantially, local body involvement in and regulation of the local economy. Thus, "by regulation boroughs could be granted the powers to inspect, sell, and control local supplies of milk, to establish and maintain city markets, refrigerate meat, set up bakeries and equip fishing trawlers"⁴³. While obviously, not all local authorities took up these opportunities, many did, particularly in the larger centres. Local bodies were also active in more traditional areas such as public transport and services, with the latter now including electricity and gas

reticulation. The overall effect of these extra undertakings was to emphasise the role of the local body in the everyday life. It also probably helped to establish an interventionist role for local bodies, over a wide spectrum of activities. There was a corresponding growth in ad hoc bodies that covered everything from hospital boards to electric power boards.

These new functions added to an already crowded agenda for local bodies. The improvements in engineering practice combined with ratepayer expectations and the arrival of the motor car brought the demand for better roads, water reticulation and sewage systems. A glance at a book such as Bush's *Decently and in Order*, a history of the Auckland City Council, reveals a picture of active local body involvement in the provision of such services. In Auckland in the period 1919 to 1945 which Bush calls "Modernizing the City", the Auckland City Council was involved in developing services and facilities which ranged from the reticulation of electricity to the extension of the zoological gardens⁴⁴. Auckland's experience was repeated on a different scale in most New Zealand cities and boroughs, some of which would not have had the funding base of Auckland. These problems of servicing and reticulating the developing suburbs were compounded by the vibrant property market that existed, especially in the early 1920s. An Editorial in the *New Zealand Journal of Commerce* spoke of "subdivision mania" and lamented the speculative nature of the activity which would "add nothing to the community's power of creating further wealth"⁴⁵.

This progressive approach to local government combined with the spread and development of the suburbs, also led to a more vibrant local body political scene and the arrival of party politics at the local level, as Labour candidates contested the

seats. In these circumstances, when local bodies' time and energies were focussed on providing services and facilities that provided a direct and tangible benefit to ratepayers and residents to whom they would answer at the next election, there was likely to be little interest in the unknown potential of town planning. Moreover, at the time it is unlikely that local bodies would have sought further work, particularly if that work might also involve expenditure. The latter was a possibility where the concept of town planning was interpreted to mean civic improvement and/or housing schemes. All of these interpretations remained valid as long as there was no legislation that specifically defined what town planning would involve. The concern here arose out of the difficulties which local authorities faced in raising loans. These loans were subject to ratepayer loans polls, which often resulted in defeat for the proposal that those loans were intended to finance. This situation was not improved by the reckless nature of some of the loans that were raised overseas. Central government constraint was not imposed until 1926 when the Local Authority Loans Board was formed, and local authorities had to seek approval for all loans⁴⁶. It was certainly not an environment that favoured the establishment of systematic town planning, beyond the most basic infrastructure planning sometimes undertaken by engineers, particularly if this might involve potentially costly civic improvement projects.

The Design Competitions

A feature of the period was the emergence of design competitions, three of which were associated with town planning. These had been prefigured by those run as part of the 1919 Conference, though there had been a "poor numerical response"⁴⁷ to them. This probably reflected the limited interest at the time, combined with the

restricted number of people who might have felt themselves competent to enter them. In Australia, the competition run in 1912 to select the design for the new national capital at Canberra, included an entry from a team which featured the subsequently prominent New Zealand architect, William Gummer⁴⁸. By the 1920s architectural design competitions “were much in vogue”⁴⁹ and successful firms such as Ford and Gummer’s partnership devoted much time to them.

This tradition of using competitions to select the best architectural design began to extend into the urban design area of town planning, where the overseas models provided by the garden city/suburb movement, provided a powerful example. Designing a new suburb was the basis of two of the competitions. The most significant was the competition to design a Garden Suburb for Orakei in Auckland, announced in June 1925. At much the same time a similar competition, though on a much smaller scale, was held to design a scheme “for the laying out of the eastern portion of the Lower Hutt Borough, together with a number of Crown lands situated in that area”⁵⁰. The other competition, run in October 1924, was a civic improvement scheme to design a civic centre for Auckland. The running of these competitions within a relatively short period was probably reflective of the desire of local bodies to demonstrate their progressive spirit by using the relevant ‘scientific’ knowledge and skills now available in town planning and design. The two Auckland based competitions probably also reflected the growing feeling that the city should demonstrate its superior position by undertaking the types of projects which were the hallmarks of successful and progressive cities overseas. The three competitions were important because they provided the opportunity to create practical examples of what town planning could achieve. They also served to demonstrate the multi-faceted nature of town planning which went beyond the

exercise of regulatory authority that was the clear direction of any legislation. Most importantly, the competitions for the first and last time represented an attempt to explore the urban design/civic improvement aspects of the movement. For the town planning movement in general, they also served to keep the spotlight on the issue, at a time when the hopes for legislation must have been fading fast.

The Orakei Garden Suburb competition involved a comprehensive design for some 631 acres of land on a magnificent harbour edge site, close to the centre of Auckland. The area's development had been delayed by the slow creation of road and rail access, and the existence of some multiple ownership Maori land within the block. The potential of the site had been recognised as early as 1912 when Arthur Myers agitated for the government to take control of its development. The Government did purchase land in the area over an extended period. In 1925, after questions were raised in Parliament, it was agreed to throw the development of the suburb open to a competition⁵¹. This was widely advertised through the journals of the New Zealand Institutes of Architects and Surveyors, though both bodies felt the prize money was modest at £250, £125 and £75. Contestants were given some basic directions, which required them to design a relatively self-contained suburb, including civic amenities such as reserves, schools, churches etc, a university site of forty acres, housing, shops and a roading system which followed the contour of the land. The latter was important as the site consisted of a complex series of ridges and gullies and must have offered contestants some challenges. The competition was judged by a panel consisting of the Surveyor-General, the Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, the Government Architect, the Chief Surveyor for North Auckland and the City Engineer, Auckland City⁵².

There were forty-two schemes submitted for the competition, mainly from architects and surveyors, some of whom worked in teams. The winning entry was that of Reginald Hammond who at twenty-nine years old had qualified variously as a surveyor, architect and town planner. He gained the latter qualifications from the course at University College London. While overseas he worked on town planning schemes in several town planning consultants' offices, which included time with Herbert Baker when he was completing the designs for New Delhi⁵³. He also travelled, apparently in both Europe and America and by the time of his return he was a member of the Town Planning Institute⁵⁴. Thus he was a new style of architect planner who would have been a relative rarity at the time in New Zealand, given that he had already had quite extensive design experiences both prior to his trip and while overseas. The second prize went to E.V. Blake and the third to S.W. Horne and C.E.H. Putt. Blake was a surveyor who was later to be quite prominent in Auckland town planning circles, as was Charles Putt, who was the first town planner for Auckland City.

Hammond's prize-winning plan featured curvilinear streets, cul-de-sacs, and the unusual Fenton Circus on a prominent part of the site. Hammond provided complete technical details with regard to the services and roads⁵⁵, but also proposed the use of zoning to identify the areas for housing and civic and recreational facilities. His delineation of the housing into areas with section sizes of one fifth, one quarter and one third of an acre, probably reflected his observations and training in both Britain and America. He demonstrated his architectural training in the concern that he showed for the positioning of both the civic centre and the buildings associated with it. For the first time in New Zealand there was a design proposal which met the concern of the architects for the creation of urban space

that would complement and enhance the buildings designed for that space. Hammond was clearly aware of this, for his description talks in detail of the positioning of buildings within the space created “with a view to convenience and to architectural effects”⁵⁶. The Institute of Surveyors was less impressed and criticised the plan for creating a “micro city”. They lamented its rather extravagant use of curved streets and open space, which made servicing more expensive and difficult⁵⁷. This outcome was, however, almost inevitable given the size of the site and the instructions given to competitors.

Ultimately only a small part of Hammond’s design was ever created on the ground. Much of the block was developed into State housing from the mid-1930s onward, ironically under Hammond’s direction through his work with the Housing Construction Division⁵⁸. It certainly never developed into the “micro city” the surveyors feared, nor did it feature the civic facilities and university of the original plan, though there is reasonable provision of open space. The winning designs did however provide excellent propaganda for the town planning movement. They were displayed at a number of venues including the 1925 Dunedin Exhibition⁵⁹. At that Exhibition they were given little prominence and seemed to form part of the Department of Health’s display⁶⁰. The didactic nature of their display was made clear. As the *New Zealand Herald* observed, “it is hoped that by these means local bodies and land owners will be given some fresh ideas on the need for purpose planning of new residential areas”⁶¹. The design of Orakei was seen as central to the progress of town planning, that it was “a vital trial ground for town planning”⁶². It would have provided local examples of the successful adaptation of overseas concepts. The failure to develop the suburb probably does much to explain the lack of interest in the urban design area in later New Zealand planning.

The second competition was to design a layout for the eastern part of Lower Hutt that was jointly sponsored by the Government and the Lower Hutt Borough Council. The land was being opened up as the result of an extension to the Hutt rail line, which would provide “quick communication with Wellington”⁶³. Transport and communication was an essential aspect of achieving the progressivist dream. Progressivism, as defined at the time, represented economic and material prosperity and the use of new technology. It was epitomised by the growth in consumer products and labour saving devices that dominated newspaper advertising. In the 1925 elections it took a political form in the slogan, “If you love New Zealand, Vote for Sound Government – Security – Progress – Vote Coates”⁶⁴. The association of firm government with progress no doubt reflected the unsettled economic conditions of most of the 1920s. The importance of the railway in the area, meant the judging panel included the Chief Engineer, Railways Department, Assistant Engineer in Chief, Public Works Department, Commissioner of Crown Lands, Chief Government Valuer, Government Architect and the Mayor of Lower Hutt Borough. The lack of a surveyor on the judging panel was a source of considerable anguish to the Institute of Surveyors⁶⁵ and this did little to improve relationships between the interested professional groups.

The £200 prize was won once again by Reginald Hammond, from a field of twenty schemes. The second prize went to an engineer, F.R.K. Kitto, who worked for the Wellington City Council. Hammond produced a comprehensive plan which addressed both servicing and roading and proposed a definite zoning system to deal with housing, business and industrial uses. This served to demonstrate that zoning was regarded as a suitable and appropriate tool for use in New Zealand. It rapidly became the primary planning tool for separating incompatible land uses.

Hammond's concern for the impact of the motor vehicle is also clearly evident, not only in the roading design proposed, but also in the treatment of the area in front of the railway stations, which allowed "for free circulation of traffic and making full provision for the safety of pedestrians"⁶⁶. There was also the same concern for creating appropriate spaces for buildings, as shown at Orakei. However, as with Orakei, there is little evidence of the plan being instituted, so once again New Zealand lost the opportunity to produce a local example of overseas concepts and so demonstrate the efficacy of the concept.

The final design competition was something quite different. Auckland had toyed for many years with the idea of a comprehensive redesign of its central area to create a civic centre. The first proposals were produced as early as 1911 by none other than Charles Reade. The competition, which closed in October 1924, required a comprehensive redesign of a forty-two and a half-acre block of city land, focussed on the area adjoining the Town Hall. While it was to include civic administration buildings and an art gallery, it also involved some housing on the periphery of the block. The £1,000 first prize was won by the partnership of William Gummer and Reginald Ford, who were judged by a panel consisting of Auckland City Councillors, the City Engineers and two Architects from out of Auckland, C. Wood and W.G. Young⁶⁷. The winning designers the judges said, "realised the value of their subject by showing an all-round appreciation of the principles of planning, external elevations and not the least important, a grasp of the requirements fundamental to the concept of a civic centre"⁶⁸. The redesign scheme was however expensive, at a cost of just under £500,000, and as a result the issue went to a ratepayer loan's poll where it was soundly defeated. While attempts were made over the next two years to revive the project in some form, it was never developed⁶⁹. These attempts at

revival included the use of an overseas expert, in the form of Sir John Sulman, a prominent Sydney architect and doyen of the Australian town planning movement. His involvement through an independent panel that also included Hurst Seager, succeeded only in producing an even more expensive scheme. Once again the opportunity to produce a practical example of the urban design aspects of town planning was lost.

The Agitation for Legislation

Town planning legislation still remained the goal of the town planning protagonists, but was hampered by the lack of committed followers within Parliament. While Myers had escaped defeat in 1919 he resigned as a Member of Parliament in 1921. This left only C.J. Parr, who had major ministerial duties. In view of his earlier active interest in town planning, it is surprising that he was not more involved in advocating for it while in government. There are two obvious explanations. The first is that his time and interest were taken up with two large portfolios and that he developed a very active interest in education at a time when it was expanding. Equally it may also reflect the fact that for a conservative ministry, town planning was an unlikely vote catcher and Parr may have accepted the point, made clear by Newton's Conference paper, that powers already existed if local bodies cared to exercise them. This latter argument may have been more compelling to a conservative minister who might have viewed this generalist extension of the interventionist powers of the state as unnecessary, given that many of the concerns that town planning seemed pre-occupied with were addressed elsewhere.

The issue of town planning did form part of Massey's platform for the election held in December 1919. It was reported by the *Wanganui Chronicle* that the Reform Government's policy for the election included "practical state encouragement of town-planning schemes by civic and municipal bodies and organisations"⁷⁰. This was a very modest proposal because it did not require any real activity on behalf of the government, merely "encouragement". Moreover as an election issue it was ranked twenty-seventh in a list of twenty-eight pledges, demonstrating its relative lack of importance. It was an approach that pushed the responsibility back to the local government level and proceeded on the presumption that no further legislation was required.

The issue had so fallen out of the political limelight that, apart from the questions asked about the development of the Orakei land along town planning lines, there were no Parliamentary queries with regard to a town planning bill until 1926. In June 1926 there was reference to a "definite promise that a measure dealing with town-planning will be laid before the House"⁷¹. However, H.E. Holland who referred to the matter, felt it necessary to point out that there was a long delay between this promise and the promises of legislation made at the 1919 Conference. Holland was the Leader of the Opposition, so his enquiry may have been intended to irritate the government rather than to provoke a meaningful commitment. Even the Reports of the Department of Internal Affairs ceased to comment on town planning after 1919.

The absence of a dedicated follower within the ranks of the politicians did not, at first, discourage agitation for legislation. In August 1920 the WTP & ME Association wrote to the Minister of Internal Affairs offering the services of Mr Haast "to collaborate with the Crown Law draughtsman in preparing the measure" (i.e. a town

planning bill). This offer was declined, but the Minister assured the Association that when the Bill was drafted a copy would be circulated to them for comment⁷². The Federation of Town Planning Associations held another meeting in Wellington in June 1920 and again resolved that legislation be put in place creating both a Town-planning Commission and Department, and the appointment of "a competent and experienced town planner"⁷³. This was followed by a deputation led by Parr as President of the Association, who called on G.J. Anderson, the Minister of Internal Affairs on 11 June 1920. The delegation tried to reassure the Minister that the local bodies were not opposed to the need for town planning and would exercise the powers given to them under any new legislation. They stressed the need for a town planning department to be established within central government. There was also a request that specific expertise be sought because, as Leigh Hunt suggested, at the moment New Zealand had "only enthusiasts"⁷⁴. This admission marks an important point in the maturing of the movement. Until then, while the skills and knowledge of the 'expert' town planners such as Davidge had been recognised and admired, there had always been room for the well read and inspired amateur. Leigh Hunt was the archetypal 'enthusiastic amateur'. However now even he was willing to recognise that the time had come to establish a Department with an appropriately trained head that would form the nucleus of that expert knowledge. This in turn suggests recognition that there was a body of unique knowledge to which town planners could lay claim, sufficient to create a distinguishable profession, independent of the existing professions.

The delegation members also suggested the inclusion of other professional groups on the Town-planning Commission, including surveyors, architects and engineers. The Minister appeared sympathetic though he stressed the need to educate the

public to accept the regulatory aspects of any legislation and suggested that powers already existed – the effects of Newton’s paper once again obvious. The education comment related to the Minister’s concern, arising from his own opposition to the Fowlds’ Bill, that ratepayers should have the right to approve expenditure on town planning projects. Such approval he suggested would be easier to obtain if ratepayers were aware of the benefits of town planning. This was a familiar approach to that taken by enthusiasts, though here Anderson, the Minister, saw one of the advantages of a town planning expert being their power to educate. Equally it conceives of town planning largely as civic improvements or at least projects requiring expenditure. He eventually suggested legislation “would be introduced that session”⁷⁵ but declined to comment on the potential for it to include housing, despite vigorous lobbying from the deputation for this. The agitation continued. Letters supporting the introduction of specific legislation were received from groups including the New Plymouth Beautifying Society which had resolved to give “the heartiest approval to his intention of introducing this session if possible a town planning bill”⁷⁶. In the absence of action such letters began to appear regularly on the files with even the National Council of Women writing to the Minister in 1923 stating it “earnestly urges the Government to pass a Town Planning Act”⁷⁷. The lack of progress was confirmed in a Memo in 1924 from the Under-Secretary for Internal Affairs, George Newton. It stated that “the questions of whether a Bill should be proceeded with has from time to time been subsequently raised, but at each occasion it had been decided not to proceed with the matter”⁷⁸. In that same Memo Newton indicated that representations seeking legislation had been made by Parr, in 1919. However he made the point that this was before he became a Minister. This tends to confirm the suggestion that on becoming a Minister Parr’s attention was diverted elsewhere. Not surprisingly given the Memo’s author, there

is also mention of the use of existing provisions though it is acknowledged that the existing legislation did not deal with town planning in the manner desired by town planners.

The press also carried some articles, including one contributed in February 1923, to the *Auckland Star* by 'R H', presumably Reginald Hammond. Entitled "Town Planning, Is It Practical?" it was a dense discussion of a quite new concept of planning which was "getting ready for the future in city growth".⁷⁹ While there were some references to the ideas derived from older concepts, such as health and amenity, the concept that was presented here was progressive and future orientated, suggesting planning involved the integration of land use planning with wider issues such as transport planning. It is in fact a very American planning model, reflected in the constant use of the term 'city planning'. This is a term that was consistently used in America. It was certainly a concept of planning that went beyond the mere regulation of urban space, primarily in terms of land use, to one that sees planning as an integrating force, bringing together all the features of the urban system in a harmonious and efficient network. This again shows a clear line of adaptation from the City Practical concepts which had evolved in America from the second decade of the twentieth century. It is interesting to note that Hammond, who had received his planning education in Great Britain, had seen an American model as appropriate for New Zealand.

The Role of the Professions

Legislation that would establish at least a voluntary requirement for town planning schemes raised the stakes for the other professions because it created a prize

worth winning. Overseas, particularly in Britain and America, many architects and surveyors were very aware of the potential work that might emerge from any legislation. In Britain the period prior to legislation had been dominated by the self-educated practitioner, with qualifications in another professional area, who by study and practical application developed a bundle of knowledge and skills that made up a version of town planning education. As Hawtree observes, these men “were aware that, in their own works, they were using the techniques and experience of a number of professions” and “were inclined to see statutory planning as a co-operative specialisation involving architects, engineers, surveyors, sociologists and landscape architects”⁸⁰. In New Zealand only the first three professions existed in the numbers necessary to take the lead in this new profession. In Britain the statutory developers of town planning ultimately combined to establish the Town Planning Institute creating a distinguishable profession. This allowed those who were involved specifically in town planning work to come together with a common understanding and focus. In New Zealand, with a smaller population and in the absence of legislation, such an outcome was likely to emerge much more slowly, if at all.

By the early 1920s the architects had begun to show a much closer interest in town planning. Surprisingly, Hurst Seager in 1921 did not advocate the primacy of the architect, but instead made a plea for trained town planners to come to work in New Zealand⁸¹. An article in the *Institute of Architects Journal* in 1923 presented a quite comprehensive picture of where the architects stood and how they perceived the actual practice of town planning. It opens with a comment that legislation was imminent and continues with some quite acute observations about local authorities. These were to the effect that they could not be relied on to make good judgements

on the development of cities, because they have “no special knowledge of the technical requirements of a large city” and to get re-elected they adopt “an expedient or popular policy rather than a sound one”⁸². The Town Planning Associations are dismissed as having “no vision beyond the parochial work of ratepayers’ associations”⁸³. The article then proposes a concept of town planning which includes three specific elements:

1. City Improvements i.e. remedying defects and altering to meet new needs;
2. Civic Developments i.e. schemes for further developing present areas and enhancing them;
3. Town-planning proper i.e. the planning of new towns, suburbs, or settlements where none exist⁸⁴.

This work was to be based on “accurately contoured plans”⁸⁵, the production of which meant an acknowledged role for the surveyors. For the period, the article proposed a very comprehensive concept of town planning which involved both urban design aspects i.e. city improvement and civic development, with the more standard concerns of planning newly developed areas. While the concept was comprehensive it was also dominated by urban design concerns. On the basis of the development of British town planning this might be expected. Hall points out that until 1947 town planning was architectural planning, about making places look good⁸⁶. As such, it became dominated by those town planners who had an architectural background, which in turn reinforced the trend. However in this case there is a modest broadening of the concept to position town planning as an integral aspect of the development of urban policy. This would however lead to the need to put power in the inadequate and untrustworthy hands of local body politicians. The

article's importance is in marking out that profession's first attempts at defining its vision of town planning and how it might work in practice.

The surveyors were much more active and vigilant. In February 1921 they set up a permanent sub-committee "to watch all legislation that is brought to the House that may in any way infringe upon the activities of the profession"⁸⁷. At this point the surveyors saw both a role for themselves and for the new profession of town planning, if it did emerge, to intrude into their traditional work. Some of the concerns of the surveyors seem to have arisen from the attempt by the Lands and Survey Department, "in its desire to keep abreast of the present public movement in this direction"⁸⁸, (that is town planning), to influence survey practice through the issue of circulars on practice and procedures under the Land Act. The major concern seemed to be that Department's attempt to control 'speculative' subdivision by placing the onus on the surveyor to show that their proposal did not fall into that category. This directly interfered with the surveyor-client relationship and put the surveyor in the untenable position, as Arthur Bridge observed in his Presidential address of 1921, of acting as "an intermediary between the Department and the public"⁸⁹. It also serves to highlight the problem the surveyors always faced, of replacing their strong client centred focus with the broader community centred vision required for town planning

This demonstrated the difficulties that might emerge from an attempt to institute town planning principles with regard to land subdivision and urban expansion, without specific legislation. It may also have provided a very poor example to local bodies who might be tempted to institute town planning using varied legislation and by-laws, in the manner advocated by Newton in his 1919 Conference paper. The

1922 meeting of the Institute of Surveyors recognised this problem. The President, Arthur Bridge, advocated that "the Institute should take an active part in bringing before Chambers of Commerce, local bodies, etc., the advantages of a Town Planning Act administered by a board on which members of the commercial world are represented"⁹⁰. The inclusion of 'commercial interests' on the board administering the act would have met the surveyors' concern with maintaining a strong position for the landowner that lay at the heart of their professional ethos. The Institute's views were put to the Minister of Lands in a letter in November 1922, subsequently published in the *New Zealand Surveyor* in January 1923. That letter sought the revision of all laws relating to subdivision and the passing of specific town planning legislation. The area of town planning was, however, identified as the preserve primarily of the surveyors as "the one body of men actually engaged in this work from the beginning and still doing all of the work"⁹⁰. The surveyors' confidence in their central role in town planning was much stronger in New Zealand than it was in Great Britain. This seems to have been derived from their high levels of professional confidence based on their central role in creating guaranteed land titles under the Torrens system⁹¹. This endowed the surveyor's work with a legitimacy that could not be easily claimed by others. Implicit in this statement is a quite narrow concept of town planning, which saw it as primarily concerned with the design and layout of new urban areas, an undertaking that would inevitably involve the surveyor. They did however graciously accept, that while surveyors should be "adequately and fully represented on any governing body"⁹⁰ (for town planning), it should also involve "the Engineers and Architects who will, after the all important lay-out has been made, be involved in the work of constructing the future streets and buildings"⁹². Predictably, there seems to have been no response from the government. The *New Zealand Surveyor* also carried regular articles on town

planning including a review of John Sulman's Australian book "*An Introduction to the Study of Town Planning in Australia*". The Institute purchased two dozen copies of this text for distribution to local committees, obviously overlooking the fact that the author was an architect⁹³.

Possibly as a result of the letter and the continuing daily problems the surveyors faced, dealing with clients, local bodies and the Lands Department, the local committees of the Institute created a forum with the engineers and architects, where town planning issues could be discussed. This grassroots response appears to have started in Christchurch in May 1923, where the first meeting attracted three engineers, six architects and thirteen surveyors⁹⁴. The group eventually formed a committee of six that included two representatives elected by each of the three professions. This approach spread quickly and by September 1923 the *New Zealand Institute of Architects Journal* carried a report of a similar meeting in Auckland that attracted twelve surveyors, four architects and two engineers⁹⁵. While the Auckland meeting resolved to form a local committee of the type created in Christchurch, it also resolved that "a central committee be formed in Wellington, consisting of representatives appointed by the Executive of the New Zealand Institute of Architects, New Zealand Society of Civil Engineers and the New Zealand Institute of Surveyors, with power to add to the Societies represented to collect the opinions of the various Committees, consolidate same and urge on the Government the desirability of town-planning legislation being placed on the Statute Book"⁹⁶. By the end of 1923 active joint committees existed in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. It is impossible to see these moves as anything except an attempt to protect the position of the professional groups involved. If they presented a united front, that the government could not overlook, then they could help to shape the

legislation in their own interests. The co-operative nature of this approach suggests that they saw town planning legislation as offering opportunities for all the professions, rather than enshrining the dominance of one.

The development of a co-operative committee of the three professions effectively replaced the earlier town planning enthusiasts as lobbyists for legislation. They must also have presented a more focussed and professional public face for the movement, directing its concerns from scaremongering about the potential for slums, to a focus on how town planning might be instituted for the good of society. The latter obviously did not exclude benefit for the professions involved. This moulding of the movement by the professions has parallels in the British experience, discussed in the previous chapter. In the hands of the professions the concept of town planning became more concerned with the actual process and practicalities of implementation. The united front temporarily concealed the conflicts between the three professions, demonstrated at the 1919 Conference, as to which would take the lead role. Clearly the surveyors were the most proactive and showed the most consistent clarity of purpose and willingness to educate themselves about these new areas. Most noticeable is the relatively poor attendance of engineers at these meetings, suggesting perhaps that they saw less potential to encompass or dominate this new area. Knudsen, who looked at professional rivalries between engineers and architects over planning in Denmark, offers some insights. Acknowledging that “professionals continually strive to enlarge their job areas and appropriate as extensive a monopoly as possible”⁹⁷, he traces the dominance of the engineers and then the architects in town planning. What emerges is a picture of the engineers dominating when town planning meant building or renewing infrastructural elements, and architects when it involved urban

design or urban growth planning. At this time in New Zealand, with basic infrastructure being established and being vigorously extended in new areas such as electricity reticulation, the engineers had a monopoly of such work. They did not need town planning to enhance or extend that dominance. Their profession was also one, like the surveyors that had significant recognition and respect in both central and local government. In local government, right through until the reforms of 1989, the second highest-ranking position in any local body was the City (or Borough or County) Engineer. Similarly in central government, the Chief Engineer, Public Works was a very senior position, the importance of which grew with that department. Some of the people involved in these committees, particularly Arthur Bridge of Christchurch and Charles Grierson of Auckland, both surveyors, were to become long term advocates and practitioners of town planning. Grierson was ultimately appointed to the first Town-planning Board in 1926.

At the local level the various Branch Committees also tried once again to widen the appeal of the movement. In September 1923 the Christchurch Committee resolved that it should “strive to interest Local Bodies, Chambers of Commerce, Progressive Leagues, Citizens and Burgers Associations and such like bodies in the Town Planning movement”⁹⁸. Worthy as these sentiments were, they demonstrated a total ignorance of the origins of the town planning movement, that had at one time or another tried to interest or involve some of these groups. It also suggests that the Town Planning Associations had, to all practical effect, ceased to be significant by this point. Further, groups with broader welfare interests which had participated in the 1919 Conference, were not seen as appropriate to be involved in this new version of the town planning movement.

The Advocacy of the Central Committee

The meeting of three professions created the Central Town Planning Committee, often shortened to the Central Committee. By May 1924 it was having regular meetings, with each of the member Institutes meeting one third of its costs⁹⁹. This commitment of funds emphasised both the strength of interest of the three professions and the importance that was now attached to the push for legislation. An important player in the Central Committee was the surveyor, Arthur Bridge, of the Christchurch City Council, who was at the time President of the Institute of Surveyors. This early enthusiasm for town planning of Bridge and others at the Christchurch City Council, would continue, and would in time ensure that Christchurch was one of the first cities to try to implement some aspects of the new legislation.

The Committee was however chaired by Frederick Furkert, who joined the Public Works Department as a cadet and retired thirty-nine years later as its head¹⁰⁰. The choice of Furkert as Chairman reflected a high degree of political acumen, as by 1924 he was already Head of Public Works and had the kudos and contacts to assist the committee in gaining access to the Minister. Thus in July 1924 he sought a meeting with the Minister of Internal Affairs, Richard Bollard, to discuss with him the "question of a Town Planning Bill". While downplaying the competence of the Central Committee calling it "more or less amateur", he did write the letter on Public Works Department letterhead. The letter also included a draft Bill and advocated strongly for legislation that should be drawn up "with the assistance of the local knowledge of both Government Officers and representatives of the interested societies" to ensure it "would have a better chance of being satisfactory"¹⁰¹.

The Bill was relatively simple. While one of its ten clauses indicated that it would become the Town Planning Act 1924, operative on 1 January 1925, it was subtitled “An Act to Regulate the Planning of Towns”, a title reminiscent of the 1875 legislation. The contents of the Bill, however, varied from its predecessors’, particularly in the administrative structure that it would have created. At the central government level there was to be a Town Planning Commission appointed by the Government but dominated by representatives of the three professional institutes. New Zealand was then to be divided into a series of Town Planning Districts. Each would have an appointed District Town Planning Committee that would again be dominated by representatives of the three professions. The Bill did contemplate the appointment of what was called a “Government Town Planner”, who was to be a member of the Town Planning Commission. He was to have few other duties except, within one year of his appointment, to respond to the Government “indicating what additional legislative powers are necessary to enable the future development of New Zealand to be on Town Planning lines”¹⁰². Importantly the Bill clearly defined what town planning meant and what it would involve. Its description was complex and comprehensive. “Town Planning means regulating the subdivision of land with or without the provision of new roads or other means of communication and controlling building thereon or utilisation in such a way as to obtain the best result from the points of view of health, safety, economy, beauty and general convenience, bearing in mind the necessity for the provision of good communication, sewage, water supply, gas, electric lighting supply and recreational facilities”¹⁰³.

It was on the surface, the general definition of town planning with its references to health, beauty and general convenience that harked back to the enthusiasts’

concerns. A closer examination reveals a concept of town planning dominated by the physical aspects of creating the urban fabric. It was very much a technical concept of planning, with only token recognition that town planning had come, through the ideas of Howard and others, to represent the creation of a pleasant and healthy living environment. The practical implications of this concept of town planning became clearer when one examines what the District Committees were to do. They were to be created to approve subdivisions of less than fifty acres, with larger subdivisions being referred directly to the Town Planning Commission. The Act was not so much a Town Planning Act as a subdivision Act, and had it been put in place it would very much have embodied a surveyor's view of the world. This is hardly surprising given that the surveyors believed that they were the country's first effective town planners and that their contribution was not recognised or valued. They had at the 1919 Conference and in comments on the town planning competitions, vigorously asserted their special role in town planning while lamenting the lack of recognition of that role. As an Editorial in the *New Zealand Surveyor* so succinctly put it, "surveyors as a body are overlooked and carry little weight in the community in spite of the essential and important function which they fulfil"¹⁰⁴. With this bill the surveyors had effectively seized the main ground in town planning and thereby largely excluded the other professions. While there may have been a small role for engineers it is difficult to see a role for the architects in the concept of town planning embodied in the draft bill.

Equally the proposed bill made no attempt to link housing and town planning, asserting instead a technical concept of planning. This reflects the dominance of the surveyors in the process, as housing was not an area where they might claim competence whereas they had clear connections to the physical cutting up of land.

Attempts were still made to link town planning and housing, with the National Council of Women writing to the Prime Minister, in July 1923, earnestly urging the Government to pass a Town Planning Act “so as to secure the application of modern town planning methods in the erection of homes for the people under the proposed Housing Scheme”¹⁰⁵. This, however, in itself represented a subtle change in approach, as now town planning was to be used as a method to achieve the best and most appropriate outcome from the housing scheme, presumably schemes launched under the *Workers Dwellings Act 1919*. Town planning was no longer the total answer to the housing question, or to the bigger question of securing moral and physical order in urban areas as had been suggested by earlier advocates, but a means of ensuring that a housing programme was undertaken in an appropriate and successful manner. The creation of a separate response to housing, embodied in legislation, had created a situation where a direct link between town planning and housing could not be successfully advocated. Further, while a separate housing programme was achieving outcomes, albeit slowly, and there was no corresponding progress in achieving specific town planning legislation, any case to link the two concerns was being undermined.

The Deputation from the Central Committee eventually saw the Ministers of Internal Affairs and Lands on the 17th July 1925. At that meeting, Furkert, as the Deputation’s leader, stressed they were “only part of a big movement that had been in agitation for some time on the subject of town planning, in the direction of having better conditions for town planning and subdivision of land”¹⁰⁶. He also indicated that they had the support of both the Law Society and the Land Agents Association. W.O. Beere, on behalf of the surveyors, while stressing the importance of surveyors’ work and the lack of recognition for that work, referred to the practical

problems they faced on a daily basis when subdividing land. The Minister of Internal Affairs, R.F. Bollard, the MP for Raglan, was a farmer and sawmiller. His career seems to have been undistinguished and Bassett, the only writer to comment on him, describes him as “dealing competently” with his department, but also as a minister “who never shone”, and who after the 1925 elections was singled out by the media “as a poor Cabinet performer”¹⁰⁷. The Minister demonstrated a sublime ignorance of both town planning and the issues involved. At one point he appeared to imply that the introduction of town planning could be used to compel people to subdivide and develop land. In an almost consistently negative tone he stated that “the proposals in the Bill looked all right but probably when he went into them he might find there were some big problems to be dealt with before legislation of the kind could be put into operation”. He also saw enormous difficulties in getting the process started. At best he saw town planning as making a contribution to the planning of new areas of cities but doubted that it would contribute much to existing urban areas¹⁰⁸. The Institute of Architects representative, W. M. Page contributed little to the discussion, merely stressing that town planning was an economically sound undertaking. The meeting was reported extensively in both *The Dominion* and the *Evening Post*. Both stated that while Bollard had made some promises with regard to the introduction of legislation, he had continually sounded notes of caution about the problems involved. These included political problems, probably reflecting the recent death of Massey, the formation of the Coates Ministry, and the general election that was to be held in November of that year. In combination these matters hardly made it an auspicious time to promote potentially controversial legislation by a conservative government. It was also unlikely to have been an area of significant interest for a conservative government, which may have led Bollard to overstate the problems.

The muted participation of the Institute of Architect's representative further stressed the fact that the surveyors had effectively taken leadership in the battle to 'colonise' town planning. The architects did not seem to resent this leadership or the direction of the bill, and indicated that the work and representations of the deputation to the Minister had been "heartily supported"¹⁰⁹. However, in the same article which detailed the role of the Institute in town planning, which had itself been provoked by a overly optimistic letter on the subject by Davidge, in the *Royal Institute of British Architects Journal*, there were notes of despair about the future of town planning. The article spoke of "a great deal of apathy, as well as misunderstanding, to be overcome ere we can claim a great advance"¹¹⁰. The barriers to the adoption of town planning were identified as a lack of commitment at national and local government level and the limited vision of the "practical man...who scoffs at idealism and science"¹¹¹. The writer of the article clearly identified the architects as representatives of this "idealism and science", who could "provide useful service in connection with all that relates to the making of towns"¹¹². Clearly the architects still saw a leading role for themselves in town planning. Also implicit in the discussion is the idea that town planning was part of the modern, scientific world which could only be advanced by appropriately and technically trained individuals. Once again town planning was equated with progress.

A Changing Public Response

Two articles published in the *Evening Post* on the 18 June 1925 and on the same day in the *New Zealand Times* reflect a change in the public and popular concept of town planning. The *Evening Post* article started with the bold, but probably quite accurate statement, that "public opinion in favour of town-planning has, we fear,

weakened in recent years". This was put down to the impression that town planning was "chiefly concerned with garden suburbs, civic centres and winding roads which are pretty for pedestrians, but traps for motorists"¹¹³. It then went on to applaud the involvement of "practical men" in the present bill and disagreed with the Minister's presumption that town planning could only be applied to new towns. They instead saw a role for it in planning the extensions to existing cities. This concept of town planning as creating new additions to the urban fabric was very much in keeping with the view of the surveyors, and the characterisation of them and the other professions, as "practical men" signals the success they had achieved in taking leadership of it. It also suggests that the public saw them as motivated by public interest rather than attempting to promote their professional interests. The negative comment about garden cities and urban design aspects of town planning also suggests that the surveyor's concept of town planning was receiving wider acceptance.

The *New Zealand Times* article opened with a similarly controversial view stating "If the people of New Zealand were sick of the town-planning question it would not be surprising". It went on to talk of "Utopian results most glibly promised". The article however then went on to largely refute this view on the basis of the Deputation's visit to the Minister which demonstrated "interest in town planning is of considerable value". It expounded a role for town planning as concerned with creating "room space" for housing, open space and infrastructural facilities to ensure "life is healthy and pleasant: industry revels in good conditions and longevity goes hand in hand with race betterment". This picture is one that emphasises the original concept of town planning as securing pleasant and healthful living environments to produce upright and racially superior citizens, in combination with the more pragmatic vision

of the surveyors concept. The article ended on a positive note stressing that “Yesterday’s deputation, ought to make sure of a good, practical start at once to carry one what has been though greatly delayed, not badly begun!”¹¹⁴

While both articles ended on a positive note, both reflect the frustration that, after so many years, there was still no town planning legislation. That delay had encouraged as part of the campaign to secure that legislation, the development of competing claims as to what it might achieve. The town planning advocates were caught in a difficult situation. They had to promise much in terms of what the legislation might achieve, to ensure it was passed in the first place. This inevitably had the potential to create problems if and when the legislation was secured, the benefits could not immediately be achieved or varied from what had been promised.

The *New Zealand Surveyor* was quite scathing about the Minister’s reply, which it regarded as reducing the issue to one of “party politics” when it was in fact a “matter of statesmanship” and “patriotism”. It went on to state that if it was an issue of party politics then the time had come “to throw the obstructing party where it can no longer obstruct”¹¹⁵. This was a strong condemnation and suggests that the surveyors saw themselves as representing some greater public good. This representation of themselves is at odds with their well-developed ethos of identifying strongly with their clients’ individual interest. It was concern with this aspect of the surveyors’ practice that had caused friction at the 1919 Conference. It would be possible to see the surveyors’ interest in gaining control of town planning, with its potential to modify private property rights, as a manifestation of that safeguarding of clients’ interests. In such an interpretation the surveyors’ wrath sounds a little hollow. It is finally, hardly a realistic position as town planning was

not an issue on which government was likely to rise or fall, whatever the surveyors thought.

