

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

**Integrating citizens' agendas in
New Zealand local government
environmental planning and decision-making:
An examination of two wastewater planning processes
and implications for deliberative democracy**

A dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Social Policy

At Massey University, Turitea, Palmerston North
New Zealand

Simon Joseph Nash

2007

Abstract

This research considers the problem of ensuring citizens having meaningful opportunities to provide input in local government environmental planning and decision-making. Planning processes are often as much a product of uncertain human behaviours as they are the result of rational activity and formal institutional arrangements. Both the conduct and outcomes of these processes are heavily influenced by conflicts between actors' underlying perspectives, yet these perspectives are hard to define and their influence is very poorly understood by researchers. Instead, local government research focuses almost exclusively on institutional arrangements and substantive debates over physical resources.

This research focuses on the influence of epistemological and procedural dimensions of actors' perspectives on the integration of citizens' agendas in environmental planning and decision-making in New Zealand local government. From a deliberative democratic perspective, I examine obstacles to the conduct of an *effective integrative process* and consider possible practical and theoretical responses.

The research studies two local government wastewater planning processes. It combines Q-methodology with interviews, observation and documentary analysis. This approach allows me to identify actors' subjective perspectives and to consider their influence on planning and decision-making. This combination of methods has not previously been used in local government research in New Zealand.

The research shows that while conflicts between actors' perspectives pose significant barriers to the integration of citizens' agendas, they can also offer opportunities for addressing those barriers. Integration is clearly limited by a positivist, rationalist perspective that privileges objectivity in knowledge and planning practices. Integration is further limited by a competitive adversarial perspective. Nevertheless, there is also *potential* where deliberative perspectives are present that are more value-critical and that seek intersubjective understanding of actors' inputs. Such compromise-seeking perspectives contribute to more communicatively rational planning and more legitimate and durable decisions.

The thesis argues that councils should foster a change among actors towards a more deliberative perspective and should champion such behaviour themselves. Such change is often obstructed by the tacit, unacknowledged, yet persistent, nature of most

actors' perspectives. The thesis concludes that while transformation of perspectives is unrealistic, a more communicatively rational planning approach is achievable as a basis for legitimate decisions that more effectively integrate citizens' agendas.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the support of many individuals and organisations over the course of this doctoral research. I am grateful to the research participants who generously gave their time in interviews and surveys. Thank you to my supervisors, Dr Christine Cheyne, Dr Kerry Taylor and Professor Jenny Dixon, who provided invaluable expert guidance, project management and jargon-busting throughout this long process. The Foundation for Research, Science and Technology generously supported this research with a Bright Futures Scholarship (#408). Officers and councillors from the Wanganui District Council, Palmerston North City Council, and Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council made their time and resources available, and in some instances, participated in the research. Colleagues and friends at Massey University provided me with a great deal of support, advice (sometimes serendipitously) and kindness. I would particularly like to thank Richard Shaw, Allanah Ryan, Avril Bell, Kath Hay, Robyn Munford, Lesley Patterson, Robin Peace and fellow travellers Ang Jury and Marianne Tremaine. My family and non-Massey friends have also supported me in various ways for which I am grateful. Most of all, I wish to thank Mary for her kind, patient support and unflagging confidence in me.

Table of contents

Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of contents.....	vii
Tables.....	xi
Figures.....	xi
List of Abbreviations.....	xii
Glossary of Terms.....	xiii
Technical terms.....	xiii
Maori Terms.....	xiii
Chapter One – Introduction.....	1
The methodological approach.....	6
Practical and theoretical justifications for this research.....	7
Key concepts.....	11
Format of thesis.....	26
Chapter Two – A review of the problem of integrating citizens’ agendas in the New Zealand context.....	29
Introduction.....	29
The statutory and institutional context for the research.....	31
<i>The Resource Management Act 1991.....</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>The Local Government Acts 1974 and 2002.....</i>	<i>34</i>
Public consultation and participation under the RMA and LGA.....	35
<i>Actors’ different expectations of consultation and participation in decision- making.....</i>	<i>37</i>
Tensions between actors’ diverse substantive agendas.....	41
<i>Risks attached to a narrow biophysical focus.....</i>	<i>43</i>
<i>Risks attached to a technical decision-making focus.....</i>	<i>44</i>
Tensions between actors’ diverse epistemological perspectives.....	45
<i>Mainstream planning and decision-making is positivist, rationalist.....</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Public engagement with experts and technical knowledge.....</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>A narrow definition of sustainable management limits integration.....</i>	<i>54</i>
<i>Māori agendas provide a particular point of tension.....</i>	<i>56</i>
Tensions between actors’ diverse procedural views.....	58
<i>Council actors’ understandings of the purpose of public participation.....</i>	<i>59</i>
<i>Citizen non-participation (rungs 1-4).....</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Citizen participation (rungs 5-9).....</i>	<i>61</i>
<i>Citizens’ different procedural expectations.....</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>Maori actors’ procedural expectations.....</i>	<i>68</i>
<i>Actors’ understandings of roles and responsibilities.....</i>	<i>69</i>
Conclusion.....	73
Chapter Three – Methodology.....	75
Introduction.....	75
Research design.....	75
<i>The fieldwork.....</i>	<i>78</i>
Ethical considerations.....	80
The research methods.....	81
Q-methodology.....	82
<i>Q-methodology and the measurement of subjectivity.....</i>	<i>86</i>
<i>Applications of Q-methodology in conflict resolution, planning and policy analysis.....</i>	<i>87</i>
<i>Advantages and disadvantages of Q versus R.....</i>	<i>88</i>

<i>Q-methodology, post-positivism and value pluralism</i>	89
<i>Q-methodology and generalisability</i>	90
<i>The relationship between perspectives and structural location</i>	91
The Q-method process.....	94
<i>Generation of statements</i>	94
<i>Filling ‘gaps’ in the concourse</i>	97
<i>The statement sample</i>	99
<i>The respondent sample</i>	101
<i>The Q-sort</i>	102
<i>Factor analysis</i>	105
<i>Factor interpretation</i>	107
Post-sorting interviews.....	112
Documentary analysis.....	115
Observation.....	116
Conclusion.....	117
Chapter Four – The two wastewater planning processes.....	119
Introduction.....	119
The Wanganui wastewater planning process.....	122
<i>The original Wanganui Wastewater Scheme (1979-1988)</i>	122
<i>The 1992 Wastewater Scheme</i>	124
<i>The 1999 Revised Wastewater Scheme</i>	125
Analysing the Wanganui planning process.....	127
<i>Institutional practices and actors’ agendas</i>	128
<i>The epistemological dimension</i>	130
<i>Procedural dimensions</i>	133
The Palmerston North wastewater planning process.....	137
<i>Wastewater 2002</i>	138
<i>Wastewater 2006</i>	140
Analysing the Palmerston North planning process.....	143
<i>Institutional practices and agendas</i>	143
<i>The epistemological dimension</i>	146
<i>Procedural dimensions</i>	149
Comparing the Wanganui and Palmerston North processes.....	154
<i>The epistemological dimension</i>	155
<i>Procedural dimensions</i>	156
Conclusion.....	158
Chapter Five – Reconstructing actors’ perspectives.....	161
Introduction.....	161
Factor One: Subjective Compromisers.....	166
<i>An explicitly subjective epistemological dimension</i>	167
<i>A deliberative compromise-seeking procedural dimension</i>	172
Factor Two: Objective Competitors.....	178
<i>An objective, factual epistemological dimension</i>	180
<i>A competitive procedural dimension</i>	184
Factor Three: Neutral Executives.....	189
<i>A neutral open-minded epistemological dimension</i>	191
<i>An executive decision-making procedural dimension</i>	193
Conclusion.....	198
<i>The significance of mixed loadings on factors</i>	199
Chapter Six – Research findings and theoretical and practical responses.....	201
Introduction.....	201

Finding One: A positivist rationalist perspective limits the integration of citizens' agendas	202
<i>A communicatively rational, value-critical approach</i>	207
<i>Four responses to a positivist rationalist perspective</i>	211
Finding Two: The expectation that council actors will be objective and neutral limits the integration of citizens' agendas	215
<i>Three responses to the ideal of neutrality and objectivity</i>	218
Finding Three: Conflicting expectations of citizens' roles limits the integration of citizens' agendas	222
<i>Responses to the problem of conflicts over citizens' roles</i>	226
Finding Four: The integration of citizens' agendas is supported by aspects of the Subjective Compromisers perspective	227
<i>An approach to fostering a deliberative perspective</i>	230
Finding Five: The integration of citizens' agendas is threatened by aspects of the Objective Competitors perspective	231
<i>Three responses to the problem of competitive perspectives</i>	235
Finding Six: The integration of citizens' agendas is threatened by aspects of the Neutral Executives perspective	237
<i>Responses to the privileging of decision-making imperatives</i>	238
Finding Seven: Tensions between actors' perspectives are a barrier to the integration of citizens' agendas	241
<i>A response on the importance of attending to processes</i>	243
Finding Eight: Actors' perspectives, experiences and structural location are all critical elements in the integration of citizens' agendas.....	244
Conclusion	246
Chapter Seven – Conclusion	249
Introduction	249
Summary of thesis and key arguments	250
Seven conditions for the effective integration of citizens' agendas	253
Critiquing the research and areas for further research	266
<i>The utility of Q-methodology for this research</i>	267
<i>Guidance for actors on achieving value-criticality and communicative rationality</i>	269
<i>Further assessing the influence of actors' perspectives on effective integration</i>	270
<i>Exploring the utility of Q-methodology as a tool for planning and consultation</i>	270
Conclusion	271
Appendix One – Information sheet (PNCC)	275
Appendix Two – Information sheet (WDC)	277
Appendix Three – Consent form	279
Appendix Four – Research Agreement	280
Appendix Five – Interview schedule	284
Appendix Six – Concourse of 181 statements	286
Appendix Seven – Q-sorts loading by factor	297
Bibliography	299

Tables

Table 1: Full set of Q-statements and factor responses.....	163
Table 2: An environmental conservationist agenda.....	168
Table 3: Spiritual and cultural values are legitimate inputs	169
Table 4: Environmental and economic agendas must be balanced	170
Table 5: Lay, non-scientific, non-expert inputs are legitimate	170
Table 6: All cultural preferences should be taken into account	171
Table 7: Engagement and compromise are worthwhile	173
Table 8: Māori will only invest time in consultation if it is genuinely worthwhile	174
Table 9: Citizens should be involved and provide input	175
Table 10: Actors should seek to balance compromise and advocacy.....	176
Table 11: Actors should accept and support legitimate council decisions.....	177
Table 12: Decisions should be based on factual evidence.....	181
Table 13: An environmental conservationist agenda.....	181
Table 14: Economic agendas should not be privileged	182
Table 15: Actors and agendas should be objective.....	183
Table 16: Planning and decision-making are competitive and adversarial activities..	185
Table 17: Engagement and compromise carry significant risks	186
Table 18: Citizens are often marginalised in decision-making	187
Table 19: Māori agendas were privileged.....	188
Table 20: Neutral and open-minded on substantive issues.....	191
Table 21: Neutral on different types of knowledge and agendas	192
Table 22: Recognise Māori inputs as legitimate.....	193
Table 23: Strong views on procedural issues.....	194
Table 24: Citizens should compromise and accept decisions	195
Table 25: Citizens' expectations of influence must be managed.....	196
Table 26: Council consultation was successful	197
Table 27: Seven conditions for the effective integration of citizens' agendas	253

Figures

Figure 1: A ladder of citizen empowerment (Burns et al., 1994)	59
Figure 2: Data collection, analysis and interpretation.....	94
Figure 3: Example of Q-sort cards used in this study.....	103
Figure 4: The Q-sort Score Sheet	104
Figure 4: Map of New Zealand showing area of Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council and Wanganui city and Palmerston North city.....	120
Figure 5: Local government boundaries in the Manawatu-Wanganui region	121
Figure 6: Wanganui City showing main sewers and marine outfall	123
Figure 7: Map of Palmerston North and downstream region.....	137
Figure 8: The final Palmerston North wastewater scheme.....	143
Figure 9: The theorised relationships between actors' perspectives.....	250

List of Abbreviations

AEE	Assessment of Environmental Effects
CLG	Community Liaison Group
ERMA	Environmental Risk Management Authority
GM	Genetic modification
HEC	Human Ethics Committee
LBED	Land based effluent disposal
LGA 1974	Local Government Act 1974
LGA 2002	Local Government Act 2002
LGNZ	Local Government New Zealand
LTCCP	Long Term Council Community Plan
MfE	Ministry for the Environment
MoRST	Ministry of Research, Science and Technology
NIMBY	Not In My Back Yard
pers.comm.	Personal communication
PCE	Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment
PN	Palmerston North
PNCC	Palmerston North City Council
RCGM	Royal Commission on Genetic Modification
RMA	Resource Management Act 1991
s.	Section
WDC	Wanganui District Council
WWWP	Waste Water Working Party

Glossary of Terms

Technical terms

Discretionary activity	An activity provided for by a rule in a plan, which requires a resource consent, and which may specify restrictions on the exercise of that activity
Milliscreen	A fine mechanical screening device for wastewater treatment
Separated/separation	Separate pipe systems for sewage and stormwater
Sewage	Same as wastewater
Sewer	Pipe for conveying sewage
Sewerage/sewerage system	Same as wastewater system
Stormwater	Run-off from roofs, roads, yards, etc.
Tradewaste	Liquid wastes discharged by industries
Wastewater	Mix of domestic sewage and industrial wastewater (tradewaste)
Wastewater system	The system of pipes, pump stations, treatment and disposal facilities which convey wastewater

Māori Terms

Hapu	Group of several whanau
Iwi	Group of several hapu
Kaitiaki	Guardians, guardianship
Kaitiakitanga	The exercise of guardianship
Mauri	Life force
Runanga	Tribal council
Tangata whenua	The iwi or hapu that holds mana whenua over an area
Wahi tapu	A place sacred to Māori in a traditional, spiritual or mythological sense

Chapter One – Introduction

In the first years of the twenty-first century, intractable conflicts are common over public decisions about physical resource issues such as wind farms and waste disposal sites. Resource use conflicts occur between individual citizens, interest groups, experts and public agencies, and often hinge on contests between a wide range of substantive agendas (including scientific, economic, environmental, social and cultural agendas). Conflicts between actors' agendas often appear to be resolved in favour of government actors and powerful interest groups, on occasion in the face of strident opposition from other citizens. At other times, public opposition leads to stalemates or to decisions that satisfy no one. Even apparent compromises often mask significant underlying inequities in the treatment of some citizens' agendas. Where intractable conflicts occur, those public agencies that are responsible for environmental planning and decision-making face significant challenges. Public agencies must guard against the potential privileging of dominant agendas and find ways to take sufficient account of those citizens' agendas that risk being excluded, while attending to the imperatives of decision-making.

Conflicts over resource use occur at all levels of government, but are particularly evident in local government environmental planning in New Zealand. As councils are encouraged to provide opportunities for more and more public participation, the *integration* of citizens' diverse agendas into plans and decisions appears increasingly problematic because of the extent to which those agendas can be in conflict with one another. 'Integration' is used here as a verb, to refer to the set of *processes* that allow for citizens' agendas to be taken into account. For integration of their agendas, citizens need to have meaningful opportunities to express their values and preferences, to engage with other viewpoints, and to have their input taken into account in any decision-making. Challenges to conducting an effective integrative process are likely to arise where citizens' agendas conflict with councils' and professional experts' agendas, or where some citizens' agendas are more dominant. At times, it also appears that councils pay bare lip service to their statutory requirements for citizens' participation and for taking account of their input.

Challenges to the integration of citizens' diverse agendas seem particularly acute in situations where a decision is required that is difficult to reverse and will directly impact on some actors' interests. Decisions such as those on the siting of a waste facility or the approval for a new residential development are often fraught because of the impact

they will have on citizens. In such situations, councils are frequently under considerable pressure from a range of statutory planning and practical constraints. On top of that, citizens' agendas may appear simply to complicate and confuse the decision-making process. This may be particularly likely when some citizens adopt positions in stubborn opposition to proposals or to other citizens. In such situations, councils may be tempted to pay lip service to consultation, while effectively ignoring public input. The challenge for councils would then be to find a means of balancing an effective integrative process that takes account of citizens' agendas against the imperatives of decision-making.

In advance of the literature review and research, it appears that problems with integrating citizens' agendas into environmental planning and decision-making may be a function of a number of issues. These issues may include institutional practices and norms, such as a council's capacity and enthusiasm for public participation and the nature of the statutory requirements for planning and decision-making. Integration of citizen's agendas is often likely to be affected by conflicts over the substantive agendas themselves, such as those between conservationist and pro-development agendas. These conflicts may reflect actors' specific interests, for example, citizens who live near a proposed industrial development are likely to have a different view from its commercial backers. Integration may also be affected where actors have conflicting *perspectives* on epistemological issues such as what types of knowledge should be taken into account in decision-making, and on procedural issues such as the value of deliberation and consensus.

In situations such as those described above, the risk is that councils will privilege some agendas over others. Such privileging could occur because those agendas conform to unwritten but widely understood standards, for example, about their degree of objectivity, expertise or practical relevance. Other agendas are likely to reflect strongly held values such as a sense of responsibility to conserve the environment for future generations, or the belief in a spiritual connection between people and environment. These may challenge dominant institutional viewpoints, such as those of the business community, councils or Western scientific researchers. They may also be expressed in challenging ways, perhaps in a quite rhetorical or culturally specific fashion. These agendas, which are likely to often be held by citizens, may be treated as of secondary importance because they are seen as uninformed or lacking professional expertise, or as overly emotive and irrational, and therefore, as difficult to take account of in decision-making. Where such privileging occurs, it may impact on citizens and their

agendas, and its consequences are likely to be quite anti-democratic and exclusive and to discourage some citizens from participating.

In order for citizens' agendas to be adequately expressed and taken into account in planning and decision-making, we need to identify any challenges to conducting an integrative process, and to develop a sound understanding of any obstacles. We need to explore issues such as how conflicts might arise and why privileging and exclusion might occur. In this research I examine the issue of challenges to the integration of citizens' agendas in New Zealand local government environmental planning and decision-making. My aim is to identify obstacles and develop a theoretical explanation for their effect on the integration of citizens' agendas. My further aim is to identify opportunities for effective integration, and to consider how obstacles can be lessened or removed so that citizens can make a productive contribution to planning and decision-making.

In order to meet these aims, I address this research question:

What influences the integration of citizens' agendas in environmental planning and decision-making in New Zealand local government?

The empirical enquiry focuses on identifying those elements that influence integration, positively and negatively, and considering what effect they have.

A subsidiary research question is also addressed:

What opportunities for more effective integration are revealed by this research?

This introductory chapter sets out the background to the enquiry and the development of the research question. I identify what I understand to be the dimensions of the problem and define the key concepts used in the research. Brief introductory descriptions are included for the methodological approach and the practical and theoretical justifications for this research. The chapter finishes with an outline of the rest of the thesis.

An initial review of what is known about the challenge of integration indicates that the existing scholarship can be divided into four dimensions, as outlined below. Those four dimensions will form the basis of a detailed review of literature in Chapter Two, which

focuses most closely on the New Zealand local government context. The four dimensions that can be identified as influencing integration are:

(1) Institutional arrangements

The integration of citizens' agendas occurs within an institutional context of statutory obligations that shape what councils can and will do, and institutional practices that affect how councils go about their business. These practices are provided for under the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Local Government Acts 1974 and 2002. These obligations and practices influence whether a council takes sufficient account of actors' agendas in planning and decision-making. Statutory requirements include legal, financial and regulatory limits on councils, and obligations such as those for public consultation. These statutory requirements are reported on by organisations such as the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) (2005) and Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) (2003a–e). Matters of institutional practices include issues such as how a council conducts its public consultation and when it chooses to involve the public (apart from its statutory obligations), and these are also well documented by similar sources. As noted under (4) below, these formal institutional arrangements also overlap with perspectives that address issues such as informal norms of behaviour.

(2) The actors and their agendas

The actors who are involved in planning and decision-making and their stated substantive agendas comprise the second dimension. Conflicts over resource use have traditionally been seen by planners and decision-makers as primarily technical and financial issues that concern a small group of actors, including land-users, professional technical experts and councils. However, it is now well understood that these conflicts often involve multiple groups of actors, including citizens, interest groups, iwi and others, and encompass a range of social, cultural and political agendas. These more subjective agendas will not necessarily be well-articulated or orchestrated. They may reflect a loose coalition of ideas and advocates, or they may be part of a highly organised and ongoing campaign.

Although the actors and agendas vary from issue to issue, they are documented by individual councils in their records of various planning and decision-making activities; and in aggregate through the reporting of agencies such as the Controller and Auditor-General (1998; 2000) and the Ministry for the Environment's annual survey of local authority resource management activities (e.g., MfE, 2005b). Research on public participation has also examined issues such as the tensions that arise between actors'

different substantive agendas (see for example, Fookes, 1999; Gunder, 2000; Ericksen et al., 2003; Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (PCE), 2005a). The local and national media also regularly cover the more interesting and high profile examples of conflicts over resource use. Media coverage, in particular, tends to focus on this second dimension of actors and documented substantive agendas when reporting on conflicts over resource use.

(3) Epistemological tensions

Resource use conflicts often appear to be underpinned by deeper tensions between actors' perspectives on types of knowledge and agendas. These *epistemological* tensions are not well documented in New Zealand literature, but they can be discerned in actors' conflicting definitions and understandings of environmental issues and the ways in which they frame and communicate their agendas. On an issue such as the allocation of a river water resource, decision-makers often need to adjudicate between knowledge claims based on very different worldviews. For example, Māori expect their knowledge and evidence to be treated as of equal importance to scientific and technical evidence, despite quite different sources of legitimacy. In the New Zealand context, a number of researchers have considered this cross-cultural issue (Klein, 2000; Neill, 2003; Ahdar, 2004).

Other researchers have examined conflicts about public understandings of science (Allen et al., 2003; Goven & Wuthnow, 2004), or technocratic decision-making practices (Tenbensel, 2000; Reid, 2002). Gunder (1998, 2000) has identified the use of power over knowledge and the ability to control what counts as professional expertise as critical determinants of success in planning and decision-making. Other researchers have considered the role of the expert and elected representatives in decision-making on our behalf (Forret, 1998; Hayward, 2000). To date, however, there has been very little research in New Zealand that directly examines individual actors' perspectives as an element in conflicts over resource use. The work of Toi Te Taiao: The Bioethics Council (2004) is a notable exception in addressing actors' perspectives directly. However, no researchers have dealt with this issue in any detail in relation to local government. Consequently, this research will be designed to capture actors' perspectives and their influence on the conduct of an effective integrative process.

(4) Procedural tensions

Conflicts over resource use issues may also be exacerbated by tensions between the procedural dimensions of actors' different perspectives on governance issues such as

roles, responsibilities and levels of influence. As defined here, the procedural dimension of perspectives includes those informal and unwritten institutional norms, customs and values that often guide actors' behaviour in planning and decision-making (Lowndes, et al., 2001). As citizens have come to anticipate a greater degree of public involvement, so conflicts appear to have escalated over different understandings of the purpose and form of planning and decision-making (Forgie, 2002). A traditional 'decide, announce, defend' approach from councils is increasingly likely to meet significant public opposition. There is also some evidence in New Zealand that where planning and decision-making privileges dominant actors and agendas, and particular types of knowledge and expertise (Gunder, 1998), other citizens feel powerless to influence outcomes, and will come to see little personal benefit from participation (Forgie et al., 1999; Day, 1998; Knight et al., 2000). Nevertheless, there is very little research in New Zealand local government on what actors' various perspectives comprise, or how they influence the integration of citizens' agendas. This is the second area in which there is a gap in existing knowledge that this research addresses.

The methodological approach

The research design encompasses critically examining all four dimensions of the problem, but with a particular focus on identifying actors' perspectives. The research identifies commonalities among perspectives and assesses their influence on the integration of citizens' agendas in local government environmental planning and decision-making. Practical and theoretical conclusions are drawn from these findings about ways to improve the integration of citizens' agendas.

The research examines two local authority public consultation processes for wastewater treatment and disposal conducted over a number of years in the 1990s and completed in 2001. The two wastewater planning processes were chosen because they comprise a typical spread of the actors, agendas and issues present in conflicts over resource use. The two processes are:

1. Palmerston North City Council's "WasteWater 2002" and "WasteWater 2006"
2. Wanganui District Council's "Wastewater Project"

The research obtained data on the two planning and decision-making processes, including:

- ❖ Information on the institutional processes and practices being followed
- ❖ Data on actors' stated agendas
- ❖ Data on actors' underlying perspectives
- ❖ Demographic information on the actors and agendas present (and therefore also what groups of actors and agendas are not present)

Data are gathered through Q-method surveys, interviews, observation of public meetings, and desk-based research.

The primary research method used is Q-methodology (Brown, 1980; McKeown & Thomas, 1988). Q-methodology allows for the reconstruction of actors' perspectives on a particular issue in a particular context. Theoretical explanations are then developed for the influence of actors' perspectives on the integration of actors' agendas. This approach is interpretative in that it begins by exploring the perspectives and understandings of the actors involved in the two planning processes. These perspectives can then be developed into more *generalised* theoretical explanations and possible areas for further research, all of which will have implications for existing theory and for planning and decision-making practices.

This enquiry is limited to the problem of integrating citizens' agendas in New Zealand local government environmental planning and decision-making. However, the problem is clearly relevant to a number of other settings, both in local government here and internationally, and in other public decision-making settings. The literature review in Chapter Two draws on international theoretical literature on public participation and conflicts over issues such as hazardous waste disposal (e.g., Hunold & Young, 1998). It also draws on evidence from other New Zealand settings, particularly from debates on the public understanding of science, as in the genetic modification debate (e.g., Toi Te Taiao: the Bioethics Council, 2004; Cronin & Jackson, 2004).

Practical and theoretical justifications for this research

My interest in the problem of challenges to the integration of citizens' agendas was sparked by my observation of councils' democratic processes, particularly public consultation, and by anecdotal evidence and media reporting on the conflicts that quite routinely emerge in environmental planning. Some aspects of this problem have attracted scholarly and practitioner attention in areas such as public policy, planning and democratic theory. This scholarship is reviewed in Chapter Two with the aim of

identifying what we already know about the research problem and where the gaps in current knowledge are. Here I briefly summarise that literature, indicating where contributions to the scholarship will be made, which areas are important to take into account, and which will be put aside as outside the scope of this study.

Current environmental planning and decision-making practices in New Zealand have not adequately addressed the challenge of integrating citizens' agendas. This is despite the extensive international and local body of scholarship on public participation and best practice. Thus, the primary justification for this research is that there appear to be obstacles to integration, but also opportunities, and that this challenge requires further study. We do not have a sufficient understanding of how constraints and imperatives on planning and decision-making, and the influences of actors' agendas and perspectives, can obstruct or enhance opportunities for the integration of citizens' agendas.

We also know very little about actors' perspectives on planning and decision-making. This is particularly the case in terms of citizens' perspectives on local government, both in New Zealand and internationally, where Lowndes (2001b:446) identifies the paucity of research on:

...the views of citizens themselves about the prospect and reality of public participation – a perspective often neglected in research...Exploring citizens' views is particularly important in the context of deep scepticism about participation that exists among many local politicians.

A secondary justification is that New Zealand researchers have argued that the problem of conflicts over issues such as resource use and genetic modification requires much closer attention, particularly in terms of conflicting stakeholder values (Allen et al., 2003; Goven & Wuthnow, 2004; PCE, 2005a). Internationally, researchers from a number of related disciplines have also argued that the challenge of better integrating different types of values, knowledge and agendas deserves greater attention. Scholars from public policy (Schon & Rein, 1994; Roberts, 1995), sociology of knowledge (Latour, 1987; Nowotny, 1993; Morcol, 2002), planning theory (Selman, 1996; Healey, 1997; Hillier, 2002), and deliberative democracy (Dryzek, 2000; Hunold & Young, 1998) have all argued for more attention to be given to the role of actors' values and preferences in conflicts. As Hendriks (2005:14) argues, we concentrate on the content of policy, but we need to listen more closely to actors' stories about

processes, values and beliefs, because “in some contexts productive deliberation hinges on our sensitivity to these more subtle storylines”.

A wider justification for this enquiry is that I anticipate that the findings and theoretical and practical implications will have relevance to other areas of public decision-making. The challenge of integrating citizens' agendas applies in a diverse, pluralistic society in which many citizens question the traditional dominant narratives of scientific positivism, western capitalism, liberal individualism, and majoritarian representative democracy. As Hayward (2000:17) observes, the claims arising from citizens' diverse agendas increasingly challenge traditional governance structures that reflect the orthodox needs, values and aspirations of the dominant cultures. In this context of deepening value pluralism, the maintenance of political legitimacy requires constant attention (Wolf, 2002). Issues such as biotechnology, public understandings of science and the environment, the effects of pollution, intergenerational and international responsibilities for the environment, and many other current debates are illustrative of this requirement.

Further illustrating the broad relevance of the challenge of integrating citizens' agendas, the Royal Commission on Genetic Modification (RCGM) (2001:24) concluded that:

In a pluralistic society people draw their values from different sources. It is not appropriate for one group to seek to impose their values on others. But in the midst of such diversity, can a common core of values be found as a basis for ethical decision-making? The Commission debated that question and decided that such a common core of values exists.

The empirical and practical justification for this research is also underscored by theories that critique the practices of mainstream planning and decision-making, that is, those prevailing ideas and practices of planners and decision-makers. New institutionalism emphasises the importance of actors' structural location, particularly in public organisations, as a source of power that allows them to exercise agency over processes and outcomes (March & Olsen, 1989; Lowndes, 1996, 2002). Where dominant actors cluster in 'policy networks' (Sabatier, 1993), they may often be able to exclude other actors from any decision-making influence. The systems of governance, and unwritten norms and rules of an institution may also function to privilege some agendas and worldviews, and to exclude others.

Where difference is suppressed or particular types of knowledge or agendas are marginalised, it is also important to consider how institutions and dominant actors may be able to deploy particular definitions of legitimacy in pursuit of their own agendas. Bachrach and Baratz (1962:949) identified the way in which “some issues are organised into politics while others are organised out”. For example, it may be possible in public consultation to discuss the route of a new motorway, but not whether the motorway is needed in the first place (Connelly & Smith, 1999). Councillors and council officers, in particular, can act as gatekeepers to types of knowledge and agendas. Officers, as with other public officials, have been recognised by some theorists as employing the rhetoric of neutrality and objectivity when defending themselves against claims of bias and predetermination (Roberts, 1995). Citizens themselves may reinforce a “popular conception” of officials as neutral managers whose motives do not need to be examined, because of the assumption of objectivity (ibid.).

This research is most closely informed by a deliberative democratic view of citizens’ participation as a critical ingredient in legitimate decision-making and the maintenance of a strong democratic polity and civil society (Benhabib, 1996; Healey, 1997; Hillier, 2002). A deliberative democratic approach to the integration of citizens’ agendas will be central to this discussion. The research also reflects a post-positivist view of the integration of agendas, which requires that actors acknowledge the context-specific nature of knowledge and understanding (Durning, 1999; Morcol, 2002). In methodological and democratic theoretical terms, this research treats political discourses as both individual and collective, and as subjective and context specific. The research emphasises both the local and situated aspects of the challenge of integration, while also seeking solutions that are applicable across contexts and sectors.

As discussed in the next section, there is no single definition for what counts as ‘integration’ of citizens’ agendas. However, from a deliberative democratic standpoint, integration requires that all actors have the opportunity to understand and critically reflect on their own and other actors’ values and preferences. Actors should also be prepared to modify their claims where communicative rationality is achieved (Benhabib, 1996; Cohen, 1996; Dryzek, 2000). Where these deliberative assumptions hold true, the integration of citizens’ agendas is likely to lead to better informed decision-making. This is possible because citizens’ knowledge and agendas often reflect issues that are not adequately articulated by professional experts and government agencies (Hunold &

Young, 1998). Difference then becomes a resource rather than being seen as an obstacle to unity or to decision-making (Young, 1995:141).

For deliberative democratic theory to be applicable to the challenge of integration, its assumptions about actors' viewpoints and behaviours must be relevant to the particular problem context (Benhabib, 1996). The theory should be able to offer an explanation for the problem that has been observed; rather than simply be aspirational, it should offer a useful connection to practice. As Dryzek and Berejikian (1993:57) maintain, "a theory of democracy is viable to the extent that there is a discourse or combination of discourses to which it can relate". For example, deliberative democratic theory should be able to explain situations where local government actors privilege decision-making over public participation, and to offer possible ways forward. As it stands, democratic theorists are suspicious of rhetorical claims of consensus and agreement, suggesting they often mask dominant behaviour and injustices (Young, 1995; Pellizzoni, 2001). This research employs a deliberative democratic theoretical framework for examining the integration of citizens' agendas, but also considers the theory's utility as an explanatory mechanism for the research problem.

Key concepts

Local government

Local government in New Zealand comprises territorial authorities and regional councils. Its structure and functions are prescribed by a number of acts of Parliament¹. Its jurisdiction, at the time of the fieldwork in 2001/2002, was limited to those activities explicitly set out in legislation. Since then, the Local Government Act (LGA) 2002 has given councils a general empowerment that allows local authorities to undertake a wider range of activities that promote social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being. Local government members (councillors) are directly, periodically elected by the residents of their communities as their representatives.

¹ The roles, responsibilities, powers and accountabilities of local government are defined by the Local Electoral Act 2001, the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002, and the Local Government Act 2002. Prior to 2002, at the time of the fieldwork, the Local Government Act 1974 was in force.

Council

'Council' refers both to regional councils and to territorial authorities. Councils are responsible for a range of basic community services, including roading, waste disposal, parks and libraries. Councils have the power to pass local by-laws and are charged with administering central government regulations such as found in building codes. Unlike in some other countries, councils in New Zealand have generally not been involved in areas such as education or social welfare.

Planning and decision-making

'Planning' is that set of professional functions concerned with defining strategies and goals and deciding on the tasks and resources needed to achieve those goals. Planners in local government work in areas such as physical resource management, and social, community and economic planning. Planning occurs through the preparation of formal statutory instruments such as annual plans under the Local Government Act 1974 (LGA 1974), long-term council community plans (LTCCPs) under the LGA 2002, and district and regional plans under the Resource Management Act (RMA) 1991. Planning also involves the preparation of non-statutory plans, strategies and policies such as a consultation policy.

'Decision-making' is both democratic (typically undertaken by representatives) and managerial (undertaken by bureaucrats who have some delegated authority). At times elected representatives may also engage in more participatory forms of democratic decision-making such as shared council/citizen/interest group forums with delegated authority. Councils are required to consult the public over decision-making on any significant proposed activities. This requirement emphasises local government accountability by exposing councils to public scrutiny and providing citizens with opportunities to participate in decision-making. Citizens are guaranteed in some situations the prescribed minimum right to make submissions on proposals. Most councils undertake additional forms of public consultation that go beyond their statutory obligations to consult in the preparation of plans and policies. For example, consultation is often undertaken during initial planning for significant activities (such as wastewater infrastructure). This non-statutory preliminary planning may begin months or years before the statutorily required component, and will typically also include some preliminary decision-making.

Statutorily, planning and decision-making are discrete activities that take place at different points. However, in terms of this study, the integration of citizens' agendas and the four dimensions of the problem bear on both statutory and non-statutory (preliminary) planning and decision-making activities. Consequently, this research treats planning and decision-making activities as inextricably linked elements of the study.

Participation and consultation

'Public participation' in this study refers to any activities where the public are involved in council planning and decision-making. These activities extend from simple information-giving and gathering public input, through more inclusive and deliberative activities, to those that include some sharing of decision-making authority. This is distinct from a participatory democratic process where decision-making authority is more-or-less automatically and routinely vested with citizens. I use 'public consultation' as councils generally use it, in a narrower sense than 'public participation', to refer to the public consultation that is provided for under the Resource Management Act 1991 and Local Government Acts 1974 and 2002. In Chapter Two I provide more detail on how participation and consultation are provided for and implemented under those three acts.

Council officers and planners

'Officers' refers to council employees who are involved in planning and decision-making processes. Officers include professional planners. The terms 'planners' or 'analysts' are sometimes used to follow other authors' terminology.

Citizens

'Citizens' refers to "member[s] of a political community or state, endowed with a set of rights and a set of obligations" (Heywood, 2002:414). Those rights include the opportunity to provide input into local government decision-making in statutorily prescribed processes such as resource consent hearings and annual planning consultation (described in Chapter Two). In practice, citizens are often allowed more extensive involvement than the statutory minimum. 'Citizens' in this study refers to both individuals and members of interest groups.

Actors

'Actors' refers to individuals and groups involved in local government environmental planning and decision-making. Actors include councillors, officers, professional consultants, and citizens acting in various capacities, such as private residents, members of interest groups, and businesspeople.

Agendas

An agenda is a set of stated or unstated things to be done or goals to be accomplished. All actors are likely to have agendas for their preferred substantive outcomes. Some will also have agendas for their preferred planning and decision-making processes. Citizens' agendas are usually expressed in their public submissions and other input on plans and proposals, for example, in a submission that requests that a resource consent application for a proposed development be declined. Council actors and other actors who represent an organisation may not express a personal agenda if their organisation has taken a formal position. Agendas can be collectively held in the sense that actors come to identify with a common position, or collectively formulate an explicit position before or during planning and decision-making.

'Public input' is a different, but overlapping, concept from citizens' agendas. The public input that a council receives from citizens, such as written submissions, certainly is an expression of citizens' agendas, but it may not fully reflect them. Public input will not necessarily incorporate all aspects of agendas, since there may be guidelines on submissions or a need for brevity. Citizens may also find incentives to tailor input to suit the particular audience. For example, citizens may couch submissions in terms of a perceived public interest, without mentioning specific private interests that they may also be pursuing. Citizens' input will be informed by their underlying perspectives, as defined below, and these are unlikely to be fully expressed.

Objectivity and subjectivity

Actors' agendas and perspectives will often be regarded as 'objective' if they appear unbiased and informed by facts and expertise that exist apart from the specific context. An objective agenda or perspective presents things such as science and technology as factual and able to be separated from values-based issues such as spirituality, politics and emotion. In contrast, a 'subjective' agenda or perspective reflects a partial, situated

approach to knowledge, and is coloured by actors' own experiences, values and preferences. Subjectivity presents things self-referentially, as the viewer regards them (Rorty, 1979). While objectivity is widely endorsed, some actors are explicitly subjective, presenting their agendas as overtly informed by political and sectional interests and making few claims about their objectivity (Tenbensen, 2000).

The widespread positivist assumption in planning and decision-making is that objective inputs such as expert technical evidence provide an independent, empirically verifiable foundation for decision-making. Yet theorists such as Rorty (1979), Kuhn (1996) and Morcol (2002) have long challenged this assumption, arguing that claims of objectivity are rarely factual or value-free at all; rather they are usually informed by underlying, unacknowledged subjective considerations and by the pursuit of private advantage. Actors who are explicitly subjective are likely to disagree with the widespread privileging of purportedly objective agendas. These debates are examined in more detail in Chapter Two.

Perspectives

The literature review in Chapter Two reveals a lack of understanding of actors' perspectives and their influence on the integration of citizens' agendas. I define a perspective as comprising those underlying subjective values, perceptions and preferences that bear on the formation of actors' agendas. Agendas and perspectives are closely linked but discrete phenomena. Actors' *underlying* perspectives are often tacit and unexamined, and their influence on agendas is largely unacknowledged (Webler, Tuler, & Krueger, 2001). Perspectives *unconsciously direct* actions, affecting how actors understand, interpret and talk about problems and courses of action (ibid.). Some individual actors will have strong, distinct perspectives that set them apart from other actors. More often, actors' perspectives will reflect values and beliefs that are, at least partly shared and held in-common by groups of actors. Individual actors will identify with aspects of shared discourses and perspectives that are socially constructed through debate and deliberation, and that change over time (Schon and Rein, 1994; Hendriks, 2005).

In this study, actors' perspectives are defined as comprising epistemological and procedural *dimensions*. The epistemological dimension comprises actors' views on knowledge, particularly issues such as what counts as expertise or as a legitimate input to planning processes. The procedural dimension concerns actors' views on issues

such as governance rules and norms, democratic processes and actors' roles and responsibilities. Thus, they overlap with a new institutionalist definition of institutions that includes values and behavioural norms. Martin and Steelman (2004:38) refer to "perspectives about values and objectives", a concept which encompasses epistemology and process, beliefs and action-oriented aims. In any given planning and decision-making environment there are likely to be multiple conflicting perspectives at play.

The epistemological and procedural dimensions of a perspective overlap significantly, to the point of sometimes being almost inseparable. Their treatment as two *dimensions* of the same perspective follows existing literature in public policy and democratic theory. Schon and Rein (1994), Sabatier (1993), Hajer (1995) and Hendriks (2005) all identify the epistemological and procedural dimensions of those values and beliefs that underlie planning and decision-making. Dryzek and Berejikian (1993:50) describe "the dispositions of individuals (i.e., their opinions about matters of fact and value relevant to democracy) and their self-described capabilities as potential members of a democratic order". They argue that "how individuals construct reality is inseparable from the roles they think they can, do, and should play in relation to that reality" (ibid:50). Effectively, the epistemological and procedural dimensions of actors' perspectives cannot be adequately considered apart from one another.

Within the procedural dimension, some authors go further in identifying multiple aspects. For example, Webler and Tuler (2000) develop a normative theory of public participation based on the twin Habermasian procedural concepts of 'fairness' and 'competence'. They argue that attention to both aspects is critical in support of a sound participatory process, yet here also the two aspects overlap and are difficult to separate.

Very little is known in the New Zealand local government planning and decision-making context about the impact of actors' perspectives on integration. In terms of the research problem, it is *not at all clear* what the nature of those perspectives is or whether groups of actors share common perspectives in the same way that they often identify common agendas. The research aims to identify perspectives and to consider their influence on the integration of citizens' agendas. Theorists who take a broadly post-positivist approach to public policy and democratic theory argue that we *cannot* understand actors' substantive agendas without reference to their underlying perspectives (Dryzek & Berejikian, 1993; Schon & Rein, 1994; Hajer, 1995). For example, in the UK

environmental decision-making context, Dietz and Atkinson (2005:445) observe that “a promising new pathway for scholarship is understanding public perceptions of environmental justice or equity in a range of contexts”. New institutionalist theorists similarly maintain that an understanding of decision-making requires an understanding of how informal norms and values shape those decisions (March & Olsen, 1989; Lowndes, 1996).

The concept of a perspective is informed by a number of existing theoretical concepts in areas such as planning and public policy, although none that adequately captures the concept. The literature also employs a range of terms, at times almost interchangeably. Dayton (2000) and Schon and Rein (1994:23) employ “policy frames” to describe the “underlying structures of belief, perception and appreciation” that actors’ substantive policy positions rest on. Schon and Rein (1994:23) observe that policy disputes occur in situations where contending parties hold conflicting frames, and that:

Such disputes are resistant to resolution by appeal to facts or reasoned argumentation because the parties’ conflicting frames determine what counts as a fact and what arguments are taken to be relevant and compelling. Moreover, the frames that shape policy positions and underlie controversy are usually tacit, which means that they are exempt from conscious attention and reasoning.

Policy frames are like perspectives in that they are far more likely to go unexamined as a source of conflict than would an explicitly stated agenda. Frames are rather like a story, based on an actor’s own subjective construction of reality and of what is important to the actor. Substantive policy problems are described in terms that fit an actor’s policy frame. Schon and Rein (1994:29) note that “it is the frames held by actors that determine what they see as being in their interests and, therefore, what interests they perceive as conflicting”. Dayton (2000:73) notes that:

...policy frames unconsciously direct us towards a central story line from which to connect an unfolding strip of policy events. They provide a discourse of understanding which draws our attention to ‘a few salient features and relations for what would otherwise be an overwhelming and complex reality’ (Schon and Rein, 1994, p.26). They provide us with a context of values and core underlying beliefs within our language, from which to interpret and respond to policy controversies (Zundel, 1995). Finally, they open up pathways to action. In

essence, then, policy frames serve as a touchstone from which political actors recognise policy situations, interpret their meaning, and respond to them”.

Thus, frames and perspectives *bear unconsciously* on actors’ interpretation, understanding and agency. And as Martin and Steelman (2004:57) argue, in order to understand policy outcomes “we need to understand the multiple perspectives that frame problems and alternatives”.

The key difference between the conceptualisation of perspectives and frames is that policy frames focus on *substantive policy issues*, whereas perspectives apply equally well to actors’ constructions of *procedural* preferences, for example, their view of actors’ democratic roles and capabilities, or whether they are inclined towards seeking consensus or to adopt a more adversarial approach. Perspectives are not conceived of as static; actors bring existing perspectives to the policy process, and they are *further shaped* by engagement with contextual issues and debates with other actors.

The concept of a perspective is also influenced by theorists who focus on policy ‘discourses’ or ‘narratives’. Sabatier (1993), Hajer (1995), Wolsink (2004), and Hendriks (2005) all emphasise the discourses that actors bring to planning and decision-making, and that further develop through interactions in interest groups and other coalitions. For these authors, policy positions are largely *shaped* by the discourses that circulate around a policy issue, and which actors come to identify with and to develop through communicative processes. Some discourses will come to be associated with dominant policies and actors; other discourses and actors will be marginalised or excluded.

New institutionalist theorists argue that these dominant discourses are closely informed by informal, often unacknowledged norms and rules that circulate within the ‘policy networks’ of actors involved in planning and decision-making (March & Olsen, 1989; Rhodes, 1995; Lowndes, 1996). These unwritten rules of behaviour and discursive styles are widely recognised and accepted, although they may also be gradually modified by institutional actors (Lowndes, 2002). Yet while such rules function to privilege some actors and agendas, they are arguably less well embedded at the local institutional level or among non-institutional actors (*ibid*). In the New Zealand context, for example, many citizens have only discrete episodes of involvement with local government planning and decision-making and may be quite out of tune with institutional norms. Councillors, for their part, are almost always independent rather

than representatives of political parties with their accompanying informal, but strict disciplines. Thus, the conceptualisation of policy networks and institutional rules may have less applicability in the New Zealand local government context.

Sabatier's (1993:27) "policy belief systems" encompass aspects of both perspectives and agendas. The first two levels of a policy belief system broadly correspond to my definition of an actor's perspective. The first level is a "deep core" of "fundamental normative and ontological axioms that define a person's underlying personal philosophy". These axioms are very difficult to change because of the level of conviction about issues such as freedom, power and justice. The second level is a "near policy core" of "basic strategies and policy positions for achieving deep core beliefs in the policy area...in question", for example, about who should participate, or whether environmental or economic ends should dominate.

The third level of a policy belief system is similar to an agenda. It is that set of secondary aspects "comprising a multitude of instrumental decisions and information searches necessary to implement the policy core in the specific policy area" (Sabatier, 1993:30). These are issues such as the specific decisions on budgets and proposals that appear to typically dominate actors' agendas.

Perspectives are like policy belief systems or policy frames in that they may be quite resistant to change, even when actors are faced with clear empirical evidence to the contrary. Actors are likely to be selective and partisan in their use of arguments to support their underlying perspectives. Yet because actors' explicit agendas are often quite dependent on these perspectives, it is critical that we gain a better understanding of their contribution to conflicts and their influence on the integration of citizens' agendas.

Perspectives are different from policy belief systems in that the former are more likely to be more implicit and unconscious, and their influence on agendas unexplored. Our limited understanding of actors' perspectives reflects this implicit nature. In contrast, policy belief systems are more explicitly shared among actors who have common goals, and who form 'policy coalitions' to pursue those goals. Perspectives may be individual or collective, and *may* also be formed or shared through interaction with other actors and agendas. Additionally, it is quite likely that perspectives will incorporate apparently inconsistent or contradictory beliefs, since there is no reason to assume that actors' subjective perspectives will conform to any objective yardstick for

rationality. Sabatier's (1993) 'belief systems' and Schon and Rein's (1994) 'policy frames' concepts arguably assume a degree of rationality that says more about the normative assumptions of the researchers than it does about the rationality of the researched.

Hajer (1995) and Hendriks (2005) examine perspectives through discourse analysis and the important concept of 'storylines'. They focus on the way in which "certain problems are represented, differences are played out, and social coalitions on specific meanings somehow emerge" (Hajer, 1995:44). Storylines emphasise the collective and communicative elements in developing a policy position. Hendriks (2005:2) focuses on the storylines of policy actors within groups and organisations, arguably excluding individuals from her conceptualisation. However, this research begins from the assumption that actors' perspectives are equally likely to be individual and pre-existing (albeit potentially open to modification). Actors' perspectives are also a more implicit phenomenon and, for some actors, may be more static than the storyline concept suggests.

Whereas Sabatier (1993) and Schon and Rein (1994) emphasise substantive policy views, Hajer (1995) and Hendriks (2005) emphasise narratives about procedural views, such as who should participate and on what terms. All tend to focus on exploring the epistemological issues underpinning those views. The concept of perspectives, used in this research, encompasses both procedural and epistemological issues.

I agree with all these authors that it is often the implicit *rightness* or familiarity of a policy position that makes it attractive to actors, rather than its explicit logic. An argument may sound right because it chimes with an actor's perspective as much as with the actor's explicit agenda. Because of their underlying nature, perspectives or storylines "can resist change and persist as subtle, self-explanatory givens" (Hendriks, 2005:2). This quality makes it difficult to examine their contribution to conflicts or to the privileging of some agendas. As Hendriks argues, policy debates tend to be positivist and adversarial and "rarely involve...an acknowledgement of the subjectivity underpinning claims" (ibid:2). Yet an acknowledgement of actors' subjectivity may be critical to overcoming conflicts and reaching compromise or agreement.

Literature on Q-methodology has also influenced the concept of perspectives. Q-methodology focuses on the systematic reconstruction of actors' subjective perspectives on an issue (Steelman and Maguire, 1999; Barry and Proops, 1999; Van

Eeten, 2001). A number of researchers who use Q-methodology draw a similar distinction to that drawn between perspectives and agendas. Martin and Steelman (2004:38) refer to “perspectives about values and objectives” as the “underlying motivations that influence how individuals and groups relate to the policy issue” (ibid:42). Webler, Tuler and Krueger (2001:437) refer to the “underlying perspectives” that inform the public discourse on a policy issue. Those authors use the terms “discourses” and “perspectives” more or less interchangeably. Dryzek and Berejikian (1993:50) refer to actors’ “constructions of reality” in similar terms to a perspective, as comprising their underlying “dispositions” which are their views on epistemological and substantive issues, and their “self-described capabilities”, referring to actors’ procedural views.

Importantly for this study, and for the prospects of developing a good deliberative process, perspectives may change over time and can be modified (Barry and Proops, 1999) even while they are also sometimes stubbornly adhered to. Dayton (2000:72) argues that policy frames are:

...dynamic and ever-changing ‘scripts’ for organizing and understanding the social world. They are not solid or observable structures, but rather partial and often incomplete social constructions of an issue, that give familiarity to otherwise ambiguous information, objects and phenomena. As such, policy frames might be thought of as fluid processes of issue conceptualisation, which are transmitted via language and are constructed through social interaction, reaction and adjustment.

Critically, where perspectives (or frames, discourses, narratives) can be modified, there is space for policy actors to seek to shift conflicts from the intractable to the tractable through a “process of reframing the controversy” (Dayton, 2000:95). Public participation and the exchange of views provide opportunities for gaining understanding and seeking agreement on a course of action. At the least, where intractable conflicts remain, public participation renders perspectives more explicit and understandable. As Steelman and Maguire (1999:365) observe, “...public dialogue [can] contribute to the stabilization of expectations needed to achieve prescription outcomes”. As noted below, this may be a ‘thin’ conception of participation in democratic processes, although where planning and decision-making are closely bounded by statutory requirements, it is likely to be a vital ingredient in effective integration.

Integration

Integration (*verb*) refers to the process of combining of parts into a whole. An *integrative process* is concerned with combining the different inputs (technical, social, environmental, cultural, etc.) to planning and decision-making, which come from different actors (official, lay and expert). Although the research question specifically addresses the integration of citizens' agendas, there is no agreed-upon definition of an effective integrative process. Instead, as Chapter Two demonstrates, there are many views, both within local government in New Zealand and elsewhere, and in academic literature, on the *description* of the process, and the *normative* aspect of whether and how councils should seek to integrate citizens' agendas. Similarly, the extent to which the process of integration actually occurs is not known but may vary greatly.

The purposes of this study are to find out what obstacles and opportunities affect the process of integrating agendas, and to consider possible responses to those challenges. The inference from these purposes is that (ahead of the research) I consider any *potential deficit* in terms of an effective integrative process to be a problem. This is so, and my position is based on my practical, theoretical and normative judgement of the challenges of integration, which I have introduced in this chapter, and on which I review the existing literature in Chapter Two. It also follows that a definition of what constitutes an effective integrative process is necessary. The working definition supplied below is a proposal based on existing deliberative democratic theoretical literature. The aim in proposing a set of conditions for an integrative process is not to simply measure their achievement, as that would assume the conditions are appropriate. Rather, the research aims to (a) to assess the obstacles to, and opportunities for conducting an effective integrative process in a particular context, and (b) to assess the appropriateness of a set of proposed working conditions for integration. These proposed conditions will be reviewed in the concluding chapter in light of the research findings

I propose that an effective integrative process comprises the following qualities:

1. Citizens will have a meaningful opportunity to provide input and to gain an understanding of the issues and of other actors' agendas, constraints and imperatives. Some democratic theorists argue that this requires a deliberative approach where actors work towards identifying shared preferences as the basis of decision-making (Hunold & Young, 1998).