The Response of Government

The response of the Government to the requests of the Deputation and the support expressed in the newspapers was predictable. George Newton, the Assistant Under-Secretary for Internal Affairs, duly prepared a Memo on its requests. Of particular concern was the question of the appointment of a Town Planner, which Newton's memo observed was a matter which had been held over since 1920¹¹⁶. The Memo traversed the possibility, that if a Town Planner was not appointed, a bill could be introduced to create a Town Survey Commission under the Surveyor General. This suggestion reflects the impact of the new concept of town planning which had been floated in the Deputation's proposed Bill. It was one in which town planning, under the guidance of the first and original town planners, the surveyors, would be concerned primarily with the subdivision of land and the creation of basic infrastructure, particularly roads.

Bollard appears to have procrastinated until December of 1925 when after discussions with Hurst Seager, he sent Newton a memo. That Memo indicated that "the papers can be brought up again for consideration during the first few months of the New Year"¹¹⁷. As discussed above, from November 1925 Bollard was subject to close press scrutiny and was under pressure over his performance. He clearly had little interest in town planning and was never a strong advocate for it. In fact no Minister except Russell had shown any real interest since town planning had

emerged as an issue. Newton was also unlikely to see the need for legislation given his paper to the 1919 Conference that meticulously identified the potential the use of existing legislation. This was a view that he had repeated many times and which was the mainstay of Minister's responses. Moreover Internal Affairs at the time, as Bassett's history demonstrates, was involved in a myriad of areas and was under the guidance of the ageing and tiring leadership of James Hislop, who would retire in 1928. While it still had many functions, a number of significant ones were lost in the late 1920s. The officers advising on external affairs were transferred to the new Prime Minister's Department in 1926, and while Internal Affairs drafted the important *Motor Vehicles Act 1924*, they lost control of its operation to the Public Works Department¹¹⁸. There may have been the fear that the same would happen with town planning legislation, which moreover did not seem to have strong political backing. For the interim at least it appeared that the issue of town planning legislation had been side stepped.

A Bill is Proposed

Given the situation at the end of 1925 it is difficult to believe that by July 1926 a town planning bill had been produced and that by August it had been passed. There are basically three explanations that may explain this change of heart. The first is that of Michael Bassett in his biography of Gordon Coates, the Prime Minister of the period. Discussing the election of November 1925 and its outcomes he states "also on the list of promised legislation was the Town Planning Bill"¹¹⁹. This suggests that town planning and the Bill, as the *New Zealand Times* had advocated in 1925, had become of sufficient importance to become an election issue. This seems unlikely given there was no Reform party advocate for it. There is no

newspaper evidence to back this view and it is in direct conflict with the Memo, cited above, written by Bollard in December 1925, after the election.

The second explanation is that of the Institute of Surveyors who saw the emergence of the Bill as a product of the Deputation. McRae's history of the Institute puts it quite succinctly when it states that "action came fairly quickly"¹²⁰, when discussing the emergence of the Bill. This he regards as the outcome of the Deputation and the surveyors' lobbying. However, despite the claim that action came quickly there was a delay of almost a year between the visit of the Deputation and the emergence of the Bill. In that period there had been an election and a change of Prime Minister.

The third explanation for the decision to initiate legislation is more complex, based on a particular relationship that may have existed between Coates and a young architect-town planner, Reginald Hammond. Hammond as was discussed earlier, was the winner of the two design competitions at Orakei and Lower Hutt. He was also a Northlander born and bred and his father, Horace Hammond, was County Engineer at Hobson County for many years before setting up an engineering and surveying firm in Dargaville, Hammond, Spannhake and Hammond¹²¹. It is inconceivable that Coates, whose Kaipara electorate included Dargaville, would not have been at least acquainted with Hammond senior, one of the town's more prominent citizens. On 24th December 1925, presumably on his way home for Christmas, Coates met Reginald Hammond at the Auckland Railway Station and spoke to him about town planning. Coates recorded this meeting in a telegram to Internal Affairs and requested that "no note necessary except record of fact that seen Hammond"¹²². A written instruction on the same telegram indicated that

Bollard wanted Newton to prepare a Memorandum for the Prime Minister's signature. For this meeting to have had any impact, then Coates had to be open to Hammond's suggestions. Coates was a complex and almost contradictory man whose reputation has only recently been rescued from the damage inflicted by his perceived poor handling of the early days of the Depression. A farmer and war hero, he was an activist conservative who, as Minister of Public Works and Railways, had extended the participation of the state in the development of infrastructure, including electricity generation and supply. Despite this evident willingness to use the state's interventionist powers, he campaigned in November 1925 on a platform of "less political activity"¹²³. However by 1926 the Reform party was rent by inner tension from, on one hand, "dissatisfaction over its collectivist tendencies" and on the other "agitation for a renewal of expansion and development"¹²⁴, via state intervention. The worsening economic situation meant that Coates continued to intervene, particularly in the economy. He was also a man who while intelligent, lacked formal education. Almost to compensate, he seemed to seek expert opinion and in 1928 when the National Industrial Conference was formed, he sought input from a range of university economists, and was characterised by some "as a dangerous innovator...the blind puppet of Leftist advisors"¹²⁵. From accounts of Coates, it seems that he was also a bold man who was willing to take risks. His main weaknesses were his loyalty to friends and a poor ability to pick good ministers to support him¹²⁶. Oliver probably sums him up when he describes him as "youthful, enterprising, intelligent and (as later years were to show) able to improvise with success in a desperate situation"¹²⁷. The almost serendipitous meeting of Hammond and Coates appears to have been the trigger for renewed interest in town planning based quite firmly on the Prime Minister's personal interest in the subject.

Newton prepared the memo as directed by Bollard, though it largely repeated the neutral, 'do nothing' tone of earlier memos. It also claimed that the issue was "largely bound up with the question of local government reform and if it is proposed at any future date to consider the 'question of local government reform' it would in such a case be possibly desirable that both subjects be dealt with in one comprehensive measure"¹²⁸. This was a view that harked back to Ward's attempt to link the two in 1912. Bollard, despite his earlier reluctance to become involved, wrote to Hammond later in the month. He stated that he had spoken to Coates, who wanted him to come to Wellington "for the purpose of discussing the question with himself and myself and possibly with the Heads of some interested Departments"¹²⁹. This marked the beginning of the formulation of the 1926 Town-planning Act.

Formulating the Bill

After so many years of delay and indecision, matters moved quickly. At some unspecified point Hammond had clearly been engaged to work on the new bill, for in February 1926 he wrote to Bollard asking for a copy of Canada's legislation¹³⁰. Newton arranged a meeting for the 23rd February to be held in the Prime Minister's office, attended by Coates, Bollard, A. D. McLeod (Minister of Lands), Furkert (representing the Public Works Department), Newton and the Surveyor-General¹³¹. This meeting was held unexpectedly as Furkert had to dash back from Christchurch to attend. Its location and the Prime Minister's involvement indicated that the issue of town planning had been elevated to a premier policy issue.

The speed at which the issue was moving also appeared to take some of the Cabinet by surprise. On the 15th February 1926 Parr was reported to have said at a school opening that a Director of Town-planning was to be appointed¹³². When this was referred to the Cabinet the Attorney-General, Francis Dillon Bell, stated that “I certainly do not think a Town Planner should be appointed”¹³³. This was all taking place, at a time when the government was engaging Hammond to work on a bill. By the middle of March Hammond’s work was common knowledge, and was reported in the press. The *Evening Post* stated that “the elimination of slum areas and the introduction of a proper system of town-planning for application to the Dominion as a whole are matters which the Prime Minister is very anxious to bring about at the earliest opportunity”¹³⁴. The same article also noted Hammond’s appointment. This public and private linking of the Prime Minister to the new bill, that continued in its passage through Parliament, was the essential element that ensured that the issue was not once again shelved and probably did much to overcome the inertia of previous Ministers. It also confirms the earlier suggestion that Bollard was not a talented Minister who could be handed such a task with any confidence of success. The appointment of Hammond to lead the process is also interesting given his age and relative lack of experience. A more likely candidate must surely have been Samuel Hurst Seager who, up to 1920 had been in effect the ‘de facto’ town planning advisor to government. When Hurst Seager caught up with the news he quickly offered his services, while forwarding yet more overseas material. His offer was delicately declined¹³⁵, despite Bollard having consulted him in late 1925, as discussed earlier. While Hammond had won the two major design competitions and could claim both an overseas town planning qualification and experience, he would have had only limited exposure to the bureaucracy in

Wellington, or to his own profession. There is no evidence, for instance, that Hammond had participated in the Central Town Planning Committee's work.

Even the experienced and normally diplomatic Newton had trouble coping with the speedy change in policy. After the first meeting of 23rd February he produced a draft memo that was preoccupied with the issue of process and suggested the option of a Commission of Inquiry. There was even the usual observation of the existence of adequate statutory power to achieve town planning outcomes¹³⁶. Newton's views were however disregarded. On 12th March 1926 a further meeting of technical officers was held for "the purpose of discussing matters in connection with proposed town planning legislation"¹³⁷. This meeting established Hammond's role as the town planning expert and formulator of the bill. It further confirmed the bill was the responsibility of Internal Affairs. It was attended by all the likely interested Departments, including J.B. Thompson, Under-Secretary for Lands, F W Furkert, Engineer in Chief and Under-Secretary Public Works, Mr Neill, Surveyor-General, Dr Makgill, Director-General of Health, Mr Marr, Government Architect, and G Newton, Assistant Under-Secretary, Internal Affairs. Hammond was so little known that the only honorific used to establish his status was "winner of Town Planning Competition"¹³⁸. Consideration was given to inviting Hurst Seager to be part of the Committee but this was deemed unnecessary as there was "no doubt Mr Hurst Seager would be the nominee of the New Zealand Institute of Architects"¹³⁹.

There were some overtones of potential conflict over which government department would take specific responsibility for town planning. Newton made it clear that there would be no new department and that while assistance would be sought from the Department of Lands, "the conduct of the work (was) to rest with the Internal Affairs

Department”¹⁴⁰. This probably reflected Internal Affairs recent experience with the *Motor Vehicles Act 1924* and other bills, where they had developed the legislation only to lose long term control to another department. Town planning might not have been viewed as a jewel, but it was worth fighting for if the Prime Minister was interested and involved.

The balance of the meeting devoted itself to the practical aspects of getting the bill written and determining the process and extent of input to be sought from the professions and the public. These concerns reflected the matters that had been raised in the discussions at the earlier meeting between the Prime Minister and the various officers. After discussion the present meeting decided to create a new Committee made up of Government Officers, representatives of the three professional groups and a nominee of the Municipal and Counties Associations. This committee would vet the bill that would be produced in consultation with any of the Government Officers on that Committee. When the bill was produced it would be sent for “preferably constructive criticism” to the three professional institutes and local authorities. There was even the suggestion that Hammond would address public meetings in the larger centres. After this period of comment the bill would be further amended and reconsidered by the Committee. It was clearly not intended to be a speedy process, and legitimised the interest of the three professional bodies in the draft legislation by recognising that they had a right to comment at an early stage. They were also given two opportunities to influence the bill, firstly through their representatives on the Committee and secondly through the more general consultation with the three professions. This emphasised that any bill would be as concerned with the relative powers of the three professions as it was with the public good aspects of town planning.

This competition between the professions emerged from the discussions on the contents of the bill, particularly the powers of the Town Planning Commission, the creation of which seemed to be taken as read, and the Town Planner. Two models emerged for the Town Planning Commission. The first strongly supported by Thompson of the Department of Lands would have created a Commission made up of senior government officials. It was a traditional central bureaucratic model that would have suited the professions, as most of the Commission's members would also have been members of one of the three professions. With the involvement of the Surveyor-General and the Department of Lands, there would also be the expectation that a surveying view would dominate. An alternative, proposed by Hammond, involved an 'expert' model, whereby the Town Planner would guide the deliberations, and ultimately the decisions of the Commission. This model attracted little support, with Marr, the Government Architect, seeming to suggest that New Zealand was too small a country to allow such power and influence to be vested in one person. Newton, as a long term bureaucrat was similarly opposed, recognising perhaps that such an arrangement could undermine the existing public service and the established ethos of that service. Hammond indicated he was impressed by the Canadian legislation, calling it "probably the most important Town Planning Act in the world"¹⁴¹. As Canada had no universal planning legislation he was presumably referring to the *British Columbia Town Planning Act 1925*, that "marked a clear break with British-style legislation"¹⁴². This act included a Town Planning Commission of the type Hammond was advocating that was derived from American models of City Planning Commissions. However Hammond's knowledge of the Canadian act seems a little hazy, as later he suggested it was based on British models. This element of uncertainty, combined with the opposition from the very

senior and influential officers, seems to have been sufficient to ensure that this approach was not pursued.

Much of the jockeying for position at this conference was pointless, as Coates had already made some of the fundamental decisions. On the 15th March he wrote to A. D. McLeod, Minister of Lands, who headed the only other department who could make a realistic claim to the area, and made it quite clear that town planning was to stay with Internal Affairs. His reasoning was quite logical. The legislation would deal with town planning “within and outside Boroughs”. Thus it was a local government matter and all local government matters fell under the aegis of Internal Affairs. The Memo ended with the statement “that the Hon. Mr Bollard will have charge of the legislation”. He did however acknowledge the need to engage “the advice and assistance of the professional portion of the Lands’ Department”¹⁴³. This effectively removed the dominance of the subdivision aspect of town planning that had been embodied in the bill produced by the Central Committee in the previous year. In turn this opened up the opportunity for the new bill to include a wider, but still undefined, concept of town planning. Some of the decisions made by Coates at the time would also prove to be long lasting. The direct connection between town planning and local government is one which still exists, and had already been foreshadowed in the 1912 proposed legislation wherein town planning was embedded in the Local Government Bill. The town planning role would in fact stay with Internal Affairs until the mid-1940s.

The Formation of the Committee and Early Responses

Putting together the advisory Committee, the formation of which had taken up so much time at the preliminary meeting, proved more problematic than might have been expected. The Municipal Association sought nominations from the members of its Executive Committee. This included Hope Gibbons, the Mayor of Wanganui, who nominated Hurst Seager whom he called "a most suitable gentleman to fulfil the work mentioned"¹⁴⁴. This nomination probably reflects the long association Hurst Seager had with the city, primarily in connection with the development of the Museum and Sarjent Art Gallery. Ultimately this suggestion was rejected and the Municipal Association nominated F.J. Nathan, Mayor of Palmerston North, with A.E. Jull of Waipawa alternating with R. A. Rodger of Wellington, as the nominee of the Counties Association¹⁴⁵.

As expected Hurst Seager, was nominated as a representative of the Institute of Architects but the architects also suggested that a nominee of the combined Central Town Planning Committee should also be appointed to this Committee¹⁴⁶. This caused some problems, as it would mean that one of the professional groups would end up with two nominees on the Committee. Newton eventually solved the problem when he remembered that W.O. Beere, the Surveyors' Institute nominee, was a member of the previous Committee. The concern to balance the Committee and to take account of potential professional rivalries indicates that Newton at least, still regarded as open the contest for who would in effect colonise and dominate the new established undertaking of town planning. The engineers had their position weakened by the fact that Furkert, who up to this point had played a pivotal and very central role in the work of the Central Committee and the early meetings on the Bill,

left in March 1926 for a twelve month trip overseas¹⁴⁷. Hammond, by chance or design, also upset some of the potential for the three professions to once again dominate proceedings by requesting, in April, that the Registrar-General of Lands and Deeds and the Government Valuer be added to the Committee. This was agreed to¹⁴⁸. Ultimately the Committee consisted of:

Registrar-General of Lands and Deeds

Surveyor-General

Acting Chief Engineer, Public Works

Valuer-General

Director-General of Health

W.O. Beere as the Surveyors Institute representative

A .J. Paterson as the Engineers Institute representative

Hurst Seager as the Architects Institute representative

F.J. Nathan for the Municipal Association

A.E. Jull / R. A. Rodgers for the Counties Association

This meant the only technical input in terms of town planning training and experience came from Hammond, a trained town planner, and Hurst Seager, an architect and amateur town planner. Hurst Seager was less than positive about the process. On being summoned to the first meeting he wrote rather sharply to Newton stating, "There is to be, I understand, a meeting of the Town planning committee on the 9th, but I hope it will be more than just a introductory address by the Minister, and then the Bill will be handed to us for consideration and discussion at a later date"¹⁴⁹. The poor grammar within the sentence reflects Hurst Seager's rather negative attitude, which seemed to persist. Newton tried to reassure Hurst Seager, replying that "it is intended to go through the bill clause by clause at the meeting"¹⁵⁰. Still unhappy, Hurst Seager replied that "a Bill of this nature certainly

requires a long time for close consideration”¹⁵¹. Hurst Seager was clearly showing both his age and perhaps an expected cynicism at this latest and unexpected attempt to achieve legislation. Ultimately the Bill was supplied to committee members on a confidential basis on the 7th June 1926¹⁵² for a meeting to be held on the 11th June 1926.

Hurst Seager, who was at the time the President of the Institute of Architects, clearly expected to have a prominent role in the formulation of the bill, given his previous status as the government’s ‘de facto’ town planning advisor and his many years of labour in promoting town planning. It was, however, that long history which had the potential to put him out of step with the type of bill which was likely to emerge in 1926. In that year he was still producing the illustrated lantern lecture featuring Letchworth and a general lauding of the garden city approach¹⁵³. He was also agitating for the formation of his beloved Town-planning Association in every town which “would be able to speak with a powerful voice on any local matters and would command the earnest attention of your civic authority”¹⁵⁴. He even went on to predict a role for such groups under the new legislation. This was clearly misleading, and overlooked the fact that regardless of his strenuous efforts to encourage the formation of such groups, after the 1919 Conference, they had failed to take root, despite the much greater public interest at the time. It also reflected a person who was clinging to concepts of the past derived from an image of town planning as dealing with the slum issues which so predominated overseas. This speech can be contrasted with one given by the American born and trained architect, R. A. Lippincott. He delivered a public lecture on “ What Town Planning Can Do for the Individual and for the Community”. It stressed civic design and layout and the ‘economy’ of town planning¹⁵⁵. Out of step he might have been, but

Hurst Seager did make extensive enquiries to assist him in responding to the Bill and its contents. These included seeking advice from Charles Reade, who had not been in New Zealand since 1914¹⁵⁶. This seeking of advice from overseas and Hammond's earlier reference to Canadian legislation indicates that New Zealand was still, in terms of the diffusion of planning ideas, at the stage of adapting overseas ideas to local conditions. The ideas however were primarily borrowed from familiar sources of Empire or the increasingly important United States.

Hurst Seager was not the only person to seek to offer advice over the contents of the bill. *The City Beautiful* magazine took a consistent interest in it. Hammond himself wrote an article for the magazine in March 1926, which represented town planning as a progressive undertaking, primarily focussed on securing a better future for the community as a whole. This concept recognised that "hardship on some individuals may follow"¹⁵⁷, thus focusing on the intervention of town planning in the basic private property right. While the garden city concept was mentioned, it was in terms of how it could be adapted to apply to the existing and new urban fabric. Hammond made much in the article of the need to revive public support and interest for the proposal, recognising perhaps that the movement had lost ground over the preceding years. As the author of the new bill, he might have recognised the need to overcome opposition from those Reade had characterised as

"politicians and town planners who, by virtue of the high office and most undeserved reputation, have held New Zealand back and contributed to the process of spoliation and disfigurement that have, in the past two decades and more injured the lovely suburban areas of Leading Cities."¹⁵⁸

The reference here to town planners is a little confusing, as there were none practising in New Zealand at the time with whom to lay such blame. It would seem

more likely that it was a shorthand term for the planners of towns which would tend to direct the criticism at the surveyors. Hammond concluded the article by linking, as in the past, the creation of good living environment with the “development of character and good citizenship”, which for readers would have made the link back to earlier concerns¹⁵⁹.

City Beautiful, presumably through its editor Charles Chilton, was quick to take up the challenge and perhaps surprisingly, given the magazine’s pre-occupation with and focus on civic improvement and beautifying, was a strong advocate for the use of zoning. This it saw as giving local authorities the power “to protect residential areas from encroachment by trade in every shape, so that their primary character of there (sic) being homes for people should remain undisturbed”¹⁶⁰. This use of zoning to protect residential amenity values reflected a continuing interest in the magazine. The same edition of *City Beautiful* carried an article on zoning, taken from the *Christchurch Press*, which dealt largely with Sydney’s experience of using this American technique and its applicability to New Zealand. This interest continued in the next edition in June 1926, which carried a reprint from an American source on the advantages of zoning¹⁶¹.

While this material was largely derivative¹⁶² it does indicate an awareness of the technique which was still being developed in America. The use of zoning to protect residential amenity values had emerged in California in 1917. This contrasted with the use of zoning in the East Coast cities where it was used to control the bulk and style of commercial activity and to stop the intrusion of small-scale industry into commercial areas. Further it also indicates that the remaining town planning enthusiasts were keeping in touch with the current developments overseas,

primarily through magazines which they then culled to fill their local publications. Material was not sourced exclusively from British models. While the imperial link was undoubtedly strong it was not exclusive when it came to town planning ideas and concepts.

Nevertheless the same magazine demonstrated an almost naïve view when it reproduced Reade and Davidges' recommendations after the 1914 Tour, suggesting that they "are of special interest at the present time when a Town Planning Bill is expected to be introduced in the coming Session of Parliament"¹⁶³. Given the time that had elapsed and the changes that had occurred in both society and the economy it was doubtful as to how relevant these recommendations were in 1926. This fascination with trying to recall the past, which was demonstrated by Hurst Seager and his attempt to revive a nationwide network of town planning associations, also undoubtedly reflects the age of the participants. The town planning enthusiasts who had created the movement often from a base of worthy community service, were faced with the prospect that their goal would now be achieved by the efforts of the new younger adherents, typified by Hammond, for whom town planning may have been more of a career than a calling. It is a period when there was a gradual transfer of leadership from the enthusiast to the professional. The moment that legislation existed, which gave powers that had to be exercised and required plans to be written, this was almost inevitable. It was, however, a development that probably largely escaped the enthusiasts, who were so caught up in the struggle to achieve legislation. The impetus of civic concern and citizenship was about to give way to a more technocratic motivation where town planning might succeed not because it was intrinsically good, but because it was potentially an effective and efficient way to deal with the issues of managing the

urban fabric. This was certainly the experience in America where, at in a much earlier period, the socially concerned abandoned planning, and the City Beautiful adherents were replaced by the City Efficient with its professional planners. It may have been the inklings of this that caused such clear discomfort to Hurst Seager.

The Committee's Consideration

Despite the efforts to set up the Advisory Committee to assist in drafting the Bill, it met only once, on the 11th June 1926. The pre-circulated bill was more extensive than its predecessors and this time indicated that it was to “provide for the Making and Enforcement of Town and Regional Planning Schemes”¹⁶⁴. The term “regional planning” was a new departure. It was intended to apply to rural areas and to be “complementary of the town planning scheme of any city or borough in the vicinity of the rural area”¹⁶⁵. It was a quite different to the concept of regional planning now used. For the time it was a very modest concept of regional planning. It appears to be an emaciated version of the British model that was largely concerned with rural amenity preservation and urban growth issues¹⁶⁶, rather than the more comprehensive American models which were championed by Adams in the New York Regional Plan¹⁶⁷. This adaption of an overseas model reflects the quite different conditions that existed in New Zealand that would have made such large scale regional plans unsuitable. The New Zealand version was largely preoccupied with controlling urban development where it occurred independently in rural areas, rather than where it represented the expanding edge of an established urban area. The concept embodied in the draft Bill was however more broadly cast with the purpose of a town planning scheme being, “the development of the city or borough to which it relates (including where necessary the reconstruction of any built-up

area therein) in such a way as will most effectively tend to promote its healthfulness, amenity, convenience and advancement”¹⁶⁸. This general statement approach was in clear contrast to the prescriptive list approach of Russell’s 1917 Bill. The first part of the statement of the purpose of schemes does however create a different concept of planning, reflective of the times. Town planning is no longer to be exclusively focussed on achieving the morally and physically uplifting living environment but is to be a tool to achieve the advancement and efficient operation of the urban system. This progressive view of town planning began to reflect the inevitable relationship between the management of land use and the achievement of economic outcomes.

Despite the make up of the Committee, with its heavy representation of ‘interested’ parties, the draft bill produced little discussion. Most noticeable was the complete lack of input from Hurst Seager. This was understandable. He had always been an ‘ideas man’ who may have felt out of his depth with the detail of the Bill, and with the participation of such a large group of officials and ‘experts’. Equally it may also reflect his concerns, expressed earlier, that this was a token consultation. Given the Committee met only once, he may have been correct in that assessment. There were few points of contention. Mr Neale, the Valuer-General made an unsuccessful attempt to downgrade the Director of Town-planning’s position from expert advisor to officer status, but this motion was lost. Not unexpectedly, the issue of compensation and betterment arising from the operation of town planning schemes also warranted some discussion but little in the way of suggestions for how it might be addressed. Two issues generating considerable debate centred on the relative powers and responsibilities of the central state represented by the Town-planning Board and local government. Hammond had proposed a model

largely based on the English Act where, as he put it, “the whole thing was worked by a Central Authority”¹⁶⁹. Nathan on behalf of the Municipal Association wanted this central authority, if it was to be given significant approval powers, to also include a representative of this Association; while Mair, the Government Architect wanted to see regional plans largely made voluntary. Nathan’s motion found approval, but Mair’s concerns were cast aside with the rather cavalier statement of Hammond, that “regional planning will be treated in a large way”¹⁷⁰, which appeared to mean that they would not be enforced by the proposed 1930 completion date for town planning schemes. Of more significance were the proposals with regard to the approval of subdivision plans. This page of the draft Bill is missing, but from the discussion it would appear that it was proposed that these would all be submitted to the Town-planning Board for approval. Nathan stated quite clearly that discussions with his Executive had produced “the strongest disapproval”. Nathan also intimated that any such scheme would produce significant delays, which offended him as a businessman as well as a Mayor of a provincial city. While this does not explicitly link the concept of town planning to achieve economic efficiency and effectiveness, it does make it more of a tool to achieve this. Hammond bowed to the pressure and agreed to redraft this section of the Bill. The debate that emerged over the relative powers of the central and local states is symptomatic of the period. Bush characterises the decade from 1920 as one of “revolution” with “central government installing itself as overseer of roading, planning, borrowing and expenditure”¹⁷¹. This occurred he believes because of local body inadequacy and a recognition that what local bodies did “impinged on the well being of the entire body politic”¹⁷². While town planning formed a minor aspect of this new relationship, the greatest change was in the financial area, where the combined effect was to “alter the fundamental ‘rules of the game’ to which local government was subject”¹⁷³. Thus

the new legislation was being proposed in a quite different environment to that which existed in 1911 and 1917.

A great deal more lobbying on the content of the Bill occurred after the meeting and prior to its First Reading on 22nd July 1926. When introducing the Bill Bollard alluded to that lobbying and consultation which had been undertaken. He ruefully observed that was required because “unfortunately nearly every second person in the Dominion is a town planner, and thinks he could make a very much better Bill than the one before honourable gentlemen”¹⁷⁴. The lobbying was not confined to the general public, professional groups and local authorities, but included government departments. The Director-General of Health actively sought to have a named position on the Town-planning Board, as he felt he need “hardly stress that the Town planning Bill is largely a matter of public health”¹⁷⁵. Such claims may have been clear to the Director-General but they are not evident in the Bill, and seem to have been based on the situation in Britain where town planning came under the aegis of the Ministry of Health. Newton rejected this, stating that the named officers, that is the Surveyor-General, Engineer-in-Chief and Government Architect, were included because “it is considered that the persons who hold such office should ipso facto be members of the Board”¹⁷⁶. Newton did not explain this comment but presumably he was suggesting that the contents of the Bill were so central to the work of these officers, who were the most senior technical officers in the public service, that they should automatically be part of the Board. All he would promise is that there would be four general appointments, which presumably might include the Director-General of Health. After the amendments to the Bill were circulated on 24th June 1926, the Surveyor-General took issue with some of the proposals. His concerns covered four main areas. He first tried to institute an

appeal authority from the Town-planning Board “where the objections would be determined on the grounds of law and equity rather than from the viewpoint of town planning experts”¹⁷⁶. Newton rejected this on the grounds that it would undermine the Board’s powers and lead to claims for compensation¹⁷⁷. His second concern was with requirements for regional plans which, the Surveyor-General suggested, should only apply to “land which is in the course of development as a town or likely to be subdivided for building purposes”¹⁷⁸, and then only after a topographical map had been produced of the area. The latter would clearly create plenty of work for the survey profession. As Hammond had done in the 11th June meeting, Newton suggested that a relaxed and flexible approach would be applied to regional planning, and that the Board would direct what it was necessary to prepare, including topographical maps. The third concern was potentially the most important as the Surveyor-General implied that he was reflecting the opposition of a number of other groups, including lawyers, surveyors and architects. It concerned the imposition of a 5% reserve contribution on subdivision¹⁷⁹. Newton’s reply was succinct. He pointed out that this provision was in keeping with current general policy and the provisions of S193 of the *Municipal Corporations Act*. Newton’s knowledge of existing law had proved useful. The final concern was with who would write the Regulations to accompany the Bill. The Surveyor-General recommended a Committee of the Surveyor-General, Director of Town-planning, Engineer-in-Chief and Government Architect. Newton partially resisted this and clearly emphasised that the prime responsibility would be with the Director of Town-planning.

Newton’s reassertion of the role of the Director of Town-planning here is interesting, given that he, a senior public servant with no technical training, was in effect making

the decisions with regard to the Bill without the apparent or visible involvement of Hammond. Doubtlessly Hammond was consulted, but there is little evidence of this within the files. What it may reflect is the relative seniority and status of the two men, for Hammond had in effect been brought in through the back door under the direct patronage of the Prime Minister. This is hardly likely to have sat well with a long term career bureaucrats such as Newton, whom Bollard lauded at the introduction of the Bill as a man “who has made a life study of town-planning”¹⁸⁰.

Hurst Seager was dissatisfied with the amendments but had nothing to offer in replacement, merely expressing “the wish that, although the Bill will not be exactly what we wanted, it will be converted into an Act in accordance with it”¹⁸¹. This tends to confirm the presumption that Hurst Seager was now out of his depth and was willing to give way to the perceived superior competence of senior public servants. Local authorities got their first look at the revised bill on 23rd July via a circular. The circular, prepared by Newton, put the Bill in historical context, mentioning the Russell Bill of 1917 which is claimed to have been based on South Australian legislation, and reminding local authorities that they already had extensive powers under existing legislation. This was followed by a brief résumé of the process of the Bill’s formulation and its contents. The tone throughout was positive and emphasised that the new requirement should not present a burden to local authorities¹⁸². This circular and the Bill were sent to all local authorities in New Zealand, including three Auckland Roads Boards and the Otago Expansion League¹⁸³. While the circulation list was wide, the material was sent after the Bill had been presented to Parliament, which undermined the Minister’s claims about consultation.

Introduction of the Bill and the Response

News that a Bill was to be introduced had been received with some derision by the Opposition when it was announced on 26 June 1926. H.E. Holland, the Leader of the Opposition, referred through a biblical metaphor, to the seven year wait and expressed the hope that it would not take another seven years to get the Bill passed¹⁸⁴.

After the Bill's introduction on 22nd July 1926, it was referred to the Lands Committee for consideration and was circulated to interested parties detailed above. Bollard did not in fact make his introductory speech until 20th August. In this interim period there was extensive debate and lobbying, which meant by August it was quite different to the original. This caused some confusion which Bollard as Minister did little to elucidate¹⁸⁵, though he claimed the August version was a "very much better one than the original"¹⁸⁶. Despite these sentiments the original July Bill received a positive press reception. The *New Zealand Herald* carried a detailed report, and a very positive Editorial which stated that "the measure may seem more ambitious than present circumstances warrant, but the essence of town planning is provision for future development and there cannot be any doubt that the advantages offered are considerable"¹⁸⁷. The same Editorial then went on to expound a very progressive concept of town planning which characterised it as balancing the achievement of a pleasant and healthful living environment with the facilitating a productive environment for the development of "future enterprises". It expressed only surprise at the requirement that local bodies with as few as 2000 people produce town planning schemes. The *New Zealand Times*, with a long interest in town planning, also reported the July Bill positively, though its Editorial

fell back on some familiar images the “problems of congestion with its incidental effects of slums, lack of city lungs, unendurable statistics of mortality and confusion of traffic”¹⁸⁸. However the older images of urban problems were joined by the new one of traffic congestion, the product of the more consumer-oriented society. In keeping with this the concept of town planning was one where “urban life can be made ideally good, pleasantly comfortable and enormously attractive”¹⁸⁹. It concluded with “this well-considered, far reaching, necessary measure should reach as near as possible to perfection”¹⁹⁰. The Bill was an answer to both the past and the present problems of the city.

Other groups were less complimentary. On 2nd August Newton and Bollard received a deputation from representatives of the Real Estate Institute who sought alterations to the betterment clause and representation on the Town-planning Board, on the basis of American precedents¹⁹¹. The real estate industry’s concern with betterment, that would capture some of the increased value of development for the community, was understandable. If strictly applied it could reduce developer profits, increase land prices, decrease land sales, and affect real estate agents’ incomes. The membership of the Board had been a vexatious problem from the outset. There had been some consideration of including representatives of the four main cities as automatic members, but this was eventually dropped in favour of two representatives from the Municipal Association¹⁹². Dr McKibben from Health was still agitating for membership and wanted at the very least a specific provision requiring that all schemes obtain certificates to confirm they met Health Department requirements with regard to health matters¹⁹³. The Director-General of Health was not easily discouraged, and a further memo on 7th July quoted the British legislation and pointed out that in that country, the Controlling Authority for town planning was

the Department of Health¹⁹⁴. Ultimately the matter was brought to an end with Bollard's tart assurance that "your Department's interests would be adequately safeguarded if provision were made in what is known as the Procedure Regulations"¹⁹⁵. These were presumably the Regulations which would give details of how the administrative processes put in place by the Act were to be undertaken. Such regulations are an effective way of dealing with administrative detail that could not appropriately be included in the Act.

Local authorities were less than satisfied with the Bill and launched a concerted campaign to defeat or at least slow consideration of it. A surprisingly harsh attack was launched by W.E. Bush, City Engineer of the Auckland City Council, who called the lack of a requirement to produce a town planning scheme for the whole of the city area "a very real defect in the Bill"¹⁹⁶. In this comment Bush seemed to expect the Bill to cure the disjointed nature of local government in Auckland, and harked back to the concerns of Myers and the Greater Auckland movement. He also disputed the need for a large central board that would entail "a serious interference with the local governing power now possessed without any real corresponding advantages"¹⁹⁷. Hence he drew parallels with the Local Government Loans Board Bill which was making its way through Parliament at the same time. That legislation was a direct response to what Bush calls "the hectic pace and recklessness of contracting loans" with many local bodies "stretching themselves beyond capacity" so "prudent redemption arrangements were being ignored"¹⁹⁸. Bush accurately saw the Bill in the wider context of the changing relationship between the central and local state that was discussed earlier. The Loans Board Bill much more fundamentally altered the balance between the central and local state with the central state trying to 'rein in' the increasingly irresponsible tendencies of local

government. The impact was further magnified by the disputes that surrounded the introduction of legislation to regulate tramways that had been passed in 1925. The two issues were linked in a newspaper article that reported the discussions of the Wellington City Council, of the two Bills¹⁹⁹. In both cases the complaint centred on the speed of the consideration of the Bills as both “measures were worthy of a great deal of thought as they were foreign to municipal practice in the past”²⁰⁰. Newton and the Minister became concerned at the press coverage the Bill was getting, particularly in Taranaki where Newton indicated that a Councillor had called the Bill “the most autocratic action of the Government”²⁰¹. All these comments indicate that local government resisted the extension of the disciplining power of the central state. While the Town-planning Bill was only a minor part of that process, it did become part of the cumulative irritation felt by the embattled local bodies. It was hardly a situation that was likely to inject a rational note into the local bodies’ consideration of this new Bill.

Ultimately all Bush expressed support for was the appointment of a Director of Town-planning. He stressed that if the legislation was to be a success then the Bill would need amendments which would make it “workable and acceptable to the local authorities on which the ultimate success of town planning in New Zealand will really depend”²⁰². It was a pertinent and accurate observation. Not surprisingly, the Auckland City Council protested against the introduction of the Bill “without first consulting local authorities” and asked that it be deferred to the next session so that “local bodies and the Municipal and Counties Association (could) be asked for their criticism and amendments and that evidence be taken on these measures before it is proceeded with”²⁰³. Perhaps more intriguing was the organised protest which emerged under the unlikely leadership of the Hawera Borough Council, which wrote

to a range of generally small boroughs around the country supplying them with a standard set of resolutions which they could then vote on before sending them to the Minister. The response was significant with at least sixteen boroughs and counties writing to the Minister along the lines suggested by the Hawera Borough Council. For both boroughs and counties alike the issues were simple. While town planning was good, the Bill would involve them in a compulsory process, which would impose costs on local authorities and landowners alike. Their solution was to have the Bill held over for twelve months to allow for "consideration as to its aims and objects"²⁰⁴. As the *New Zealand Herald* had observed at the time of the Bill's introduction, the requirement for boroughs with populations of one thousand to produce town planning schemes set a net with very small mesh²⁰⁵. For these smaller boroughs and counties with limited rating powers and multiple calls on their funds, compulsory town planning schemes may have seemed a luxury that they could not afford, particularly if they had to be produced by 1st January 1930. The Minister tried vainly to defend the Bill, saying there were "certainly a lot of misconceptions of the objects and principles of the Bill"²⁰⁶. He also contended, a little disingenuously, that the writing of the schemes need not be costly and that the government was merely promoting a Bill that had been sought by a remit from the last Municipal Association Conference. He stressed that the Town-planning Board "must be comprised primarily of experts" who would act "in the nature of a town planning court"²⁰⁷. This was not an entirely accurate rendition of the role of the Board, which was much more one of approval than dispute resolution. It did not have the powers of a Court and its decisions could be subjected to the normal process of judicial review. While the agitation from local authorities continued, the news was not always bad. Petone Borough, for instance, stated it was in favour of the Bill, "particularly the provisions giving authority to Borough Councils to declare

that certain areas will be wholly residential and some will be wholly for business purposes”²⁰⁸. This advocacy for simple zoning indicates that knowledge of this technique had spread beyond the usual ‘interested’ enthusiasts. In what looks like an orchestrated campaign, a number of organisations and local authorities telegraphed the Minister just prior to the Second Reading of the Bill in an attempt to have it held over for further consideration²⁰⁹.