2. Citizens' agendas are received with an open mind and taken into account in planning and decision-making. In this way, citizens can influence decisions although their specific input will not necessarily determine outcomes. Councils are not required to offer citizens any direct influence over decisions, although some practitioners and theorists argue that decision-making becomes more democratically legitimate for doing so (PCE, 1998). However, there is no necessary causal link between an integrative process and an outcome that actors agree with. Often the sheer diversity of agendas makes it practically impossible to recognise all preferences in a substantive way (Forgie et al., 1999). In some instances, even the consideration of some agendas may only extend to a decision to exclude them as irrelevant, for example, where deliberation is confined to highly technical matters (Thomas, 1995).
3. Citizens are able to accept the legitimacy of planning and decision-making processes and outcomes because councils have met all their statutory obligations, and because the previous conditions have been met. Many practitioners and theorists argue that councils should seek to model public participation on best practices, which generally implies going further than statutory obligations (Controller and Auditor-General, 1998; MfE, 2005).
4. Necessary and legitimate decision-making is able to proceed at the same time as citizens' agendas are taken into account. Councils have a range of statutory and regulatory requirements that they must observe (described in Chapter Two) at the same time as seeking to integrate citizens' agendas. Thus, councils must seek a balance between the imperatives of decision-making and the aim of effective integration. NB: this condition is specific to the planning and decision-making context for this study, which is discussed further below. At other times and in other contexts that are less statutorily circumscribed, a condition that (arguably) elevates decision-making above participation could be said to reduce the relevance of the democratic process.

In seeking a sound integrative process, councils may recognise that there will be situations where, having met statutory obligations, less public involvement is more effective. Competing priorities for planners and decision-makers, such as time and financial constraints, may require that participation be scaled back (Thomas, 1995). For example, at times it will be sufficient for councils simply to gather information on a proposal. At other times, technically complex issues effectively exclude lay actors. The

risks of over-consultation and the burden on citizens also suggest that consultation should be well targeted, without becoming exclusive of citizens' input (Cheyne, 2002:148).

Nevertheless, some theorists argue that effective integration requires that councils routinely provide greater opportunities for citizens to exercise influence. Such an approach would probably pose a significant challenge to many existing practices in New Zealand local government, and arguably, would challenge the constitutional basis for representative decision-making. For example, Cohen (1996) and Benhabib (1996) maintain that citizens should exercise influence over the design of participatory processes and should have the right to challenge procedural rules and substantive agendas. These debates are considered further in Chapter Two.

The relationship between actors' perspectives, integration and social life

Actors' perspectives *underlie* their agency in that they are often tacit and unexamined and may unconsciously direct actions such as the roles that actors adopt in planning and decision-making process (Webler, Tuler, & Krueger, 2001; Schon and Rein, 1994, Dayton, 2000). As Dryzek and Berejikian (1993) argue, actors' perspectives – their constructions of reality – bear on the roles that those actors can and do play in democratic processes. Actors' perspectives on issues such as the nature of validity and knowledge, the value of compromise, and the role of expertise, will inform their own and other actors' agency.

However, the relationship between perspectives, integration and other aspects of social life is more iterative – repetitious and cyclical – than simply causal. Actors' perspectives (and the overlapping concepts of frames, discourses, storylines, values and beliefs) are likely to *alter* in response to their experience of planning and decision-making. In particular, as Sabatier (1993), Hendriks (2005) and Hajer (1995) all emphasise, the communicative and collective nature of planning processes will shape and modify existing perspectives. Actors' perspectives and subsequent actions will also differ in response to the specific context, their location in that context, and the nature of the issues at play. For example, we might anticipate an alignment between a perspective that favoured concentration of decision-making authority within institutions, and the institutional actors themselves, even while that perspective changed over time (Lowndes, 2002). However, this hypothesis may not always stand. One aim of this research is to identify the perspectives that are actually present in a particular context,

rather than to assume such an assertion of structure. As Webler, Tuler and Krueger (2001:448) have concluded, some actors have procedural preferences that are independent of the substantive and contextual issues, while others have strong links between procedural and substantive preferences and aspects of their structural location. Perspectives and aspects of agency and location cannot be separated when interpreting events, and while a causal relationship may exist, its nature is not simply linear.

How well an integrative process conforms to my proposed conditions will depend on the nature of the perspectives at play. Where powerful actors and institutions with shared procedural norms and dominant discourses are able to control planning and decision-making, other actors and perspectives will often be marginalised or excluded. An integrative process depends on actors sharing a perspective that favours integration. Yet, as noted, those perspectives and their influence may go unexamined.

As discussed below, this research does not set out to prescribe a good integrative process or to measure the conduct of processes against *a priori* standards. Rather, it proposes some qualities of an integrative process and acknowledges that some actors' perspectives may run quite counter to that conception. One outcome from this research is to identify the nature of that integrative process that can accommodate different perspectives while also encouraging actors towards a deliberative approach. Another aim is to achieve a better understanding of the perspectives present and their capacity for change.

Deliberative democracy

This research adopts a deliberative democratic theoretical approach to considering planning and *representative* decision-making in a particular prescribed statutory context. It assumes that the challenge of integrative planning is bounded by the necessity of planning and decision-making occurring within statutory timeframes and according to prescribed processes. Critically, the decision-making outcome is an *essential* end-result of such processes, even if it is a decision to not proceed with a proposal, or to proceed in the absence of popular support. Decision-making in such contexts is generally, but not exclusively, the responsibility of elected representatives or those with delegated authority. The exception is where elected representatives *choose* to share some decision-making authority with citizens and interest groups – a more participatory democratic approach. As the proposed conditions for integration

indicate, a deliberative democratic approach focuses on participation and the achievement of consensus or compromise based on actors' informed understanding of one another's agendas and the modification of claims, and where possible, the sharing of procedural and substantive decision-making authority.

In other contexts besides the statutory context for this study, the proposed conditions for integration and decision-making could be regarded as anti-democratic. For example, a more radical decentralisation or devolution of decision-making authority, such as envisaged by a participatory democratic approach, might be regarded as appropriate or necessary. However, in the context of this study, I have proposed that integration does *not* require that actors agree with outcomes; only that they can accept them because of the legitimacy of the process followed and the necessity of statutory decision-making. As noted, in other less statutorily-bounded contexts, this could be regarded as a thin conception of democracy.

Format of thesis

Chapter Two reviews the literature and background history on the issue of integrating citizens' agendas in New Zealand local government environmental planning and decision-making. This review includes references, where appropriate, to international literature on local government planning and decision-making, although the primary focus is the New Zealand context. I describe the institutional setting and review what is currently understood about the obstacles and opportunities in terms of integration. The context is important because Q-methodology has not been applied previously in this setting, and because of the lack of research on the subjective perspectives of actors in this setting. A deliberative democratic theoretical perspective on integration is employed in assessing the research problem.

Chapter Three sets out the methodological approach to this study. It discusses the relationship between the research question, the empirical research and data, the synthesis, conclusions and recommendations. This chapter includes an explanation of the particular research methods and of the selection of two wastewater planning processes as the empirical setting for the data collection.

Chapter Four describes the history and background of two wastewater planning processes. Data from initial interviews, documentary analysis and observation at

meetings are presented. The discussion focuses on those aspects of each planning process that impact on the integration of citizens' agendas.

Chapter Five presents the empirical data from Q-method surveys and interviews. These data are combined with data collected from respondents in the two wastewater planning processes and from documentary research and observation at meetings. Statistical factor analysis is used to reconstruct actors' perspectives on the two wastewater planning processes and towards planning and decision-making issues in general. Data from the two planning processes provide supporting evidence for the description of these perspectives. Differences between actors' perspectives are discussed in terms of their influence on the integration of citizens' agendas.

In Chapter Six I synthesise the empirical data with theoretical material and the review of literature from the New Zealand institutional context. The discussion focuses on the theoretical and practical implications of actors' perspectives for the integration of citizens' agendas, and for planning and decision-making practices in New Zealand local government.

Chapter Seven summarises the research findings in response to the research question. I identify the key issues that need to be addressed in order to conduct an effective integrative process. I propose some modifications to theory and to planning and decision-making practices. The utility of the research methods and overall methodology is considered, and I propose a number of methodological, practical and theoretical areas for further research.

Chapter Two – A review of the challenge of integrating citizens' agendas in the New Zealand context

Introduction

In this chapter I review what is known about the research question: *What influences the integration of citizens' agendas in environmental planning and decision-making in New Zealand local government?* The chapter brings together the literature and background history on this issue and identifies those gaps in the existing research that are worthy of further study. The primary focus is on scholarship in the New Zealand context. Where appropriate, this review also addresses relevant international literature on local government planning and decision-making and related issues.

Chapter One identified four dimensions to the issues that influence the integration of citizens' agendas. The dimensions are:

1. Statutory and institutional arrangements.
2. Tensions between actors and their different substantive agendas.
3. Tensions between actors' different epistemological views.
4. Tensions between actors' different procedural views.

As will be discussed in this chapter, the first and second dimensions have attracted most research and are well documented. Consequently, the focus of this chapter is on the third and fourth dimensions of the problem. Accounts of these two dimensions are not so straightforward because underlying perspectives are often tacitly held and unexpressed, and therefore, are hard to document. The focus on actors' underlying perspectives in the New Zealand context is a key point of originality for this research.

This research is also unusual in treating the four dimensions as a single coherent issue. Most literature only addresses elements of the challenge of integration tangentially when addressing related issues. For example, research on consultation with Māori has identified the problem of conflicting spiritual and cultural viewpoints (PCE, 1998a; Ahdar, 2004; MfE, 2005a) but it has not addressed this as part of the wider issue of the integration of citizens' agendas generally.

Most scholarship on local government and environmental planning focuses on the first dimension of institutional context and practices, reflecting the predominance of practitioner-based planning literature (LGNZ, 2000; PCE, 2005). Scholarship also tends to focus on formal institutional arrangements, reflecting the emphasis on a traditional institutionalist research agenda. New Zealand literature often has a quite applied focus on issues such as councils' consultative obligations and aims of best practice (Controller and Auditor-General, 1998, 2000; McNamara, 2004; MfE, 1999). Some literature focuses on interpretations of statutory requirements or case law (Controller and Auditor-General, 1998; McNamara, 2004; Ruru & Stephenson, 2004). Other research focuses on problems such as cost, frequency and length of delays in planning processes (Ericksen et al., 2003; MfE, 2005b). Where research does examine particular actors, it tends to focus on councillors and officers, and on their formal, professional roles (LGNZ, 2003a–e). Drage (2004) is a notable exception in this regard for stepping over to examining councillors' own perceptions of their roles and experiences in addition to their formal roles.

In general, actors' perspectives have received limited attention in academic research on local government in New Zealand. In particular, there is very little empirical data on citizens' perspectives, even though most actors would have views on what citizens think. Citizens' views are quite routinely canvassed by local authority staff through mechanisms such as in-house council surveys and public consultation on plans and proposals. However, there are only a few academic studies in this context that focus on citizens' viewpoints and experiences as an important element in planning and decision-making. These include Hayward (2000) on social learning in deliberative planning processes, and Forgie (2001, 2002) on submitters' experiences of annual planning processes. The contributions of these two researchers are returned to in a number of places in this chapter and throughout the thesis.

Two other areas of quite applied research on environmental decision-making in New Zealand are significant for moving beyond a focus on institutions to address the less quantifiable dimension of actors' viewpoints. Both areas of research are outside local government but similarly address the issue of how to take better account of public viewpoints as a legitimate element in public decision-making. Firstly, organisations such as Landcare Research (Bosch et al., 1996; Kilvington et al., 1998) and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (2001; 2004; 2005) have examined participatory aspects of planning and decision-making and stakeholder involvement in activities such as conservation planning. Secondly, in the area of research, science

and technology, organisations such as Crown Research Institutes increasingly consider how to take better account of actors' perspectives in their decision-making on issues such as biotechnology (Allen et al., 2003; Dew et al., 2004; Toi Te Taiao: the Bioethics Council, 2004).

My research has a primary focus on possible tensions between actors' perspectives that arise over issues such as what types of evidence are relevant, how much influence particular actors should have, or how to balance environmental, social and economic objectives. These are sometimes described as 'wicked problems' because they are uncertain, complex, difficult to understand, and often have multiple possible solutions (Conklin, 2006). Where a decision on such problems is required, and it will impact on some actors' interests, then conflict is likely. Such conflicts will often appear intractable and immune to resolution through appeal to the facts. Ultimately, these conflicts are likely to hinder the conduct of an effective integrative process by marginalising or excluding some actors and agendas while privileging others, although the impact of such conflicts has not been adequately studied in the New Zealand context.

The statutory and institutional context for the research

In this section I describe the provisions in legislation for public participation in local authority environmental planning and decision-making at the time of the research. My focus is on how the interpretation of those provisions has led to a set of mainstream institutional practices that impact on the integration of citizens' agendas. Since the conduct of fieldwork in 2001-2002, some of those provisions have subsequently been repealed or amended. In those cases I have also discussed current and amended provisions.

The Resource Management Act 1991

The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) is the principal statute for local government environmental planning and decision-making. As such, it largely dictates the context within which integrative processes can occur. The RMA sets out a regime of national, regional and district policies and plans that regulate the use and development of physical resources. This regime includes provisions for public participation in planning activities. The interpretation of these provisions creates both opportunities for, and barriers to effective integrative processes.

The purpose of the RMA is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources while minimising the adverse effects of activities on the environment. ‘Sustainable management’ and ‘environment’ are broadly defined in the Act, allowing a very wide range of agendas and interests to be taken into account, but also leading to frequent conflicts over outcomes. ‘Sustainable management’ is defined in Section 5 as:

...managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety while –

- (a) Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and
- (b) Safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems; and
- (c) Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.

The ‘environment’ is broadly defined in Section 2 to include natural and physical resources, but also amenity values and social, economic, aesthetic and cultural elements. In promoting sustainable management, decision-makers must also take account of matters of national importance (s.6), other matters (s.7), and the Treaty of Waitangi (s.8). Councils have some freedom to decide, in consultation with their communities, how to balance potentially conflicting environmental, economic, cultural and social agendas.

Given some latitude to decide how to address environmental issues, mainstream planning and decision-making has tended to focus on biophysical issues such as nature conservation and biodiversity protection. Other potential goals of sustainability, such as social and cultural goals, have been generally regarded as being outside the ambit of the RMA (Perkins & Thorns, 2001; PCE, 2002; Freeman, 2004). However, there is no consensus that this division is appropriate, and council and community actors frequently disagree about which issues to take into account. While Sections 5–8 require that councils take account of a range of matters, ultimately, decision-makers apply their own judgement on which are most important (Somerville, 2004). Over time, this has allowed for significant variation in implementation (Perkins & Thorns, 2001). Increasingly, however, the Environment Court has stressed treating sustainable

management as an overarching concept, and balancing the full range of agendas within it (Skelton & Memon, 2002).

Gleeson and Memon (1997) and Ericksen et al. (2003) characterise the RMA as a cooperative, devolved mandate because central government has granted significant decision-making powers to local government, to be used cooperatively in consultation with communities. Plans are applied to specific activities through the issuing of 'resource consents' by local authorities. The RMA does not prescribe the content of plans or desired outcomes. Instead it establishes a permissive planning regime based on minimum environmental standards that must be maintained when considering the effects of an activity. Thus market forces, such as development and land-use activities, have generally dictated outcomes within established minimum standards.

Public participation is provided for under the RMA through statutory requirements for public consultation. Councils must publicly notify their plans and policies, and must also notify resource consent applications unless the adverse effects of the activity will be minor (s.93). Councils must allow for public submissions to be made and heard prior to decision-making (s.96). Consultation over plans often attracts little public interest. The exception tends to be where a proposal has a significant impact on a particular community, for example, where intensive development is proposed. Where all parties who may be adversely affected give their written approval to the activity, public notification is not required (s.94). Notification allows anyone to lodge a submission in support or opposition. Public notification occurs for approximately 5% of applications (MfE, 2005a), usually where the consent authority considers that the adverse effects of an activity are significant, or when affected parties do not give approval for the proposal. Because only 5% of resource consents are notified, the vast majority of consents do not allow for any public participation.

Public hearings of submissions can be extremely tense, and decisions on proposed activities are sometimes made in the face of strong public opposition. Given this, councils sometimes conduct 'pre-hearing meetings' (s.99) with interested parties in an attempt to resolve contentious issues in advance, in a less formal atmosphere. Pre-hearing meetings are held for approximately twenty-five percent of notified consent applications (MfE, 2005a).

The Local Government Acts 1974 and 2002

The Local Government Act 1974 (LGA 1974) was the second important statute in place at the time of the fieldwork in 2001–2002. A major amendment to the LGA in 1989 emphasised the importance of citizens’ participation. It sought to ensure that communities were able to have an active role in determining the kinds of facilities and services available in their community, and that local government was responsive to its citizens’ preferences. The Act set out the purposes of local government, including recognising “communities of interest” with distinct identities and values, and enabling the “effective participation of local persons in local government” (s.37K). The LGA 1974 was substantially repealed by the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA 2002).

The LGA 1974 and LGA 2002 both prescribe statutory planning processes that apply wherever significant decisions are being made. Under the LGA 1974, councils were required to prepare draft annual plans and to publicly consult on the draft plans (s.223D). Under the LGA 2002, councils must prepare a ‘long term council community plan’ (LTCCP) that provides opportunities for public participation in council decision-making (s.93) and describes ‘community outcomes’ (s.91). Annual plans remain under the LGA 2002 (s.95) as a detailed year-to-year operational plan for the LTCCP. Resource management proposals for major projects under the RMA also fall under the provisions of the LGA 1974 and 2002 if they involve major expenditure. The two wastewater planning processes that feature in this study are examples of this scenario. Both processes required resource consents, but as major projects, both also appeared in planning processes under the LGA 1974 and were subject to the relevant public consultation requirements.

Under the LGA 2002 (s.10) the purposes of local government are:

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

To meet these purposes, local authorities are granted new general powers to act as they see fit within the existing law (s.12). The Act also emphasises community involvement in the identification and achievement of community outcomes for the LTCCP (s.91). The Act codifies a set of principles for public consultation (s.82) (described below).

Public consultation and participation under the RMA and LGA

The RMA, LGA 1974 and LGA 2002 all provide for public input on proposed plans and activities via public submissions at hearings, and for attendance at public meetings. These activities are usually collectively referred to as 'public consultation'. In this section I define 'public consultation' and 'public participation' and review existing research on how institutional structures and practices of public participation influence the integration of citizens' agendas.

As defined in this study, public consultation includes statutory consultation, for example, as part of a resource consent application or as part of the annual planning process. The definition also includes non-statutory consultation, for example, where a council undertakes consultation (but is not obliged to) before a consent application. The definition does not include consultation undertaken by private applicants for resource consents.

Principles for public consultation are outlined in the LGA 2002 (s.82). Prior to that definition, local government practice was based on a workable but incomplete definition, arising from the Court of Appeal decision in *Wellington International Airport Ltd v Air NZ* (Appeal Court, 1991, 1 NZLR 671). The Court set out the following principles for a minimum standard of consultation:

- The statement of a proposal not yet finally decided upon.
- Listening with an open mind and providing a considered response.
- Allowing sufficient time for consultation.
- Making a genuine effort to consult.
- Conducting the process in good faith.
- Providing sufficient information to affected parties.

Over time, practitioners have developed a general understanding of, but never complete agreement on, what these principles mean in practice. The Controller and Auditor-General (1998:15) made it clear that consultation does *not* carry any obligation to reflect any particular views in decision-making. Consultation guarantees citizens the right of input and opportunities for discussion, but does not guarantee any negotiating power. The LGA 2002 confirmed this interpretation in its principles for consultation (s.82):

(a) that persons who will or may be affected by, or have an interest in, the decision or matter should be provided by the local authority with reasonable access to relevant information in a manner and format that is appropriate to the preferences and needs of those persons;

(b) that persons who will or may be affected by, or have an interest in, the decision or matter should be encouraged by the local authority to present their views to the local authority;

(c) that persons who are invited or encouraged to present their views to the local authority should be given clear information by the local authority concerning the purpose of the consultation and the scope of the decisions to be taken following the consideration of views presented;

(d) that persons who wish to have their views on the decision or matter considered by the local authority should be provided by the local authority with a reasonable opportunity to present those views to the local authority in a manner and format that is appropriate to the preferences and needs of those persons;

(e) that the views presented to the local authority should be received by the local authority with an open mind and should be given by the local authority, in making a decision, due consideration;

(f) that persons who present views to the local authority should be provided by the local authority with information concerning both the relevant decisions and the reasons for those decisions.

Although the requirements vary, public consultation under the RMA and LGA 2002 must follow the principles set out above.

Under the RMA, consultation is not always a statutory requirement for resource consents, although it is generally seen by councils and the Environment Court as good practice. There are no universal requirements for particular forms of consultation for resource consents. The process may be as quick as a single telephone call or it may extend to dialogue over a number of years (Beverley, 1998:138).

Consultation for resource consents is the responsibility of the applicant. Sometimes this is a council, as is the case with the two wastewater planning processes. Large proposals generally involve various types of formal and informal consultation taking place over months or years, and often beginning before the lodging of an application. Sometimes councils seek statutory pre-hearing meetings and other non-statutory opportunities for direct dialogue between parties, as a means of resolving conflict and seeking agreement in a less formal setting than the hearings process itself.

Section 8 of the RMA requires that the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi be taken into account in the preparation of plans. This grants tangata whenua some status apart from the general public by guaranteeing them a particular opportunity to be consulted, and by requiring councils to take particular account of their cultural and spiritual values. Tangata whenua must also be consulted over resource consents where there are matters of significance for them. Other stakeholders are often suspicious of the particular attention given to iwi consultation and whether this attention privileges iwi over other non-council actors (Ericksen et al. 2003).

Actors' different expectations of consultation and participation in decision-making

Although councils generally understand their minimum obligations, there can be significant variations in council and community expectations of the form and purpose of public consultation (Controller and Auditor-General, 1998; PCE, 2004). Councils' purposes appear to range from simply meeting their statutory obligations through to sharing decision-making authority with communities. Citizens' expectations appear similarly varied and can be quite at odds with councils' purposes. Integration of citizens' agendas will almost certainly be more difficult where conflicts arise over actors' disagreements about the purpose and practice of consultation. And as consultative opportunities expand and actors' expectations vary, so the risks of confusion and conflict will rise and the opportunities for effectively integrating citizens' agendas may actually decline. It is not clear where these conflicts over expectations stem from, and why they persist.

Most often, councils consult primarily to satisfy their statutory obligations. Although the point of statutory consultation is to provide opportunities for public participation, councils may still see this as less important than other aspects of planning and decision-making. Where councils have a compliance mentality, they are likely to pay bare lip service to principles such as open-mindedness and are likely to marginalise or

exclude some actors (PCE, 2004:67). Not surprisingly then, citizens often come to see the outcomes of consultation as pre-determined decisions, and to question the value of participating (Controller and Auditor-General, 1998; Forgie et al., 1999). Memon and Thomas (2006:136) regard the LGA 2002's emphasis on public participation as the policy-makers' response to growing public apathy about consultation, noting that:

Public participation in council consultation processes is often disappointing for anything other than highly contentious and NIMBY type issues. Local authorities have often been accused of engaging with communities only after they have identified a preferred course of action.

Research has shown that councils often face significant practical obstacles to achieving better quality consultation (MfE, 1999a; PCE, 2004). Councils with constrained budgets and staff resources are likely to under-fund consultation, allocating so little time and so few staff that the result is likely to be of a low standard. It seems likely that this under-funding will continue, since as Memon and Thomas (2006:139) conclude:

The level of discretion [over funding] available to councils to decide how they carry out some of the requirements of the LGA means many will opt for doing the bare minimum to comply with the Act and to a large extent it will be business as usual for these councils.

Good consultation usually takes time, and if officers, councillors and citizens come and go it can be very difficult to maintain ongoing relationships. As new actors come to consultation, they bring different agendas and perspectives to the table (PCE, 2004). In pursuit of efficient, speedy decision-making, councils often focus on compliance with legal requirements, and on processing consents as quickly as possible. This emphasis on deadlines severely undercuts the ability of council officers to invest time in consultation that allows for integrating citizens' agendas, despite the emphasis in the LGA 2002 on responding to diverse communities (Thomas & Memon, 2007).

At other times, the academic and practitioner literature suggests that councils adopt processes that are more consistent with effective integration, such as building public understanding or improving council-community relationships. Aims such as these are often identified as elements of best practice (MfE, 1999a). As the PCE (2004:51) maintains:

Successful consultation requires open minds, mutual respect, knowledge sharing and building relationships between...policy makers and stakeholders that establish trust. That takes time and effort. Consultation on complex and contentious...issues to do with environmental management is more likely to succeed through dialogue than debate. Dialogue provides the opportunity to explore a wider range of ideas and perspectives to address potentially complex connections and, in particular, uncertain environmental outcomes. It enables each party to acknowledge, listen to and respect the other's viewpoints, and to move forward in a way that is mutually constructive.

Occasionally, councils pursue innovative approaches to public participation in decision-making, including citizens' juries and deliberative forums such as those documented by Blyth (1999), Hayward (2000), and Cheyne and Comrie (2002). An effective integrative process then becomes more likely since councils are better able to capture citizens' views and preferences, and will achieve more public buy-in when traditional approaches are complemented with additional, well-targeted and designed participatory activities (Controller and Auditor-General, 1998; Forgie et al., 1999; Department of Internal Affairs, 1995; MacLennan, 2000). Increased use of such participatory approaches by councils has also clearly been encouraged by UK central government in their 2000 local government reforms (Chandler, 2000). As Lowndes and Sullivan (2004:57) observe of the UK reforms:

Citizen involvement is not an end in itself; the aim is to create a 'virtuous circle' whereby participation in specific local initiatives leads in turn to increased levels of public interest in, and involvement with, local affairs.

Although many citizens will respond favourably to innovative approaches, conflicts still commonly arise over different understandings of the purposes of public consultation and participation (MfE, 1999b). However, the source of these conflicts is not clear; while most actors agree that ascertaining community views and achieving a better project or plan are priorities, Wilson (1996), MfE (1999b) and Forgie (1999) found that some citizens are not satisfied with consultation unless they are also able to agree with the outcome. Some citizens appear to expect to participate in decision-making by exercising some direct influence over outcomes, although it is not clear whether this expectation stems from a lack of understanding of consultation principles, or from different procedural preferences. At times there will also be council actors who are only satisfied when they can agree with the outcome. Where conflict arises over the

purpose of consultation, the common response in guidelines on consultation is that public expectations of influence are too high, and councils must manage expectations through clear communication about processes and the purpose of consultation (MfE, 1999; LGNZ, 2004a–e). However, while shared procedural expectations are important for an effective integrative process, not all citizens will accept less influence simply because it has been clearly explained.

Two further explanations for conflicts over the purpose of consultation deserve investigation because neither is adequately addressed in the New Zealand literature. First, commentators say little about the possibility that councils are often not *genuinely* consulting. Most guides to public consultation confine themselves to setting out the elements of consultation and defining ‘best practice’, often with a focus on how to avoid legal challenges (MfE, 1999; 2004; LGNZ, 2004a–e). However, this advice risks giving tacit approval to a placatory public relations approach, where councils seek to *appear* to be genuinely consulting, rather than actually to be open-minded. Where councils do adopt a compliance mentality at the same time as raising citizens’ expectations of exercising some influence over outcomes, then it is likely conflicts will follow. Bush et al (2005:649), writing about siting controversies in the UK context, note that local government officials and other public authorities often view forums for public consultation “primarily as a vehicle for risk communication and public reassurance [whereas] for residents these functioned chiefly as a vehicle for holding public authorities to account”. Thus, conflicting expectations among actors may also be closely linked to conflicting purposes.

Second, it appears that the most acute point of tension is where a decision on a specific, concrete proposal follows a period of public consultation (for example, a decision on waste disposal siting or land-use zoning or development). The stakes are high in decision-making of this order because it impacts on some actors’ interests and is probably difficult to reverse. Conflict is more likely over such concrete proposals than in consultation and decision-making at the level of visions or strategies where the specific impact of a proposal is less obvious or immediate. Ericksen et al. (2003) found that public consultation on district plans was characterised by a general lack of public interest, with the exception of conflicts at those specific points where proposals were under consideration and citizens’ specific interests were affected and their expectations of influence were higher. Neither the source of these tensions, nor the reason for their persistence, nor the lack of citizens’ interest in non-NIMBY type issues, is very clear.

Consequently, this thesis seeks to identify explanations for such tensions and to consider their influence on the conduct of an effective integrative process.

Tensions between actors' diverse substantive agendas

It is inevitable that actors will have a range of views on which substantive issues are important, and their relative importance. Actors frame issues in different ways, and this is reflected in the various emphases in their competing agendas. Tensions are likely where some agendas are privileged while others receive limited recognition. In this section I review the local government planning literature on whether this privileging occurs, and if so, by whom and with what consequences for the integration of citizens' agendas. The discussion here focuses on substantive agendas, while actors' perspectives are addressed later in this chapter.

The RMA allows for some flexibility in interpretations of the scope of environmental planning and decision-making. This flexibility impacts on the integration of citizens' agendas because it allows actors' diverse agendas to be expressed and taken into account, or potentially to be excluded (PCE, 2005). As the Controller and Auditor-General (1998:47) has observed:

Local authorities find that they are dealing with an increasingly diverse range of interest groups and communities of interest—as society has become more pluralistic, multicultural and complex. Associated with this is an increasing diversity of community expectations, which encourage local authorities to be involved in a wider range of social and economic activities.

An issue such as coastal development, for example, is important to local communities in terms of physical ecosystems, economic potential, recreation, aesthetic and spiritual values, local identity, and tangata whenua relationships with the land (PCE, 2005:50). The full range of these perspectives should be taken into account in planning and decision-making. Yet while the ambiguity in the RMA allows for this inclusive approach, it equally allows powerful institutional actors such as planners and decision-makers, and powerful non-council actors within the wider policy community, to take a narrow interpretation of what is relevant. Thus, actors within policy networks around local government environmental planning may be able to exercise agency over discourse and debates in this area of planning activity.

There is evidence that where environmental issues are defined in narrow biophysical terms, as scientific and technical matters, this is likely to exclude issues such as cultural, spiritual, aesthetic and recreational values (Poole, 1997; Gunder, 2000; Buhrs, 2000). Yet because these issues are central to some citizens' agendas, integrating those agendas is also seriously threatened because "such an approach provides limited opportunities for public engagement and does little to engender long term commitment in...the community" (Kilvington et al., 1998:74). Buhrs and Aplin (1999) and Aplin (2000) similarly characterise Australian environmental policy debates, both local and national, as dominated by an over-riding philosophy emphasising biophysical science and economic rationalism, to the exclusion of social and cultural values.

Where councils have a compliance mentality towards consultation, they will see few incentives to acknowledge diverse agendas because that diversity can complicate and lengthen planning and decision-making. Balancing multiple agendas can be extremely complex and can introduce considerable conflicts (Poole, 1997). Consequently, where common ground is difficult to find, the incentive for councils may be to aim for simple solutions based on a limited number of issues on which agreement is more easily reached.

However, many commentators support a more deliberative approach that encourages the expression and recognition of diverse agendas (Chart, 1998; Johnston, 1998; PCE, 1998a; Perkins & Thorns, 2000). As Hayward (2000) notes, councils that take an open and innovative approach are better able to respond to diversity in a way that is inclusive and socially just, and can more easily identify common interests. Kerr (1997) similarly maintains that policy-making becomes more legitimate when based on a communicatively rational process that allows for full understanding of all actors' agendas. Bush, et al (2002) in the UK context contend that citizens' constructions of environmental problems rely heavily on "local context—local history, experiences, local knowledges and everyday existence—as an arena in which meanings associated with the environment are constructed and negotiated". The authors argue that imposed, global and biophysical definitions of environmental issues serve to alienate local populations and consequently, form an obstacle to an effective role for citizens in policy-making.

Risks attached to a narrow biophysical focus

A number of authors argue that planning under the RMA often treats issues such as social well-being and equity as unimportant or beyond the scope of the Act's sustainable management objective (Gunder, 2000; Perkins and Thorns, 2000). As Shand observes, these issues are "perceived to be outside the core business of most councils" (Shand quoted in LGNZ, 2000:29). Councils generally frame environmental issues in terms of the technical and scientific management of biophysical risks. This narrow biophysical focus poses a risk for integrating some agendas because it excludes those wider issues as irrelevant. For other agendas that align with a narrow biophysical focus (such as those advocating technical solutions to problems), this focus may serve them well.

Buhrs (2000), Gunder (2000), and the PCE (2001) suggest this narrow framing of sustainable management serves ideological as well as practical purposes. A biophysical focus allows councils to avoid conflicts by excluding those contentious social and economic issues that threaten the agendas of dominant institutional council and corporate actors. While the RMA provides the scope for addressing wider public interests and diverse agendas, as Gunder (2000:297) observes, "the political will must also be there". Otherwise, biophysical issues tend to dominate (Hayward, 2000:229). Some commentators defend this narrow framing of environmental issues as pragmatic and appropriate (MfE, 2005; LGNZ, 2000). Perkins and Thorns (2000) and the PCE (2001) note that many planning practitioners also choose to focus on biophysical issues alone.

Yet, the integration of citizens' agendas is clearly put at risk by the exclusion of some agendas. As Salmon (1998:5) argues, the RMA has "created a statutory environment and philosophy that makes it essential for adequate decision-making that there be full argument on issues of resource use". By "argument" he means that public participation in decision-making is necessary for a critical assessment of available information. Salmon argues that decision-making is enhanced, rather than prevented, by such participation. The PCE (1996, 1998b) similarly maintains that participation is provided for by the RMA so that councils can take better account of public input. Allen and Bosch (1996:4) also observe that successful resource management uses both expert and local 'practical knowledge', and requires all actors to deal with uncertainty and with subjective debates and conflicts. For these commentators, then, a narrow biophysical

focus is actually an obstacle to effective, durable and legitimate planning and decision-making.

Risks attached to a technical decision-making focus

A narrow focus can also be discerned in councils' widespread, if understandable, preoccupation with decision-making and with the technical aspects of decisions (PCE, 1998a; Ericksen, et al., 2003). Resource consent processes, such as consents for a wastewater solution, usually focus on the measurable technical and financial details of proposals. This focus reflects the RMA's effects-based regime, and tends to emphasise the shorter term fiscal and biophysical effects of activities over the longer term environmental and less easily measurable social and cultural effects. Where that narrow technical and short-term focus is also present in district plans, it may exclude wider issues from future decision-making. Once set, the legal status of plans constrains councils in resource consent decisions from taking account of issues that are potentially *ultra vires* and therefore, outside councils' ambit. For example, zoning and development rules may provide little scope for considering the longer term aesthetic effects of new subdivisions.

One risk of a narrow, short-term focus is that immediate practical details overshadow councils' strategic objectives in planning and decision-making. According to some commentators, this poses a risk to the effective integration of those citizens' agendas contained in strategy-level visions and goals (Hayward, 2000; Kerr, 1997). A focus on more specific and shorter term issues may overshadow councils' consideration of longer term goals such as inter-generational equity, which then become disconnected from specific decisions (PCE, 2001; Blyth, 1999). Where citizens are similarly focused on short-term issues, such as their parochial concerns, the gap between strategic goals and individual resource consent decisions may widen even further (PCE, 2001:97).

A second risk that is identified in the literature is that councils see financial, technical and political benefits as accruing to the most efficient planning process, to the detriment of effective integration (PCE, 1998a). For example, a narrow focus on the technical aspects of agendas may simplify and speed up decision-making, whereas the inclusion of more subjective cultural and social aspects is likely to complicate processes. Similarly, a fast decision-making process may allow councils to dodge potential conflicts and objections (Ericksen et al., 2003). These considerations may discourage councils from extensive public consultation because such consultation

introduces a wider range of potentially conflicting agendas into debates. Buhrs and Aplin (1999:333) point to a similar attitude among Australian central and local government environmental planners and decision-makers. They describe:

...the fear...among bureaucracies of losing control over the policy process by allowing too much local involvement. This 'guarding the turf' attitude can stifle grass-roots initiatives, dampening local enthusiasm.

It is probably not surprising that councils in New Zealand and elsewhere prefer speedy decision-making. Many councils feel over-burdened by planning and consultation obligations that are raised further by citizens' expectations of opportunities to participate. Nevertheless, Bush (1995:216) also noted in the mid-1990s that local government had been heavily influenced by a focus on efficiency and core technical and financial criteria that had led to the exclusion of other types of knowledge and agendas. Reid (2002:316) similarly observed the privileging of "largely technical and non-political forms of knowledge". Overall, this narrow approach sometimes leads councils to make simplistic judgements based on supposedly objective technical and financial criteria, while underplaying democratic aspects of decision-making such as taking account of citizens' input (Reid, 2002; Drage, 2003).

A third risk of a narrow biophysical and technical focus is that citizens will see incentives to tailor their arguments and evidence to address those aspects that councils privilege, and disincentives to express more subjective agendas that risk being excluded. For example, a citizen who actually objects to wastewater discharge on aesthetic, spiritual or recreational grounds may gain more council support by mustering technical or financial evidence. Thus, some actors will see incentives to make objections that are spurious rather than genuine, in that those objections are based on issues more likely to be taken into account rather than citizens' actual agendas. In terms of effective integration, these risks are likely to lead to less well-informed, less durable decision-making.

Tensions between actors' diverse epistemological views

Public participation in environmental planning and decision-making has also exposed tensions between the epistemological dimensions of actors' perspectives on different types of knowledge. These tensions have attracted little attention in New Zealand

scholarship or in planning and decision-making practices, yet they probably have a significant impact on the integration of citizens' agendas. Mainstream planning and decision-making often adopts a positivist perspective that privileges particular types of knowledge, including Western science and professional expertise. Where this privileging occurs, it is likely to lead to the marginalisation or exclusion of those agendas that do not meet such standards. These tensions will be exacerbated by public participation and by citizens' demands for recognition of their agendas. In this section I consider the evidence for epistemological tensions, and I identify gaps in what we know about this issue in this context.

Mainstream planning and decision-making is positivist, rationalist

A number of authors argue that mainstream planning and decision-making in New Zealand generally adopts a narrow positivist, rationalist perspective towards the types of knowledge that should be taken into account (Gunder, 1998; Buhrs, 2000; Reid, 2002). This perspective functions to exclude those actors and agendas that are seen as less objective or expert, or less relevant to decision-making. Such exclusion obstructs the integration of citizens' agendas because some actors (particularly council actors) may not take citizens' agendas into account in planning and decision-making.

Policy rationalism sees planning as a technical and value-neutral activity focused on the "selection of appropriate means for achieving given ends...and determining the most efficient use of resources among competing purposes" (Gregory, 1989:139). Rational actors seek the best objective solution to problems, based on a comprehensive assessment of the issues. This aim is not generally fully achievable, but in attempting it planners create significant obstacles to effective integration. By defining problems and seeking solutions in objective, technical terms, other more subjective agendas, such as social and cultural issues, are often excluded. These issues do not fit easily within a technical, problem-solving approach, and consequently, tend to be treated as of secondary importance. Buhrs (2000:31) argues that as a result of this exclusion, planning actually becomes *less* rationally comprehensive, and ultimately, less democratic and legitimate.

Not all citizens' agendas are excluded by a mainstream, rationalist perspective. Some agendas, such as those of powerful business, development and ratepayer lobbies, may be well accounted for by a perspective that privileges financial agendas over conservationist, social and non-western cultural agendas (Javison, 1994; Barfoot,

1999; Blyth, 1999). However, a rationalist perspective makes support for less orthodox, alternative agendas unlikely—particularly where they involve solutions that are more expensive in the short-term, as is often the case with more environmentally sustainable approaches.

A positivist perspective also leads to the privileging of actors who are *seen* as objective, professional experts, and of forms of knowledge that are seen as factual and scientific. Not all actors will agree with this view or with claims of objectivity and factuality. Nevertheless, legitimacy is routinely conferred by mainstream actors on the contributions of experts such as scientists and lawyers, and often withheld from lay citizens and community groups (PCE, 1998a; Bostwick, 1999). Those citizens who do have recognised expertise may also be privileged in this way. Forret (1998:47) observes that such faith in the ability of this “environmental expert industry” is based on the positivist assumption that their claims and evidence are objective and trustworthy. She notes that there is a:

...continuing perception in planning and decision-making circles, that ‘good’ expert opinion evidence should be and can be objective, and that this is a desirable and necessary component of expert testimony (Forret, 1998:48).

In contrast, lay citizens are likely to be seen as lacking professional status, and their agendas as being more subjective. Cronin and Jackson (2004) note that this view remains widespread within the science community, where public opposition to issues such as genetic modification is often attributed to emotion and a lack of objectivity and rationality. While many citizens do have technical expertise in some form or other, it may still be marginalised if they lack recognised professional status. Goodwin’s (1998:488) research on UK conservation revealed similar positivist perspectives. He found that:

...a concentration on ‘objectivity’ and ‘expertise’ continues to marginalize and undermine a subjective, local discourse, denying local people an authoritative way to talk about the world of conservation, and rendering them not just powerless, but opinionless.

From a new institutionalist perspective, where powerful actors privilege particular types of knowledge and behaviour, this is likely to reflect the informal cultural and behavioural norms of the dominant institution—in this case, local government. Lowndes (1996:187)

identifies those informal, but deeply embedded, norms and rules within institutions, which “determin[e] the ‘opportunity set’ that actors face in making choices”. Thus, where dominant council actors privilege objectivity and rationality, there are incentives for them to maintain that privileging for the stability of that institution. The existence of such informal institutional norms also makes it more likely that privileging will continue unchallenged, and that a positivist position will be taken for granted as a starting point for decision-making. Such institutional reinforcements of unexamined norms are likely to be a significant barrier to a more deliberative and inclusive approach.

This reinforcement of actors’ views reflects March and Olsen’s (1989) assertion that political institutions shape actors’ behaviour by shaping their norms, interests, beliefs and so forth. As Lowndes (2002:95) argues, “seemingly neutral rules and structures actually embody values (and power relationships), and determine ‘appropriate’ behaviour within given settings”. March and Olsen (1989:17) similarly observe that institutions simplify political life by ensuring that “some things are taken for granted in deciding other things”.

Among those taken-for-granted aspects of planning is the strong tendency for rationalist planners and decision-makers to focus on specific, concrete tasks. When faced with competing agendas, mainstream planners and decision-makers are likely to favour those claims that appear more valid and applicable to decision-making. Forret (1998), for example, notes that expert technical arguments are often favoured because they have an obvious application to problems defined in technical terms. In contrast, more subjective agendas, for example about historical or cultural significance, may be excluded as lacking validity or relevance.

Both councils and courts tend to adopt this mainstream perspective of viewing factual, expert evidence as more reliable, objective and neutral than lay input (Forret, 1998). The view that technical experts stand apart from their research and evidence remains widespread in local government and among scientists and technicians themselves (*ibid.*). Goven and Wuthnow (2004:52) characterise scientific debates in New Zealand as split between those who see science as an “unproblematically expert enterprise engaged in discovering and revealing the (unproblematically singular) truth about an objective external reality” and those who challenge definitions of “what might comprise appropriate ‘knowledge’ and appropriate ‘knowers’ in the realm of scientific and technological decision-making”. Critical views of expertise, even from citizens who have their own counter-expertise, are often “deemed uninformed and based on

motivation other than valid knowledge" (ibid:54). Consequently, mainstream planners and decision-makers may come to see public participation as an obstacle to decision-making rather than as a source of democratic legitimacy (ibid.).

There is some evidence that actors typically frame debates over science and expertise in quite binary terms. Cronin and Jackson (2004) observe that actors frequently *anticipate* conflicts over issues such as wind farms, pollution controls or GM. Actors construct these issues as entrenched conflicts between factions, with the assumption of "homogeneous values and expectations within each group and a wide divide between...apparently intractable public positions" (ibid:6). From this position, debates quickly become ritualised, as between "science versus society', 'fact versus emotion' and 'technologists versus greenies'" (ibid:8). Blake (1999:271) observes a similarly unhelpful, binary "public/lay vs. expert" framing that is common in UK environmental debates. He argues that, in reality, citizens are sometimes repositories of considerable local knowledge, while at other times they have little expertise and will acknowledge this. Thus, "the 'public' is better defined in terms of alienation from dominant political or knowledge regimes in a particular context" (ibid:271), rather than simply framed as non-expert. Voigt (2002:925) similarly observes that some disputes are closely founded in conflicts over basic values, as between an anthropocentric view that favours exploitation of the environment and an ecocentric view that favours long-term sustainable solutions. She argues that the scale of such conflicts is such that "on issues of basic values no substantive compromise is possible". Tensions such as these, at the level of actors' underlying perspectives, may result in failed planning processes where the courts are left to make a "judgement as to which of the incompatible values should prevail" (ibid:927).

Cronin and Jackson (2004:32) observe that while citizens and experts generally both want arguments to be based on facts, those 'facts' are often contested and informed by subjective concerns. This is because actors generally favour their own view of what the facts are, and often see opposing groups as presenting a biased or ignorant view. Some citizens will not address the expert evidence, yet where decision-making is framed in technical terms there may be few opportunities for taking account of lay agendas. For example, a technical decision on wastewater treatment may override recreational or cultural concerns. Decision-making on wicked problems such as these require all actors be open to considering the full range of agendas present. Yet it is not clear to what extent actors have such an open perspective, or are disposed towards

privileging some agendas over others. This research sheds further light on these issues.

Public engagement with experts and technical knowledge

There is limited scholarship in the New Zealand local government context on the privileging of technical expertise and objectivity, or how citizens respond to this privileging. My observation of council planning and decision-making before this research suggested citizens are suspicious of experts' claims to validity, particularly where they are asked to accept those claims without the opportunity to gain sufficient understanding or to debate them. Perhaps counter-intuitively, many citizens also value what they believe to be *genuine* objectivity and expertise almost as much as the recognised experts do themselves. In this section I will review literature on public understandings of science and on the role of science and expertise in environmental policy-making.

Conflicts between actors over the validity of different types of knowledge and agendas are probably a feature of many planning processes, although they are not well documented. The PCE (2004) has observed that citizens are increasingly disinclined to take professional experts' claims on trust, and are often quite discriminating about sources of scientific information. This is particularly so where the line between expert input and advocacy or public relations is blurred, as may be the case in resource consent hearings (Allen et al., 2003), and in debates over issues such as GM (Hutt, 2004). Citizens are understandably suspicious of the role of professional experts who appear to act as advocates for councils or corporate parties such as consent applicants.

Citizens' sense of suspicion and discrimination has a number of potential drivers. When citizens lack understanding of, or misunderstand expert claims, this may lead them to reject those claims (PCE, 2004). Alternatively, citizens may not accept the privileging of a scientific view, because they have their own counter-expertise or local practical knowledge, or other kinds of lay and cultural knowledge. At times, citizens will reject claims simply because they threaten their own agendas. The debate over the use of 1080 poison to control possums in New Zealand reflects this mix of agendas, contests over expertise, and public scepticism about the objectivity and accuracy of scientific claims. The drive for more participatory activity in technical decision-making, for example, through the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology's (MoRST)

Science and Society Dialogue Initiatives (Cronin & Jackson, 2004), is partly a response to this public rejection of expert privileging (Allen et al., 2003). MoRST's Dialogue Initiatives seek to engage communities in discussion of science- and technology-related issues that are a source of tension between science and society.

Chopyak and Levesque (2002:158) note similar trends in the science/society nexus in the USA, where concerns over issues such as GM and 'mad cow disease' mean that:

...scientists are now being held to greater accountability by a variety of communities (both public and private), and the idea that scientists should be trusted to work in the interest of the public good—by virtue of their profession—is no longer accepted.

Professional experts often do little to enhance public trust or lessen such public suspicion. Goven and Wuthnow (2004:57) note that scientists frequently reject public input because of the:

...false, but widespread, dichotomy between all-knowing experts and a public conceived of as often ignorant of the facts and therefore not legitimate actors in decision-making processes.

Planners and other professional experts in local government and elsewhere often assume that they are well placed to define the public interest, and that public participation on technical issues simply introduces uncertainties into decision-making because it is poorly informed and lacks expertise (Forret, 1998; Goven & Wuthnow, 2004). Yet clearly, citizens often bring a range of lay and expert forms of knowledge to planning and decision-making.

Despite their suspicions about experts, citizens appear to value highly the *idea* and *appearance* of objectivity. Citizens frequently express concerns when experts appear to be biased or are unable to agree on the facts (Allen et al., 2003). Many citizens, themselves, are also concerned to appear as objective and well-informed as possible when making submissions or contributing to debates because they understand that these characteristics are valued by decision-makers (Hayward, 2000). Citizens appear to recognise that subjective agendas may be marginalised. Consequently, they often seek to ensure their own demeanour is objective and their agendas appear factual and

evidence-based, even though this involves downplaying the more subjective elements of their agendas (Cronin & Jackson, 2004).

According to Hutt (2004), experts and decision-makers often assume there is poor public understanding of scientific and technical issues, and that this drives public suspicion and rejection of new ideas and projects. The expert's response to this 'deficit' is to increase the one-way transfer of knowledge from themselves to the lay person (Hutt, 2004). Thus, public participation comes, at times, to be equated with public education or information-giving rather than dialogue. Goodwin (1998:486) identifies this view of public participation among UK environmental planners, who "tend to concentrate on the lack of local understanding of an expertly defined conservation". These professionals "see local participation as a mechanism that is able to bridge the gap between local and expert knowledge, by providing information and education and, in doing so, is able to mobilize local support for national objectives". Bush et al (2005) describe the appearance of this viewpoint in the UK foot-and-mouth outbreak in 2001. In that example, public officials established ad hoc liaison committees to deal with the public. The authors found that citizens commonly saw these committees as a potential accountability mechanism, whereas public officials intended them to function in top-down fashion, solely to communicate issues of risk to the community.

Such a traditional top-down 'deficit' model is challenged by what Hutt (2004:38) calls the "democratic engagement model". This model emphasises the importance of public dialogue on complex and controversial technical issues. It requires all actors to recognise and value alternative sources of knowledge in decision-making. The challenge for all actors is to accept sources of 'counter-expertise', such as lay citizens' own expertise and local and traditional knowledge, as legitimate inputs alongside recognised professional expertise (Goven & Wuthnow, 2004:57).

Dialogue is particularly valuable over those wicked problems that are "rarely amenable to effective analysis using the standard research of single-discipline, reductionist science" (PCE, 2004:58). On an issue such as the treatment and discharge of wastewater, there will be a variety of legitimate perspectives, besides economic and scientific agendas, that can contribute to solutions. Yet, it is in situations of uncertainty, often dealing with new technologies, where a positivist rationalist framework is most rigidly applied. Baker et al. (2004) observe that mainstream planning and decision-making typically responds to complexity by seeking certainty from factual, objective knowledge, and by excluding more subjective inputs. For example, Māori spiritual

concerns about water quality, may be marginalised in water resource and wastewater planning because advocates are unable to demonstrate the standards required for evidence (Scott & Tipene-Matua, 2004).

Internationally, research shows that decision-makers similarly make recourse to a positivist, rationalist position in the face of complexity and conflicts. Aplin (2000:278) observes of Australian environmental planning and decision-making, that:

The present economics-dominated meta-theory is commonly accepted, frequently unquestioningly, by many Western scholars (especially, but far from exclusively, economists), most business leaders, and politicians of almost every political hue.

Councils and courts in New Zealand are also likely to reject public concerns based on uncertain and unquantifiable risks of a 'what if' nature because they lack supporting evidence (Forret, 1998). Public concerns about issues such as pollution are often characterised as deficient in their understanding of technical issues (MfE, 1999b). Yet these concerns may be based on alternative expert opinion, or on opinion that is subsequently validated. Forret (1998:40) cites the example of conflict over the siting of telecommunications towers adjacent to local schools:

Such public outrage, which is fuelled by a genuine concern about harmful future effects on children's health, does not often reflect the accepted findings of mainstream science and places considerable pressure on our environmental decision-makers; especially where a contrary view is preferred.

The lack of support from mainstream science for marginalised agendas diminishes their standing among planners, experts, decision-makers, and ultimately, courts (Forret, 1998). Yet even where mainstream knowledge is uncertain, experts often believe they deserve the trust of the public, and will seek opportunities to persuade other parties to accept their points of view (Cronin & Jackson, 2004). As Goodwin (1998:486) has observed of UK environmental conservation planning, experts typically adopt an information deficit approach. In doing so, they ignore the possibility "that what appears to be a question of cognitive capacity, or lack of public understanding of conservation ideas, may, in fact, represent a lack of trust in that expertise, or a difference in understanding of conservation thinking".

Overall, there is limited evidence in New Zealand for the significance of conflicting epistemologies as an obstacle to an effective integrative process. Positivist, rationalist perspectives appear to be a key driver behind the privileging of orthodox, mainstream agendas and the marginalisation of subjective and non-mainstream agendas. However, there is limited evidence for how commonly held these positivist perspectives are, or for their bearing on planning and decision-making in this context. This study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of those perspectives and their influence.

Ahead of that empirical work, two issues provide useful examples of the way in which a positivist, rationalist perspective obstructs the integration of citizens' agendas. Definitions of sustainable management and the treatment of Māori knowledge and agendas both illustrate some of the tensions between mainstream and alternative approaches to planning and decision-making.