The various professional groups were also quick to respond. The Institute of Surveyors appointed a small group to assess the Bill, consisting of E.V. Blake, a surveyor, who also had town planning interests being the second placegetter in the Orakei Design Competition, and C. K. Grierson a prominent Auckland surveyor in private practice. The Bill was discussed at the Surveyors’ Conference which was held in early August 1926, at which it was called “fundamentally wrong in principle and childish in conception”²¹⁰. The surveyors’ dissatisfaction stemmed from two broad areas. The first was a concern with the cost to local authorities and the overall lack of control at the local level. The second and much more fundamental concern in terms of the surveyors’ professional life, was the lack of an appeal path to anything except the Town-planning Board. This seemed to reflect the fact that by 1926 surveying was a well settled profession built on a strong client relationship which involved regular close contact with local authorities within the context of the well understood provisions of the *Municipal Corporations Act*. This Bill appeared to disturb that settled and understood relationship and to offer the potential for interference from another, essentially unknown professional group encapsulated in the Town-planning Board. The Minister’s response, in print at least, was scathing — “personally I think that the wrath of the surveyors has been stirred because the Bill does not follow the suggestions made in 1916 by the President of the

Institute”²¹¹. Such fundamental complaints from the surveyors indicates how rushed the writing of the Bill had been, leaving no time to allow the surveyors on the Committee to shape it in their image. Within Internal Affairs there were clear worries about the strength of objection from such a significant group, George Newton prepared a detailed reply to each of the points raised in the *Evening Post* report and the press was encouraged to use it quickly²¹². The surveyors continued their battles for alteration to the Bill through submissions to the Lands Committee, which considered the Bill from the 4th August 1926. They were successful in securing some alteration to the Bill when it went before the Legislative Council but these “were nearly all subsequently lost when the Bill returned to the Lower House”²¹³. They seemed to accept that they had been defeated over the Bill and that the important thing had been to get a Bill passed. Once the statute existed, they observed, “it can be amended, and, after some years of actual experience can be consolidated and re-enacted”²¹⁴. The same article was careful to warn surveyors to treat the new Town-planning Board and its members with respect. For despite their expressed misgivings over their competence, there was the danger that “merely destructive criticism and denunciation simply antagonises them and destroys the weight of what may really be valuable suggestions from the same source”²¹⁵. For the surveyors it was clearly the battle not the war that had been lost and they were signalling their intention to be prime participants in the new processes instituted by the Act. It also meant that they were likely to be critical participants in the process, hardly helpful to the success of the new legislation.

The response of the architects was equally critical. In August 1926, the Auckland Branch of the Institute of Architects headed a campaign, involving the other branches, and resolved that “it cannot support the Bill in its present form and

recorded its agreement with the Surveyors' Institute in its protest against the terms of the Bill²¹⁶. Their major concern was with the "insufficiently defined" powers of the Town-planning Board that would lead to "an undesirable concentration of power" in the hands of the Director of Town-planning²¹⁷. In the notes attached to that letter it was clear that they saw the answer to this dilemma, like the surveyors, in the creation of a Town Planning Court, "consisting of a Supreme Court Judge and two professional Assessors", "who would sit above the Board and the Director"²¹⁸. Without doubt both bodies saw their members as the two professional assessors. Hurst Seager, who was at this time President of the Institute of Architects, answered the Auckland branch in a detailed paper. While he accepted their concerns he also pointed out that some of the issues could be resolved in the regulations which would follow the Bill²¹⁹. Hurst Seager also used one of his Christchurch Beautifying Association colleagues, H.F.Von Haast, a barrister and solicitor, to answer some of the more serious criticisms, particularly about the potential of the Director to abuse his powers. The efforts of Hurst Seager certainly seemed to have paid off. By November 1926 the *Journal* of the Institute of Architects reported, "it is gratifying to know that the Town Planning (sic) Bill which was in the throes of Parliamentary debate as the last issue of the *Journal* went to press, has now become an Act ... in spite of efforts to postpone it"²²⁰. Perhaps Hurst Seager aware of the abortive attempts of the past to achieve legislation, was happy to concede some of his concerns to see the legislation on the Statute Book.

What is missing is any real concerted involvement of the engineers. They had never been such enthusiastic supporters of the earlier agitation for legislation and certainly turned up in lesser numbers to the joint meetings held between the three institutes. While Bush, the Auckland City Council City Engineer, helped to

spearhead the Auckland City Council response to the Bill, he seemed to do this from his position with the Council, rather than as President of the New Zealand Society of Civil Engineers. The latter seemed merely to be a fortunate coincidence. Bush however did make submissions with the other institutes and the representatives of Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch City Councils²²¹. The engineers were certainly never as prominent in this area as the other professions either because they did not see it as affecting so directly their professional lives, or because they recognised that engineering and its achievements were so firmly embedded that it would prevail anyway. Certainly Furkert, Chief Engineer in the Public Works Department, was to have a seat on the Board. Equally, at the time many of the large engineering projects were instituted by central government would not be covered by the provisions of the Act, as the Crown was not bound by such legislation. Later legislation would make special arrangements for the public works projects of both local and central government.

Representations and comment on the Bill were not confined to the professionals and local authorities. A surprising range of groups commented on the Bill. The Wellington Chamber of Commerce was highly critical of it, particularly the betterment clauses, undoubtedly reflecting the same concern as the real estate agents, and said the "provisions included are somewhat obscure"²²². However once again the old enthusiasts rode to the rescue. A. Leigh Hunt challenged the Chamber's interpretation of the Bill and suggested, quite sensibly, that they should support the Bill but oppose the betterment provisions. Representations were also received from groups as small as the Anderson Bay Ratepayers Association, as peripherally interested as the Otago Builders Association, and as self interested as a real estate company²²³. Even the New Zealand Institute for Horticulture

suggested they needed a representative on the Town-planning Board to present “the aesthetic viewpoint”²²⁴. The diversity of criticism was surprising and seems often to have arisen out of misunderstanding of the Bill that was compounded by the speed of its formulation. The Board was certainly viewed as much more powerful than it was ever likely to be hence the strenuous efforts of all types of organisations to gain a seat on it. Betterment, but not its corollary compensation, also caused significant concern to any group with an interest in land development. Betterment raises a plethora of problems that the British planning system was still wrestling with in 1947, and which Grant believes helped to undermine the first three British planning acts²²⁵. This Bill was reasonably clear on how the betterment would be assessed, which was based on the existing provisions used, for instance, when roads were extended giving owners valuable frontage. What differed here was the extent of the opportunity to assess betterment, which immediately raised fears. In practice the fears were to be unrealised as there is no evidence of any betterment ever being collected. In the welter of criticism it must have seemed that the 1926 Bill might fail like all the previous attempts.

The Second Reading – The Political Response

The odd consultation process that the Bill had been subject to meant that it was a much-revised version that was presented to Parliament on 20th August. This time it was subject to a very full introduction by Bollard, who called it “much-needed legislation in New Zealand for the last twenty five years”²²⁶, but used the quite dated imagery of town planning as the ‘slum cure all’²²⁷. While Bollard outlined the major changes in the Bill there was still confusion over which version was being discussed, and this clouded the debate. There were many areas of change.

Compulsory regional planning by county councils was abandoned with such plans only being required where the government deemed them necessary. The compensation and betterment provisions had also been altered to allow compensation disputes to be settled in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Act*, and betterment disputes through an Assessment Court set up in terms of the *Valuation of Land Act*. This was an obvious attempt to link the process of betterment to existing, and presumably well-understood systems, and in turn to quieten opposition²²⁸. On these two issues Bollard was at pains to stress that the provisions were not much different to those already in existing legislation, particularly the *Municipal Corporations Act*. There was also a clear idea that the compensation and betterment funds would balance each other out and were to be kept in a specific account. Bollard also indicated that local authorities would be given guidance on the preparation of schemes through regulations that would be prepared after the Bill was enacted. Much faith was placed in these regulations, though at no point were there any clear statements as to what they would contain. In this regard he stressed that this was not intended to diminish the power of local authorities, presumably through the imposition of direction by the central state, but would instead be “conferring additional powers upon them”²²⁹. This was an attempt to address the concern that was being expressed by local bodies in the consultation period, that this legislation was merely another part of a wider attempt by the central state to exert control over the fundamental operations of local bodies. It seems doubtful if assurances over as yet unwritten regulations were likely to calm such fears. In this discussion he specifically mentioned that the Act would allow the use of zoning, which he clearly saw as a major technique to address the issue of incompatible uses and to preserve residential amenity values. That Bollard, a disinterested Minister, would mention zoning indicates how widespread was both

knowledge and acceptance of this American technique. Membership of the Town-planning Board was finally settled, with only the Municipal Association being rewarded with an extra member. The Director-General of Health's extensive lobbying secured only a requirement for all town planning schemes to have a certificate of compliance for health. Bollard also dealt specifically with subdivision, stressing that it was not intended to "take away any of the existing powers provided in the Land Act"²³⁰, or to interfere with the existing powers and role of the Minister of Lands. This was clearly an attempt to reassure the surveying and development communities that little would change under this new legislation. It also emphasised that the actual process of surveying and titling of land, the mainstay of the system of guaranteed titles, would remain unchanged and in the safe and responsible hands of the Lands Department, rather than in the unknown hands of the new Director of Town-planning.

The Parliamentary opposition, after the 1925 elections, consisted of twelve National and Independents, and thirteen Labour MPs. Labour was a growing party that was benefiting from the increasing urban populations and the unrest emerging from deteriorating economic conditions. Thus in the 1920s Labour's "socialist zeal was edged out by a general humanitarian urge for social justice"²³¹. This was reflected in Labour's response to this Bill. M. J. Savage was supportive and complementary and suggested the "underlying the principle of town-planning is to be found in the welfare of the community in general"²³². Further, when discussing betterment he stated that it "seems a fair thing that a share of the values due to town-planning should be made available for further planning, in the interests of the people as a whole"²³³. For Labour, town planning was an acceptable concept for while it might limit private property rights it did so to achieve a greater good for the community.

This opens the way for public involvement in the creation of those schemes to ensure that they do reflect what the community will accept or what it believes is good. This was taken up by a later speaker, H.L. Tapley, a Reform MP and Mayor of Dunedin, who observed that towns and cities and the people in them would want “to have a voice on the matter”²³⁴. Other Labour speakers on the Bill tended to reflect the approach of Savage, that town planning could be used to the advantage of all the community and that little would be achieved by delay. H.G.R. Mason the MP for Eden, said that the problems that had emerged to date were because local authorities had insufficient power, and that “we are giving them more powers”²³⁵. Labour was, not unexpectedly, comfortable with the concept of extending the powers both of the central and local states, to secure more than the private good.

The other Opposition MPs and the Reform members were less sure of their response to the Bill. The debate was extensive and it was clear that a number of the members had been directly lobbied by both local authorities and members of the professional associations. Some of the debate became bogged down on exchanging detail about road widths or water supply²³⁶. Both Reform and opposition members while expressing support for the concept of town planning, wanted to slow the process down and posed questions on some aspects of the Bill. Tapley sought a delay to allow for further consultation to avoid the “great dissatisfaction”²³⁷ which was going to be created by without it. He moved an amendment to have the Bill postponed until the next session and to be subject to discussion at a conference of interested local bodies. While Tapley’s amendment received some support it was eventually ruled out of order by a vote initiated by the Speaker. Part of the concern to delay the legislation appeared to stem from the fact that local authorities had been given no opportunity to examine the Bill which

emerged from the Lands Committee. For as H.G. Dickie, the Patea MP whose seat included Hawera, that hot bed of local authority opposition, observed, “the Bill was only put in our Bill-book two days ago”²³⁸. Given the delays that had occurred in developing the legislation there may have been no clear reasons, evident to the present MPs, for such galloping urgency.

The cost of the Board and the cost to individual local bodies were frequently raised concerns. In the end Coates himself rose to defend the Bill, chiding members for supporting the idea of town planning but trying to delay the Bill, stating quite categorically that “the Bill is necessary, urgent and essential”²³⁹. Sir Joseph Ward also spoke in strong support, pointing out that he had seen all the previous attempts lost to similar tactics – “it was found utterly impossible to get either the Bill through for the reason that people at a distance, particularly local bodies, wanted the measure postponed”²⁴⁰. Within the debate there were some interesting observations as to who might actually undertake the task of writing town planning schemes. Despite the efforts of the surveyors, the Borough Engineer was mentioned by T.W. Rhodes, as the most likely scheme writer²⁴¹, though W.D. Lysnar did not see it as a task beyond the capability of the Town Clerk²⁴². Both comments reflect the poor understanding among MPs of what a town planning scheme might include and, consequently, what it might effect.

After a last minute amendment to delay its implementation until 1st January 1928 rather than 1st January 1927, was defeated, the Bill was passed with a majority of fifty. The Bill then moved immediately to a Third Reading and despite another attempt by Harris to delay it, was passed by the House of Representatives, left to face only the hurdle of the Legislative Council.

The Last Gasps of Opposition

The passing of the Bill was welcomed in the *New Zealand Times* with the headlines “Away With Slums!”, “Welcome Measure”, “A Preliminary Step Towards Securing the City Beautiful”²⁴³. This headline succeeded in combining a series of older concepts of town planning, concepts which seemed to be less strongly embedded in the Bill than the paper might suggest. What did seem to have escaped the press’s notice was that the Bill had completed not only the Second but the Third Reading and was in effect beyond the point of change except through the Legislative Council, which had limited powers in this respect. Over the next days, the *New Zealand Times* in particular carried positive reports on the Bill and its potential, stressing that opposition from local authorities about the lack of detail on implementing the Bill was an excuse – “the plea for detail is really for the Bill not to be”²⁴⁴. An earlier contributed article suggested the Bill in effect widened civic powers and went on to evoke a communitarian concept of town planning – “such measures aim, however, at promoting the greatest good for the greatest number of people. They are measured essentially useful and altruistic in intent and purpose”²⁴⁵. There was clear acceptance that this might mean constraints on the rights of the individual.

Despite the major legislative hurdle having been passed, the lobbying for delay and change continued. A deputation from Auckland which included representatives of the Auckland City Council, Bush, the City Engineer, and Grierson and Blake of the Auckland Branch of the Surveyors’ Institute, met with the Minister of Internal Affairs on 25th August 1926. They were to put the “views of Auckland generally on the

matter”, “to suggest a few improvements”²⁴⁶. While the group acknowledged that Mr Nathan had represented the Municipal Association on the Committee which had been called to write the Bill, they said the consultation that had been undertaken was rather a sham and that they had in effect been presented with a ‘fait accompli’. Despite the fact the Bill had had its Third Reading, they were there to advocate change. Bush was spokesman and suggested a number of relatively minor changes, that for instance, would allow money to be raised for civic improvement schemes without a ratepayer poll (a return to Russell’s 1917 approach), and a bar on the Director of Town-planning undertaking private work. Of greater significance was the suggested change in procedure for writing town planning schemes that would have had the effect of requiring more direct negotiations with potentially affected landowners, along the lines of the British Act. In his discussions with the Minister, Bush mentioned the “Madras-Bombay Act”²⁴⁷, indicating that there was a range of legislation circulating within the country at the time, and the diverse sources of that material. He also indicated he had discussed the practical applications of zoning with Edward M. Basset, an author of zoning laws in New York²⁴⁸, whom he quite accurately represented, as “probably the most eminent man on zoning law in the world”²⁴⁹. The extensive knowledge of Bush may help to explain some of the opposition to the Bill. Hammond, while formally trained in town planning, may have been regarded as too young and inexperienced to properly produce such legislation. This would have been compounded by the speed at which the Bill moved, which allowed little opportunity for men like Bush to become meaningfully involved.

Also of concern in the deputation representations was the relative power of the central and local states. While the Deputation members were willing to accept that

some body other than the local authority was needed to settle disputes, they preferred the neutrality of a "Tribunal of Arbitration"²⁵⁰ rather than the government appointed Town-planning Board. This was a point that was also stressed by Grierson who made many of the same points as Bush but highlighted other practical issues such as street widths etc., reflecting his surveying interests. He also placed a greater emphasis, as might be expected, on the impact of schemes on the rights of individuals.

There are no notes of the deputation's case, merely the minutes of the meeting, to elucidate the real concerns that underlay what was being said. However it is not hard to recognise that Auckland, as New Zealand's largest city, experiencing the most significant growth rates and deeply involved in developing its infrastructure, was in the best position to assess how the Act might work. This would have been magnified by the competence of Bush. They would also have been well aware of the impact to date of the attempts by central government to exert more direct control over local bodies and the problems of undertaking any sensible planning without local body reform to create larger units, particularly in the main cities. The Auckland City Council and Bush's personal involvement in the attempt to develop a Civic Centre must also have made them aware of the strength of opposition that could emerge to town planning schemes, from ratepayers, let alone landowners²⁵¹. With such knowledge they may have felt that they had a view to put, based on experience, that would have added meaningfully to the drafting of the Bill. There was also almost an air of annoyance that the views of the country's largest city had been ignored in the haste to formulate and pass the Bill. In short the deputation was inspired by a combination of hurt pride and the need to ensure that the Bill's provisions would actually work without excessive direction from the government.

In reply, Bollard, with the assistance of Mr Christie, the Law Draftsman, stressed that the deputation was concerned with detail while “the bill is meant to provide a skeleton” and “provides certain general principles”²⁵². They may have been reassured by his declaration that, “the idea of the Town-planning Board is more to act as an advisory board to local bodies; they deserve every credit and encouragement and it is the duty of the Government to encourage them in developing the country not to retard them in their working”²⁵³. Coates, the prime instigator of the Bill, still remained influential. Bollard said in considering amendments to the Bill, “the Prime Minister is clearly at the back of the bill and has got to be considered, it is impossible to give effect to any suggested amendments in the bill until he has considered them”²⁵⁴. The last, and very Auckland fear, was that the Bill would “place the wide power of town planning in the hands of a small nucleus in Wellington. Those nominated members must be resident in Wellington”²⁵⁵. While this fear was expressed in terms of a place it was doubtlessly a metaphor for the fear that central government would dominate, and direct local government. The meeting ended with a rather acrimonious exchange between the Minister and E.V. Blake. The deputation’s meeting was underpinned by strong suspicions about the motivations of central government in passing the Bill. It was seen as diminishing local powers, which fed the very negative expectations of how the Act would work. Noticeable in the debate was the lack of participation of Hammond, who had written the Bill. Most of the defence of the Bill was carried out by Bollard and Christie. This may have reflected his experience and age, he was only thirty-two at the time and may have served to increase the disquiet of men like Bush as to how successfully the Bill might work.

While local authorities, and groups such as the New Zealand Federated Builders and Contractors Industrial Association of Employers, lobbied for delay and alteration the opportunity for change was effectively gone. The Bill with minor alterations with regard to betterment, passed through the Legislative Council on 9th September 1926. At last New Zealand had its first planning legislation.

The 1926 Town-planning Act – A Brief Analysis

The Act that emerged retained the basic structure and processes proposed in the Bill, but also contained numerous modifications of those processes and structures. Town planning schemes were made compulsory for all Boroughs with a census population of one thousand people and they were to be prepared by 1st January 1930. Regional planning schemes which were to complement town schemes were optional but could be required by Order in Council, as could a town planning scheme for a borough with less than one thousand people. Reflecting the quirks of Auckland local body politics, the Mount Roskill, Mount Wellington, One Tree Hill and Onehunga Roads' Boards were deemed 'Boroughs', giving single purpose bodies wide planning powers. All schemes written under the Act had as their purpose, "the development of the City or Borough to which it relates in such a way as will most effectively tend to promote its healthfulness, amenity, convenience and advancement"²⁵⁶. It was a neat combination of a new concept of town planning as a tool to secure an efficient and progressive urban system, and the old concept of town planning as the answer to urban ills.

The contents of the town planning schemes were prescribed in much less detail than that proposed in the Schedule to Russell's 1917 Bill. The usual requirement

for the planning of infrastructural elements such as roads and sewerage systems, the location, density and design and appearance of buildings, and the reservation of land for open space and recreational purposes was included. There were also some new aspects. Most important was provision for the definition of areas to be used exclusively or principally for specific purposes, and classes of purpose²⁵⁷ and provision for amenities. The only logical tool to achieve this was zoning, a technique which apparently already had wide acceptance. The guidance given on control was much less detailed and directive than had been proposed in 1917, thereby supporting the Government's contention that this was legislation which empowered rather than directed local authorities.

Schemes so prepared would then be submitted for provisional approval to the Town-planning Board. Having gained this, the Council concerned would open them to objection by "occupiers of rateable property"²⁵⁸. Objection was clearly tied to a land-owning qualification and there was to be no right of general objection. This limited right of appeal was quite in keeping with the time. While universal franchise for local body elections was achieved by 1910, plural voting based on property ownership, persisted until 1971²⁵⁹. More pragmatically it may also have been seen as a quick way to define those who would be affected by the operation of the town planning scheme. The Board, or part of it, then heard the objections, upheld or dismissed any objection and then required alterations to the scheme. After these were completed, the scheme was given final approval by the Board. The borough or city was then charged with observing and enforcing its scheme's provisions. It was, as the local authorities had predicted, a process that concentrated the decisive power in the hands of the Town-planning Board. This was confirmed by S23 that allowed modifications to the scheme by way of an application to the Board rather

than to the local authority. This may however have been a realistic approach, given that many small boroughs at the time may not have had a Borough Engineer or any other suitable staff to undertake the work.

The Town-planning Board was very much an expert board given that it included the appointees of the three professional groups, the Director of Town-planning, the Surveyor-General, the Engineer-in-Chief of the Public Works Department and the Government Architect, among its thirteen members. The balance of the Board consisted of the Minister of Internal Affairs, two appointees of the Municipal Association, one appointee of the Counties Association and two appointees of the Minister. Board members were appointed for a term of three years. The Director of Town-planning, despite suggestions as to the potential powerfulness of his position, had few defined tasks. He was a member of the Board. His only other specific power was to see subdivision plans before they went to the Minister of Lands and to approve subdivisions with non-complying elements such as under-width roads, building lines etc. He was to be appointed by the Governor-General for a five-year term after which he would be eligible for reappointment. The Director's salary and conditions were determined by Parliament²⁶⁰ and he could only be removed, for specified reasons, by the Governor-General. It was very much an executive rather than a public service appointment. This seemed to create the potential for insecurity, particularly at the end of the five-year term, and to encourage the incumbent to avoid controversy, for if there was a dispute he might not be able to rely on the usual public service procedures for protection. On the other hand it also had the potential to make the Director feel that he had a special relationship with Parliament and the Minister which went beyond that which might have been

experienced by others in similar positions. This was, however, not a situation that would be welcomed by the career public servants.

The Act also contained some administrative detail, particularly the long and complex arrangements with regard to the controversial issue of compensation and betterment. The New Zealand Act was partly derived from the British legislation, particularly in terms of the overseeing and directive role which was assigned to the central state. The 1926 Act's acknowledgement of the potential for the overspill of development into rural areas and its interest in the preservation of historic and scientific sites is reflective of the *Town Planning Act 1925* which was the first piece of British legislation "not to be an appendage of housing"²⁶¹. Equally the creation of the Town-planning Board probably owes much to Australian models particularly the South Australian legislation, and Bush may have been correct in drawing comparisons with the Indian legislation. The Town-planning Board certainly did not, despite earlier suggestions, resemble the Canadian and American City Planning Commissions. The use of the term 'Board' explicitly connected the Act to its British counterpart. However overall this was an indigenous piece of legislation which mixed and matched the appropriate and inappropriate from around the world to meet the needs of New Zealand. Debate and assessment of the Act was made difficult for all concerned because it involved a totally new law, the effect of which would only be fully understood when it was put into practice.

Conclusion

While the period covered by this chapter commenced with the afterglow of the 1919 Town-Planning Conference and Exhibition, and the expectation of legislation, it

closed in 1926 with somewhat grumpy acceptance of a new Act which seemed to broadly encapsulate what had been demanded in 1919 and earlier. The shift to some extent reflected the change in the times and attitudes. Up to the end of the World War One, town planning had largely been the preserve, the hobby, of the interested middle-classes looking for a new outlet for the exercise of their civic and social consciousness. Thus the concepts of town planning which were employed were ones which stressed that moral and physical decay would emerge from the degeneration of, and unplanned extensions to, the urban fabric. Town planning, with its respectable origins in Britain, and to a lesser extent Europe and the United States, would offer the solution to these problems, providing a morally and physically robust population, untroubled by the epidemics typified by the 1918 Influenza Epidemic, housed neatly and obediently in their garden suburbs. However by the 1920s the men and women who had supported and employed such concepts, had aged or lost interest, and there was a corresponding loss of advocacy for them. This is well illustrated by the discomfort of Hurst Seager over the 1926 Act. He only rode to the rescue when all seemed about to be lost once again. It is also well demonstrated in the gradual fading away of the various Beautifying Societies and other groups interest in town planning as they strove to retain membership to undertake their primary interest in beautifying the urban fabric.

The void was partly filled by the professional associations which were motivated much more by self interest and the need to maintain and extend their profession's dominance. They appeared by the early 1920s to realise that town planning would eventually be instituted by legislation, legislation that had the potential to interfere with and to alter the way in which they pursued their professions. The surveyors in

particular seemed to recognise that town planning principles (whatever they were) had the potential to influence subdivision and to disturb the existing relationships which they enjoyed with the Lands Department. To reduce this impact they attempted to colonise planning, to suggest that the existing professions could do the job as well as any specifically trained planner. In this respect they were employing a concept of town planning which saw it as a tool for ensuring that the city and its fabric functioned efficiently and effectively. Writers such as Hague would suggest, in a Marxian interpretation, that this reflected the forces of capitalism which were using town planning to ensure that increasingly complex exchange and productive economy could function with the minimum of barriers. In a less Marxian framework Luithlen makes the same point, suggesting town planning facilitated the development of urban areas by reducing uncertainty and constraining the practices of competitors. There was certainly an element of this as the 1920s were a period when mass production was coming to dominate New Zealand's manufacturing sector. Agriculture, the economic mainstay, also benefited from improved technology. While zoning was often represented as a means of protecting residential amenity, it was also a means of avoiding reverse sensitivities whereby residential neighbours interfered with industrial production. Business would ultimately not be slow to see town planning as a means of hindering competitors, a practice that continues to the present despite efforts to stop it. Above all, the concepts of town planning which were increasingly advocated at the time all featured the progressive nature of planning with a definite orientation to the future. It was also a period when the image of the slum ceased to be the primary driving force in 'selling' town planning legislation. While it was still employed, particularly in the press, the more sophisticated concepts which involved managing the whole of

the urban fabric, rapidly displaced it. Town planning was no longer characterised only as a panacea but also as a force for progress.

Until Coates developed an interest in town planning, the movement suffered a distinct lack of political commitment. Given the movement was less focused and more disaggregated than it had ever been, this was clearly inimical. It is clear from Bollard's comments in August 1926, that Coates regarded this as a piece of legislation that had his closest personal interest. He spoke to it extensively in the Parliamentary debates and was the instigator of the meeting that set up the Bill writing process. The source of Coates' interest has never been documented and Bassett's biography only deals with the issue briefly, identifying it incorrectly as an election pledge. Coates' interest in town planning might, however, be seen as a reflection of what Farland calls his "quest for demonstrable proof and practical solutions"²⁶². This might have lead him to accept that town planning, as an essentially practical undertaking, could and would help to address the undeniable problems of urban life. Such an approach was not alien to Coates who in his first Ministry was willing to pursue policies "which he believed to be necessary so as to prevent the collapse of society"²⁶³. To that end he was willing to employ the assistance of clever, and often young, advisors with advanced and progressive ideas. Hammond would have 'fitted the bill' well. The essentially progressivist nature of planning is also likely to have appealed to Coates. The most unexpected aspect of Coates' support was the fact that the Act's contents significantly altered the relationship between the central and the local state, though this was in keeping with other reforms of the time. Coates had shown his willingness to use the interventionist powers of the state, even if this discomforted those in his own party. Many Labour members spoke in support of the Bill, as it instituted a system where,

potentially, the rights of the community could outweigh those of the individual property owner. The Act did however fit into an overall general strategy with regard to local government that involved central government exercising specific controls and directions to curb the worse excesses of the operation of local government. This was seen most strongly in the Local Authority Loans Board legislation that was passed at the same time. Local government resented this extension of the supervisory power of the central state, and there are obvious parallels with the situation in 1911. However, this time the central state triumphed, if at the expense of creating within local government resentment at the requirement to undertake town planning. Despite advocacy of the approach, central government stopped short of writing into the legislation a provision that would compel local government to complete schemes, despite the fact such powers existed in the British legislation. It may have been a move that was later regretted.

Thus by September 1926 when the Bill cleared its last hurdle, legislation had been achieved which seemed to not fully satisfy anyone and to have created attitudes among local government and within the professions which was unlikely to assist its passage to smooth and easy practical application.

¹ Brooking, T. 1981, Economic Transformation in Oliver, W & Williams, B (eds.) *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, Clarendon Press/Oxford University Press, Wellington, p227

² Polaschek, R. 1958, *Government Administration in New Zealand*, New Zealand Institute of Public Administration, Wellington,p41

³ Bassett, M. 1998, *The State in New Zealand 1840 –1984 : Socialism Without Doctrines ?*, Auckland University Press,p150-151

⁴ *ibid.*,p151

⁵ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 15th September,1918

⁶ Bassett,op.cit.,p150

⁷ For further discussion see Burdon, R. 1965 *The New Dominion : A Social and Political History of New Zealand*, AH & AW Reed, Wellington,p49

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⁸⁶ Hall, P 2000 Planning Past and Future : A Millennial Perspective, Keynote Address to New Zealand Planning Institute Conference, Christchurch, May 2000.

⁸⁷ McRae,op.cit.,p372

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⁹⁰ McRae,op.cit.,p373

⁹¹ The Torrens system is a land registration system that creates a register that records all of the interests anyone has in a particular piece of land. This is based on a guaranteed system of land titles that are created by the survey of land into registered parcels, called lots. This system was started by the *Land Transfer Act 1870*, with the deeds system being replaced totally by 1924. Generally considered the best and most secure system of land titles, it exists in few places outside New Zealand. South Australia and some provinces in Canada are the only other major examples of its use. In such a system, the surveyors measurements become central to the success of the system, as at anytime the records of those measurements can be used to recreate legally recognised boundaries. It is a system that the surveyors and others involved are justly proud. As all surveyors work has to be checked before becoming part of the legal title, the role of the Chief Surveyor had particular status and respect. However the position of District Land Registrar remained the preserve of the legal fraternity.

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⁹³ *New Zealand Surveyor*, 1924 Vol.XII,No.4,p140

⁹⁴ McRae,op.cit.,p373-74

⁹⁵ Anonymous, 1923 Town Planning : Co-Operation With Surveyors and Engineers,*New Zealand Institute of Architects Journal*, Vol. II,No.4,September, p80

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⁹⁸ McRae,op.cit.,p375

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¹⁰⁰ Furkert, F.(revised & edited by Newnham, W.) 1953 *Early New Zealand Engineers*, AH. & AW. Reed, Wellington,p17

¹⁰¹ Furkert to Bollard, 21st July 1924, on IA S1 F 34/5, Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.

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¹⁰⁵ NZ Council of Women to PM,17th July 1923, on IA S1 F34/5, Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.

¹⁰⁶ Deputation Notes, 17th June 1925 on IA S1 F34/5, Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.

¹⁰⁷ Bassett,1998,op.cit,p85. There is very little material on Bollard who does not appear in the indexes of any of the general histories of New Zealand or those that deal with more specific aspects such as Bassett on the development of the state or Burdon on New Zealand between the wars. He gets one brief mention in Bassett's history of Internal Affairs, the Department of which he was Minister for four years. This suggests a low key and probably only modestly influential minister.

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¹¹³ *Evening Post*,18th June,1925

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- ¹²⁵ For a brief discussion see Burdon,op.cit.,p73 and Farland,op.cit.,pvii
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- ¹⁴⁴ Letter Municipal Assoc. to Mayor, 18th March 1926 : Mayor to Municipal Assoc, 23rd March 1926, File AAF72/114 Wanganui Borough Archives, Wanganui District Council, Wanganui.
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- ¹⁴⁶ Letter NZIA to Newton, 21 April 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington
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- ¹⁷² *ibid.*, p29
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- ¹⁷⁴ PD, Vol.210, 22nd July 1926, p700
- ¹⁷⁵ Director-General of Health to Minister of Health, 25th May 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁷⁶ Newton to Minister of Health, 26th May 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington
- ¹⁷⁶ Memo Surveyor-General to Newton, 29th May 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington
- ¹⁷⁷ Memo Newton to Surveyor-General, 30th May 1926 on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington
- ¹⁷⁸ Memo from Surveyor-General, *op.cit.*
- ¹⁷⁹ The Memo gives no detail of how this reserves contribution was to be imposed, however as it still exists and has remained unchanged for several decades, it presumably follows the present practice. That requires a nominated percentage (most recently 7.5%) of the value of all new lots created, be paid by the developer, presently in land or money, to allow the local body to create reserves and open space to serve the population that would be brought to the area by the new subdivision. It is an imposition that still creates great dispute and is regarded by some surveyors and developers as a tax on development, but has allowed the creation and development of much of New Zealand's suburban open space. Such charges exist in most countries, often at much higher rates and have more complex requirements.
- ¹⁸⁰ PD Vol 210, 20th August 1926, p700
- ¹⁸¹ Letter Hurst Seager to Newton. 30th May 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3
- ¹⁸² Memo Newton to MIA, 3rd July 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3
- ¹⁸³ Draft Circulation List Dated 27th July 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3
- ¹⁸⁴ PD Vol. 209, 24th June 1926, p125
- ¹⁸⁵ PD, Vol. 210, 20th August 1926, p701
- ¹⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p 700
- ¹⁸⁷ *New Zealand Herald*, 23rd July, 1926
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- ¹⁸⁹ *ibid.*
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- ¹⁹¹ Notes on Meeting, 2nd August 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington
- ¹⁹² Draft Memo Newton to Municipal Association, 6th July 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington
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- ¹⁹⁶ *New Zealand Herald*, 6th August, 1926.
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- ²⁰⁴ Waitotara County to MIA, 12th August 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington
- ²⁰⁵ *New Zealand Herald*, 27th July, 1926
- ²⁰⁶ *New Zealand Times*, 10th August, 1926
- ²⁰⁷ *ibid.*
- ²⁰⁸ Letter Petone Borough to Prime Minister, 29th August 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington
- ²⁰⁹ See IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington
- ²¹⁰ *Evening Post*, 12th August, 1926
- ²¹¹ *New Zealand Times*, 14th August, 1926
- ²¹² See handwritten note from Bollard on newspaper clipping from 12th August, 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington
- ²¹³ McRae, *op.cit.*, p384
- ²¹⁴ Anonymous, 1926c, The Town Planning Act, *New Zealand Surveyor*, Vol. XII, No. 2, September, p73.
- ²¹⁵ *ibid.*, p74
- ²¹⁶ Letter Auckland Branch NZIA, 11th August, 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington
- ²¹⁷ *ibid.*
- ²¹⁸ Attachment to letter cited above. This advocacy of an appeal body seems again to overlook the potential for judicial review from the normal court system. Ultimately it was a decision in *Ideal Laundry v Petone Borough* case that brought the replacement of the 1926 legislation. Its substitute, the *Town and Country Planning Act 1953*, created an independent judicial review body the Town and Country Planning Appeal Board which continues today as the Environment Court. However that body also replaced the Town-planning Board, as town planning schemes no longer required central government approval.
- ²¹⁹ Attachment to letter Hurst Seager to Newton, 18th August, 1926 on IA S1 f34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington
- ²²⁰ Anonymous, 1926d, The Town Planning Bill, *New Zealand Institute of Architects Journal*, Vol. V, No. 5, November, p101. This edition also carried a full copy of the Act.
- ²²¹ See Correspondence- C.K. Grierson, *New Zealand Surveyor*, Vol. XIII, No. 4 June 1927, p 121 - 122
- ²²² *New Zealand Times*, 19th August, 1926
- ²²³ See telegrams and letters to Downie Stewart, Minister of Justice, 11th August 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.3, National Archives, Wellington
- ²²⁴ *New Zealand Times*, 19th August, 1926
- ²²⁵ See Grant, M. 1999, Compensation and Betterment in Cullingworth, B (ed.) *British Planning : 50 Years of Urban and Regional Policy*, The Athlone Press, London, p62-75
- ²²⁶ PD, Vol 210, 20th August 1926, p699
- ²²⁷ *ibid.*, p699
- ²²⁸ The use of existing procedures and processes under other Acts is a feature of all planning legislation in New Zealand and in fact is a feature of New Zealand legislation as a whole. It reflects the fact that the small size of the country makes it inefficient to set up separate bodies to hear disputes under different Acts. Thus under the current Resource Management Act 1991 disputes over the loss of use rights associated with designated land is dealt with under the dispute procedures of the Public Works Act, and disputes over valuation are referred to a Valuation Tribunal whose main work is settling disputes over the government valuation of land which is the basis of local body rating and influences sale prices.
- ²²⁹ PD, Vol. 210, *op.cit.*, p702
- ²³⁰ *ibid.*, p703

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- ²³¹ Oliver,op.cit.,p174
²³² PD,Vol.210,op.cit.,p704
²³³ ibid., p704
²³⁴ ibid., p706
²³⁵ ibid., p728
²³⁶ See PD,Vol.210,p716 and 727
²³⁷ ibid.,p705
²³⁸ ibid.,p714
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²⁴⁰ ibid.,p 720
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²⁴³ *New Zealand Times*, 21st August,1926
²⁴⁴ *New Zealand Times*, 25th August,1926
²⁴⁵ *New Zealand Times*, 23rd August,1926
²⁴⁶ Minute of the Deputation to MIA, 25th August 1926,on IA S1 F34/55 Pt.5, National Archives, Wellington.
²⁴⁷ ibid.,p17
²⁴⁸ Scott,op.cit.,p154
²⁴⁹ Minutes of Deputation,op.cit.,p10
²⁵⁰ ibid, p12
²⁵¹ For a discussion of this see Miller, C 2000, *The City Beautiful Movement in New Zealand and the Saga of the Auckland Civic Centre* in Garnaut ,C & Hamnett, S (eds.) 2000 *Conference Proceedings : Fifth Australian Urban History/Planning history Conference*, University of South Australia,p276-284
²⁵² Minutes of Deputation, op.cit.,p17
²⁵³ ibid.,p17
²⁵⁴ ibid.,p18
²⁵⁵ ibid.,p19
²⁵⁶ S3(2),*Town-planning Act 1926*
²⁵⁷ S15 & First Schedule,*Town-planning Act 1926*
²⁵⁸ S17(3),*Town-planning Act 1926*
²⁵⁹ Bush,op.cit.,p18-22
²⁶⁰ S5(3),*Town-planning Act 1926*
²⁶¹ Cherry,1996,op.cit.,p68
²⁶² Farland,op.cit.,p.vii
²⁶³ loc.cit.

ATTEMPTING TO PRACTICE TOWN PLANNING :

1926-33

Introduction

The legislation of September 1926, was an unexpected victory after years of struggle. It was unexpected because the Bill had been produced and promoted, not by the traditional long term supporters typified by the indefatigable Hurst Seager, but by a new and unknown ally in the form of Gordon Coates. Coates' position as Prime Minister, and his demonstrated intention to push the legislation through Parliament, meant that he succeeded where Fowlds and Russell had failed. In this respect, however, the dominance of the Reform party in Parliament at the time probably assisted the passage of the Bill. While Reform members may not have been keen on the Bill's content, they followed their leader over what was probably a relatively minor issue. The subject of town planning was moreover, quite palatable to Labour who imbued it with their own interpretation. This revolved around a concept of town planning which allowed the State to modify the basic property right with the intention of securing some greater good for the community as a whole. Labour support and Coates' urging ensured the Bill became an Act.

However legislation was only the first step. Few of the current or earlier advocates had really contemplated how the legislation would operate. The paucity of trained town planners meant that there was no readymade group to take up the work. Thus the existing professions of surveying, engineering and architecture were offered the opportunity to colonise town planning, both in the short and long term. As

discussed earlier, the surveyors in particular were well aware of the opportunities presented to them.

The passing of the legislation also changed the way people thought about town planning as a concept. Until a basic concept was enshrined in legislation and demonstrated in practice, an individual or group could attach to it any meaning they saw fit or useful. Thus for the old enthusiasts it was interpreted to mean slum removal, garden city layouts, and the creation of an urban environment which produced healthy and morally responsible citizens. In contrast, for the surveyors, it was a simple concept concerned with the subdivision of land and the creation of an infrastructure which produced an effective and efficient urban fabric and system. The various concepts never had to be reconciled and/or judged when there was no specific definition against which to measure them. This all changed with the passing of the Act, which also produced town planning in practice. That demonstration effect, as the garden city/suburb adherents would be quick to attest, would do much to shape a specific understanding of the concept.

The timing could not have been worse for the new Act. By the end of 1926 it was becoming clear that unemployment was rising, due primarily to the fall in the export returns from meat and wool. "Conditions did not improve and in March 1927 Coates recognised a state of emergency by arranging to employ 2,000 extra men in public works"¹. New Zealand was entering a period of difficult, and at times extreme economic conditions which would last through most of the 1930s. New Zealand's export volumes rose but prices dropped forty-five percent between 1929 and 1932, with real incomes declining by between ten and twenty percent². It was not an ideal time to launch new national or local initiatives, particularly not ones as potentially

costly as town planning. As Burdon put it, “the times were inauspicious for launching a movement that could flourish only if carefully nursed and generously financed. Long before the slump was spent, town planning had withered under the stress of ruthless economy”³. While the last part of the quote is questionable, it is not an inaccurate assessment. While the conditions encouraged state intervention in almost every economy, that intervention was clearly and consistently targeted at curing or at least helping with unemployment and the economic slump. Intervention was bounded and did not necessarily extend to the intermittent use of the powers of the state in the more general areas, such as town planning. Those who hoped to nurture town planning under the Act, would work with stony and unproductive ground.

This situation was made all the worse by the unsettled nature of politics. Coates faced an election in November 1928 which he lost to a revived Liberal Party, led by the ageing but still electorally effective, Sir Joseph Ward. The Liberals had rechristened themselves the United Party in 1927, and fought the election on stimulating the economy through overseas borrowing. United won only enough seats to form a weak minority government, which Ward headed, until shortly before his death in 1930. Thereafter the leadership was taken up by the less than charismatic George Forbes. Forbes, faced by an escalating economic crisis, persuaded Coates and the Reform party to join in a coalition that governed from September 1931 to December 1935, ensuring that “the two together shared the odium attaching to tough decisions”⁴. The tough decisions on the economic crisis involved continued and extended state intervention. This was demanded by “every sector group” who “seemed to feel that salvation lay in accessing government assistance while denying the advantage to others”⁵. Paralleling this was an attempt

to reduce government expenditure through the work of the Cabinet Economic Committee. Thus the period is one when an essentially conservative government was forced to intervene increasingly and unsuccessfully to deal with a major depression, the causes of which lay well beyond their control. Equally it was a time of experimentation in all forms of state intervention without, in many cases, the resources to ensure the intervention would be successful.

The Appointment of the Director of Town Planning

A significant starting point for the operation of the Act was the appointment of the Director of Town Planning. The qualities this individual should possess had occupied the minds of many for some time. These concerns were summed up by Hurst Seager's description of the perfect candidate in 1919;

“I am convinced that if this appointment is to have the value that we wish, it must be made from among the English Town Planners who have been through the very full town-planning course of training at one of the English universities and who has had some experiences (sic) in practical work. He must be a man not only of great imagination and a skilful draughtsman, but also a man of business, of tact, and of ability to press his views without offence to local bodies”⁶.

In the debate on the Bill's Second Reading, Coates stated that the Director would have to be “well versed on town planning” and “would work with local bodies and through discussion and suggestion” of “what may be done and in doing so he will have to stand up to the arguments of those men”⁷.

The picture produced by both these quotes, is of a Director of Town Planning who was an expert in his field, that is a qualified town planner rather than a member of one of the associated professions. Equally he was to be an individual with significant personal standing and abilities. Both stressed that the person who was appointed would need a good working relationship with local authorities over who he would, in effect, have to exercise guidance. This, given the attitude of local bodies by 1926, would inevitably require a strong confident character who could hold his own while at the same time inducing some action. The person clearly needed the patience of Job, the skills of a negotiator, the highest professional qualifications and the most extensive experience available in the field of town planning.

Appointment of the Director was specifically in the hands of the Minister of Internal Affairs. While the Act allowed the Director to become a contributor to the Public Service Superannuation Fund, it specifically stated that "The Director of Town-planning shall not be subject to the Public Service Act 1912"⁸. Parliament was to set his remuneration and he could only be removed from office because of "disability, insolvency, neglect of duty, or misconduct"⁹. The job had a specified five-year term though this could be renewed. It was an interesting approach in terms of the relationship that it created with the rest of the public service, particularly with the permanent Heads of Departments. It also ran contrary to the increasing controls that were being exercised in the public service that had begun with the *Public Service Act 1912*. The Act established the Public Service Commissioners Office (PSC) which introduced "new procedures for staff appointments and classifications and for the efficient ongoing management of a civil service now numbering 4,895"¹⁰. The work of the PSC, while reduced after the First

World War, did do much to 'professionalise' the public service and to turn it into a career service. To take the appointment of the Director outside this system is perhaps surprising. It also had the potential to leave the incumbent in a somewhat exposed position, particularly at the end of his term. This style of appointment while unusual was not without precedent. Some of the problem lay in the rigidities of the public service classification system. While there was a 'professional division', it was largely confined to doctors, lawyers and engineers who were members of recognised professions and who were carrying out their 'professional duties' within government service. New technical areas such as forestry, broadcasting and town planning required high level technical expertise outside these established professional categories, and often within only newly professionalised areas. Thus they failed to fit into the established categories, and had to be dealt with on a 'one-off' basis¹¹. The need to buy in such expertise from outside the existing public service was common at the time in other countries. Ward refers to Adams being "headhunted"¹², to his position in Canada. There must also, presumably, have been an ethical problem for any professional town planner who, having held the post, could not appropriately then advise clients who might benefit from their "insider" knowledge. This however may reflect a concern of the twenty-first century rather than one in 1926. Given the paucity of town planners at the time it was more common for individuals to move in and out of public service. Davidge and other British town planners commonly spent time in both government service and private practice. It could have become a problem as town planning moved towards forming a professional body in New Zealand, something that was almost inevitable given the introduction of the Act. The Act, while prescribing the detail of the Board's duties, was silent on its relationship with the Director. He was an automatic Board member, which begs the question of how he could also function as its technical

adviser. Again this may be a concern from a later time, but it did mean that whatever the relationship was between the Director and the Board, it would be developed through practice rather than being dictated by legislation.

There were a number of individuals who believed they were suited to the position. Mr de Montalk, an architect and member of the Wellington Town Planning Association, offered his services in August 1923¹³. Some based their candidature on the most flimsy claims to suitability. Mr Enos Peglar, a land agent from Manurewa, was willing, in 1926, to make his services available to the Government at no cost, confident that he could undertake the work on the basis of his long-term interest and observations made on the 1921 Bowlers World Tour¹⁴. Even Charles Reade now stuck in humid Kuala Lumpur, expressed some, though rather forlorn aspirations, when he wrote "I hope that the fundamental necessity of having an expert advisor will be kept in mind – not that there appears much prospect of my ever being able to serve in that capacity"¹⁵. He stressed that "an expert adviser with organising powers and sufficient appreciation of the legal and administrative side of town planning is indispensable to successful results in practice"¹⁶. Given that Reade had been Government Town Planner in South Australia, this was advice based very much on experience.

Ultimately their concerns and interest were irrelevant, as Reginald Hammond was gazetted as Director of Town Planning on 10th September 1926, only seven days after the Act was passed. The file covering Hammond's appointment has been destroyed so there is no clear information as to how he came to get the position. To some extent, as the author of the Act, his appointment was almost inevitable, particularly as he also had the patronage of Gordon Coates, the Prime Minister.

This was confirmed by a later memo, in 1927, which indicates no applications were called for the position and that Hammond was appointed due to his authorship of the Act ¹⁷. Hammond, however, did not seem altogether appropriate for the position. He did meet the educational requirements as a trained architect, surveyor and town planner, who had completed the town planning course under Professor Adshead at London University. He had also worked as an architect prior to going to London and travelling in Europe and America. While overseas he worked a year on the Becontree housing and town planning schemes¹⁸ and was an assistant in Herbert Baker's office when the plans of New Delhi were being produced¹⁹. However he was only thirty-two at the time and apart from his success in the Orakei, and Lower Hutt competitions, had little to show in terms of practical achievements. He certainly would not have had the skills and experience that an overseas candidate might have had. It was noticeable throughout the process of legislative formulation and debate, that it was Newton rather than Hammond who answered the critics. This is typified by the meeting in August 1926 with the Deputation from Auckland which is fully discussed in the previous chapter. It did not suggest that Hammond was at a stage in his career where he would be able to 'foot it' with the more experienced staff and politicians whom he was likely to meet in local and central government. It also put the author of a much-maligned Act in charge of its implementation, which might not have been altogether sensible if the Act was eventually regarded as requiring modification.

The Surveyors' Institute received the news of Hammond's appointment with an almost unexpected degree of equanimity particularly as they had stated that "applications for the position of Director of Town Planning should be advertised throughout the British Empire and that the Board should consider such

applications”²⁰. There was a similar muted response from the Institute of Architects, who reported the appointment of Hammond with no comment²¹. This is more understandable, however, as Hammond was a practising architect and a member of their Institute.

Despite the Act allowing for a five-year appointment, Hammond was appointed for a year, with no explanation for the shortened term. It perhaps reflects a degree of testing on both sides – Hammond was not a career civil servant and may not have wanted to enter public service permanently. The Government may have been testing Hammond in the position and preserving the option of removing him without having to prove the grounds of S5(4). This may be a pessimistic assessment. Writing in 1927 Christie, the Law Draughtsman said of Hammond, “his present appointment is limited to a term of twelve months, but this will doubtless be extended”²². Nevertheless It did not signal the total commitment of the Government to the process or the position.

The Early Work of the Director and the Board

It was obvious that Hammond on his appointment had a number of key roles to play over the early establishment. In a circular letter to all local bodies announcing his appointment, Bollard indicated that the government would give support to ensuring that the Act worked in practice²³. This letter was accompanied by a copy of the Act, and indicated that one of the roles of the Director would be to assist local authorities to get started in their town planning work. He was to act as the source of expert knowledge and guidance. This highlighted the dependence of the Act on the active

support of local authorities to write, administer, and enforce their schemes. This was a point that was highlighted by Professor Cyril Knight, appointed Professor of Architecture at Auckland University College in 1924²⁴, in a speech in Auckland shortly after the Act was passed. He said, "it is the duty of local bodies and the public to appreciate the work the Government is doing, to undertake town-planning Schemes for themselves and to see that only the best Schemes are put into operation"²⁵. Ensuring that this happened became problematic in the absence of trained planners and the lack of powers of compulsion on the part of central government to make local bodies undertake their planning functions.

Requests for assistance were not slow in coming. The Papatoetoe Town Board wrote to the Director in December 1926, seeking assistance to get started in writing a scheme. It also asked, "... is there an officer of your Department in Auckland to whom any matter arising from the proposed new subdivision could be referred?"²⁶. Hammond replied that Regulations were to be promulgated which would assist them, and that he proposed to visit "various Local Authorities throughout the Country and (to) explain to them how to go about the preparation of town planning schemes for their district"²⁷. In the same letter Hammond raised the prospect of a "Greater Auckland Town Planning Scheme", which while eminently sensible, was probably unlikely given the feuding nature of local bodies in that city. It was also an old concern that had occupied Myers as early as 1904, and stressed again the relationship between successful town planning and local body reform. The letter and the reply also highlighted the real problem Hammond faced in being the sole provider of technical information on this new activity – there was certainly no suggestion at any point that he should be assisted.

Writing the Regulations referred to was also the most important of the Director's early duties, as they had the potential to reduce calls on his time and to give local authorities clear and consistent guidance. The Regulations, gazetted on 10th March 1927, appear to have been prepared at quite short notice and with little input from anyone except Hammond. They did, however, provide local authorities with some form of template to guide the preparation of schemes. In true Geddesian fashion, the process was to commence with the preparation of a detailed Civic Survey Map, showing the existing infrastructure, reserve areas and land uses and subdivisional boundaries. It was a massive task at a time when all maps were hand-drawn and where the information, if it existed, was likely to be held in disparate locations. After this Civic Survey map had been completed, the Provisional Town-planning map was produced that showed new roading and improvements and areas of proposed recreation and open space. This aspect of the process was a 'master plan' approach, where development is strongly guided by the local body rather than being the outcome of the unco-ordinated decisions of different landowners. Most importantly, the map would also show areas where there would be land use restrictions or where specific controls on the nature and character of building would occur. It was, without the use of the word, an encouragement to use zoning. It also allowed the introduction of what would now be referred to, as 'bulk and location' or development controls. These were intended to control the location of a building on a site. They also dealt with the relationship between buildings and adjacent sites, particularly with regard to light and air penetration. The balance of the Regulations dealt with the processes that the town-planning scheme was then subject to, and provided standard forms for giving notice of the preparation of it and for objection. The latter form stresses that objection would be related to property ownership, as the objector was to indicate if they were an owner or occupier of rateable property²⁸.

It represented a very narrow right of objection but was probably what might have been expected at the time. There was little comment on the Regulations. *The New Zealand Surveyor* for instance, did not published an extract from them until December 1927, with some negative comment with regard to reserve provision²⁹. The minimalist assistance in the Regulations and the nature of their preparation, may have served only to confirm local authorities' worst fears as to the impact of the Act, in terms of the commitment of central government time and resources.

Education, often through public addresses, also took up much of Hammond's time. In December 1926 there was a request for him to address the Town Clerks' Conference, at Palmerston North in February 1927, on the Act³⁰. The invitation was accepted only after Hammond had cleared it with Newton and the Minister, suggesting that he had little real independence in his role³¹. These requests for speeches came from many sources, including groups as diverse as the New Zealand Institute of Horticulture, which invited Hammond to speak on "Horticulture As A Factor in Town Planning"³². This took town planning back to older concepts of city beautification and Hammond went to some effort to tie this to the concern in the Act for the reservation of areas of open space.

Hammond also went to some lengths to make contact with local authorities. On the 24th May 1927, he wrote to the Palmerston North Borough Council indicating he would be in the town in June and "if there are any matters relative to town planning your Council would care to discuss with me, I would be pleased to meet them any time"³³. This travelling was time-consuming. For instance in March 1927 Newton had to telegram Hammond to return from Cromwell and points South to deal with a number of urgent subdivisions³⁴. This conflict between everyday tasks such as

subdivision and the bigger advice and education roles was not one that would be easily overcome.

The Town Planning Board was gazetted on 3rd February 1927 and contained few surprises in its membership. The Institute of Surveyors appointee was Archie Boyle, a Wanganui surveyor who was to go on to be President of the Institute in the early 1930s. The Engineers nominated W. E. Bush, the Auckland City Engineer who had offered such trenchant criticism of the Bill, and the Architects, W. M. Page, a Wellington architect and former president of their Institute. The Municipal Association nominated the former Mayor of Palmerston North Borough, F. J. Nathan, who had also been involved with the Committee which had advised on the Bill, while the Counties Association nominated the former Chairman of Hutt County, S. Blackley. The two nominations made by the Minister went to George Newton and Dr Charles Hercus, a medical professor at Otago University with an interest in public health. The latter appointments seem to reflect the ministers concern to keep the Board as a bureaucratic entity, hence the presence of Newton to guide procedures. The appointment of Dr Hercus may have reflected the attempts of the Department of Health to have a representative on the Board. While a medical authority, he was not a health bureaucrat, and could therefore be expected to bring a more independent view than that of the Department. It was however a very 'technical' or 'expert' board given the preponderance of members from the three professions, the automatic membership of the Surveyor-General, Engineer-in-Chief, Public Works, and the Government Architect. These three individuals gave their Departments two opportunities to influence the Board and to potentially undermine the Director, for in the absence of staff backing for Hammond, issues were referred to the Departments for advice and comment. These views could then be

championed by the Departmental representatives at the Board. For instance, at its first meeting on 15th February 1927, the Board called the Minister's attention to the need for legislation to determine urban street alignments³⁵. This reflected the surveyor's view of town planning, that it was primarily to deal with the arrangement of the physical fabric of urban areas. Dispute within the Board became apparent at an early stage. At the March meeting Newton contested a request made by A.D. McLeod, the Minister of Lands, on the necessity of encouraging regional plans to be produced. Newton, apparently in an attempt to constrain the Board's work, believed this was unnecessary. The matter was then referred to the Surveyor-General, also a Board member, who said that such regional planning schemes were necessary "to regulate on town planning principles, the rapid suburban growth in the vicinity of the large cities"³⁶. This somewhat pointless exchange highlighted the problems that would arise where members of the Board were also the experts whose advice would inevitably be sought by their respective Ministers. In many cases there would have been few sources of independent contestable advice, even if the seeking of such advice were seen as acceptable. It was hardly a promising start.

The Growth of Opposition and the Resignation of the Director

Implementation of the Act never gained great momentum. This was a consequence of the negative attitudes among the surveyors and the local authorities that emerged from the speedy passage of the Bill. Hammond attended the Municipal Association Conference in February 1927 and had to listen to much discussion about amending the Act, particularly S13, to allow a scheme to be prepared which covered only part of a Borough. Delegates also complained, quite accurately, that

there were not enough experts in the country “to carry out Survey maps of every borough within the three years required”³⁷. Hammond tried to calm the situation by stating that “the Board would not ask for a full plan showing every detail”³⁸. This seemed to do little to calm the concerns. By July the Director received, from the Municipal Association, a detailed list of alterations sought³⁹, by a range of local authorities. Their concerns were extensive, and included a request for the appointment of an Assistant Director, “preferably having surveying or engineering qualifications”⁴⁰. Many of the suggestions concerned compensation and betterment, that had not be resolved when the Act was passed. Others were technical matters to do with the scheme formulation process and subdivision. Of significance among the new issues raised was the request that the Crown be made subject to the Act, to undertake its developments in the same manner as individual property owners. It was in fact a significant request, as the Crown was not fully bound by planning legislation until 1991. Even under the *Resource Management Act 1991*, the Crown retains what are, in essence, special arrangements through the designation procedures for anything regarded as a public work. It suggests that the local government, compelled to produce these schemes, was seeking in the process to adjust to the nature of its relationship with the central state. This would redress the trend of recent legislation that put the central state in a supervisory role over local bodies. This suggestion was, not surprisingly, ranked “not practicable” in a Memo which briefly considered the requests and suggested they be discussed at the Board⁴¹. There is however, no suggestion in the Minute Book or on the files, that the Board ever considered the matter, perhaps because after the March 1927 meeting, the Board did not meet again until January 1928.

Discontent also simmered among the surveyors, fuelled no doubt by the irascible Ted Blake. In June 1927 Blake complained, in the *New Zealand Surveyor* that more time would have produced “a better a more workmanlike (sic) Act”⁴². He predicted that alterations would be made to the Act as a result of “exasperated public opinion”⁴³. The Editorial adopted a high moral ground tone, reflecting that politics was not about achieving the public good. Therefore the surveyor, the Editor reported, “will be statesman enough to aim at the public good, adopting what is good in the Act, amending what their knowledge enables them to point out to be weak or mistaken”⁴⁴. This sets the surveyors up as the natural town planners, the specialists who could and would achieve the public good through their actions under this Act. It is certainly an extension of the rather narrow concept of town planning that had been expressed, at earlier points, by the surveyors. There was some support for the surveyors’ stance that they were the natural town planners. As a correspondent to *Liberty* stated, “The Government has a staff of surveyors quite capable of laying out streets. Why should they not do their job? After the streets are laid out the best town planner is the person who wants allotments”⁴⁵. This reduces town planning to a cosy arrangement between the surveyor and his client, suggesting the surveyor can simultaneously meet his clients’ needs and those of the wider community. The other two professions took a much lower profile and certainly were less openly critical of the Act. For the architects this may have reflected the fact that until schemes were written they were relatively unaffected by its provisions. Given that the schemes seemed some time away they had little to be actually worried about, or about which to form negative opinions. Their *Journal* did however continue to carry town planning articles. In January 1928 there was a reproduction of Abercrombie’s paper on how to undertake civic and regional surveys. In New Zealand these were the first part of the process of formulating a

scheme⁴⁶. It is doubtful if the architects would have had all the mapping skills to undertake this work. The Editor, in most moderate tones, acknowledges that it was the role of all three of the professions to assist local authorities and the public to achieve the potential of the Act⁴⁷.

Some of the surveyors' angst with the Act seems to have stemmed from the concern that they were not in fact doing town planning work. In a somewhat choleric letter to *the New Zealand Surveyor*, A.D. Goodwin complained that "town planning is being increasingly monopolised by architects"⁴⁸. This observation he based on the appointment of Hammond, an architect, as Director, and Butcher, also an architect with a Diploma in Town Planning, as town planning officer for Wellington. The writer clearly believed that surveyors were handicapped in their search for town planning work, for which they were the "suitably trained profession"⁴⁹, because a British model was being used. This model, he suggested ignored surveying and emphasised the role of the architect and engineer. He also seemed incensed that employers might accept a town planning training as an appropriate qualification to do the work. It was a view which was antagonistic to a new profession particularly one which could not be qualified for in New Zealand. Also of concern were the powers the Act gave to the Director in the area of subdivision. This had an earlier and greater impact on the surveyors than it had on the work of the other professional groups. In fact it was subdivision that made up much of Hammond's day-to-day work. In the Director's Report for 1927 he indicated that he approved 350 subdivision schemes in that year⁵⁰.

Criticism was not confined to those with a vested interest in the subject. The Auckland Town Planning Association caused considerable controversy with a

pamphlet in 1927. The Association was formed in March 1927 by no less an old town planning war-horse than George Fowlds. Fowlds called a public meeting inviting representatives of the three professions “to promote a comprehensive Scheme for Greater Auckland”⁵¹. Fowlds’ main, and very understandable concern, was that the disunited state of local government in Auckland would produce poor town planning outcomes. This was a view which was supported by Cyril Knight who said in an article the following year, that “by far the greatest stumbling block, however is found in the multiplicity of local authorities governing the cities”⁵². In the case of Auckland this involved some twenty-three local authorities. The meeting attracted a good turnout, including Grierson from the surveyors, Powell from the engineers, and architects Knight and Lippincott. Lippincott, an American who had worked with the prominent architect-planners in Chicago and elsewhere, had written of the need for a comprehensive approach to planning for Auckland in an article written before the Act was passed⁵³. This he saw being achieved through a City Planning Commission, along American lines. The Association quickly appointed a committee which included representatives of the three professions, the Auckland Chamber of Commerce, the Auckland Advertising Club, and prominent individuals such as Gummer, Fowlds and Knight⁵⁴. They took as their objects:

1. To achieve a unity of action by the local authorities
2. To voice public opinion on matters pertaining to town planning in Auckland
3. To assist in the preparation of a plan by using reasonable means within its power⁵⁵.

In the latter respect the Association was attempting to play the role that Hurst Seager had always envisaged for such groups, and which he tried to facilitate by encouraging their formation from at least 1924 onwards.

The Association then took it upon itself to produce a pamphlet on the Act, giving a brief run-down on how it worked, but also including critical comment and suggestions for amendments. The criticisms included the statements that “the Act is now functioning to a minor degree” and “indeed a study of the Act as at present framed reveals the truth of the statement – that only the broadest principles of town planning have been established under the Act and those imperfectly”⁵⁶. The amendments they suggested were quite sweeping, with the Town-planning Board having the power to compel scheme preparation, and the joining of local bodies to produce schemes. They also sought the creation of a Local Metropolitan Planning Commission (Lippincott’s City Planning Commission) for Auckland. Other suggestions were greater financial powers for local bodies to raise funds, presumably for civic improvement schemes, and new powers to provide for excess condemnation⁵⁷. The latter two concerns reflect a much earlier concept of town planning as town or civic improvement, which had largely been avoided in the Act, presumably because of the financial problems associated with it. It was not a model which would have had much relevance outside the main centres. Hammond produced a quite reasoned Memo, for use by Newton which defended some of the existing provisions as being what was called for at the time and in keeping with similar legislation overseas. He even went so far as suggesting that “further descriptive matter” could be supplied “for the guidance of the Local Authority in connection with the preparation of schemes”⁵⁸. However the matter seemed to escalate and Christie, the Law Draughtsman, was also asked for an opinion. Fowlds apparently still had sufficient political connections, particularly when backed by a group of prominent citizens from the country’s largest city, to generate such a response.

At this point it becomes clear that there was some real confusion at central government level as to the intent and scope of the legislation. Christie stated that the “powers to carry out a town planning scheme are to be found primarily not in the Town-planning Act but in the Municipal Corporations Act”. He then concluded that the Town-planning Act did not alter the essential functions of a Borough Council but merely ensured that those functions should not be exercised in accordance with the Scheme and not haphazardly⁵⁹. These ideas were carried through into the Press statement that Newton prepared and forwarded for Christie’s comment⁶⁰. Ultimately these interpretations were also used in the letter that the Minister of Internal Affairs, now Maui Pomare, wrote to the Association later that month⁶¹. Equally the whole exchange was conducted between Newton and the Law Draughtsman, rather than involving Hammond. This suggests that the Director was seen as less central player than the Act would have suggested. There is certainly no concept of him as the embodiment of expert knowledge.

These, rather peculiar interpretations of the Act, only served to undermine its purpose and use. They appear to be based on a concept of town planning as a tool to achieve physical change, that is civic improvement schemes, slum clearance etc, rather than the regulation of land use to achieve compatibility and residential amenity protection, which was at the heart of the Act. It also suggested to local authorities and others that the Act was a quite powerless piece of legislation, though the idea that town planning could be achieved without a specific Act had been a long-term belief of Newton’s. Most importantly it begged the question of why the Act had been passed at all. It also suggested to local bodies that they would have to co-ordinate powers from a variety of areas to undertake town

planning, a model they had already effectively rejected, if Newton's contention that such powers had existed as early as 1919, was true.

The Auckland Town Planning Association was singularly unimpressed with the Minister's letter, to which they replied in detail. They were particularly critical of the suggestion that the legislation did not extend the function of local authorities already established under the Municipal Corporations Act. They also re-emphasised the need to overcome, through compulsory measures, the disaggregated nature of local government "which manifestly makes the planning of Auckland, in its proper sense, impossible"⁶². The Association's fears were confirmed by the correspondence in August over the attempt to form a Committee in Auckland, to co-ordinate a scheme for the city that would disregard local authority boundaries. As ever, the Auckland local authorities demonstrated their unwillingness and inability to work together⁶³. An editorial of the same day observed "the substitution of sectional negotiations defeats the whole purpose and meaning of town planning"⁶⁴.

Given the time that Hammond was spending in fruitless discussions all over the country, and given the government's total lack of comprehension of what the Act really meant, it was hardly surprising that in September 1927 Hammond declined to renew his appointment.

The Resignation of Hammond and the Response

Hammond's resignation can hardly have been unexpected. In his first year in the job he had spent much of his time defending and explaining the legislation he had written, to a generally quarrelsome and unresponsive public, local authorities and

professional groups. His efforts were also effectively undermined by the pronouncements of Christie and Newton with regard to how town planning was to be implemented and in particular their claim that local authorities would need powers other than those in the Act to fully implement town planning. This was hardly a positive approach that did much to reinforce the relevance of the Act to the local authorities, which were the lynchpins in its operation.

Hammond was also effectively undermined in his work by a lack of resources. In August 1927 he reported to the Minister of Internal Affairs, after a tour of the country, that the problem with local bodies getting underway with town planning was the lack of trained town planners. His solution was to expand the town planning section within Internal Affairs to provide trained officers who could work with the local bodies to produce schemes. He believed this arrangement which would involve direct central state interaction at the local level, would be acceptable to the local bodies because of the cost savings involved. Hammond stressed this was necessary if town planning schemes were to be prepared within the timeframe set. He wanted this settled before he "entered a further term of office"⁶⁵. This was clearly never agreed to, and when he officially notified his retirement from the position, Hammond stated he was going "because I felt I could render more valuable service by assisting Local Authorities in the actual preparation of their town planning schemes"⁶⁶. Hammond had, as he intimates in the memo, discussed the issue directly with the Minister who had asked him to consider some alternative to resignation. It would appear that they did seriously contemplate a situation where Hammond would still act as Director but would in effect offer services directly in the local authorities for a period of two to three years while schemes were being written. For this he would be paid the base fee of £1,000 from the Government and the

“balance to be met by fees paid to the Government by Local Authorities for the additional service I would be giving them”⁶⁷. This proposed arrangement demonstrates the bureaucratic naivety of Hammond. As a hybrid arrangement it was unlikely to be acceptable to any Government, or more importantly the public service. It was also the sort of arrangement that the surveyors were concerned might emerge when they critiqued the Bill. The problem was that it muddied the very essential division between service rendered by the permanent government servants, and that provided by a consultant who would offer complete and undivided attention and loyalty to his client. It also overlooked the very clear conflict that would arise when the schemes that Hammond had helped to write arrived at the Town-planning Board for approval. That expert comment would be provided by the man who had written the scheme. It would have been a situation that would have quickly undermined the credibility of the Board.

The death of Bollard in the middle of these negotiations probably complicated the situation, though Hammond in fact had direct discussions with Coates over the issue, reflecting again the close relationship and elements of patronage in his appointment. Ultimately it was decided to reappoint Hammond as Director on an effective short-term contract for another four months, to cover the period until a successor was found⁶⁸. The arrangement could be continued for up to twelve months.

The search for a successor proved less than simple. Hammond discussed the matter directly with Coates, and suggested that the position did not need to be advertised either here or overseas, as Mr Butcher, recently appointed Town Planner in Wellington, would be an appropriate appointment at a salary of £800⁶⁹. Butcher

had taken up his appointment in August 1927, having completed the University of London course after war service. He took the Lever Prize in 1920 and had worked, like Hammond, for Herbert Baker, before moving to work on the New York Regional Plan with Edward Flagg⁷⁰. Given the similarities in experience there must be the suspicion that Hammond had known Butcher either as a student or when they were working in Baker's office. This neat solution was quickly found wanting. While Hislop concurred that the position did not require to be advertised and in fact had not been in Hammond's case, there was the suggestion that this should be regarded as the exception rather than the norm. Further, Butcher had worked in the Government Architects Office for a salary of £350, and was paid £600 by Wellington City in his present position. To now appoint him, without application, to a position at a salary of £800 would upset public service sensibilities and "might ... cause some little heart-burning, seeing the salary of the Government Architect is £850"⁷¹. While the public service might have coped with an outsider like Hammond being appointed over their heads, they were unlikely to be so tolerant of another such appointment particularly where the appointee had held a junior public service position in the recent past. Hislop's position here reflects the increased inflexibility of the permanent public service that had probably been increased by the work of the Public Service Commission. Nearing the end of his leadership of Internal Affairs (he retired in June 1928), he was probably keen to avoid fuelling a dispute with such an appointment. Hislop suggested instead that the position be advertised and the applicants should not only have town planning skills and qualifications but should also be versed in local government law as they would have "vital reference to the carrying out of a town planning scheme"⁷². This reference indicates once again how entrenched was the idea that town planning was to be achieved, not primarily through the new Act, but through the use of a variety of existing legislation.

At the end of the Memo it was suggested that any advertisement should specifically state that Hammond had decided to retire, that is that he was leaving of his own volition rather than, one presumes, being dispensed with. Such a statement, Hislop suggested "might be of some assistance to him, as there will no doubt be numbers of persons who may seek to discredit his action in retiring"⁷³.

The resignation of Hammond brought some interesting responses and gave the surveyors new hope that they could take the lead in town planning. There was also agitation from the Auckland Town Planning Association for the appointment of an overseas expert who would be better able to "visualise all the complex conditions which can obtain in far larger cities than any in this Dominion"⁷⁴. Ultimately the Minister, Maui Pomare, had to come up with an ideal profile for the appointment and the letter from the Auckland Association prompted the development of a detailed list. The appointee was to have:

1. A town planning qualification and experience.
2. A working knowledge of local government and other law, "this knowledge being necessary in order to explain the underlying principles and provisions of those Acts, in connection with the carrying out of town planning schemes"⁷⁵.
3. A personality which would assist the candidate in securing the good will and assistance of local bodies in getting the town-planning schemes written.

The Memo ended with the observation that a New Zealand appointment would be preferred, in line with the Government's policy of encouraging local talent. Thus it was suggested that applications only be sought within New Zealand. Ultimately it was decided to invite applications from overseas but to "state that preference would be given to a qualified New Zealander"⁷⁶. This seemed an unnecessary convoluted approach if the real interest was in appointing a New Zealander. Over the years there had been quite diverse support for an overseas appointment, an acceptance that an appropriately qualified and experienced New Zealander might not be available in a relatively new technical area. Such overseas appointments were accepted in the similarly new area of forestry⁷⁷. At this point there was reference to existing material on John Mawson, who had applied for the position after the appointment of Hammond. His application was well received, with Hurst Seager calling him "the best man who could probably be obtained"⁷⁸. Hurst Seager had written to Mawson in 1926 expressing his disappointment "that the Government has not seen its way to appoint you to the position of Director of Town Planning" and encouraged him to come to New Zealand as "... you will be in a very much better position as a consultant Town Planner than you would be as Director for the Government"⁷⁹. He also had glowing tributes from a number of international town planning figures including Thomas Adams and William Davidge. In light of this support it was decided that Mawson should be approached by the High Commissioner to see if he was still interested, thereby undermining the earlier convoluted attempts to secure a New Zealander for the position. The position was eventually advertised on 7th November 1927 in papers throughout New Zealand.

For the Institute of Surveyors, Hammond's resignation offered a new opportunity to try to change the direction of town planning. Branches in Auckland and

Christchurch moved that the Act, and the Director be placed under the control of the Surveyor-General within the Department of Lands⁸⁰. This was followed by a direct letter to the Prime Minister that opened with the request that “the Director and administration of the new Act should be placed under the Department of Lands and Survey”⁸¹. The letter was direct and hard hitting and declaring that surveyors were trained to undertake such work, and were “now doing the actual technical spadework of the whole sub-stratum of the administrative work”⁸². They claimed moreover that the Institute was “responsible for the passing of the Act”⁸³. If control was passed to the Department and that profession, the Director would gain access to a large resource of well trained surveyors, and the maps and mapping service which were so essential to the progress of town planning.

In making this case the surveyors were promulgating a very narrow concept of town planning. As they stated, “the whole foundation of the subject is subdivision of land, which is surveyor’s work and no-one else’s”⁸⁴. While they acknowledged the contribution of other professions such as architects and engineers, the whole direction of town planning was to be demonstrated by the physical laying out of the urban fabric. It was a very technocratic approach that represented a very narrow concept of town planning. It also reflected the consistent defensive tone of the Institute, which always appeared to feel that its efforts and contribution were overlooked. There is also the suggestion of a hardening of attitude on behalf of the surveyors, the product of their experience to date, or recognition that this was their last real chance to dominate town planning. The motivation for the latter may have been strengthened by the worsening economic conditions that would make town planning an alternative source of work, if and when land development slowed or ceased. Given the strength of sentiment in the letter, Coates produced a very mild

reply, to the effect that the matter had been considered when the Bill was passed, and it was “considered desirable that the Act should be under the administration of the Minister of Internal Affairs”⁸⁵. The Institute was slow to reply. Eventually in February 1928 it wrote to Coates again emphasising the savings that would be achieved and stressing that officers of the Department of Lands and Survey and Surveyors were in daily contact with local authorities, thus it was logical that they take on such work. They also took a new line by stressing they “have nothing to gain from the suggestion unless it be the relief which we hope to obtain from causes of complaint which we personally have dinned into us daily” and that they were taking civic responsibility in pursuing the matter⁸⁶. This produced yet another low key response from Coates, reflecting the file note from Newton that the matter “has been so fully gone into previously, that I think it unnecessary to comment further on the merits or otherwise of the proposal”⁸⁷. At that point the efforts of the Surveyors to capture town planning and to have it transferred to Lands and Survey seemed to end.

The Appointment of the Second Director

The advertisement for a new Director yielded twenty-two candidates of varying degrees of suitability. Exactly half were registered surveyors, though most were also registered engineers or architects in addition, reflecting the less rigid professional boundaries of the time. Among the more interesting candidates in this group was A. H. Boyle, the Institute of Surveyors representative on the Town-planning Board, F.H. Waters the Chief Surveyor and E. V. Blake, that trenchant critic of the Act. Despite the surveyors’ earlier expressed fears of the domination of

the architects, only six candidates described themselves as architects. Of those over half had another qualification in surveying or engineering. This group also included J.T. Marr the Government Architect. Only Butcher described himself as a town planner, though Blake also included the term "consultant town planner". Other interesting candidates included Professor E. R. Arthur, Professor of Architecture at the University of Trent, Canada, Arthur Bridge of the City Engineers Department in Christchurch, an individual who had been prominent in the deputations to agitate for the Act, and P. L. Hollings a Kawhia solicitor⁸⁸. The interest in the position by two senior civil servants, Marr and Waters, perhaps reflects the attractiveness of the salary and/or the perception that the position was one of particular independence. For while it was located in Internal Affairs, the Director appeared to be answerable to the Minister, rather than the Departmental Head. Given Newton's on-going and direct involvement in town planning administration, this aspect may have been more illusory than real.

A committee consisting of Newton, the Public Service Commissioner, Furkert, as Chief Engineer and Under-Secretary of Public Works, and Hurst Seager, was appointed to consider the applicants⁸⁹. The Committee was unimpressed with the candidates and reported, on 15th December, that none had the necessary qualifications or experience⁹⁰. Mawson was also considered as a candidate, but he wanted a salary of £1,250, at a time when Raymond Unwin, a doyen of the British planning movement, was only being paid £1,000, in Britain. The Committee considered various ploys, including trying to lure Unwin or George Pepler, two of Britain's leading town planners, with a £1,000 salary plus moving expenses. Pomare, the Minister of Internal Affairs, also suggested to Coates, that Britain be asked to lend New Zealand a town planner for three-years⁹¹. These proposals were

eventually abandoned as unworkable. The proposal to 'borrow' an expert from Britain seemed to be particularly out of step with the earlier concern to appoint a New Zealander. Mawson was approached again, but declined a further offer in February 1928, but recommended Longstreth Thompson, as a substitute⁹². This created further problems for the Committee, which was in a quandary as to how to proceed. They considered various options, including re-advertising or making another approach to Mawson⁹³. The problem with Mawson's demand was that it would put the salary of the Director out of step with those within the civil service and cause "discontent to many permanent heads"⁹⁴. The matter dragged on, and by June adverse comment was appearing in the newspapers. Some was quite nationalistic in sentiment. A Letter to the Editor, in the *Auckland Star* stated quite boldly, "why cannot the Government select someone in this country whose interests are here and who is likely to remain here, and if not in their opinion quite up to their requirements, send him abroad?"⁹⁵. Despite this, the Government was eventually forced to compromise, and Mawson got his five-year appointment at a salary of £1,250⁹⁶. The decision was made by the Cabinet, indicating its importance⁹⁷. Cabinet's involvement probably came about from a combination of factors, not the least of which was the nature of the position, as established by the legislation, which made it an appointment by the executive. Other important factors were the difficulties in securing a candidate and the substantial salary being offered. That salary well exceeded the £950 paid to the Under-Secretary of Internal Affairs⁹⁸. The prospect that Mawson would not only put town planning on a sound footing, but would "give an opportunity to young New Zealanders to obtain that essential experience in the carrying out and preparing of town planning schemes, thus qualifying later to succeed Mawson in this important position", were proffered as a reason for an overseas appointment⁹⁹.