A narrow definition of sustainable management limits integration

Where planning and decision-making take a narrow, biophysical definition of sustainable management, this can lead to the marginalisation or exclusion of agendas seen as outside that definition. The institutional context is important; the RMA provides the space within which this marginalisation can occur because "an environmental decision-maker has considerable leeway when making policy and strategic decisions in order to attain the goal of the legislation" (Somerville, 2004:46). Where planners and decision-makers do adopt a positivist, rationalist perspective, they are likely to privilege technical knowledge. Freeman (2004:10) argues there is a dominant "biophysical ideology [that] has marginalised economic and social concerns within planning". Memon (2001) similarly maintains that those agendas *seen or portrayed* as being more subjective, such as intergenerational equity or social wellbeing, are likely to be excluded. Internationally, scholarship around new institutionalism supports the argument that institutional rules and norms support dominant ideologies and actors (March and Olsen, 1989; Lowndes, 2002). As noted, however, there is a lack of empirical evidence in the New Zealand context on the effects of this marginalisation and exclusion.

Where council actors define sustainable management in terms that include more subjective agendas, this allows for a more rationally comprehensive examination of problems and possible solutions. Such a definition might incorporate indicators for social, cultural and economic measures. In contrast, a narrow biophysical focus may

prevent planners and decision-makers from taking account of some of the community's preferred outcomes for the physical environment, where these addressed issues such as social and cultural well-being (PCE, 2001:94). Memon (2001:9) argues that planning should strive to prevent the domination of biophysical agendas by allowing for:

...mediating between social purpose and the natural and built environment...by interpreting social purpose through participatory decision-making processes and shaping individual ambitions to fit a conception of the public interest.

The PCE (2001) similarly argues that it is only possible to take account of issues such as equity, aesthetics and cultural concerns if councils actively pursue them. Otherwise, the financial and technical agendas of dominant institutional actors will continue to be privileged. Although Section 5(2) of the RMA requires that councils take account of social, economic, and cultural wellbeing as part of sustainable management of physical resources, Somerville (2004:46) maintains that the values in S5(2) are:

...inherently in conflict with and in opposition to each other, and there is no common measure to weigh or balance them. For example, there is no reasoning process to say ethically why the interests of this generation should prevail over those of future generations or vice versa.

Borrie et al. (2005) found that councils continue to routinely struggle with defining critical concepts such as sustainable management, and that this can delay plan-making, sometimes for years. Borrie et al. (2005) and Freeman (2004:313) conclude that without more central government guidance on sustainable management, councils will continue to be perplexed by the problem of how to balance biophysical, social and economic issues, particularly in situations of conflicts of interest. Freeman (ibid.) concludes that technical decision-making imperatives will probably continue to crowd out the consideration of more subjective issues such as intergenerational equity.

The marginalisation of some agendas seems likely to persist for some time. Proposals to broaden the RMA's sustainable management objective or definitions of the environment have been strongly opposed in the local government sector, with LGNZ noting that such changes would "complicat[e] resource management decision-making leading to an exacerbation of existing difficulties and complaints" (LGNZ, 2004:48). Consequently, environmental planning will not adequately reflect broader economic, social and cultural objectives, despite their prominence in many citizens' agendas and

elsewhere in the government's agenda. As Freeman (2004) and the PCE (2002) note, broader social debates are more likely to take place in strategic planning under the LGA 2002 than under the RMA. However, as consistency is not required between LGA 2002 plans and RMA plans or resource consent decisions, the results of those social debates may not filter down to individual planning and consent decisions.

Māori agendas provide a particular point of tension

Māori knowledge and agendas provide a striking example of the challenge of integrating diverse agendas into mainstream planning and decision-making. Māori environmental agendas often appear radically different from western and scientific views of the environment, in being explicitly informed by spiritual and cultural beliefs. Consequently, there is often considerable scope for conflicts over agendas and underlying perspectives. Adding to this, councils have a clear statutory obligation under the RMA to take account of tangata whenua input. So while Māori agendas are often fundamentally at odds with councils' mainstream views, councils must consult closely with Māori, making any tensions harder to avoid. Here I am treating Māori agendas as citizens' agendas in that individual Māori, iwi and other representative bodies are not part of local government.

Many commentators have observed that tensions between Māori agendas and mainstream agendas arise when councils privilege technical expertise and discount Māori inputs as subjective and lacking legitimacy (see for example, PCE, 1998a; Matunga, 2000; Klein, 2000). This contrast between Māori agendas, which are typically based on accumulated, community-based and experiential knowledge and formal Western evidence-based expertise, is particularly stark (PCE, 1998). For example, Māori frequently challenge resource consents on the basis of oral evidence for historical issues such as wahi tapu, or on the basis of spiritual concerns, such as those about the mixing of waters. These claims to validity do not fit well within processes that privilege expert-based, factual knowledge (Neill, 2003). Consequently, as Forgie et al. (1999:76) observe, "there is often an unwillingness to recognise Māori input in the same light as professionals such as engineers and lawyers". These tensions appear to be largely a result of the conflicts between perspectives that this study seeks to identify.

Such tensions are exacerbated by councils' obligations to consult with Māori. Consultation places considerable burdens on tangata whenua who are generally poorly resourced for providing input (Blyth, 1999; Matunga, 2000; Borrie et al., 2005; Memon

and Thomas, 2006). Yet consultation is also often characterised by a lack of recognition and utilisation of Māori knowledge and values. For example, Borrie et al (2005:30) found that many district plans were “deficient in identifying issues relevant to tangata whenua/iwi, being typically limited to wāhi tapu”. Given such common deficiencies in the mainstream understanding of Maori issues, many Māori will come to see their involvement as simply legitimising pre-determined outcomes (PCE, 1998a). For their part, councils lack any clear guidance on how to integrate Māori environmental concepts into planning and, not surprisingly, are unlikely to adequately take them into account (Ericksen et al., 2003; Borrie et al. 2005). Integration is particularly difficult when there is little obvious room for compromise between technical and Māori input.

These epistemological conflicts are also apparent when courts attempt to take account of Māori agendas. Case law is instructive here as it has a significant influence on local government practices (LGNZ, 2004:15). Ruru and Stephenson (2004:59) document an Environment Court case where Māori opposed, and then unsuccessfully appealed, a decision to grant resource consents to build a road over a wahi tapu containing ancestral remains². For tangata whenua, the proposal simply could not proceed. Ruru and Stephenson (2004:59) noted the “implacable opposition” of the Māori trustees who, as kaitiaki “could hardly do anything other than oppose the road if they were to be true to their obligations”. The Māori position was based on a concept (wahi tapu) defined in spiritual and cultural terms and supported by oral evidence alone. For both the Environment Court and the consenting authority, this standard of evidence was insufficient when applied to a specific proposal. The Environment Court (2003, paras 41-42) observed:

Evidence of oral history, we have always accepted as accurate to the extent of it being an accurate statement of what was handed down through generations. What we did not accept was that the base from whence that oral tradition emanated was necessarily sound in fact and untainted by variations and inaccuracies which may have crept in over centuries and in particular relating to precise geographical location in a case where geographical precision is required.

² *Te Runanga o Ati Awa ki Whakarongotai Inc and Takamore Trustees v Kapiti District Council*, EC, Wellington, W23-02, 4 July 2002, Judge Treadwell; *Takamore Trustees v Kapiti Coast District Council*, 2003, NZRMA 433

In situations such as this, where citizens’ agendas and supporting evidence are deemed insufficient, effective integration is difficult. Similar conflicts are relatively common now over citizens’ opposition to projects such as wind farms or development on iconic landscapes. Opposition is often based on grounds such as aesthetic, cultural and health concerns for which citizens lack acceptable supporting evidence in an effects-based regime such as the RMA. As Ahdar (2004:209) notes, the “desirability of some empirical evidence of harm to [actors’] interests is a recurrent theme in the environmental case law”. Yet the courts, councils and other institutions such as the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) all lack central government guidance on how to quantify and weigh subjective inputs (ibid.).

In situations where a compromise position is difficult to reach, actors’ perspectives are likely to be influential. Dominant institutional actors are likely to be swayed by mainstream positivist perspectives and by their widespread preference for coercive action over compromise in decision-making (Mansbridge, 1996). As Scott and Tipene-Matua (2004:139) observe, the critical risk is that Māori will be “pigeon-holed into the ‘cultural box’” as secondary considerations to be mitigated if possible, but only if they do not interfere with primary considerations. Whether mitigation is possible or not, Māori agendas and other agendas that are less clearly applicable to decision-making, will probably continue to be marginalised by powerful mainstream planning practices.

Tensions between actors’ diverse procedural views

Research shows that, a decade and a half after the introduction of new consultation requirements under the LGA 1974 and RMA, there is considerable uncertainty about the purpose of public consultation and public participation in decision-making. Council actors generally understand their statutory obligations well enough. However, there is some evidence that council and community actors hold diverse, often conflicting views on procedural issues such as roles and responsibilities, and the question of where decision-making power lies (PCE, 1996b; Controller and Auditor-General, 1998; Forgie, 2001; Neill, 2003; Drage, 2004; Memon and Thomas, 2006). Where there are such tensions between actors’ perspectives, this appears to pose a significant obstacle to the integration of citizens’ agendas. In this section I examine the evidence for tensions between actors’ perspectives in the New Zealand context, focusing on actors’ procedural expectations of influence and of relationships and roles. I also identify gaps in current knowledge that my research aims to address.

Council actors’ understandings of the purpose of public participation

Beyond the minimum statutory requirements for consultation, the form that public participation takes is open to interpretation and will reflect councils’ views on what is most appropriate (Klein, 2001:52). Often, this legislative flexibility leads to councils simply going through the motions and exhibiting rhetorical rather than genuine support for consulting the public (Cheyne & Comrie, 2002:159). The Controller and Auditor-General (1998:52) reported in 1998 that many councils persistently adopted a ‘we know best’ attitude, treating consultation as simple information-giving. Where this continues to be so, citizens’ agendas are unlikely to be adequately taken into account because councils come to see them as less relevant to decision-making.

Given the variety of forms public participation takes, it is important to understand what perspectives council actors adopt. New Zealand literature has focused more on documenting participation than considering the purposes assigned to those activities. Drage (2004) is notable for considering councillors’ views on procedural issues such as roles and responsibilities, which, as seen in Chapter Six, are relevant to this research.

Existing literature is sufficient for reviewing the participatory activities that councils undertake, and for some initial observations on the integration of citizens’ agendas and actors’ understandings of participation. To examine these issues, I employ a variation on Arnstein’s (1971) ‘ladder of citizens’ participation’. Burns et al. (1994) constructed a ‘ladder of citizen empowerment’ reproduced below in a summarised form.

	12	Interdependent control
Citizen control	11	Entrusted control
	10	Delegated control
<hr/>		
	9	Partnership
	8	Limited decentralised decision-making
Citizen participation	7	Effective advisory boards
	6	Genuine consultation
	5	High quality information
<hr/>		
	4	Customer care
Citizen non-participation	3	Poor information
	2	Cynical consultation
	1	Civic hype

Figure 1: A ladder of citizen empowerment (Burns et al., 1994)

The authors intended it as a device for councils’ assessment of their practices in relation to the goal of citizens’ empowerment, arguing councils should aim to climb the ladder over time. Here, the rungs of the ladder provide a means to plot councils’ understandings of the purpose of public participation. As Burns et al. (1994) note, some rungs are less relevant in some situations and may be collapsed.

Citizen non-participation (rungs 1–4)

A review of New Zealand literature suggests that most public participation in New Zealand is located on rungs 1–4, and also offers some clues for council actors’ purposes and perspectives. Consultation on rungs 1–4 constitutes what Burns et al. (1994) term “citizen non-participation”. In New Zealand such consultation is generally undertaken as a statutory requirement that also meets a range of other purposes. On rungs 1 and 2 is the practice of consulting to build citizens’ support for council initiatives (Javison, 1994). On rung 3 is consultation as information-giving. Here, information is manipulated and selectively disseminated, often by consultants on behalf of councils and consent applicants, again to persuade citizens to support a proposal (DIA, 1995; PCE, 2005). With information giving, communities often remain unaware of many issues and options, and have no buy-in. Councils tend to be unresponsive to public input, indicating a pre-determined position (DIA, 1995; PCE, 2005). On rung 4 councils adopt a ‘customer care’ approach where the appearance of consulting and listening is intended to ameliorate and mitigate citizens’ actual substantive concerns.

Citizen non-participation poses a barrier to the integration of citizens’ agendas because it does not allow citizens any clear understanding of processes and other actors’ agendas, or of how actors’ input relates to outcomes. Knight et al. (2000:74) argue that council actors’ primary purpose is to legitimise predetermined policies that are tweaked to reflect feedback from token consultation. Where this is so, citizens often feel powerless to influence outcomes and may see little point in participating (Day, 1998; Forgie et al., 1999). Borrie et al. (2005:19) observe that a lack of central government support and guidance for LGA 2002 plan-making “may cause councils to question the wisdom of committing their resources to the LTCCP process. The level of council commitment in turn will affect whether or not communities see LTCCPs as meaningful and useful documents”.

Internationally, research suggests that there can be a significant gap between how council actors and citizens perceive the purpose, quality and effectiveness of public

participation. Berman's (1997) nationwide USA survey of local government officers and citizens illustrates this gap in perceptions. He found that most officials felt that local government met citizens' needs and treated citizens fairly, while citizens themselves were very cynical about the competence and honesty of local government, and its lack of understanding of citizens' needs. Berman rejects the view that citizens' cynicism can be attributed to a misunderstanding of council intentions and activities, pointing instead to citizens' experiences of tokenism and a lack of official commitment to effectively integrating public opinion. Blake (1999) similarly observes that UK citizens often mistrust local government because of a perceived focus on legitimisation and a top-down mentality towards public participation. Mackenzie and Krogman (2005) report a similar sense of *fait accompli* among citizens about public consultation over publicly notified physical resource applications in Canada and the USA.

Citizen participation (rungs 5-9)

The lowest category of meaningful public participation on the ladder of citizen empowerment is rung 5, for the provision of clear, high quality information, "which citizens can use to appraise the performance of their council" (Burns et al., 1994:167). Initiatives such as citizens' charters and council consultation policies sit on rung 5 if they offer citizens a genuine opportunity to gain understanding and a right to be heard. However, Burns et al. warn that such initiatives may not offer citizens real influence over decision-making, and instead, may function as a "mechanism for channelling people's anger away from...the council" (ibid:167). To the extent that this is true, it suggests council actors view consultation as a means of gaining good quality input, but rarely intend sharing any authority with citizens.

In between rungs 5 and 6 is the common council practice of providing opportunities for public discussion based on good-quality information. These forums are important for the legitimacy of planning and decision-making. However, they offer citizens few opportunities to see their agendas reflected into plans and proposals. Both Forgie (2002) and Hayward (2000) reiterate the Department of Internal Affairs' (1995) earlier findings that this level of participation offers citizens intrinsic benefits such as increased understanding but few benefits in terms of enhanced decision-making. Legitimacy and authority are enhanced when citizens have been "listened to seriously", yet "public cynicism and feelings of disempowerment" remain when citizens' views have little impact on outcomes (Hayward, 2000:268). Such findings mirror the UK experience where, as Lowndes and Sullivan (2004:64) report:

The Audit Commission (1999) found that three-quarters of the ‘best practice’ authorities it surveyed failed to link the results of consultation with decision making processes. Recently completed research into public participation in local partnerships in England found that there were few significant policy outcomes following the experience of deliberation.

In New Zealand, the Ministry for the Environment’s guidelines for ‘best practice’ in consultation (MfE, 1999b, 2005) appear to sit just below rung 6. As the ministry principally responsible for administering the RMA, this is significant. The MfE’s view of best practice centres on the provision of high quality information and opportunities for public discussion. Actors require a clear understanding of processes, roles and responsibilities, and of “the issues that are being consulted on and those that are not” (MfE, 1999b:23). However, the MfE observe that “once an advocate has lodged an application for resource consent...there are often limited aspects on which compromise with the community is possible” (ibid:26).

Where council actors agree with these guidelines, they are likely to equate information-giving and listening with consultation, and to prefer a relatively passive role for citizens. The ministry’s guidelines provide for citizens’ input and for gaining procedural and substantive understanding, but they cast best practice as a matter of statutory compliance and conflict management rather than genuine participation. They do not necessarily offer citizens any sense of empowerment, and it is likely councils will generally deliver less than the MfE’s guidelines. Blake (1999) points to a similar view within central government environmental agencies in the UK. He describes the national “Going For Green” strategy of local environmental initiatives, where the “vision of participation primarily entailed a national programme of education, which was largely top down...and expert led” (ibid:260). Chandler (2000:11) is similarly critical of the UK local government reforms in 2000, arguing that the government’s aim of active citizenship:

...revolves around involvement rather than political accountability or policy changes. This is therapeutic politics because the aim of ‘giving a voice’ to local people is primarily designed to give individuals a feeling of greater inclusion and sense of community.

Rung 6 offers some meaningful opportunities for the integration of citizens’ agendas. Here, actors engage in two-way communication focused on establishing common

understandings of issues and where possible, identifying common ground. Citizens' agendas are seen as legitimate inputs that directly inform plans and complement representative decision-making processes. Hayward (2000:268) found such decisions are likely to be more rational and durable because citizens can accept their legitimacy and authority when they have been "listened to seriously even if they do not agree with the outcome". On this basis, effective integration would not necessarily equate with citizens directly influencing a decision.

Consultation at this level probably represents much of the best consultative and participatory activity in New Zealand local government. Here, councils are more innovative, employing practices such as citizens' juries and charrettes and co-management arrangements that allow for the better representation of community interests. Councils seek more informed decisions that are understood and accepted by the community, and are therefore less likely to face pressure for revision or cancellation. By 1998, according to the Controller and Auditor-General (1998:50), a few councils had "embraced" this approach and "recognised and capitalised on a range of additional benefits which public consultation can achieve". At this level, public participation is recognised as a necessary element in decision-making (DIA, 1995; Forgie et al., 1999).

A number of benefits accrue when councils actively encourage public participation. Citizens' understanding of, and trust in council decision-making increases, and their input becomes more informed and useful (Day, 1998). Councils are also more likely to achieve community buy-in (MacLennan, 2000). To this end, Hayward (2000) maintains councils should aim for maximum public debate and scrutiny, while making the minimum demands on citizens' time and resources. Lowndes and Sullivan (2004:63) have made similar recommendations about accountability and resourcing of UK local government partnerships, in response to increasing evidence of citizens' "consultation overload". In contrast, MfE (1999b, 2005) recommends councils exercise caution when considering whether to embark on additional consultation on alternative options. While consultation demonstrates that the applicant has considered alternatives and avoids accusations of a "done deal" (ibid:27). MfE also argues that it introduces the risk of further objections and delays.

Rungs 7–8 represent a degree of decentralised decision-making and limited power-sharing for which there is less evidence in New Zealand. Here, councils guarantee meaningful opportunities to influence decision-making, perhaps by allowing citizens to

scrutinise and challenge council activities, or by designing decision-making processes in collaboration with citizens (Klein, 2001:53). Participation on rungs 7–8 requires that councils ensure citizens have the financial and information resources, and the time and capacity to participate meaningfully (PCE, 1996a). Hayward (2000) and Mitcalfe (2001) both conclude that where councils address these resourcing issues, they also redress structural power imbalances. For example, actors such as well-resourced experts and developers are more likely to be active in informal, powerful institutional policy networks, whereas poorly resourced environmental advocacy groups may have little access to decision-makers. However, Memon and Thomas (2006) also note that local authorities already meet most of the cost of community consultation and would find it difficult to further resource community groups to participate, without central government support.

From rung 9 onwards, the “transformation of the role of the centre” occurs through the delegation of council decision-making power to citizens (Burns et al., 2004:162). At rung 9, this consists of genuine “partnerships” with bottom-up processes for plan development. At rung 10, control is “delegated”, and at rungs 11–12, the ladder enters the category of “citizen control”. Activity in New Zealand local government around rung 9 or 10 is probably not very common, but would include situations where councils enter co-management arrangements or partnerships with groups of citizens, such as representatives of iwi and interest groups, for the joint management of an environmental resource. Arrangements such as this are sometimes established as a condition of a resource consent decision, although typically with clear parameters for delegation of authority.

Von Dadelszen (2006) documents just such an arrangement where a joint committee of Hastings District Council and tangata whenua was established for wastewater planning, with equal representation of councillors and tangata whenua. The Hearing Commissioners for the District Council's wastewater resource consents described the Joint Committee proposal as a “remarkable and probably historic accord between tangata whenua and local government” (Von Dadelszen, 2006:23). This committee would be able to recommend decisions to the full council, which could subsequently veto, agree or amend.

Lowndes and Sullivan (2004) note that partnerships between UK local government and communities, often involving private enterprise, are increasingly common under Labour's modernisation of local government. Devine-Wright (2005:58) records a small

number of “genuine” power-sharing partnerships in UK energy development where a “locally-embedded approach” has been adopted. There, private and public initiatives involve communities in genuine decision-making partnerships with private or community-owned electricity providers, for the development of new, smaller-scale, local energy projects such as wind farms. Community support and a sense of ownership are important results of such an approach when compared with a centralised, national infrastructure and decision-making process (ibid.).

Perhaps the best example of a partnership arrangement in New Zealand environmental planning and decision-making is outside local government, in the role of conservation boards as advisors to the Department of Conservation. Conservation boards are independent bodies, established by statute to represent the public interest in the Department's work. Individual citizens sit on boards and are involved in strategic planning, monitoring, and advice on Department activities.

This review indicates that most participatory activity is concentrated on or below rung 5. Two aspects of this are notable in terms of the integration of citizens' agendas: First, even at the level of what MfE (1999b) regards as ‘best practice’, most council activity focuses on gathering informed public input to contribute to planning and decision-making that will occur in another time and place. This suggests that many council actors view the integrative process in quite limited terms, as the provision of input from relatively passive citizens who have little or no ability to directly influence decisions.

Second, actors will have a range of conflicting views of the purpose of consultation and participation. Even while some council actors seek to retain and ring-fence their decision-making authority, some citizens will expect to share some influence, while other actors will seek mutual understanding, longer term relationships, and so forth. These different procedural expectations are likely to be a source of tensions that limit the integration of citizens' agendas. As Blake notes in the UK context, even where citizens *are* more actively involved in the design of processes and in decision-making, new risks may emerge; increased citizen responsibility can “legitimise inaction amongst other organisations (in particular local and national government) by allowing them to deny their own responsibility for environmental improvement” (Blake, 1999:273).

Citizens’ different procedural expectations

The Controller and Auditor-General (1998) has concluded that some citizens expect to influence outcomes directly, even though council actors may commonly expect otherwise. These expectations are partly a result of how citizens interpret councils’ efforts towards public participation. Some citizens believe that by participating, they are engaging in a “genuine debate over the issues and that their views determine the outcome” (ibid:44). Yet this review indicates that, from a council perspective, consultation is often a matter of compliance and information gathering, rather than any genuine debate or power-sharing.

Where councils do go beyond compliance and information-gathering, they further raise citizens’ expectations, and ironically, this can also be a source of conflict. Blyth (1999), Bostwick (1999) and Hayward (2000) were all critical of councils that made overt commitments to consultation but subsequently ignored or sidelined citizens’ recommendations. This led to a loss of legitimacy, despite councils’ initial good intentions. Borrie et al. (2005) observe that this lack of commitment continues to be a problem under the LGA 2002. Buhrs and Aplin (1999) point to a similar lack of commitment to implementation of environmental policies in state and local government in Australia, despite an emphasis on public participation in the policy formation. Halseth and Booth (2003:453) observe of Canadian citizens’ involvement in environmental initiatives:

When groups or individuals come to the process with quite different views as to roles, issues and decision-making powers and invest a great deal of time and energy, they feel betrayed when they find out that the outcomes will not have the effect they expected.

Goodwin (1998:491) found in the UK that claims of commitment to participation by conservation agencies “rais[e] local expectations that their voice will be heard”. However, they also found that when this expectation proves incorrect:

...the subsequent disillusionment and frustration felt by local communities risks creating a credibility gap between local people’s demands and the ability or willingness of national organizations to respond, and, by undermining the sense of agency of local participants, may result in withdrawal from such participatory initiatives.

Borrie and Memon's surveying of councils in New Zealand (2005:41) shows that many councils are concerned that the extensive requirements for consultation over community outcomes under the LGA 2002 will raise unrealistic community expectations of outcomes and levels of influence. A lack of public understanding is seen as a key contributor to such unrealistic expectations (ibid). In contrast, where citizens' expectations are based on a clear understanding between all actors, then this is likely to contribute to effective integration. For example, Forgie et al. (1999) and Cheyne and Comrie (2002) both reported positively on councillors who took a hands-on role in public consultation, because they lent legitimacy and a sense of commitment to those processes.

Conflicts are also likely when councils' own objectives are unclear. As the Controller and Auditor-General (1998:47) observes:

A council is likely to be more successful in carrying out formal consultation when it...is itself clear about the purpose of consultation and makes that purpose clear to others.

A number of researchers and organisations state that councils must clearly establish their own objectives, but they must also make it clear what influence citizens can expect to have over outcomes (Blyth, 1999; Forgie et al., 1999; MfE, 2005). The PCE (1996b:54) observes, for example, that:

Participants need to be clear about what they are seeking to achieve, and be seeking to achieve the same thing. It should also be made clear to participants what can and cannot be dealt with by agreement among them and what will require a decision of the council.

Borrie et al. (2005) and the Local Government Commission (2005) both note, in their research and reviews of the LGA 2002, the widely expressed public and council concerns about the lack of clarity and guidance in the Act on consultation, planning and decision-making. For example, many submitters observed that councils have insufficient guidance about what information to provide during public consultation. Such a lack of clarity, let alone agreement, on procedural matters will certainly contribute to conflicts that limit the integration of citizens' agendas. In order to understand what drives this conflict, this study will focus partly on investigating actors' procedural understandings, expectations and preferences.

Māori actors’ procedural expectations

Conflicting procedural expectations also appear to lead to tensions between Māori, council actors and other actors. Borrie et al. (2005) found that many hapu and iwi have a lack of clarity regarding their role. Tiakiwai et al. (2004) and Neill (2003) characterise Māori as often having a preference for, if not an expectation of long-term relationships with other actors in planning and decision-making. Trust and respect are established between actors, allowing them to develop a sound understanding of one another’s views as the basis of compromise or agreement. Such relationships typically extend beyond terms of political office or incumbent council actors. They will encompass historical eras and can cut across existing geographic boundaries to include past or related authorities. Although this understanding of relationships is probably neither exclusively Māori, nor general to all Māori, it is likely to be a source of tension where it differs from other actors’ expectations.

Neill (2003) observes that some councils and many citizens see relationships as relatively finite, discrete affairs driven by the requirements of a specific consultation process. Councils have an “understandable culture of getting things done and focusing on their accountabilities...Continuity of the relationship is not emphasised” (ibid:4). However, for Māori, a focus on deadlines may not allow sufficient time for consideration of proposals (Tiakiwai et al., 2004), and the lack of ongoing engagement with councils will be difficult to understand. As Neill (2003:5) observes:

...with councils taking an instrumental, project-by-project approach to relationships, and Māori seeing present relationships in the context of those in the past (with this or related authorities), it is not surprising that relationships founder.

These different perspectives may lead to Māori and councils talking past each other, with negative consequences for integration of Māori agendas.

Trust between actors is also a major factor for Māori. Neill (2003:7) maintains that trust emerges when actors make a commitment to a relationship. Trust makes compromise and agreement easier, and it gives actors the confidence to defend their agreements “when faced with initially hostile reactions from their respective constituent groups” (ibid:7). Trust cannot form where the consultation process is not genuine, as is the case when councils use Māori and their traditional knowledge in an instrumental

fashion, simply for the purpose of gaining consents or legitimising decisions (Tiakiwai et al., 2004). Borrie et al (2005:21) conclude that genuine relationship-building will “require commitment by both councillors and staff. This may require changes in attitudes within councils, especially from councillors...The primary requirement will be to overcome the distrust of councils that has developed on the part of some Māori”

These tensions between perspectives are an under-researched source of conflict. Mainstream planning and decision-making probably sees the substance of consultation as being far more important than the process, yet for many Māori, procedural and substantive elements are equally important. Tensions can easily emerge over a lack of shared understanding of procedural issues such as the amount of time required for hui, or the importance of protocol. Such a lack of understanding, founded in different procedural and cultural views, may be unacknowledged by most actors. Yet it can become a major obstacle to Māori, for whom quality of relationships are critical (Tiakiwai et al., 2004). Thus, a better understanding of the perspectives present, and of tensions between them, is also critical to more effective integration.

Actors' understandings of roles and responsibilities

Tensions between actors' different perspectives are also likely to reflect conflicting views of their roles and responsibilities. The parts actors see themselves and other actors playing probably vary enormously—particularly on issues of influence, accountability and neutrality. Integration of citizens' agendas will be limited by such procedural confusion, because the resultant conflicts are a barrier to shared understandings and agreement. There is some evidence that actors have conflicting views on roles and responsibilities (e.g. Borrie, et al. 2005), but the empirical evidence regarding actors' perspectives in the New Zealand context is limited. Blake (1999:257) concludes from UK-based research, that the increased emphasis on public participation in environmental planning and decision-making has led to “tensions...emerging over the relative responsibilities of different actors”, and over how to translate environmental concerns into effective policy.

Confusion over citizens' roles appears to centre on the issue of differing expectations of citizens' influence in decision-making (Controller and Auditor-General, 1998). This has been more recently confirmed by the Local Government Commission (2005:46) who note that “an increased number of submitters have unrealistic expectations of how their input should be reflected in decision-making”. The Commission notes particularly,

that sections 82 to 90, dealing with principles for consultation and use of the Special Consultative Procedure “contribute largely to these unrealistic expectations” (ibid, 46).

A number of researchers suggest that what councils generally seek is better quality input and more legitimate decisions (around rungs 5 and 6 on the ladder of citizen empowerment) rather than more power-sharing (Javison, 1994; Blyth, 1999; Justice, 2001). If this is so, it suggests a council view of citizens as relatively passive. Yet citizens are not passive; Forgie’s (2001:128) research shows citizens often choose to participate and “have their say” even when they anticipate predetermined outcomes. Cheyne and Comrie (2002:163) similarly observe that “citizens have aspirations for accountable and responsive local government and seek to be involved in decision-making contrary to assertions about apathy and alienation”.

Where different expectations are evident, they are likely to undermine the legitimacy of outcomes (Blyth, 1999; Bostwick, 1999). As councils resist allowing citizens any influence, so citizens will tire of being encouraged to participate and then being sidelined (Selman, 2001). Effective integration is then hampered because citizens have less sense of ownership of processes, and less accountability for outcomes. The response of tangata whenua is notable in this respect, because they increasingly circumvent public consultation by seeking direct partnerships with councils, based on their Treaty partner status that guarantees them some influence in management and decision-making processes (PCE, 1998b:114).

The obverse of the debate over citizens’ influence concerns councillors’ decision-making authority. Tensions are most acute where citizens seek to influence decisions at the same time as councillors seek to retain their decision-making independence. As citizens are increasingly encouraged to have their say through statutory consultation, so they increasingly perceive themselves as having a legitimate claim to decision-making influence. Citizens may also anticipate that council actors should be more responsive to their agendas. This reflects uncertainty among all actors over where citizens’ influence ends, and on what basis elected representatives might share some authority with citizens. As Drage (2004:37) observes:

...just where the line is drawn between the practice of participatory democracy and political institutions that have always been based on the ethos of representative democracy remains unclear.

This uncertainty is likely to persist, if not be amplified, since the scope of potential local government activity has widened with the introduction of general powers under the LGA 2002. Drage (2004) has found that councillors have a wide range of views on their roles and accountabilities. This suggests that citizens probably also receive mixed messages about roles and the possible extent of their influence. Borrie et al. (2005) are critical of the lack of central government guidance for the roles and functions of councillors, in particular. Memon and Thomas (2006:140) also note that "the community at large has also been left in the dark by central government regarding community outcomes" under the LGA 2002, with decisions about communities' roles left for citizens themselves and individual local authorities to make.

Uncertainty over councillors' roles is probably exacerbated by the conflicts councillors experience over decision-making versus consultation. Councillors are often criticised for their lack of leadership, and in various ways, for demonstrating a lack of ownership of their decisions (PCE, 2005; Ericksen et al., 2003; Borrie et al., 2005). For example, council decisions are sometimes subject to rapid about-turns when political or public pressure comes to bear. Yet when councillors do form a strong opinion, express a commitment, or champion a particular view, they are frequently accused by citizens of predetermination and a lack of neutrality (Bush, 2004; PCE, 2005). Again, it is not at all clear what the different groups of actors' perspectives are on these issues, or how these potentially conflicting roles can be reconciled.

Planning literature in New Zealand says little about the role of officers, tending to treat them as neutral actors who are responsible for providing expertise, synthesising opinions, and facilitating various activities and outcomes, but who have little impact otherwise. Planners have a formal role, based on an assumption of neutrality, fairness and objectivity rather than vested interest (Controller and Auditor-General, 1998:36). A planner is an "arbiter" (Gleeson, 2000:118), a "facilitator of the process; recorder of the views" (MfE, 2005). These views appear to reflect a rational positivist perspective of planning as a depoliticised activity, where planners are neutral facilitators of rational scientific and economic processes, rather than actors with any particular interest (Murray & Swaffield, 2000:78). Such views also reflect the central government Westminster tradition, in which the role of officials is one of non-partisan advisors and implementers of policy. Nalbandian (1990) considers this view of the objective, neutral official to be common within USA local government, despite widespread scholarship acknowledging that officers' roles often include a significant leadership element. As Nalbandian (1990:654) observes, such politicisation:

...is widely acknowledged among professional observers. However, popular justifications for the local government professional's role has not kept pace and still relies heavily on the proposition that politics and administration are separate endeavors and that professional city and county managers must be insulated instruments of a governing body, incapable of providing or facilitating community leadership.

There is some limited evidence in the New Zealand context that actors have a common perspective on officers' roles. The Controller and Auditor-General (1998) and Forgie (2001) both found that citizens and councillors want officers to maintain a position of professional, apolitical neutrality on substantive issues. Council officers themselves "often state their role to be one of 'finding the middle ground'" (PCE, 2001:72). In the wider public sector, policy professionals support a broadly positivist view of their own role as objective, value-neutral technicians (Wolf, 1997), and as "purposive, goal-oriented problem solvers seeking optimal solutions" (Tenbenschel (2000:426).

While there may be a broadly shared *ideal* view of officers/planners as objective, neutral actors, it appears actors often have a different view of the *actual* role that officers play. Hayward (2000:238) found that some citizens distrusted council planners, and saw them as "unable or unwilling, to listen to broader social concerns" raised by citizens. Some commentators recommend independent third-party facilitators and mediators, because of citizens' concerns that officers lack neutrality and have a vested interest (PCE, 1996; Controller and Auditor-General, 1998; MfE, 2005). Hayward (2000:238) argues that citizens trust independent facilitators exactly because they are able to challenge the "illegitimate uses of power" by councils—something that would be difficult for council officers to do (PCE, 2004:70).

Overall, there appear to be considerable uncertainty and mixed expectations among actors of governance issues such as roles and responsibilities. Actors' perspectives reflect a mix of beliefs and preferences, some of which may be largely unexamined and potentially contradictory. Integration of citizens' agendas is likely to be limited where there is conflict over roles, because legitimacy requires actors' acceptance of, if not agreement with processes.

Conclusion

In this chapter I examined the evidence for obstacles to the integration of citizens' agendas in the New Zealand context, and of opportunities for conducting a more effective integrative process. The first part of the chapter described the institutional and statutory context for planning and decision-making, and the evidence for its impact on effective integration. I then considered the tensions between different agendas and perspectives that actors have towards planning and decision-making. It was apparent from this review that the least understood aspects of this research on the integration of citizens' agendas concern actors' perspectives. In light of this, and in response to the research question, the research will focus on those two dimensions and consider how they influence effective integration.

Having reviewed the literature on the challenge of integration, in Chapter Three I present my methodological approach to an empirical enquiry into these issues. That approach centres on describing actors' agendas and perspectives in two particular planning processes, which, in terms of their influence on the integration of citizens' agendas, can be compared with the existing evidence from this chapter.

Chapter Three – Methodology

Introduction

This chapter sets out methodological issues relating to this empirical enquiry. It covers:

1. The overall research design philosophy
2. The research methods used.
3. The ethical issues associated with the fieldwork.

In Chapter One I posed the research question: *What influences the integration of citizens' agendas in environmental planning and decision-making in New Zealand local government?* and the subsidiary question: *What opportunities for more effective integration are revealed by this research?* I identified four dimensions to the challenge of integration and went on in Chapter Two to review the literature on those issues in the New Zealand context. The literature review revealed that the first dimension of the institutional context for planning and decision-making, and the second dimension of actors' substantive agendas, are relatively well documented and understood. The literature review also revealed a gap in understanding of the epistemological and procedural dimensions of actors' perspectives and of possible tensions between perspectives. These tensions are difficult to describe and poorly understood and have attracted little scholarly attention in New Zealand. Yet understanding the influence of tensions between actors' perspectives is critical for assessing conflicts over resource use, particularly those founded in tensions over subjective issues such as what counts as knowledge or evidence, or what roles and levels of influence actors should have.

Research design

From the review of literature in Chapter Two it is apparent that the least well-understood dimensions of the research problem are actors' perspectives. Consequently, while this research also takes account of institutional issues and actors' stated agendas, the empirical enquiry focuses most closely on describing actors' underlying perspectives and considering their influence on the integration of citizens' agendas. The enquiry is grounded in two local authority planning and decision-making processes, but the findings have relevance to other public policy-making settings and will add to existing knowledge on the research problem.

The research design is informed by a number of ontological and epistemological assumptions. The approach is post-positivist in that it focuses on the role of ideas, as expressed in actors' perspectives. From a post-positivist perspective, social realities are multiple and varied and reflect people's efforts to make sense of their experiences and their interactions with each other (Jennings, 1987). A post-positivist approach would not view actors' understandings of issues such as wastewater planning as fixed and objective; rather, they are intersubjectively constructed through debate and mutual understanding, and are in a "constant state of revision" (Bryman, 2004:17). In methodological terms, this requires an approach that renders actors' understandings, and the interactions between them, explicit. This approach fits with my research focus on actors' perspectives.

The research design is also post-positivist in assuming that knowledge is both valid and relative. From this perspective it is not possible to discover the objective 'facts' about social processes such as planning and decision-making. However, it is possible to uncover the range of understandings of those things at a point in time (Durning, 1999), even though actors' understandings are often implicit and unarticulated and may be constantly being modified. Research can only gain a snapshot of that social reality and the findings cannot simply be replicated (Crotty, 1998), and will not always be empirically verifiable and universally generalisable (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). The findings from this research allow for drawing wider theoretical and practical inferences, but have limited generalisability because they are based on interpretation of findings that are partly contextually specific. This research presents a number of clear findings, but also concludes with some more speculative findings and areas for further research.

This research approach is interpretive in assuming there are multiple, changing social realities to be taken into account (Bevir & Rhodes, 2002). I begin from the position that there is no independent benchmark researchers can use to establish an objective, fixed view of the facts about knowledge in a social setting. Instead, the empirical enquiry is affected by interpretation at two critical points. First, reality is interpreted by actors who negotiate meanings and construct "mutual knowledge that is constantly being used and modified by social actors as they interact with each other" (Blaikie, 2000:115). Actors attach meaning to situations based on their own subjective perspectives, yet little is known about how this subjectivity influences planning and decision-making. Second, this research interprets and then theorises actors' interpretations of social reality. This process is explanatory, because actors' perspectives and actions are interpreted in relation to their particular context and in terms of wider theory.

However, the research is unlikely to find complete causal explanations for actors' actions in the specific context. For example, actors' choices about whether to support or oppose a particular proposal are unlikely to be explainable simply in terms of their treatment by other actors, or in terms of their institutional location, or objective measures, such as voting habits and class (Bevir & Rhodes, 2002). Actions are better explained once actors' underlying perspectives are included in the analysis alongside contextual variables. This research design allows for the description of the different perspectives that are present and to consider their influence on the integration of citizens' agendas.

This interpretive, post-positivist approach takes a middle ground between positivist objectivity and subjectivism by acknowledging the interrelationships between structure, agency and ideas. As Jennings (1993:103) argues from a post-positivist perspective:

...concepts and categories used in social inquiry and political argument are publicly available concepts—that is, they are drawn from a common intersubjectively meaningful set of cultural norms, traditional values and commonsense understandings of what human beings need and how they react to various circumstances.

An interpretive approach seeks to “gain insights into and understanding of the means by which social realities are constructed and deployed” (Stainton Rogers, 2003:52). This research explores how *actors interpret* situations by attaching subjective meanings, which are informed by their underlying perspectives. Subsequently, this *research interprets* those actions and perspectives that actors adopt, and then considers the influence of tensions between perspectives for the integration of citizens' agendas, and for wider practices and theory.

The research design is partly inductive in that I began by observing the problem of poor integrative processes and posed a research question that asked why the problem is as it is. From my observation and a review of literature I infer that the problem of ineffective integrative processes is a function of institutional arrangements and of tensions between actors' agendas and between actors' perspectives. The research locates that problem in two particular settings that allow me to consider possible explanations for the problem. My approach is to observe the problem and draw wider practical and theoretical inferences. The research does not begin with a hypothesis to test; rather, the research question is operationalised in such a way as to explore

possible explanations. The research outcomes will be theoretical explanations for the problem, some proposed practical remedies, and recommendations for further research. Some of those recommendations will suggest more deductive approaches to testing aspects of the theory through the collection of more data. Bryman (2004:10) describes this as an “iterative strategy of weaving back and forth between data and theory”.

The fieldwork

The fieldwork comprised a study of two local authority planning and decision-making processes that appeared to exemplify the problem. The study explored how the problem of integration played out in those particular settings, as well as drawing inferences about its relevance to other settings. The data collection methods, described below, were suited to a focus on actors’ subjective perspectives. All data collection was conducted in the two planning processes from which the respondents were drawn.

The fieldwork gathered data on the following:

- The various epistemological and procedural dimensions of actors’ perspectives, and evidence of whether those perspectives were common to both studies.
- Similarities or differences in institutional arrangements and processes, both within each process and between the two processes.
- Similarities or differences between actors’ substantive agendas, both within each process and between the two processes.

In both planning processes the councils involved were applying for renewed resource consents for wastewater treatment and disposal, to replace their expired consents for discharge of treated wastewater. The two wastewater planning processes were:

- Palmerston North City Council’s ‘WasteWater 2002’, later renamed ‘WasteWater 2006’.
- Wanganui District Council’s ‘1992 Wastewater Scheme’, later renamed the ‘1999 Revised Wastewater Scheme’.

Fieldwork was undertaken in Palmerston North and Wanganui, in relation to those wastewater planning processes, in 2001/2002.

The approach taken in the fieldwork combined qualitative methods (interviews, documentary analysis and some observation) with a small scale statistical survey using Q-methodology. Each method is discussed in more detail below.

Using two planning processes provided an empirical setting within which to ground the findings and conclusions. Those particular planning processes were selected for a number of reasons. They appeared to be good examples of the phenomenon under study and they had a number of common elements that could be compared. For example, both councils were acting within tight timeframes related to the need to gain resource consents. Both were engaged in a variety of forms of public consultation, and were clearly struggling with the integration of citizens' agendas, which conflicted with each other and with council agendas.

A number of other criteria influenced the selection of these two planning processes. They were progressing virtually in tandem, which simplified the research process. Palmerston North City Council began its planning and public consultation in the early 1990s and consents were granted in mid-2003. Wanganui District Council began planning and consulting in the late 1980s, and final resource consents were granted in early 2002. At the time of the fieldwork in 2001-2002, both councils were consulting as part of the resource consent process. The two processes were mostly conducted in public and were expected to yield data on "webs of social relations, variety of activities and diverse events" (Neuman, 2000:352). Both cities were typical of non-metropolitan New Zealand, with medium sized urban areas and wastewater infrastructures common to many cities (Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, 2000a).

Using two planning processes also allowed for comparison of similarities and differences between the two processes. I was able to draw some conclusions on the importance of each of the four dimensions of the problem by assessing their relative influence in each planning process. For example, where a particular perspective was more evident in one process than the other, this discrepancy could be linked to potential causal factors in each process, such as the extent to which citizens were actively involved in planning and decision-making, or their roles and ability to exercise institutional veto over processes and outcomes.

One potential disadvantage of the selection was that both processes were council-initiated and council-led resource consents. Neither was initiated by a private citizen or

commercial enterprise, for example, a land developer. This limited the conclusions that could be drawn on developer-led resource consent applications.

Ethical considerations

Research participants were involved in the two wastewater planning processes in one of three capacities: as councillors, council officers or citizens. All were involved in the development of the two councils' wastewater schemes and resource consent applications. Citizens were mostly involved in temporary advisory groups organised by the two councils. Some citizens also represented particular interest groups, encompassing community, environmental, and iwi (tribal) interests.

Potential research participants were identified from council records of council officers and councillors who were closely involved, and of listed membership of groups and all public submitters. An initial contact was attempted with all of these potential participants by telephone. Those who responded and expressed an interest in participating were sent an Information Sheet (Appendices One and Two) and Consent Form (Appendix Three). I requested permission of participants to attribute their responses to them in the thesis. Given the quite focused and public nature of the wastewater planning processes, anonymity could not be guaranteed, although respondents' names were not used and they were able to request that particular information be kept confidential.

For Palmerston North City Council and Wanganui District Council staff, consent was initially obtained from their Chief Executives before approaching individual staff. Permission was also obtained from the two councils and from the consenting authority, the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council³ for attendance at public meetings and resource consent hearings. Research agreements were reached with the two councils (Appendix Four)

A successful application for approval for the study was made to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee before commencing fieldwork (reference: HEC: PN Protocol 01/116).

³ The Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council's trading name is 'Horizons Regional Council'. It also formerly traded as 'horizons.mw'. It is the governing local body for the Manawatu-Wanganui region that Palmerston North City Council and Wanganui District Council are both local authorities within.

The research methods

This research design combined quantitative and qualitative methods, although the design itself fit most closely with a qualitative approach in being interpretive and largely inductive. In this section I briefly introduce the research methods and explain the reasons for their selection.

The research incorporated five methods (each is described in later sections):

1. Intensive semi-structured interviews with 6 key stakeholders in the two wastewater planning processes, conducted prior to Q-method surveys.
2. Q-method surveys with 24 respondents followed by statistical factor analysis of surveys.
3. Semi-structured interviews following Q-method surveys with all 24 respondents.
4. Analysis of official documents from the two local authorities and of media reports relating to the two planning processes.
5. Non-participant observation at resource consent hearings.

The primary data collection method was Q-method surveys. The interpretation of survey results was supported by material from qualitative interviews and documentary and observational data from the two wastewater planning processes. The purpose of combining research methods was to gather complementary types of data that would enhance the reliability and validity of the findings (Bryman, 2004). The reliability of data interpretation is increased when it is supported by evidence from other data sources (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). Snape and Spencer (2003:21) argue that combining qualitative and quantitative methods and different types of data allows for “complementary extension—that is using different forms of evidence to build a greater understanding and insight of the social world than is possible from one approach alone”.

The results of the statistical Q-method survey will be representative of perspectives present in the population under study. It will also be possible to draw wider inferences from the findings in the specific settings to other populations involved in similar activities (in this research, in environmental planning and decision-making) although not with any statistical precision (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). At the theoretical level the findings will have more general application to issues concerning planning and decision-making practices.

The validity of data interpretation was also enhanced by combining research methods that allowed for the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data. Interview data and other context-specific material were used to extend my understanding of the survey data. For example, validity in factor interpretation related to issues such as whether the factor descriptions “accurately reflect the phenomenon under study as perceived by the study population” (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003:274). Interview material, in particular, was useful in establishing the accuracy of these interpretations.

Interviews, observation and documentary analysis all contributed to a post-positivist and interpretivist enquiry, although they could equally be used in more positivist approaches. Interviews were conducted immediately following the Q-method surveys. These interviews gleaned additional context-specific material that assisted in interpreting respondents’ subjective perspectives, as revealed by surveys and factor analysis. By combining surveys and interviews, respondents’ perspectives were rendered explicit and able to be interpreted—in terms of the specific social settings and in wider, theoretical terms. Observations and documentary analysis supported these interpretations.

Q-methodology

Q-methodology suits interpretive studies because it allows the researcher to gain rich insights into actors’ subjective perspectives and experiences (Fairweather & Swaffield, 2001). Researchers are able to reconstruct the values and meanings people use in particular settings (Dryzek & Berejikian, 1993; Wirth, 2004), often uncovering new or previously unrecognised perspectives.

Q-methodology is sometimes characterised as a post-positivist and interpretive methodology because, as Dryzek and Berejikian (1993:52) observe:

...it takes the subjective, self-referential opinions of respondents seriously in seeking to model the whole subject as he or she apprehends a particular situation...Q is interpretive in assuming that each reconstructed perspective represents a coherent point of view. Thus, any apparent internal inconsistencies require explanation, rather than just dismissal or criticism.

Q-methodology allows the capture and reconstruction of the ‘perspectives’ or shared patterns of beliefs that are present in a particular context in relation to the issue under study. Individual research respondents will identify more or less closely with one or more perspectives. The reconstruction of perspectives is based on the assumption that peoples’ views are not merely idiosyncratic, but rather, that there are patterns and interpretable meanings to them. Q-methodology allows the researcher to search for a finite number of patterns that aid in the interpretation of actors’ perspectives (Barry and Proops, 1999). Each pattern of values and beliefs is described as an overall perspective on the issue under study.

Q-methodology is distinguished from traditional ‘R-methodology’⁴ by their different approaches to statistical analysis. R-methodology measures and correlates traits such as attitudes and opinions in a *population of respondents*. In contrast, Q-methodology measures and correlates different expressed viewpoints in a *population of statements* on a topic of interest. Correlations using Q-method reflect the degree of similarity in the way respondents have sorted the statements. Analysis identifies clustered views that have been modelled by respondents’ rank-ordering of statements (Durning, 1999:404).

Q-methodology is suited to interpretive research of the sort undertaken here, involving small numbers of participants in a policy context. It is able to capture actors’ diverse, subjective perspectives on the matter at issue (Durning, 1999). The Q-method procedure achieves this by surveying and modelling “patterns of subjective perspectives across individuals” (Steelman & Maguire, 1999:363). By aiming for a better understanding of those perspectives, Q-methodology addresses some of researchers’ and analysts’ criticisms of the positivist nature of much traditional quantitative research (Dryzek, 1990:113). The point of “reconstructing” perspectives is to explore beliefs and discourses, how groups of actors (and sometimes individuals with a unique perspective) think about an issue, construct meaning, interpret experiences and so forth, and therefore, what the problems and possibilities are.

Research respondents are likely to identify with aspects of more than one of the reconstructed perspective and to share perspectives with other respondents. Often, aspects of actors’ structural location will assert themselves in this process. For example, Barry and Proops (1999:344) note, it may be “possible to identify that certain groups have discourses about nature that are markedly different from other groups

⁴ “R” being a reference to the application of Pearson’s more conventional “product-moment” correlation, *r*, to the study of trait relationships (Brown, 1980:9).

(e.g. urban/rural; male/female; rich/poor; etc.).” Such findings often have significant policy implications, such as that “policies acceptable in one locality, or stratum of society, may be ineffective or even unworkable elsewhere”.

Perspectives (ideas, discourses, values and beliefs) can also “have a force of their own independently of particular actors” (Fischer, 2003:vii). A dominant perspective will often be shared by groups of powerful actors, and it may have the ability to shape and limit action by privileging some points of view over others. As Dayton (2000:73) notes:

...policy outcomes will always reflect the dominant perspectives about the way that people are and the way that the world works (Rochefort and Cobb, 1994). These dominant assumptions will constrain the range of options open to policy makers, or even eliminate a problem from the policy agenda if that problem cannot be solved using the conventional tools and techniques favoured in policy circles.

The reconstruction of perspectives is critical to making sense of the meanings that actors attach to events and issues, and to understanding agency and influence (or lack thereof) in planning and decision-making (Martin and Steelman, 2004). This knowledge allows policy actors to better understand sources of conflict and to accommodate and take account of diverse perspectives.

Fieldwork based on Q-methodology allowed me to reconstruct actors’ perspectives on planning and decision-making in a particular context. I sought to make sense of the problem in terms of the understanding of actors involved, and to identify the viewpoints on which actors are closest and furthest apart. Some of these findings would probably confirm what is already understood, but others might be more revelatory—uncovering opportunities for new approaches to problems in planning and decision-making.

Q-methodology is interpretivist and post-positivist in seeking to avoid imposing the researcher’s assumptions about what is relevant on the enquiry. Rather than operationalising an existing hypothesis as the criteria for investigation, Q-methodology explores actors’ perspectives, so far as possible, without *a priori* assumptions. Researchers subsequently develop theoretical propositions about the significance of actors’ different perspectives, rather than testing existing theories (Wirth, 2004).

The main steps in the Q-method approach are briefly summarised as follows:

1. Development of the research question, typically with a mix of deductive and inductive approaches, and exploratory and interpretive aims.
2. Collection of statements that represent the overall discourse on the topic of interest (for example a discourse on environmental sustainability might include the statements “humankind should tread more lightly on the Earth” and “I don’t believe that I should limit my fuel consumption now because of the risk of possible fuel shortages in the future”). The set of statements or ‘concourse’, generally comprising 200-300 statements, is usually collected from interviews with actors involved in the activity, but can also come from newspapers, books and other sources.
3. Development of a representative set of statements from the concourse into a Q-sample.
4. Administration of the Q-sample to a number of individuals through a Q-sort. Each respondent rank orders each statement in relation to all other statements in the Q-sample, according to whether they agree more strongly with one than another, disagree more strongly, and so forth. Respondents are forced to make comparisons and choices between the statements by ranking them according to a set distribution.
5. The resultant Q-sorts provide a sample of perspectives on the issue under study. This sample is correlated by statistical factor analysis in order to identify clusters or ‘factors’ of commonly-shared viewpoints. Each factor models a particular *perspective* on the topic of interest, rather than modelling a particular group of individual respondents or identities.
6. The results are examined to identify the particular attitudes and values associated with each factor. Factors are usually labelled to represent the core elements of that perspective. For example, a ‘green, spiritual environmentalist’ factor might be compared with an ‘environment as an economic resource’ factor, and a ‘market liberal green’ factor.

Q-sorts are often complemented with interviews and observations as a way to further draw out underlying attitudes and values, and to clarify the rationale for statement sorting choices (Fairweather & Swaffield, 2001:219).

Q-methodology and the measurement of subjectivity

The term 'subjectivity' is commonly used in Q-methodology. McKeown and Thomas (1988:12) define it as:

...nothing more than a person's communication of his or her point of view. As such, subjectivity is always anchored in self-reference, that is, the person's internal frame of reference, but this does not render it inaccessible to rigorous examination.

Rather, as Webler et al. (2001:437) observe, subjectivity can be modelled in Q-methodology because:

Unlike most survey methods, which ask a respondent to express a view on isolated statements, in this type of study individuals react to statements in the context of all statements included in the study. Not only do they react to statements within a particular context, each statement is ranked in relation to the others. This provides a researcher with a holistic perspective of a person's subjectivity regarding a research question.

The data gathered on subjective viewpoints or perspectives are statistically analysed, but unlike R-methodology, the range of subjective responses become the units of analysis. This allows for modelling whole viewpoints rather than particular aspects of identity (Webler et al., 2001).

Conventional R-methodology might, for example, correlate the objective variables of high income and high education with the variable of commitment to conservation. These variables would all be objectively quantified in some way—income, qualifications, time spent on recycling rubbish, and so forth. Generalised statements could then be made about these findings in the wider population. Perhaps research would discover that 62% of university graduates earning \$40,000 or more regularly recycle their rubbish, indicating a high positive correlation between the three variables.

In contrast, Q-methodology might ask respondents about their own perspective on the association between education, income and conservation values. As such, their responses would be subjective. The variation in responses would be statistically analysed to "reveal dominant patterns of belief" (Steelman & Maguire, 1999:363).

Using the same example, Q-methodology might uncover sets of clustered viewpoints on the issues of education, income and conservation, perhaps including a viewpoint that demonstrates that income and education are immaterial to respondents' attitudes towards conservation. Thus, analysis might reveal the potential fallacy in the conventional survey results, and uncover an alternative hypothesis as the basis for further research.

Applications of Q-methodology in conflict resolution, planning and policy analysis

The perspectives that are reconstructed through Q-methodology can assist in revealing different (sometimes unimagined) ways of interpreting a policy issue. They may challenge stereotypes and generalisations, or may reveal shared meanings and commonly-held perspectives that can facilitate dialogue and offer solutions to policy problems (Focht and Lawler, 2000). Steelman and Maguire (1999:362) note that Q-methodology has applications where:

...oftentimes bureaucrats, researchers, and analysts prefer to deal with 'facts' or empirically established data and therefore avoid addressing value issues and public preferences. This can occur because subjectivity, or an individual's personal point of view, is often thought to be difficult, if not impossible, to study with any degree of precision.

Focht and Lawler (2000:103) argue that many policy conflicts are actually "rooted in misperceptions of one kind or another" rather than being a "true conflict, [which] is an accurate, objective assessment that the goals of the parties are mutually incompatible". Even where conflicts do centre on substantive differences, "perceptual distortions may interfere with effective conflict management". Focht and Lawler (2000:104) argue that "Q methodology, through its ability to operantly reveal stakeholder perceptions in an environmental controversy, is an ideal tool to assess conflict and inform policy dialogue". As Carr (pers.comm. 11 Dec 2007) further observes:

Most if not all of our social systems (whether political, organizational, work-group, familial, etc) inevitably involve conceptual conflict and thus entail an ongoing process of negotiating 'reality' from amongst the diversity of viewpoints about it, so as to enable the social system to take unitary action. Q-methodology allows the researcher or policy actor to identify the clusters of perspectives underlying the diversity within the social system, but also to clarify

issues which may attract consensus or which may be major points of ongoing disputation.

Q-methodology is well-suited to this research because actors' perspectives on planning and decision-making include subjective views on issues such as the value of the environment, roles and responsibilities, and power structures. Actors often frame their agendas in difficult-to-quantify terms, for example, in terms of their responsibility to future generations. Q-methodology is appropriate for the exploration of perspectives and agendas such as these.

Q-methodology versus R-methodology

In his primer on Q-methodology, McKeown (1998:10) warns against "overzealousness" and "hubris" among proponents of Q-methodology. He notes that while Q-methodology offers a distinctive approach, it is important to make the best practical uses of Q-methodology without becoming blind to its potential faults or the advantages of other approaches. McKeown cautions that researchers must be aware of what Q-methodology allows them to say, and what other approaches are better suited to.

Q-methodology and R-methodology allow researchers to say different things about the population being studied. In R-methodology, the researcher typically makes inferences on the basis of previously selected traits (ethnicity, income, and so forth), because they believe them to be associated with the attitudes under study (Brown, 1980). Thus, the researcher divides the population according to their own idea of which traits are important. The risk, as Brown (1980) notes, is that the categories used may be arbitrary rather than functional. The researcher may miss significant relationships they have not previously conceived of, and therefore have not measured.

Q-methodology seeks to ensure that traits (in this case, actors' perspectives) are uncovered by the empirical enquiry rather than pre-selected, and that what is uncovered is significant for the respondents rather than the researcher (Brown, 1980:28). The resultant factors model those perspectives through a process of respondents attaching subjective meaning to statements when ranking them (ibid:34). Any explanations offered by the researcher for the perspectives must be meaningful and should be able to be justified from an examination of the data gathered in the Q-sort and from related data such as interview comments. So far as possible, the statements are derived from interviews with respondents, and the relationships

between those statements are determined by respondents during Q-sorting, rather than by researchers.

Q-methodology, post-positivism and value pluralism

Q-methodology aligns with a post-positivist and interpretivist approach that acknowledges value-pluralism, in allowing the ambiguity and contradiction that is a feature of social life to remain in the perspectives that are revealed. While the interpretation of factors emphasises the reconstruction of meaningful points of view, actors will often have multiple 'loadings' on different factors, indicating that they identify with aspects of a number of points of view. Some Q-method researchers emphasise the goal of internal *coherence* when generating explanations for factors (e.g. Fairweather, 1990). However, in keeping with the interpretivist approach, the more common purpose of such an empirical enquiry is to reveal actors' perspectives as they are, and to identify patterns within complexity of beliefs and discourses, rather than to apply an objective yardstick of rationality.

Post-positivism assumes that sufficient access to knowledge and understanding of viewpoints is possible, such that in-common views can be empirically identified. Q-methodology allows the researcher to identify significant shared perspectives from among individual actors' viewpoints. As Barry and Proops (1999:339) write:

It is not generally the case that there are as many discourses as there are participants. Q operates on the assumption of 'finite diversity'. Q allows the researcher to see if there are any patterns shared across individuals, and what are the diversity of accounts, without this resulting in chaotic multiplication. There are a limited number of ordered patternings within a particular discourse domain, and Q works on this assumption and attempts to reveal those ordered patternings (factors or discourses) in a structured and interpretable manner."

Ambiguity, uncertainty, contradictions, and so forth, will come through in the factors that are generated, and this is to be expected since people, themselves, are often ambiguous and uncertain. Q methodology allows us to hear the diversity of views that are present, although in reality, some views will typically be more dominant than others, and some views will be marginalised and treated as other or outsider views.

Q-methodology and generalisability

The purpose of Q-methodology is not to make empirical statements about individual respondents, or to generalise reliably from those individuals to a wider population. Rather, Q-methodology seeks to identify *clustered viewpoints* within a particular domain of subjectivity, for example, among the various perspectives on wastewater treatment and disposal. It allows the researcher to make statements about the commonalities and differences between those viewpoints, rather than the respondents holding those views.

When we talk about generalisation in Q methodology, we are not inducting from a few individuals to a population but rather, from a few statements to a 'type' or cluster of views. As Brown (1980:67) writes:

Generalisations in Q, unlike those in surveys, are not best thought of in terms of sample and universe, but in terms of specimen or type. That is, we are prepared to say what it is that is of concern to specimen persons of the a type, the factor being a generalised abstraction of a particular outlook or value orientation. Generalisations are expected to be valid for other persons of the same type, that is, for those persons whose views would lead them to load highly on factor a.

Thus, generalisability in Q-methodology must be thought of as quite different to R-methodology. With Q-methodology, researchers identify perspectives in a small respondent sample, and can provide an in-depth portrait of that perspective. They may then have reasons to believe that those perspectives will be present among people in other contexts, but they cannot generalise reliably about other populations. The logic here is that human behaviour has a degree of predictability, sufficient for research to be designed to investigate that general behaviour (Berg, 1998). Using the earlier example, researchers could identify a coherent, overall perspective on the association between education, income and conservation, but could only say that it may be present in other contexts. Other knowledge might strengthen that argument, for example, in terms of inferred similarities between the contexts based on existing scholarship and research. In some instances, a larger R-method survey would be able to provide that complementary information to allow more reliable generalisation.

In contrast, R-methodology provides generalisable findings on the relationships between *individual traits*. It treats variables as discrete, objective traits that can be abstracted from the individuals who possess them. It tends to use larger samples of subjects in order to generalise about those relationships between traits in wider populations. Using the earlier example, R-methodology might allow researchers to say that 62% of university graduates earning \$40,000 or more also recycle their rubbish. Researchers will be less readily able to infer anything about the overall subjective perspective within which these correlations exist.

When Q-methodology is combined with other approaches, such as interviews and observation, by triangulating the data, observations can be made about the specific population under study, and wider inferences may also be drawn about those findings in other populations, for example, other local government environmental planning and decision-making processes. Importantly, while the factors/perspectives are statistically valid, generalisations about issues of structural location (e.g. actors' roles) are not as reliable, because they are based on a small, non-random sample of respondents.

The relationship between perspectives and structural location

The way in which Q-methodology and factor analysis are deployed tends to decontextualise perspectives, reducing the importance of structure and causality. As noted above, there are limitations on generalisability in Q. There are also limits on what can be said about the relationship between perspectives and aspects of structural location and context such as occupation or geographic location. Any conclusions drawn about the identity of respondents who load on a particular perspective (for example, factor X is a professional male point of view) must be provisional since the respondent sample is usually small and non-random (Brown, 1980). Even where structure is clearly asserted in findings, it is quite possible that the same Q-sort, administered in another location, would identify different structural relationships.

But this is not really the point because Q focuses on reconstructing *whole* subjective perspectives on the issue under study in a way that most conventional R-methodological approaches could not achieve. In R-methodology, correlations between attitudes and respondent or context-specific characteristics are often central to the findings. However, generalisations about overall subjective perspectives would be very difficult to make. In Q, in contrast, the whole subjective perspective in its context is

central to the study, and the results are often augmented with further context-specific information, sometimes from additional R-type studies.

Q-methodological studies are often undertaken in a particular context where knowledge of the respondents' identities and of the context adds depth to factor analysis. Such analysis is often enhanced by the addition of data from other collection methods, such as interviews. For this enquiry, Q-methodology is employed in conjunction with other methods that provide depth of understanding of the empirical setting and of respondents' views. Q-methodology is combined with interview, documentary and observational data that are context-specific, allowing a thick description of actors' perspectives in a particular setting, while also being generalisable.

Existing practice among researchers employing Q-methodology shows it is relatively common practice to analyse factors alongside context-specific information such as interview data. Dayton (2000) and Brown (pers.comm, 11 April, 2005) note it is common to draw attention to specific information, such as occupations and nationalities, where it can illuminate or amplify aspects of the sorting decisions respondents make. For example, Wolsink (2004) draws conclusions based on the geographic location of respondents' communities in relation to their views on the siting of waste facilities.

Nevertheless, the critical point is that when using Q, the (causal) relationship between perspectives and other aspects of social life (agency, interests, experience, etc) is not absolutely clear. As Webler, Tuler and Krueger point out of their 2001 study, on the issues of causality and importance, the results

...do not permit us to draw conclusions about how strongly individuals adhere to these perspectives. We simply do not know how important peoples' preferences for process are relative to other objects associated with making the decision (2001:447).

Barry and Proops (1999:345) similarly note that

...while Q does not directly give an indication of the relative strengths with which the various discourses are adhered to by the population at large, the discourses identified can be related back to the individuals participating, to give at least an impression of what likely adherence there is in a wider population to

each discourse....it would become apparent if different groups in society had markedly different perspectives on certain environmental concerns. This would suggest what policies would be likely to receive support, and from whom, allowing the policies to be formulated in a way most likely to generate wide acceptance.

Literature on perspectives, discourses, policy frames and similar concepts was reviewed in the conceptual definitions section of Chapter One). That review showed that perspectives are *underlying* and implicit, and will often *unconsciously* inform actors' agency. How actors respond to particulars of context will be partly dictated by their underlying perspectives. Yet perspectives are in an iterative rather than simply primary or causal relationship with structure; in particular, the construction of actors' perspectives is also influenced by their experiences of social life.

In terms of Q studies it is not possible to categorically state the nature of the causal relationship with regards to contextual specifics. Q provides a snapshot of the perspectives present, however ambiguous or irrational they may appear. Knowledge of context (especially from other empirical data) certainly aids considerably in their interpretation, but Q alone does not allow for strict empirical generalisation about the relationship between structure and perspectives.

Even so, some researchers use Q-methodology in situations where context is critical. For example, van Eeten (2000) uses Q as a tool in actual planning and policy-making practice (as opposed to research on those activities), focusing on situations of intractable conflict. The perspectives uncovered are then employed in the analysis of problems, such as physical resource decisions. Data from sources such as interviews and focus groups are also invaluable aids in those real world settings, for interpreting the perspectives uncovered with Q-methodology. Webler et al. (2001) employed this approach in environmental planning in North America, taking particular account of respondents' demographic characteristics when analysing their perspectives. In both research and planning practice, contextually specific information clearly assists in the interpretation of factors while providing thicker descriptions grounded in a particular setting.

The Q-method process

A Q-sort is a “distribution of items into a continuum” that can be factor analysed to identify common patterns, which are then interpreted in ways that describe and explain the subject's point of view (Fairweather & Swaffield, 2001:219). In this section I describe the processes of Q-sorting and factor analysis. Figure 2 on the following two pages sets out the complete Q-method process.

Generation of statements

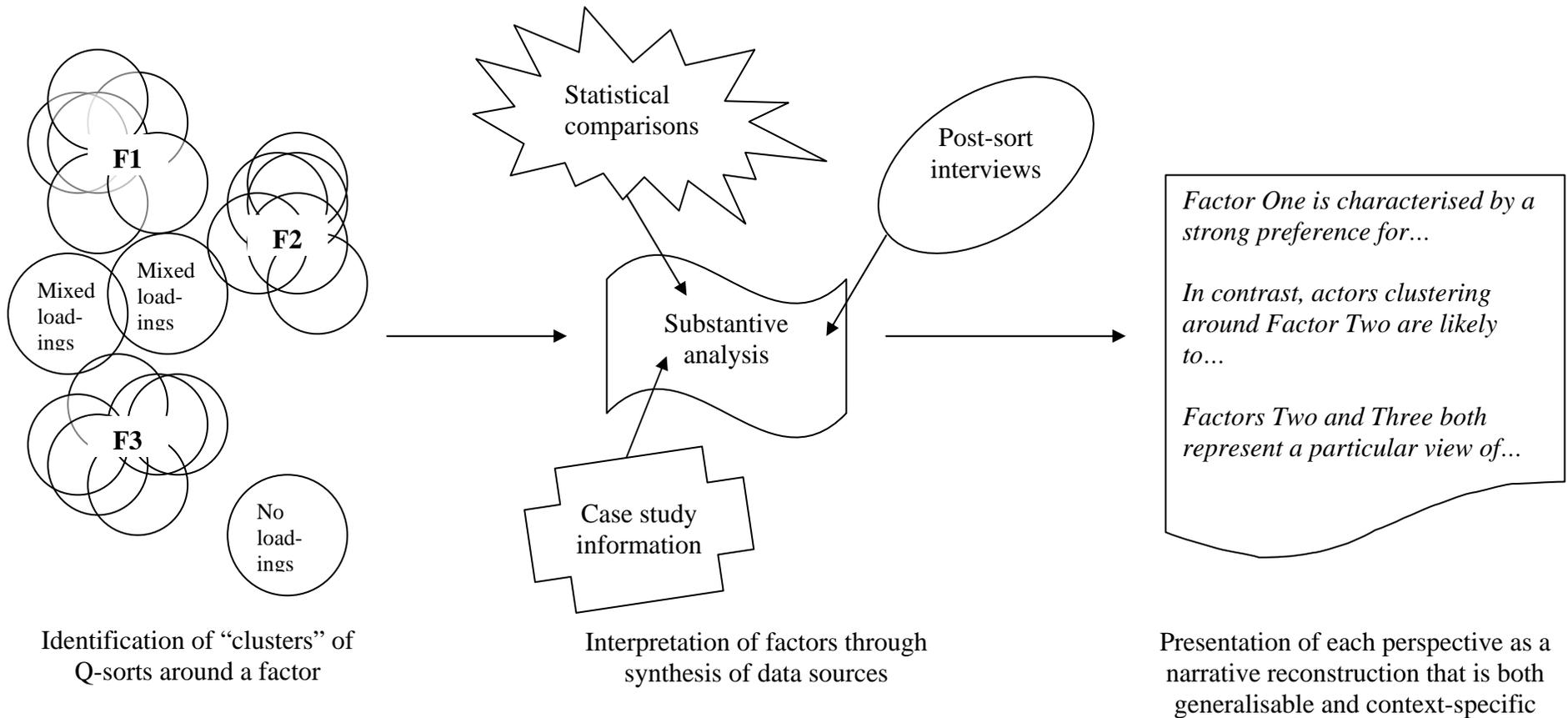
The development of a Q-sort begins with the generation of a population or ‘concourse’ of short statements on the topic of interest. The statements in a concourse reflect the discourse of views on that topic, and can vary considerably in style and language, at times being somewhat ambiguous. As Dryzek and Berejikian (1993:50) note, “ambiguity is resolved by each subject and reflected in his or her placement of a statement in relation to other statements”.

I followed the approach taken by Dryzek and Berejikian (1993) and Barry and Proops (1999) in my method for identifying the important elements of the discourse under study—in this case, the discourse surrounding the two wastewater planning processes and related issues. I divided the issues that actors were concerned with into four categories:

1. The respondent's own understanding of actors' roles, responsibilities and status in the planning process (including their own).
2. The respondent's expectations of the planning process and their understanding of its aims and objectives.
3. The weighting given by the respondent to various issues in planning and decision-making (economic, social, environmental, technical, statutory, political, cultural, etc.).
4. The weighting given by the respondent to the subjective aspects of any relevant issues.

These categories became the basis for a set of semi-structured interview questions (see Appendix Five for a copy of the interview schedule) designed to elicit diversity of responses. The main purpose of these interviews was to gather quotes for the concourse of statements.

Figure 2 - Data collection, analysis and interpretation



The interviews were undertaken with councillors, officers and citizens who were directly involved in the two planning processes, ensuring the research was “focused on issues which are mostly or wholly raised by the participants, rather than the researcher” (Barry & Proops, 1999:339). The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed. Statements in the transcripts were sampled for the concourse of statements, as described below. Material from the six interviews was also used to build a picture of the two wastewater planning processes, and as supporting evidence for factor interpretation.

Filling ‘gaps’ in the concourse

Where there were gaps in the issues covered in interviews, additional statements were generated from media reports, written submissions, consultants’ reports and council documents that related to the two processes (see Appendix Six for a full list of statements). Where gaps remained in this material, further statements were sampled from published sources on environmental policy and public policy issues⁵. These statements generally addressed less contextually specific, philosophical and public policy issues. This strategy followed a common approach to concourse development (McKeown & Thomas, 1988; Steelman and Maguire, 1999), but it does require some theoretical expansion.

Concourse development was informed by a combination of deductive and inductive approaches. The concourse reflected actors’ perspectives on the two wastewater planning processes and on environmental issues and planning and decision-making more generally. Its design was initially based on deductive theoretical considerations – from the literature review it was clear that by far the least well-understood aspects of planning and decision-making were actors’ perspectives, comprising both epistemological and procedural dimensions. Those dimensions were further divided into the four-fold typology.

Further structured sampling was undertaken as described earlier in this chapter. Brown (1980:38) maintains that structured statement samples that are bounded by theoretical considerations ensure that balance is achieved in the distribution of statements. This also ensures that, as far as possible respondents with different points of view will have an equal opportunity to express their views through statement sorting.

⁵ The sources used were Dayton, 2000; Hayward, 2000; Focht & Lawler, 2000; Webler, Tuler, & Krueger, 2001, Memon, 2000; Tenbensen, 2000.

Concourse development reflected Barry and Proops' research (1999:340) where the "overwhelming" source of statements was contextually-grounded material but where statements were also used from academic literature to fill gaps in the concourse. I used contextually grounded statements where possible, to guard against any unnecessary intervention by the researcher. As McKeown and Thomas (1988:25) maintain, naturalistic samples "reduce the risk of missing the respondents' meanings or confusing them with alternative meanings derived from an external frame of reference". They further note that "hybrid" concourses can be developed, comprising items from naturalistic samples and other sources, maintaining that "neither is inherently superior to the other; one should select the type best suited to the research at hand" (ibid:27).

In this study, "gaps" were identified in the concourse in two particular areas: (a) statements of values on actors' roles in public participatory processes, and (b) statements of values on the relative importance of different substantive considerations in environmental decision-making. The structured interview schedule did not solicit enough statements on these more philosophical and overarching aspects of the issues under study, to allow their canvassing in the Q sorts. These gaps were filled with statements from published sources (listed in the footnote).

From interview transcripts, it appeared that interviewees had simply reflected less on the more rarified philosophical aspects of the issue under study, and perhaps unsurprisingly, had focused more closely on context-specific issues. However, my research question sought data on commonalities and differences between the two wastewater studies, and on wider issues for planning and decision-making. In filling those "gaps" I followed Brown's (1980) advice that those issues not seen as important or applicable to respondents (in the particular context in which they were sorting statements), would not feature significantly in sorting or factor analysis. My conditions of instruction also required respondents to sort statements to reflect their relative importance, including into a "neutral and/or no opinion" pile. During sorting and in post-sort interviews, it was also generally clear from comments and interactions which statements respondents had fitted the neutral/no opinion category.

As Brown (1980) further notes, if some respondents for whom the statement does not seem applicable do actually respond to the statement either positively or negatively, then clearly the statement did have applicability to them. This reflects the extent to which individual statements "take on meaning in relation to the whole factor array"

(Brown, 1980:251). Thus, the data gathered from Q sorting may lead in quite different directions to that initially theorised as important.

The statement sample

A concourse of statements reflects the “volume of discussion on any topic” (Dryzek & Berejikian, 1993:50). It typically comprises at least 200-300 statements, making it too large to administer as a Q-sort. Brown (1980) and McKeown and Thomas (1988) recommend a structured sampling process for reducing the number of statements to a manageable size for Q-sorting. Structured samples are composed inductively, emerging from patterns and themes that are observed as statements are collected. Samples can also be composed deductively, in line with the researcher’s particular theoretical focus (Brown, 1980:38).

The selection of samples follows the principles of homogeneity (in the initial grouping of the statements into categories of similar statements), and heterogeneity (in the subsequent selection of those most different from one another within a category). As Brown (1980:189) notes:

Selecting the most un-alike statements from those which are alike in kind serves to minimise the constraining effects of the design and tends to produce a sample of stimuli more nearly approximating the complexity of the phenomenon under investigation.

Final samples of statements typically number 36-80 in size, as a larger sample would make sorting statements an unwieldy and lengthy process (Barry & Proops, 1999; Dryzek and Berejikian, 1993). Relatively wide-ranging statements can easily be rank-ordered by respondents. Statements are generally presented without amendment, as, although the researcher defines the domain of study, they seek to avoid further inputs that might determine the scope of the concourse. Thus, Dryzek and Berejikian (1993:50) describe Q-methodology as a “reconstructive methodology” since the principal analytical tools are stakeholders’ unaltered statements or “reality constructions”.

My statement sample structure was similar to the concourse matrices employed by Dryzek and Berejikian (1993), Barry and Proops (1999), and Dayton (2000). I followed Brown’s advice (1980:189) in examining the range of statements in the concourse and

clustering them into key themes. The initial set of over 300 statements was reduced to 181 statements (averaging 20 words each), by removing statements that unnecessarily duplicated themes. I identified four basic themes and divided the 181 statements into those themes:

1. Processes (e.g. format of decision-making, consultation, issues of equity and legitimacy, balancing of issues) (68 statements).
2. Actors (e.g. relationships, who is included or excluded, status) (25 statements).
3. Substantive issues and their role and status (e.g. technology, science, environmental and financial matters) (39 statements).
4. Subjective personal and corporate values, and their role and status (e.g. environmental, spiritual, capitalist) (49 statements).

Within those themes there were also clear differences in the types of views being expressed. I replicated one dimension of Dryzek and Berejikian's (1993) 4x4 matrix in employing the following categories for statements:

1. Definitive (statement about the meaning of something, or how something is)
2. Designative (issues of fact, claims to be factual)
3. Evaluative (expressing the worth of something)
4. Advocative (opinion; how something should or should not be)

This gave me a 4x4 matrix for sorting the 181 statements (see Appendix Six for the full set of statements and matrix). Once sorted, each of the 16 cells in the matrix contained at least 5 statements, indicating a reasonable spread of statements. A final sample of 43 statements was taken from this. Because respondents were required to rank-order statements in a forced distribution, the final sample was fixed to fit that distribution of 43 statements.

I decided to administer a combined Q-sort to all respondents from *both* wastewater planning processes in order to simplify the process and the analysis. This followed other researchers who had administered a single set of statements on a single issue to multiple, geographically discrete, sometimes widespread communities (see for example, Webler et al., 2001). In order for the Q-sorts to be applicable to all respondents, statements had to accurately reflect the relevant issues in each wastewater planning process, without losing applicability to the other process. In the

event, given the strong similarities between planning processes, most statements were equally applicable to either process.

A pilot study was undertaken using the Q-sort of 43 statements, with respondents who had some knowledge of the two wastewater planning processes and of issues related to environmental planning in general. Respondents were asked for advice on the utility of the Q-sort cards and distribution sheet, ease of following instructions, and so forth.

The respondent sample

Q-sorts are typically administered to small groups of sampled respondents who often comprise a large percentage, if not all the population of stakeholders involved in a particular activity. For example, a Q-methodological study of a public policy-making process might survey 30 respondents from a population of 50 directly involved stakeholders. A review of Q-methodological studies showed that the use of small samples in intensive studies is common practice, in contrast to conventional R studies, where the emphasis is often on gaining a statistically generalisable sample size⁶. A small respondent sample is adequate (Brown, 1980), as Barry and Proops (1999:344) maintain that:

...as few as 12 participants can generate statistically meaningful results, in terms of the range of implicit discourses uncovered. The reason for this is that each participant's Q-sort provides a very large amount of information.

An adequate respondent sample is ultimately measured by having statistically well-defined factors. Definition is expressed by 'factor loadings' that indicate the percentage of correlation of each individual respondent's Q-sort to a particular factor. Computer programmes such as PQMethod generate factor loadings for each respondent, identifying which loadings are 'significant'. Brown (ibid.) maintains that a factor should have four or five significant loadings in order to be considered well-defined. Where factors lack definition, further sampling and Q-sorting by respondents can be

⁶ A review of 13 published Q studies in the area of public policy and environmental planning showed sample sizes being used of between 15 and 141 respondents, with an average of 60, and five samples of 40 or less. The 13 studies and number of respondents for each were: Brewer et al. (2000) 74 Q-sorts; Dayton (2000) 30 Q-sorts; Dryzek and Berejikian (1993) 37 Q-sorts; Steelman (2000) 15 Q-sorts; Focht and Lawler (2000) 108 Q-sorts; Webler et al. (2001) 27 Q-sorts; Dryzek and Braithwaite (2000) 60 Q-sorts; Fairweather (1994) 77 Q-sorts; Van Eeten (2001) 38 Q-sorts; Pelletier et al. (1999) 141 Q-sorts; Fairweather and Swaffield (2000) 88 Q-sorts; Fairweather and Swaffield (2001) 66 Q-sorts.

undertaken. The goal is not a set number of respondents, but a sufficient number for good factor definition.

My fieldwork for the two wastewater planning processes used a sample of 24 respondents, comprising five councillors, five council officers, and fourteen individual citizens or members of interest groups from both wastewater planning processes. These are described in the section on factor analysis.

The Q-sort

The Q-sort was tested before its actual administration on a small number of people who were informed about the two wastewater planning processes. The focus of testing was on the practicality and manageability of the Q-sort, including issues such as the amount of time taken, the number of statements, duplication of statements, and clarity of instruction.

I chose to conduct the 24 Q-sorts face-to-face⁷, and to conduct an unstructured interview with each respondent immediately following the Q-sort. Notes were taken of interviews and questions were not pre-planned. Interviews sought elaboration from respondents on particular sorting decisions of interest, and on comments they had made or aspects of demeanour that indicated a particular point of interest and so forth. The interview time was also an opportunity to respond directly to any problems or queries from respondents.

The process of administering a Q-sort is relatively simple. Respondents undertake the Q-sort with minimum interaction with the researcher under set conditions of instruction that vary little from one instance to another.

⁷ Q-sorts can also be administered via postal surveys, Internet websites, and with focus groups, where each individual completes a Q-sort following group discussion (Steelman and Maguire, 1999:384)

In this research the following protocol was adopted.

1. Respondents were presented with a set of statements, each printed on a separate card, rather like a deck of playing cards.

(1) Those who dispute the scientific evidence are now few and far between.

(2) The continued resistance to the proposal is from a minority of the population who are radicals and extremists.

Figure 3: Example of Q-sort cards used in this study

2. Respondents read through the statements to gain a broad impression of their overall content. At the same time, they divided the cards into three groups, according to whether they agreed, disagreed, or were neutral or had no opinion.
3. After this initial grouping of statements, respondents moved on to make more detailed distinctions between the statements in each group.
4. Respondents were instructed to spread out the 'agree with' statements, then to read through them again, and to select the three of those available, which they most agreed with. These were placed on the illustrative score sheet in the '+4' column (see Figure 3 on the following page).
5. Next the respondents spread out the 'disagree with' statements, and read through them, selecting the three with which they most disagreed, and placing them on the score sheet in the '-4' column.
6. This was followed by the four next-most agreed with statements in the '+3' column, followed by the four next most disagreed with statements in the '-3' column, and so forth, working back and forwards between 'agree with' and 'disagree with'.
7. Finally, the statements that were neutral or no opinion were included in the remaining spaces between 'agree' and 'disagree' (Those spaces would not necessarily correspond to the '0' point at the middle of the range).
8. The respondents then re-examined the entire array to make certain it represented their views adequately, and to make any adjustments desired.
9. The statement scores were then recorded in the relevant cells on a copy of the score sheet.

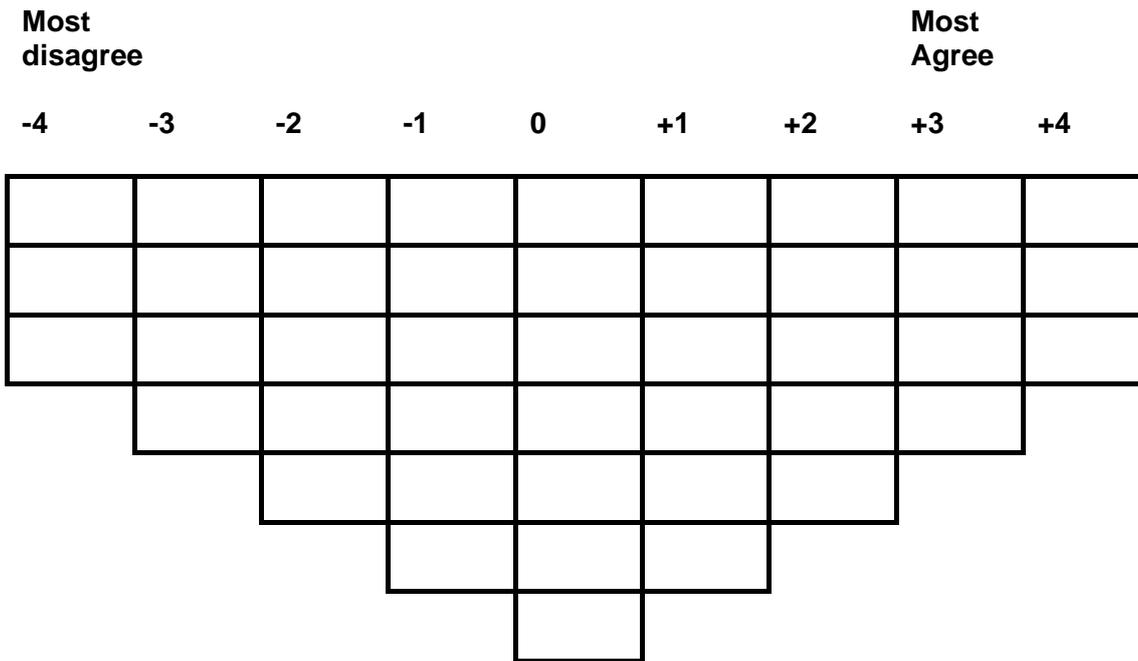


Figure 2: The Q-sort Score Sheet

A forced distribution⁸, as shown in Figure 3, encourages respondents to think about the relationship between statements more systematically (Van Eeten, 2001). Effectively, respondents are forced to make choices between all statements, rather than simply say they ‘agree with’ a number of statements. Through that ranking process, finer distinctions are revealed between respondents’ subjective choices.

The rank ordering process reveals one of the strengths of Q-methodology when compared to a conventional ranking technique such as a Likert scale, which simply requires discrete responses on a range of items (e.g. strongly agree, agree, neutral). Those responses reveal little about the relationship between statements, and the overall meaning often remains obscure. When asked to rank order statements in *relation to each other* (as in a Q-sort), greater discrimination is required. Thus, the respondent begins to reveal a more comprehensive and nuanced overall perspective.

Q-sorting is one of the two specific methods that set Q-methodology apart from most conventional surveying processes. The other is the ‘inverted’ statistical factor analysis process.

⁸ A range of possible distributions can be used, depending on the total number of statements and preferred distribution “curve”. A relatively “normal” distribution curve fits those topics where participants are expected to have limited knowledge or interest, and to therefore be neutral/no opinion on a greater number of statements. For a highly controversial issue, or one on which participants are knowledgeable and opinionated, a more “flattened” distribution is appropriate. This provides more opportunities for participants to agree or disagree, and therefore, fewer opportunities for neutral responses (Brown, 1980).

Factor analysis

Factor analysis is a method for classifying variables that is used in both R-methodological and Q-methodological studies. A factor is a “dimension or construct which is a condensed statement of the relationship between a set of variables” (Kline, 1994:5). In Q-methodology the variables are the respondents’ perspectives, as revealed and made measurable through their Q-sorts. Individual Q-sorts are correlated in order to identify similarities and differences. A factor is a model Q-sort that presents an abstract composite of the perspective revealed from among similar Q-sorts. Factor analysis allows the researcher to “determine how persons have classified themselves” through their Q-sorts (Brown, 1980:208). Common or sympathetic viewpoints should cluster on the same factor, whereas differing viewpoints should appear on different factors. It can be useful to picture the factor as an ideal Q-sort—an array of statement cards on the score sheet that most closely models a group of like-minded respondents’ Q-sorts.

‘PQMethod’ was the statistical computer programme used for the factor analysis of my respondents’ Q-sorts. Factors were extracted using the centroid analysis option⁹. A review of Q-methodology researchers confirmed the strong preference for the centroid extraction method¹⁰, and this was used in this study.

Seven factors were initially extracted from the data. PQMethod offers a default number of seven factors to be extracted. This does not affect the number of factors the researcher can ultimately choose to use for analysis (Schmolk, 2002). PQMethod is designed so that the addition of each extra factor does not affect the composition of the already extracted factors in any way.

Whether or not a factor should be taken into account in analysis depends on its ‘significance’. Factor significance is determined by a combination of statistical and theoretical means (McKeown & Thomas, 1988). Statistical significance is defined according to expressed ‘factor loadings’, which indicate the extent to which each respondent’s Q-sort is similar or dissimilar to the model Q-sort for that factor. Where a

⁹ PQMethod offers two options for extracting factors: “QCENT” performs a “centroid analysis” while “QPCA” performs a “principal components analysis”. Centroid analysis continues to be the method of choice for most Q researchers, although principal components analysis is the default method of factor extraction in statistical packages like SPSS.

¹⁰ See for example, Dryzek and Berejikian (1993); Dayton (2000); Barry and Proops (1999); Steelman (2000); Webler et al. (2001); Fairweather et al. (1994); Van Eeten (2001); Pelletier et al. (1999).

factor has a number of high factor loadings (sometimes referred to as 'defining sorts')—at least four or five—it is regarded as a well-defined factor¹¹.

For this study, PQMethod automatically identified those Q-sorts that loaded significantly on each factor¹². Six respondents had mixed loadings on two factors and each of the three factors had at least one mixed loading (see Appendix Seven for a full list of Q-sorts and loadings).

Before the researcher can begin to examine the extracted factors, those factors must also be 'rotated'¹³. The aim of rotation of factors is to reach the most meaningful explanation for the observed correlations between Q-sorts. Without rotation, factors cannot be used to explain and account for the correlations that exist between Q-sorts, since there is "almost an infinity of mathematically equivalent sets of factors" that can be produced (Kline, 1994:56). Factor rotation ensures that, as near as possible, each factor is well defined by having sufficient high loadings (Q-sorts with a statistically significant degree of similarity) and, where possible, each Q-sort has a high loading on one factor and low loadings on all other factors (McKeown & Thomas, 1988:52). This process makes solutions clearer and more meaningful and subsequent analysis easier.

The factor analysis for this research followed a relatively simple process. PQMethod was used to extract seven unrotated factors—the default number. After initially rotating five of those seven factors (PQMethod's automatic option), I examined the loadings produced for the 'auto-flagged' factors, and decided to drop two factors (explained

¹¹ High loadings are calculated according to a standard error relating to the number of items (statements). Usually, a factor loading is regarded as high if it is greater than +/- 0.6, and moderately high if it is +/- 0.3 (Kline, 1994:6). A loading of +0.6 indicates a 60% positive correlation with the model Q-sort, whereas a -0.6 loading indicates a 60% difference (a high level of disagreement).

¹² Brown (pers.comm. 2002) sets out how to calculate significance, so that all Q-sorts that do load significantly can be "flagged" to their respective factors: A loading is statistically significant (i.e., significantly different from zero) if it is 2.58 times the standard error, where $SE = 1/\sqrt{N}$ and N is the number of statements. ($\sqrt{}$ means square root). Using this calculation, Q-sorts loaded significantly on the three factors as follows: This Q-sort contained 42 statements, thus: Square root of 42 = 6.4807406. $1 / 6.4807406 = 0.1543033 \times 2.58 = 0.3981025 =$ significant loading.

¹³ In the rotation process Q-sorts are mapped in a geometric picture or "two-factor space". Their locations are based on the Q-sorts' original, unrotated loadings on each of those two factors. In this geometric representation, one factor forms the vertical axis and the other factor forms the horizontal axis. Individual respondents' Q-sorts are plotted according to their loadings on each factor. So for example, a Q-sort may have a loading of -0.29 on Factor A and a loading of +0.56 on Factor B, giving it a location in the geometric two-factor space. This unrotated solution for two factors allows the researcher to actually see which Q-sorts have significant loadings on one factor ('pure' cases) or two factors ('mixed' cases), or none ('null' cases). The researcher can then make decisions about possible optimum rotations to reach the simplest solution, based on the geometric picture and on the related figures. Computer programmes now perform these algebraic operations, but prior to the advent of computer software, factor rotation was actually performed by researchers using paper overlays rotated against each other.

below), and to return to rotation of the first three factors only. This was done for the following reasons:

- The initial five-factor solution included two factors (#1 and #3) that appeared to be quite similar to another factor (#4) in statistical terms. An examination of factors 1, 3 and 4 revealed broadly similar overall perspectives, and a group of respondents, with similar demographic (occupational) characteristics. While the sample did not offer any statistically reliable basis for correlating occupation (in this case, local authority officers and councillors) with a factor, a judgement was made on knowledge of the particular circumstances.
- Factors 1 and 3 were each defined by just two significantly loading Q-sorts—none of which were from respondents that represented an obviously exceptional perspective. An examination of their Q-sorts supported this assessment.
- Five factors intuitively appeared to be too many for the discourses on the two wastewater planning processes as I understood them. Three or four important perspectives seemed likely, particularly given that respondents in factors 1, 3 and 4 were almost exclusively council actors.
- By requesting fewer factors for rotation, the respondents on factors 1, 3 and 4 all clustered onto one well-defined factor. Any concerns about the effect of a decision to rotate fewer factors than were initially extracted were allayed by Schmolck (pers.comm., 2002), the author of PQMethod, who advised that:

The fact that PQMethod extracted more factors does not change anything here, because the first 3 or 4 PCs or Centroids extracted are not affected at all by extraction of additional factors.

Thus a three-factor solution was arrived at, with all 24 respondents loaded as defining sorts on one or two of the three final factors (see Appendix Seven for a list of respondents scores and factors). The data from those three factors were then ready to be interpreted alongside qualitative data.

Factor interpretation

Following factor analysis, each 'factor' is interpreted through an examination of its statistical data and the corresponding array of statements. Factor interpretations are subsequently checked for consistency against any related data such as interview material. The goal of factor interpretation is the development of thematic explanations

for the common features that set each factor apart from other factors. Attention is focused on the subject (the topic of study) and what respondents think of the subject. Fairweather (1990:6) maintains that factor interpretation requires:

...the development of an explanation which must fit the known facts for that factor. In particular, attention is given to the relationship between statements, and the interpretation proceeds by continuously putting up possible explanations for the factor array until the best explanation is developed.

Factor interpretation begins with the comparison of statement scores between factors. For example, where Factor One scores a particular statement highly, Factor Two may be more neutral. The differences between each factor's score on a particular statement become their 'deviation scores', and are expressed as a plus or minus in comparison with an overall average (mean) score. For example, the statement "Wherever possible, recyclable materials should be recycled from rubbish, regardless of cost" might attract the following normalised scores on three factors:

Factor One	Factor Two	Factor Three
-2.156	-0.290	-1.866

These scores show that respondents on all three factors disagreed with the statement, but Factor One disagreed more than Factor Three, and both disagreed more than Factor Two.

Where respondents on one factor have scored a particular statement significantly differently to other factors, that statement is defined as a 'distinguishing statement'. These distinguishing statements provide particular insight into the positions represented by factors, although they will not necessarily always reflect strong agreement or disagreement. For example, a score of 0 might be flagged as a distinguishing statement for one factor because the other factors have scored +3 or +4 on the same statement. In that case, its significance is its neutrality relative to other factors (Schmolck, 2002).

While attention tends to be focused on the differences between factor scores, researchers must also attend to those 'consensus' statements scored similarly by respondents on all factors. For example, the statement "Conservation of wetlands

should have priority over their conversion to agricultural land” might attract the following normalised factor scores:

Factor One	Factor Two	Factor Three
+3.010	+2.734	+2.608

The significance of this is that all three factors agree quite strongly. Whether they can agree on any related issues—such as how to ensure conservation of wetlands, might be revealed by other responses in their Q-sorts. Consensus is equally possible on statements about which all factors disagree or are neutral.

Factor interpretation also requires the comparison of respondents’ individual Q-sorts. As with factor scores, PQMethod also calculates and correlates each respondent’s individual statement scores, and expresses them as deviation scores, with a plus or minus from the average score. Thus, when two respondents have normalised scores of +2 and –1, they can be meaningfully correlated or compared with each other¹⁴. A clear understanding of respondents’ individual sorting decisions enables more nuanced interpretations of the overall factors because there will often be aspects of respondents’ decisions and their identity which provide clues to interpretation. For example, if a councillor scores highly on statements supporting a wastewater scheme, but also scores highly on statements supporting the expression of opposing views (statements also scored highly by citizens opposing the scheme), this may reveal something about the councillor’s perspective on democratic issues, for example, on the value of contrary viewpoints.

In this study, factor interpretation began with the statistical correlation of individual respondents’ scores and overall factor scores, and then moved on to considering the substance of the statements and of any related data from interviews and other sources. Using the previous example, the councillor’s scores would have been further checked against other respondents’ scores and other relevant data. I sought meaningful explanations for the differences and similarities between factor scores, proposing new explanations until arriving at the best explanation. Each factor presented a large amount of information, allowing for the identification of a number of themes within each

¹⁴ PQ Method also produces a correlation coefficient for each individual Q-sort. This is “a numerical measure of the degree of agreement between two sets of scores. It ranges from +1 to –1” (Kline, 1994:3). Complete individual Q-sorts can be compared in this way. A correlation of +1 is the upper limit (no differences between the sorting decisions for all items, which is extremely rare), and -1 is the lower limit (the two Q-sorts were exactly the reverse of each other—also extremely rare).

factor. Combined, the themes within a factor represented an overall subjective perspective on planning and decision-making in general, and the two wastewater processes in particular.

Any conceptual or theoretical explanations developed for the three factors had to be supported by an examination of all of the sources of data available (contextual background information, interviews and statistical factors). The factors could also be related to existing theoretical frameworks, such as rational choice and deliberative democracy, where those concepts were relevant to the data. The same requirements for interpretation, based on triangulated data and a process of putting up explanations, would apply equally there. As Ritchie et al. (2003:252) argue:

The search for explanations...involves going backwards and forwards between the data and emergent explanations until pieces of the puzzle clearly fit. It also involves searching for and trying out rival explanations to establish the closeness of fit.

The three factors revealed qualities that would probably be common to any group of perspectives on a topic. In some instances their positions were very similar to each other; in other respects, very different. As interpretation proceeded, the reconstructive nature of the methodology became apparent; each factor revealed a whole perspective that took considerable time and thought to comprehend, as would be the case with analysing the views of any group of people holding alike views on an issue. Explanations also had to be consistent with whatever else was known about the respondents and the context from other data sources.

As with any Q-method study, the interpretation of factors and individual statement scores must take account of the nature of the specific concourse of statements. In this case, most statements were naturalistic, drawn from interview comments and other oral or written statements in the two case studies. Those statements often had a degree of ambiguity in meaning and could be interpreted in various ways and as addressing more than one dimension of an issue. In particular, it was often not possible to separate the epistemological and procedural dimensions of the views being expressed in statements, although statements tend to focus more closely on one dimension than the other. Within the bounds of this limited separability, the concourse and final statement sample sought to include nearly equal numbers of statements addressing each dimension.

Statements such as #11 and 42 demonstrated the limited separability of epistemological and procedural dimensions. This limited separability was accommodated in the interpretation of statement scores in order to achieve meaningful factor interpretation. As it transpired, there were important differences between the three factors' views on epistemological and procedural issues that needed to be taken into account in interpretation. Where statements addressed both dimensions, my interpretation was greatly assisted by (a) my presence at the sorting process and subsequent interviews and the insights this gave me into respondents' meanings and intentions, and (b) my knowledge of the specific contexts for the two wastewater studies. I was able to interpret statement scores meaningfully, and to identify the relevant dimension(s). In some instances, the statement score was clearly focused on one dimension or the other; in quite a few instances, the same statement score contributed to my descriptions of both epistemological and procedural dimensions.

As noted previously, statements varied considerably in style and language, at times being somewhat ambiguous. Dryzek and Berejikian (1993:50) maintain that "ambiguity is resolved by each subject and reflected in his or her placement of a statement in relation to other statements". In this study, the aim in factor and statement score interpretation was to achieve the most meaningful explanation. This required an acknowledgement that perspectives often included apparent contradictions—at least from the point of view of the researcher (Brown, pers.comm.).

As well as the initial interviews, Q-method and factor analysis, my research utilised data from post-sorting interviews, documentary analysis and some observation at public meetings. These qualitative methods were employed as a means of strengthening the validity of the factor analysis through triangulation of data. They were also used to guide the selection of statements for Q-sorts and to gather contextual information to assist in factor analysis and interpretation. Each of those methods is described in the following sections.

The presentation of factors in Chapter Five follows conventional practice for research using Q-methodology¹⁵. Each factor is presented as a description of a group of actors' common perspective on the issue under study. The important themes within that perspective are described. For each theme I present a table comprising the relevant statements and scores and an accompanying thematic description that includes any

¹⁵ See for example Dayton (2000); Steelman (2000); Webler et al. (2001); Van Eeten (2001); Pelletier et al. (1999); Fairweather and Swaffield (2001).

relevant contextual information. Each factor is initially described in terms of abstract qualities that can be expected to be present in wider populations and will be relevant to planning and decision-making in general, for example, in terms of their perspective on the value of consensus. This abstract description is drawn from the analysis of Q-sort data. These data are 'functional' types of information, because the factors derived are entirely a function of respondents' own Q-sorting (Brown, 2002).

Each factor is also presented as a perspective on the two actual wastewater planning processes, for example, on the value of a particular consultative process undertaken. This context-specific description is supported by use of interviews and other data. This description includes 'structural' information (Brown, 2002) because it relates to particular structural locations (e.g. the two planning processes) and reflects categories proposed *a priori* (e.g. occupations, geographic locations, demographic divisions). Some aspects of the three perspectives are partly explainable in terms of those existing structural categories, for example, as being partly dependent on actors' different roles in the two planning processes. Thus, particular groups of actors (e.g. council actors) may be described as identifying with a perspective, but the perspective itself remains independent of the structural location. Once the factors have been described I go on to consider their wider theoretical and practical significance and to frame theoretical propositions for further research.

Post-sorting interviews

All 24 respondents were interviewed immediately following Q-sorting at the same meetings. These interviews were distinct from the semi-structured interviews undertaken before the development of the Q-sorts. Post-sort interviews were unstructured and focused on gaining elaboration on respondents' sorting decisions. The aim of these interviews was to:

- Explore the reasoning behind respondent's specific ranking decisions, thereby increasing the reliability of factor interpretation.
- Provide a source of triangulating data to add confidence in the validity of the factor interpretation.
- Provide context-specific data that supplemented the background information gathered on the two wastewater processes from other sources. Context-specific

data assisted in drawing conclusions about the relationships between actors' perspectives and aspects of the two planning processes.

Many Q-methodology researchers recommend post-sort interviews as a valuable means of clarifying viewpoints and testing assumptions (Van Eeten, 2001; Brewer et al., 2000; Brown, 1980; Webler et al., 2001, Fairweather & Swaffield, 2001). In this research, post-sort interviews proved useful for the reasons above. In almost all interviews, respondents offered important additional observations that allowed a more nuanced interpretation of actors' perspectives. Interview material proved especially useful where the meaning of factors was insufficiently clear from an interpretation of the factor scores alone. In general, interviews reinforced interpretations by amplifying perspectives and added clarity and subtlety to them.

Post-sort interviews also proved essential in establishing a clear understanding of respondents' individual Q-sorts. As each respondent resolved the ambiguities they encountered in the Q-sorts in their own way, it was important to be able to seek clarification on their sorting decisions. For example, a respondent might agree with two statements that appeared (to me) to require opposing responses. Once respondents had sorted all of the items, I would ask questions of this nature: "I see that you have placed statement 32 under -4 while statement 24 was placed under +2. Could you explain your thinking on this to me?" Their clarification sometimes revealed an alternative or more nuanced interpretation of statements to the interpretation I made.

Once the perspectives had been uncovered through factor analysis, I was able to see what sort of statements were associated with each perspective, and which respondents were associated with those statements. Prior to factor analysis it was not possible to confidently predict which Q-sorts would go together or what the nature of that factor's concourse would be. After factor analysis, this relationship was known. With the benefit of hindsight, I was able to gather the post-interview comments of those respondents clustered around each factor, and to use those commentaries in factor interpretation.

Examination of interviews revealed three categories of material:

1. Information on actors' perspectives which was useful in interpreting and drawing inferences from the three factors, for example, views on the relative importance of consensus versus advocacy.

2. Information on the *identities* of the individual respondents, which proved a very useful source of contextual information and of material for framing questions for further research. For example, comments from officers and councillors suggested possible theoretical explanations for the relationship between their professional roles and their perspectives.
3. Information specific to each wastewater planning process which revealed respondents' views on those issues, for example, on whether councillors could be trusted or not. This was a very valuable source of data because it grounded the factor interpretation in a specific context. Thus, actors' perspectives could be considered in relation to other issues that influenced integration in those specific settings.

Extensive use of post-sort interview material was made in the analysis and presentation of the three factors. This use of interviews raised an issue to do with theorising from the three factors, which requires some further comment. The value in using interview quotes is in the amplification and reinforcement of factor interpretations. These additional insights provide confidence that the theoretical and practical inferences which form the basis of subsequent theoretical propositions are as accurate as possible. Factors are, however, an ideal type based on an averaging of a number of similar viewpoints, and not attached to any particular context or person (Dayton, 2000). The process of factor interpretation "depersonalises" individuals and context-specific debates (ibid:97). The interview material has the opposite effect—it personalises the abstract factors because it comes from respondents who were active participants in the two planning processes and, quite naturally, expressed their views with reference to their particular contexts.