John William Mawson was born in 1886, the son of Thomas Mawson, a landscape architect who has been described as “an unlikely pioneer in the early history of the British town planning movement”¹⁰⁰. He moved from humble beginnings as a nurseryman to found a town planning consulting firm that did work in Britain, Europe and Canada. It numbered among its clients, the redoubtable Lord Leverhulme. John Mawson trained at Liverpool as an architect and town planner and joined the family firm, becoming manager in 1912, of the Vancouver office, which served both Canada and the United States. He served with the Canadian Expeditionary Forces in the First World War, rising to the rank of lieutenant before being released in October 1917 to “proceed to Salonica on special work for the Government of Greece”¹⁰¹. This work for the Greek Government involved the re-planning of villages in Macedonia in Greece, where he was, in 1919, appointed “head of the Service for the Reconstruction of 130-150 small towns and villages of Eastern Macedonia”¹⁰². After this he was employed by Lord Leverhulme until 1924, and was involved in the development of Mote Park near London. After 1924 he rejoined the family firm and seemed to have worked on a range of projects in Britain and Europe¹⁰³. On his departure his father wrote to him, “you are the luckiest fellow I have ever met, seeing that you have more jobs thrown at your head than you can possibly get under your hat. This means that you have the power of impressing others, consciously or unconsciously with your ability to undertake large enterprises”¹⁰⁴. He could also readily produce testimonials from such leading figures of the British town planning world as Patrick Abercrombie and Adshead¹⁰⁵. In short, Mawson was a well trained and vastly experienced individual who was likely to live up to Newton’s glowing description as one whose “organising and administrative ability is considered to be exceptional”¹⁰⁶. All of this was undoubtedly true, but Mawson was also a difficult individual, at times almost too self-assured and

confident, who took any questioning as a personal challenge. Interviewed before his departure he praised the New Zealand legislation as “far in advance of that in England”¹⁰⁷. It was further reported that he would “endeavour to preserve the amenities of nature” and would “advocate garden cities within easy reach of the cities”¹⁰⁸. Like Hammond he had no sustained experience of working within the constraints of a public service position, other than from the relative independence of a consultant. Mawson acknowledged the problems of his character, saying, “I am a difficult man to get on with in some ways I know. I cannot tolerate fools or self-seekers. I have been fighting for principles and have stepped on many corns in the process”¹⁰⁹.

Despite the fact that Mawson was not a surveyor, the Institute of Surveyors took this appointment well. He was described in laudatory terms in the *New Zealand Surveyor*, emphasising both his experience and his suitability for the position¹¹⁰. The Institute moved quickly to send an official Deputation to visit Mawson on 15th October 1928, “to welcome him to New Zealand, and assure him of the co-operation of the surveying profession in the great work which lies before him”¹¹¹. It was an unexpectedly cordial approach by the surveyors, given their attempts in the recent past to place a surveyor in the position. Mawson was well aware of the potential for an acrimonious relationship with the surveyors. While he spoke of his recognition of surveying’s “fundamental character in relation to town planning” and acknowledged the need for maps, he also said “town planning was of itself a complete process and not merely an accessory to engineering, architecture or surveying”¹¹². It was a bold pre-emptive statement that sought to establish, at an early stage, the independence of the town planning profession, while simultaneously recognising the interests and importance of the surveyors. However

Mawson obviously impressed the surveyors, and by early 1929 the Surveyor's Annual Report for 1928/29 stated that "the appointment of Mr J W Mawson, as Director of Town Planning has the cordial approval of your Council"¹¹³. Mawson's quick acknowledgement that the legislation needed amending probably enhanced his acceptability because it offered the surveyors a further opportunity to weld the Act into a form that better suited their interests.

Progress in Town Planning

Prior to his retirement Hammond's report on the first year of the Act's operation appeared in both the *New Zealand Surveyor* and the *New Zealand Institute of Architects Journal*. While Hammond was very positive in his assessment of progress in implementing the Act, he did stress that "the year 1927 being the first year of operation of the Act did not show much advance. It was a period of educational work"¹¹⁴. This was a time consuming activity which undoubtedly produced little in the way of obvious outcomes.

Local bodies were slow to act, with Chas Chilton, Editor of *The City Beautiful*, observing that the time had come to dispense with the "ignorance and indifferences regarding the whole subject"¹¹⁵. He also hoped that when the 1927 municipal and borough elections were held, that "questions relating to the future development of our cities and boroughs will form a very important facet in the election of those whose duty it will be to plan for the future and to start putting the planning into operation"¹¹⁶. This connection between town planning and the exercise of what might be called civic responsibility was not new, it had been a strong theme in the earlier years of the movement. It was also a recurring theme in *The City Beautiful*

journal, which from 1925 also carried the annual reports of the activities of the Christchurch City Council. The journal also carried a variety of articles on aspects of municipal governance and the creation of infrastructure in a planned and orderly manner¹¹⁷.

The idea that town planning would become an election issue was a rather forlorn hope. A glance at the election advertisements for Auckland and Wellington yields no specific mention of town planning by any of the candidates¹¹⁸. They made more basic appeals. Voters were invited to support James Doherty who offered “economy by avoidance of waste of material and labour on ill advised undertakings”¹¹⁹, while W.H. McKinney supported a Greater Auckland movement and a readjustment of local body boundaries¹²⁰. Other appeals were based on the qualities of the candidate rather than any policies, this being by far the most common approach. Voters in Auckland were, for instance invited to support Thomas C. Paw, as he was a “young, virile and successful businessman”¹²¹.

Given the difficult economic times and the fractured nature of local body politics, the restrained response of local bodies is understandable. In the larger cities where there was likely to be a number of local bodies, effective town planning would only be achieved if they all prepared schemes, preferably co-operatively. This could only have been achieved if central government could compel local bodies to prepare schemes, a power it lacked. Cyril Knight specifically identified this as a problem in advancing town planning, when he wrote that “the greatest stumbling block, however is found in the multiplicity of local authorities governing cities” and their “unwillingness to operate in some voluntary co-operative fashion”¹²².

The Auckland Town Planning Association, reporting on its first year in operation, observed that “the general attitude of the local bodies showed more anxiety to preserve the status quo than to adopt the true spirit of town planning”¹²³. The Association saw the solution in building a “sufficiently influential body of public opinion giving an unmistakable lead to the local authorities”, and through reform of the Act¹²⁴. This reliance on the building of public consensus for the Act and its operation was an approach pursued by Archie Bogle, a member of the Town-planning Board, who wrote several articles for the *Wanganui Chronicle*. In one he stated “the Act only provided the machinery, the bare bones of any proposition. The finished article will depend largely on the vision and goodwill of the people themselves”¹²⁵. True as this might be, it did beg the question of how the public’s interest might be engaged to pressure local bodies to perform. While there were the remnants of the older groups that had taken an interest in town planning and had actively advocated for the cause, they were by 1927/28 clearly in decline. Even the Auckland Association in 1928 had only one hundred and forty-eight members and funds of £97¹²⁶. They recognised that “the object of the Association during the coming year should be to extend its membership and activities”¹²⁷. Given the time, groups such as this may have been competing for funds and members with others involved in more practical, social welfare focused works.

The news was not however totally gloomy. If Auckland had recognised the need to provide a combined scheme to overcome the irrationality of local authority boundaries, so had Christchurch. This probably reflects two influences. Firstly of those who were members of groups, such as the Beautifying Association, who were also involved in local politics. Secondly the influence of John Galbraith, the City Engineer, and Arthur Bridge, the surveyor for the City Council, who had been

involved in agitation for the Act in 1926 through his position as Institute of Surveyors' President. In August 1927 Galbraith produced a detailed report on the "advantages and economics of town planning", which helped to persuade the recalcitrant Riccarton Borough to join the City and other Christchurch boroughs to produce a combined town planning scheme¹²⁸. Later in the same year, Galbraith was successful in getting some of the smaller Boroughs, such as Waimairi, to refer their subdivisions to the City Council for comment and offered to do the same for subdivisions in parts of the city that adjoined these Boroughs¹²⁹. Such co-operative approaches, carefully negotiated over time and based on a process of educating the smaller boroughs, seemed to yield reasonable results in Christchurch. Equally, by June 1928 the Director of Town-planning reported to Galbraith that plans were being prepared by thirteen Boroughs, Towns Boards and Roads Boards, including a joint scheme between Hamilton City and Waikato and Waipa Counties¹³⁰. This, nevertheless, left large numbers of local bodies doing little or nothing, despite the statutory requirement to have a scheme in place by 1930.

The Early Years of J. W. Mawson

Mawson was Director of Town-planning from 1928 to 1933, a period of some significant achievements and equally significant defeats¹³¹. In negotiating such a substantial salary, Mawson was creating great expectations about his ability and his role. The salary he claimed was equivalent to the Prime Minister's, and he took this to indicate that "they must be taking the business seriously"¹³². In taking up the position, Mawson stated many years later, he sought to achieve two objectives: "first to place planning on a sound administrative basis and secondly, to obtain recognition for planning as a separate and honourable profession"¹³⁴. Reflecting on

this he felt that “I have had to admit defeat in the first”¹³⁵. For the first time New Zealand had a senior public servant who was fully committed to the town planning profession. Most importantly making planning work in a practical sense was an integral aspect of establishing a separate and distinct professional identity. This was a position that had never been much apparent in Hammond’s brief reign as Director, probably because of his age and experience. Mawson was a quite different individual – a vastly experienced and confident professional who had practised with success in a number of countries. He was certain he could meet with representatives of the other professions on at least an equal footing.

While this all seemed to be an auspicious start, Mawson clearly underestimated the strength of the bureaucracy that he was joining. He claimed that he negotiated with Cabinet a “dispensation ... that I could say and write what I liked, when I liked it and where I liked”¹³⁶. While there is no actual evidence to support this claim, Mawson did seem to have a wide freedom to give speeches, and there is no evidence of any attempts to constrain him. However in negotiating such an arrangement Mawson was attempting to work outside the accepted tenets of practice for public servants of the time. Mawson believed on his arrival, that he had “an established reputation for organising and administrative ability”, and that in negotiating the position with Sir James Parr, the High Commissioner, he had been promised he was taking up a “senior administrative post”¹³⁷. Instead he found on his arrival, “to use the Public Service Commissions (sic) own phrase, that I was just one of the ‘bits and pieces’ tucked away in the Internal Affairs Department”¹³⁸. He credited Newton with persuading him to stay, by partly righting the injustice that had been done, by “voluntarily arranging with Cabinet that I was to be given a free hand in the organisation and administration of the affairs of the Town-planning Board”¹³⁹.

This was clearly not a happy start to Mawson's career in New Zealand. In hindsight he identified the problem as being, "that unless you start life as an office boy licking stamps or a telegraph messenger boy, you simply lack the fundamentals of sound administration and nothing you can do in the academic field can remove this disability"¹⁴⁰. This seems to reflect the difficulty of a technical/professional officer located in a Department which was largely devoted to general administration and that had little experience of dealing with such officers. Newton was for instance, a career public servant, one of those who had started as an office boy and worked his way up to his present position through experience in other government departments. That path would have served to provide him with the contacts and the experience that were an integral part of the professionalised public service. The increasing intervention of the central state necessitated by the economic downturn and the need to take a lead in the development of infrastructure such as electricity generation, also enhanced the role of the permanent public service who put the programmes into action. Earlier efforts to improve public service work practices and build *esprit de corps*, also assisted in raising the status of senior public service positions. Mawson stood outside these developments, his five-year contract and high salary serving to distance him within in his own department. This was not helped by the fact that the various rearranging of government functions had left Internal Affairs as a " loose confederation of semi-independent agencies"¹⁴¹. Ironically, Mawson would have faced fewer problems if he had ended up in the Lands and Survey or Public Works Departments, where there would have been greater numbers of technical/professional officers and a greater recognition of their value and roles.

Mawson seems to have spent the remainder of 1928 getting to grips with the job. From his discussions in February 1929 with the Town-planning Board, which was still meeting only irregularly, it was obvious that he saw the need to educate the public about town planning as a necessary precursor to establishing town planning schemes. At that meeting Mawson tried to get a publicity expert or journalist for his office, but while this request was forwarded to the Minister it was apparently never acted upon¹⁴². This was the first of mainly failed attempts Mawson made to get adequate staff to progress town planning. He did however get support for his intention to speak widely and received an interested response to his discussion of regional planning. Reflecting on the early period of her father's time in New Zealand his daughter spoke of him as a "sort of travelling salesman" who was always coming from, or going to somewhere, to speak¹⁴³.

Amending the Act – The Arrival of Regional Planning

If Mawson spent the balance of 1928 finding his feet, then 1929 was the period when he started to make active and obvious progress. By January 1929 the new Minister for Internal Affairs in the Ward Ministry, P. A. de la Perrelle, admitted in a press interview that progress with writing Schemes under the Act, was "disappointing"¹⁴⁴. In the same article the Minister prefigured the possibility of amending the Act, partly to incorporate the Director's new concept of town planning, one which produced a master plan to which all future developments must conform¹⁴⁵. Town planning becomes a method of regulating the development of urban fabric. It is a technically driven process rather than one that is intended, as the earlier concept stressed, to relieve social ills. The motif of the slum and the city beautiful had finally disappeared. Agitation to change the Act was also coming from

other quarters. In February 1929 the Auckland Town Planning Association wrote to Mawson proposing the Act be amended along the lines they had suggested earlier. Mawson graciously replied that there were other areas he had also identified, which needed alteration¹⁴⁶. A few days later this produced a banner headline in the *Auckland Sun* – “Found Wanting : Town Planning Act to be Overhauled”¹⁴⁷. The article went on to credit the Auckland Association with suggesting the amendments which Mawson was to proceed with. The whole tone was very negative, the legislation being characterised as having been “rushed through Parliament in a moment of enthusiasm following the attractive lay-out of the Orakei garden suburb”¹⁴⁸. Even local authorities’ lack of action was excused, because “the fabric of the Act (was) ... functionally wrong and of small practical use”¹⁴⁹. The article was not only negative, it was inaccurate in crediting the Orakei competition with having anything to do with the passing of the legislation. It did however indicate that popular support for town planning had yet to emerge.

Mawson however also moved to give practical assistance to those who were forced to use the new Act. Subdivision issues had taken up much of Hammond’s time, and by August 1928 Mawson had produced a memo outlining some of the problems in this area¹⁵⁰. He tried to tidy this up, reflecting perhaps his practical experience in land development for Lord Leverhulme. In October 1928 he started to prepare a circular to guide local authorities on subdivision, and this was issued in March 1929. Separate circulars were prepared for boroughs and cities and counties, each ending with an offer of assistance from the Director to deal with any problems¹⁵¹. The circulars were well received by local bodies, a number seeking extra copies¹⁵². Generally Mawson was developing a good relationship with the Surveyors’ Institute. In February 1929 he met with the Council of the Institute to discuss the Act and the

need for regional planning. The meeting was evidently quite cordial, particularly as Mawson supported some of the changes proposed by the Institute, which had been rejected in 1926. As a result it was reported "that there was a good deal of common good between the parties"¹⁵³. By working with the surveyors, Mawson was quieting a potential source of conflict and building an alliance to support his plans to make major amendments to the Act.

This approach was not confined to the surveyors. Early in 1929 Mawson gave two significant speeches which simultaneously established his vision and concept of town planning and confirmed that the Act was to be altered. The speech to the Institute of Architects in Wellington on 12th February 1929, a meeting chaired by the Minister, de la Perrelle, was reproduced in the Institute of Architects' journal. It was long and complex, focusing primarily on establishing a new and more diverse concept of town planning. Quite appropriately it was called "Some Popular Misconceptions in Regard to Town Planning"¹⁵⁴. At the outset Mawson specifically acknowledged that there was no specific definition of town planning and that there were "half a dozen people holding apparently different views on one particular phase of the subject, all of which, in some measure are well-founded"¹⁵⁵. His concept, expanded in the speech, was largely based on a technical interpretation, where town planning provided a comprehensive scheme which took "into consideration every factor in the town or locality which is likely to exercise any influence over its growth for a period of years, to use this to formulate a comprehensive plan which would guide the future development of the town"¹⁵⁶. This was very much a future orientated concept, where planning helped to guide and to create the conditions which ensured both orderly expansion and the achievement of a productive future for citizens and producers alike. Thus while

town planning could produce “prevention and cure”, it does “...not make towns. Dynamic forces, the energies of men and the enterprises associated with industries, the pressure of population lured to a centre by powerful sources of attraction – these are the makers of the town”¹⁵⁷. Thus town planning becomes a facilitatory tool rather than the messianic force for change which was an inevitable aspect of earlier concepts. Equally however it is also a concept which integrates town planning within the existing socio-economic system rather than seeing it as an independent element of change.

Mawson’s speech remains as the most comprehensive discussion of what the concept of town planning actually meant. In it he reveals himself as a strong conceptual thinker who could move beyond the strictures of statutory town planning, which in Britain at the time was still pre-occupied with civic layouts and housing. As Cherry observes of this period, “the closeness of housing to town planning matters suggested little difference between local authority housing projects and town planning schemes”¹⁵⁸. Thus the source of Mawson’s concept seems to lie not as much in town planning as it was practised in Britain, but his political views derived from the British Liberal ideas on an appropriate role for the state. Cherry discusses the emergence, in response to Labour’s calls for nationalisation, of a Liberal philosophy based on increased control by government over private industry, to secure planned development of the economy, with the requisite social gains¹⁵⁹. These ideas emerged out of the Liberal Summer Schools that produced, in 1928, *Britain’s Industrial Future*, also known as the Yellow Book. Mawson seems to have combined these ideas with the more comprehensive planning schemes that Adams had developed in Canada, of which he would have been well aware from his time in Vancouver. Here there is a new type of diffusion of planning knowledge, with a

single individual being the mechanism for the development of a set of adaptive ideas. While Mawson had not been in New Zealand for long he appeared to have quickly recognised that the traditional British statutory model had little relevance. Any concept of town planning would have to incorporate an element of managing and directing new urban growth and economic development, and to do this by working with existing structures and groups.

In the same speech Mawson also addressed the issue of town planning as a profession. While he acknowledged the role of the three professions, along with others such as sociologists, he clearly delineated a specific role for the town planner, as a sort of conductor of the process and those involved in that process. His inclusion of the sociologist, a direct reference to the influence of Geddes in town planning, emphasises the diversity of planning thought in Britain and elsewhere. There is no evidence that the ideas of Geddes received any real exposure in New Zealand. This serves to demonstrate the limited nature of the planning ideas that were diffused to New Zealand and the 'filtering' of those ideas by men like Hurst Seager. In this situation the value of the town planner lay in "his knowledge of the relations these things bear one to the other and the part they play in a well balanced community, keeping ever before him the essential function or functions which the town is to fulfil"¹⁶⁰. These observations were important as they signalled a new and very specific role for the town planner that was clearly distinguishable from that of other professionals. It was a bold statement, given the paucity of town planners able to do such work, that he would personally have to take a lead in fulfilling this professional role and achieving his concept of planning.

In the speech Mawson also raised a new issue. This was the relationship between successful town planning, particularly in the area of urban renewal that he referred to as 'replanning', and the associated concept of excess condemnation. The Auckland Association had requested the latter, presumably as a practical way of funding civic improvements. This he then extended to betterment. Both these issues involved a fundamental intrusion into the established concepts of property rights, by assuming that if the community as a whole was to benefit then 'profit' could be appropriately retrieved via excess condemnation or betterment. Thus town planning becomes a tool to regulate the capitalist state by capturing some of the profit for the community, to make a society more comfortable and more acceptable to the worker. Mawson no doubt ventured into this area on the basis of his British experience where betterment provisions had been put in place under the *Town Planning Act , 1925*, at a rate of half of the increase in the value of the land resulting from a planning control. There seemed to be acceptance of this and its opposite, compensation, as the rates were steadily increased in subsequent British legislation. However, as discussed earlier, some of that acceptance may have resulted from the general ineffectiveness of the provisions in practice.

This was a delicate area in a country where land ownership was regarded as a right, something which Mawson himself acknowledged¹⁶¹. This, he appears to suggest, meant that the local authority as the representative of the community had a responsibility to try to use town planning to reap a benefit from the individual landowner to return to the community. This opened up a complex area and while Mawson discussed it, he did not suggest a particular solution beyond suggesting the relationship of the individual to the community in respect to land ownership and unearned increment is one of the big political issues of the day. While he did not

pursue this at this point, such ideas might have alarmed his politically conservative Minister, as much for the insights that they gave to Mawson's personal political beliefs. One of the reasons he was to return to New Zealand in 1935 was because the Labour Government had come to power. This background and his more limited knowledge of New Zealand may have led him to over-estimate the concern with what he was saying. While land ownership was and is an important aspect of New Zealand society, as it is in many colonial societies, it was not a major issue by the late 1920s. The works of Bassett and Oliver both stress that Labour was victorious in 1935 not because it promised to achieve some doctrinaire socialisation of the means of production (including land) but because it offered the opportunity to use the powers of the state more proactively to benefit the community. With such an approach, and this was demonstrated in Labour's support for the *Town-planning Act*, town planning is merely one of the tools the state might use. Given the other much more significant changes that were accepted with regard to marketing primary produce, the threat to individual property rights from the planning Act, pales into insignificance.

Mawson used a speech to the Municipal Association Conference in Wanganui in February 1929¹⁶² to introduce within a framework of encouraging local authorities to participate in planning, his concept of regional planning. In this speech he demonstrated that he was now well aware of the reluctance of local authorities to become involved in town planning, and of the causes of that reluctance. In this respect he showed that he was much more politically astute than Hammond, or simply that he had experienced such attitudes in his earlier work. He overlooked their reluctance, and instead indicated that the problem stemmed from the "confusion of local government with economic and social units"¹⁶³. Perhaps in an

attempt to mollify the local bodies present, he stated at an earlier point that “the rights of local self government”¹⁶⁴, were inviolate. Drawing on progressivist images of a modern and rapidly developing urban area, Mawson presented regional planning as the answer to the problem. He defined regional planning as “the co-ordination and correlation of all matters of interest common to the separate local authorities within the region in order to secure the economic use and development of the land for the purpose for which it is best suited”¹⁶⁵. By presenting this new concept of regional planning, Mawson was attempting to overcome the limitations imposed by the fragmented nature of local government. These regional plans were to be voluntary at first, with those who did not recognise their worth, eventually being forced to become involved by altering the Act to allow the government to compel their preparation. Regional plans would promote economic and social development within a framework of regulation that achieved the best use of natural, social and economic resources. While the regional plans would establish basic standards for density and amenity, much of this detail would be in the town planning schemes that would form a complementary part of the regional plans. The regional plans would be financed by rates but would also be prepared “by the local authorities and business interests working in co-operation”¹⁶⁶. This was the first attempt to specifically involve the public, albeit a selected part, in the preparation of plans. It was to be a hallmark of Mawson’s work and probably reflected his belief that town planning would only succeed if there were public support for it. By involving the public in the creation of the plan then the planner was in effect making the public stakeholders in the process and the outcomes.

This approach of promoting co-operation between all the groups involved in planning was extended to include a suggestion that it was appropriate to look at a

less centralised model and to pass some of the decision making powers back to the local level¹⁶⁷. This was surely a message that would have been welcomed by local authorities, as it would have subtly adjusted the balance between the central and local state and would have been an acknowledgement by the central state of the competence of the local state. In both speeches Mawson consistently recognised that town planning required public consensus if it was to succeed. To this end, throughout his career he spent a great deal of time developing or delivering speeches to all types of groups. He was a true believer in the value of propaganda and by all accounts was a persuasive speaker. In the two-year period from 1928 to 1930 he claimed to have given over two hundred speeches¹⁶⁸. He certainly toured the country extensively making a point of talking to local authorities, professional groups and the interested public¹⁶⁹. He even wanted to include “town planning in the curriculum of the primary and secondary school”¹⁷⁰. In addition he produced a steady stream of articles. He formed a continuing relationship with *Board and Council*, a publication aimed specifically at local authorities, as it was the official organ of a number of organisations including the Municipal Association and Counties Association¹⁷¹. His propaganda efforts extended to the use of radio and he delivered what now seem to be rather stilted lectures, in a question and answer format, on 2YA in 1932.

The picture of Mawson that emerges from these is a strong almost opinionated man who was ready and willing to use, within the bounds of the appropriate, whatever means required, to advance the cause of town planning. He also demonstrated a breadth of vision of what planning, both of the town and the region, might achieve in practice. It was a vision well removed from the narrow outlook of the surveyors. He also showed that he was astute enough to know that nothing would be achieved

without the active support of a range of groups and organisations. In these two speeches he managed to inject an enthusiastic, almost evangelical note into the promotion of town planning. Equally however his obvious personal commitment meant that failure might be devastating and complete.

The 1929 Amendment

Mawson had used these speeches to 'prepare the ground' for the amendment to the Act that developed the regional planning proposal more fully. The concept of regional planning which he was promoting was derived from overseas models, most specifically the ideas developed by Thomas Adams' American regional planning models. In an article in 1926 Adams had specifically proposed regional planning as a method of overcoming local authority competition and to produce "the needed co-ordination of interests of adjacent local authorities"¹⁷². While Adam's model drew heavily on Geddes' Regional Survey approach as the basis of the construction of the plan, he did adapt it to meet the needs of producing a co-ordinated response to the issue of controlling urban expansion. Such efforts were not confined to America, similar approaches were attempted in Europe and Britain. It is interesting to note however, that the model proposed in Adam's 1926 article, particularly the list of matters to be covered in the plan, is almost identical to that proposed in Mawson's 1929 speech to the Municipal Association Conference¹⁷³. This tends to support Mawson's contention that he was aware of, and at the forefront of, international planning ideas that he was attempting to introduce in New Zealand. Mawson seems to have spent much of the period to the end of June preparing his

comprehensive amendments. By June he had developed a proposal that would in rewrite the Act. It created three related parts that is:

Part 1 Regional Planning

Part 2 Town Planning

Part 3 Interim Development¹⁷⁴

Under this amended Act, regional planning would be the central focus for planning. The regional plan would be produced by a regional planning committee made up of members appointed from the constituent local authorities, which would co-opt and involve members of the community. The plans produced after a Geddesian style survey would be non-binding but would guide the production of town planning schemes and offer advice and assistance to developers, government departments etc. Town planning schemes would no longer be required everywhere, with the Town-planning Board deciding when and where these should be prepared. There was also to be provision for privately prepared schemes for land that would eventually be taken over by local authorities. As Mawson explained, this was to deal with “a large manufacturing concern going out into a rural area and establishing something in the nature of an industrial village, like Port Sunlight, or again an isolated residential area like that proposed for Wainui-o-mata”¹⁷⁵. This approach clearly reflects both the British planning system and Mawson’s experience that had included responsibility for developing various residential estates including Mote Park¹⁷⁶. In situations where a local authority had not prepared a town planning scheme, all subdivisions and developments were to be dealt with by a committee of officials from the Board. This was likely to act as a strong encouragement for local authorities to prepare plans if they were not to lose this very basic control to central government. It did however preserve the illusion of choice that was likely to appeal to the local authorities. There were also some

detailed proposals to give specific guidance on development control standards with regard to the penetration of light to buildings and other related controls. In total, the amendment would have created a quite different piece of legislation to that produced in 1926. In developing his proposal Mawson spent some time with all the professional groups and the local authorities, once again reflecting his recognising that change would only be possible if supported by those with an interest in its outcomes. The issue was also discussed with the Town-planning Board, which was still meeting although irregularly. The problem was that the Minister called meetings of the Board. If the Minister was unwilling or simply not interested in calling a meeting, the Board was powerless to do anything. In the future this was to prove a major problem.

Ultimately, however, the amendment proposal came to cover little more than the creation of regional planning, as a voluntary non-statutory scheme and some minor amendments which extended the date for the preparation of schemes and extended S34 to cover all local authorities. Mawson had caught wind of the fact that only minor changes were being contemplated. In June he sent a very detailed five-page Memo to Newton advocating more extensive change. In it he stated that "I view with some alarm the possibility that the Government may decide not to bring down anything more than 'stop-gap' amendments to the Town-planning Act" which would "create serious dissatisfaction amongst the local authorities through the country"¹⁷⁷. The carefully cultivated support among local authorities was used to pressure his political masters. Mawson's case was based very strongly on the idea that New Zealand should follow the lead of the international planning community, and particularly the New York Regional Plan and the regionally based plans being developed for London¹⁷⁸. While guided by American models, he recognised they

had to be adapted to local conditions. Many years later he reflected that “the regional planning legislation was expressly designed to deal with New Zealand conditions”¹⁷⁹. He also began explicitly to formulate a new concept of planning for New Zealand which went beyond what he saw as “the popular conception of town planning in New Zealand” which “deals only with questions of health and amenity”¹⁸⁰. In this respect he was referring to the slum driven imagery of the early enthusiasts who promoted town planning purely as a solution to social ills and focused on achieving the essential beauty which made urban areas bearable to live in. Mawson’s concept was much broader and more concerned with resource use and allocation. In such a concept, industry and development are no longer the enemies. Thus “while safeguarding and raising ones (sic) standards of health and amenity, ... the emphasis in our regional and town planning schemes should be placed upon the solution of those problems, on which the efficiency and economical conduct of our industries and consequently the prosperity of the whole country depends”¹⁸¹. Further, the plan which would guide efficient development, would be prepared by and in the interests of the community”¹⁸². Thus town planning would be integrated with social and economic planning and promotion, becoming a tool through which the community could achieve prosperity within an attractive and healthy living environment. It was, as such, a much more complex and comprehensive concept of town planning than those used earlier, one which avoided town planning being marooned. It made it part both of the main stream administration and the social and economic life of the community. This in turn ensured that town planning is not seen merely as a fad of the middle classes but as a tool which will achieve amenity and economic outcomes. It in short made it a very modern and progressive tool.

Mawson concluded this memo with a plea that at least the regional planning provisions be passed. Newton sent a summary of the matters raised by Mawson to the Minister¹⁸², but to no avail. On the 31st July 1929 the Law Draftsman produced a Memo outlining the extent of the changes, with a note to Mawson at the bottom stating "In view of what Sir Joseph said, I think it would be well to stick to essentials only"¹⁸³. This indicated that the issue had been directly discussed with the Prime Minister, Sir Joseph Ward, and that a conservative approach had been adopted. This is hardly surprising, as Ward was leading a "weak minority ministry dependent on other parties"¹⁸⁴ and facing escalating unemployment. Dogged by deteriorating health¹⁸⁵, he was likely to have viewed such a minority but potentially divisive issue as town planning, as something that could wait for better times.

The Board and the Minister : A Deteriorating Relationship

The fact that the legislation was discussed directly with Ward may reflect a number of matters. The most obvious is that it was significant enough in terms of the legislative programme to require discussion with the Prime Minister. However an equally compelling explanation lies in the strains which were already beginning to emerge in both Mawson and the Board's relationship with the Minister.

Philip de la Perrelle, a Southland newspaper owner and editor, became Minister of Internal Affairs in the minority Ward government in December 1928. In an ill advised and frank farewell speech in 1933, Mawson described him as "a Minister whose policy has been well described as one of placid and indolent inefficiency and whose guiding principle in life seemed to be that the man who never does anything cannot make a mistake"¹⁸⁶. Further "he never made any secret of the fact that he

didn't know anything about town-planning and did not want to know anything"¹⁸⁷. This was hardly the Minister likely to launch a major amendment to an Act that was only three years old. de la Perrelle was not an MP who has attracted any comment from historians which might refute Mawson's assessment. He certainly emerges from the files as a Minister who was frequently back in Southland, where he was evidently active in his local community¹⁸⁸. He may have been a good local member who never made the transition to the national level. If Mawson's judgement of de la Perrelle seems harsh it seems to be corroborated by the poor relationship which quickly developed between the Board and the Minister. The Board had met only irregularly since its creation, reflecting the Minister's lack of interest in calling it together, and perhaps the general uncertainty that might have surrounded its role at this early stage. There was after all already some work for the Board. In April 1929 for instance, it heard the appeal of A.G. Quartley against the Devonport Borough Council¹⁸⁹. It had also given consistent and active encouragement to Mawson's propaganda efforts. The Board was also quick to support Mawson in his bid to have input into any development plans and projects of the Government. Thus in August 1929 when Mawson sought support over the development of the Wellington Railway Station, the Board resolved that "it is essential that the fullest possible contribution should be given to those proposals in relation to the City's town planning scheme now in the course of preparation"¹⁹⁰. This was a stance sought directly by Mawson. Evidently Mawson had quickly formed a rapport with the Board.

This August meeting was in fact a watershed in the relationship between the Minister and the Board. De la Perrelle began the meeting by reading a prepared statement. In it he stated, with some candour "it is possible that the delay in calling

the Board together has given rise to some misgivings in the minds of individual members in regard to the relation between the Board and the Government"¹⁹¹. He then acknowledged that the Board might be concerned that in effect it was not to be used to help formulate changes to the Act but was merely there to criticise what the Government chose to place before it. In a long and complex speech de la Perrelle explained that this was not true, but equally had to admit that the Government had decided prior to the meeting, to proceed with only limited amendments to the Act. He explained that while the Government was "fully alive to the desirability of amending the present Act" there was not the necessary time for "proper consideration of such a matter"¹⁹². He then went on to detail what the Bill would deal with, thereby largely confirming that the Board's role was not to advise, but to criticise. He also traversed, but dismissed, the prospect of binding the Crown under the Act, preferring to remind Ministers of their earlier agreement to refer important matters to the Director for comment¹⁹³. He ended his speech by stating that the Government could not "legislate in advance of public opinion"¹⁹⁴, and that the only way to achieve the comprehensive measure he felt the Board wanted was to continue the propaganda work to educate the public. This seemed to offer the Board nothing more than a publicity role, clearly emphasising that its role was to be subservient to government. The issue of expenditure was also raised and the Board was reminded that "we must confine ourselves to the absolute minimum requirement so far as the amendment of the present provisions of the Town-planning Act is concerned"¹⁹⁵. This latter remark clearly reflects the deteriorating financial situation the Government was facing. All in all the Board had little to be optimistic about in its relationship with the Minister or his government. Once again the progress of town planning was to be limited by the lack of interest of the politicians. The response of the Board seems, from the recorded Minutes, to have

been largely muted. This may reflect the fact that at least half of the Board's members were public servants, who could hardly openly criticise their political masters. Some of those public service members may also have had some sympathy with the Minister's stance given that within their own Departments they would have seen core work reduced in extent or abandoned.

The 1929 Amendment is Passed

The Bill was largely prepared by early October. Mawson once again demonstrated in the process that he was drawing from the breadth of international experience in town planning and fulfilling the promises of his earlier speeches. In a letter to Sir John Sulman, the eminent Australian town planning leader and author of a text on the topic, he discussed the new Bill, saying "I have attempted to incorporate in it the very latest theory and practice relating to regional planning in England and the United States of America"¹⁹⁶. This letter well demonstrates Mawson's direct relationship with the leading figures in the town planning world. While he might be expected to know and correspond with planners in Britain and Canada, he quickly seemed to establish contacts with Australian practitioners such as Reade, Sulman and McInnes. This ensured the constant diffusion of ideas from a range of sources given Mawson's proclivities to give a speech or express an opinion at the slightest opportunity.

The Bill then entered what might almost be characterised as a Gilbertian process. At the meeting of the Town-planning Board on the 22nd October 1929 the Minister, announced that, due to Ward's ill health, he had not had the opportunity to discuss the Bill with him. "Therefore did not anticipate that there would be any chance of

the desired Amendments being made this session”¹⁹⁷. The members of the Board must then have been surprised to hear that the Town-planning Amendment Bill had been introduced to Parliament on the 31st October 1929, had its second and third reading on the 7th November, being passed into law shortly thereafter. It can hardly have been a performance that inspired confidence from the Board in the Minister. Nevertheless, the Bill glided through Parliament with the minimum of debate. The claim was correctly made that the matters had been discussed by the Municipal Conference after Mawson’s speech, thus it was a consensus measure. The Minister gave the Bill’s contents the most basic introduction, saying the provisions were “self explanatory”¹⁹⁸. It is perhaps just as well that they were. Mawson claimed in 1933 that the Minister had “never read it” and that he didn’t have “the vaguest idea as to what it contained”¹⁹⁹.

Despite this less than auspicious process the Bill did achieve Mawson’s prime objective in creating non-statutory and non-binding regional planning schemes. The new Act contained in S2, a surprisingly descriptive definition of these. They were to be provided for regional planning “in the proper sense of the term”, reducing the existing regional planning schemes to extra-urban planning schemes. The latter were in effect to deal with small urban developments within rural areas. Most of the Amendment was concerned with establishing the machinery for regional planning. Section 7 made it clear that regional planning schemes were intended to provide guidance to local bodies preparing town planning schemes, and any government departments or other public bodies working in the region. This gave a statutory life to the broad concept of planning that Mawson had begun to develop in his Municipal Conference speech, and which he had subsequently expanded on. It was a concept which if used, would have made regional planning schemes the

guiding force in the economic development of New Zealand. The Second Schedule detailed the matters to be covered by these schemes and these once again stressed that regional planning had a much broader ambit, with a clear resource development focus, than that provided by the earlier concepts of town planning. Other more minor amendments extended the date for the completion of town planning schemes to the 1st January 1932, altered the provisions for compensation, and extended S34, dealing with interim development approval when schemes were being prepared, to include rural authorities. Given the nature of the changes it was not surprising there was no real debate on the Bill, particularly as the Minister somewhat misleadingly suggested that the Town-planning Board, which he described as being “composed of men with a vast knowledge of municipal affairs”²⁰⁰, had fully considered the Bill.

Advancing the Profession

While Mawson had not fully achieved his objective of improving the process and operation of planning in New Zealand, he had made real progress with the 1929 Amendment. In the same year he also moved to address his other objective, of better establishing the status of the profession in New Zealand. It did not take him long to realise that “the lack of competent town planners in the Dominion ... is one of the serious difficulties we shall have to face”²⁰¹. He stressed in the same memo that the work of the town planner did not end with the preparation of the scheme, but that “the big work comes in the administration and carrying out of Schemes”²⁰². His discussion on how to remedy this shortage reveals a pragmatic approach. Sensibly he accepted that getting the appropriate professional training for those who would undertake town planning work would be difficult, and consequently it

would be appropriate to admit to the profession, without examination, a variety of individuals "occupying an eminent position in the various professions"²⁰³. Others, he hoped, would gain training via a course which Cyril Knight, Professor of Architecture, might establish at Auckland University. All of this he conceded would require them to "ignore the English Town Planning Institute"²⁰⁴, though he thought this was hardly likely to be fatal, for as had been done in Canada, New Zealand could move to create its own professional town planning institute.

Drawing on his experience in England, Mawson saw the essential step in founding such an institute, was "to seek the co-operation of the Institute of Surveyors, civil engineers and architects"²⁰⁵. He suggested that a requirement that any student seeking a town planning qualification should also be a member of one of these Institutes, would avoid the type of controversy which had arisen in England, from the attempt to "reconcile the conflicting interests of these three Professions"²⁰⁶. In light of the surveyors' persistent attempts to corner town planning for themselves, this seemed to be a sensible and realistic approach.

Hammond, who was the Secretary of the New Zealand Committee of the British Town Planning Institute, had already taken some modest steps to promote the training of town planners in this country. In June 1928 the *New Zealand Surveyor* indicated that Hammond had made arrangements for New Zealand candidates to sit the examinations for membership of the British Town Planning Institute. The Council of the British Institute appointed W.E. Bush, W.H. Gummer, Hurst Seager and Hammond as the New Zealand based Examinations Committee. While this was helpful it did not answer the question of where and how the candidates were to receive the training to allow them to pass the exams. At the time, as Mawson

observed, in a letter to Hammond, there were only "seven members of the Town Planning Institute in the Dominion of whom two only – you and myself – have any academic training or practical experience"²⁰⁷. The other members were W.H. Gummer, the architect, who was admitted in 1920²⁰⁸, E.V. Blake, Hurst Seager, and W.E. Bush, with the seventh member being unknown (though perhaps Butcher the possible candidate for Director). In the same letter Mawson expressed the concern that without adequate training the candidates "would have practically no chance of passing the examiners"²⁰⁹.

Ultimately Mawson attempted to tackle this problem in two ways: the first, to establish a town planning course at Auckland University College, and the second to establish a New Zealand Town Planning Institute. Establishing a university course presented some challenges, though the Senate of the University of New Zealand had been willing to see it established as one of the 'special schools'. These 'special schools' included by 1930, an engineering school at Canterbury (established 1886), a school of mines at Otago (1879), a school of home science at Otago (1909) and a variety of others, which experienced mixed fortunes. The various university colleges valued these special schools as giving them an edge over their rivals and "their possession ...was a source of pride, and in considerable measure, a source of grants from the state"²¹⁰. Of all the groups that sought a special school, the surveyors seem to have been the least successful. The surveyors attempted from 1928 onwards to get a diploma course established at Otago University and met with a series of rebuffs and rejections from the Senate which ensured that the course was not established until 1961²¹¹. The architects had better success, with Cyril Knight being appointed the first Professor of Architecture at Auckland, in 1924. An Australian, Knight had obtained an architectural degree at Liverpool University²¹²

and had evidently followed it with a town planning qualification, as he was the “Lever Prizeman in Town planning”²¹³. Knight had also gained planning experience in both Britain and America, and must potentially have been a strong supporter of Mawson’s plans. Knight had developed a draft syllabus for a Diploma of Town Planning which he sent to Mawson in March 1929, indicating that it had already been circulated to the three professional institutes, to the Town Planning Institute (presumably the New Zealand Branch), and to the other universities colleges, for comment. With regard to the Town Planning Institute, Knight indicated that it was “favourably disposed towards exemption from their examinations provided the syllabus is finally approved by them.”²¹⁴

The Diploma proposed by Knight required candidates to have passed all the examinations “of an intermediate standard for a degree in architecture or civil engineering, or were a licensed surveyor”²¹⁵. They were then required to complete five papers in

The History of Town Planning

The Planning Law

Town Planning Practice (2 papers), and

Civic Engineering

Candidates also had to complete a practical work paper that required the production of three major design schemes. The five papers were comprehensive in their coverage. The planning practice paper included surveys, at the town and regional level, zoning, and building design and control. Canterbury and Otago University Colleges provided comment on the syllabus which, while generally supportive, also reflected their specific prejudices. Canterbury, with its own engineering school, deemed the proposed civic engineering paper to be “quite inadequate”²¹⁶.

Hammond made comment, presumably as the representative of the British Institute, primarily on the law and practical requirements. The other professions also promoted their particular interests in their comments. The Institute of Surveyors wanted alterations to the practical requirements and a new paper added on Town Planning in Relation to Architecture to ensure that architects got the benefit of engineering training and engineers of architecture. They also were quite firm that candidates must already possess a practical qualification in architecture, engineering or surveying. While they were a little focused in their comments, they did as a group demonstrate that they recognised, at least implicitly, that a practising professional town planner needed skills in addition to those which they might already possess as a person trained in one of the other three professions. It was perhaps a grudging recognition, but important nevertheless, of the legitimacy of town planning as a stand-alone profession in New Zealand.

Mawson, however, mishandled this matter. He delayed replying to Knight until May 1929, and declined to comment on the syllabus until the new Institute was established. To comment, he said, might "tie the hands of the new Institute in regard to town planning education in the Dominion"²¹⁷. Knight seems to have accepted this but wrote in October indicating that if the matter was not taken to the Academic Board soon, then the course could not run until 1932²¹⁸. As time moved by and the Institute was not fully established, Mawson offered, in December, to consider the syllabus with an interim committee, on behalf of the new Institute²¹⁹. Knight declined this offer²²⁰ but remained optimistic about the establishment of the course as late as February 1930²²¹. That optimism was largely misplaced as the onset of the Depression in earnest reduced student numbers, and in addition the University's income fell by 28.6% between 1915 and 1934²²². Equally in 1925,

while the School of Architecture had thirty-three students, only five were full time²²³. That was not totally unusual, as in 1925 only 32% of all university students studied fulltime²²⁴. In such an environment there was little real opportunity to pursue the matter further. The Diploma course at Auckland was not established until 1957.

If the opportunity to secure university based teaching of town planning was lost, there was greater success in establishing the Town Planning Institute. Mawson, apparently reflecting on the strategy employed in Britain, wrote to each of the three institutes in April 1929 to discuss both Knight's syllabus and the foundation of a New Zealand Institute²²⁴. All of the Institutes duly sent representatives to a May meeting which quickly decided that the matter of the syllabus should be set aside until the Institute was established. The question central to the Institute's formation was whether it was to be professional or non-professional body. It was decided there should be three classes of membership. Members, who would be "anyone interested in the cause of town planning" but who would get no letters to use after their names. Fellows would be "elected by the Council of the Institute" from amongst those who had qualified in the three professions and who had "attained eminence by practical experience in town planning work or rendered distinguished service to the cause of town planning". Associates would be those who had qualified by way of examination²²⁵. The objects of the Institute, which was to be based broadly on the Canadian model, were quite simply

- (1) to promote and advance the cause of town planning in New Zealand
- (2) to secure the association and to promote the general interests of those engaged or interested in practice of town planning.

This model, while a practical response to the realities of the situation, produced a hybrid organisation that was as interested in propagandising for town planning as it was in establishing and regulating its professional practice. The British Institute had faced similar questions of balance, though at a much earlier time in the development of the discipline, between what Hawtree has called “education and professional association”²²⁶. While the foundation of that institute in 1913 formalised the existence of a body of knowledge called ‘town planning’, a similar situation did not exist in New Zealand, where there was already legislation in place. That legislation provided a limit on what that body of town planning knowledge could and should address. The focus of the new Institute on education, led to the admission of unqualified “enthusiasts”. Such members were likely to do little to promote the concerns and interests of the professionals. Hawtree discusses in detail this aspect of the early years of the British Institute. In its formative years it was not in a position to ensure that its members upheld their professional responsibilities, that is, that they could demonstrate specific skills and knowledge, were respectable, and could be trusted or disciplined into acting ethically. He attributes this lack of interest in this aspect, to the fact that “the groundwork of professional status in town planning was already managed by the architectural and other professionals”²²⁷. This was evidently what the New Zealand Institute expected to rely on, particularly given the dearth of qualified town planners.

Mawson’s plans did not however meet universal approval. W.H. Gummer, already the most successful New Zealand architect, made it clear that he was “very concerned” over the proposal to admit lay members²²⁸, a view which was also expressed by E.V. Blake²²⁹. Gummer’s concern was that the admission of lay members would “preclude the possibility of the Institute reaching the full degree of

usefulness and undermine largely the authority its voice should exercise"²³⁰. Mawson, in reply, to Gummer's first letter, maintained his stance and made it clear that the Institute's prime function was to "further public knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the art and science of town planning, rather than to protect or further the material interests of the profession"²³¹. Negotiations over the constitution and membership of the new Institute continued for the remainder of 1929. Mawson took the opportunity to lobby the Government for a grant to help establish a journal for "the dissemination of information and knowledge in town planning matters and thereby create a public opinion which could not be done in any other way"²³². While Harper, the Under-Secretary of Internal Affairs recommended the Institute be granted £350, the Minister appears to have declined the request²³³. Eventually Mawson persuaded the Board to support this request, but despite a positive recommendation from Treasury, the matter was once again declined²³⁴. The economic exigencies of the time were clearly coming into play.

Eventually the Town Planning Institute of New Zealand [TPINZ] was launched by de la Perrelle on 27 February 1930. It had a much extended Constitution, with the following objectives:

- (a) To advance the study of town planning and kindred subjects and of arts and sciences as applied to those subjects:
- (b) To promote the aesthetic and scientific development of cities, boroughs, towns and suburbs, and other building land:

- (c) To promote the association and general interests of persons engaged or interested in the practice of town planning:

- (d) To establish and maintain, or to promote the establishment and maintenance of adequate professional standards (theoretical, practical and ethical) amongst persons engaged in the practice of town planning:

- (e) To undertake and promote the teaching of subjects relating to town planning:

- (f) To form and maintain a library and collection of books, papers, maps, drawings, designs and other writings and objects connected with town planning:

- (g) To issue or promote or assist in the issue of books, pamphlets, periodicals and other documents relating to town planning.²³⁵

The emphasis was on the role of the TPINZ in promoting the cause of town planning. To this end, as the Minister observed, “a keynote work of the Institute is to be education – not only in the practical training of those who intend to take up town planning as a profession but of the citizens of the Dominion as a whole”²³⁶. This was a theme the Minister returned to at a number of points. There was little mention of the professional aspects of the Institute. Rather, a picture emerged of the Institute as a body dedicated to bringing together the enthusiasts of the past and using them to promote civic consciousness and responsibility within each urban

area. Mawson would, however, not have been surprised to hear the Minister state that “the insight that I have been able to obtain into the social and economic significance of town planning has been a revelation to me”²³⁷.

Mawson’s press release at the end of January 1930 stressed that while the existing Institutes had co-operated in setting up the TPINZ, this should not be seen as an implied admission that they recognised the separate professional status of town planning. This stance is difficult to understand, given that the new Institute, with its mixed membership, was hardly in a situation to maintain the expected ethical standards of a professional institute. TPINZ was very reliant on the goodwill and co-operation of these other Institutes. The balance of the release also stressed the openness of membership with lay members getting the impressive title of Honorary Members.

Quite why Mawson adopted this very open-ended approach is not clear. He had an obvious liking for the educational aspects of the movement and may have regarded this as essential to building support for town planning if either regional or town planning schemes were to be achieved. However in taking this direction he largely precluded the Institute from ever being a professional body, as ejecting or separating off the lay members would be near impossible, particularly if the numbers of trained planners continued to grow slowly.

The Role of the Institute

The launch of the TPINZ was closely followed, in September 1930, by the establishment of the Institute's journal *Community Planning*. In keeping with his interest in education and propaganda, Mawson was the journal's editor as well as the Institute's Secretary, while lawyer and KC, Harold Johnston was the Institute President. The journal, published quarterly, was a vehicle for New Zealand produced articles as well as articles and snippets from overseas and kept members in touch with Institute activities. In the first edition readers were invited "to submit questions of general interest relating to any phase of town-planning law and practice which the then Editor and his advisers (sic) will endeavour to answer"²³⁸. This offered the opportunity for readers to seek advice on town planning issues that may not have been readily obtainable elsewhere. Mawson never apparently stopped to question the appropriateness of the Director giving advice through a public journal, when eventually as part of the Board, he would judge actions based on that advice. He had an unshakeable belief in the quality of his own 'expert' advice.

The first edition reported the formation of branches of the Institutes in Auckland and Christchurch²³⁹ and by late 1931 there was a branch in Wellington. Membership grew steadily from the limited nominees of the three professional groups. There were by June 1932, one hundred and eighteen members, ninety-six honorary members, seven student members, six honorary fellows and one corresponding member²⁴⁰. In that year a change to the rules extended the life of the fifteen-person Council which ran TPINZ. That Council included three nominees of each of the professional institutes, insuring that they could outvote the other members, drawn

from the lay membership²⁴¹. There were however some interesting anomalies. Gummer, who was a member of the British Town Planning Institute, was consistently listed as an honorary member, i.e. unqualified, when he was in fact fully qualified for membership. A number of local authorities became honorary members including the Christchurch and Auckland City Councils, Devonport Borough and the Timaru Borough Council.

In keeping with the intention of the Institute to promote the education of planners, a New Zealand based university course was discussed at the first Annual General Meeting in October 1930. This was led by Knight and resulted in the formation of an Education Committee “to enquire into the whole question of Town-planning Education”²⁴². That resolution was amended to allow co-option of members to assist in the enquiry. There were clearly difficulties in advancing the issue, given the Depression, and as a stop-gap measure Knight produced a series of articles from September 1932 onwards to try to help students prepare for the British Institute’s exams. The Institute maintained an extensive library that was available to members. Its contents, listed in the December 1932 issue, included material from Britain, the United States, Canada, France and South Africa²⁴³. Again the diversity of material available in New Zealand is impressive.

The use of the term ‘community planning’ for the journal, was welcomed by G.A. Troup, the Mayor of Wellington²⁴⁴, as “a distinct improvement as it indicates a much wider scope than the old term “Town-planning” and is self explanatory”²⁴⁵. It appeared to be an attempt to cover both town and regional planning and to avoid the connotations from the past that might apply to both terms. This was confirmed in an article by Galbraith, in 1931. He stated ‘community planning’ was used to

overcome the muddled and imprecise differences which had been attached to the term 'town planning' in the past²⁴⁶. 'Community planning' failed, however, to gain general credence or use. It appears to have been used outside the magazine, and presumably Institute circles. The journal did provide a vehicle for disseminating information that would attempt to more fully promote the wider concept of planning which Mawson was attempting to establish. Typical of this, is the article by Horace Belshaw, the Professor of Economics at Auckland University College, on "Some Economic Aspects of Town-planning"²⁴⁷. Such articles were balanced with practice orientated ones such as that on "Light and Air Space"²⁴⁸ by M.A.F. Barnett, the DSIR scientist who was assisting Mawson in the development of the Model Ordinances, intended to provide model standards for town planning schemes. It was, and remained, a very progressive journal that attempted to foster an image for the profession. Unfortunately just as Mawson resigned in 1933 it ceased publication when the stress of the economy necessitated "the most careful management and control of expenditure"²⁴⁹. It did not recommence until March 1934.

Making the Amendment Work

Having made progress on his two objectives, Mawson now needed to make the provisions of the 1929 Amendment operative. An essential first step was the establishment of boundaries for the new regions. The determination of the boundaries was undertaken in a surprisingly democratic manner, by way of a series of public enquiries by a small sub-committee of the Town-planning Board. That committee toured the country throughout 1930. While hearings were heard in the larger cities and towns, there were also ones in communities such as New

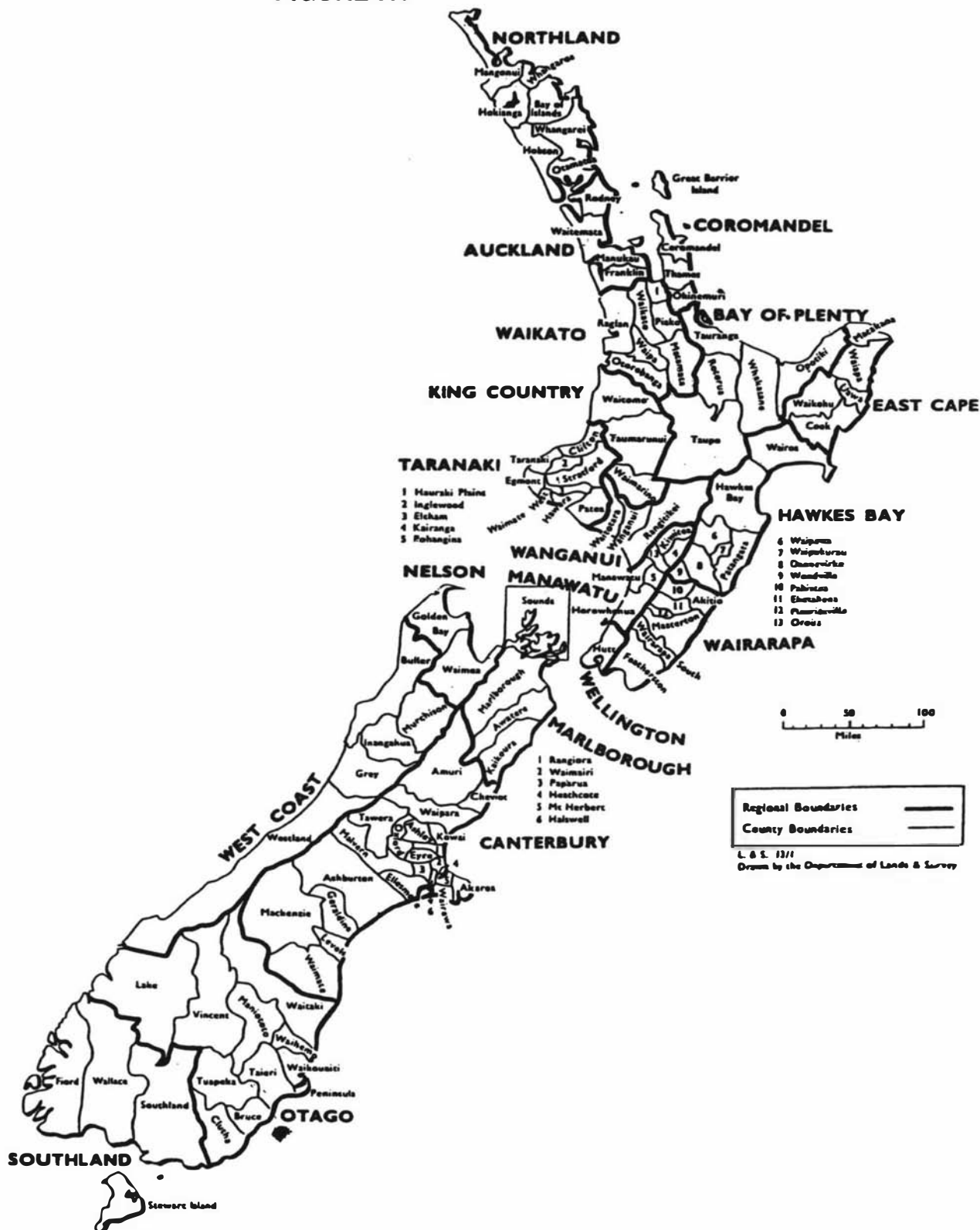
Plymouth, Nelson, Westport and Gisborne. Many years later Mawson reported that the Committee “took evidence on the question of community of interest and ignored all other factors except natural geographic boundaries”²⁵⁰. This was intended to ensure that the existing local body boundaries were totally disregarded, thus removing a formidable barrier to effective planning. Mawson was quite open about this. Writing to a F.C. Cook of the Melbourne Metropolitan Town Planning Commission, he said that with the new regional boundaries, “fundamentally what we are aiming for is a scheme for the rationalisation of local body activities through the Dominion and the guidance or encouragement of the economic development of all natural resources”²⁵¹. Local authorities were, however, not slow to see through this ploy, with Ohinemuri County complaining that “the time is not ripe for the introduction of such far-reaching interference with the functions of local bodies”²⁵². There was also the ever present concern with how the costs of this new activity might be met, a concern which was particularly pressing in the Depression. Thus Waiwera County wrote in the same month “objecting to any payment being levied from County Councils in connection with town planning.”²⁵³

After twenty-one meetings throughout New Zealand the final Inquiry was held in Wellington on the 4th June 1930. The ever loquacious Mawson used the opportunity to make a major statement in which he reflected on the progress in developing the boundaries²⁵⁴. He reported support in the South Island but several occasions of opening meetings “in an atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust”²⁵⁵. From the long and complex discussions in his paper, it is evident that the main causes of complaint were that regional planning was not relevant, and if it was, it was only applicable to urban areas. Other causes of concern were that the exercise was too costly and that it interfered with the duties and responsibilities of

local government. Mawson addressed each issue in turn, while constantly emphasising that regional planning was essential for the on-going economic health of the country, particularly in terms of supporting the rural sector. In a somewhat convoluted discussion he suggested that planning could help maintain some theoretical ratio between rural and urban population which would in turn support agriculture.

The new boundaries established are illustrated in Figure 7.1. The need to take account of local feelings had created the bizarre situation where a country with a population of 1.3 million required twenty-nine separate regions. The only way such boundaries made sense was if the regional planning bodies eventually came to supplant other local bodies in the manner intended by Mawson. It is doubtful that New Zealand could have sustained this level of planning given the number of planners available, and the need to write the compulsory town planning schemes. For all of Mawson's enthusiasm for regional planning and the many words that he wrote about it, it is doubtful if he ever really addressed how it was to be achieved in practice. By September 1930, Mawson advised the Town Planning Board to exercise caution with regard to regional planning "as the success of regional planning, depends very largely on the voluntary cooperation of local authorities and the emergence of Regional Committees, anything in the nature of coercion should be avoided as far as possible"²⁵⁶. While this again demonstrates Mawson's pragmatic approach, it also indicates that even he was not sure that he could compel any movement. By making regional planning voluntary, Mawson had achieved his legislative change but had produced a tool that was dependent on the willing actions of local bodies, at a time of great financial strain. This was hardly a recipe for success. The Government itself was also less than enthusiastic.

FIGURE 7.1



SOURCE : Ministry of Works, 1960 Regional Planning – Definition of Regional Boundaries, *Bulletin*, MOWD, Wellington, p2

The combination ensured that regional planning went nowhere and quietly withered away as a concept.

An Ever Deteriorating Relationship

In addition to the work Mawson had with the Inquiries, Mawson also had the Town-planning Board work. In the glow of the launch of the TPINZ, de la Perrelle had taken the opportunity to reflect on the roles and responsibility of the Board. In the speech he said

“the primary function of the Town-planning Board is to draw up the rules of the game and act as referee – or in other words, to lay down the method of procedure to be followed in order to secure some measure of uniformity throughout the country, and by acting in a semi-judicial capacity to see that the balances are held evenly between the community”²⁵⁷ .

He then went on to talk of how the Board functioned in practice, alluding to the idea that it would meet on a regular two monthly cycle with the potential to sit more regularly, as the volume of work increased. Overall he presented a picture of an effective well functioning Board at one with its Minister.

The reality was somewhat different. In the period of de la Perrelle’s appointment as Minister and Chairman of the Board, there had been only intermittent meetings, with long gaps in between. There was for instance in 1929, a meeting in April, and then none until August. Equally, despite de la Perrelle’s claims of the Board’s involvement in the Amendment, they had little opportunity to make any reasoned suggestions about its contents, and they were positively misled as to when the Bill would enter Parliament. This was despite the fact that the Board was increasingly

being required to deal with quite complex appeals and thus to play the role of referee. The Marlborough Mansions appeal which involved an interpretation of S34, dragged on through 1929 right into 1930²⁵⁸. Moreover the Minister frequently absented himself from meetings, leaving Newton to chair them, sending instead a written statement, as he did to the 4th December 1929 meeting. The Town-planning Board was set up to be one in which the Minister took an active and leading role. This was confirmed by de la Perelle's constant habit of sending complex statements with his excuses for non-attendance. Overall these performances must have done little to reassure the Board either of the commitment of the Minister or his government.

The Board, in a role the Minister had obviously contemplated for it, was also receiving requests to provide specific guidance over a number of matters. Two recurring issues were the compensation and betterment provisions, and the setting of standards with regard to light and air penetration. These represented contrasting aspects of town planning practice. The issue of light and air penetration was a very basic technical concern derived from the interest town planning has in securing good living environments through adequate site design and building placement. It is a 'bread and butter' issue that is still an important aspect of present day practice. It is also a matter which is amenable to a universal solution which can be derived from a basic technical investigation drawing on techniques used overseas. As early as December 1929 Mawson had suggested to the Board that it was worth considering developing a model to "set up definitive standard and secure uniformity through the country in the preparation and administration of these Schemes"²⁵⁹. The Board in turn agreed to "furnish all local authorities with information in regard to the standards of light and air space"²⁶⁰. This work commenced, but took a backseat

to regional planning throughout most of 1930. It included consultation and technical advice from Dr Barnett of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR)²⁶¹. In many ways, given the dearth of planners, this was a logical and productive area in which the Board could and should have become involved. A lack of staff and resources, however, served to ensure that these matters advanced slowly and did little to advance the progress of planning.

The issue of compensation and betterment was much more complex, offering theoretical rather than real problems, as they would not come into effect until the schemes were written. However, much of the concern among local authorities seemed to be related to the experience of its limited use in other legislation. The issue is underlain by two basic concepts. Firstly if a landowner suffers 'injurious affectation' from the provisions of a town planning scheme then they should be compensated by the community. Secondly, if a landowner benefits through an increase in land value as the result of a town planning scheme they should in turn pay the community some compensation. Both issues are simple in theory but complex in practice, as they raise significant questions with regard to valuation and the assessment of appropriate payments. While compensation was reasonably well understood, betterment was "more or less experimental" and Christie, the author of the provision, suggested "many stiles must be crossed before a perfect system is evolved"²⁶². Knight expressed similar concern as to the workability of such a system in 1928²⁶³.

Acting on the Minister's comments to the Board in December 1929 that "no substantial progress can be made in the preparation and execution of town-planning schemes until compensation and betterment have been placed on a more

reasonable and equitable basis"²⁶⁴, Mawson presented another major speech on the issue to the Municipal Conference on the 6th March 1930 in Invercargill. Mawson suggested that compensation and betterment affected the most basic aspects of private property rights. They also involved determining the appropriate roles and responsibilities of the state in compensating or seeking settlement for the real or perceived depreciation or appreciation in the value of these rights. It almost inevitably arises from the intervention of the state to modify the untrammelled exercise of the rights of the property owner. In a careful and very comprehensive speech, Mawson discussed both compensation and betterment and the models which were available to improve these provisions in the town planning legislation and other legislation, primarily the *Public Works and Municipal Corporations Acts*, that used similar provisions.

Mawson in many respects over-emphasised compensation and betterment, which did not seem to be at the heart of the concept of regional and town planning that he was promoting. In that concept there was less direct interference with the private property right, particularly if, as he had indicated, planning was to promote economic growth. That would most logically proceed from identifying the most economically productive use of resources. That in turn would enhance the private property right. While betterment could be seen to arise from such a situation, practically it is usually only claimed from a specific project. Most importantly, the Act only provided the opportunity for betterment and compensation, there was nothing that required either to be sought. The recommendations at the end of the speech give some clue to Mawson's pre-occupation with these issues. He stated that the provisions with regard to compensation and betterment would be altered. This would make the Act "self-contained and independent of other Legislation in

respect of all matters relating to compensation and betterment arising out of the approval of a town-planning scheme or the execution of any works authorised by a scheme"²⁶⁵. This suggests that much of the concern arose from the experiences of trying to administer compensation and betterment provisions under other legislation, that often lead to complex valuation problems and prolonged Compensation Court hearings. In this Mawson did a disservice to the *Town-planning Act*, in that he suggested a problem where there was none — there is no evidence of a penny of either being collected²⁶⁶. In the same speech he also gave details of his proposals for the 1929 Amendment, which had not been acted upon. He focused primarily on the proposal that the Government would, through the Board, be able to require preparation of a scheme, and the proposals for interim control of development. Raising these matters publicly after they had been rejected or at least shelved by the Government demonstrated both Mawson's determination to continue to vigorously advocate for matters he believed were important, and his lack of political and administrative acumen. This is not the approach that would have been used by a career bureaucrat.

Mawson also discussed the issue of compensation and betterment with the Town Planning Board at their meeting of the 24th April 1930, from which the Minister was once again absent. Mawson again stressed that "there can be no doubt that the whole success of town planning and indeed of economic local body administration depended upon compensation and betterment provisions being placed on a more effective and equitable basis than obtained at the present time"²⁶⁷. Accordingly the Board resolved that the Government should bring down an amendment dealing with the issues during the upcoming Session, thereby demonstrating their support for Mawson and his concerns. Support for change also came in the form of a

deputation from the Municipal Association to the Minister led by G.A. Troup, the Mayor of Wellington, and a member of the Board. Troup put a case for betterment in no uncertain terms when he stated that “the whole of this town-planning is absolutely futile without betterment provisions” and if the Government did not act in this regard it would have “let the local bodies down very badly”²⁶⁸. Again there was no indication of why it was regarded as such a vital issue and at this point had come to take on a life of its own. When Troup, the Mayor of Wellington and a strong town planning enthusiast, returned from the Municipal Association Conference, he provided a detailed interview to the *Evening Post*, on the Conference highlights. In that interview there is no mention of Mawson’s speech or of compensation and betterment. There is instead overwhelming concern with heady issues such as “the difficult problem of rating farmland in boroughs”²⁶⁹ and the ever-present problem of unemployment. Given Troup’s appearance at the Board, there must be the suggestion that Mawson ‘assisted’ his appearance. The fear of problems arising out of the provisions became more important than the provision itself. The Minister prevaricated and said that progress would depend on the willingness of Parliament to deal with the matter. He merely agreed to put the issue before Cabinet.

Mawson attempted to use this support from the Board and the Municipal Association to press once again for a comprehensive overhaul of the Act²⁷⁰. This brought a prompt and pointed response from Newton. He stated he was “strongly of the opinion that it would not be possible at the present juncture, at all events to obtain legislation in regard to phases of town planning, other than those relating to compensation and betterment”²⁷¹. Eventually at the September meeting of the Board, a committee was formed to proceed with the writing of an amendment. This all seemed rather a wasted effort. The Minister, who was not in attendance, clearly

stated in his report to the Board, that he wished “to express my regret at the inability of the Government to bring down further legislation during the present session”, “as this was an issue of a “highly controversial nature”²⁷². The result was an impasse. Eventually all the Board could do was to resolve that it “desired to record its unanimous opinion that “the services of the Board could be more frequently and fully utilised particularly at the present time of economic stress”²⁷³. It also wanted an early meeting with the Minister and Prime Minister to discuss their role. This futile and frustrating exchange demonstrated both Mawson’s single-mindedness in achieving the outcomes he wanted in the face of political opposition and the strong supportive relationship that he had quickly managed to forge with the Board.

A Fatal Deterioration

The failure to extract from the Minister any commitment to action marked the beginning of a serious rift in relations between the Board and the Minister that was compounded by problems Mawson himself was having within Internal Affairs by 1931. In August 1930, speaking to the Annual General Meeting, Bogle, the Institute of Surveyors representative on the Board, had reported the frustrations of the Board in its dealings with the Minister. He stated that “one of the difficulties facing the Directors and the Board was that they were having great difficulty in persuading the Minister to accept the principles which must be the underpinning of the legislation” and “until the Minister could be persuaded to attend Board meetings... there was little chance of having new legislation put before the House”²⁷⁴. Bogle took a great deal of time and effort to explain the new regional planning provisions to his audience, and replied to some quite querulous attacks from E.V. Blake²⁷⁵. The fact

that Bogle would raise such concerns about the Minister indicates that de la Perrelle's shortcomings were widely viewed as both frustrating and obstructionist.

The Napier Earthquake provided a clear indication of the lack of government commitment to town planning. After the earthquake Bogle wrote to Newton requesting a meeting of the Board be held immediately to deal with "the special circumstances that have arisen in Napier"²⁷⁶. This request was in vain, as de la Perrelle had already marked "NO ACTION" on the invitation from the Napier Borough Council for "Mr Mawson the Director of Town Planning, to visit Napier and confer with Council regarding reconstruction of the business area"²⁷⁷. Mawson was eventually permitted to go to the Hawkes Bay in March. He immediately suggested that a regional planning committee be set up to guide the rebuilding as "the disaster is nothing less than a God sent opportunity to demonstrate to the people of this country the social and economic value of regional planning and town planning"²⁷⁸. At first Mawson met with some success with the *Hawkes Bay Herald* reporting that he gave an "absorbingly interesting and enlightening address"²⁷⁹. By later that month Mawson had produced draft provisions for Napier. However, discontent grew quickly and in June it was reported that "there is a great and growing body of dissatisfaction here with the long delay in town-planning matters"²⁸⁰. Much of the discontent can be traced to the disputes that emerged over the reconstruction work. The proposal to widen Heretaunga Street was vigorously opposed by local businessmen and landowners, despite that fact that the widening would have significantly improved traffic flows. Cabinet reneged on applying Mawson's recommendations, and the draft town planning regulations that included the widening of Heretaunga Street were stamped "In Cabinet 28th August 1931 : Stand over"²⁸¹. Once again Mawson's careful work had been thwarted, presumably by

what he would have called “entrenched interests”. There was also no attempt to use the Town-planning Board despite Mawson’s early advocacy for their involvement. In a Memo he stated that “there is no organisation in this country at the present time more competent to deal with the situation in the Hawkes Bay²⁸². The whole Hawkes Bay earthquake affair demonstrated both the lack of government commitment to town planning, and Mawson’s inability to bring his plans to fruition. Given that Mawson had had experience in Greece in a similar situation after World War One, it is perhaps surprising that he did not foresee the difficulties and opposition that would arise from the urgency to return everything to normal. However, it may have been the experience of dealing with a more compliant population in Greece that lead him to underestimate the opposition he would face in Hawkes Bay. It was another illustration of the poor judgement that marked much of Mawson’s New Zealand career.

By December 1931 the Board was concerned about its situation and attempted to discuss the matter with the Prime Minister²⁸³. To add to the frustrations the Board was not recalled until after the end of the Parliamentary session, that finished on the 10th May 1931²⁸⁴. The only bright spot was that de la Perrelle was replaced as Minister in September 1931, by Adam Hamilton. Hamilton, who would lead the National Party when it was formed in 1936, was another Southland MP and former successful businessman. He had attended Knox College, qualifying but never becoming a Presbyterian minister, and has been described as an “honest, industrious, kindly man, able within the scope of a limited capacity”²⁸⁵. He certainly seemed to have more potential to be an active minister than had ever been demonstrated by his predecessor. However when the deputation from the Board, consisting of Mawson, Jordan and Blackley, met him on the 23rd March 1932, he

stated “he was entirely in sympathy with the Movement but unfortunately owing to the pressure of Parliamentary business he had not been able to devote as much time to it as he would have desired”²⁸⁶. This may not have been an empty excuse, as economically the country was well within the grip of the Depression. Mawson and Blackley had had to appear before the National Expenditure Committee, examining the work of all government departments, though this went well, and Mawson reported that the Committee was “favourably impressed”²⁸⁷. However, the practical work of providing assistance to local authorities by way of a set of model ordinances met resistance from the Crown Law Office. In April 1932, Currie, the Crown Solicitor, suggested that if the Model Ordinances were used they might produce adverse comment and liability for the government if a local body followed them and they were eventually judged to be deficient²⁸⁸. Given the work that had gone into these, this was hardly good news, particularly as the main fault seemed to lie in the legislation itself. Currie may also have been taking a very conservative approach as a model ordinance method was used under subsequent legislation. They may have been able to be issued on an “all care and no responsibility basis”. It certainly represented a set back as these Model Ordinances represented the most logical and efficient way of getting local bodies started on town planning schemes.

Mawson’s situation within Internal Affairs was also deteriorating. While he and George Newton did not always agree, Mawson obviously had a strong relationship with him which was maintained after Newton’s retirement in June 1931²⁸⁹. Newton was replaced in 1932 as Under-Secretary by Malcolm Fraser, who, because of fiscal retrenchment, received a salary of £748, £200 less than Newton²⁹⁰. He was one of the ‘tea boy brigade’ that Mawson had complained of, though he had gained

an accountancy qualification during his time in government service. He is described by Bassett as a “personable man” who...established a reputation with the Public Service Commissioners Office” as “an officer of the highest grade, full of energy, tact and ability”²⁹¹. Mawson, in contrast, described him as “a small man mentally and physically” who “bitterly resented my independence”²⁹². To be fair, Fraser was dealing with the exigencies of the Depression and reduced staff within his Department. Mawson however saw Fraser as a person, jealous of his high profile and ability to speak out independent of Departmental policy. For a career civil servant such as Fraser, Mawson's independence combined with his difficult personality, must have presented a persistent problem. This would have been a particularly galling issue because it would appear that Mawson, retained his original salary. Fraser obviously attempted to tighten control over Mawson who claimed he was “not allowed even to sign my own correspondence” and was made to “cancel all my extra-mural activities”²⁹³. Mawson’s pursuit of opportunities to educate the public about town planning had included a radio series in 1932, which featured him as the learned professor answering questions from a member of the public²⁹⁴. Such high profile appearances are unlikely to have been a common role for members of the public service at that time. Faced with a lack of commitment from the Government to town planning and personal strains, Mawson was rapidly coming to the end of his options.

The Resignation of the Director

On the 13th July 1932 Mawson wrote to the Minister, with a copy to Forbes, the Prime Minister, asking that “unless there is a reasonable prospect of the Government embarking on an active policy of regional planning and town planning

in the near future that I be given a leave of absence or termination of this contract"²⁹⁵. In an increasingly bitter letter, Mawson outlined his disillusionment with the commitment of the government who refused to acknowledge or recognise the value of planning, an argument he called "to (sic) futile to merit refutation"²⁹⁶. The final point of disillusionment had apparently come over the refusal of the Government to use unemployed surveyors to undertake topographical surveys and instead used them on "pick and shovel work"²⁹⁷. In a letter to Dr Hercus, a member of the Town-planning Board, he expressed his concern "that the strenuous effects of the last four years have been practically wasted"²⁹⁸.

At this point determining exactly what occurred is difficult, as the files are incomplete. Mawson announced his resignation to the Board at its meeting of the 29th July 1932. The Board was instantly supportive and resolved that "the Government should give its immediate and active support to putting into operation measures designed to bring about the conservation and economic utilisation of the capital and natural resources of the Country"²⁹⁹. This was accompanied by a request that Mawson be kept on for another five-year term. The Board was in short, sending the Minister a clear message that it supported both Mawson personally, and his demand for a government commitment to planning.

Mawson's resignation did not seem to become public until 1933. In February 1933 Mawson made a quite imprudent and frank speech to the Civil Service Institute which suggested that he had resigned and was just seeing out the last months of his contract. In that speech he tracked his career in New Zealand and rued his service with de la Perrelle, whose ministership he described as labouring for three years under "hopeless disability"³⁰⁰. He was also critical of the Act, saying it

needed replacement, and of the degree of “often outspoken hostility not only from the local authorities but from business organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce”³⁰¹. This he put down to their mistaken belief that town planning “was concerned only with beautification and a totally unwarranted interference with property rights”³⁰². In this regard he was conveniently overlooking the focus that he and the Board brought to the compensation and betterment provisions, which tended to suggest that town planning would involve both expenditure and interference in property rights that would have to be compensated for. He also alluded to the fact that his comments on the need for local body reform had also upset some local authorities.

His resignation became public on the 31st March 1933, at which point he also resigned from the Council of the Town Planning Institute of New Zealand (Inc). Mawson explained the reasons for his departure to the Council of TPINZ. The Chairman, Mr Blackley, accepted the resignation with regret and observed that “the work of the Director of Town Planning had suffered from political interference”³⁰³. The Institute did not appear to pursue the matter, probably because it was a case of political indifference rather than interference. They may not have been in a sound position to do so. By this date the Institute was having difficulty in continuing to publish *Community Planning* and a new edition was not published for eighteen months.