Rather than muddying the factors' ideal types, the inclusion of interview material enhances analysis. Interviews fit well with the post-positivist and interpretivist nature of the research. They add data that assist in interpreting the specific social setting and examining the influence of actors' perspectives in those settings. At the same time, the factors remain as abstract perspectives that are likely to have wider relevance to other populations. Explanations for those perspectives can be sought using commonly understood theoretical concepts, such as rational choice and deliberative democracy.

Existing practice in Q-methodology demonstrates the value of context-specific material. Q-methodology can be applied in actual problem-solving processes (as well as to research on those processes) where context and identity-specific information is

important (see for example, van Eeten, 2001; Webler et al., 2001). Its value is in clarifying actors' perspectives on specific decision-making issues. When used in actual planning practice, the presentation of abstract factors assists actors in understanding other actors' perspectives. As Dayton (2000) notes, the depersonalised nature of the factors and perspectives presented may actually reduce conflict between actors.

Context-specific interview data also assist in drawing wider inferences that are valuable in future planning and policy-making, and in developing theoretical explanations for observed behaviour. In this research, post-sort interview material was used extensively in the analysis to show why each perspective was as it was, and why particular groups of participants were associated with it. This strengthens the practical and theoretical conclusions, because, as Brown (pers.comm. 11 April 2005) observes:

The Q statements impose a commonality on the participants—they all have to use the same set of statements—and so the post-sorting commentary adds individuality. I would consider the use of post-sort commentaries to be reinforcement. The demonstration that a factor exists provides the basis for going back to the interviews and gathering those interviewees that are associated with the same factor. Prior to that, we didn't know which Q sorts go together and so could not understand clearly why the concourse has the content that it does.

Quotations from interviews are used extensively in the presentation of factors in Chapter Five. The interpretation of each theme within a factor is supported by interview material. This arrangement for presentation of factors with interview material is relatively common in Q-methodology (see for example, Fairweather & Swaffield, 2000, 2001; Hoppe & Jeliaskova, 2004; Capdevila & Stainton Rogers, 2000; Dayton, 2000; Webler et al., 2001).

Documentary analysis

The aim of documentary analysis was to gather information on the two wastewater planning processes for the following purposes:

- To provide a clear and accurate description of the two wastewater planning processes (presented in Chapter Four).

- To provide contextual qualitative information that would be used alongside the Q-sorts for data triangulation.
- To gather quotes for use in the concourse of statements for Q-sorts. This material was extracted as verbatim statements of 1-2 sentences length, using the same content criteria as for statements from interviews.

Two types of documentary material were gathered:

1. Official documents from the two applicant authorities (Palmerston North City Council and Wanganui District Council) and the consenting authority the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council. Documents included officers' reports, summaries of public submissions, commissioned reports from external consultants, and various newsletters and forms related to public consultation.
2. Media reports from the two local daily newspapers (*Manawatu Evening Standard* and *Wanganui Chronicle*) and a small number of reports from weekly community newspapers.

Observation

The purpose of observation at public meetings was to gain a more detailed understanding of the two wastewater planning processes and to develop a sense of the range of perspectives and agendas present among actors—some of whom subsequently completed Q-sorts. The meetings attended were resource consent hearings for both councils, in Wanganui and Palmerston North in 2001 and 2002. Because of the delay between consent applications and public hearings, all public consultation and meetings for the consent applications had been concluded before commencement of fieldwork in 2001. I attended meetings as an unobtrusive observer, and I did not participate in proceedings.

Observation provided a view of social practices, such as what people were doing and saying, who was attending and meeting whom, what documents were being prepared and what debates were prominent. Thus, as Silverman (1993:37) observes, "we seek to understand how any 'phenomenon' is locally produced through the activities of particular people in particular settings". Observation allowed me to gain a better sense of the discourses present before administering the Q-sorts and interviewing.

Observations were recorded in note form. In most instances, submitters and presenters at resource consent hearings also provided written notes they read from or referred to while speaking. These observations and the documentary data were useful means of reinforcing my interpretation of the perspectives uncovered by Q-method and initially augmented with interview material.

Conclusion

This chapter describes the methodological approach to answering the research question: *What influences the integration of citizens' agendas in environmental planning and decision-making in New Zealand local government?* This research explores the influence of the four dimensions identified in Chapter One on this problem. The empirical enquiry focuses most closely on describing actors' perspectives and considering their influence on integration. The research is designed to capture the (often implicit) subjective meanings actors attach to their agendas and actions in a particular empirical setting. This approach can be broadly characterised as post-positivist and interpretive, and in parts both deductive and inductive. The empirical findings are further considered in terms of their wider implications for planning and decision-making practices and for democratic theory.

The fieldwork has two key elements that operationalise this research approach. It is based on a study of two wastewater planning processes that exemplify the problem of integrating citizens' agendas. Within those studies, a combination of research methods allow for gathering context-specific data on the problem, as well data on actors' perspectives. Q-methodology is central to the research design. It allows the researcher to reconstruct actors' perspectives in a particular social setting. These data are augmented with interview data and other contextual material from observations and documentary sources. Combined, these sources allow me to provide a fine-grained description of the perspectives present and to consider the wider theoretical and practical implications of those context-specific findings.

Having set out the methodology, the following two chapters present the fieldwork data. In Chapter Four I describe and analyse the two wastewater planning processes. The focus is on exploring the influence of the four dimensions of the problem in those two empirical settings. In Chapter Five I present the three reconstructed perspectives, based on factor interpretation and an analysis of interview and other qualitative data.

That material from Chapters Four and Five is synthesised with theoretical debates in Chapters Six and Seven. Conclusions are drawn on the influence of actors' perspectives on integration and their relationship to the other dimensions of institutional practices and actors' agendas, and a number of practical and theoretical responses to the problem are presented.

Chapter Four – The two wastewater planning processes

Introduction

This chapter examines two local authority environmental planning and decision-making processes. For each planning process I describe the institutional context and actors' substantive agendas and their perspectives. The focus of this chapter is on identifying tensions between agendas and perspectives and considering their influence on the conduct of effective integrative processes. The data are from documentary sources¹⁶, observations and interviews on the two wastewater planning processes, as outlined in Chapter Three.

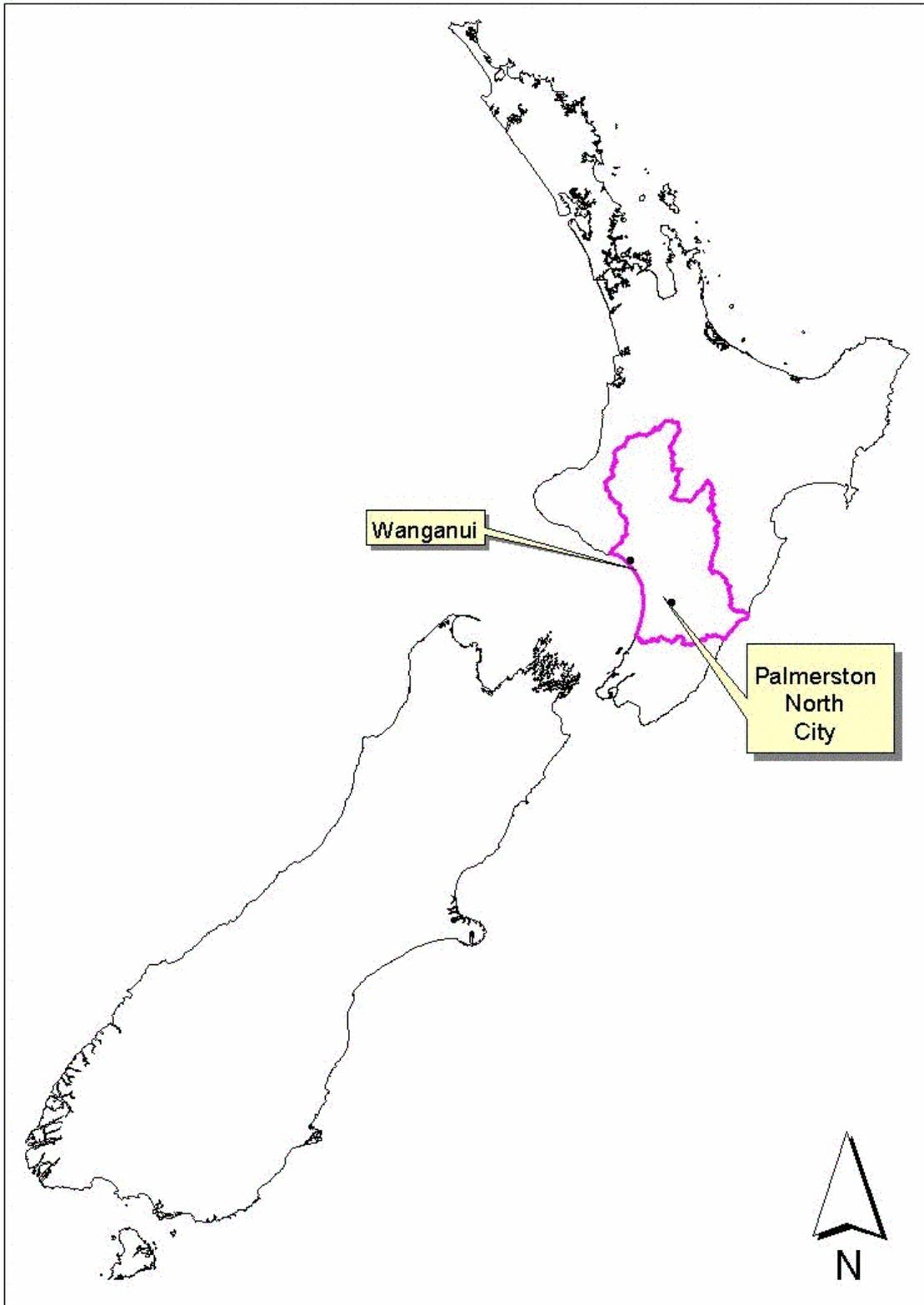
The two wastewater planning processes are:

- Palmerston North City Council's 'WasteWater 2002', later renamed 'WasteWater 2006'.
- Wanganui District Council's '1992 Wastewater Scheme', later renamed the '1999 Revised Wastewater Scheme'.

In the last part of the chapter I compare the two processes in terms of the influence of actors' perspectives on processes and outcomes. These data, combined with Q-method data from Chapter Five, provide the basis for a discussion of the research findings in Chapter Six.

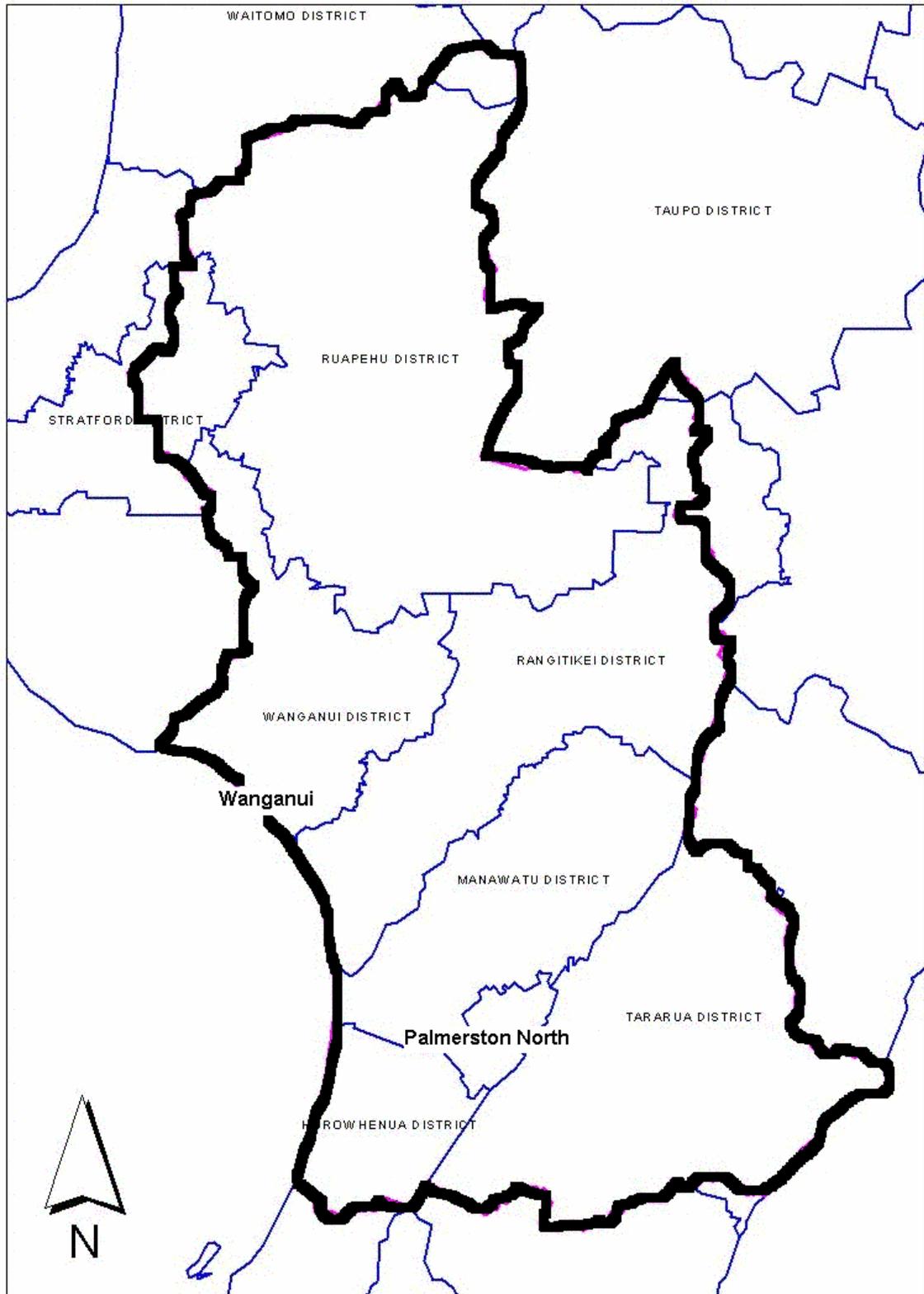
Palmerston North and Wanganui are typical, provincial North Island New Zealand cities (see Figure 5), with medium sized urban areas and populations (at the time of the fieldwork in 2001) of approximately 70,000 and 40,000 respectively. Their respective territorial authorities are Palmerston North City Council (PNCC) and Wanganui District Council (WDC).

¹⁶ The range of documentary sources varies, both between the two planning processes, and within them over time. Both councils produced in-house publications on their proposed schemes for public consumption, particularly at the resource consent application stage. Both wastewater planning processes gained media coverage over time, although the volume of reporting and range of sources for Palmerston North was consistently far greater than for Wanganui.



Source: Arc-View, Horizons Regional Council

Figure 3: Map of New Zealand showing area of Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council and Wanganui city and Palmerston North city



Arc-View, Horizons Regional Council

Figure 4: Local government boundaries in the Manawatu-Wanganui region

The two councils are among seven territorial authorities within the boundary of the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council (see Figure 5). In New Zealand local government, responsibility for environmental planning and decision-making is divided

between territorial authorities and regional councils. At the time of the research, territorial authorities' functions included the management of local land use issues such as subdivision consents, pollution and refuse disposal, but also extended to functions such as operating libraries and swimming pools, and liquor licensing. Regional councils had narrower responsibilities focused on regional planning and sustainable management of physical resources such as soil and water, lakes, rivers and coastal areas.

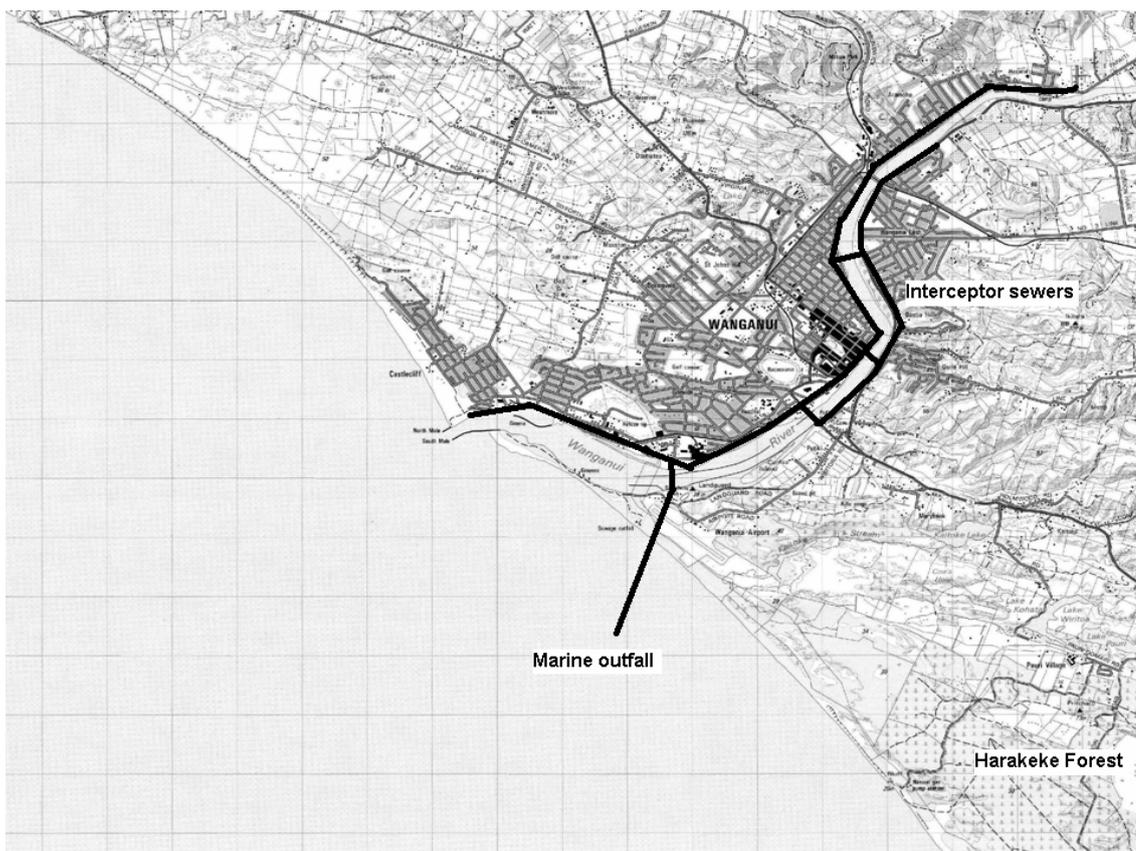
The Wanganui wastewater planning process

Until the 1970s, the Whanganui River received all of Wanganui City's industrial and domestic liquid waste, mostly untreated. This combination of wastewater and stormwater was discharged to the river via 59 outlets, from approximately 30,000 houses and most of Wanganui's industries including a large abattoir. By the 1950s the discharge had stretched the river beyond its carrying capacity, and in 1962 a number of cases of typhoid were notified in Wanganui, with one death resulting from shellfish poisoning. Following this, public health officials classified the lower river and adjacent beaches as polluted. The City was granted temporary permits in 1966 for continued discharge, with restrictions on recreational activities (WDC, 1991a).

In 1970 the Wanganui City Council announced a new 'Wastewater Scheme' designed around three components: the staged separation of wastewater and stormwater which would significantly reduce the volume of wastewater for treatment and disposal; the construction of an under-river pipeline and ocean outfall to eventually receive all of the City's wastewater discharge; and the treatment of all wastewater before discharge.

The original Wanganui Wastewater Scheme (1979-1988)

Construction of the original Wastewater Scheme began in 1979 and was completed in 1984 at a cost of \$23.5 million. Under that Scheme tradewaste was collected, treated, and discharged along with some wastewater via an under-river pipeline to an 1800 metre ocean outfall. Most domestic wastewater and stormwater continued to be discharged untreated into the river. Nevertheless, there was a dramatic, visible improvement in the quality of river water and surrounding beaches, particularly because of the removal of discharge from the City's large abattoir. The 1979 Scheme left the Wanganui City Council with a substantial, but anticipated \$2.7 million deficit.



Source: Horizons Regional Council

Figure 5: Wanganui City showing main sewers and marine outfall

Despite these improvements, Wanganui Area Health Board reports in 1987 and 1989 identified ongoing health risks on the river and immediate coastline from swimming and eating shellfish. The City Council, primarily driven by financial concerns about the cost of further works, challenged the Board's claims about pollution levels (*Wanganui Chronicle*, 25 February 1989, p.3) A public debate ensued, with a number of groups, including the Maruia Society (a nationwide conservation organisation) and Friends of the Shoreline (a local group opposed to continuing discharge), along with the Department of Conservation publicly campaigning for a river clean-up (*Wanganui Chronicle*, 5 November 1988, p.8). Nevertheless, the City Council continued to delay any further action.

In 1989 the Central Districts Catchment Board¹⁷ withdrew the City's discharge water rights, forcing the new Wanganui District Council¹⁸ to apply for new rights (*Wanganui*

¹⁷ Catchment boards existed prior to the 1989 local government reforms. In 1989 most boards and other smaller bodies were amalgamated into larger regional councils.

¹⁸ Wanganui City Council was amalgamated into Wanganui District Council in 1989 as part of the New Zealand-wide local government reforms.

Chronicle, 28 April 1989, p.3). Many public submissions on the application were received, mostly in opposition to any further river discharge (*Wanganui Chronicle*, 5 November 1988, p.8; WDC, 1991b:48). A new Water Right was issued in 1989 for just two years, subject to quite stringent conditions. It required the Council to begin treating its wastewater, and to establish a Working Party for a comprehensive study of the issues. The Wanganui Wastewater Working Party (WWWP) was established by the Wanganui District Council in 1989 with membership from groups with an interest in the river and coast.

In 1989 the Council commissioned a public survey on treatment and disposal options (WDC & McDermott Miller Group, 1990). Five hundred and fifty responses were received, revealing a “considerable public willingness to pay for an improved scheme, at a higher priority than other Council works” (WDC, 2001a:69). Key findings were:

- Land disposal of wastewater was acceptable to 89% of respondents, whereas river or ocean disposal was acceptable to 53%.
- A separated wastewater system combined with land disposal was easily the most preferred option.

The Working Party recommended the Council adopt a scheme based on land disposal via irrigation of wastewater onto plantation forestry. The preferred site was the Harakeke Forest south of Wanganui.

The 1992 Wastewater Scheme

The District Council subsequently adopted the Working Party’s recommendations and applied for resource consents. This was a major new commitment, given the estimated \$85.7 million cost, which was a huge sum for a small, relatively poor district¹⁹. Resource consents were subsequently granted by the Regional Council for the 1992 Wastewater Scheme. The basic features were:

- Full separation of stormwater and wastewater on all public and private property.
- Stormwater discharged to the river.
- Wastewater milliscreened and disposed of by irrigation onto Harakeke Forest by 2004.

¹⁹ 1996 census data showed that the median household income in Wanganui was \$27,021 compared with \$34,707 in New Zealand overall.

- Tradewaste treated and disposed of via the ocean outfall.

Funding for the Scheme was planned through a \$150 rates increase to be phased in over three years. However, after two \$50 rates increases, the Council became increasingly concerned about the cost to the community (WDC, 2001a; *Wanganui Chronicle*, 4 April 2002, p.3). Since the late 1980s Wanganui had been in a state of economic decline, with rising unemployment and below average incomes. By 1996 the Council had come to accept that many ratepayers were unable to continue funding the 1992 Scheme. In the event, the third increase was never levied and the scheme was never fully completed. The pumping and milliscreening of wastewater was completed in 1996, along with some separation of stormwater from wastewater, but the land-based disposal was never undertaken. Instead a revised scheme was undertaken as described below.

The 1999 Revised Wastewater Scheme

In 1996 the Council decided to review the remainder of the Scheme on financial and technical grounds. It had become clear that central government funding would not be available to meet the shortfall. The Council now sought a better balance between the community's desire to improve the river and coast, and its limited ability to pay. It believed a revised scheme was the best way to achieve this. Importantly, the Council now saw *ocean* discharge as a cheaper, preferable alternative to land-based discharge, partly because of technical and financial issues with the proposed forest site.

While the Council considered its options, regulatory changes were also imposing new standards on any future wastewater discharge. The Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council's new *Regional Coastal Plan 1997* made the discharge of wastewater and tradewaste discretionary activities. A *Proposed Land and Water Regional Plan 1999* also set new river quality standards, and a *New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement 1994* set compulsory standards for coastal water quality.

The Wanganui District Council began a comprehensive review of the 1992 Scheme in 1998. Three groups of citizens were identified for consultation:

- Level One involved the formation of a Wastewater Project Scheme Consultation Group from those organisations, community groups and individuals who were

involved in the 1992 Wastewater Working Party plus tangata whenua for the Whanganui River²⁰. The Consultation Group would work very closely with Council officers in assessing wastewater options and recommending a best option.

- Level Two comprised those individuals and organisations identified as having an interest in the issues apart from that of the general community, such as ratepayer interest groups, community groups and local industries that discharged to the river. It also included Ngati Apa, tangata whenua on the coast south of Wanganui, who would be affected by decisions on ocean outfall and coastal impacts. Consultation within Level Two would occur as and when required.
- Level Three comprised the wider community to be consulted when appropriate, through processes such as public meetings, submissions and notices.

At this point the Council signalled publicly that it had made a major change of direction. The Wastewater Consultation Group's Terms of Reference, set by the Council, now *explicitly excluded* a land-based disposal option from consideration. The Terms of Reference required the Consultation Group to explore options for ocean discharge of all wastewater, and for an extended, less costly timetable (WDC, 2001c). The Consultation Group was asked to recommend preferred options (but to exclude a land-based option), while the Council would retain final decision-making authority.

Consultation Group meetings revealed significant tensions between Council staff (who were present at all meetings but not as Group members) and those Group members who still clearly preferred land-based disposal. This disagreement ultimately affected the Group's final recommendations, which lacked the detailed guidance the Council hoped it would receive. The Consultation Group intentionally avoided making recommendations on any particular ocean or river discharge options because most members continued to prefer a land-based solution. Instead, the Group set out principles for council decision-making on the wastewater scheme (WDC, 2001c). The principles focused on balancing affordability with water quality standards, while recommending the Council commit to full wastewater treatment and full separation of wastewater from stormwater by 2010 if possible.

²⁰ Membership of the Consultation Group included representatives for two local lobby groups: the Whanganui River Combined Recreational Users Group and the Friends of the Shoreline. Tangata Whenua were represented through Te Runanga of Tupoho and the Whanganui River Māori Trust Board an umbrella group of iwi for the lower reaches of the river, and the Putiki Marae Committee. The Group also included officers from the Department of Conservation and Ministry of Health. The Group was supported by Wanganui District Council officers and technical consultants Montgomery Watson. An observer from the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council also attended.

Level Two consultation occurred with groups identified above, who had a particular interest in the river or coastal environment. The Council attended particularly closely to coastal iwi Ngati Apa's concerns about river and ocean discharge, and discharge to Harakeke Forest and the effect on possible burial grounds in the forest. Ngati Apa's first preference was for land-discharge to another location (WDC, 2001b). Level Three consultation was through a brochure inviting comments, which was mailed to all households, and by advertisements and reports in newspapers.

Following consultation, the Council applied for new resource consents for an all-ocean discharge wastewater system. The Council maintained it had sought to balance community concerns about environmental outcomes and affordability, while taking account of the Consultation Group and community's concerns about ocean discharge. In effect, this meant selecting the treatment and discharge options which provided the best water quality the Council believed the community could afford. All land-based options were excluded because of cost.

The Council applied for new resource consents for the discharge of stormwater into the lower Whanganui River for 35 years, and the discharge of fully treated wastewater via the ocean outfall for 35 years. The Council also applied to delay any decision on the specific treatment scheme until 2006 to allow them to take advantage of improvements in treatment technology.

The application was heard by the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council. There were no opposing submissions and some members of the Consultation Group spoke in support of the Scheme. Group members had all agreed that the application was the best compromise possible at the time, given the community's limited ability to pay. Resource consents were granted without any substantial modifications to the application. The 1999 Revised Scheme was estimated at \$35M.

Analysing the Wanganui planning process

This overview of the Wanganui wastewater process identifies institutional practices and actors' agendas, and highlights a range of actors' perspectives and their influence on the integration of citizens' agendas.

Institutional practices and actors' agendas

The influence of institutional practices and actors' agendas²¹ on the integration of citizens' agendas appears reasonably clear. The Wanganui District Council and its predecessor, the Wanganui City Council complied with external regulatory requirements (public health and river and water quality standards) and with the resource consent process, including requirements for public consultation. Because of the scale and cost of the wastewater proposals, the Council undertook an extensive planning process, including a considerable amount of additional public consultation prior to, and in addition to that required. Input from the Wastewater Consultation Group also continued past the granting of consents and in addition to consent conditions.

One of the most notable features of the Wanganui planning process was the broadly shared Council and public agenda of cleaning up the Whanganui River in an affordable way. By the 1970s the river's visibly polluted state had become a source of widespread public concern and embarrassment. There was general public agreement on the need for action, to the extent that successive councils were frequently criticised in the 1980-90s for a lack of action—although the inaction was almost entirely due to financial constraints. This public-council consensus significantly reduced the potential for tensions in the planning process and increased the chances of the council and citizens reaching agreement on the best solution. As the Council's Water and Wastewater Manager observed:

I guess we have this advantage over other councils in that we've gone from a pretty awful situation of chucking all our sewage in the river, moving as fast as this relatively poor community can go, in a very high profile way—so that people understand what we're doing—which everyone accepts, either enthusiastically or reluctantly. Reluctantly because of the financial burden, but they accept it. So to that extent, the whole process is quite peaceful comparatively (16)²².

²¹ All four dimensions of the problem (institutional practices, actors' agendas, and actors' epistemological and procedural perspectives) are defined in Chapter One.

²² Numbering of interviewees is as follows. In this chapter and subsequent chapters I have identified research respondents in two ways: First, where respondents are quoted they have been numbered rather than named, in accordance with the confidentiality provision in their consent forms (see Appendix Three). Respondents are numbered in the order that they completed Q-sorts. Second, where respondents are being discussed in relation to their official capacity, I have identified them by position rather than by name (for example, 'iwi representative' and 'council wastewater manager'). With the exception of written submissions from the 24 research respondents who were guaranteed confidentiality, all written sources follow referencing conventions.

This shared public-council agenda reflected the high level of public awareness of the visibly polluted river, prior to the removal of tradewaste in 1984:

The river was literally red [at the freezing works], and it's not now. We re-instituted the bridge-to-bridge swim a few years ago...In fact, one of our problems now with the river is about conflicts of use—boats, fishing and swimmers—and that's going to get worse. It's great; it's a good problem to have (16).

As one Council engineer reported:

The initial public commitment to very high rates for land-based disposal was because the public was embarrassed about the river and the previous nonchalant use of the river (20).

While the Wanganui community had been concerned about the costs of a wastewater scheme, they appeared convinced of the need for the scheme. The Council's Assessment of Environmental Effects²³ (AEE) (WDC, 2001a:15) observed:

The Wanganui community is very aware that the Council has embarked on the Wastewater Scheme and most people now simply want the job completed. All of the Council's strategic and annual plans have been developed against the backdrop of the Wastewater Scheme. Plan submissions on wastewater have been at a low level since the 1992 scheme was commenced, reflecting the community's feeling that the work is essential and the Council's approach is appropriate.

However, while public input supported this view that the work was essential, by the late 1990s there was no longer public agreement, as suggested in the AEE quote above, that the Council's particular approach to the problem was appropriate.

In the 1998 Review of the wastewater scheme the Council made a significant, but well-signalled shift to a full river and ocean discharge option, based on its conclusions that the 1992 Scheme was prohibitively expensive and would negatively affect community

²³ An Assessment of Environmental Effects (AEE) is a report that states the effects a proposed activity will have on the environment. This provides the consent authority and other parties with information about likely effects and any measures that can be adopted to avoid, remedy or mitigate negative effects.

wellbeing. The Council explicitly excluded any of the expensive land-based options from its review, and set out to gain public input and support for the revised scheme, despite knowing that most citizens had a clear preference for a land-based approach.

At the point of review, there were a range of agendas present among Council and community actors. Iwi were united in their strong preference, on cultural grounds, for land-based disposal (WDC, 2001b), although as noted, Ngati Apa had specific concerns about the proposed location of land-based disposal in relation to ancestral burial grounds. Recreational users were concerned about possible effects of discharge on shellfish, fishing and swimming, although all agreed that proposals for treatment would lead to improvements on existing water quality (WDC, 2001c). The Council and ratepayers (private and business) were concerned about costs.

In the event, however, the Council's consultation on the 1999 Revised Scheme was relatively successful in that it gained a high degree of public support for the final Scheme. This support reflected the Council's success in achieving buy-in by involving concerned citizens during the planning process. Success also reflected the underlying commonly shared agenda for improving the river and coast, which clearly reduced points of conflict between council and community. Success was also attributable to the lack of tensions among actors over epistemological and procedural issues, as seen below.

The epistemological dimension

The Wanganui District Council adopted a quite inclusive approach in the wastewater planning process. It was respectful of other actors' involvement and appeared ready to acknowledge the different types of knowledge and agendas present in planning and decision-making. It sought to ensure citizens were able to express viewpoints and gain an understanding of other actors' positions before any decision-making. Tensions between actors' epistemologies in the Wanganui planning process were most apparent between iwi and the Council, and to a lesser extent, over technical debates about potential wastewater solutions. However, none of those tensions led to significant conflicts or objections or to delays in planning and decision-making. While the Council clearly restricted the terms of reference for the planning process, there was no other strong evidence of actors seeking to control the process or the terms of the debate. Each of these issues is discussed in turn.

The most obvious epistemological tension was between Māori spiritual and cultural views and Western views, largely based on technical and financial concerns. Throughout the 1990s, the Council took particular care to consult with local iwi over wastewater options. The Council clearly acknowledged the strong historical, tribal and spiritual connections of local Māori to the Whanganui River. Whereas most relationships with interest groups and parts of the community were relatively discrete and focused on particular issues (such as recreational river usage or industrial discharges), the Council had made a concerted effort to maintain an ongoing relationship with all Whanganui River-based and coastal iwi. The most significant of these relationships was with the Whanganui River Māori Trust Board and with Ngati Apa as the southern coastal iwi.

Under the 1999 Review, the Council sought to strike a balance between addressing the cultural and spiritual concerns of iwi about wastewater discharge, and the Council's need to find an affordable, workable solution. The Council maintained it had done its best to address the abhorrence Māori felt about sewage discharge to water (WDC, 2001b). However, it also acknowledged that while its proposals would meet pollution standards, it could not adequately address Māori concerns about river and coastal contamination. All iwi in the area had maintained an explicitly stated preference throughout for land discharge (WDC, 2001b). The Council's Water and Wastewater Manager acknowledged this tension between regulatory, Council and iwi positions, and that different beliefs and worldviews needed to be accommodated:

You could argue from a public health point of view that you could accept 5% sewage discharge to the river, and it wouldn't have any material effect, but it has a spiritual effect...The Council are attempting to analyse and understand the cultural and spiritual and attitudinal perspectives on the [wastewater issue], rather than simply come at it from a technical and financial, hard process (16).

Ultimately, the Council had pushed ahead with a water discharge solution despite cultural objections. However, iwi representatives were positive about the process, indicating the Council had gained their qualified support for its solution, primarily because of the Council's attention to consultation:

It was a good process that allowed differences to remain. At the same time, people and groups had to understand each other and recognise the practicalities of what was involved in reaching an outcome (17).

Another iwi representative was very pragmatic about the value of the process:

Being engaged with the process allows [iwi] to give their opinion. If they are not involved, they will miss out. It is better to cause a ruckus and to get what you can...Iwi have been, and continue to be, very patient about things not to their liking. They have been pushing strongly for what they want and what they believe in, but know that they will largely not get it (23).

While differences between Māori and other views clearly remained, the Council had managed to gain qualified support from iwi for its proposals. This support came despite a lack of substantive success for iwi agendas, and appeared to be due to iwi representatives' willingness to compromise, the Council's own commitment to the best affordable scheme, and to a process that allowed actors to express viewpoints and understand one another.

Technical debates were another potential source of tension because while technical issues were very prominent in planning and decision-making, some actors emphasised the importance of other criteria, such as recreational and cultural concerns. Most council actors and citizens appeared to accept that actors with technical expertise could more easily influence planning and decision-making than could lay actors. As the Council's Water and Wastewater Manager observed:

This is a technically complex and multi-dimensional issue. Those who are able to put the time and research into understanding the issues and into becoming articulate and targeted in what they say, become very influential (16).

One Consultation Group member agreed that an understanding of technical issues was important because lay opinion—while acknowledged—tended to be marginalised in final decision-making. The exceptions were Māori agendas, which received special recognition despite not directly addressing technical issues. He felt the commitment required to obtain technical expertise was an obstacle for lay citizens, concluding that:

You've either got to have a lot of political clout, which iwi have, or you've got to have a well thought through case, or both. Citizens who come along with arguments about swimming and surfing or fishing are going to be sidelined if they can't provide the supporting evidence (24).

Nevertheless, as one councillor observed, where possible the Council clearly sought to avoid tensions over technical decisions by seeking compromises:

A balance is needed between subjective viewpoints and technical advice; the science by itself is useless unless there is some agreement on issues amongst parties (3).

This pragmatic approach to the value of different types of knowledge and agendas appeared to reflect a perspective common to most actors. Those epistemological tensions present did not appear to cause any significant conflict in the Wanganui planning process. In general, council actors and citizens who were involved were positive about the value of mutual engagement for gaining an understanding of one another's viewpoints, and positive about the value of the compromising as a means of reaching a decision acceptable to all actors. This willingness to listen and compromise on the part of most actors was particularly notable, given the Council began its 1999 review by excluding land-based options on technical and financial grounds, despite very strong public support for those options.

Procedural dimensions

Perhaps the most notable aspect of the Wanganui planning process was the *lack* of conflict arising from the Council's about-turn on a land-based solution, when compared with the Palmerston North process. Despite making decisions that ran counter to widespread public support for a land-based scheme, and despite a clear effort to shift public opinion, the Council managed to retain a considerable degree of public buy-in for the process and its proposed solution. The Council had demonstrated that it saw decision-making as necessary and was prepared to ring-fence off the land-based option, but also that it would seek public buy-in if possible. The overall public response was accepting of the Council's approach in making these changes.

Clear, common procedural expectations appeared to be a critical factor in this relatively successful process. The Council was open about its explicit change of direction and its aims of gaining public input and support. It provided financial and technical reasons for its review, and its Terms of Reference clearly excluded any land-based disposal options. The Council also publicised its goal of finding a solution the community would support, despite the strong public preference for a land-based option. Thus, even

where the council circumscribed public input and debate, this appeared to be widely accepted as a legitimate approach.

The Council's commitments to the process and to public engagement were also important factors. Council commitment was particularly important to river-based iwi, with whom the Council's relationship had suffered significantly following the Whanganui iwi occupation of Moutoa Gardens in 1995. Overall, the Council sought to maintain a good working relationship with other stakeholders where possible. It also sought to include other affected parties, particularly coastal iwi and river and beach users as affected downstream resource users. The Council's Water and Wastewater Manager claimed that:

The process that [the Council] has gone through – there's not much that could have been said [by citizens] that wasn't, and there's not much that was said that wasn't taken on board and an attempt made to accommodate that view – not always successfully of course...Everybody believes that they have had a fair crack at this and either their view has prevailed and influenced the outcome, or it hasn't because it was a minority view and others prevail over it (16).

Nevertheless, the Council did demonstrate that it was determined to settle on an affordable and achievable scheme, and it would not reconsider the decision to discharge to the river and ocean. This meant public involvement was circumscribed, although in an explicit manner that limited the possibility of citizens' overly high expectations of influence or particular outcomes. In the event, the Council secured conditional support for its decision, based on other actors' understanding of the various imperatives, and despite ongoing public preferences for a land-based solution. This compromise was assisted by the shared council/public agenda(s) for cleaning up the river and for containing costs.

The Council certainly believed it had consulted well. In its *Assessment of Environmental Effects* (WDC, 2001a:82) it reported that "key stakeholders were prepared to tolerate disposal to sea so long as their concerns and aspirations were properly reflected in the detailed development of the concept". According to the Council those concerns were met, since "technology [was] available to mitigate public health risks and to reflect stakeholder concerns and aspirations concerning sea disposal" (ibid:82).

Most other actors also appeared to accept there were good reasons for the compromises made and for the exclusion of the land-based option. As one Consultation Group member observed:

Everyone has had to bite the bullet in reaching agreement, and most people will feel reasonably satisfied with the compromise solution (24).

In particular, all involved parties acknowledged that the emphasis on affordability was appropriate. As two Consultation Group members observed:

The process forced us to be moderate, and to consider economic welfare as well as environmental concerns. You can't drive the town broke (4).

One of the things that has modified my position has been the financial implications of some of this work to this community (24).

There were no formal objections to the consent applications, although actors did make their preferences clear. Actors recognised that, by offering conditional support, they had signalled their understanding and their preference for remaining involved in ongoing planning and implementation. As one councillor observed:

The groups were poles apart at the start of this process. The end result though, is far removed from where it was. The heat has gone out of the issue because of the real, genuine effort to consult...There's a maturity now in Council processes and in the nature of involvement of groups. For example, Friends of the Shoreline were initially quite antagonistic, but over time, they were able to have their say, and they had to listen to the Council and other groups also. The issues meshed to a certain extent (18).

An iwi representative presented a similar perspective, acknowledging the importance of ongoing relationships:

We didn't have a major fight with the Council over the scheme. We understood the RMA process and had a sense of what was possible, and we wouldn't get off the handle about it because we need to keep engaging with the Council. The Council officers wanted to avoid a sense of divisiveness too. They are not stupid and don't want to polarise things for the future (17).

For iwi, the compromises struck reflected a pragmatic recognition of their limited ability to extract concessions from the Council. For both parties, the broader aim of maintaining a longer-term relationship made compromise much more acceptable. As one councillor observed:

Māori do want to be in there with the Council, not being consulted afterwards. They want to be involved from the start with a real role in decision-making. But all groups are all members of the community, and accepting each others' point of view is critical. Time is a key issue here. You can't rush the process of reaching understanding. Patience is of the essence, especially with iwi (18).

Ultimately, the various council-community relationships appeared to emerge from the planning process relatively unscathed, despite the very significant compromises which the Council had extracted. As the Council's Water and Wastewater Manager concluded:

The various groups having input into the wastewater planning process have discounted their own preferences on a number of occasions, in order to reach agreement. There has been an awful lot of goodwill (16).

A Consultation Group member agreed that the process of seeking compromises had led to a good outcome:

Community groups can treat the decisions that have been made as legitimate decisions because everyone has had a fair chance to express their point of view and to push their case (24).

Overall, the mix of shared agendas and lack of tensions between perspectives had eventuated in a relatively inclusive, deliberative planning process. Most actors appeared to adopt a perspective towards seeking understanding and compromise. This had further strengthened their shared agenda and the outcome, in turn, had probably reinforced their perspectives. In a number of important respects, these qualities differed from the Palmerston North process discussed below.

The Palmerston North wastewater planning process

Palmerston North City's wastewater has always been discharged to the Manawatu River that runs through the city. Since 1904 that wastewater has been treated to some degree, initially through a series of septic tanks, and more comprehensively since the 1960s. Since European settlement of the Manawatu River catchment, the river has, at various times, also received treated and untreated wastewater from outside the city from dairy factories, abattoirs and other industries, and from nearby townships and the Linton Army camp.

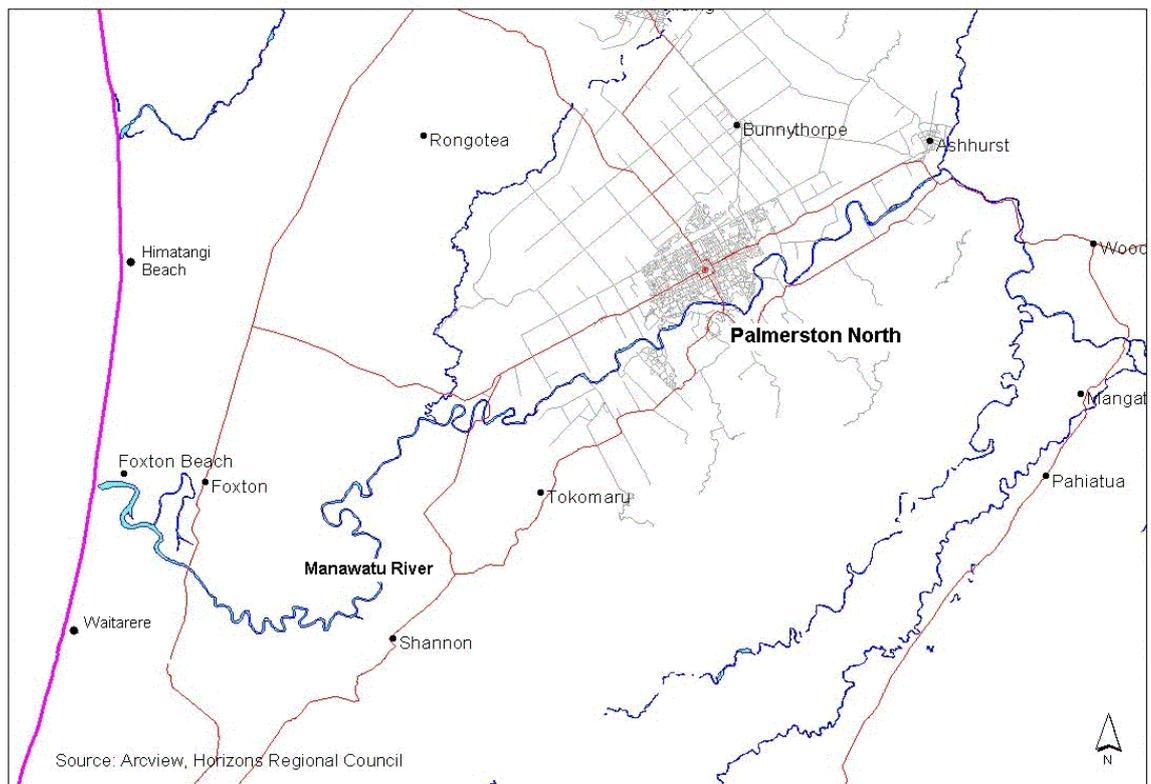


Figure 6: Map of Palmerston North and downstream region

A primary treatment facility (mechanical screening and sedimentation) for Palmerston North was opened in 1968 and a secondary treatment facility (aerated lagoons) was constructed in the 1980s. Since then, discharge has continued, but increasing volumes have gradually offset the improvements in the quality of the discharge (PNCC, 2001a:1). However, pollution in the Manawatu River has tended to be much less visible than that in the Whanganui River, particularly as the latter received untreated waste from the local abattoir for many years.

In 1993 Palmerston North City Council applied for new resource consents for discharging treated wastewater into the Manawatu River. In 1994 that application became subject to the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council's *Proposed Manawatu Catchment Water Quality Regional Plan*, which required significantly higher river water quality standards than had applied previously. The City Council appealed to the Planning Tribunal against the new classification in 1995 because of similar concerns to those held by successive Wanganui councils, about costs, timeframe and technical problems with meeting the new standards.

Wastewater 2002

In 1995 the City Council initiated the Wastewater 2002 project to consider alternative treatment and disposal options—so named for its expected completion date. Technical consultants Harrison Grierson were appointed and planning began for public consultation to identify and develop a preferred public option. Tangata whenua consultation was to be conducted concurrently but separately.

In 1996 the City Wastewater Community Liaison Group (CLG) was established. Its task was to assess and recommend treatment and disposal options, and then to seek public responses to its recommendations. The CLG was to comprise members of the public who had “the skills, expertise and ability to formulate a thorough public consultation that will obtain a consensual conclusion regarding future treatment and disposal of Palmerston North’s wastewater” (PNCC, 1996c:1). The Council eventually appointed members from the public health, industrial, commercial, recreational, science and research, conservation and community sectors (PNCC, 1996a:5). The Council and its technical consultants would provide assistance to the CLG but would have no direct input. The *Manawatu Evening Standard* (3 September 1996, p.9) reported that the CLG was appointed to avoid claims of any predetermined preferences, but the Council’s distance from the Liaison Group would also allow it to disassociate itself from any unwelcome recommendations.

The Community Liaison Group identified three ‘representative options’ for public consultation:

- Option A: Continued discharge to the river with additional disinfection (estimated cost \$7M or \$35 per annum per ratepayer). This option would not meet the

Proposed Water Quality Plan's requirements, and would only be possible in the event of a successful appeal against that classification.

- Option B: Continued discharge to the river with additional disinfection and phosphorus removal to reduce algae and weed growth (estimated cost \$42M or \$254 per annum per ratepayer).
- Option C: Land-based disposal via irrigation of pastureland or exotic forestry (estimated cost \$37M or \$200 per annum per ratepayer).

A brochure outlining the options was sent to all households in the Palmerston North region and to all affected downstream communities. Of 1095 responses, 84% were in favour of the land-based option, despite its cost. The Community Liaison Group saw the response as reflecting a strong community desire for environmentally sustainable wastewater treatment and disposal (Community Liaison Group, 1996:s9.1). A significant number of supporters of land-based disposal also identified the high cost as a secondary concern. Both the regional and district councils made submissions supporting the land-based disposal option. The Community Liaison Group also conducted a number of meetings with affected iwi at local marae. The "general consensus" among iwi was that "river discharge should cease as soon as possible" in favour of land-based disposal (ibid:s7.1).

Following public consultation, the Community Liaison Group recommended land-based disposal to the Council, which resolved to investigate that option in detail. The Council appeared to make a strong commitment to planning for a land-disposal system, if not to its construction. The City Manager described the Wastewater 2002 consultation process as an "excellent model of how community participation could work" (quoted in Editorial, *Manawatu Evening Standard*, 12 August 1997, p.1).

By early 1997 there appeared to be almost unanimous support among citizens and the local, district and regional councils for a land-based solution. The City Council began negotiations for the purchase or leasing of land for the disposal system. The Council's Services and Facilities Manager described the Council as "firmly committed", noting that "if everything goes right, we hope to have the land-based system up and running by 2004" (*Manawatu Evening Standard*, 30 August 1997, p.2). The following year's *1998/1999 Annual Plan* included the land-based system with a budgeted cost of \$38.4M.

Wastewater 2006

Between 1997 and 2000 the Council made a major change in direction following growing concerns about costs and technical issues. In late 1997 new technical consultants Montgomery Watson were appointed to provide a 'contextual review' in response to Council concerns about the high cost and technical uncertainties about the land-based scheme (PNCC, 1999). In May 1998, the new consultants reported to the Council, criticising the planning and decision-making process undertaken by the previous consultants and the Community Liaison Group as insufficiently rigorous and comprehensive. The new consultants recommended the new Council re-examine all options from scratch (land and river based), ensuring that a "sound and defensible audit trail be established as an integral component of the decision making process" (PNCC, 1999:9).

The Council adopted these recommendations, renaming Wastewater 2002 as 'Wastewater 2006'. It established a new Project Steering Group of two councillors and three council officers, which immediately distanced itself from the land-based option by stressing the amount of research and investigation still to be undertaken before a final decision could be made (*Manawatu Evening Standard*, 8 August 1998, p.2). The Steering Group released *Wastewater 2006: Representative Options* in July 1999, presenting seven treatment and disposal options for public consultation. In the report, the estimated cost of land-based disposal had now doubled to \$76 million or \$417 per rateable property annually. The new city council, elected in October 1998, supported the review. A number of councillors were very concerned about rising cost estimates for land-based options, with one referring to the earlier consultation as being "captured by a well-orchestrated programme from the self-interested looney left" (*Manawatu Evening Standard*, 16 July, 1999, p.1).

In late 1999 the original City Wastewater Community Liaison Group was reactivated to undertake public consultation on the seven representative options. Its consultation brochure, which emphasised the higher costs of land-based discharge, received 1437 responses. The results of the consultation showed that people held a mix of environmental and financial concerns, and were split almost 50/50 between river and land discharge. All-year river discharge was now favoured by 52%, generally because of its significantly greater affordability (\$12.7M). Land-discharge options were preferred by 48%, of which 28% preferred a mix of land and river discharge as the best compromise of cost and environmental protection, and 20% preferred the very

expensive all-year land application (\$76M). Downstream river users, who were not Palmerston North ratepayers, clearly favoured land-based options. Iwi also continued to push for a land-based solution. For iwi, the need to remove discharge from the river as soon as possible dominated other considerations such as cost.

The Community Liaison Group now concluded that the most preferred option was the cheaper all-year river discharge option at \$12.5M. However, it also identified a strong community sentiment for improving the environment, and from this “deduced that the greater part of the community would support a scheme that provides further enhancement of some kind to the most preferred option” (City Wastewater Community Liaison Group, 2000:19).