Despite what he indicated to the Institute, Mawson had rendered his resignation on the 24th March 1933 saying that his contract had been “terminated by arrangement” and that he had “resigned owing to a disagreement with the policy of the Government on town planning”³⁰⁴. The Minister moved to correct this, saying

there was no disagreement but rather that as the Director on a salary of £1,200, was not subject to the *National Expenditure Adjustment Act*, he was “a somewhat expensive luxury when neither the Government nor the local bodies were in a position to spend money in connection with regional and town planning”³⁰⁵. So goaded was the Minister, that he released part of a letter from Mawson that appeared to accept that his position was not being renewed for financial reason beyond the Government’s control. This tends to support the proposition that Mawson had stood on many toes in his time as Director.

The press however were not impressed by the Minister’s explanation and there was surprisingly widespread support for Mawson. *The Taranaki Herald* suggested that his resignation would be received with the regret that “so capable and useful an officer (has) to be dispensed with owing to the need for strict economy”³⁰⁶. *The Wairapapa Age* called the Government “obsessed with the idea that regional and town planning are a luxury” when “they represent an undoubtedly effective means of saving money” and went on to talk of Mawson’s “gallant efforts to raise the Government and the country to action”³⁰⁷. *The Press* was equally supportive and scolded the government for not committing itself to an active policy of regional and town planning, identifying the lack of local body reform as a major drawback³⁰⁸. The Timaru Borough Council went as far as to resolve that the Minister be asked to reconsider the re-appointment of Mawson³⁰⁹. These responses seem to reflect the good relationships that Mawson had cultivated in his time as a ‘travelling salesman’ for town planning. It may also reflect the growing dissatisfaction with Government’s inability to deal with the economic crisis beyond slashing expenditure. That would create the conditions for Labour’s election in late 1935.

The Government either inadvertently or deliberately allowed the membership of the Board to lapse, not re-appointing or replacing the members. Thus Bogle was reduced to writing directly to the Minister to register his disapproval and to chide him into establishing a legally constituted Board. The Board situation was regularised and the Board met again in May 1933. At that point Blackley and Bogle moved a resolution that the Board record its appreciation of Mawson's work. Further that "it considers it deplorable that owing to the apathy and lack of support of the principles of town-planning by the Government he should decide to resign the position which he has occupied for nearly five years with conspicuous ability"³¹⁰. This inflammatory second part was eventually removed at the behest of the Minister, thereby demonstrating the lack of independence of the Board with its high membership of civil servants who were unlikely to question the performance of the Minister or the commitment of his government. It also demonstrated the central role of the Minister on the Board.

On Mawson's departure, no attempt was made to replace him. The Board continued to function without a technical advisor, though it did not seem to meet at all in 1934³¹¹. The Institute of Surveyors, under Bogle's leadership, resolved in August 1933 that a deputation should meet the Minister and Prime Minister "for the purpose of urging upon them the necessity of a drastic revision of the Town Planning legislation and administration and consequently the appointment of a Director of Town Planning whose whole time shall be given to the work"³¹². They even contemplated a joint approach with the other professions. There must have been a strong sense of déjà vue. In fact the whole area entered a type of interregnum that lasted until 1937, when Mawson returned to government service to start a whole new period of frustration.

Conclusion

The period from 1926 to 1933 should have been a period of progress for town planning, given that the much-desired legislation was now in place. In fact it turned out to be a period of much frustration and very little achievement. While some blame can be placed at the door of events beyond the control of individuals or the government, mainly the onset of the Depression, there were other factors at work which might have been able to be changed. Mawson was correct in identifying the need for local body reform as a barrier to the achievement of town planning. According to his daughter it was the indifference of local authorities to the value of planning and their general intransigence in the face of his best efforts that helped to convince him that he was engaged in a futile undertaking³¹³. The population level at which local authorities came within the orbit of the Act was set very low. That produced an inert body of significant size that invested much time and energy in avoiding town planning. The introduction of regional planning and the inquiries to establish regional boundaries probably did much to resurrect and focus the parochial views of existing local bodies. The Government did nothing to address the need for local body reform and by 1932 it was faced with rescuing several boroughs from insolvency brought on by the Depression³¹⁴. This triggered a more general investigation of local government later in the same year, which produced a visionary report that “was strangled by political reactionism”³¹⁵. Mawson’s approach of trying to work with, and persuade the local authorities through individual contacts and his education work was a good start, as was the institution of regional planning committees that would transcend local authority boundaries. Unfortunately Mawson was largely a one-man band in this regard, and he spent too much time traversing the country trying to reach out and be involved in too many places. As a result he

spread his efforts much too widely and in the end could not chivvy enough local authorities into action, particularly in difficult financial times. The Government did little to help by leaving his office understaffed and under-resourced.

The Government also seemed, particularly, after the unexpected defeat of Coates, to lose what little interest it ever had in town planning. The inept and ineffective leadership of de la Perrelle as the Minister of Internal Affairs negated the potential of the Board or Mawson to give leadership. The Government was also reluctant to look at substantive changes to the legislation, needed to make it work. While some of Mawson's changes were perhaps not justified, his ideas seemed sound in the area of development control at least. Where he did go a little awry was in his belief that a non-binding regional plan could be made to influence the writing of town planning schemes. Such a model is difficult to impose and police even where compliance is compulsory, as it is under the *Resource Management Act 1991*. To try and impose it via the Board's consideration of the schemes would have created a great deal of work and would likely have been found legally to be ultra vires. Equally, both local authorities and Mawson were fixated on the peripheral issue of compensation and betterment. The attitude of the local bodies to these matters, seem to be derived from their experience under other legislation, in relation to road widening proposals. This was however largely a red herring because, as Mawson so often stressed, town planning was not about civic improvements which might give rise to injurious affectation and a call for compensation. Rather it was about regulation of land use and resource use to achieve social and economic outcomes. Assessing or identifying injurious affection from regulation that might interfere with or modify the private property right was much less likely to arise or to be assessable. However the fear and difficulties associated with both issues gave

local authorities yet another opportunity to avoid their responsibilities. By focusing on these issues Mawson merely fed their prejudices and fears.

The period did see a major advance in the concepts of planning which were used. The old concern with slums and beautification were abandoned, to be replaced by a new concept which integrated planning into the overall structure of social and economic development. Such concepts stressed the role that planning could play not only in achieving better living environments through bulk and location controls, but a better life by facilitating the growth of the economy and exploitation of resources. It was a concept that very clearly separated the New Zealand planning system decisively from the areas of housing and urban/civic design that remained more integral parts of overseas systems.

Mawson also helped to achieve a degree of recognition for the status of town planning as a profession. It was however, a compromised status. The dearth of planners in the country and the lack of training facilities meant that the newly formed Institute had to accept, and rely on, lay members. This in turn diluted the professional aspects of the Institute which had to rely on the other three established professions to be the gatekeepers of professional, and ethical conduct. Thus the role of the town planner was subordinate to the other professional roles. However the Institute and Mawson did give a public face to the profession particularly through the journal *Community Planning* and Mawson did much to distinguish the specific roles and abilities of the planner as opposed to the other professions. The period also saw the establishment of a much more cordial relationship with other professions, particularly the surveyors. After 1928 the surveyors even stopped trying to take over the profession, probably because they recognised it was little

threat to them and unlikely to generate substantial work. Instead they started to work with Mawson and others to promote planning.

In short the period was one of much unsuccessful experimentation. Hammond was out of his depth as Director. He was too young and too inexperienced to relate convincingly to either the local authorities from whom he had to command respect, or his political masters. It was presumably this recognition which led him to resign so precipitately. Mawson was the appropriately experienced man who commanded respect and probably frightened his political masters with his outspoken nature and intemperate statements. While he clearly made an impact in local authorities, he was prevented from rendering them much practical help. The Model Ordinance fiasco testifies to this. There an important and useful piece of practical assistance seemed to have been rejected because of bureaucratic timidity. He also tried to become involved in too much, and in the end could achieve little.

In terms of the relationship between the local and the central state, the period is one where there was much manoeuvring, but little real change. Despite the fact that the local state was the creation of the central state, the classic 'creature of statute', the central state had little success in reforming it into sensible and workable units. Local parochial issues, and the conservative nature of politics at both levels, ensured that the attempt to reform local government was either not taken or was defeated. However without such reform there were too many units of local government that were too small to undertake this new duty of town planning, which many were already convinced would be a costly failure. Mawson's plans for regional planning, while appearing to be an attractive answer to the problem of local body reform, may never have worked because they depended on voluntary

participation by local bodies followed by voluntary compliance with the regional plans produced. Given the nature of local bodies and the economic problems at the time, this was unlikely to happen. The events of this period merely served to emphasise how dependent planning of any sort was on local and central government interest and support. As neither was readily forthcoming at the time then so the real advance of town planning was slowed. This was very much a time of "ifs". If the Depression had not come and if more resources had been forthcoming then town planning may have had more opportunity to get established. Equally if the Government had been more committed, and if Mawson had been less volatile then perhaps there would have been a better base on which to build. The reality was in a time of economic crisis town planning and its adherents could not demonstrate that it would obviously contribute to addressing current problems. So characterised it became a luxury that could wait for better times.

¹ Burdon, R. 1965 *The New Dominion : A Social and Political History of New Zealand Between the Wars*, AH & AW Reed, Wellington,p71

² Bassett, M. 1998 *The State in New Zealand 1849-1984 : Socialism Without Doctrines ?*, Auckland University Press, Auckland,p173

³ Burdon,op.cit.,p113

⁴ Bassett,op.cit.,p168

⁵ *ibid.*,p169

⁶ Memo Hurst Seager to Newton quoted in Memo Newton to MIA, 2nd May 1919, on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington.

⁷ Parliamentary Debates (PD), Vol.210,20th August,1926, p718

⁸ S5(2) *Town-planning Act 1926*

⁹ *ibid.*, S5(4)

¹⁰ Bassett, M 1997 *The Mother of All Departments : The History of the Department of Internal Affairs*, Auckland University Press/ Historical Branch, Dept of Internal Affairs, Auckland,p69

¹¹ Although not enshrined in legislation, a similar contract approach was used in the appointment of the first Inspector of Forests and the Director of Forests. For a discussion of public servant classifications see Polascheck, R. 1958 *Government Administration in New Zealand*, New Zealand Institute of Public Administration/Oxford University Press, Wellington,p132-134.

¹² Ward, S. 1999 *The International Diffusion of Planning : A Review and Case Study*, *International Planning Studies*, Vol.4, No.1,p59

¹³ Letter on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington

¹⁴ Letter Pegler to McLennon, 7th August 1926, on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington.

¹⁵ Letter Reade to Fowlds, 31st May 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt. 3, National Archives, Wellington.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ Memo Newton to MIA, 23rd September, 1927, on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington.

¹⁸ Anonymous, 1923 *New Zealanders Abroad*, *New Zealand Building Progress*,23rd September,p32

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- ¹⁹ Christie, J. 1927 Town-Planning Legislation in New Zealand, *Journal of Comparative Legislation*, Vol.9,p194
- ²⁰ Letter of 21st August 1926 in *The New Zealand Surveyor*, VolXIII, No.4, June 1927,p123
- ²¹ Greenish, F. 1926 The Town Planning Bill, *Journal of the New Zealand Institute of Architects*, November,p105
- ²² Christe,op.cit.,p194
- ²³ Circular Letter MIA to all Local Bodies, 16th September 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.5, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁴ Scholefield, G. 1932 *Who's Who in New Zealand*, Gordon & Gotch, Wellington,p223
- ²⁵ *New Zealand Herald*, 8th September 1926
- ²⁶ Letter PTB to DTP, 3rd December 1926 on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.5, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁷ Letter Hammond to TPB, 10th December 1926, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.5,National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁸ Form 2, *Town-planning Regulations, 1927*.
- ²⁹ Anonymous, 1927 Reserves in Town Plan Subdivision, *The New Zealand Surveyor*, Vol.XIII, No.6 December,p180-181
- ³⁰ Letter Stratford Borough Council to MIA, 1st December 1926, on IA S1 F34/202, National Archives, Wellington.
- ³¹ See Memo Newton to MIA, 10th December 1926 on IA S1 F34/202, National Archives, Wellington.
- ³² Anonymous, 1927a Horticulture as a Factor in Town Planning, *New Zealand Fruit Grower and Apiarist*, 16th July, p553
- ³³ Letter from PNBC to DTP, 25th May 1926. Palmerston North Town planning 1913-27, S1/5/7, Box 37, Palmerston North City Archives, Palmerston North
- ³⁴ Telegram, Newton to DTP, 31st March 1927,on IA S1 F34/44, National Archives, Wellington
- ³⁵ Minutes of the Town Planning Board (TPB), 15th February 1927, on IA S1 F 34/42/3 Pt.1, National Archives, Wellington
- ³⁶ Minutes and Resolutions of the TPB, 16th March 1927,on IA S1 F34/42/3, National Archives, Wellington
- ³⁷ Remit from Municipal Association Conference:9/2/27,on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington
- ³⁸ ibid.
- ³⁹ Letter Municipal Association to DTP, 18th July 1927,on IA S1 F 34/4 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington
- ⁴⁰ Suggestions for Change, Municipal Association, June 1926,on IA S1 F 34/5 Pt.5, National Archives, Wellington
- ⁴¹ Memo Unknown Writer to DTP, 18th July 1927,on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.5, National Archives, Wellington
- ⁴² Correspondence, *The New Zealand Surveyor*, Vol. XIII, No.4 June 1927,p91
- ⁴³ loc.cit.
- ⁴⁴ loc.cit.
- ⁴⁵ Letter to Editor, *Liberty*, 15th November,1927
- ⁴⁶ The Town Planning Institute, *Journal of New Zealand Institute of Architects*, Vol.VI, No.1, June 1928,p128-132
- ⁴⁷ ibid,p134
- ⁴⁸ Correspondence : Town Planning and the Professions Affected, *The New Zealand Surveyor*, Vol.XIII,No.8, December 1927,p200
- ⁴⁹ ibid.,p201
- ⁵⁰ Report of the Director of Town Planning,1927 in *The New Zealand Surveyor*, Vol.XII,No.7,March 1928,p229-230
- ⁵¹ *New Zealand Herald*, 29th April, 1926
- ⁵² Knight, C. 1928 Town Planning in New Zealand, *Town Planning Review*, Vol.XIII,No.1,July, p80
- ⁵³ *New Zealand Herald*, 29th April, 1926
- ⁵⁴ Chilton, C 1927 Town Planning in Action, *The City Beautiful*, 10th April,p12
- ⁵⁵ ibid.,p12

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- ⁵⁶ Auckland Town Planning Association (ATP) Pamphlet, 1927,p1, Auckland City Heritage Centre, Auckland City Library.
- ⁵⁷ Excess condemnation refers to the practice of a public agency compulsory purchasing a greater area than was required to redevelop that area with the intention of that additional land being developed and sold at a profit to help off set the costs associated with slum clearance for instance.
- ⁵⁸ Memo DTP to Newton,22nd August,1927,on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.5, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁵⁹ Memo Christie to Newton,18th August 1927,on IA S1 F 34/5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁶⁰ Memo Newton to Christie, 23rd August 1927,on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁶¹ Letter MIA to ATPA, 29th August 1927, IA S1 F34/5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington
- ⁶² ATPA to MIA,12th October 1927,on IA S1 F 34/5 Pt. 6, National Archives, Wellington
- ⁶³ *New Zealand Herald*,31st August,1927
- ⁶⁴ Editorial, *ibid.*
- ⁶⁵ Memo Hammond to MIA,31st August 1927,on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁶⁶ Memo Hammond to MIA, 10th September 1927,on IA S1 F 34/10, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁶⁷ *ibid.*
- ⁶⁸ Note on Memo Dated 20th September 1927,on IA S1 F 34/10, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁶⁹ Memo Hislop to Acting MIA, 23rd September 1927,on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁷⁰ *Dominion*, 17th August 1927
- ⁷¹ Memo Hislop to Acting MIA, 23rd September,op.cit.
- ⁷² *ibid.*
- ⁷³ *ibid.*
- ⁷⁴ Letter ATPA to MIA 14th October 1927,on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington
- ⁷⁵ Memo Writer Unknown to MIA , 25th October 1927,on IA S1 F 34/10, National Archives, Wellington
- ⁷⁶ Memo Writer unknown to MIA, 27th October 1927,on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁷⁷ In that case, Englishman, L.M. Ellis was appointed Director of Forestry in 1921.
- ⁷⁸ Attachment to Memo to MIA, 27th October 1927,on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁷⁹ Letter Hurst Seager to Mawson, 3rd December 1926, Kemble Welch Collection
- ⁸⁰ *The New Zealand Surveyor*, Vol.VIII, December 1928,p230
- ⁸¹ Letter NZIS to PM, 21st November 1927,on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington
- ⁸² *ibid.*
- ⁸³ *ibid.*
- ⁸⁴ *ibid.*
- ⁸⁵ Letter PM to NZIS, 28th November 1927,on IA S1 F 34/5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁸⁶ Letter NZIS to PM, 3rd February 1928,on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁸⁷ File Note Dated 4th February 1928,on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁸⁸ Candidates List on IA S1 F34/4 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁸⁹ Memo Newton to MIA, 6th December 1927,on IA S1 F 34/5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁹⁰ Memo Appointment Committee to MIA, 15th December 1927,on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁹¹ Draft Telegram Pomare to PM, 5th December 1927,on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington
- ⁹² Cable High Commissioner to MIA, 19th February 1928,on IA S1 F 34/10, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁹³ Memo Newton to MIA, 22nd February 1928, on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁹⁴ Cable High Commissioner to MIA, 24th May 1928, on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁹⁵ *Auckland Star*, 9th June,1928
- ⁹⁶ Memo Newton to MIA, 25th June 1928,on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington.
- ⁹⁷ Letter High Commissioner to Mawson, 20th June 1928, Kemble Welch Collection
- ⁹⁸ Bassett,1997,op.cit.,p85
- ⁹⁹ Memo Newton to MIA, 25th June 1928,on IA S1 F34/10, National Archives, Wellington.

- ¹⁰⁰ Cherry, G., Jordan, H. & Kafkoura, K. 1993 Gardens, Civic Art and Town Planning : The Work of Thomas Mawson (1861-1933), *Planning Perspectives*, 8,p307
- ¹⁰¹ Discharge Papers: Lieutenant J. W. Mawson, 31.10.17, Kemble Welch Collection
- ¹⁰² Kafkoura, K. 1993 The Replanning of the Destroyed Villages of Eastern Macedonia After World War I : The Influence of the Garden City Tradition on an Emergency Programme, *Planning History Bulletin*, Vol.4 No.2,p6
- ¹⁰³ Biographical Detail from the Professional Qualifications and Career of J W Mawson, Box B, Mawson Papers, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ¹⁰⁴ Letter T. Mawson to J. Mawson, 14th August 1928, Kemble Welch Collection
- ¹⁰⁵ Letters in Kemble Welch Collection
- ¹⁰⁶ Memo Newton to MIA, 25th June 1928, on IA S1 F 34/5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington
- ¹⁰⁷ *Morning Post*, 30th June, 1928
- ¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*
- ¹⁰⁹ Letter Mawson to Newton, 14th January 1947, Mawson Papers, Box E, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ¹¹⁰ English Appointment – Mr. John W. Mawson, *The New Zealand Surveyor*, Vol.XIII, No.9, September 1928, p407-410
- ¹¹¹ Government Town Planner, *The New Zealand Surveyor*, Vol.XIII, No.10, December 1928, p435
- ¹¹² *ibid.*, p436
- ¹¹³ Cited in McRae, J. 1989 *New Zealand Institute of Surveyors, 1888-1988*, NZ Institute of Surveyors, Dunedin, p 390
- ¹¹⁴ Anonymous, 1928 Town Planning in the Dominion, *Journal of the New Zealand Institute of Architects*, VolVI, No.VI, January, p132-134
- ¹¹⁵ *The City Beautiful*, April 1927, *op.cit.*, p4
- ¹¹⁶ *ibid.*, p4
- ¹¹⁷ See for instance Anonymous, 1929 Management of Public Utilities, *The City Beautiful*, 10th February, 1929,
- ¹¹⁸ See for instance *New Zealand Herald*, 23rd April & 26th April 1927 and *Evening Post*, 23rd April 1927
- ¹¹⁹ *Evening Post*, 23rd April, 1927
- ¹²⁰ *New Zealand Herald*, 26th April, 1927
- ¹²¹ *New Zealand Herald*, 23rd April, 1927
- ¹²² Knight, *op.cit.*, p80
- ¹²³ *New Zealand Herald*, 18th May, 1928
- ¹²⁴ *ibid.*
- ¹²⁵ *Wanganui Chronicle*, 6th December, 1928
- ¹²⁶ *New Zealand Herald*, 17th May, 1928
- ¹²⁷ *ibid.*
- ¹²⁸ Report Galbraith to Mayor and Councillors, Riccarton Borough : Technical Service Files, Christchurch City Council, CC/TS/F51-TP General 1927-33, National Archives, Christchurch.
- ¹²⁹ Letter Galbraith to Waimairi, Riccarton, Halswell & Heathcote Borough Councils, 10th October 1927, CC/TS/F51-TP General 1927-33, National Archives, Christchurch.
- ¹³⁰ Letter DTP to Galbraith , 15th June 1928, CC/TS/F51-TP General 1927-33, National Archives, Christchurch.
- ¹³¹ Mawson, with a sense of history, left a collection of personal papers to the Town Planning Library at the University of Auckland. They are eclectic and discontinuous in their coverage, but do give a personal insight into these early years. His daughter, Mrs A. Kemble Welch of Nelson, was also able, in an interview, to offer some limited perspectives on his career.
- ¹³² Address to the Kawakawa Rotary, 19th August 1965, Mawson Papers, Box B, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ¹³⁴ Letter Mawson to Potter(?), 10th December 1947, Mawson Papers, Box A, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ¹³⁵ *ibid.*
- ¹³⁶ Kawakawa Speech, *op.cit.*

- ¹³⁷ Letter Mawson to McKillop, 12th August 1946, Mawson Papers, Box E, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ¹³⁸ *ibid.*
- ¹³⁹ *ibid.*
- ¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*
- ¹⁴¹ Polaschek, R 1958 *Government Administration in New Zealand*, NZ Institute of Public Administration, Wellington, p43
- ¹⁴² Minutes of TPB, 11th February 1929, IA S1 F45/1, National Archives, Wellington. Despite the Act using the term Town-planning Board, the files and some correspondence use the un-hyphenated version. The version used is the one used in the text or file quoted.
- ¹⁴³ Notes of Interview with Mrs A Kemble Welch, 7th January 2000, Authors Collection
- ¹⁴⁴ *Evening Star*, 31st January, 1929
- ¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*
- ¹⁴⁶ Letter Mawson to ATPA, 1st March 1929, on IA S1 F34//5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington
- ¹⁴⁷ *Auckland Sun*, 11th March, 1929
- ¹⁴⁸ *ibid.*
- ¹⁴⁹ *ibid.*
- ¹⁵⁰ Memo DTP to Newton, 30th August 1928, on IA S1 F 34/44, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁵¹ *ibid.*
- ¹⁵² See letter Rangitikei County to MIA, 29th April 1929, IA S1 F34/44, National Archives, Wellington
- ¹⁵³ McRae, *op.cit.*, p390
- ¹⁵⁴ Mawson, J. 1929 Some Popular Misconceptions in Regard to Town Planning, *Journal of the New Zealand Institute of Architects*, Vol.VIII, No.1, April, p2
- ¹⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p 2
- ¹⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p 5
- ¹⁵⁷ *ibid.*, p7
- ¹⁵⁸ Cherry, 1996, *op.cit.*, p67
- ¹⁵⁹ Cherry, 1996 *op.cit.*, p 49
- ¹⁶⁰ Mawson, *op.cit.*, p7
- ¹⁶¹ *ibid.*, p2
- ¹⁶² Most importantly this was an invited speech. See letter MIA to Pres, MANZ, 13th February, 1929, IA S1 F 34/202 Pt.1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁶³ Speech to the Municipal Conference, 6th March 1929, on IA S1 F34/202 Pt.1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*, p1
- ¹⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p1
- ¹⁶⁶ *ibid.*, p5
- ¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p6
- ¹⁶⁸ Kawakawa Speech, *op.cit.*
- ¹⁶⁹ *Dominion*, 12th April, 1929
- ¹⁷⁰ *ibid.*
- ¹⁷¹ Letter Board & Council Publishing to DTP, 17th January 1929, on IA S1 F 34/202, , National Archives, Wellington
- ¹⁷² Adams, T 1926 Regional Planning in Relation to Public Administration, *National Municipal Review*, January, p35
- ¹⁷³ Speech to Municipal Association, *op.cit.*, p38-40
- ¹⁷⁴ Undated Memo, probably late May 1929, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁷⁵ Memo Mawson to Newton, 2nd July 1929, on IA S1 F 34/5 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington
- ¹⁷⁶ *New Zealand Surveyor*, September 1928, *op.cit.*, p409-410
- ¹⁷⁷ Memo Mawson to Newton, 12th May 1929, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.6
- ¹⁷⁸ Mawson quickly obtained the first series of volumes of the New York Regional Plan and had them placed on the Internal Affairs files. They were presumably made available to interested groups and individuals.

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- ¹⁷⁹ Letter Mawson to Lowe, 11th Feb 1966, Mawson Papers, BoxB, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ¹⁸⁰ *ibid.*
- ¹⁸¹ *ibid.*,p2
- ¹⁸² *ibid.*,p2
- ¹⁸³ Note on Memo to Law Draftsman, 31st July 1929, on IA S1 F345 Pt.6, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁸⁴ Bassett, 1998, *op.cit.*, p166
- ¹⁸⁵ Ward was 72 at the time and had diabetes and heart trouble. He in fact had his last day in Parliament on the 1st October 1929.
- ¹⁸⁶ Address to Civil Service Institute, 6th February 1933, Mawson Papers, Box E, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland, p4
- ¹⁸⁷ *ibid.*, p5
- ¹⁸⁸ A general reading of the Internal Affairs' files reveals a number of instances when de la Perrelle had to be telegraphed to pass on information or to seek instruction. He seemed to return to his electorate frequently, and as it was at such a distance he probably spent a great deal of time travelling. His entry in the 1925 *Who's Who* suggests a man with diverse community interests. (Scholefield, G. 1924 *Who's Who in New Zealand*, Venables, Masterton, p59)
- ¹⁸⁹ Minutes of the Town Planning Board, 10th April 1929 : Minute Book No.1, W45/1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁹⁰ Minutes of the Town Planning Board, 12th August 1929 : Minute Book No.1, W45/1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁹¹ Statement by Hon. De La Perrelle to Town-planning Board, 14th August 1929, on IA S1 F34/43 Pt. 1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁹² *ibid.*, p1
- ¹⁹³ *ibid.*, p2
- ¹⁹⁴ *ibid.*, p3
- ¹⁹⁵ Minutes of Town Planning Board Meeting, 12th August, 1929 : Minute Book No.1, W45/1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ¹⁹⁶ Letter Mawson to Sulman, 25th September, 1929, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.7, National Archives, Wellington
- ¹⁹⁷ Minutes of Town Planning Board, 22nd October 1929, on IA S1 F34/42/3 Pt.1, National Archives, Wellington
- ¹⁹⁸ PD, Vol 223, 7th November 1929, p308
- ¹⁹⁹ Address to Civil Service, *op.cit.*
- ²⁰⁰ PD, Vol 223, *op.cit.* p327
- ²⁰¹ Memo Mawson to Newton, 19th January 1929, IA S1 F 34/204, Pt.1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁰² *ibid.*, p1
- ²⁰³ *ibid.*, p1
- ²⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p2
- ²⁰⁵ *ibid.*, p2
- ²⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p2
- ²⁰⁷ Mawson to Hammond, 8th February 1927, on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington
- ²⁰⁸ Pers. Com, RTPI, 9th January 1999
- ²⁰⁹ Mawson letter, 8th Feb, *op.cit.*
- ²¹⁰ Parton, H. 1979 *The University of New Zealand*, Auckland/Oxford University Press, Auckland, p118
- ²¹¹ *ibid.*, p145-46
- ²¹² Sinclair, K. 1983 *A History of the University of Auckland 1883-1983*, Auckland/Oxford University Press, Auckland, p117
- ²¹³ Scholefield, 1932, *op.cit.*, p223
- ²¹⁴ Knight to Mawson, 26th March 1929, on IA S1 F34/202, National Archives, Wellington
- ²¹⁵ *ibid.*

- ²¹⁶ Comments of Canterbury College, Faculty of Engineering, Undated, on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²¹⁷ Mawson to Knight, 9th May 1929, on IA S1 F 34/204, National Archives, Wellington
- ²¹⁸ Knight to Mawson, 15th October 1929, on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington
- ²¹⁹ Mawson to Knight, 7th December 1929, on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington
- ²²⁰ Knight to Mawson, 14th December 1929, on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington
- ²²¹ Knight to Mawson, 25th February 1930, on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives. Wellington
- ²²² Sinclair, 1983, op.cit., p146
- ²²³ *ibid.*, pl 17
- ²²⁴ Parton, op.cit., p50
- ²²⁵ Notes of Meeting of 8th May 1929, on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²²⁶ Hawtree, M 1981 *The Emergence of the Town Planning Profession in Sutcliffe, A British Town Planning : The Formative Years*, Leicester University Press/St.Martin's Press, Leicester, p98
- ²²⁷ *ibid.*, p98
- ²²⁸ Gummer to Mawson. 17th September 1929, on IA S1 F 34/204, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²²⁹ Blake to Mawson, 17th September 1929, on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²³⁰ Gummer to Mawson, 11th September 1929, on A S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²³¹ Mawson To Gummer, 13th September 1929, on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington
- ²³² Memo Mawson to Newton, 5th October 1929, on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²³³ File Note Harper to Minister of Finance, 18th October 1929, on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²³⁴ Minutes of Town Planning Board, 21st February 1930, on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²³⁵ Copy on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington
- ²³⁶ Address of MIA to Inaugural Meeting of TPINZ, 27th February 1930, on IA S1 F34/204, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²³⁷ *ibid.*
- ²³⁸ Institute News, *Community Planning*, Vol.1, No.1, September 1930, p38
- ²³⁹ *loc.cit.*
- ²⁴⁰ Institute News, *Community Planning*, June 1932, p88-90
- ²⁴¹ *ibid.*, p88
- ²⁴² *Community Planning*, December 1930, op.cit., p43
- ²⁴³ *Community Planning*, June 1932, op.cit., p112-116
- ²⁴⁴ While Troup at the time was Mayor of Wellington, he was a trained architect who, until 1925, was in charge of architectural services for the Railways Department (see Furkert, FW 1953 *Early New Zealand Engineers*, AH & AW Reed, Wellington, p282-283). He was knighted in 1937
- ²⁴⁵ *Community Planning*, September 1930, op.cit., p.5
- ²⁴⁶ Galbraith, G. 1931 *The Value of Community Planning*, *Community Planning*, Vol.II, No.2, December, p41-46
- ²⁴⁷ *Community Planning* December 1930, op.cit., p49-51
- ²⁴⁸ Barnett, M 1931 *Light and Air Space*, *Community Planning*, Vol.I, No.3, March, p97-101
- ²⁴⁹ A Dangerous Situation, *Community Planning*, Vol.III, No.1, March 1934, p.1
- ²⁵⁰ Mawson to Lowe, 11th February 1966, Mawson Papers, Box B, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ²⁵¹ Mawson to Cook, 8th September 1939, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.7, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁵² Ohinemuri County to Mawson, 8th May 1930, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.7, , National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁵³ Waiwera County to Mawson, 8th May 1930, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.7, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁵⁴ Speech to Regional Planning Inquiry, Wellington, 4th May 1930, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt. 7, , National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p2
- ²⁵⁶ Minutes of Meeting of Town Planning Board, 30th September 1930, W45/1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁵⁷ Speech of MIA at Launch of TPINZ, 27th February 1930, on A S1 F34/204 National Archives, Wellington.

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- ²⁵⁸ See Minutes of Town planning Board, on W45/1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁵⁹ Minutes Town Planning Board, 4th December 1929, Minute Books, W45/1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁶⁰ *ibid.*
- ²⁶¹ Minutes of Town Planning Board, 21st February 1930, on W45/1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁶² Christie, *op.cit.*, p196
- ²⁶³ Knight, *op.cit.* p 82-83
- ²⁶⁴ Quoted in Mawson's Speech to the Municipal Conference Invercargill, 6th March 1930, Mawson Papers, Box E, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ²⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p7
- ²⁶⁶ The files dealing with both were destroyed in a purge of Internal Affairs files in 1959. While it is speculation, that fact that they were destroyed suggests there was little or nothing on them. Equally there is no evidence of repeated discussion of these issues at the Town-planning Board.
- ²⁶⁷ Minutes of Meeting of Town Planning Board, 24th April 1930, on W45/1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁶⁸ *Dominion*, 3rd May, 1930
- ²⁶⁹ *Evening Post*, 11th March, 1930. There is no evidence in a range of other papers of these issues being given press coverage.
- ²⁷⁰ Mawson to Newton, 7th May 1930, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.7, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁷¹ Newton to Mawson, 7th May 1930, on IA S1 F34/5 Pt.7, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁷² Minutes of the Town Planning Board, 3rd September 1930, on W45/1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁷³ *ibid.*
- ²⁷⁴ McRae, *op.cit.*, p394
- ²⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p396-399
- ²⁷⁶ Bogle to Newton, 24th February 1931, on IA S1 F34/42/3 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁷⁷ Memo Municipal Association, to Newton, 24th February 1931, on IA S1 F34/42/3 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁷⁸ Memo Mawson to Under-Sac., Dept. Internal Affairs, 13th March 1931, on IA S1 F34/343, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁷⁹ *Hawkes Bay Herald*, 1st April, 1931
- ²⁸⁰ Napier BC/Earthquake Commission, to DTP, 26th June 1931, on IA S1 F34/343, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁸¹ Memo to Under Secretary for DTP, 4th August 1931, on IA S1 F34/343, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁸² Mawson to PM, 14th February 1931, Mawson Papers, Box B, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ²⁸³ Minutes of Town Planning Board, 9th December 1931, on IA S1 F34/42/3 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁸⁴ Mawson to Member of TPB, 12th April 1932, on IA S1 F34/42/3 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁸⁵ Burdon, *op.cit.*, p 232-233
- ²⁸⁶ Mawson to TPB, *op.cit.*
- ²⁸⁷ *loc.cit.*
- ²⁸⁸ Memo Crown Solicitor to DTP, 24th April 1932, on IA S1 F34/42/3 Pt.2, National Archives, Wellington.
- ²⁸⁹ See Mawson to Newton, 14th January 1947, Mawson Papers, Box E, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ²⁹⁰ Bassett, 1997, *op.cit.*, p98
- ²⁹¹ *loc.cit.*
- ²⁹² Mawson to McKillop, 19th August 1945, Mawson Papers. Box E, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ²⁹³ *loc.cit.*
- ²⁹⁴ Scripts 2YA Programmes, Mawson Papers, Box A, Town Planning library, University of Auckland.

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- ²⁹⁵ Mawson to MIA/PM, 13th July 1932, Mawson Papers, Box E, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ²⁹⁶ Ibid
- ²⁹⁷ Ibid
- ²⁹⁸ Mawson to Hercus, 14th July 1932, Mawson Papers, BoxE, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ²⁹⁹ Minutes of Town Planning board, 29th July 1932, on W45/1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ³⁰⁰ Speech to Civil Service Institute, op.cit.
- ³⁰¹ Ibid.
- ³⁰² Ibid.
- ³⁰³ Minutes of Special Meeting of TPINZ, 31st March 1933, Mawson Papers, Box E, Town Planning Library, University of Auckland.
- ³⁰⁴ *Dominion*, 25th March, 1933
- ³⁰⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁰⁶ *Taranaki Herald*, 25th March, 1933
- ³⁰⁷ *Wairarapa Age*, 25th March, 1933
- ³⁰⁸ *The Press*, 27th March, 1933
- ³⁰⁹ *Timaru Herald*, 28th March 1933
- ³¹⁰ Minutes of Town Planning Board, 19th May 1933, Minute Books- Town Planning Board, on W45/1, National Archives, Wellington.
- ³¹¹ Ibid.
- ³¹² MacRae, op.cit.p401
- ³¹³ Interview A Kemble Welch, op.cit.
- ³¹⁴ Bush, 1995, op.cit.p31
- ³¹⁵ Ibid.p31-32

CONCLUSION

Introduction

The intention of this last brief chapter is to tie the threads together, to transcend the temporal boundaries that are required to organise a work of this size. It also provides the opportunity to address some of the implicit and explicit questions that were traversed in the Introduction and Chapter Two. Finally it offers the chance to address the three foci of this study being concepts of town planning, town planning as state intervention, and the development of the profession of town planning in New Zealand.

New Zealand and Planning History - Some Theoretical Concerns.

From the discussions in Chapter Two it is apparent that overseas there is the belief that there are connections between planning history and urban history. While both are recognised as separate and distinguishable undertakings, the works of Burgess¹ and others suggests that urban history can inform planning history. Consequently it can provide a background against which to interpret the development of planning as a profession and as a process. The question of how far urban history informs New Zealand's planning history is a relatively easy one to answer. The paucity of urban history in New Zealand outside the attempts of Olssen², Hamer³ and to a lesser extent Schrader⁴, provides little with which to inform planning history. The best of this work by Olssen and Hamer who both concentrate primarily on the nineteenth century, thus pre-

dating the emergence of town planning. However as this thesis was being concluded Issac and Olssen produced a useful chapter, which deals with twentieth century city, in *At Home in New Zealand*⁶. While this work adds some useful insights, discussed later, it does not provide a comprehensive urban history coverage of the type provided overseas. Therefore in New Zealand it is necessary and possible to construct a history of planning which is relatively independent of urban history. What urban history material that is available merely assists in broadening the understanding of the urban conditions that underlay the interest in town planning. This does, however, mean that planning history in New Zealand of necessity often has to make assumptions about the nature of urban conditions, based on quite sparse resources. This inevitably increases the potential for errors of interpretation to emerge. In more positive terms it also focuses planning history of the history of the profession aspects, which serves to fill a gap in the profession's knowledge of its origins.

This then leads us to the more pragmatic approach of Cherry⁶ and others, that the history of town planning is the history of the profession. This is underpinned by the contention that town planning emerged in response to social problems and is always reflective of the socio-economic and socio-political systems of the time. As Foglesong⁷ would characterise it, planning is an ameliorating activity, attempting to make bearable the unfortunate consequences of industrialisation and urban growth. Such an approach also offers the potential for town planning to change over time, in fact to be in an almost constant state of flux. There is support for this in the work of Yiftachel⁸. This is an approach that is relevant to New Zealand, where it is

clear that concepts of town planning did change markedly over the period of this study. When town planning was eventually formally established in 1926, it was based on quite a different concept to that promoted by the early pioneers such as Hurst Seager. By 1926 the need to ameliorate severe social ills had been superseded by a need to ensure urban space functioned in a more orderly manner. Establishing the history of the profession in New Zealand is important. While Sandercock⁹ may disparage the role of planning history in socialising new planners into the profession, the lack of an established history for the profession undermines its foundations and belief in itself, and what it attempts to achieve. There is endless evidence of this in the last decade.

Also of interest is the relationship of this work of planning history to some of the other theoretical perspectives discussed in Chapter Two. The discussion of definitions of planning that are an integral part of that chapter, concluded that there was no universal definition of planning embedded in most works of planning history. However both Hall¹⁰ and Burgess seem to base their analysis on a definition of planning broadly based on the idea that its focus is to produce better environments for communities, that planning is an improving activity. This is a definition that sits well in this thesis up until the legislation was passed in 1926. At that point planning assumed a more technocratic edge moving towards Boyer's¹¹ view of planning as disciplining and organising space, or Cherry's more pragmatic view of it being what planners do. This is a simple rendition of course of the complex changes in the concept of town planning which occurred within the thesis's period of study and which are discussed below.

A number of theorists and planning historians have stressed the linkage between practice and theory, emphasising again the fact that planning as a profession developed largely ahead of its theory. A very recent paper by Fischler that addresses the connections between planning history and theory, published after most of this thesis was complete, states “past decisions by professionals can help us understand from whence current practices come — that is, why planners do what they do”¹³. This suggests that planning history can help to shape the practice and theory of the present. This is clearly supportable in the New Zealand context, as the early failure in achieving civic design projects or establishing viable examples of the garden city/suburb pulled planning in New Zealand away from urban design and towards the regulation of urban space. In that role planning was likely to find a more acceptable niche, supporting the capitalist economic system in the manner assigned to it by both Luithlen¹⁴ and Hague¹⁵. There is no evidence in this period that town planning was used in New Zealand as a tool of radical reform. Placing the power to institute it in the hands of traditionally conservative local government and the firm middle class origins of its early adherents ensured that.

Equally the origins of town planning in New Zealand are not vastly different to those postulated by the main Anglo-American planning historians. While New Zealand never suffered the extreme urban problems that characterised Britain and America, there were signs there was the potential for them to emerge, or at least for urban areas to become ‘untidy and inconvenient’ in their layout and development. The arrival of a range of town planning paradigms so well described by Hall provided a range of attractive solutions. The City Beautiful

paradigm which would seemed to have some applicability in New Zealand was only mimicked in very modest terms due to the size and limited financial base of most New Zealand cities. This stresses once more that planning is “a societal product whose goals as much as limitations are ultimately linked to a dynamic and ever-evolving economic, political, social and environmental backdrop”¹⁶

Overview

For New Zealand's planning history, the period 1900 to 1933 was one of evolution. For most of the period there was less an emphasis on the practice of planning, than on the promise of that practice. It was not, however, a period without achievement. After a number of abortive attempts legislation was secured, and planning stumbled into operation. Planning was slow to make demonstrable progress because of the nature of the times. Economic downturn, the bane of New Zealand life, was evident by 1927 and was firmly entrenched by 1930. These were hardly the conditions to advance town planning, particularly in the absence of a well developed and numerous group of town planners. Perhaps the greatest tragedy of the period was the gradual alienation of the talented, intelligent, but mercurial John Mawson. Properly resourced and recognised he would have been an enormously positive force not only in the development of town planning, but also in the development of New Zealand.

There are also definite break points in the period. The enthusiastic amateurs, who had often come together and had their first experiences in City

Beautifying groups, dominated until 1919. Their prominence and influence peaked with the 1919 Town-Planning Conference and Exhibition. In this period there was much undiluted borrowing of overseas concepts and a reliance on intellectual input from the international sources, primarily the garden city/suburb movement. Reflecting the concerns of the time and these overseas sources, there were consistent attempts to link town planning to housing and the erection of a morally and physically superior people. Town planning was very much Foglesong's ameliorating agent. It was also a period when local body politicians shared a strong interest in town planning. Men like Myers used interest in it to advance his local body career and to take him into national politics. When established in Parliament they provided a strong voice for town planning. It was only the incipient disintegration of the Liberals that made them unsuccessful in securing legislation. This identification of town planning with the amelioration of social ills and the creation of better urban living environments is a product of the motivations of the promoters. These people had no vision of practising town planning, rather they saw it as a useful tool in meeting their civic duty to improve urban environments. Most in fact never looked beyond achieving legislation, presuming that at that point the 'experts' would take over and they would remain in a facilitatory role. All of the discussions of whom might undertake the work of town planning stressed the role of the expert, even if there was no agreement on which was the appropriate expert.

From 1919 to 1926 the enthusiasts' interest waned, hardly unexpectedly given their age and years of relatively fruitless toil. Only the true devotees such as Hurst Seager continued, though with less success. This lack of

success did not reflect his lack of influence but rather that his position had become 'bureaucratized'. He became the 'de facto' town planning advisor to the government, a position which seemed to evolve out of his attendance at the Australian Town Planning Conferences and his organising of the 1919 Conference. He became less a lobbyist and more of an advisor. This loss of an evangelical zeal in the promotion of town planning, combined with the new consumer orientated focus of the 1920s, made town planning a less attractive cause for public and politician alike. The effects of lantern slides of British slums that had so impressed pre-war audiences had lost their edge after the experience of war. The development of a separate housing programme also meant that town planning lost its role as a panacea. Attempts at garden suburbs and civic design projects were unsuccessful, leaving town planning looking for a new focus and a new band of adherents. The increasing complexity of town planning as a concept also meant that direct borrowing from overseas was less easy. This was compounded by the lack of legislation to define what town planning would do and consequently what imported concepts might be useful. However there was a positive side. The lack of a specific focus for town planning probably widened its potential appeal.

The period from 1919 to 1926 was also the time when the first professional town planners like Hammond emerged. Their small number meant, however, that they could not claim an exclusive mandate given the potential scope of town planning, still undefined by legislation. Thus they faced constant challenge from other allied professions, particularly the surveyors. These professional discussions and disputes continued through the 1920s and were

never fully resolved. While the town planning profession in Britain suffered similar disputes in its formative years, it resolved them more quickly as a consequence of the more rapid production of trained town planners.

The legislation of 1926 was a decisive moment, not just because it created a role for the emerging professionals, but because it signalled that the debate on the concepts of town planning was ended. The statutory definition of town planning determined it would deal with the regulation of urban space, mediating conflicting interests within an urban system. At this point reality also dawned on the local bodies, who had often called for town planning legislation. Now presented with the requirement to formulate town planning schemes, they rapidly lost enthusiasm, often cloaking their reluctance in concerns with betterment and compensation. While both were potentially difficult issues, as the British experience demonstrated, they were not sufficiently important to prevent schemes being formulated. While progressive local bodies such as Christchurch began to plan, others submerged themselves in narrow parochialism, and concerns with costs. The latter were probably the most realistic concern given the small size of many New Zealand local bodies and the generally disaggregated nature of local government. The attempt in 1912 to link the institution of town planning with local body reform was not misplaced. In Australia there was in the early period of the development of town planning, a similar linkage with local body reform and "city organisation and management"¹⁷. The 1926 legislation also encouraged the emergence of a town planning profession, though in a compromised form. The small number of trained planners meant that accommodation was essential with the architects, surveyors, and engineers,

who had, with the remaining enthusiasts, to be brought within the ambit of the proposed 'professional' institute. While this was Mawson's practical answer to a difficult situation, it undermined the creation of an identifiable and separate profession.

What is clear from this overview is that the origins of town planning in New Zealand do not, as in Britain, America and Europe, lie in the urban problems that were produced by the Industrial Revolution. As a younger country New Zealand simply could not reproduce the intense urban ills of Britain and elsewhere, which made town planning a necessary and attractive solution after the public health reformers and engineers had righted the grossest of the problems. While New Zealand did have areas which could be described as 'slums' they were not of sufficient extent to warrant the responses that emerged elsewhere. The work by Issac and Olssen suggests that government concern with the slum in New Zealand was a product of a larger interest in the "quality of home life"¹⁸ which would reduce 'larrikinism', and produce better quality citizens. This focus on home life was reflected in other areas such as the Plunket movement that elevated domestic duties and child rearing to new heights. Slum imagery was, as Mayne¹⁹ demonstrates, in three continents used as a propaganda tool and a motif for a number of urban ills. It was not a totally convincing one in New Zealand. Reade's lectures and writings, while well received and based on a kernel of fact, overplayed the 'slum', and the images he used were based on only limited examples. Reade was after all a successful journalist and a committed enthusiast. For him the end may have justified the means. Again Issac and Olssen demonstrate that

the slum “became a fulcrum for reform”, and that as late as 1921 “statistics had less impact than anecdote”²⁰.

New Zealand's experience in establishing town planning does have some similarities to the South African experience. Mabin and Smit²¹ chart a history of town planning characterised by a long period of evolution in which it tried to associate itself with health, housing and other social concerns, powered by a single-minded enthusiast. When legislation was eventually achieved in 1924, it served to narrow town planning and to focus it on the control of land use. While in South Africa the situation was complicated by racial issues, the similarities are there, perhaps reflecting the shorter urban history of much of South Africa. There are also some parallels with the Australian experience, though that is complicated by the federal nature of that country, which creates a town planning history for each State, rather than for the country as a whole. Nevertheless the experience in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia was broadly similar to New Zealand. A long period of struggle by enthusiasts reliance on imported concepts, and then a narrowing of concepts through the passing of legislation. Like New Zealand most Australian states depended at the outset on a relatively small base of professional planners.

Foci One - Concepts of Town Planning

The concepts of town planning throughout this period changed considerably. This is not unexpected given, that Eric Reade²² and others have portrayed the practice of town planning as largely developing within a theoretical vacuum.

Thus there was until as late as the 1950s no real universal concept of planning, underpinned by a theoretical base. As Cherry²³ so accurately puts it, town planning became defined by how it was practiced. While there were no planners then concepts could remain fluid, with planning being what planners might do in response to the needs of the time. Thus in the early period in New Zealand, town planning was taken up by those interested in social reform, primarily housing improvements to produce better living environments and consequently a morally and physically healthier race. Those interested in city improvements also saw value in drawing on the ideas of the City Beautiful movement which had some parallels with the beautifying groups in this country. At this stage, as Ward²⁴ demonstrates, there was likely to be quite undiluted borrowing of ideas, many of which were not applicable to New Zealand. The archetypal example here is the garden city/suburb movement. This emerged in Britain and spread world wide as a response to uncontrolled urban growth and concerns with the need to promote co-operative based developments. This was a concept that was only partially achieved, at least in physical forms until the New Towns were developed after World War II. By then its underlying concepts were much modified. Its co-operative aspects were never achieved. In New Zealand it really became no more than a metaphor for good urban design and a concern for creating good living environments. This is hardly surprising given that most of New Zealand's urban growth, even in Auckland, was incremental, expanding the urban edge. Miller's²⁵ study of land sales advertisements in the 1920s shows that most appeals were based on connectivity, that is demonstrating that the new suburbs were close to, linked by transport, and integrated with, the existing urban area. A stand-alone suburb or city would

have had little appeal and probably could not be justified, either economically or in land-use terms.

When housing was dealt with through a separate programme and civic improvement looked to be an expensive option, stymied by ratepayer's parsimony, the concept changed again. It became narrower and more focused, reflecting the process of adaption whereby overseas ideas were taken up and transformed to meet the needs of the recipient society. With the assistance of the surveyors and other allied professions, the concept of town planning was transformed from a panacea for urban ills into an instrument to manage urban space and land-use conflicts. It became part of a progressive societal view, a modern method to make the urban system more responsive and in turn more pleasant. This was a concept that Mawson took up and tried to expand, to make it a more explicit progressive instrument by linking it to a broader concept of regional and national economic planning and growth. He was only stopped by the reluctance of a failing government faced by intractable economic conditions, to investigate such a novel instrument. Local body reluctance and obstruction which developed when they recognised that the concept might achieve reform by stealth and impose unknown costs, did little to help its establishment. As such it represented the ultimate adaption of an overseas concept to New Zealand needs.

The concepts of planning which emerged after 1926, while more focused were also concerned principally with process, how the act would be put into practice. At this point there was some potential for the emergence of an American derived process model based on a city planning commission.

However, despite advocacy from some, it failed to take root because it did not reflect the reality of local body structures. To give an ad hoc body such potentially decisive powers would have been an anathema to the parochial bodies that proliferated everywhere despite often feeble attempts at reform, and which rarely managed to co-operate even where this was essential, as in Auckland. The model that emerged in the legislation of 1926 was based on British precedents adapted to New Zealand conditions. Thus in terms of Ward's process of diffusion, New Zealand had moved from direct borrowing to a complex process of adaption and modification.

Foci Two : Town Planning as State Intervention

Both Hamer²⁶ and Bassett²⁷ in their respective works, report the well-established belief in the innate goodness of the state. It is what Bassett and earlier writers talk of as 'socialism without doctrines'. Politicians were not motivated by any philosophic or political belief but rather by the practical considerations of how the needs of a small but growing country could best be met. Heavily dependent on export receipts and unable to interest private companies in developing basic infrastructure such as railways, the responsibility was assumed by the central state. Regardless of the political party, power was generally wielded to the benefit of society as a whole. While at certain times specific groups were favoured, such as the farmers, generally a more holistic view was taken. Thus even a conservative politician such as Coates, though probably more innovative than he has been given credit for, was willing and able to use the powers of the central state to intervene in the

economy. This willingness to use the interventionist powers of the state may have its roots in the makeup of New Zealand society. Even by the early twentieth century most politicians and in fact most New Zealanders were still first or second-generation migrants. They were a group, bold and inspired enough to take themselves to the other side of the world, to build a better society. It was also generally a less class-riven society than that in Britain or America. For such people it would have been inconceivable that the appalling urban conditions of the Old World (or it was referred to by the affectionate term of Mother Country), were to be reproduced in New Zealand for the want of intervention by the state. It was an approach that seemed to subsist successfully with a strong Imperialist spirit. It almost seemed a case of proving that the strength of Imperialism lay in the opportunity it offered to build improved versions of the Mother Country.

The failure to pass town planning legislation before 1926 cannot, therefore, be explained by a reluctance to use the interventionist powers of the central state. Rather it seems to reflect a series of unrelated events, such as the disintegration, very slowly, of the primacy of the Liberals and the onset of a world war, in combination with conflict between the central state and local government. Local government has always had a difficult relationship with the central state. Aware that it is a creature of statute, endowed only with the powers that the central state granted it, and with limited revenue raising power, local government was nevertheless not slow to flex its muscles throughout the period of this thesis. The work of Bush²⁸ clearly demonstrates that the roles and responsibilities of local government multiplied in the period, with a corresponding growth in the number of units of local government.

Local government at times exercised its powers rather irresponsibly, causing the central state to move to rein in those powers and to reassert its dominance. Thus in 1911 Fowld's bill was lost, not through a rejection of town planning, but rather as a protest against the overseeing and decision-making role that it reserved in town planning administration for the central state. That it came shortly after similar conflict arising out of the Tramways legislation made the concerns all the more poignant. Similarly in 1926 many of the concerns from local bodies arose from their annoyance at the new requirements of the Local Bodies Loans Board. Local government was not, however, a powerless dupe of the central state. Until the late twentieth century it successfully defeated any attempts at local body reform, reflecting the much closer linkage between central government politicians and their communities and the loose political arrangements in terms of party politics. Local bodies, having asked for town planning powers for some years and having failed to be convinced by argument that they already had such powers, were slow to administer the new legislation. Explanations for this inaction based on deeply held philosophic viewpoints would again be misplaced. Simply, inaction was not a resistance to intervention in the private property right, but rather a matter of priorities. While basic infrastructure such as water and sewage reticulation and roads, still needed to be provided in difficult economic times, there was faint enthusiasm for the new and potentially expensive writing of town planning schemes. This situation was exacerbated by the lack of trained town planners to do the work. This rather erratic path of commitment to town planning as a state intervention, reflecting the social, economic and political landscape of New Zealand, was not unique. As Cherry observes, "Britain drifted into town planning, Germany cities had it thrust upon

them and France was simply reluctant²⁹, in short their responses mirrored their particular society. New Zealand was no different.

Local government concern at potential interference by central government may not have been totally imaginary. While on many Boards the Minister's was a token presence, soon surrendered to a replacement from the ranks of the bureaucrats, this was not true of the Town-planning Board. The Minister of Internal Affairs was its Chairman and meetings were only held at his behest. The first Minister, de la Perrelle, to exercise this power was reluctant to summon the Board and showed a fine disregard for its concerns. That the Board was run with such direct input from a Minister must have been of concern to local bodies, always wary of the exercise of central power. This reluctance to summon the Board to do its duties was compounded by a general under-resourcing of it, particularly in terms of professional expertise. The reasons for this seem to be ineptitude (on de la Perrelle's part) and inertia in the face of more pressing problems as the Depression deepened.

Foci Three : The Development of a Profession

Given that the early practitioners might have found difficulty in identifying the unique body of knowledge that lay at the heart of their profession, it is surprising how quickly in Britain and elsewhere, professional bodies were formed. The formation of the British Town Planning Institute helped to establish the general legitimacy of town planning which was further enhanced by the creation of the university courses at Liverpool and London.

In New Zealand the profession was less lucky, and it was not until 1930 that a separate Town Planning Institute was founded. Its mixed membership of trained practitioners and the enthusiasts, while helping to build consensus and support for the new legislation and the exercise of town planning powers, did undermine the professional character of the Institute. This was of considerable concern to Gummer and others, and effectively cemented an on-going reliance on the established allied professions, particularly surveying and architecture. Both professions had at times, without real success, tried to colonise the management of the town planning movement. In fact they could have saved their resources, for when the Act was passed there were so few trained town planners that inevitably work fell to the other professions. The failure to get town planning education established was also inimical to the emergence of a strong and independent profession. Probably the Institute's greatest success lay in its creation of the journal *Community Planning*. This journal built on publications such as *City Beautiful* that helped disseminate both local and overseas news and views. They were both important vehicles in spreading the word and building the support that was essential if the profession was to be recognised and the work of town planning undertaken. However, by 1933 the profession and the Town Planning Institute were not sufficiently strong or influential enough to lobby successfully for more resources for town planning or to retain Mawson.

Concluding Reflections

New Zealand's planning history in its emergent years reveals a complex tapestry of people, events and ideas. Its richness belies the rather cavalier dismissal of the period that has marked most accounts. Only Ross³⁰ made any real attempt to document the depth of achievement of those years, a point overlooked by those who read his work. Ross throughout his work emphasises that individuals, a sense of civic duty and urban problems produced by growth, all help to explain the origins of town planning in New Zealand. Above all he stresses the pivotal role of local government — “the success of town planning is absolutely and inextricably linked with the success of local government”³¹. The history of town planning after 1926, a period that Ross did not address, emphasises the accuracy of this observation. Overall Ross did identify the essential origins of town planning in New Zealand, though he did underestimate the change in the concept of town planning being promoted, and probably overestimated the importance of individual players particularly Myers.

In Chapter Two I proposed a number of critical frameworks which might be used to examine this period, and I explained, given the incomplete record that exists, why it was almost inevitable that the framework of research that would be adopted would be that of Liberal Planning History. At the end of this thesis I find no reason to resile from that position. It was a realistic approach that recognised that other critical frameworks were built upon the original narratives provided in such splendid detail by the pioneer Liberal Planning

historians. In many ways New Zealand's planning history has only commenced. It is to be hoped that others will be able to use this work as the basis of challenging interpretations.

¹ Burgess, P 1993 Should Planning history Hit the Road ? : An Examination of the State of Planning history in the United States, *Planning Perspectives*, 11, p314-327

² Olssen, E 1995 *Building A New World : Work, Politics and Society in Caversham, 1880s-1920s*, Auckland University Press.

³ Hamer, D 1994 Town Planning in new societies in the nineteenth century : a comparative perspective, *Planning Perspectives*, 9, pp125-137 and Hamer, D 1990 *New Towns in the New World : Images and Perceptions of the Nineteenth Century*, Columbia University Press, New York

⁴ Schrader, B 1999 Avoiding the mistakes of the 'mother country' : the New Zealand garden city movement 1900-1926, *Planning Perspectives*, 14, pp395-411 and Schrader, B 1991 A Peaceful Path to Reform ; The Garden City/Suburb Movement in New Zealand/ Aotearoa, Unpublished B.A Hons. History Research Essay, Victoria University

⁵ Issac ,P & Olssen, E 2000 The Justification of Labour's Housing Scheme : The Discourse of 'the slum', in Brooks, B (ed.) *At Home in New Zealand : History, Houses, People*, Bridget Williams Books, Wellington.

⁶ See particularly Cherry, G 1996 *Town Planning in Britain Since 1900 ; The Rise and Fall of the Planning Ideal*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford.

⁷ Foglesong, R 1986 *Planning the Capitalist City : The Colonial Era to the 1920s*, Princeton University Press.

⁸ Yiftachel, O 1989 Towards a New Typology of Urban Planning Theories, *Environment and Planning B*, Vol.16, p23-39

⁹ Sandercock, L (ed.) 1998 *Making the Invisible Visible : A Multicultural Planning History*, University of California Press, Berkeley.

¹⁰ Hall, P. 1996 *Cities of Tomorrow : An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century*, Updated Version, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford

¹¹ Boyer, C. 1983 *Dreaming the Rational City: The Myth of American City Planning*, MIT Press, Cambridge.

¹³ Fischler, R. 2000 Linking planning Theory and History : The Case of Development Control, *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 19,p234

¹⁴ Luithlen, L 1997 Landownership in Britain and the Quest for Town Planning, *Environment and Planning A*, Vol.29,No.8,p533-55

¹⁵ Hague, C. 1984 *The Development of Planning Thought : A Critical Perspective*, Hutchinson, London and Hague, C 1991 A Review of Planning Theory in Britain, *Town Planning Review*, 66(3),p227-241

¹⁶ Hamnett, S. & Freestone, R. (eds.) 2000 *The Australian Metropolis : A Planning History*, E & F N Spon, London, p 4. This valuable volume only became available in the very concluding stages of this thesis and was not able to be fully integrated into the main body of the thesis.

¹⁷ Garnaut, C 2000 Towards Metropolitan Organisation ; Town planning and the Garden City Idea, in Hamnett & Freestone, op.cit.

¹⁸ Issac & Olssen, op.cit., p108

¹⁹ Mayne, A. 1993 *The Imagined Slum : Newspaper Representation in Three Cities, 1870-1914*, Leicester University Press, London

²⁰ Issac & Olssen, op.cit., p109

²¹ Mabin, A. & Smit, D. 1997 Reconstructing South Africa's Cities ? : The Making of Urban Planning 1900-2000, *Planning Perspectives*, 12,p193-223

²² Reade, E. 1987 *British Town and Country Planning*, Open University Press, Milton Keynes

²³ Cherry, op.cit

²⁴ Ward, S 1999 The International Diffusion of Planning : A Review and Canadian Case Study, *International Planning Studies*, Vol.4,No.1,p 53-77

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- ²⁵ Miller, C. 2000 Selling Suburbia : Image and Reality, in Roche, M., Hesp. P. & McKenna, M. *Proceedings of the Twentieth New Zealand Geography Conference*, New Zealand Geographical Society, Hamilton, p223-236
- ²⁶ Hamer, D. 1988 *The New Zealand Liberals : The Years of Power, 1891-1912*, Auckland University Press, Auckland
- ²⁷ Bassett, M. 1998 *The State in New Zealand 1840-1984 : Socialism Without Doctrines ?*, Auckland University Press, Auckland.
- ²⁸ See Bush, G. 1995 *Local Government and Politics in New Zealand*, Second Edition, Auckland University Press, Auckland and Bush, G. 1971 *Decently and in Order : The Centennial History of the Auckland City Council*, Collins/Auckland City Council, Auckland.
- ²⁹ Cherry,op.cit.,p33
- ³⁰ Ross, W. 1967 An Introductory Study of the Origins and Evolution of Town Planning in New Zealand, Unpublished Diploma in Town Planning Research Project, University of Auckland.
- ³¹ ibid,p263

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Through out this thesis a number of newspapers are used. While for many the locality is clear, for others it is not. Thus the following lists the 'home town' for all newspapers used in this thesis.

New Zealand Herald – Auckland
The Dominion – Wellington
Evening Post – Wellington
The Press – Christchurch
The Otago Daily Times – Dunedin
The Southland Times – Invercargill
The Wairarapa Age - Masterton

Departmental and Other Files

These are primarily located at National Archives, Wellington, though selected files are kept in other localities as indicated.

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Fowlds Papers Box 40 FP65 Town Planning 1911

Fowlds Papers Box 40 FP3/66 Town planning Bill 1911, Letters,
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APPENDIX 1

The Schedule to the Town Planning Bill 1911

SCHEDULE.

Schedul

MATTERS THAT MAY BE PROVIDED FOR IN TOWN-PLANNING SCHEMES.

The laying-out and construction of roads and streets, and the stopping of any road or street.

The laying-out and construction of drainage and water-supply schemes.

The lighting of roads and streets and public buildings.

The setting-apart and laying-out of land for recreation-grounds and public buildings (including public baths), and the erection of public buildings.

The reclamation of land.

The preservation of objects of historical interest or of natural beauty.

The preparation and approval of plans and specifications for any of the works comprised in the scheme.

The notices to be given at any stage to the owners of land, and the deposit for public inspection of any scheme or proposed scheme and the plans and specifications relating thereto.

The acquisition by the responsible authority or any other authority of land for any of the purposes of the scheme.

The local authority liable for the payment of any part of the cost of the carrying-out of the scheme.

Any matter which is ancillary to any of the purposes of the scheme.

By Authority : JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1911.

APPENDIX 2

PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AUSTRALASIAN TOWN PLANNING TOUR 1914

1. A comprehensive Town Planning act for New Zealand on more direct and simpler lines than the British Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909 to deal with
 - a. All undeveloped areas in and adjoining all towns and cities
 - b. The improvement of areas wholly or partly built-up
2. Town Planning and Housing Commissioners to consider and approve Town planning proposals, or to take action in case of neglect by a local authority.
3. A Town planning authority (wherever possible the City Council) for every town or city, whose duty it shall be to prepare a plan and regulations for the future development, amenity; and improvement of the district or town, irrespective of present administrative boundaries.
4. The essential provisions of a Town planning act should include :
 - a. Power to lay down street and building lines, and to make requirements as to street construction.
 - b. To vary statutory width of roads,etc.
 - c. To prescribe the maximum height and character and to limit the number of buildings per acre (this may vary in different parts of the town).
 - d. To prescribe special districts for factories and other purposes.
 - e. To acquire or secure lands for open spaces, park belts, streets or city improvements,clearance of insanitary areas, or other public purposes(including Garden suburbs) at the Government valuation current prior to the initiation of the Town Planning or City improvement Scheme.
 - f. To secure for the Public a proper proportion of the betterment due to any public improvement under Town Planning.
5. We are of the opinion :
 - a. That all main of arterial roads should be subsidised or maintained by the State.
 - b. That cheap and rapid transit and rail and water facilities, provided by the State or the Municipality, should be an integral part of Town Planning schemes.
 - c. That tenement houses should be strongly discouraged, and the principle of one family one house firmly, maintained.
 - d. That scenery and natural features, such as streams and hill summits, and objects of historic or scientific interest, should be preserved and wherever practicable, belts of open country permanently reserved on the outskirts of cities and new suburbs.
 - e. That the principles of the Garden City Movement should be applied to or adapted to every scheme of Town planning or to every new town created.

APPENDIX 3

TOWN - PLANNING.

A BILL INTITULED

Title. An Act to Regulate the Planning of Towns.

BE IT ENACTED by the General Assembly of New Zealand in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:-

Short Title and commencement.

1. This Act may be cited as the Town-Planning Act, 1914, and shall commence on the first day of March, nineteen hundred and fifteen.

Interpretation.

2. In this Act "Board" means a Town-planning Board as constituted under this Act.

Power to prepare town-planning scheme.

3. (1). Subject to the provisions of this Act, a Local authority may prepare and adopt a scheme (herein called a town-planning scheme) providing for all or any of the matters mentioned in the Schedule hereto.

(2). Every such scheme shall define clearly the area (herein called the town-planning area) within which it is intended to have effect.

(3). The town-planning may include the whole of the borough or any part thereof, and in either case with or without any land adjacent to that borough.

(4). A town-planning scheme may make comprehensive provision for the whole of the town-planning area, or separate provision for different defined parts thereof or it may make comprehensive provision for the whole of the town-planning area for some purpose and separate provision for different parts thereof for other purposes.

Public Notice of Scheme to be given.

(5). Before any town-planning scheme is adopted, public notice of the scheme and of the intention to adopt the same shall be given at least four times at intervals of not less than one week, and, in particular, public notice of the time and place of the meeting of the Local authority at which the adoption of the scheme is to be proposed shall be given not less than seven days nor more than fourteen days before the date of that meeting.

Objections to Scheme.

(6). Any person interested may by notice in writing to the Town Clerk or Secretary of the Local authority at any time before the date of the meeting at which the adoption of the scheme is to be proposed object to the scheme. Every such objection shall be considered and determined by the Local authority before the scheme is adopted.

Scheme to be submitted to Board.

(7). Within twenty-eight days after the adoption of a town-planning scheme, the scheme, together with all written objections thereto, shall be forwarded by the Local authority to the Board hereinafter constituted.

(8). On receipt of any such scheme it shall be the duty of the Board to consider the same and to make such inquiry as it thinks fit, and, in particular, it shall give such public notice as it thinks sufficient calling on all such persons interested to set forth in writing any well-grounded objections to the scheme, and to send such objections to the Board within a time specified in the notice.

(9). After considering the scheme and all objections thereto as aforesaid, the Board shall report fully thereon to the Local authority or Local authorities concerned and may make such recommendations in the matter as it thinks fit.

Approval of scheme.

(10). Should the Board approve of the scheme then the Local Authority concerned shall proceed with the carrying out of such scheme.

When Scheme disapproved.

(11). Should the Board disapprove of such scheme wholly or in part it shall convey its decision or recommendations to the Local authority concerned and should such Local authority decline to adopt the Board's recommendations it shall give notice to the Board accordingly.

Citizens meeting.

(12). The Board shall forthwith convene a meeting of citizens and should a majority of those present thereat approve of the Board's recommendations then the Local authority shall carry the same into effect.

(13). Should a majority of those present at the meeting disapprove of the Board's recommendations then a poll of citizens shall finally determine the scheme.

Authority to proceed with scheme.

(14). No Local authority shall undertake any of the scheme set forth in Schedule hereto without first having obtained the approval of either the Board or a poll of citizens.

Government Scheme.

(15). In the case of a State Department desiring to undertake any of the works set forth in the Schedule hereto it shall furnish the Board with the provisions of such scheme and if the Board approves such scheme then the work may be proceeded with forthwith.

(16). Should the Board disapprove of such scheme either wholly or in part then the whole matter shall be referred to a special committee of Parliament to be called "The Town-planning Committee" which shall hear the evidence of any Local authority

or persons interested and finally determine the scheme.

Approval of scheme to be gazetted.

4. A notice in the Gazette of the approval of the Board, Poll of citizens or the Town Planning Committee as per preceding section to any scheme (either with or without modifications) shall confer on the scheme or on the scheme modified, as the case may be, authority of law as from a date specified in the Gazette notice and from that date the scheme shall have effect as if it were enacted in this Act.

Scheme may be varied or revoked.

5. A town-planning scheme may be varied or revoked by a subsequent scheme prepared, adopted and approved in accordance with this Act.

Scheme extending beyond borough.

6. (1). Where a town-planning area extends beyond the district of the Local authority which prepared the scheme, the scheme shall, before being adopted by that Local authority be submitted to each of the Local authorities into whose district the town-planning area so extends, and the said Local authority shall convene a conference of the members of the said Local authority and of the said Local authorities for the consideration of the scheme.

(2). At the conference the scheme may be either approved or disapproved, or it may be approved with modifications, but in any case the Local authority that prepared the scheme may, if it thinks fit, proceed with the same in the manner required by this Act, and any resolution of the conference disapproving the scheme, or (unless the said Local authority agrees thereto) modifying the same, shall be deemed to be an objection to the scheme and a copy thereof shall be forwarded to the Board, together with other written objections (if any) received pursuant to sub-section six of section three hereof.

(3). The Governor may from time to time, make regulations prescribing the procedure for convening a conference under this section, and regulating the proceedings at the conference.

Responsible "authority" where scheme extends beyond borough.

7. Where a town-planning area extends beyond the district of the Local authority that prepared the scheme, the Board may specify that that one of the Local authorities into whose district the town-planning area extends, shall be responsible authority for the carrying out of the scheme, or it may specify one Local authority for some purposes of the scheme and another or others for other purposes, or it may constitute a joint Committee of all such Local authorities: and all necessary provisions may be made by the Board for constituting the joint Committee and giving it the necessary powers and duties.

Power to enforce scheme.

8. (1). The Local authority in the case of a town-planning area which does not extend beyond the district of the Local authority or the responsible authority in any other case, may at any time after giving such notice as may be provided by a town-

planning scheme, and in accordance with the provisions of the scheme:-

A. Remove, pull down, or alter any building or other work in the town-planning area which is such as to contravene the scheme or in the erection or carrying out of which any provision of the scheme has not been complied with; or

B. Execute any work which it is the duty of any person to execute under the scheme in any case where it appears to the Local authority or other responsible authority (herein referred to as the responsible authority) that, delay in the execution of the work would prejudice the efficient operation of the scheme.

(2). Any expenses incurred by a responsible authority under this section may be recovered from the person in default in such manner and subject to such conditions as may be provided by the scheme.

(3). Any question which may arise as to whether any building or work contravenes a town-planning scheme, or whether any provisions of a town-planning scheme have not been complied with in the erection or carrying out of any building or work shall, unless the parties otherwise agree, be determined by the Board as arbitrators; and the decision of the Board shall be final and binding on all persons.

9. (1). Subject to the provisions of this Act, any person whose property is injuriously affected by the operation of a town-planning scheme shall be entitled to full compensation for the injury sustained by him, which may be claimed and shall be determined in the manner provided by the Public Works Act, 1908.

(2). A person shall not be entitled to compensation on account of any building erected on, or contract made or other thing done with respect to land included in a town-planning scheme after the date of the first publication of the notice of the Local authority's intention to adopt the scheme made pursuant to section three hereof.

(3). Where property is alleged to be injuriously affected by reason of any of the provisions of a town-planning scheme no compensation shall be payable in respect thereof if or so far as the provisions are such as would have been enforceable if contained in a bylaw made by the Local authority.

(4). Property shall not be deemed to be injuriously affected by reason of any of the provisions of a town-planning scheme which regulate the space about buildings, or limit the number of buildings to be erected or prescribe the height or character of buildings.

(5). Where a town-planning scheme is revoked any person who has incurred expenditure for the purpose of complying with the scheme shall be entitled to compensation in accordance with this section in so far as any expenditure has been rendered abortive by reason of the revocation of the scheme.

(6). Where a person is entitled to compensation under this Act in respect of any matter or thing and he would be entitled to compensation in respect of the same matter or thing under any other enactment, he shall not be entitled to compensation both under this Act and that other enactment or to any greater compensation under this Act than he would be entitled to under the other enactment.

Scheme deemed to be a public work.

10. The carrying out of a town-planning scheme by a responsible authority shall be deemed to be a public work within the meaning of the Municipal Corporations Act 1908, and the Public Works Act, 1908 and in raising any loan for the purpose of the scheme it shall be necessary to take poll of the ratepayers.

Power to make and suspend bylaws.

11. Where any part of a town-planning area extends beyond the district of the Local authority that prepared the scheme, the responsible authority may suspend any by-law in force within that part, and may make such by-laws applicable to that part as it might make if the same were within its district.

The Town-planning Board.

12. (1). For the purposes of this Act there is hereby constituted a Board to be called the Town-planning Board consisting of the Surveyor-General for the time being and three members of the Borough Council, one member of the Harbour Board if there be one in the area affected, two persons elected by the Citizens and two persons nominated by the Governor in Council to represent the Public Works and Railways Departments (with the exception of the nominees of the Governor in Council who shall hold office during the Governor's pleasure) the members of the Board shall hold office for the period of two years dating from the election by the Citizens of such local authorities.

(2). At every meeting of the Board three shall form a quorum.

(3). If the Surveyor-General is absent from any meeting the person lawfully acting as his deputy may attend that meeting and act as his substitute, and while so attending and acting shall be deemed to be a member of the Board.

(4). The Surveyor-General shall be President of the Board and act as Chairman at every meeting

meeting at which he is present.

(5). If the Surveyor-General is absent from any meeting, the members of the Board at that meeting shall elect one of their members to be Chairman at that meeting.

(6). Proper minutes of the proceedings of the Board shall be kept.

(7). Subject to the provisions of this section, the Board may regulate its own proceedings.

Definition of
Local authority
extended.

13. For the purposes of this Act the expression "Local Authority" includes Borough Council and Harbour Board and the expression "Citizen" shall mean any person qualified to vote at an election of Borough Councillors.

14. This Act shall apply only to such Boroughs as shall from time to time through its council petition the Governor to be brought under its provisions.

15. The Municipal Corporation Act shall be amended to give power to any Local authority.

(1). To define residential and industrial areas and the conditions containing thereto:

(2). To prevent any sub-division of land until due permission has been made for all public needs present and future, such as streets, drainage, sites for public buildings and schools, reserves and public requirements of whatever kind. The said land to be acquired by the Local authority concerned at the then value.

SCHEDULE.

Matters that may be provided for in Town Planning
schemes.

The laying out or the closing or alteration of any street or road.

The laying out of any drainage or water supply scheme.

The laying out or erection of any Railway, Tramway, Public Lifts, wharf, Dock, Tunnel, Bridge, Viaduct, or public buildings.

The setting apart or laying out of any recreation grounds or reserves.

The reclamation or embankment of any land or any foreshore.

The preservation of objects of historic interest or beauty.

The defining of any residential and industrial area and the building and other conditions relating thereto.

The subdivision or laying out of any land whether by the State, local authority Company or Private Individual.

The acquisition by purchase of any land or buildings for public purposes.

The sale or leasing of any public lands.

SOURCE : New Plymouth District Council Archive, New Plymouth.

APPENDIX 4

NEW ZEALAND TOWN-PLANNING CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION

ORGANIZED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF NEW ZEALAND.

(Minister of Internal Affairs: The Hon. G. W. RUSSELL.)

To be held in the Town Hall, Wellington, from Tuesday, 20th May, to
Friday, 23rd May, 1919.

THE objects of the Conference and Exhibition are—

1. To assemble delegates from all the cities and boroughs of the Dominion representing—

- (a.) Government Departments;
- (b.) Municipal and other local government bodies;
- (c.) Professional societies or other associations or individuals interested in the welfare of Dominion cities and towns.

2. To discuss a series of illustrated papers on the principles of town-planning and housing and their application to Dominion conditions, compiled by delegates possessing expert knowledge of some portion of town-planning work.

3. To consider the legislation necessary to carry into effect the principles of town-planning and the means of securing permanent organizations for town-planning education and advancement.

4. To collect and arrange for exhibition plans, models, photos, diagrams, &c., relating to—

- (a.) Town-planning activities in Great Britain, United States, Canada, France, Italy, Australia, and other countries;
- (b.) The growth of Dominion cities, showing the existing conditions, their merits and defects, and contrasting the conditions before and after improvements have been effected.

5. To inaugurate competitions for housing for workers, industrial villages, garden suburbs, civic improvements, artistic advertising, photographs of civic beauty contrasted with civic ugliness, paintings of towns and cities, and to exhibit the drawings and models submitted.

6. To bring before delegates and the public, by means of moving pictures and lantern illustrations, the progress which has been made in the development of garden cities and garden suburbs, the convenience and beautification of cities, and, by contrast, the necessity for immediate improvement in the Dominion cities and towns.

7. To publish an illustrated official synopsis of proceedings recording the views of the writers and speakers and the resolutions passed.

SOURCE : Hurst Seagar, S 1919 *Proceedings of the 1919 Town-Planning Conference and Exhibition*, Government Printer, Wellington, p3.