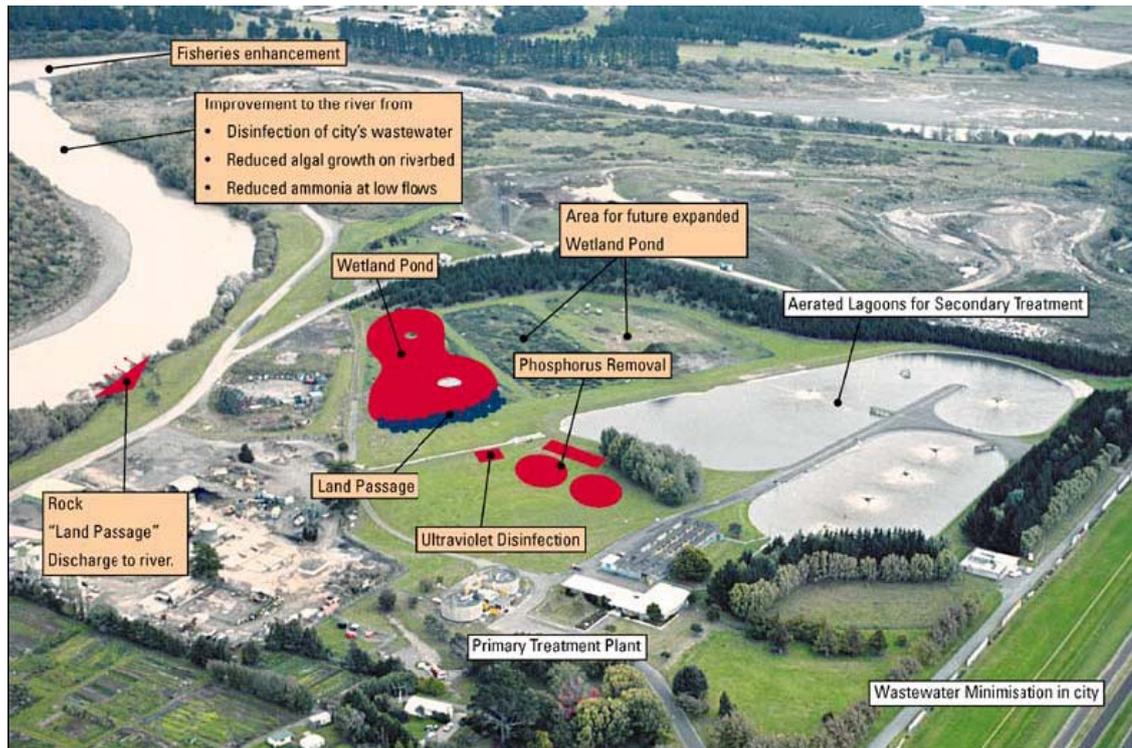
While the Council considered its options, opposition to river discharge continued to build from downstream and beach communities and local iwi, and from some river users and environmental groups. A *Manawatu Evening Standard* editorial (31 January 2000, p.8) at the time described the “yawning gulf in views” over the best options, and observed that councillors would need “the wisdom of Solomon” in order to make the right decision, given the deep divisions in the community. The Editor predicted appeals to the Environment Court over the final decision. The Wastewater Project Steering Group and Community Liaison Group both acknowledged it would be difficult to convince downstream communities of the benefits of river discharge. In their report (2000) the Community Liaison Group also noted that the downstream communities’ “stance is not well understood by the Palmerston North community” (ibid:19). They further observed that there was “ongoing public confusion and lack of understanding of the various roles and responsibilities of elected representatives and officers at both local and regional councils”. The Liaison Group reported that this confusion had led to conflict between the Council and citizens. They observed that the lengthy planning process and extensive public consultation had led to overly high public expectations of influence over the final decision.

Despite conflicts and possible objections, the Council adopted the \$12.5M river-based scheme in 2000. Councillors and the City Manager were almost unanimous in praising the consultation, variously describing it as “superb”, a “masterpiece” and as “meeting all needs” (*Manawatu Evening Standard*, 23 March 2000, p.3). Since then, the Wastewater 2006 consultation has continued to be identified by councillors and officers as an example of best practice in public consultation, despite significant public dissatisfaction with the process and outcome.

The final scheme sought to respond to some community concerns by providing additional mitigating features without altering the final choice of a river-based scheme. Most notably, it established the Marae Ohu Working Party comprising representatives of the seven downstream hapu. The Working Party's task was to plan for a habitat wetland and rocky land passage that would naturally cleanse wastewater before river discharge, through its contact with Papatuanuku (Mother Earth). The scheme also established a monitoring group comprising downstream communities and other affected parties to monitor treatment, environmental effects and resource consent reviews. Funds for fisheries and estuary management were attached to this group.

The Council applied to the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council for resource consents in June 2001. Opposing submissions were received from the Department of Conservation, who sought significant additional conditions, and a number of groups and individuals. Most were from downstream communities, including Waitarere Beach and Foxton Beach. An opposing submission from Foxton Beach included a petition with 314 signatures. Environmental organisations that opposed the application included the Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board and the Horowhenua and Manawatu branches of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society. The Marae Ohu Working Group presented evidence in support of the City Council's application. It registered its clear ongoing preference for a land-based system, but acknowledged its pragmatic acceptance of the final compromise solution. A number of other organisations including Mid-Central Health, Massey University, the Horowhenua District Council and the New Zealand Defence Force supported the application while requesting additional conditions relating to water quality be imposed.

In May 2002 commissioners granted all consents with minor conditions. Following the decision, the Waitarere Environmental Care Association, a group of Waitarere Beach residents, lodged an appeal relating to the effects of discharge on the river and fish life, and on the coastal and marine environment. After lengthy negotiations, an out-of-court compromise was reached, allowing the scheme to proceed. Construction began in late 2003 and was expected to take four years to complete.



Source: Palmerston North City Council (2001)

Figure 7: The final Palmerston North wastewater scheme

Analysing the Palmerston North planning process

Institutional practices and agendas

As with the Wanganui process, the Palmerston North City Council was responding to external regulatory and resource consent planning and consultation requirements with which they were obliged to comply. Because of the scale and cost of the wastewater proposals, the Council had undertaken an extensive planning process with lengthy public consultation. The arms-length Community Liaison Group had been established as an independent forum for gaining public input, and it had carried out a very extensive consultative process. This forum provided interested actors with good opportunities for becoming informed and providing input, but with few opportunities for any closer contact with Council actors. This distance from citizens appeared to contribute to a lack of public buy-in which cost the Council public support.

The most notable feature of the earlier Wastewater 2002 process was the broadly shared agenda for an environmentally sustainable land-based solution. The great majority of submitters, including district and regional councils, had expressed a strong

preference for a land-based option. Despite Council reservations about costs, it had responded positively to these submissions and to the Community Liaison Group's recommendation by planning and budgeting for that scheme. By late 1996 this support appeared to have coalesced into an almost unanimous council-citizens agenda for a land-based scheme. As one Community Liaison Group member observed:

From the beginning of [the wastewater scheme development], there had been a climate of opinion in the city that wanted sewage out of the river. That climate had been partly shaped by the past misuse of the river (25).

This shared agenda could not be maintained. Over 1997-1999 the Council performed a major about-turn because of concerns about rising costs and technical complexity. The Council decided to pursue a river discharge option and then set out to reframe the issues in public consultation. The Council's concerns were reinforced by its consultant's strong support for a cheaper river discharge option, and by financial and operational reviews at the Council in 1997-1998 that emphasised reductions in capital expenditure. By late-1998 the new Council, City Manager and technical consultants all favoured the cheaper river-discharge options. As the Council's Wastewater Manager concluded, "In the end, it was a question of the Council not wishing to pay for a better scheme" (21).

The Council then sought to reframe the debate by focusing on cost containment rather than on environmental sustainability, and to persuade citizens to support a cheaper, simpler river discharge option. The Council believed many citizens would not accept the doubled estimates of \$76M. However there was also a significant body of public opinion including most iwi and downstream communities, who had established a clear expectation of a land-based solution and would not be easily swayed. As the Steering Group's Chairperson noted in the *Manawatu Evening Standard* (8 August 1998, p.2):

Many people thought that because land-based treatment had received strong support through public consultation, it was just a matter of getting on and getting something built.

Public opinion had become significantly more divided as the cost implications of a land-based solution set in. Public opposition had also hardened as it became clear to land-based supporters that the Council was actively pursuing a new agenda.

The public response to Wastewater 2006 consultation and the emphasis in publicity on costs was as the Council expected, and probably as it intended. Many citizens and businesses now supported cheaper alternatives. As the Liaison Group Chairperson noted:

Some of the commercial and economic interest groups were initially prepared to support an environmentally friendly option. But when later evidence showed the cost was higher and the environmental gains less than expected, they modified their position to a much more traditional one (25).

Palmerston North residents, especially ratepayers who would bear the costs, were now evenly divided over river versus land discharge, reflecting their concern to balance costs against water quality. This confirmed the Community Liaison Group's (1996) earlier interpretation of the public response as an agenda of environmental sustainability rather than a vote for land-based solutions *per se*.

In contrast, downstream communities, who were not Palmerston North ratepayers, remained consistently opposed to any river discharge on their river and coastline. As it became clearer that river discharge was likely, opposition hardened and public criticism and suspicion of Council predetermination grew, leading to claims about the legitimacy of the process. Groups of citizens were now pitted against one another and the Council. This more intransigent aspect of the conflict was acknowledged by the Council Wastewater Manager:

There was certainly a considerable section of the community who said "we're not interested in the cost, we think it should be land-based disposal regardless" (21).

The Liaison Group Chairperson similarly acknowledged the entrenched conflict:

There's still an underlying gap between what some interest groups want, and what other interest groups want, and that's not been resolved...Some of the green or environmental groups are aware of the dilemmas that arose over land treatment. It was not going to be satisfactory. Others were unrelenting about getting wastewater out of the river and ocean at all costs. (25).

The views expressed in the submission of one downstream community actor were typical of opponents of river discharge, in their unalloyed support for land-based options:

Regardless of cost, the Council should go to land disposal of effluent, despite treating to the appropriate standard (Submission of Malcolm Guy, Regional Councillor and Levin Farmer).

By 1999 the broadly shared agenda for an environmentally sustainable land-based solution had given way to a range of conflicting agendas that could not be easily taken account of into a final decision. This conflict had been exacerbated by the Council's lack of openness about its decision to review the land-based option, leading to strong public suspicions of predetermination and bias, and to more public entrenched opposition. Some actors clearly perceived the Council as being intentionally covert and predetermined, and this perception had led to a loss of legitimacy and trust. The split in actors' agendas was in striking contrast to the Wanganui planning process, where opinion remained largely united. The split in Palmerston North was also influenced by actors' perspectives, discussed below.

The epistemological dimension

As with the Wanganui process, epistemological tensions in Palmerston North arose over the status of different types of knowledge: principally, tangata whenua input which was based on cultural and spiritual concerns; and conflicts between lay and technical scientific inputs. Tensions centred on the treatment of these different types of knowledge and agendas, and were exacerbated where council actors sought to control their influence on decision-making, through restrictions on the terms of debate and through a less-inclusive process than that followed in Wanganui.

The experience of tangata whenua in the Palmerston North wastewater process was, in some respects, similar to that in Wanganui. Throughout Wastewater 2002 and Wastewater 2006 iwi had consistently maintained that any wastewater discharge to the river or ocean was offensive, and argued that their spiritual viewpoint was not being adequately taken into account by the Council. As Taiepa (2001:12) noted in his research into the process, "the key point asserted by Māori was that land-based treatment was the only wholly acceptable way of assimilating the wastewater".

Although the Council did acknowledge this position, it had not been deterred from pursuing a river discharge solution.

Instead, the Council had treated iwi concerns as an additional factor to be mitigated if possible, rather than a driving factor in the choice of scheme. The Marae Ohu Working Party's task had been to develop the land passage and wetland area in response to iwi concerns. The Working Party had acknowledged that these mitigating features did not remove the "unacceptable practice of discharge to the river" (Wastewater Project Steering Group, 2000b:27), but maintained that a nil discharge was not achievable at that time. Instead, their objective was to "do what is possible to satisfy cultural concerns" (Marae Ohu Working Party, 2001:3).

The Council's Iwi Liaison Officer was quite critical of its response to the iwi position. He noted that it was:

...apparent that the councillors' level of understanding of Māori/iwi values, beliefs, world views, knowledge and practices [was] very limited" (Community Liaison Group, 2000, Appendix 6:3).

Iwi representatives were also critical of the Council and other actors who they saw as hostile to a Māori worldview and unthinkingly supportive of Western expertise. As one observed:

A lot of Māori dispute the so-called 'facts' and the idea that science is always right. Scientists promote the view that it can give the right answer in black and white, but it can't always do so, and the council and public need to recognise this (12).

Overall, the iwi response to council's attempts to mitigate their concerns was quite similar to that in Wanganui. Iwi were pragmatic about the lack of genuine recognition granted to their cultural and spiritual concerns, and about gaining what advances they could for their agendas.

Despite iwi disappointment with their lack of substantive progress, some other actors were unhappy with the degree of prominence they felt was given to iwi agendas by the Council. A number of other actors thought their own values were insufficiently recognised. Some debate arose over the place of values in what was a quite technical

planning and decision-making process. One submitter felt that values-based agendas deserved less prominence than those submissions that he viewed as more objective:

It is important to recognise the submissions that are being made that are emotional rather than based on facts, and to treat them accordingly. (Submission of John Whitelock, Former Regional Councillor (Oral submission).

Another citizen defended the downstream citizens' responses as more valuable than the iwi viewpoint:

...emotional responses, such as to the mixing of faeces and water, are unstable. However, there is a place for a considered set of values (6).

Another downstream citizen defended the role of lay and non-expert forms of knowledge and challenged the technical evidence:

Lots of people don't agree about the scientific evidence. Even the scientists don't entirely agree and probably don't have all the answers. There should be a debate and normal people should dispute the scientific evidence. This includes challenges from non-technically-minded public. We can't know if the water will ever be technically pure, and anyway, people know what it includes, even if it is purified (14).

The Council's consultants sought to downplay any values-based input from non-Māori citizens, as being very much a minority view:

There may also be spiritual values held by some Pakeha relating to the river. Any adverse effects of the discharge on these values are likely to be experienced by a small number of individuals, rather than affecting a [larger portion of the community]. Any such effects will be very minor (Statement of evidence of Sylvia Jean Allan, Planner, Montgomery Watson Harza, p.22).

Other submitters were critical of the Council for having an overly narrow focus on costs:

Affordability [is] the [Council's] sole driving factor when considering options for wastewater treatment (Written submission of Taranaki/Whanganui Conservation Board).

Overall there were various epistemological positions in evidence. While some citizens sought to engage with the Council and technical experts on scientific evidence, others wished to focus on the values underpinning their agendas. The Council and its consultants, in turn, proved to be more willing to acknowledge Māori values-based agendas than other citizens' similarly subjective agendas. Actors clearly had a range of views on the weighting to be given to different types of knowledge and agendas. And in many instances, those epistemological tensions were also closely linked to tensions between perspectives, as seen below.

Procedural dimensions

The most notable feature of the Palmerston North study in procedural terms was the Council's lack of openness about its preferences, and the public response to this. From late 1997, the Council had not clearly communicated its intentions, while being quite defensive of the about-turn it had made on the land-based option. Council actors had made a virtue of remaining at arms-length from the CLG process for establishing public preferences, yet at the same time they had pursued a lower-cost river discharge agenda and engaged in public relations to that end. Even the CLG had acknowledged the mixed message this approach sent to citizens. Citizens' responses generally fell into two camps: some, including iwi, had accepted the planning process as legitimate, regardless of their substantive agendas; others had opposed both processes and outcomes, sometimes quite intransigently. Some of the latter group had certainly perceived the Council as underhand in the way it sought to shift public opinion. It also became apparent that many citizens' perceptions were closely linked to whether they felt included in, or excluded from the process.

While the Council's concerns about cost and technical issues were valid, if contestable, its approach was questionable. Unlike its Wanganui counterparts, who clearly ring-fenced all land-based options, the Council never publicly declared its preference for a cheaper river discharge option. Instead, it embarked on a 'review', involving public consultation allied with careful use of media and public relations that highlighted the increasing cost estimates, in an attempt to shift public opinion. At the same time, it

maintained a careful public appearance of neutrality about the various possible wastewater solutions. The Council's predetermination and shift in agendas only became apparent over time as Wastewater 2006 unfolded.

Council actors were guarded when questioned on the Council's about-turn. However, one councillor felt the Council had reneged on some commitments and would likely do so again:

Political decisions have overturned obligations such as land-based disposal, especially with the composition of the new Council and their inclination to change their mind and overturn existing agreements such as the Pit Park agreement. So, we might still see the budget for WW2006 being stretched-out' to make way for other spending. For example, we might lose the wetlands. This could be seen as a breach of public trust (13).

The public response to the Council's about-turn was mostly negative. Many citizens' expectations of the process were based on incorrect assumptions about what matters were on the table. The common assumption was either that the Council was committed to pursuing a land-based option, or at least, this option was still under serious consideration. However, citizens gradually became suspicious about the information the Council had presented or omitted, and eventually it became clear that the Council was pursuing a river discharge solution. As one citizen observed:

The Council did manipulate the consultation process to try to move public away from the LBED (land-based effluent disposal) option. Economics played a big part. The prices quoted by the Council for the LBED were way too high, and this was intentional. They were designed to scare/turn people off the LBED with the inflated price. No one outside the Council had the full story and we didn't know what we didn't know (22).

Another agreed that cost had scared off many supporters of the land-based option:

Because of the envisaged high cost, the [land-based] proposal was presented to the ratepayers in such a way as to be doomed from the start (Submission of Waitarere Beach Progressive and Ratepayers' Association).

Taiepa (2001:19) was similarly critical of the Council's approach; particularly of the initial apparent commitment and subsequent about-turn:

There are many examples of amicable relationships between local government and iwi being undermined at a later stage through a failure to consistently demonstrate commitment and to invest time and resources in the relationship.

One Councillor acknowledged that the Council was determined to go ahead with its application, primarily on technical and financial grounds, despite the opposing views of iwi and many downstream residents:

At the end of the process Councillors had a range of opinions, and this was reflected in a number of compromises. However, the cost and technical data and hard information did largely override people's values in the final decision. You'll never get everyone on board. Some people were just never prepared to accept the decision, but personal opinions and heartfelt values don't sway the RMA. And democracy doesn't always reflect values in outcomes. Once a decision has been made, all parties should stand by it. Individuals are under no pressure to change their views, but they do need to accept the process (10).

After 1997, citizens' agendas tended to harden into opposing camps and their different perspectives became more apparent. City residents were evenly split between river and land options, with most who favoured river discharge doing so because of costs. In contrast, downstream citizens (who were not affected by the potential costs) were almost uniformly opposed to river discharge.

Citizens, including downstream residents, were also divided according to whether they perceived the process as more inclusive or exclusive. Some downstream citizens felt they *had* been adequately heard in the consultative process and were willing to accept the outcome as the best they could secure, despite disagreeing with it. As one Foxton resident concluded:

Palmerston North [City Council] consulted well with Foxton. The Community Board tried to get Waitarere to be involved too, but they were so hard-nosed about it. Over time, the Foxton community became better informed, and it shifted its position as a result (22).

However, other citizens felt they had *not* been heard, and continued to formally oppose the application. This group also included downstream residents, some from Foxton. As it became apparent that a river discharge option was favoured by Council, those citizens took a more entrenched position. Many were clearly suspicious of predetermination in the Council's position. Some expressed this view in their written submissions:

The Resource Management Act is all about how much money you have that will buy you the smart lawyers, the consultants and the scientists...The consultation process has been flawed from start to finish albeit handled with expensive finesse (Submission of Christina Paton, Foxton resident).

The [Council's] presumption, that the granting of these consents is just an irritating formality, is irresponsible (Submission of Peter Wright, Waitarere Beach resident).

Other downstream residents who were interviewed expressed their convictions about Council bias:

We cannot trust the Council to report accurately or to be trusted that the water is actually pure as they claim it to be (9).

We believe that money corrupts decision-making, especially the bribes given to iwi during consultation. Consultation was a sham, too late, and the decision was already made. The Mayor actually told us that they were only there because "we are required to be here" (6).

I needed to object because the river is so important to me, but the Council was going to walk all over us anyway. It had already made up its mind (11).

A sense of Council predetermination only heightened the disappointment some citizens felt about the direction of the process. Many citizens had developed incorrect expectations of a land-based outcome, and this disappointment was acknowledged by some Council actors. As the Council's Wastewater Manager observed:

Many people felt that the process was over by the time that the first round of consultation was completed and Council had announced what its proposed scheme was (21).

A City Councillor was even more candid:

Some people's views come from a position of suspicion and mistrust about councils. But I can see how the Council came to deserve that suspicion because it raised expectations about the LBED. Those people who oppose a river-based solution now see compromise as weakening their position, since they believe they can't trust the Council (10).

As that quote suggests, those citizens who had the strongest sense of council predetermination were often also those most adamantly opposed to the process and the river discharge option. Conversely, citizens who saw the council in a more positive light were also more disposed towards seeking compromise and ongoing relationships—perhaps regardless of their preferred outcome. However, it was not clear whether the relative intransigence of the former group, or the more compromise-seeking perspective of the latter group, was a result of their different experiences, or a matter of predisposition, or perhaps both. Data from Q-method surveys in Chapter Five shed further light on these elements, and they are discussed further in Chapter Six in the findings.

This latter group included iwi representatives on the Marae Ohu Working Group. A broad shared perspective had emerged from among iwi and those downstream residents who accepted the legitimacy of the process and outcome. The Marae Ohu Working Party had made a very pragmatic decision to formally support the Council's resource consent applications in return for undertakings on mitigating and monitoring conditions. This support reflected their desire to maintain a constructive long-term relationship with the Council through which they could continue to advocate for nil river discharge. Some Working Party members had been criticised by their iwi for this compromise, but they maintained that collaboration was necessary if they were to have any genuine influence.

In terms of effective integration of their agendas, the Marae Ohu Working Party position reflected the difficult balance for iwi representatives in accepting a decision over which they had limited influence. Ultimately, maintaining ongoing relationships took

precedence over concerns about the process and the outcome. As Taiepa (2001:14) observed:

The decision over the preferred scheme was not made collaboratively [with Māori]...While the goal [of nil discharge to water] was not achieved, there were some positive results including stronger relationships with the Council.

A Marae Ohu Working Group member similarly concluded that:

Our fundamental, first stated position is nil discharge. Now, while that position has not altered, the iwi have taken a particular course to work towards achieving it. That course is to be involved, rather than to simply demand nil discharge from the outside (8).

Overall, at least three discernible perspectives on procedural issues were evident among Palmerston North actors. Most council actors appeared to support the Council's pursuit of a river discharge solution, even where they recognised that some public support had been lost due to a less than inclusive process. Citizens appeared to fall into two perspectives. One group of citizens were positive about the process and accepted the outcome as legitimate, even while some of them supported river discharge and others opposed it. A second group of citizens were more stubbornly opposed, and were unhappy about the process and did not accept the outcome.

Comparing the Wanganui and Palmerston North processes

There were strong similarities in the two planning processes in terms of institutional processes and actors' agendas, but some significant differences between actors' perspectives and their influence on the integration of citizens' agendas. In both processes, the primary driver for a new wastewater scheme was regulatory. Planning and decision-making had to be undertaken within set timeframes to meet regulatory and resource consent obligations, regardless of public or council agendas. However, these obligations did not unduly restrict either council in considering a range of treatment and disposal options, or in offering citizens opportunities to participate. Both councils undertook extensive public consultation before applying for resource consents. In both cases there were tensions over citizens' expectations of exercising some influence over outcomes. In Wanganui those tensions were fairly well resolved so that

almost all involved citizens accepted the process and outcome as legitimate. In Palmerston North, tensions over actors' roles and influence were exacerbated by concern about council bias and predetermination. Some of these tensions were not satisfactorily resolved, instead contributing to ongoing conflict during the formal consent process.

In terms of agendas, there were some strong similarities between the two processes. In both cases a strong public agenda had emerged at an early stage in support of expensive, but environmentally sustainable land-based solutions. Both councils had reservations about costs but made firm public commitments to pursuing land-based solutions. Thus, citizens in both communities came to expect these solutions were the likely final outcome.

The most notable difference became apparent after *both* councils performed about-turns and pursued river and ocean discharge options. The Wanganui District Council was quite explicit about its shift and the financial and technical reasons for it, and this transparency paid off. Even though it had already gained the necessary consents for a land-based scheme it subsequently gained significant public buy-in to its review, and ultimately, broad support for river/ocean discharge. This support was underpinned by widespread agreement among actors on the need for action and concern about the prohibitively high cost of a land-based scheme.

The Palmerston North City Council's change of direction was not well signalled to citizens, and this lack of transparency led to conflict and delays. The Council sought to shift public opinion by reframing issues in the media and in public consultation. Public suspicion was aroused, leading to a hardening of citizens' positions on land versus river discharge. By the time the Council applied for consents there was a clear body of public opposition, some of it quite intransigent, even while other citizens continued to support the Council.

The epistemological dimension

A range of epistemologies emerged in both processes, but with different impacts on the integration of citizens' agendas. The most obvious tensions concerned Māori spiritual agendas and Western scientific agendas, and some debates on the validity of science and technology itself. All actors broadly agreed that technical matters should be closely attended to on issues such as wastewater, although citizens in both processes

produced counter-evidence to challenge councils' technical evidence. Some iwi representatives and other actors in Palmerston North were also concerned that technical agendas were unreasonably privileged over other agendas, such as citizens' spiritual connections to the river and ocean. There was no sense that actors in either process were prevented from expressing their preferences, even though land-based options were certainly ring-fenced off at later stages by both councils. Thus, for example, iwi were able to consistently and publicly oppose river and ocean discharge.

Although there was a similar range of viewpoints in the two processes, the level of conflict differed markedly. This difference appeared to be largely attributable to the perspectives actors adopted. In Wanganui, most actors were quite inclusive of different types of knowledge and agendas, and were focused on gaining mutual understanding and reaching agreement. This approach smoothed over many of the issues that existed. Disagreements certainly remained about the best scheme, but most actors managed to identify the most acceptable option, given that financial and technical constraints appeared to rule out a land-based scheme.

In contrast, the Palmerston North process was marked by ongoing tensions over scientific, spiritual and other values-based agendas. There appeared to be less energy among actors for gaining understanding and reaching agreement. Actors did not share such a strong cultural or spiritual connection to the Manawatu River, whereas the Whanganui River was accorded quite iconic status by iwi and by the wider community. And while Council actors were prepared to acknowledge the range of agendas present, a number of other actors, both Māori and non-Māori, were clearly quite dismissive of each other's agendas.

As noted, it was not clear from the fieldwork evidence alone, whether actors' experiences of the two processes were more influential than actors' different perspectives. Analysis of the Q-method data in Chapter Five will allow further exploration of these issues.

Procedural dimensions

Differing procedural expectations were a significant contributor to the ongoing tensions in the Palmerston North process and the notable lack of conflict or opposition in Wanganui. The extent to which each council adopted an inclusive and open perspective was critical. In both cases, the councils had performed about-turns and

then sought to persuade citizens to support their new agendas through public consultation and a public information campaign. Crucially however, Wanganui District Council was explicit in its intention to pursue a river/ocean discharge option, and it included community members in detailed planning *alongside* officers and councillors throughout. In contrast, Palmerston North City Council was less open about its plans, and it remained at arms-length from the CLG consultation process, and did not reveal its position before its final decision. The Council had anticipated formal public objections, and it sought to guard against this by providing a defensible ‘evidence trail’ and avoiding stating any preferences.

A more deliberative council approach was important. Wanganui District Council was able to gain public support, because actors were able to establish a shared understanding of the council’s technical and financial imperatives. Citizens accepted, if grudgingly, the ring-fencing off of land-based options as a legitimate council response to those imperatives. Wanganui citizens also appeared to form more realistic expectations of their influence over outcomes than their Palmerston North counterparts. In contrast, Palmerston North City Council collaborated less with citizens, and was unable to reach a compromise or gain wide public acceptance. Some opposing citizens were quite vocal in expressing their sense of disenfranchisement and their suspicions about council predetermination. This rather strident opposition was probably a response to council actions as much as a matter of these citizens’ own perspectives.

A pragmatic and collaborative perspective served iwi representatives well. Iwi in both planning processes were closely focused on maintaining good ongoing relationships with their councils. In return for securing some mitigating measures, iwi pragmatically supported the final council decisions, even though neither council would compromise on the fundamental issue of river and ocean discharge. Some other citizens adopted a similarly pragmatic approach, even while disagreeing with the outcome.

Some aspects of actors’ perspectives were more difficult to interpret from the fieldwork evidence. It was not clear why some actors who had less well-established council relationships than iwi were similarly pragmatic. Nor was it clear whether the opposition that arose, mostly in Palmerston North, was primarily a response to council actions, or more a reflection of those actors’ own, more oppositional perspectives. On those issues where the two councils acted differently, it was difficult to conclusively state whether this was a reflection of different council perspectives on public participation.

Analysis of the Q-method data from Chapter Five will allow further examination of these issues.

Conclusion

This chapter described two local government wastewater planning processes and examined the integration of citizens' agendas in those settings. It revealed a number of similarities and differences in actors' perspectives and in institutional practices and actors' agendas. Notably, all of the perspectives identified were present among actors in *both* planning processes, to some degree. There were no clear distinctions that could fully account for differences in the processes or outcomes, although there were significantly different tendencies. Most importantly, there was less conflict in the Wanganui process because tensions between agendas and perspectives were sufficiently resolved to allow actors to accept processes and outcomes as legitimate. This resolution reflected a mix of elements, including a strong shared agenda, a relatively inclusive and open approach by the District Council, and actors' pragmatic perspectives on seeking workable compromises.

The more persistent epistemological and agenda-based conflicts in the Palmerston North planning process appeared to be largely due to the Council's less open and more arms-length approach to consultation. Some actors, both council and citizens, city and downstream, also appeared more disposed towards maintaining an oppositional perspective which bolstered existing tensions.

It was not clear whether any perspectives were specific to particular groups of actors or geographic locations. For example, downstream iwi in Wanganui were collaborative and compromise-seeking, whereas some downstream residents in Palmerston North were relatively intransigent in opposition. The latter group's perspective also resembled elements of the unilateralism and lack of inclusiveness displayed by some council actors'. Iwi representatives sought to maintain ongoing relationships, but so did some other citizens. Additionally, based on their interview comments some council actors were sympathetic to this perspective.

These conclusions will further examined in light of the Q-method data in Chapter Five. As noted, Q-method is particularly well suited to capturing actors' diverse subjective perspectives on the matter at issue, in a form that is also likely to have relevance to

other populations. Fieldwork data are further discussed in the presentation of findings and a discussion on democratic theory and planning practices in Chapter Six.

Chapter Five – Reconstructing actors’ perspectives

Introduction

This chapter reconstructs the perspectives of actors in the two planning processes. In response to the research question, my aim is to describe actors’ perspectives on the planning processes in which they were involved, and towards environmental planning and decision-making issues in general. In this chapter I consider the influence of those perspectives on the integration of citizens’ agendas. Data on the three perspectives presented here are derived from Q-method surveys, factor analysis and interviews, as described in Chapter Three. Each perspective is a reconstruction of actors’ perspectives on the issue under study. This chapter is not a critique of these perspectives; rather, it describes how actors see themselves and other actors, including their perceptions of matters such as what roles and responsibilities actors should have; what processes should be followed; and what counts as valid knowledge. A critical assessment of those perspectives and their influence on the integration of citizens’ agendas is undertaken in Chapter Six.

The decision to focus on actors’ perspectives followed the Chapter Two review of what is known about the research problem, where it became clear that actors’ perspectives are far less well understood than their agendas and institutional practices. At points, this discussion touches on those latter aspects, and makes use of democratic theoretical concepts that will be an important part of the discussion in Chapter Six.

Analysis of statistical and qualitative data from Q-sorts and interviews produced three factors, which the twenty-four respondents cluster around. The three factors are:

Factor One: Subjective Compromisers (F1)

Factor Two: Objective Competitors (F2)

Factor Three: Neutral Executives (F3)

The titles serve as short identifiers for the three factors and were chosen to represent key elements of each group of actors’ epistemological and procedural dimensions of their perspectives. For example, “Subjective Compromisers” regard *subjective* forms of knowledge as epistemologically important and are *compromise-seeking* in their procedural expectations of planning and decision-making.

The analysis and presentation of factors was described in detail in Chapter Three's section on 'Factor interpretation'. In this chapter the three factors are described separately. Each factor description begins with a brief overview, including respondents' demographic characteristics and their agendas. This is followed by a description of the common perspectives shared by this group of actors. The important themes within each perspective are described. These themes are identified by reflection on the intent of a series of statements and respondents' scoring of those statements, and on respondents' post-sort interview comments. For each theme I present a table comprising the relevant statements and scores and an accompanying description. Some statements appear in more than one table because they address more than one theme (a full set of the Q-statements is reproduced in Table 1 below). Each description also includes observations about actors' substantive agendas and relevant contextual information from the two wastewater processes.

Each factor description weaves together general and context-specific elements. First, I provide a description of each theme within a perspectives. These perspectives have inferential value in that they are likely to be present in wider populations and to apply to planning and decision-making in other contexts. This description is made *without reference* to particular respondents or the structural location of the planning processes. This decontextualisation is intended to emphasise the general nature of the factor.

Second, each factor is presented as a perspective towards the two wastewater planning processes. This context-specific interpretation is supported by use of interviews and other data from the particular settings, and contributes to my assessment of those planning processes. Contextual data subsequently assist in interpreting the factors and framing general theoretical propositions for further research. Demographic data are discussed where they are relevant to the factors. For example, I draw conclusions about respondents' professional roles, ethnicity and geographic location where they may prove causally significant in terms of influencing those actors' perspectives. In this chapter, respondents are referred to as "clustering around" or "loading on" or "identifying with" a factor or perspective. This usage indicates that the factor is a composite perspective standing apart from an individual's structural location and not correspond to any single respondent's perspective²⁴.

²⁴ The exception to the composite nature of factors would be where a single respondent's Q-sort formed a factor on its own, which was identified as theoretically significant despite lacking statistical significance, for example, a single important individual (e.g. the prime minister) whose Q-sort might be seen as significant.

Each factor also has one or more “mixed loadings”. This indicated that some actors had viewpoints that reflect more than one factor and some had statistically significant associations with more than one factor. The analysis of data in this chapter and the discussion in subsequent chapters takes account of mixed loadings. For example, a mixed loading may suggest some commonalities between two factors, or it may indicate that some actors will identify with more than one perspective given particular structural circumstances (e.g. the presence or absence of a more integrative process).

The perspectives presented here are those present among actors involved in the two wastewater planning processes. Were the study to be replicated elsewhere, the same perspectives might be present, or other modified combinations of these perspectives might be revealed. Additional, entirely different perspectives might also be revealed. Regardless of its particular formation, each perspective must offer a meaningful explanation for actors’ overall points of view, taking account of all of the relevant data.

Table 1: Full set of Q-statements and factor responses

No.	Statement	F1	F2	F3
1	Those who dispute the scientific evidence are now few and far between.	-3	1	1
2	The continued resistance to the proposal is from a minority of the population who are radicals and extremists.	-4	-4	-2
3	Technical, financial and legal experts are able to present their viewpoints as ‘objective’ factual evidence that cannot be challenged, while using it in support of a particular preferred outcome.	1	1	-2
4	We should not be involving citizens directly in decision making unless they are technically well-informed.	-2	-4	-3
5	Expert bodies or individuals are best suited to determine how, where and under what circumstances resources should be allocated and used.	-3	-2	-1
6	There was a bias in the consultation towards the more literate members of the public, and towards those who felt comfortable making a written submission.	1	2	-3
7	It is quite important to present a reasonably well considered opinion on the wastewater issue. It is going to be criticised, so it has to be well thought out.	4	4	2
8	Too much emphasis was being put on consultants pummelling the Council into submission and not enough on what the public wanted.	-2	0	-4
9	Environmental groups have taken an idealistic point of view. Affordability has not been high on their agenda.	-1	-1	-1

10	Even if the water being discharged into the river were technically pure, the discharge would still not be totally acceptable.	3	-2	1
11	While economic growth has positive benefits for the community, clearly conservation has not been afforded the value it should have.	3	2	0
12	The main driving forces behind the decision on the final scheme are price and technical complexity.	0	4	-2
13	Ethical values and norms should be accorded equal standing to economics as a basis for environmental policy making.	2	0	1
14	Involvement in the consultation process does make you rethink your underlying values. You are forced to see outside your own vision.	3	-1	4
15	Sometimes people's intuition is more important than a lot of technical know-how on issues.	1	0	0
16	A key challenge is to seek strategies that respect both Māori and European traditions in interpreting, understanding and protecting the natural world.	4	0	3
17	The cultural and spiritual expectations of Pakeha are not written into the Resource Management Act and are therefore totally ignored.	-2	1	-3
18	There is a general acceptance amongst the Council that personal subjective values are as important as the financial and technical imperatives, or more so.	-3	-2	0
19	Policy decisions are never objective – rather, they will always reflect the cultural, social, institutional and economic context in which they arise.	2	2	2
20	Most people realise that resource consents are dictated by powers outside their control.	0	-1	-1
21	Consensus almost always means that the values of dominant majorities have marginalised the concerns of minorities.	0	2	0
22	Participants in wastewater planning who expressed a different point of view to the majority one were sometimes treated as if that were divisive or working against an agreement.	0	3	-2
23	I am suspicious of the role that money can play in corrupting decision making processes.	0	2	-3
24	The revised wastewater scheme was a case of the Council not liking the outcome of consultation and trying to change it.	-1	1	-4
25	The Council officers have been pushing a particular agenda.	0	0	-4
26	Participants should leave behind their particular experiences and points of difference in order to aim for unity and a common good.	-2	-3	2

27	You have to moderate your point of view to reach an agreement, and that is a worthwhile process.	2	-2	2
28	All parties with a clear interest in the issue needed to be included in the process.	4	3	4
29	There has been a considerable shift in public opinion since the wastewater scheme's early days, as a result of increased understanding of the issues and of what the Council is doing.	2	-2	3
30	Iwi are very patient. Provided they trust and believe that the Council are moving in the right direction and are going to get there, they are fairly happy.	-1	0	4
31	People do not necessarily need to agree with the outcome, they only need to consent to it.	-1	-2	2
32	The more that a group felt that they were heard, the more they were likely to think that they were having an influence on the decision.	1	2	3
33	Grass roots community participation improves decision-making processes and ensures new voices are heard.	2	1	3
34	The achievement of workable solutions to concrete problems is more important than the presentation of individual views and preferences.	-1	-2	-1
35	The level of opposition to the proposal is very low indeed, and that reflects the merits of the scheme.	0	-3	2
36	One positive result of this process is a stronger relationship with the Council.	1	-2	2
37	The resource consent applications are not only the product of an extensive consultative process, but also reflect total community consensus.	-3	-3	-1
38	The larger the human economy becomes, the more nature suffers.	2	4	0
39	Sewage volumes should be reduced by reducing the community's use of water.	3	3	-2
40	Technology and chemicals pose relatively low risks and these risks are controllable through technology.	-2	-3	0
41	There is no point wasting money by setting standards that are better than the bathing standards required.	-4	-4	-1
42	Science, not emotional or political reactions, must serve as the foundation for policy decisions.	-4	3	0
43	Cost-benefit analysis offers policy makers a way to assess the most objective and efficient means to respond to this challenge.	-1	-1	1

Factor One: Subjective Compromisers

Subjective Compromisers have a perspective on procedural issues that favours engagement with other actors in planning and decision-making. They seek compromises that satisfy their own agendas while maintaining relationships between actors. Compromise is seen as possible when all actors have sufficient understanding and acceptance of other actors' agendas, and of the constraints and opportunities present. Subjective Compromisers' agendas typically emphasise subjective issues such as spiritual, cultural and aesthetic interests. Their perspectives and agendas are explicitly self-referential and coloured by their own experiences and values. Subjective Compromisers want other actors to treat all subjective agendas as legitimate elements to be taken into account in planning and decision-making, but they are aware that those agendas perceived as objective and factual are more likely to be privileged.

Ten respondents loaded significantly²⁵ on the Subjective Compromisers factor. Eight were citizens involved in the two planning processes. One was a council officer and one was a councillor – both from the Palmerston North City Council. All ten expressed significant reservations about the final decisions in the two planning processes, yet all eight citizens reported very positively on their experiences of involvement in the process. This positive assessment contrasted strongly with the negative experiences of the remaining citizens in the study, all of whom loaded significantly on Factor Two. The positive assessment of the process could be partly explained by their perspectives, but also by an examination of respondents' demographic characteristics and their experiences in the two processes.

The experiences of actors loading on the Subjective Compromisers factor demonstrates that, for many actors, participation in a deliberative process is critical for their sense of procedural legitimacy. Seven citizens were members of formal stakeholder groups appointed by the two councils for their wastewater planning processes. The eighth citizen was a member of a local community board²⁶. In contrast, none of the citizens on other factors were members of formal groups such as these. The council officer and councillor loading on this factor were both very enthusiastic about the importance of public participation, and reflected quite mixed feelings about council decision-making processes. All ten respondents spoke positively of the

²⁵ See Chapter Three for an explanation of statistical significance in the loadings of respondents on factors.

²⁶ Community Boards have powers and functions delegated to them by their councils. They act as a link between councils and communities. Members comprise councillors and citizens from that community.

opportunities afforded citizens by formal involvement, including the close contact with councillors and officers, and the opportunities to gain an understanding of issues and to influence outcomes. These positive experiences clearly contributed to their subsequent support for the final resource consent applications, despite *all* ten respondents maintaining strong reservations about the final schemes.

Additionally, five of the ten respondents were Māori, whereas there were no Māori respondents on Factor Two and only two on Factor Three (both also loading on the Subjective Compromisers factor). Four of the five were citizens acting as iwi representatives in the planning processes, while the fifth was a Māori liaison officer responsible for council relations with iwi. Although a council officer, he clearly identified very closely with Māori and iwi concerns. Māori respondents were all involved in separate iwi consultation, undertaken by both councils concurrently with wider public consultation. This separate consultation afforded Māori actors a higher level of contact with council actors, and greater opportunities to pursue their specific agendas than were afforded most citizens. Both councils had attempted to address culturally specific iwi agendas through the addition of mitigating measures, such as Palmerston North’s wetlands and rock passage. As a result of this particular attention, Māori respondents reported positively on the processes and had offered formal support for the final schemes, despite continuing to favour land-based schemes. Their positive experiences of participation had partly mitigated these actors’ disappointment at the substantive outcome. This compromise-seeking approach reflects the wider New Zealand evidence, in Chapter Two, that iwi actors often value ongoing engagement and relationships even where they are unable to gain significant success for their agendas.

An explicitly subjective epistemological dimension

Subjective Compromisers have an epistemological dimension to their perspective that gives primacy to intangible, non-scientific values and preferences such as cultural, spiritual and ethical concerns. Their agendas are likely to reflect this perspective rather than to seek to appear more objective or scientific. In the case of respondents on this factor, their agendas focussed on issues such as the spiritual and aesthetic value of land and water, limiting economic growth and resource use, and the long-term guardianship of the environment.

For Subjective Compromisers, these subjective values and preferences are often the most important elements of their agendas, and are seen as entirely legitimate inputs to

planning and decision-making. Actors who clustered on the Subjective Compromisers factor were markedly less likely to muster technical arguments in support of their agendas, and less likely to present themselves as experts outside their areas of lay knowledge.

Subjective Compromisers acknowledge a wide range of other agendas and types of knowledge as legitimate inputs. They recognise that decision-makers and other actors often privilege knowledge supported by technical evidence, because it is seen as being more valid and relevant to problems defined primarily in technical terms, for example, wastewater issues. They also recognise that subjective agendas are often treated by actors with a positivist perspective as secondary issues because they are seen as lacking objectivity and a factual basis. Nevertheless, Subjective Compromisers wish to express their subjective agendas without them being marginalised or put aside.

Below is the first set of statements reflecting one theme of the Subjective Compromisers factor’s perspective. Each set of statements is accompanied by a description of that theme, usually incorporating quotes from post-sort interviews. The score given to each statement for the relevant factor is in **bold**.

<i>Table 2: An environmental conservationist agenda</i>		F1	F2	F3
11	While economic growth has positive benefits for the community, clearly conservation has not been afforded the value it should have.	3	2	0
38	The larger the human economy becomes, the more nature suffers.	2	4	0
39	Sewage volumes should be reduced by reducing the community’s use of water.	3	3	-2
40	Technology and chemicals pose relatively low risks and these risks are controllable through technology.	-2	-3	0
41	There is no point wasting money by setting standards that are better than the bathing standards required.	-4	-4	-1

Subjective Compromisers (F1) and Objective Competitors (F2) share an environmental conservationist agenda of concerns about the effects of wastewater discharge on the natural environment. Both factors gave high scores to statements on protecting the natural environment by reducing pollution and minimising its effects on human and animal populations. Both disagree with technical and financial responses, such as statements 40 and 41, which focus on mitigating the effects of pollution rather than removing it.

<i>Table 3: Spiritual and cultural values are legitimate inputs</i>		F1	F2	F3
1	Those who dispute the scientific evidence are now few and far between.	-3	1	1
10	Even if the water being discharged into the river were technically pure, the discharge would still not be totally acceptable.	3	-2	1
16	A key challenge is to seek strategies that respect both Māori and European traditions in interpreting, understanding and protecting the natural world.	4	0	3

Subjective Compromisers differ from other factors in highly valuing non-scientific, spiritual and cultural views on the environment. As their scores show, these views are seen as legitimate inputs that complement or enhance the science (statement 10), or may challenge scientific inputs in planning and decision-making (statements 1 and 10). Subjective Compromisers generally do not claim to have any technical expertise; rather, they claim that values-based agendas are equally legitimate as scientific agendas. They would also readily acknowledge actors’ cultural agendas and other values-based inputs as valid inputs (statement 16).

Respondents clustering around this factor offered observations that reflected their non-scientific agendas and lay knowledge. One respondent noted that “the scientific point of view is just one of many points of view” (18). Another noted that “scientists have the view that they can give the right answer in black and white, but they can’t always do so” (12). In responses to assurances about the quality of treated wastewater he observed succinctly, “it’s still shit—clean as, but still shit”. A third (11) admitted that “I am bamboozled by the science, but I don’t believe that the science is always right”. Another admitted that “residents did not understand the technicalities of the land-based issue very well at all, but the community was and is very sensitive to the need to clean up the river” (4).

Subjective Compromisers have a deep connection to the environment that is informed by ethical and spiritual concerns as well as by their local knowledge. This connection is reflected in their sense of intergenerational responsibility for conservation and for being guardians of the ongoing health of the oceans, rivers, and the wider environment.

Comments by respondents, both Māori and non-Māori, reflected this sense of connection and guardianship. One non-Māori respondent (11) described her “personal relationship with the mighty river, which began as a child, about 50 years ago”. For her,

“the river was sacred, as a source of food, drink and recreation, something to be proud of”. She asked about the “potential legacy of destroyed beaches and rivers. Can you put a price on future generations for destroying one of our greatest assets?” (11). A Māori respondent similarly asked “what will I say to my grandchildren if I can’t say that I tried to get the best outcome that I could?” (12).

<i>Table 4: Environmental and economic agendas must be balanced</i>		F1	F2	F3
11	While economic growth has positive benefits for the community, clearly conservation has not been afforded the value it should have.	3	2	0
13	Ethical values and norms should be accorded equal standing to economics as a basis for environmental policy making.	2	0	1
18	There is a general acceptance amongst the Council that personal subjective values are as important as the financial and technical imperatives, or more so.	-3	-2	0
41	There is no point wasting money by setting standards that are better than the bathing standards required.	-4	-4	-1
43	Cost-benefit analysis offers policy makers a way to assess the most objective and efficient means to respond to this challenge.	-1	-1	1

Subjective Compromisers agree with Objective Competitors about statements 11 and 41 that technical and financial agendas must be balanced against environmental agendas, rather than allowing the former to prevail. They argue too much emphasis is placed on the technical and financial elements of environmental management, distorting decision-making (statements 18 and 43). Decisions such as those made in the wastewater planning processes to abandon land-based treatment are seen as cost-cutting at the expense of the environment. Both Subjective Compromisers and Objective Competitors maintain that non-economic considerations such as environmental sustainability should be given equal, if not greater, weight by councils in environmental planning. However, the two factors differ in their view of what counts as valid evidence in planning and decision-making; Subjective Compromisers are more likely to privilege explicitly values-based agendas (statements 13, 18), whereas other factors tend to treat economic issues as objective and value-free.

<i>Table 5: Lay, non-scientific, non-expert inputs are legitimate</i>		F1	F2	F3
1	Those who dispute the scientific evidence are now few and far between.	-3	1	1

10	Even if the water being discharged into the river were technically pure, the discharge would still not be totally acceptable.	3	-2	1
18	There is a general acceptance amongst the Council that personal subjective values are as important as the financial and technical imperatives, or more so.	-3	-2	0
42	Science, not emotional or political reactions, must serve as the foundation for policy decisions.	-4	3	0

Subjective Compromisers maintain that knowledge that is seen as subjective, non-scientific and non-expert is still legitimate. This sets them apart from Objective Competitors, who value objectivity and factual evidence (statements 10, 42). All three factors view Subjective Compromisers’ agendas as subjective, in that they are explicitly informed by personal values and preferences, and are often not well-supported by expert evidence. Subjective Compromisers, themselves, acknowledge their agendas are more likely to be marginalised, but maintain they should be given equal credence. Nevertheless, Subjective Compromisers challenge the science (statement 1) and are unlikely to moderate this subjective aspect of their agendas in order to make them more acceptable to other actors (statement 42).

Respondents on this factor recognised that their agendas were treated less seriously than more factual, objective agendas. As one observed, their agendas were “well thought out and well informed but they often lacked specific technical expertise” (4). As lay citizens they were often “somewhat on the back foot when responding to specialists” (17). On the value of the river to future generations, one respondent characterised this as an “emotional issue, and one that is akin to intuition...but the commissioners were rather dismissive of it” (11). Iwi agendas were particularly notable for not engaging with scientific and technical considerations at all. One Māori respondent argued that Māori should be accorded a “particular status with separate burdens of proof to those standards required for other forms of knowledge” (8). Another respondent defended the focus on values-based agendas, but also felt all actors should “try to provide a reasoned explanation in support of their views and concerns and opinions should be well thought out” (4).

<i>Table 6: All cultural preferences should be taken into account</i>		F1	F2	F3
16	A key challenge is to seek strategies that respect both Māori and European traditions in interpreting, understanding and protecting the natural world.	4	0	3

17	The cultural and spiritual expectations of Pakeha are not written into the Resource Management Act and are therefore totally ignored.	-2	1	-3
----	---	----	---	----

Subjective Compromisers are like Neutral Executives in agreeing that cultural and spiritual preferences, including non-Western knowledge, are important elements in planning and decision-making. Both factors disagree with statement 17, because they believe that the RMA is closely informed by Western individualistic, capitalist values. However, Subjective Compromisers are more likely to disapprove of this dominance, for example, of the emphasis on financial constraints over cultural and spiritual considerations.

Comments from respondents clustering around this factor illustrated their position. One non-Māori respondent maintained that “everyone’s spiritual and cultural views should be given more weight in decision-making” (11). A Māori respondent reflected the common response to statement 17, asserting that “the Resource Management Act is almost entirely based on a western Pakeha conception of environmental values and legal and decision-making structures that denies other cultural traditions” (4). As another Māori respondent observed, “Māori spiritual values reflect a particular relationship with nature that is not taken seriously” (8).

Most Māori and some non-Māori respondents also acknowledged the dominance of Pakeha values in council decision-making. One Māori respondent felt that the RMA “reflects negative or tokenist assumptions about Māori, and massive underlying assumptions in the make-up of the RMA of Pakeha values about decision-making, sustainability, and the environment being best” (15). Māori respondents were notable for commenting on power imbalances and Pakeha dominance in decision-making. Interestingly, some Māori respondents saw statement 17 as reflecting the lack of a coherent set of Pakeha values. One asked, “whose responsibility is it to generate and recognise Pakeha values? Certainly not Māori” (15).

A deliberative compromise-seeking procedural dimension

Subjective Compromisers’ perspective on procedural issues reflects a number of deliberative democratic assumptions about actors’ behaviour²⁷. Subjective

²⁷ See, for example, Bohman & Rehg (1997) and Dryzek (2000) for a discussion of deliberative democracy. Deliberative democracy is discussed more fully in Chapter One and Chapter Six.

Compromisers are deliberative in that they take account of what they perceive to be the public interest and seek compromises between different agendas. They actively pursue ongoing deliberative relationships as a means of gaining a mutual understanding of other actors’ agendas, constraints and imperatives. Subjective Compromisers pragmatically modify their own claims in order to reach agreement on preferred outcomes.

<i>Table 7: Engagement and compromise are worthwhile</i>		F1	F2	F3
22	Participants in wastewater planning who expressed a different point of view to the majority one were sometimes treated as if that were divisive or working against an agreement.	0	3	-2
29	There has been a considerable shift in public opinion since the wastewater scheme’s early days, as a result of increased understanding of the issues and of what the Council is doing.	2	-2	3
36	One positive result of this process is a stronger relationship with the Council.	1	-2	2

Subjective Compromisers view engagement and the maintenance of relationships with other actors as worthwhile if all actors are willing to compromise. When compared with Objective Competitors, actors on the Subjective Compromisers factor were more positive about the two wastewater planning processes and outcomes (statements 22, 29, 36), largely because they were able to improve their understandings of one another’s agendas. This ability to deliberate encouraged them to remain involved and reinforced their perspective towards engagement and compromise. This perspective contrasted with Objective Competitors’ strong negative views of the two processes, and Neutral Executives’ very positive views.

Subjective Compromisers feel an obligation to remain true to their values, but this does not preclude compromises—rather, it obliges them to do what is constructively possible to gain recognition for their agendas. Even where they disagree with decisions and outcomes (as in the two wastewater planning processes), they are likely to remain pragmatically committed to maintaining relationships. As one respondent noted, “those parties who refused to be involved and make a contribution would miss out” (23).

Because Subjective Compromisers are disposed towards compromise and maintaining relationships, they may be more likely to be selected by their own communities to act as representatives for interest groups. In their representative capacity, Subjective

Compromisers are also likely to be selected by councils for formal involvement in working parties such as the Community Liaison Group.

Respondents were certainly aware that engagement carried risks of coercion by dominant actors, but they defended their ongoing engagement and compromise as the most pragmatic course of action. As one respondent argued:

The criticism by some iwi members of co-option to the Councils’ or other actors’ plans just reflects their lack of involvement and understanding of the process. The iwi have taken a particular course to work towards achieving nil discharge. That course is to be involved, rather than to simply demand nil discharge from the outside (8).

Another respondent had been accused of “caving in” (17) when seeking compromises. He said of his iwi that “we’re not totally against a radical approach when it’s about a fundamental issue, but we are practical and pragmatic in our response when possible” (17). A non-Māori respondent acknowledged that actors did “feel an emotional desire to get along, which encourages them to give their consent to a decision” (4). Another respondent related “accusations of selling-out” (15) from within his iwi, but maintained that “it was important for representatives to be well-attached to the process”. Formal involvement in a planning group meant one respondent had “a public role and a responsibility to be moderate in making choices...and had to be seen as credible so couldn’t just insist on the most expensive or desirable option” (24). Another agreed, noting that “you can’t drive the town broke” (4). Thus, Subjective Compromisers were disposed towards consensus and this was reinforced by their positive experiences of the two wastewater processes. Decisions based on such a consensual process were seen as more legitimate and durable than ones that resulted from a competitive, adversarial process.

<i>Table 8: Māori will only invest time in consultation if it is genuinely worthwhile</i>		F1	F2	F3
30	Iwi are very patient. Provided they trust and believe that the Council are moving in the right direction and are going to get there, they are fairly happy.	-1	0	4

Most Pakeha and Māori respondents on the Subjective Compromisers factor responded moderately negatively to statement 30. Subjective Compromisers seek genuine opportunities for deliberation and will remain committed to the process when

that genuineness is demonstrated. Thus, while respondents felt Māori in both planning processes had a consensus-seeking perspective, they were certain Māori would only continue to invest time if they benefited in terms of maintaining relationships and advancing agendas. Respondents recognised that the two councils had undertaken separate formal consultation with local iwi, but they still criticised councils for a lack of open-mindedness. As one Māori respondent noted, “on the surface iwi may appear patient, but there is actually a lot of impatience. They are tremendously patient but they need to see improvements and would see that statement as tokenism” (15).

Statement 30 elicited many additional comments from Māori respondents. One observed that, “while Māori could be very patient, they were also very determined to get the best that they practically can” (12). He described statement 30 as a “1940s view of Māori”, saying that “iwi are not prepared to sit back and be patted on the head” (12). Another saw this statement as reflecting a “condescending attitude by councils” who “[were] likely to do just enough to get the iwi off their backs” (15). A third felt that “iwi have been, and continue to be very patient about things not to their liking. They have been pushing strongly for what they want, but know that they will largely not get it” (17).

Despite mixed views of the process, Māori respondents expressed their strong preference for engagement and compromise. As one noted, “we all understood the RMA process and had a sense of what was possible, and wouldn’t go off the handle about it” (17). He believed council officers had worked to avoid a sense of divisiveness, noting that “they are not stupid and don’t want to polarise things” (17).

<i>Table 9: Citizens should be involved and provide input</i>		F1	F2	F3
2	The continued resistance to the proposal is from a minority of the population who are radicals and extremists.	-4	-4	-2
4	We should not be involving citizens directly in decision making unless they are technically well-informed.	-2	-4	-3
5	Expert bodies or individuals are best suited to determine how, where and under what circumstances resources should be allocated and used.	-3	-2	-1
7	It is quite important to present a reasonably well considered opinion on the wastewater issue. It is going to be criticised, so it has to be well thought out.	4	4	2
28	All parties with a clear interest in the issue needed to be included in the process.	4	3	4
33	Grass roots community participation improves decision-making processes and ensures new voices are heard.	2	1	3

Responses to all of the statements above reflect *all factors’* shared belief that planning and decision-making are improved when citizens are involved and when they seek to provide well-informed input. Citizens have a valuable contribution to make. Importantly, this is also the *only area* in which all factors clearly agree. As the scores on statements 2, 4, 5, 28 and 33 indicate, citizens’ involvement and input are seen as important ingredients, whether in support or opposition, and whether providing lay or expert input. Statement 7 shows that all actors acknowledge that success for their agendas depends on having a well constructed and clearly thought-out argument. Subjective Compromisers would argue that citizens do not need to be experts, but that a sound argument will assist their case.

<i>Table 10: Actors should seek to balance compromise and advocacy</i>		F1	F2	F3
14	Involvement in the consultation process does make you rethink your underlying values. You are forced to see outside your own vision.	3	-1	4
21	Consensus almost always means that the values of dominant majorities have marginalised the concerns of minorities.	0	2	0
26	Participants should leave behind their particular experiences and points of difference in order to aim for unity and a common good.	-2	-3	2
27	You have to moderate your point of view to reach an agreement, and that is a worthwhile process.	2	-2	2
31	People do not necessarily need to agree with the outcome, they only need to consent to it.	-1	-2	2

While the three factors agree that citizens are central to the planning process, they disagree about the relative importance of citizens providing input and exercising advocacy versus seeking understanding and compromise. For Subjective Compromisers, participation requires a balance between the two. Subjective Compromisers feel it is important to be open to other knowledge and agendas (statement 14) and to compromise (statement 27). Compromise and agreement are possible without losing sight of one’s agendas (statement 21). Citizens have a right to be heard and it is essential to allow actors’ individual experiences and points of difference to remain. More than this, Subjective Compromisers and Objective Competitors both see it as their *responsibility* to remain true to their values and preferences. Both factors disagree with statements 26 and 31 that actors should “leave behind” their specific experiences, or simply “consent” to council proposals. As one respondent maintained, “you can’t forget your own experiences; you must hold onto them during the process; that is your duty”. Another noted of their values and

preferences, “that is what makes us human” (15). In contrast, Neutral Executives agree with both statements 26 and 31.

Subjective Compromisers maintain that actors should remain involved, question their own assumptions and be prepared to be persuaded by a better argument. As noted previously, this view is spurred on by their sense of inter-generational responsibility (shared by Objective Competitors) to pursue the best outcome for the future. Thus as one respondent stated, a sound consultative process would be one that “allowed differences to be brought to the table and allowed diversity to work” (15). Respondents recognised the importance of understanding other actors’ constraints, with one observing that “people and groups have a responsibility to try to understand each other and must recognise the practicalities of what is involved in reaching an outcome” (17).

One Māori respondent identified his “responsibility to my iwi to engage in constructive debate because people and groups must understand each other and must recognise the practicalities of what is involved in reaching an outcome” (17). Another maintained that “it was important to be ready to rethink values [since] remaining opposed was an easy way out” (12). By engaging in debate, they believed citizens prevented councils from making unilateral decisions, and secured their future influence. As one respondent argued, “we do need to be ready to compromise, and to be pragmatic about reaching a decision. We need to be ready to work out an agreement, but we also need to ask: How do I get my issues acknowledged in a meaningful way?”(15). Another agreed, noting that “compromise must still allow Māori to aim to achieve their long term goals” (8).

<i>Table 11: Actors should accept and support legitimate council decisions</i>		F1	F2	F3
8	Too much emphasis was being put on consultants pummelling the Council into submission and not enough on what the public wanted.	-2	0	-4
12	The main driving forces behind the decision on the final scheme are price and technical complexity.	0	4	-2
24	The revised wastewater scheme was a case of the Council not liking the outcome of consultation and trying to change it.	-1	1	-4

Subjective Compromisers were mildly supportive of the two councils when responding to statements that were critical of the processes. They did not agree that their councils were led by consultants (statement 8) or unreasonably attending to cost considerations (statement 12) or overly predetermined or manipulated (statement 24). In line with their

interview responses (below), this demonstrated their relatively positive experiences and their belief that actors should be pragmatic in accepting and supporting decisions where they had an opportunity to exercise some influence. This contrasted with Objective Competitors' quite negative experiences (discussed later in this chapter).

Respondents on the Subjective Compromisers factor saw the final decisions as fair and the best that could be achieved. They agreed that financial and technical imperatives had dominated the final decisions. However, as one respondent observed, this was a "pragmatic response to a number of important drivers" (4). Another thought that "the Council would have liked to go with a land-based option, but their choices were limited by financial and technical constraints" (12). Respondents accepted that councils had the legitimate right to make the final decisions, although where respondents disagreed, they had also sought to "challenge the experts' point of view and to substantiate that challenge" (17).

Overall, Subjective Compromisers were positive about the planning processes and their participation. These positive experiences had reinforced their perspective towards compromise and their sense of responsibility to support the final decisions. A number of respondents had maintained ongoing involvement in monitoring and implementation of schemes. While these actors had very little success for their agendas in opposition to river/ocean discharge, and were disappointed at their limited influence, nevertheless they recognised the outcome as the best they could achieve.

Factor Two: Objective Competitors

Objective Competitors have a competitive perspective towards planning processes. They have relatively fixed preferences and are less likely than Subjective Compromisers to alter their agendas after exposure to other agendas and imperatives. They take a relatively limited and instrumental interest in ongoing engagement with other actors. Whereas Subjective Compromisers pursue compromise and see relationships as having intrinsic value, Objective Competitors are suspicious of compromises and see engagement primarily as a means of pursuing their agendas. In general, Objective Competitors have quite an adversarial and competitive approach. They have a strong preference for agendas expressed in objective, factual terms. They avoid subjective values-based arguments and prefer expert evidence, which they equate with neutrality and legitimacy.

Seven respondents loaded on the Objective Competitors factor. Six were citizens; five from the Palmerston North area, the sixth from Wanganui. The seventh was a councillor from Wanganui. None identified as Māori. Six, including the councillor, were residents in downstream river or coastal communities that were receiving environments for wastewater discharge. The seventh was a Palmerston North resident and member of an interest group opposing river discharge. Thus, all seven were in situations where they would feel the negative impact of the Council’s proposed ongoing river discharge, and all opposed to aspects of the wastewater schemes. All six citizens were active opponents.

All seven respondents were involved in wider community consultation on the two planning processes as submission makers, one as councillor, and one as a formal objector to a resource consent decision²⁸. One respondent had earlier withdrawn from membership of the Wanganui District Council’s appointed planning group because he saw the process as biased and unfair. He felt that “there was a disparity between the lack of recognition of citizens [who participated] and the heavy demand on their time and energy, compared with the support and status of councillors and various paid staff and other professionals” (2). None of the other five citizens had formal involvement in council and council-sponsored groups, although such involvement may have been possible, had they sought it. In contrast, all respondents on the Subjective Compromisers factor had opportunities for ongoing close involvement with council actors, and as a result, had a greater sense that they were exercising some influence over processes and outcomes.

Respondents on the Objective Competitors factor generally had a different perception of the two planning processes when compared to Subjective Compromisers. Most Objective Competitors respondents had quite negative experiences, which appeared to strongly reinforce their perspective. In contrast, Subjective Compromisers had quite positive experiences and this had reinforced their more deliberative perspective. These different perceptions could be partly explained by respondents’ different perspectives, and partly by their contrasting opportunities to participate. For respondents on the Subjective Compromisers factor, working party membership had afforded them a level of engagement and input that was not available to respondents on the Objective Competitors factor (although for at least one respondent, this had been by choice). All

²⁸ Public submissions are called for and made at specified points in the resource consent process, prior to decisions on consents. Formal objections are lodged after consent decisions have been made and relate directly to form and/or substance of the decision.

six citizens on the Objective Competitors factor had recounted negative experiences of the planning processes, including a sense of exclusion and bias. All six continued to strongly oppose the final decisions. The seventh, a Wanganui District Councillor, was notable for his strong support for citizens opposing the final scheme, and for the importance of citizens voicing their opposition.

Only one respondent (No.24) loaded on both the Subjective Compromisers and Objective Competitors factors. This respondent was a Wanganui citizen acting as representative for a local environmental watchdog group. As a respondent loading on the Objective Competitors factor, he had reflected in interviews on the conundrum of holding true to his views and his sense that his group's position was marginalised, while acknowledging that he risked co-option by engaging. As a respondent loading on the Subjective Compromisers factor, he clearly understood the importance of remaining engaged in order to exercise influence over processes and outcomes. Over time, he had become more resigned – arguably accepting – of the importance of engagement, and more willing to moderate the stridency of his opposition.

Five of the seven respondents (all citizens) were involved in the Palmerston North planning process. Their negative experiences tallied with the assessment in Chapter Four of that process as less inclusive and deliberative than the Wanganui process. As discussed previously, actors' experiences of the particular setting and their perspective on planning and decision-making in general are likely to be mutually reinforcing. This appeared to be so for Objective Competitors respondents. This group of citizens had clearly resisted any form of co-option to councils' agendas, both because they felt marginalised by the process and lack of success, and because their inclination was towards an adversarial relationship. The one councillor on this factor was sympathetic to that view.

An objective, factual epistemological dimension

As demonstrated below, Objective Competitors favour objectivity in planning and decision-making. They equate objectivity with neutrality and lack of bias, and do not approve of actors presenting agendas that are openly subjective and self-regarding. Objective Competitors believe debates should be settled with reference to factual, expert evidence, and that it is often possible to establish a single, correct, objective answer to environmental problems, because solutions are fundamentally technical rather than values-based.

Objective Competitors’ agendas generally concentrate on quantifiable matters such as the risks associated with high levels of nutrients and phosphorus in waterways, the effects of discharge on fish populations, and the effectiveness of various treatment solutions. Objective Competitors gather expert evidence to challenge other technical arguments. They avoid issues such as cultural and spiritual concerns that they perceive as being subjective, intangible, and non-scientific. Their sense of the rightness and factual correctness of their claims may lead Objective Competitors to eschew compromises and to seek to prove their arguments correct, even where this risks exacerbating conflicts.

<i>Table 12: Decisions should be based on factual evidence</i>		F1	F2	F3
10	Even if the water being discharged into the river were technically pure, the discharge would still not be totally acceptable.	3	-2	1
42	Science, not emotional or political reactions, must serve as the foundation for policy decisions.	-4	3	0

Objective Competitors agree strongly with statement 42 on the importance of scientific evidence as the basis of decision-making. In contrast to Subjective Compromisers, they avoid reference to issues that they view as being subjective and value-based. Instead, they seek to appear as objective, expertly informed and factual as possible. Reflecting their scoring of statement 10, Objective Competitors respondents were particularly dismissive of claims for which little, if any, scientific support was provided. These included Māori spiritual concerns about wastewater, and mitigating solutions such as Palmerston North’s rock passage and wetlands, for which the Council’s consultants had stated there was no scientific justification (submission by Montgomery Watson consultants, quoted in PNCC, 2001b).

<i>Table 13: An environmental conservationist agenda</i>		F1	F2	F3
11	While economic growth has positive benefits for the community, clearly conservation has not been afforded the value it should have.	3	2	0
38	The larger the human economy becomes, the more nature suffers.	2	4	0
39	Sewage volumes should be reduced by reducing the community’s use of water.	3	3	-2
40	Technology and chemicals pose relatively low risks and these risks are controllable through technology.	-2	-3	0
41	There is no point wasting money by setting standards that are better than the bathing standards required.	-4	-4	-1

As seen in their similar scores on these statements, Objective Competitors and Subjective Compromisers share an agenda of protecting the natural environment from the impact of human activities such as pollution, consumption and growth. They want to conserve and enhance the environment for its own value as well as for human use, and for future generations. However, the difference between the two factors is evident in how they present this agenda. Objective Competitors seek to *appear* as objective and factual as possible in support of their environmental conservationist agenda, whereas Subjective Compromisers are likely to emphasise values-based agendas.

<i>Table 14: Economic agendas should not be privileged</i>		F1	F2	F3
11	While economic growth has positive benefits for the community, clearly conservation has not been afforded the value it should have.	3	2	0
12	The main driving forces behind the decision on the final scheme are price and technical complexity.	0	4	-2
18	There is a general acceptance amongst the Council that personal subjective values are as important as the financial and technical imperatives, or more so.	-3	-2	0
23	I am suspicious of the role that money can play in corrupting decision making processes.	0	2	-3
41	There is no point wasting money by setting standards that are better than the bathing standards required.	-4	-4	-1
43	Cost-benefit analysis offers policy makers a way to assess the most objective and efficient means to respond to this challenge.	-1	-1	1

As with Subjective Compromisers, Objective Competitors believe environmental and economic agendas must be balanced against one another (statements 11, 41). Both believe that financial considerations and a narrow economic analysis are frequently privileged in decision-making at the expense of the best environmental outcomes, which require a more holistic approach to problems (statements 11, 12, 18, 43). However, Objective Competitors respondents see this privileging as proof of bias and predetermination. Both factors would support more council expenditure on matters such as wastewater treatment if it led to more environmentally sustainable outcomes (statements 12, 41).

Respondents on the Objective Competitors and Subjective Compromisers perspectives all supported land-based schemes and accepted there would be substantial additional costs in their preferred options. However, Objective Competitors also believed that the two councils were biased and over-emphasised cost considerations. As one

respondent observed, “the focus on costs was an indictment of the council’s thought processes and its over-emphasis on economics” (5). Comments such as this reflected their overall negative experiences of the planning processes as privileging expert views and council agendas, and marginalising their own agendas.

<i>Table 15: Actors and agendas should be objective</i>		F1	F2	F3
1	Those who dispute the scientific evidence are now few and far between.	-3	1	1
10	Even if the water being discharged into the river were technically pure, the discharge would still not be totally acceptable.	3	-2	1
16	A key challenge is to seek strategies that respect both Māori and European traditions in interpreting, understanding and protecting the natural world.	4	0	3
42	Science, not emotional or political reactions, must serve as the foundation for policy decisions.	-4	3	0

As seen in scores on statements 1 and 42, Objective Competitors believe all actors should behave objectively, accepting and presenting factual evidence and arguments. They reject claims that lack proof (statement 10) and will discount claims made on the basis of culture or tradition (statement 16). They take care to frame their agendas in terms which they see as objective, focusing on elements such as measurable physical effects, which they see as the appropriate basis for planning and decision-making. Maintaining an *appearance* of objectivity is also important because Objective Competitors believe that decision-makers discount those agendas and actors that appear subjective, overly emotive or partisan.

Nevertheless, Objective Competitors respondents’ agendas did sometimes extend to less easily provable propositions such as those based on “common sense” (7) or “local knowledge” (5). In those cases where their agendas might be regarded as lacking objectivity, they sought to bolster their arguments with technical evidence. For example, one respondent on the Objective Competitors factor provided evidence to support his claim that it was “well known that locally, native fish species had been depleted by discharges” (5). This claim became the subject of a technical debate at the resource consent hearing, because hearing commissioners and council actors all sought scientific data and were inclined to discount any observations of local conservationists that lacked supporting documented evidence.

Interestingly, Objective Competitors privilege objective facts, but they also assign a higher status to some normative positions than to others. For example, one respondent distinguished between views that were “widely held and most people would agree with” (9), and other more culturally specific arguments. As another respondent put it, “a considered set of values has a place in decision-making, whereas an unstable emotional response does not” (6). The position of Māori on the mixing of faeces and water was seen by these respondents as subjective, whereas “responsibility for clean water for future generations” was seen as “considered and responsible” (6). Another argued that “the average citizen’s common sense position on rates, public services and so on, is sometimes as valuable as technical know how” (7). Still another maintained that “experts are not always right, but methods such as scientific enquiry, and cost-benefit analysis provided the best starting point for decision-making” (3).

These respondents were generally more convinced of the correctness and evidential basis for their arguments than were Subjective Compromisers. They were more inclined to defend their positions rather than seek compromises. For example, one respondent asserted that “the best environmental outcome should be the basis of scientific decisions on water quality and [the] wastewater scheme” (9). This position was seen by that respondent as factually correct and unchallengeable because it was empirically based. These actors presented their agendas with conviction and sometimes defended them in a quite adversarial, perhaps intransigent manner that reflected their strong sense of rightness. In contrast, Subjective Compromisers were much more likely to assert that actors have multiple claims which may be equally valid.

A competitive procedural dimension

Objective Competitors have relatively fixed agendas that are more immune to change through exposure to alternative arguments than those of Subjective Compromisers. As will be seen in statement scores and interview responses, Objective Competitors have a very instrumental approach to engagement with other actors, in that they seek competitive advantage from their interactions and place limited value on the process itself. Objective Competitors are focused on advancing their agendas, and are less likely to compromise than some other actors. This perspective is allied with a strong sense of their duty to be a vigorous advocate, and where necessary, an adversarial opponent. In contrast to Subjective Compromisers, Objective Competitors are unlikely to support decisions that do not result in significant gains for their agendas.

This perspective was reinforced by these actors’ strong negative perceptions of the two planning processes. Respondents on this factor continued to oppose both of the processes and decisions, maintaining that the two councils were biased against land-based schemes. While it was not clear the six citizen-respondents had any fewer opportunities to provide input than other citizens, they certainly had a sense of exclusion from the processes and some grounds for their suspicions of predetermination, and this had reinforced their negative views.

Objective Competitors’ perspective on procedural issues can be described with reference to the key assumptions of social choice theory (Riker, 1982). This is addressed in more detail in Chapter Six, but a brief introductory description is useful here. Essentially, social choice theorists argue that majoritarian democratic processes fail because actors have fixed, predetermined preferences that are largely immune to change through deliberation. Actors (for example, voters) are instrumental in pursuing private advantage, and this behaviour affects the aggregated voting or decision-making process. Social choice theory’s scepticism about democracy leads to arguments for more competitive bargaining processes and more reliance on market mechanisms, neither of which relies on actors’ attention to the public interest (Riker, 1982). The significance of these behavioural assumptions is that they run counter to deliberative democratic assumptions embodied in the qualities for effective integration of citizens’ agendas, as set out in Chapter One. A central assumption of deliberative democracy is that actors’ preferences are open to change if they have a meaningful opportunity to deliberate and gain an understanding of other actors’ agendas.

<i>Table 16: Planning and decision-making are competitive and adversarial activities</i>		F1	F2	F3
14	Involvement in the consultation process does make you rethink your underlying values. You are forced to see outside your own vision.	3	-1	4
21	Consensus almost always means that the values of dominant majorities have marginalised the concerns of minorities.	0	2	0
26	Participants should leave behind their particular experiences and points of difference in order to aim for unity and a common good.	-2	-3	2
27	You have to moderate your point of view to reach an agreement, and that is a worthwhile process.	2	-2	2
31	People do not necessarily need to agree with the outcome, they only need to consent to it.	-1	-2	2

Objective Competitors tend to see planning and decision-making as contests between largely predetermined agendas, whereas Subjective Compromisers see them as opportunities for engagement and compromise. Objective Competitors and Subjective Compromisers do agree, however, that the main purpose of engagement is to secure the best outcome for their agendas. It is significant that neither factor agreed with statements 26 and 31, nor would they simply give their consent to a decision which they disagree with or which compromises their beliefs. Both factors recognise that planning processes are often competitive; however, they have contrasting views on what all of this means in practice. Objective Competitors are less likely to be swayed by the process (statement 14) or to make accommodations or compromises (statement 27) because this means a dilution of their agendas. Instead, they will challenge opposing actors and agendas, reflecting their strong sense of obligation to maintain their opposition when they disagree with proposals and decisions.

This sense of obligation came through clearly from respondents, who emphasised their responsibility to do their best for their families and for other citizens and future generations. One described himself as “a guardian of the environment” (9), while another said that “we are the vanguard for an underrepresented point of view” (7). Following the granting of resource consents, these actors continued to oppose the final schemes rather than be involved with other stakeholders in their development, even though this meant losing further opportunities for input into their implementation.

<i>Table 17: Engagement and compromise carry significant risks</i>		F1	F2	F3
29	There has been a considerable shift in public opinion since the wastewater scheme’s early days, as a result of increased understanding of the issues and of what the Council is doing.	2	-2	3
35	The level of opposition to the proposal is very low indeed, and that reflects the merits of the scheme.	0	-3	2
36	One positive result of this process is a stronger relationship with the Council.	1	-2	2
37	The resource consent applications are not only the product of an extensive consultative process, but also reflect total community consensus.	-3	-3	-1

Objective Competitors tend to see more risks than benefits in engagement and compromise. This perspective and their negative experiences of the planning processes had been mutually reinforcing, spurring their ongoing opposition. Respondents were suspicious of councils’ motives and felt that opposing and minority viewpoints (such as theirs) were marginalised while other agendas were privileged

(statement 35, 37). As one respondent exclaimed about statement 35 “I can’t believe that anyone would say this. I would love to know who it was!” (7). Citizen-respondents continued to feel they had been treated unjustly by the two councils who had publicly downplayed any reports of opposition (statements 29, 37), and this actually contributed to their ongoing opposition.

<i>Table 18: Citizens are often marginalised in decision-making</i>		F1	F2	F3
3	Technical, financial and legal experts are able to present their viewpoints as ‘objective’ factual evidence that cannot be challenged, while using it in support of a particular preferred outcome.	1	1	-2
6	There was a bias in the consultation towards the more literate members of the public, and towards those who felt comfortable making a written submission.	1	2	-3
12	The main driving forces behind the decision on the final scheme are price and technical complexity.	0	4	-2
22	Participants in wastewater planning who expressed a different point of view to the majority one were sometimes treated as if that were divisive or working against an agreement.	0	3	-2

Objective Competitors are sceptical about consultation because they believe the moderation of viewpoints leads to a loss of ground in a competitive process. These respondents felt the two councils had marginalised opposing actors (statement 22). The councils had also privileged actors who had more technical expertise or planning experience (statements 3, 6) and overly favoured financial and technical arguments (statement 12). While these respondents accepted that councillors would retain final decision-making authority, they believed citizens should have some influence over substantive decisions and outcomes. Objective Competitors believe public participation should be encouraged, and their input should be received with an open mind and without predetermination. This view of citizens’ roles was an important point of difference with the third factor, Neutral Executives.

Interview comments showed that these respondents’ expectations of influence in the two planning processes had been disappointed by councils which they saw as having “preordained conclusions” (2). This predetermination was most notable in relation to the exclusion of land-based options. Respondents felt like a minority when the initial high public support for a land-based option did not translate into wide formal opposition to the final applications. As one respondent noted, “those remaining opponents felt marginalised by the council’s treatment of them” (7). Some respondents also chose not

to become involved in the groups tasked with implementation of schemes, feeling that “membership would simply let the more powerful players dominate the less powerful” (7).

Respondents were very suspicious of council bias. Consultation, according to one respondent, was “a sham, too late, and the decision was already made...councillors were just there because they were required by the RMA to be there” (7). Respondents felt their efforts to engage with the process and with other actors were foiled by councils who saw them as disruptive and divisive. Little regard was given to their submissions, whereas those from organisations such as the Department of Conservation were seen as being closely attended to. One respondent characterised the council’s stance thus: “a submission from Mr Smith, Such-and-Such Road, Anytown—so what?” (6), observing that “consultation felt like us versus the Council administration and elected members in general” (6).

Respondents also felt that council officers were able to “make the issues seem how they want it to be” (7) in support of their particular agendas. Officers “control[ed] the dissemination of information. For example, we could not trust the Council to report accurately or to be trusted that the water is actually as pure as they claim it to be” (9). Councillors and officers were seen as privileging expert evidence, particularly from their own hired consultants, with one respondent maintaining that “what is factual according to the consultants changes over time” (6).

<i>Table 19: Māori agendas were privileged</i>		F1	F2	F3
16	A key challenge is to seek strategies that respect both Māori and European traditions in interpreting, understanding and protecting the natural world.	4	0	3
17	The cultural and spiritual expectations of Pakeha are not written into the Resource Management Act and are therefore totally ignored.	-2	1	-3

This group of respondents believed Pakeha values had been marginalised and councils had systematically privileged iwi agendas in order to win iwi support. This strategy had been successful, since, as one respondent maintained, “Māori had been co-opted by council interests, with the result that Pakeha opponents had lost a partner in opposition” (9). Another respondent saw iwi and councils as “colluding” (7) while a third maintained that “money had corrupt[ed] decision making processes, especially the

bribes given to iwi during consultation" (6). This perception of bias further contributed to respondents' negative perception of the planning processes.

Overall, these respondents' negative experiences of the two planning processes clearly reinforced their perspective. Had they perceived these processes as being more deliberative and inclusive, these actors would probably have been less inclined to suspect the councils of bias. Respondents' suspicions had reinforced their belief that engagement and compromises would not help their agendas. When respondents did seek to engage with other actors, their approach was quite competitive and less focused on relationships or compromise than Subjective Compromisers. Respondents felt the two councils had privileged some actors and agendas, and marginalised or excluded others. However, they had also chosen to adopt an adversarial, and at times, quite intransigent perspective. Thus, these actors' existing perspectives and their negative experiences proved mutually reinforcing. However, it was not clear whether perspectives or experiences were more influential or causal, and this issue is discussed further in Chapter Seven.

Factor Three: Neutral Executives

Neutral Executives see neutrality as a very important attribute of councillors who have political authority, and officers who have administrative authority. They consider that all council actors should maintain an open-minded stance and remain free from bias and predetermination during planning and decision-making, but especially during public consultation. Neutral Executives also have a preference for objective, factual, evidence-based information in decision-making. Thus, neutrality and objectivity are seen as critically important qualities for council actors.

As will be seen in statement scores and interview responses, Neutral Executives emphasise the 'executive' activities of making and implementing decisions, ahead of public participation and advocacy, which are the priority of the other two factors. They see decision-making, achieving outcomes, and fulfilling councils' various statutory obligations as more important than ensuring that citizens participate meaningfully, or that compromise or consensus are achieved. This does not mean Neutral Executives ignore public participation, but their focus is generally on practical constraints such as timeframes and financial, technical and political considerations.

As with other factors, the label for this factor represents key elements of that group of actors' *own* perspectives. In this chapter I do not offer any critique of those perspectives. Thus Neutral Executives reveal a positivist epistemological dimension that emphasises *neutrality* towards types of knowledge and agendas, particularly for council actors. They also have a perspective that emphasises the *execution* of planning and decision-making functions. Councillors are the “political executive” with elected authority, while officers are the “bureaucratic executive” (Heywood, 2002:363) that has delegated authority from the chief executive down. It does not necessarily follow that Neutral Executives will be council actors themselves since any actors could, potentially, adopt this perspective.

Thirteen respondents loaded on the Neutral Executives factor. The most notable feature of this group was the predominance of council actors among respondents. All of the surveyed councillors and officers from the two planning processes were grouped on this factor. Five respondents were councillors and five were council officers while only three were citizens. Respondents were fairly evenly split between Wanganui and Palmerston North. This grouping of councillors and officers indicated a strong link between these actors' preferences and their institutional location. By clustering together on this factor this group demonstrated that, in terms of the issues under study, they have more in common with each other than with other actors, and more similarities than differences among themselves.

Four respondents (Nos. 8, 13, 17, 22) loaded on both Subjective Compromisers and Neutral Executors factors. Two were citizens acting as representatives on iwi organisations (one each from Palmerston North and Wanganui). A third was a citizen serving as a downstream community board member. The fourth was a Palmerston North city councillor with a reputation for championing citizens' ‘grassroots’ interests. These mixed loadings emphasised the two factors' shared pragmatic interest in commitment and engagement, compromise and achieving outcomes. As noted, one other respondent on the Subjective Compromisers factor was also a council iwi liaison officer who clearly identified very closely with Maori citizens' concerns (this respondent did *not* load on the Neutral Executives factor). Thus, some councillors and council officers could be characterised as identifying very closely with citizens' interests, while some citizens identified similarly closely with council objectives.

Only one respondent (No.3) loaded on both the Objective Competitors and Neutral Executors factors. He was a Wanganui district councillor. Those interview comments

that most distinguished him from other respondents on the Neutral Executives factor concerned his support for more intransigent citizens’ positions and his view that citizens’ groups should try to bargain from a position of strength. This view was in keeping with his loading on the Objective Competitors factor. He also supported the Neutral Executives position that councils should retain final decision-making authority. This acceptance of council decision-making authority was an element in both the Objective Competitors and Neutral Executives factors, albeit more conditional among Objective Competitors.

A neutral open-minded epistemological dimension

Neutral Executives adopt a neutral and open-minded perspective towards all types of knowledge and agendas. They believe council actors should definitely maintain a careful public *appearance* of neutrality about substantive issues such as on the choice of treatment solutions or the importance of preventing pollution. Council actors should also seek to actually *be* neutral and open-minded, particularly during the public consultation process. Council actors should acknowledge all inputs as legitimate elements to be taken into account. They should avoid any perception of bias or privilege. This contrasts strongly with the two citizen-dominated factors that had strong and explicit views on many substantive issues.

<i>Table 20: Neutral and open-minded on substantive issues</i>		F1	F2	F3
10	Even if the water being discharged into the river were technically pure, the discharge would still not be totally acceptable.	3	-2	1
11	While economic growth has positive benefits for the community, clearly conservation has not been afforded the value it should have.	3	2	0
38	The larger the human economy becomes, the more nature suffers.	2	4	0
40	Technology and chemicals pose relatively low risks and these risks are controllable through technology.	-2	-3	0
41	There is no point wasting money by setting standards that are better than the bathing standards required.	-4	-4	-1
42	Science, not emotional or political reactions, must serve as the foundation for policy decisions.	-4	3	0

The significance of Neutral Executives’ scoring of these statements is evident when contrasted with other factors’ scores. Neutral Executives score far more neutrally than other factors on statements on substantive elements of the wastewater projects and

environmental issues in general. Whereas other factors form clear views on substantive issues, Neutral Executives avoid expressing any strong opinions because they believe it is important that council actors maintain a public appearance of neutrality and open-mindedness. This appearance of neutrality is an important source of public confidence and legitimacy for council actors. Neutral Executives also downplay any link between council authority and the privileging of particular types of knowledge and agendas.

<i>Table 21: Neutral on different types of knowledge and agendas</i>		F1	F2	F3
15	Sometimes people’s intuition is more important than a lot of technical know-how on issues.	1	0	0
18	There is a general acceptance amongst the Council that personal subjective values are as important as the financial and technical imperatives, or more so.	-3	-2	0
42	Science, not emotional or political reactions, must serve as the foundation for policy decisions.	-4	3	0
43	Cost-benefit analysis offers policy makers a way to assess the most objective and efficient means to respond to this challenge.	-1	-1	1

Neutral Executives also adopt a neutral stance on the weighting of different types of knowledge and agendas. They acknowledge the legitimacy of more subjective inputs, maintaining for example, that it is important to respect the view that wastewater is not entirely acceptable in the river or ocean, however technically well treated or undetectable. Scores on all four statements above demonstrate that Neutral Executives are careful to avoid privileging any particular type of knowledge, input or agenda.

Comments from Neutral Executives respondents supported this view on the legitimacy of more subjective agendas. One observed that “a trade-off or balance is often possible between subjective viewpoints and technical advice” (3). Another acknowledged that “people will always know what wastewater includes, even if it is purified” (14). A third agreed that “there was a widely held view that it will still be wastewater, no matter how much you clean it” (10).

In reality, however, Neutral Executives see a significant tension, between a council’s neutral acknowledgement of all inputs and the need to make decisions and take actions. While they respect all inputs, Neutral Executives feel citizens’ input is actually most effective when, as one respondent put it, “submissions are carefully considered and factual” (10) and therefore, amenable to use in decision-making. As one

respondent observed, “public input is welcome so long as it is workable” (20). Where subjective inputs clash with objective evidence, Neutral Executives expect citizens to accept the more provable arguments, and to support decisions based on that evidence. Another respondent maintained that “science should be the foundation for decision-making, although values and emotions might subsequently sway decisions” (1). Another observed that “public input tended to be emotional and political, but decisions should be based on a serious dose of science even while they take account of public concerns” (20). Another noted that “while compromises were made, the data and hard information at the end of the process did largely override values in the final decision” (10). Yet another argued that, “expert advice was the best place to begin even if the experts were not always right” (3). For Neutral Executives respondents, primacy should typically be given to expert input over public input.

<i>Table 22: Recognise Māori inputs as legitimate</i>		F1	F2	F3
16	A key challenge is to seek strategies that respect both Māori and European traditions in interpreting, understanding and protecting the natural world.	4	0	3

Neutral Executives agree that Māori cultural and spiritual knowledge should be treated as legitimate inputs despite regarding them as subjective. They accept that councils have a responsibility to seek Māori input and take it into account. Whereas other citizens’ more subjective agendas tend to be viewed as useful only if they add value to more objective arguments, Neutral Executives think councils have a responsibility to attend closely to Māori input, even if it is based on cultural values. This probably reflects councils’ statutory obligations to take account of tangata whenua input.

An executive decision-making procedural dimension

Although Neutral Executives are carefully neutral on substantive issues, they have strong views on most procedural issues, including actors’ roles and responsibilities. Neutral Executives agree with other factors that officers and councillors should be neutral and open-minded, particularly during public consultation where legitimacy depends on avoiding any suggestion of bias. However, as the scores and comments below indicate, there is a key point of difference between the factors. Essentially, Neutral Executives think councillors should retain decision-making independence rather than share it with other actors. This is not surprising, given the predominance of council actors among respondents. However, Neutral Executors also maintain that citizens should be prepared to accept councils’ decision-making authority regardless of

their substantive disagreements. This is more contentious, as other factors do not readily accept that this should always be so.

<i>Table 23: Strong views on procedural issues</i>		F1	F2	F3
3	Technical, financial and legal experts are able to present their viewpoints as 'objective' factual evidence that cannot be challenged, while using it in support of a particular preferred outcome.	1	2	-2
6	There was a bias in the consultation towards the more literate members of the public, and towards those who felt comfortable making a written submission.	1	2	-3
8	Too much emphasis was being put on consultants pummelling the Council into submission and not enough on what the public wanted.	-2	0	-4
12	The main driving forces behind the decision on the final scheme are price and technical complexity.	0	4	-2
22	Participants in wastewater planning who expressed a different point of view to the majority one were sometimes treated as if that were divisive or working against an agreement.	0	3	-2
23	I am suspicious of the role that money can play in corrupting decision making processes.	0	2	-3
24	The revised wastewater scheme was a case of the Council not liking the outcome of consultation and trying to change it.	-1	1	-4
25	The Council officers have been pushing a particular agenda.	0	0	-4

One striking difference between Neutral Executives and other factors is that Neutral Executives offer strong opinions on statements about procedural issues, but mostly neutral responses to statements on substantive issues. This reverses the position of the two citizen-dominated factors, both of which tend towards neutrality on procedural issues, but hold strong substantive views. Not surprisingly, Neutral Executives strongly rejected any suggestion that council actors in the two wastewater processes were biased or they privileged particular types of knowledge or agendas (all statements). They maintain council actors should avoid appearing to exercise any influence over other actors during public consultation, and councillors should only make decisions once consultation is completed.

Interview comments illustrated a point that was not so evident from statement scores. Respondents acknowledged that while council actors sought to appear neutral and open-minded, they often actually held strong personal views. Councillors saw it as important to appear unbiased during consultation, in order to preserve the integrity and

legitimacy of the process. As one councillor respondent noted, “councillors parked their views aside, but their personal views were still very important as a reference point and way of understanding other views” (10). Another agreed that “councillors will bring their personal judgements to bear once consultation has finished” (18). These statements illustrate the point that Objective Competitors see the *appearance* of council neutrality as critical to citizens’ sense of the legitimacy of planning and decision-making. However, Objective Competitors may also acknowledge that council actors do have predetermined preferences that prevent them from being fully neutral.

While most respondents on the Neutral Executives factor were quick to defend the two councils against criticisms of bias, some admitted that those criticisms had some validity. One acknowledged that “the Council did manipulate the consultation process to try to move the public away from the land-based option” (22). Another observed that “there are a significant number of councillors and their supporters who want economic benefits to be treated as the first priority. You’ll never change their views even though they won’t admit them publicly” (13).

<i>Table 24: Citizens should compromise and accept decisions</i>		F1	F2	F3
14	Involvement in the consultation process does make you rethink your underlying values. You are forced to see outside your own vision.	3	-1	4
26	Participants should leave behind their particular experiences and points of difference in order to aim for unity and a common good.	-2	-3	2
27	You have to moderate your point of view to reach an agreement, and that is a worthwhile process.	2	-2	2
31	People do not necessarily need to agree with the outcome, they only need to consent to it.	-1	-2	2

Neutral Executives believe citizens should be prepared to compromise and revisit their agendas, and to accept final decisions whether or not they agree with them (statements 14, 26, 27). On this issue, Neutral Executives go further than other factors in maintaining citizens should be prepared to consent to decisions, whether or not they agree with them (statement 31). All three factors agree that citizens have a responsibility to provide input, listen, and become informed. Neutral Executives and Subjective Compromisers also agree that citizens should seek compromises.

Ultimately however, Neutral Executives believe decision-making should take priority over reaching a compromise, which in turn has priority over ensuring meaningful public

participation. Compromise and meaningful public participation are desirable, and often enhance decision-making, but decision-making must often proceed in their absence. As one respondent noted “all parties that are involved need to be aware that they are just one of a number of groups. They should accept the decision-making process” (20). Another maintained that “responsible citizens are those who are prepared to be realistic in reaching a compromise, because the problem doesn’t go away” (10). Nevertheless, respondents also acknowledged that citizens would not always be able or prepared to reach agreement. As one noted “it is entirely valid to resist a proposal, this does not make citizens radicals or extremists” (14). The point for Neutral Executives is that decision-making should proceed, unimpeded, after public input has been taken into account.

This emphasis on decision-making had created significant tensions in the two planning processes that respondents (mostly council actors) did not seem to adequately acknowledge. Maintaining an appearance of council neutrality during consultation had raised citizens’ expectations of influence. Yet the two councils subsequently limited public input on land-based options and, in Palmerston North in particular, those limitations were widely opposed. These limitations reflected the Neutral Executives view that citizens should be prepared to put aside their own agendas and accept compromises in order to facilitate decision-making.

<i>Table 25: Citizens’ expectations of influence must be managed</i>		F1	F2	F3
32	The more that a group felt that they were heard, the more they were likely to think that they were having an influence on the decision.	1	2	3

Neutral Executives acknowledge that public expectations of influence can become over-inflated, but feel that public participation should not displace or unreasonably constrain council decision-making. Respondents saw the need for councils to retain authority and for citizens to accept compromises as issues of political reality. One observed that “iwi had probably got a poor deal in the end. They expected to have a say, but would not have any real, effective redress if the Council decided to simply discharge to water and to leave it at that for 25 years or even as long as possible” (14). Another noted that “political decisions may yet overturn obligations such as wetlands...this could be seen as a breach of public trust but it is Council’s responsibility to lead and to make decisions” (13). These comments did not indicate that Neutral Executors saw political decision-making as entirely autonomous; rather, that the

political reality was that consultation would not always lead to decisions actors agreed with, and decisions were often required in the absence of agreement.

Nevertheless, Neutral Executives also acknowledged that public involvement was valuable. The interview data indicates that these respondents believe increasing citizens’ knowledge and understanding encourages compromise and can lessen conflict. As one respondent observed, “well-informed citizens were better able to understand which aspects of the scheme were tradable or negotiable...Consultation moved some objectors away from formal opposition” (10). Another maintained that citizens who gained an understanding took a “more moderate, engaged approach to issues such as costs and technical constraints, rather than being idealistic” (20). A third respondent noted that “time is a key issue here. You can’t rush the process of reaching understanding. Patience is of the essence” (18).

<i>Table 26: Council consultation was successful</i>		F1	F2	F3
33	Grass roots community participation improves decision-making processes and ensures new voices are heard.	2	1	3
35	The level of opposition to the proposal is very low indeed, and that reflects the merits of the scheme.	0	-3	2
36	One positive result of this process is a stronger relationship with the Council.	1	-2	2

These respondents had a very positive overall assessment of the two councils’ performances. This was probably not surprising, given that these respondents were all council actors, but it contrasted strongly with Objective Competitors’ views on the same processes. Neutral Executives respondents felt consultation had provided opportunities for actors to gain understanding and seek agreement, and it had strengthened council-citizen relations. One respondent observed that groups in Wanganui had been “poles apart” at the start, but that the “heat had eventually gone out of the issue because of the Council’s real, genuine effort to consult” (18). A Palmerston North council officer described the Council’s consultation as “simply superb” (21) because he saw it as providing extensive opportunities for public input. As noted, while this positive view was not surprising, it was significant that respondents continued to praise and defend the councils’ consultative practices even while some other actors were very critical of them. There was a considerable gap between council and some public perceptions of the quality of planning and decision-making.

In summary, one important characteristic of the Neutral Executives factor was that most respondents were councillors and officers. This factor also held quite distinct perspectives, particularly on issues of actors' roles and responsibilities. However, while the Neutral Executives factor generally coincided with council actors' views, there were contradictions within that viewpoint. By encouraging public input and by seeking to appear open-minded and neutral, councils actually raised citizens' expectations of gaining influence over outcomes. Yet councils also wished to retain decision-making autonomy and to limit citizens' influence. To that end, both councils restricted some debates, and both expected citizens to accept their councils' decisions. This tension was not adequately resolved in the wastewater processes, and it highlighted how council actors' dominance is masked by their maintenance of a neutral perspective.

Conclusion

Each factor in this chapter described the epistemological and procedural dimensions of the perspectives of a group of actors with like-minded views on the issues under study. These perspectives apply to the specific contexts of the two planning processes under study but may also be present in other similar planning and decision-making settings. The findings in the following chapter will address both the context-specific and wider inferential elements.

Actors' perspectives and their experiences in the two planning processes often appeared to be mutually reinforcing, and this relationship was, arguably, at least partly attributable to their institutional location. For example, respondents on the Subjective Compromisers and Objective Competitors factors, who were almost all citizens, had quite different perspectives that were reinforced by their different experiences of the *same* planning processes. Objective Competitors held quite negative experiences, and continued to oppose the decisions, and this reflected their more adversarial and intransigent perspective, and their lower level of involvement in formal planning activities. Subjective Compromisers were relatively satisfied with the processes and had accepted the compromises as the best possible. This stance reflected their more deliberative perspective, and the fact that most actors on the Subjective Compromisers factor were afforded greater opportunities to participate than were actors on the Objective Competitors factor.

As noted, it was not possible to say with certainty whether actors' perspectives or their experiences or their institutional location was more important, or to what extent one variable was dependent on another. This issue will be discussed further in the following chapter.

The significance of mixed loadings on factors

The presence of mixed loadings on the three factors was not surprising. Some actors were likely to have viewpoints that reflected more than one factor and some would have statistically significant associations with more than one factor. For example, four actors loaded significantly on both the Subjective Compromisers and Neutral Executors factors. There were strong commonalities between these two factors in terms of their shared commitment to engagement, compromise and decision-making, and it was likely that some actors would identify with those aspects of both factors.

It was equally unlikely that there would be a pure association between the factors and actors' structural locations in this study, because the perspectives that were revealed did not clearly map onto categories such as occupation, location or ethnicity. For example, it was quite likely that some councillors (loading on Neutral Executors) and some citizens (loading on Subjective Compromisers) would share a sense of responsibility to see the processes to successful conclusions. This shared responsibility for pursuing decision-making was apparent among those citizens who acted as representatives for community groups and iwi. Three of those citizens had significant mixed loadings on the Neutral Executives and Subjective Compromisers factors.

The three perspectives are not mutually exclusive alternatives; rather, they are likely to have a range of relationships to one another. As Van Eeten (2001) demonstrates, perspectives may cut across existing, assumed policy positions. Positions that are assumed to be polarised may actually have much more complex relationships and perhaps, significant affinities. For example, in this study, Subjective Compromisers agree with Objective Competitors that there are sometimes good reasons for intransigent opposition. Additionally, perspectives that might have been expected to be distinctly-articulated may actually collapse into another perspective. For example, Maori actors all loaded onto the Subjective Compromisers perspective, which also included a range of other non-Maori actors, although I had anticipated a separate Maori factor emerging.

Mixed loadings do not reduce the meaningfulness of perspectives. Rather, they militate against the risk of treating perspectives as overly simplistic stereotypes. Mixed loadings de-emphasise the relationship between perspectives and aspects of structural location, such as occupation. For example, it is not possible to solely associate the technocratic Neutral Executives factor with professional actors such as council officers, when three citizens also loaded on that factor.

Mixed loadings also militate against the treatment of perspectives as stereotypes based on discrete beliefs, by demonstrating that actors have a range of complex, often over-lapping and intertwined views. For example, Subjective Compromisers could be labelled “environmentalists”, but if that suggested a more radical politics, then their mixed loadings with the Council-dominated Neutral Executives factor (and shared focus on compromise) would belie such stereotyping. Among respondents loading on any given factor, some are more likely than others to “lean” towards a second factor. This is analogous to mapping beliefs on a political spectrum where beliefs cut across simple ideas such as “conservative” versus “liberal”.

The presence of mixed loadings and recognition that actors lean towards second (and subsequent) factors has democratic implications. It supports the deliberative democratic view that actors perspectives are open to change, given attention to a sound deliberative process. Issues such as this, which arise partly as a result of mixed loadings, will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

Chapter Six presents analysis and findings based on the three factors from the Q-method and the contextual material from the two planning processes. I consider the tensions present between actors' perspectives and agendas, and the influence of those tensions on the effective integration of citizens' agendas. The findings lead on to a discussion that synthesizes democratic theory and aspects of New Zealand planning practice, and their implications for the effective integration of citizens' agendas.

Chapter Six – Research findings and theoretical and practical responses

Introduction

In this chapter I present the research findings and consider their implications for the question: *What influences the integration of citizens' agendas in environmental planning and decision-making in New Zealand local government?* and the subsidiary question: *What opportunities for more effective integration are revealed by this research?* The chapter focuses on tensions between the actors' perspectives that were identified in Chapter Five, and I advance eight findings about their influence on the integration of citizens' agendas. In keeping with my emphasis on a productive connection between theory and practice, I also respond to the theoretical and practical challenges arising from each finding by discussing possible courses of action.

The findings are:

1. A positivist rationalist perspective limits the integration of citizens' agendas.
2. The expectation that council actors will be objective and neutral limits the integration of citizens' agendas.
3. Conflicting expectations of citizens' roles limits the integration of citizens' agendas.
4. The integration of citizens' agendas is supported by aspects of the Subjective Compromisers perspective.
5. The integration of citizens' agendas is threatened by aspects of the Objective Competitors perspective.
6. The integration of citizens' agendas is threatened by aspects of the Neutral Executives perspective.
7. Tensions between actors' perspectives, are a barrier to the integration of citizens' agendas.
8. Actors' perspectives, experiences and structural location are all critical elements in the integration of citizens' agendas.

As discussed in Chapter Three, these findings are drawn from two types of data that are sometimes treated differently. Data on the two planning processes are context-specific, while data on actors' perspectives (the three factors) are likely to have wider inferential and theoretical value. In most instances, the inferences drawn from the two types of data are mutually supporting, although in some places findings are drawn from analysis of the factors alone because there is no related evidence from the planning

processes. A distinction is drawn between the specific actors in the two studies, and the three perspectives common to whole groups of actors. For example, I discuss particular groups of actors (such as council actors) as identifying with a perspective, but the perspective itself exists independently of any individual actors.

Finding One: A positivist rationalist perspective limits the integration of citizens' agendas

The integration of citizens' agendas in New Zealand local government environmental planning and decision-making is limited by a positivist, rationalist perspective that privileges agendas that are perceived as objective and factual. Objective Competitors and Neutral Executives share this perspective, regarding factual knowledge and expertise as objective and non-partisan and therefore as a more legitimate and trustworthy input. Other agendas perceived as subjective and based on values or on non-expert opinions are likely to be marginalised by these actors. Neutral Executives and Objective Competitors aim to be objective and factual. They also seek to *appear* as objective as possible, because the appearance of bias or predetermination reduces the validity of the agendas they are pursuing. Where positivist, rationalist actors dominate planning and decision-making, there are likely to be similar incentives for other actors to appear objective, to avoid marginalisation of their agendas.

This hierarchical treatment of agendas and perspectives limits the integration of citizens' agendas, because where some actors and agendas are marginalised, there are fewer opportunities for deliberation and understanding of the full range of agendas. Marginalised actors and agendas will not be adequately taken into account, leading to less rational planning and decision-making. This marginalisation creates incentives for actors to manipulate their agendas to appear more objective and factual. Such manipulation further distorts deliberation because debate is less fully informed.

Marginalisation particularly affects Subjective Compromisers because they, and their agendas, are often perceived as lacking objectivity and factuality. Subjective Compromisers are aware of this risk of exclusion yet they still choose to emphasise subjective issues because these are often central elements in their agendas. Unlike other factors, Subjective Compromisers do not privilege any particular agendas based on a facts/values distinction.

As seen in Chapter Two, in New Zealand mainstream environmental planning and decision-making is typically positivist and rationalist. Importantly then, the same positivist rationalist perspective present among Objective Competitors and Neutral Executives is also prevalent in wider planning and decision-making. This perspective tends to privilege objectivity and professional expertise, and to marginalise more subjective and lay forms of knowledge (Blyth, 1999; Forret, 1998). One of the most significant aspects of this problem is its *persistence*. The problems associated with this privileging have also long been identified by theorists such as Simon (1957), Forester (1993), Habermas (1996) and Morcol (2002), yet their critical insights are mostly unrecognised in the institutional design and practices of environmental planning and decision-making.

Central to those debates in the 1990s is the concept of communicative rationality (Habermas, 1996; Hunold and Young, 1998). Communicative rationality (as opposed to instrumental rationality) occurs when actors gain a shared intersubjective understanding of relevant knowledge and agendas, including the more subjective social and cultural aspects of environmental debates (Allen & Bosch, 1996). Communicative rationality requires actors to accept that citizens' input, including subjective, lay opinions and local forms of expertise, should sit alongside technical and policy expertise (Habermas, 1996). As Hayward (2000) argues, if subjective inputs are simply marginalised, planning and decision-making will be less well-informed and ultimately, less well supported or durable.

In situations such as public consultation processes, citizens' input becomes better informed and is better taken into account if all actors are able to achieve a degree of communicative rationality. This is not to suggest that decision-making should be based on the simple aggregation of private interests; rather, that decision-making (representative or otherwise) will be better informed by input from public consultation processes that foster communicative rationality. There will be situations where councils (or other dominant institutional actors) decide that some inputs are more relevant than others. For example, on issues requiring specific technical expertise, councils may decide that less public involvement is appropriate (within their statutory obligations to consult). In other situations, such as non-notified resource consent applications where there is no public consultation, public input may be relevant but it is not sought or taken into account. However, in many situations such as the two wastewater planning processes, communicative rationality should enhance decision-making. In some

situations where councils do limit consultation (e.g. through non-notification), additional consultation would enhance the communicative rationality of decision-making.

In contrast, this research shows that Objective Competitors and Neutral Executives adopt an *instrumentally rational* perspective. These actors seek efficient technical solutions based on provable and quantifiable inputs that are seen as value-free and useful for technical problem-solving (Gunder, 2000; Morcol, 2002). It may also be in their best interests to adopt such a positivist perspective. Tenbenschel (2000) observes that these qualities of objectivity are widely endorsed in mainstream public policy generally, for example, in health policy. Such qualities contrast strongly with subjective agendas, which reflect a partial, situated approach to knowledge that is coloured by actors' own experiences and values, and may be explicitly informed by political and sectional interests (Tenbenschel, 2000). Subjective Compromisers are such actors, disagreeing with the privileging of purportedly objective agendas while recognising their subjective agendas are widely viewed as illegitimate and lacking validity in planning and decision-making.

Where positivist rationalist actors are in positions of influence, this threatens the integration of some citizens' agendas—particularly of those more subjective and lay agendas. Those actors whose institutional location allows them some dominance (e.g. council actors who are responsible for undertaking consultation) may be able to define what counts as a legitimate input, thereby privileging those actors whose agendas (and perhaps their general dispositions) are perceived as objective. Communicative rationality is threatened because some inputs are recognised while others are not. This was the case in the two planning processes, where council actors identified with the Neutral Executives perspective. Dominant council actors were able to exercise some agency, by virtue of their institutional location, over the treatment of different types of knowledge and agendas, and to exclude those agendas seen as an obstacle to efficient decision-making. Thus, both councils closed off debates on land-based treatment options, citing incontestable expert advice from technical consultants. This marginalised those actors, including iwi, who would not simply accept expert evidence because it ran counter to their spiritual and cultural concerns about contamination. This experience supports Forret's (1998) finding that citizens are often unwilling to accept expert evidence as a definitive, objective basis for decision-making.

Ironically, for instrumentally rational actors, in the situation above, planning and decision-making actually became *less* rationally comprehensive because some inputs

were excluded and could not be taken into account. This exclusion reflects the persistent mainstream assumption that objective facts can, and should be separated from values. However, theorists such as Rorty (1979), Kuhn (1996) and Morcol (2002) argue that objective positions are usually informed by underlying subjective considerations, such as political concerns. From a post-positivist perspective, however, and following Simon's descriptive model of bounded rationality (1957), the ideal of rational comprehensiveness is seriously flawed. The positivist maintenance of a false separation between facts and values simply prevents actors from gaining a communicatively rational, critical understanding of all of the values present in planning and decision-making. This separation is particularly detrimental for those citizens' agendas that are non-technical or non-expert agendas, for example, agendas informed by values such as a sense of intergenerational responsibility (Buhrs, 2000). As Fischer (2003:42) notes:

Insofar as experts understand or treat the essence of policy to be its technical core, as do most conventional policy analysts, the citizen's input will remain a secondary, inferior contribution to policy deliberation.

Interestingly, the two wastewater processes demonstrate that conflicts may sometimes be *less severe* where this separation of facts and values is attempted. Subjective agendas tend to address different aspects of an issue rather than directly challenging technical agendas. Where this difference in focus occurs, it may allow more subjective agendas to be grafted onto decisions without compromising technical solutions. Iwi agendas were partially addressed in this way as additional mitigating measures that did not disrupt the main wastewater solutions. The clearest example was the 'rock passage' added to the Palmerston North scheme despite consultants' advice that it served no technical purpose. Durie (2004:1142), discussing Māori research methods, sees this "interface between science and indigenous knowledge...as provid[ing] opportunities for the expansion of knowledge and understanding". He rejects the duality and recognises the risks for indigenous groups that often "feel that the Māori component has simply been added on to standard scientific practice" (ibid:1142). However, he also acknowledges as more problematic those situations where indigenous claims directly threaten the technical solutions and scientific rigour that are prized by positivist actors (Durie, 2004). In those situations, decision-makers often feel forced to adjudicate between claims, rather than seeing opportunities to expand understanding or augment primarily technical solutions with attention to non-technical concerns.

There are often strategic incentives for positivist actors to distance themselves from alternative forms of knowledge, such as Māori cultural agendas, and to *appear* as objective and factual as possible. This was the case in the wastewater studies, where council actors identified with a positivist Neutral Executives perspective. Respondents on the Neutral Executives and Objective Competitors factors felt any suggestion of subjectivity or lack of expertise was to be avoided as it would damage the validity of their arguments. Tenbenschel (2000) similarly observes, in the context of health decision-making, that there are incentives for advocates to present their claims as apolitical and expert despite being mustered in support of a particular agenda. Thus, the appearance of objectivity becomes a source of competitive advantage (Lee & Roth, 2006), which Objective Competitors and Neutral Executives clearly understand.

This purported objectivity is a barrier to the integration of citizens' agendas because value-critical, communicative rationality is difficult where any actors mask their true agendas. Smith (2006:87) notes that actors often “adopt positions based on what they consider to be the most appropriate way of obtaining the desired outcome”; for example, actors may align themselves with a dominant expert's position, when their underlying interests are actually based on personal subjective values. Such posturing obscures actors' genuine interests, making it difficult to identify solutions based on intersecting interests (Forester, 1999). Planning is less well-informed because it is based on partial knowledge of actors' agendas, and decisions may be less well supported or durable because of these omissions.

Lee and Roth (2006:430) observe that technical expertise has a “crucial rhetorical role” in environmental planning because courts and regulatory agencies routinely treat science as a “source of certainty upon which to base decisions” (ibid:430). Hendriks (2002:69) observes that technical experts are able to use the abstract and supposedly “infallible” nature of expert evidence to exclude the discourses of actors who have multiple, value-based and contextually specific agendas. These experts may be unaware of the values that underpin their own agendas, for example, about the primacy of Western scientific knowledge. Schon and Rein (1994) observe that experts such as professional planners often have a compelling sense of certainty and *rightness* about the objectivity of their claims, which may lead them to reject non-expert opinions and counter arguments.

Such a sense of certainty also leads to competitive win-lose situations because actors become wedded to their positions. Actors on the Objective Competitors factor had this

experience in the planning processes, when they directly challenged councils' technical experts. These groups of actors could not agree on the meaning of factual evidence on issues such as pollution levels, and this led to ongoing, stalemated conflicts. In such situations, any decisions are likely to be unsatisfactory for some actors and may lead to further opposition.

Lessening the dichotomous and adversarial nature of the facts/values debate is difficult when actors see strategic advantages in denying any appearance of subjectivity. Hendriks (2005:6) observes of Australian environmental planning that "interactions between different actors typically involve one side of the debate making 'factual' claims, which are then met with 'counter-factuals' from the opposing side, and so on". When those opposing groups were brought together, "their discussions rarely involved an acknowledgement of the subjectivity underpinning claims, nor were they orientated towards reaching common ground" (ibid:6). Instead, planning focused on arbitrating between the 'facts' and the 'other' and avoided exposing any underlying values. Actors in the two planning processes experienced this dichotomy in different ways. Neutral Executives and Objective Competitors respondents tended to maintain the facts/values distinction and to hierarchise different types of knowledge, while Subjective Compromisers respondents were frustrated that their values were not adequately taken into account in primarily technical debates. For all actors, communicative rationality is less achievable while large parts of actors' agendas remain unexamined and cannot be taken into account.

A communicatively rational, value-critical approach

A post-positivist approach to communicative rationality is value-critical in recognising actors' value pluralism and the multiple ways in which actors communicate and reason. It counters the positivist privileging of efficient technical solutions and the narrow biophysical definition of physical resource problems. While these positivist views may be orthodox within the planning profession, as Calhoun (1995:77) observes:

Most claims that there is a single universal standard of rationality are really claims for the absolute superiority of one standard, and are compatible with recognition that other people may act on other standards though arguers may wish to deny the label of rationality to those standards.

Theorists such as Kuhn (1970), Hajer (1995) and Morcol (2002) have extensively critiqued the instrumental use of purportedly factual knowledge in pursuit of particular agendas. Rorty (1979:334) observed of 'objectivity', that there are frequent "attempts to apply this honorific term to morals or politics". Habermas (1996) argues that conflicts between purportedly objective claims are often based on unquestioned values-based positions that must be acknowledged so that their role in any conflict can be understood. Conflicts in the two wastewater processes often reflected this facts/values dichotomy, sometimes through rhetorical appeals for 'common-sense', or to 'take the emotion out of an issue'; at other times, through actors' explicitly subjective, situated claims for which they sought understanding.

A communicatively rational approach requires that actors reflect on the often-implicit assumptions underpinning their agendas, and seek intersubjective understanding as the basis for negotiating agreement (Yankelovich, 1991; Young, 1998; Hillier, 2002; Baker et al., 2004). No viewpoints can be excluded *a priori*; all actors must have opportunities to deliberate and synthesise their different types of situated knowledge and expertise, so that actors can identify and consider all alternatives (Hunold & Young, 1998:87). In contrast, an instrumentally rational approach tends to exclude subjective agendas (Amy, 1987), thereby undermining any claims of rational comprehensiveness and eroding the democratic legitimacy of decisions (Kerr, 1997; Tenbensen, 2000).

A value-critical approach treats subjective agendas as a distinct, legitimate input, while being consciously critical of the situated and subjective nature of much purportedly objective knowledge (Yankelovich, 1991; McCarthy, 1991; Rehg, 1994; Anderson, 2001). Actors' values are often tacitly held and unexamined despite closely informing their policy choices (Schon & Rein, 1994). Smith (2006) argues that the intractable nature of many conflicts is largely a result of tensions between unacknowledged values, particularly as substantive issues tend to occupy almost all of actors' attention. In a value-critical approach, facts and values are treated as "rationally comprehensive entities with specifiable public meanings" (Jennings, 1987:144), so that actors can learn to negotiate conflicts by considering the views of others without abandoning their own values (Kerr, 1997). Nevertheless, as Smith (2006:86) notes, values-based conflicts are often difficult to resolve because "they involve changing beliefs about what people consider to be important".

It is instructive to consider some of the qualities of the Subjective Compromisers perspective for a communicatively rational, value-critical approach. Subjective Compromisers readily acknowledge that actors' agendas may be informed by underlying values. Rather than dismissing this as evidence of bias, they treat values as a legitimate element in potential solutions. Thus, they establish a fuller understanding of the issues and are more likely to accommodate other agendas. Actors on this factor did exactly that when accepting a compromise between their agendas, based largely on spiritual and cultural objections, and the financial, technical and scientific imperatives of other actors. It appeared these actors' interests were served by compromising, whereas for other groups of actors, notably Objective Competitors, compromise was seen as inimical to their particular interests.

For integration of citizens' agendas, all actors need to acknowledge the legitimacy of different types of knowledge and to recognise that few problems are amenable to resolution exclusively through objective, rational analysis. This is not to say that all inputs should be regarded as equally relevant or useful in all situations. Integration, as defined in Chapter One, applies to the *process* and does not imply success for any particular agenda, since compromise and trade-offs are necessary in many situations. However, any prioritising of agendas should arise from communicatively rational deliberation, rather than the imposition of dominant institutional actors' predetermined hierarchies.

Councils have a central role in combating the positivist ideal of objectivity and rationality. Yet where council actors identify with the Neutral Executives perspective and have a strong decision-making imperative, they are likely to view additional deliberation as taking unnecessary time and opening up space for conflicts (Dorfman et al., 2006). Therefore, councils need to find a balance between inclusiveness and making a decision (Lane & McDonald, 2005). Where statutory consultative obligations permit, and where actors accept such restrictions, it may be appropriate to limit public consultation on unproblematic issues. For example, actors might agree to allow solely technical decision-making on a complex technical issue.

A particular challenge arises where non-Western, non-scientific agendas (such as Māori views on wastewater contamination) need to be taken into account. Some types of knowledge may appear to be mutually exclusive, and actors may even be unable to understand one another's claims to validity (PCE, 2004). Scott and Tipene-Matua (2004:127) describe this clash between Western and Māori environmental knowledge

as a “collision of knowledge frames”. The challenge here is for all actors to acknowledge the various knowledge frames at work, including their own social and political determinants, and to take them all into account rather than hierarch-ise them (ibid:132).

For integration of this order to occur, all actors need to negotiate the tensions between different types of input and expertise. A conditional approach to knowledge asks “how can we interconnect and coordinate the different but inherently interdependent discourses of citizens and experts?” (Fischer, 2003:45). Sometimes citizens’ expertise directly challenges recognised experts. At other times, as Lindblom and Cohen (1979:12) have noted, the challenge is for actors to value citizen’s ‘ordinary knowledge’, which is:

...knowledge that does not owe its origin, testing, degree of verification, truth, status, or currency to distinctive...professional techniques, but rather to common sense, casual empiricism, or thoughtful speculation and analysis.

Fischer (2003:194) defines the overlapping concept of ‘local knowledge’ as:

...knowledge about a local context or setting, including empirical knowledge of specific characteristics, circumstances, events, and relationships, as well as the normative understandings of their meaning.

Planning and decision-making become more communicatively rational by including local and ordinary knowledge, since solutions often depend on an understanding of contextually and culturally specific information. Perspectives that are oriented towards such understanding, as Subjective Compromisers are, will advance this communicative rationality.

Nevertheless, at times, citizens’ agendas are so poorly articulated that even their assessment is difficult (PCE, 2001:60). Berke et al. (2002) suggest that an important role for councils is to build citizens’ capacity to provide usable input. By facilitating participatory processes that tap into local, situated knowledge, councils reduce conflicts (Bosch et al., 1996; Controller and Auditor-General, 1998; Baker et al., 2004), and foster the development of “shared ethics” (PCE, 2001:65) on environmental issues.

Four responses to a positivist rationalist perspective

In this section I consider four possible responses to a positivist rationalist perspective. Each response addresses aspects of this problem and, in various ways, aims for a more communicatively rational and value-critical approach. The first response is Ericksen et al's (2003) 'rational-adaptive' approach to planning under the RMA. This approach maintains a separation between expert and public/political input, while seeking "the best of both rational and participatory approaches to plan-making" (ibid:37). Technical expertise provides the factual basis for planning, while public input helps to "shape the policy and builds commitment to its implementation" (ibid:32). Public input is "tempered by the influence of factual information and technical feasibility" (ibid:31). Ericksen et al. (2003) maintain that this approach closely reflects the RMA's intentions for public participation.

The rational-adaptive model challenges mainstream planning and decision-making by granting public input a legitimate role *alongside* expertise. However, as the wastewater processes and the wider New Zealand evidence from Chapter Two indicate, many positivist actors would probably resist such an approach, and will continue to marginalise subjective agendas or treat them as additional issues.

The rational-adaptive model arguably also appears to treat objective technical inputs as distinct from, and unchallenged by public input. This reflects Sager's (1994:ix) argument that the domains of instrumental and communicative rationality will have to be bounded since:

...different types of rationality are required to guide reasoning within the competing modes of problem-solving used when attacking the various tasks of planning in society.

Yet the risk is that the model simply reinforces the facts/values dichotomy, since mainstream planners and decision-makers typically see technical input as apolitical and separate from those public and political agendas which bear on it (Ericksen et al., 2003; Buhrs, 2002).

A second possible response is a 'public ecology' approach (PCE, 2004:55) that treats objective and subjective inputs as partial views that are uncertain and cannot be clearly separated. Public ecology views environmental issues as "complex and unruly

sociotechnical problems” (Baker et al., 2004:88). These problems attract contestable claims that are best addressed when actors bring their explicit values and preferences to bear on *defining* as well as seeking to solve them. As the PCE (2004:78) observes:

Unless these dimensions are part of the problem definition phase, the process is likely to lack legitimacy for important stakeholders, and the outcomes, regardless of their scientific credibility, are less likely to be accepted.

Deliberation over complex and uncertain issues, such as wastewater pollution, should allow actors to “acknowledge, listen to and respect the other’s viewpoint, and to move forward in a way that is mutually constructive” (PCE, 2004:51). As seen in Chapter Two, approaches such as this are less common in mainstream planning and decision-making. An example cited was the Hastings District Council’s Joint Council-Tangata Whenua Wastewater Committee, established in 2000 with equal representation of councillors and tangata whenua. Von Dadelszen (2006:23) concluded that the Committee achieved stakeholders’ buy-in to decisions by:

...building capacity through the sharing of information, not only listening to other points of view but achieving some understanding of different paradigms, and being prepared to alter proposals to accommodate deeply held concerns.

Despite this positive assessment, a public ecology approach is likely to be challenging for actors such as Neutral Executives, who may be unwilling to grant citizens the additional influence or allow the additional time required when they are closely focused on decision-making.

A third deliberative approach also requires additional time, because it focuses on encouraging unhurried communication and reflection among actors. The two critical elements of this approach are that actors must be able to reflect on wider public interests and longer term considerations; and they must moderate the competitive, adversarial behaviour that often appears when decisions are being made and when private interests are threatened. Opportunities for such approaches may be limited once formal consent timeframes apply because decisions that directly affect groups and individuals are often imminent. However, opportunities are likely at the early stages of planning for specific activities, such as wastewater planning, while solutions and impacts are less well-defined.

Conflict is less likely in these situations because actors are able to step back from points of tension such as siting decisions and specific effects. Where there is less immediate pressure on actors to win arguments, a space is opened up for mutual understanding and identification of common solutions. More time also becomes available for attention to procedural formalities and relationship-building. Without such immediate decision-making pressure, actors are less likely to identify predetermination and bias, and more likely to modify their agendas and pursue compromises.

A number of researchers and organisations, including Tiakiwai et al. (2004), Allen et al. (2003), Cronin and Jackson (2004) and Toi Te Taiao: the Bioethics Council (2004), have come to similar conclusions about the value of this deliberative approach. All have begun by considering how to foster mutual understanding in planning processes where there is considerable conflict. This has drawn their attention away from final decision-making processes, towards a focus on forums that offer more opportunities for dialogue and present fewer risks of immediate conflicts. Their common conclusion is that the *distance* from decision-making provides the space for constructive dialogue and shared understandings. Actors' conflicting viewpoints do still exist, but they do not excite the same dichotomised conflicts that typically arise at the points of greatest tension.

Researchers note, however, that the distance from decision-making is also problematic for a number of reasons. RMA consent processes are already widely criticised for being too lengthy. Most actors are motivated to engage for instrumental reasons, such as their desire to influence other actors and outcomes, and are often concerned that the process will be irrelevant otherwise (Allen et al, 2003; Cronin & Jackson, 2004; Bioethics Council, 2004). As the Bioethics Council (2004:39) observed, "people expected their participation to make a difference to the decisions taken, and to the understandings of others". This public expectation is a critical issue; the conundrum is that meaningful dialogue may not translate into meaningful action. Tiakiwai et al. (2004:75) concluded of their research with Māori communities and local government, that dialogue needed to be more closely driven by the specific issues and any shared understandings needed to be directly translated into decision-making.

While some distance from decision-making tensions is central to this third deliberative approach, communication and understanding become something *apart* from decision-making. Deliberation risks becoming the province of vision and strategy-level planning, and irrelevant to actual outcomes. Blyth (1999), Hayward (2000) and PCE (2005) all

observed processes where actors' commitments to strategic plans did not survive their application to specific decisions because more pressing political considerations marginalised them. Ericksen et al. (2003) similarly conclude that resource consent decision-making often proceeds with little reference to strategic plans. Borrie et al. (2005:27) found that "a common problem was too much consultation at the beginning of the process when it was easy to reach agreement as to the higher level objectives and policies and too little when it came to deciding on methods". The challenge must be to maintain strong links between deliberative processes and resource consent processes (and other forms of decision-making that tend to be more aggregative). This link means that decision-making is able to rely less on aggregative democratic approaches. It is worthwhile fostering intersubjective understanding in the spaces provided by less adversarial processes, but only where actors can be motivated to engage, and where these processes actually inform final decision-making. The next approach is a possible response to this problem because it focuses on a more deliberative approach to making specific decisions.

The fourth approach employs a technique known as a 'decision support system' (DSS) (Allen et al., 2002; Newson & Chalk, 2004). DSS is a management tool for pooling knowledge in areas such as environmental planning and research. It typically focuses on the computerised management of complex technical information, but in its deliberative form, it employs stakeholder participation as the primary mechanism for assessing that information and deciding on solutions (Allen & Kilvington, 1999; Allen et al., 2002; Newson and Chalk, 2004). Thus, it aims to bring deliberation into specific problem-solving situations.

Deliberative DSS seeks to provide access for all actors to all necessary information (lay and expert) and media (written, visual, and face-to-face) (Allen & Kilvington, 1999). The aim is to ensure actors have sufficient opportunities for developing a sound understanding of all issues, particularly of actors' values and preferences, as the basis for informed debate. Actors collaborate in assigning values and risks to all the possible uses of a physical resource, in the manner of an economic evaluation (Newson & Chalk, 2004). For example, the 'environmental capital' of a water catchment, is likely to include economic, cultural, spiritual, social, recreational and other values. Actors make trade-offs between these values and uses as the basis of agreement. This process renders conflicts between values explicit, requiring critical reflection on the range of views present. However, it may also risk creating an aggregated, majority-rules

outcome that is not appreciably more sensitive to difference than a simple voting process.

Most importantly, a successful deliberative DSS process relies on actors' willingness to modify their preferences and seek compromises (Allen & Kilvington, 1999; Newson & Chalk, 2004). This is problematic, given Neutral Executives believe councils should retain decision-making authority, and Objective Competitors are very suspicious of any major compromises. Newson and Chalk (2004:900) advise that DSS processes must facilitate actors' early and ongoing engagement if there is to be buy-in and commitment to decisions. Expectations must be clear, and actors must be well supported to deal with situations that may challenge fundamental beliefs. Whether this level of engagement is practically possible will depend on actors' perspectives and experiences of the actual process, both of which I address further in later sections of this chapter.

Each of the four approaches above focuses on fostering elements of a communicatively rational and value-critical process. This focus is very relevant to this thesis because the fieldwork demonstrated that a critical obstacle to integrating citizens' agendas is actors' conflicting perspectives on different types of knowledge. Where such conflicts can be overcome by fostering a more communicatively rational process, then integration of citizens' agendas is more likely. At points, the discussion above also shows the importance of actors' perspectives on procedural issues, which will be addressed in later findings. Encouraging change in actors' perspectives requires all actors' time and commitment to critical reflection, and this in turn, requires careful facilitation and councils that champion deliberative processes (Allen et al., 2002).

Finding Two: The expectation that council actors will be objective and neutral limits the integration of citizens' agendas

The second finding concerns the three factors' perspectives on the roles of council actors. All factors broadly subscribe to a persistent but unrealisable expectation that councillors and officers are neutral, objective actors. There are both normative and descriptive dimensions to this expectation: The factors agree council actors *should strive* to be neutral and objective, and some actors appear to think they are *capable* of being so. There are some differences in actors' expectations, but overall, councillors are expected to receive public input without bias or predetermination and should reserve any judgements for decision-making. Officers are expected to provide

unbiased expert advice and assistance and implement decisions, but have no part in substantive decision-making. This view of officers' roles was previously identified by Durning and Osuna (1994) and Wolf (1997) in earlier Q-method studies, and evidence from the New Zealand context shows that overall, these expectations of council actors are widely held.

These expectations are a barrier to the integration of citizens' agendas for a number of reasons, but primarily because they are unrealistic. They are obstacles to communicative rationality and to actors' understanding because council actors are expected to be value-free and neutral, when, just like other actors, they actually have interests and agendas on many issues. Citizens' expectations of council neutrality and objectivity are a source of conflict because, when they are not realised, this leads to tensions between actors. Powerful council actors, who have some agency through their control of institutional veto points, are also able to muster the rhetoric of neutrality and objectivity in support of their own agendas, for example, by defining what counts as appropriate behaviour or legitimate knowledge. This functions to keep citizens (who are seen as more biased and subjective) at arms-length from decision-making influence.

A significant aspect of this ideal is that it is widespread and very *persistent*. Many scholars in public policy, planning and democratic theory reject the myth of objectivity and rationality (see for example, Simon, 1957; Forester, 1993; Rhodes, 1995; Peters, 1999; Morcol, 2001; Hillier, 2002). Yet despite its refutation, this ideal is evident in the three factors' expectations, and is a persistent feature of local government practice in New Zealand, reflected in the managerialist emphasis on neutrality and rationality in the 1989 reforms (Gregory, 2003). It is also clear from fieldwork and the New Zealand evidence that this expectation persists despite council actors' frequent exhibitions of predetermination and bias.

All groups of actors have broadly similar expectations of council actors' neutrality. Despite being an obstacle to the integration of citizens' agendas, those expectations are actually mutually reinforcing for the following reasons. As seen among Neutral Executives respondents, council actors and some citizens place a high premium on *appearing* neutral and objective. For councillors, this is a response to the statutory requirement for open-mindedness; for officers, it is in keeping with the Westminster ideal of neutrality. For council actors overall, it is a response to many citizens' strong aversion to any suggestion of council bias. As respondents on the Subjective Compromisers and Objective Competitors factors demonstrate, citizens react very

negatively to council bias (perceived or real). Legitimacy is quickly lost, and citizens become less willing to compromise and more entrenched in opposition. Council actors also recognise these risks so they cultivate an appearance of open-mindedness which simply reinforces citizens' incorrect expectations. Many council actors, themselves, have a normative commitment to open-mindedness.

In terms of the councillor role, all factors agree councillors should be unbiased actors who receive input with an open mind, consider it objectively and exercise impartial judgement in decision-making. This view tallies with the wider New Zealand local government experience. Bush (2004:36) notes, for example, that councillor codes of conduct may have requirements such as councillors being “free from prejudice, bias and predetermination” and “impartial, responsible and fair”.

There are some differences in how the three factors view the councillor role in practice. Subjective Compromisers and Objective Competitors also have expectations of citizens exercising influence. These citizen-dominated factors expect councillors to act more like delegates who are neutral and without predetermination, and therefore, *responsive* to citizens' input. However, their expectations are likely to be disappointed; open-mindedness is possible if it means *even-handedness* in councillors' approaches to issues, but as Bush argues, “to expect councillors to have no prior opinions on matters they are called on to debate or resolve is utterly absurd” (ibid:36). Nevertheless, council actors, themselves, reinforce this unrealistic expectation by emphasising the appearance of neutrality in keeping with the Westminster ideal. This reinforcement is, in turn, partly because citizens respond so negatively to the idea of council actors with interests or bias, perhaps because they unintentionally or intentionally concur with the Westminster ideal.

For Neutral Executives, neutrality and objectivity means that councillors should act more like trustees who exercise impartial, independent, expert judgement after taking account of all relevant input. Neutral Executives, like trustees, tend to view citizens as relatively passive providers of input who should allow councillors to define their long-term interests (Smith & Blanc, 1997). In the wastewater studies, council actors clearly expected citizens to put aside their preferences and accept decisions made on their behalf. This reflects the public sector view that bureaucracies are better able to arrive at a decision that reflects the common interest than would any decision based on the aggregation of private interests (Hunold & Young, 1998). At times, both councils “closed off debate” (Hillier, 2002:150) or restricted opportunities for public engagement.

Such restrictions often lead to public opposition to decisions and a loss of public confidence because citizens feel their views have been poorly represented (Webler et al., 1995:449).

In terms of council officers, all factors in this study expect them to act as unbiased professional experts. This mirrors wider New Zealand evidence (Wolf, 1997; Controller and Auditor-General, 1998; Forgie, 2001), and reflects the influence of the Westminster ideal where public servants are responsible for tendering 'free, frank and fearless advice' to politicians. Where citizens suspect officers of bias, as in the wastewater processes, this leads to tensions and ongoing opposition. Consequently, council actors themselves see incentives to mask any evidence of interests or bias, and this, in turn, further encourages a public expectation of neutrality. Across the sphere of local government activity, then, there is a strong incentive for council actors to maintain an appearance of neutrality and objectivity.

The fundamental problem with these expectations is that council actors will often have preconceived opinions and personal interests on some issues (although on other issues they may have neither). Council actors are also unlikely to be entirely value-neutral in their engagement with other actors and agendas. The ideal of neutrality and objectivity does not actually encourage open-mindedness at all. Rather, council actors simply avoid any *appearance* of bias or subjectivity, because there are incentives to do so, thereby reinforcing citizens' unrealistic expectations. Actual open-mindedness requires that actors be willing to understand and take account of all forms of input in an even-handed way (Bush, 2004). Ironically, open-mindedness requires a reflexive awareness of actors' own values, which is particularly difficult for council actors to achieve given the incentives to appear value-free.

In the next section I discuss three responses that focus is on establishing more realistic expectations of council actors and citizens' roles and levels of influence. They all require incremental adjustments to practices rather than any wholesale abandonment of the requirement for councillors to be open-minded, or of the Westminster tradition for public servants.

Three responses to the ideal of neutrality and objectivity

First, all actors should establish clear, common procedural expectations, particularly of one another's roles and levels of influence. A number of New Zealand commentators

strongly recommend that clear procedural expectations be established as a mechanism for avoiding unnecessary conflicts (MFE, 1999a; PCE, 2004; LGNZ, 2004b). This may be achieved if councils spell out procedural rules very clearly. However, I argue that actors should seek *agreement* on their common expectations. Otherwise, where there is no procedural agreement, dominant institutional actors are able to define roles to their advantage. Actors should also seek to be value-critical; that is, to acknowledge that actors (including themselves) have values and interests that underpin their procedural preferences, and to compromise in accommodating those values and interests. As noted however, there are significant disincentives to actors' acknowledgement of their subjectivity—both from the positivist privileging of objectivity, and from citizens' negative reactions to any suggestion of bias. These disincentives are a barrier to communicative rationality because they constrain value-critical deliberation.

Second, all actors should seek ongoing engagement to the extent that it aids their mutual understanding of each other's agendas, constraints and imperatives, and can occur without disrupting statutory timeframes. Intersubjective understanding is a prerequisite for establishing *realistic* procedural expectations of council actors' roles because it requires actors to scrutinise their own expectations of neutrality and objectivity. Greater understanding also encourages actors to accept councillors and officers as actors who can be open-minded in the sense of being even-handed and value-critical, rather than improbably neutral. This is critical, since the fieldwork shows that most actors' views of democratic legitimacy rely heavily on the appearance of neutrality and suppression of bias. The wider evidence indicates that these views will not be easily debated or put aside (Jennings, 1987; Lawrence & Daniels, 1997; Durning, 1999; Forgie, 2001). Thus, the establishment of realistic, agreed procedural expectations is likely to be very difficult.

The fieldwork data illustrate the value of deliberative processes for establishing realistic shared expectations, and as a partial antidote to citizens' suspicions of bias. Citizens on the Subjective Compromisers factor had both the *opportunities* and the *inclination* to gain an understanding of councils' imperatives and constraints. Subsequently, where councils controlled processes and restricted agendas, this was mostly accepted as a pragmatic necessity, rather than as evidence of bias. In contrast, citizens on the Objective Competitors factor generally had fewer opportunities for engagement and were less inclined to seek compromises. Their expectations of influence were mostly disappointed, and they remained suspicious of council bias and co-option and opposed to councils' preferred solutions.

Ongoing value-critical engagement requires time and commitment of all actors. Von Dadelzen (2006) was positive about the benefits to the Hastings District Council's wastewater project of relationship-building, but how practical are such long-term commitments when decisions are required? Subjective Compromisers have a head start with this challenge in that they have a compromise-seeking perspective, whereas Neutral Executives and Objective Competitors have a less deliberative and more competitive perspective. The question is: how to motivate actors to deliberate and seek compromises if they are otherwise disposed? In later sections I consider possible incentives for actors to adopt more deliberative perspectives. For now I consider some changes to institutional practices to encourage actors to adopt more value-critical roles.

Third, council actors should foster more realistic expectations of themselves as actors who *do* bring interests and preferences to planning and decision-making, but who should endeavour to be open-minded in their dealings. Council actors should aim to be closely engaged in public participation, and should be value-critical in seeking to understand citizens' input and to communicate their own positions. On many issues, masking all interests and agendas is neither possible nor a realistic representation of council actors' positions. However, given the incentives to appear neutral, this process can be supported by independent third party facilitators who can work to ensure even-handed treatment of actors and agendas.

Council officers, such as planners and policy analysts, should be both technical experts and value-critical professionals. They have the task of encouraging communicatively rational deliberation and of systematically understanding and synthesising the range of agendas present, in collaboration with other actors (Gunder, 1999; Morcol, 2002). For this, council officers must be value-critical and aware of the influence of their own preferences and biases in their planning and decision-making (Forester, 1993). As Schon and Rein (1994:51) argue, officers should aim to:

...create a space for speaking and listening, for difference and respect, for the joint search for new possibilities, and ultimately, for newly fashioned agreements about how we shall live together.

Council officers' ability to *actually* provide free, frank and fearless advice (rather than to conform to an ideal of impartiality) is strengthened when their roles are based on realistic assumptions about their interests and agendas. The alternative is to sustain a myth of positivist objectivity and value-free neutrality that may simply mask biases and

privilege. More realistic assumptions about officers' interests might simply involve the recognition that officers are human beings with natural biases and preferences, which their constitutional role requires them to try to put aside in the interests of neutrality. However, where citizens are encouraged to actively engage in debates, and where independent facilitation is employed, officers may also seek to ensure under-represented voices are heard and decision-makers are exposed to the full range of agendas and advice present (Forester, 1993). A number of contemporary commentators recommend this more value-critical role (Healey, 1997; Gunder, 1999; Hillier, 2002), recalling the arguments of Marxist planners such as Cockburn (1977).

Councillors should also take an active role as value-critical decision-makers who acknowledge they often have relevant interests and agendas. Disclosure of any particular interests is less the critical issue than is shedding the unrealistic image of objective, neutral actors. Councillors should be closely engaged with citizens (as some already are) because this demonstrates they are committed to public participation and, because public input is an important part of the planning process (Healey, 1997; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000). Councillors can be very effective champions for public participation by ensuring sufficient time and resources are invested (PCE, 2005b). Councillors should set examples that encourage other actors to remain engaged and energetic, and to seek compromise rather than simply oppose or pursue sectional political agendas (Selman, 2004). Without councillors' commitment to inclusive processes, officers may tend to fall back into a familiar technocratic perspective that marginalises citizens' agendas (Harrison et al., 2004).

Clearly these commitments to inclusiveness must be genuine to be worthwhile. The wastewater processes and New Zealand experience show that councils damage any sense of legitimacy and integrity when they raise public expectations of commitment then subsequently disappoint them (Bostwick, 1999; Blyth, 1999; PCE, 2005b). Councillors are prone to *ad hoc* decision-making and confusing political about-turns (Ericksen et al., 2003) and will often need to be convinced of the merits of adopting a more transparent, value-explicit and committed role. As is the case with most actors on the Neutral Executives factor, many councillors will resist the possible undermining of their decision-making authority that comes with closer engagement. And as noted, many citizens will be suspicious of council actors who more openly acknowledge any interests and preferences.

Therefore, for council actors to be more engaged and value-critical, *all* actors need to establish more realistic views of their roles. Genuine even-handedness in planning and decision-making is more likely once all actors accept it is neither improper nor unethical for council actors to have interests. Facilitators who are independent, rather than stakeholders in relevant citizens groups or institutional actors, have a role here in managing actors' expectations. Facilitators can work to protect citizens from dominant actors, while allowing decision-makers to engage more constructively and value-critically (Dryzek, 1990). As Frame et al. (2004) found, most actors routinely judge others as being more biased and less committed than themselves. Facilitation helps to counter this sense of power inequalities while fostering a safe environment in which actors can be value-critical and seek intersubjective understanding. As Smith (2006:82) notes, independent facilitators are also quite likely to have their own preferences about environmental issues, and may also have particular procedural and political biases. Thus, "mediators also need to reflect on their own position prior to...entering into the mediation process".

Finding Three: Conflicting expectations of citizens' roles limits the integration of citizens' agendas

The third finding is that actors have conflicting views on citizens' roles in planning and decision-making, particularly the level of influence citizens should exercise. Effective integration of citizens' agendas is limited because these conflicts are an obstacle to actors' understanding and agreement and are likely to lead to more adversarial and oppositional behaviour by all actors. These conflicts contribute to a loss of citizens' trust and cooperation, and ultimately, to less legitimate and durable decision-making.

The fundamental conflict addressed in this finding is between two incompatible views of citizens' roles. All actors agree citizens' involvement adds to the legitimacy and quality of planning and decision-making. However, Subjective Compromisers and Objective Competitors also believe citizens should be advocates who exercise some influence, particularly over outcomes. Some of these actors would argue citizens have a *right* to influence decisions. Neutral Executives take a different view, believing citizens should be relatively *passive* providers of public input and should not expect to exercise any influence. Crucially, Neutral Executives also maintain that citizens should be prepared to put aside their agendas in pursuit of compromises, and councils should retain decision-making authority. This view is probably not surprising, given the institutional

council location of most actors clustering on the Neutral Executors factor. However, Objective Competitors disagree and see it as their duty to pursue success for their agendas rather than compromise overly much. As a citizen-dominated factor, this is less surprising also. Were Objective Competitors to comprise council actors, their perspective might be tempered by a sense of institutional behavioural norms, such as that of open-mindedness. This research also showed that while the council-dominated Neutral Executives factor had strong opinions on procedural issues, the citizen-dominated factors had fewer opinions on the same issues. Their focus tended to be almost wholly on the substantive issues being debated.

The conflict occurs at two levels. First, as with councillor roles, there is a lack of clear, shared expectations of citizens' roles. This problem is relatively well-recognised by New Zealand researchers, who recommend that councils should ensure actors have common procedural expectations (MFE, 1999a; PCE, 2004, 2005b; LGNZ, 2004b). Second, the conflict is also over how much *influence* citizens should exercise. MFE (1999a) and LGNZ (2004b) advise that these conflicts can be resolved if citizens simply understand the roles that councils intend them to have—and where necessary, citizens should accept those roles and, if necessary, lower their expectations of influence accordingly. These findings reinforce different research and conclusions (Klijn & Koppenjan, 1999; Hillier, 2002; Bickerstaff & Walker, 2005) demonstrating that there are ongoing problems when actors have conflicting views of what level of influence is appropriate for citizens. Those problems cannot easily be solved by councils dictating roles.

Where actors disagree about procedural expectations, this creates a space for dominant actors, such as those within powerful institutional positions, to potentially control processes because other actors are not able to effectively challenge processes or agendas (Bickerstaff & Walker, 2005). The PNCC Wastewater 2006 consultation was driven by council actors and consultants who were able to control processes with particular ends in mind. It was conducted over a restricted range of options and was seen by some citizens as a legitimisation exercise. In contrast, the Wanganui District Council's procedural transparency paid off when its decisions were understood and generally supported by citizens, despite the Council's changes of direction and a circumscribed public debate.

The fieldwork evidence suggests that where there is a lack of procedural transparency or agreement, citizens are likely to be concerned about co-option and manipulation by

dominant actors. Lack of clarity or actual disagreement about citizens' roles opens up a space where councils are able to pursue their agendas while citizens are left to resolve their procedural uncertainty. For example, Iwi representatives faced opposition to their compromises from some of their own members; however, they also felt committed to council relationships despite a lack of success for their agendas. Iwi representatives and other citizens expressed concern that they could not see a connection between their input, the deliberation, and the decisions made. Citizens did not know whether council actors had taken them seriously, or whether as Hillier (2002) argues, their participation had become largely symbolic. Bickerstaff and Walker (2005:2129) describe situations such as this as:

...a process of co-option and a neutering of oppositional politics. Participants [are] consequently left to make choices about whether and how to participate given the potential links between inclusion and subordination

Lowndes and Sullivan (2004:66) similarly note that UK "local partnerships can serve to 'incorporate' community representatives" rather than empower them. Citizens often remain uncertain of their status and ability to influence processes or outcomes. How citizens respond to such uncertainty is likely to reflect a mix of their experiences and their own perspectives on engagement.

Because councils initiate public consultation, citizens who participate will often have a sense of being encouraged to do so, and may develop raised expectations of exercising some influence. As noted previously, councils reinforce these expectations, yet where citizens are subsequently unable to judge the effectiveness of their involvement, the legitimacy of the process suffers. Citizens lose trust in council actors and may disengage (Goodwin, 1989; Klijn & Koppenjan, 1999; Forgie, 2001). As with Objective Competitors, there is a greater risk of conflicts, more entrenched opposition, and perhaps formal objections. Conversely, for Subjective Compromisers, where citizens understand councils' constraints and imperatives, and their expectations are moderated, the risks of conflicts are lessened. Citizens clearly need opportunities for close engagement with council actors, but must also choose (and be encouraged) to become engaged when opportunities arise, and to remain engaged.

One of the most notable features of the experiences of Subjective Compromisers and Objective Competitors respondents was that citizen-respondents in neither group gained significantly more ground for their agendas than the other, yet the two factors

responded quite differently. Citizens in both processes were effectively required to accept restrictions on deliberation and final decisions. Yet Subjective Compromisers respondents remained positive despite continuing to be concerned about co-option and manipulation, while Objective Competitors respondents, citing similar concerns, were more oppositional and withdrawn. The different responses were attributable to a *mix* of actors' different perspectives and their experiences of the processes. As noted in Chapter Five, there were partial correlations between actors' perspectives and levels of involvement, but the causal relationship was not entirely clear. Actors' different perspectives were clearly a critical contributor, but it was not clear whether those perspectives drove their decisions about levels of involvement, or were formed by their experiences. This issue is discussed further in Finding Eight.

Hendriks (2005:3) observes that conflicts are often rooted in different “participatory storylines or narratives about what constitutes the most appropriate form of public participation for that policy issue”. As described in Chapter One, all actors have storylines about “the role and character of the public” (ibid:3). Where participatory storylines are implicit or poorly articulated, they may become an unrecognised source of conflict. Hendriks further notes that “participatory storylines...do not always align with interests and discourses”. Thus, conflicts may be grounded in opposing procedural views, for example, on levels of influence, even while actors share similar views on the substantive problem and the solution. These unacknowledged procedural conflicts obscure the potential for substantive consensus.

As with policy frames (Schon & Rein, 1994), participatory storylines often comprise persistent, implicit beliefs about issues such as who is included or excluded, or whether compromise is worthwhile. Dominant storylines may be treated as givens even while they allow powerful actors to control processes and outcomes and to exclude counter-storylines. As March and Olsen (1989:17) observe, there are powerful unwritten norms and rules within institutional networks, which ensure that “some things are taken for granted in deciding other things”. Nevertheless, Lowndes (1996) also suggests that these norms and rules have a lifecycle and can be modified or replaced over time. Thus, the potential remains for more deliberative and inclusive approaches by council actors. The responses below are largely aimed at encouraging actors to examine implicit institutional norms, and to form explicit perspectives (or storylines) as the basis for agreement on governance issues such as roles and levels of influence.

Responses to the problem of conflicts over citizens' roles

Some aspects of these responses can be addressed quickly because they reiterate responses in the previous section on council actors' roles. The obvious response to this problem is that actors must establish clear, agreed upon, realistic expectations of all actors' roles and levels of influence, because this lessens the potential for conflict (PCE, 2005b; LGNZ 2004b). This is a persistent problem in New Zealand local government practice, particularly in situations where councils encourage citizens' participation at the same time as facing constraints such as statutory timeframes for resource consents.

Agreed procedural expectations are important, but are unlikely to satisfy some groups of actors. They may be sufficient for those actors, including Subjective Compromisers, who are more prepared to moderate their claims in pursuit of compromises. As in the wastewater processes, these actors are inclined to accept the legitimacy of council decisions where they are able to engage and understand other actor's agendas. For other actors, such as Neutral Executives and Objective Competitors, who are more competitive and adversarial, some substantive success may be more critical to their acceptance of the process. As Hendriks (2005) argues, a critical contributor to actors' sense of procedural legitimacy is whether the process resonates with their underlying participatory storyline. I agree that actors' conflicting perspectives are critical contributors to conflicts, and must be addressed.

Objective Competitors link legitimacy and acceptance with gaining a degree of influence over outcomes. This is problematic, given that representative decision-making authority is not often ceded to groups of citizens. Furthermore, Neutral Executives wish to restrict citizens to a relatively passive role as providers of input who put their own interests aside in pursuit of compromise. Subjective Compromisers may accept this to a degree, but Objective Competitors will not. Unless all actors are ready to find an agreed balance between citizens' advocacy and council decision-making, conflicts are likely to continue. Thus, all actors must be encouraged to remain engaged, modify their perspectives, and seek such a balance if citizens' agendas are to be taken into account in an effective fashion.

Councils have a central role in establishing procedural agreements, as the actors with most responsibility for, and expertise in procedural matters. The incentives to reach such agreements are considerable, because Objective Competitors, in particular, will

be more motivated to engage and pursue durable outcomes when they can accept the legitimacy of the process. These benefits are therefore an incentive for Neutral Executives—particularly those council actors who identify with that perspective—to be more open and inclusive in their treatment of other actors and agendas.

Up to this point, my focus in this chapter has been on issues relevant to two or three factors, such as the ideal of neutrality and objectivity, which reflects a perspective common to all three factors. However, there are aspects of each perspective which set it apart from others and which pose particular challenges for the conduct of an effective integrative process. These findings are examined separately, beginning with the Subjective Compromisers' perspective.

Finding Four: The integration of citizens' agendas is supported by aspects of the Subjective Compromisers perspective

Subjective Compromisers have a deliberative perspective that offers considerable promise for the integration of citizens' agendas. When compared to other factors, they are more likely to seek (or take advantage of) ongoing, active engagement with other actors, and in doing so, to gain an understanding of actors' agendas. They are also very willing to balance the identification of common interests against advocacy for their private interests, reflecting their awareness of other actors' constraints and imperatives. Most importantly, even where they are *unable* to gain any significant success for their agendas, so long as they have genuine opportunities for engagement, Subjective Compromisers are generally prepared to moderate their claims, seek compromises, and accept and support final decisions. However, in the absence of genuine opportunities for engagement and influence, they may be more competitive and adversarial, more like Objective Competitors in pursuing their agendas.

Crucially, as with other factors, Subjective Compromisers *bring* their perspective to planning and decision-making, and that perspective can be positively *reinforced* by a robust deliberative process. Subjective Compromisers are disposed towards engagement and compromise, but if they have a sense of exclusion or adversarial opposition towards them, they may choose to respond by being less willing to engage deliberatively. This potentially becomes an obstacle to the integration of citizens' agendas.

Subjective Compromisers facilitate the integration of citizens' agendas in ways instructive for other actors. In procedural terms, they try to avoid conflicts and to engage constructively while still allowing decision-making to proceed. When outcomes are reached, Subjective Compromisers are more likely to accept them as legitimate because they have been actively involved in their development and they are able to understand the constraints and imperatives that drove decision-making.

In epistemological terms, Subjective Compromisers are also quite value-critical in that they treat all actors' inputs as potentially legitimate contributions to be taken into account in planning and decision-making. Unlike more positivist rationalist actors, Subjective Compromisers have less of a conviction of the correctness of their agendas, and are more willing to entertain alternative viewpoints, whether they are informed by subjective or purportedly objective considerations. This mix of epistemological and procedural dimensions marks these actors apart from other factors in this study, and holds considerable promise for the integration of citizens' agendas. However, it is quite likely that other formations of perspectives, perhaps combining aspects of these three factors or adding different perspectives, would be present in other studies.

Whether or not Subjective Compromisers maintain a deliberative perspective is partly dependent on their experiences of planning and decision-making, and their institutional location in those activities, and partly a matter of the perspectives they bring to the process and subsequently modify. In the wastewater processes, actors clustering around this perspective chose to accept and support council decisions despite maintaining quite fundamental disagreements. This rested on their willingness to compromise and their sense that the process which they engaged in was legitimate. There was also *some* evidence these actors had greater opportunities to engage through membership of formal planning groups, and that this more deliberative experience afforded by their institutional location was reflected in their positive responses. However, neither the experience and institutional location, nor the perspective was clearly the independent variable; for example, a more negative experience may have led these actors to adopt a less deliberative perspective. Yet the limited differences between the experiences of actors on the Objective Competitors and Subjective Compromisers factors could not fully explain the much more adversarial perspective adopted by Objective Competitors.

Although most Subjective Compromisers respondents had limited influence over outcomes, they still felt a strong sense of responsibility to compromise and support

solutions they had been engaged in developing. These actors were aware this left them open to manipulation by other actors, for example, to appeals from councils for compromise, but they felt they had achieved what they could. In contrast, Objective Competitors respondents had *also* disagreed with the councils' decisions but had responded by opposing them.

Subjective Compromisers respondents' experiences are significant for reflecting wider New Zealand research that shows the benefits of gaining a mutual understanding of one another's agendas, constraints and imperatives (Allen & Kilvington, 1999; Ericksen et al., 2003; PCE, 2004). Direct engagement with other actors is essential, because it allows actors to develop a value-critical intersubjective understanding that lessens suspicions of bias, reduces conflict, and encourages a pragmatic approach to decision-making (Allen et al., 2003; Cronin & Jackson, 2004). As noted, however, actors probably need to be inclined towards seeking engagement for these positive benefits to accrue, and this is a matter *both* of perspective and of how actors experience and respond to the particular process.

These findings are also significant in theoretical terms. A deliberative democratic approach assumes actors are motivated by more than narrow, competitive self-interest. Given a suitably deliberative forum, actors may be motivated to seek to understand and accommodate other actors' agendas and work towards achieving a common good. Actors who identified with the Subjective Compromisers perspective characterised their approach in those terms, as striking a balance between adherence to their own agendas and an obligation to seek common solutions to mutual problems. For Subjective Compromisers, planning and decision-making had the potential to be what Webler et al. (1995:461) call a "social learning" process rather than simply a matter of pursuing predetermined agendas. Yet the Neutral Executives and Objective Competitors perspectives indicate that some actors are more immune to deliberation and social learning, and more predisposed towards competitively pursuing individual claims. This is crucial, since social learning depends on *all* participants engaging in critical reflection, rather than just those participants who are willing to compromise. Consequently, the success of deliberative processes may depend on actors' perspectives as much as on processes that foster engagement and understanding. Any attempt to develop a deliberative process must therefore also seek to foster deliberative perspectives.

An approach to fostering a deliberative perspective

Actors should have opportunities to gain an intersubjective understanding of one another's agendas, constraints and imperatives, because this is the basis of communicatively rational agreements (Bohman, 1996; Kerr, 1997). As the Subjective Compromisers respondents' experiences demonstrate, actors who gain an intersubjective understanding are more motivated to seek compromises and to accept decisions as legitimate, and less inclined towards competitive, dominating, or manipulative behaviour. Opportunities for such understanding can be provided within statutory processes, such as resource consent applications, or sometimes, outside or prior to that statutory component. However, actors themselves must take advantage of those opportunities. Intersubjective understanding is possible without actors' substantive agreement to decisions, since as Subjective Compromisers demonstrate, some actors are motivated to gain understanding and reach agreement even in the absence of significant personal gains.

There are a number of potential obstacles to this response. Time is often short in planning and decision-making, particularly in statutory processes, yet communicative rationality requires time and space for reasoned deliberation and understanding. Councils have a central role in fostering such a deliberative environment, yet as the Chapter Two review shows, councils often adopt a do-the-minimum compliance mentality towards public participation. Additionally, where actors with a Neutral Executives or Objective Competitors perspective have sufficient influence, there may be little enthusiasm for fostering a more deliberative approach, or for responding positively to one. Some actors may remain unmotivated and opposed to agreement regardless of council efforts to foster deliberation. Thus, while council actors should aim for decision-making arrived at through meaningful engagement by all actors, they must also be prepared for ongoing conflicts and processes that potentially end in a stalemate.

In the next two sections I consider these obstacles in more detail as issues related to the Objective Competitors and Neutral Executives perspectives. Responses to those perspectives will draw on this finding about Subjective Compromisers and will extend the discussion on approaches to fostering a more deliberative perspective.

Finding Five: The integration of citizens' agendas is threatened by aspects of the Objective Competitors perspective

Objective Competitors adopt a competitive perspective that threatens the integration of their own and other actors' agendas because it is a potential obstacle to agreements based on communicative rationality and mutual understanding. Objective Competitors are very instrumental in seeing engagement and relationships as a means of gaining advantage for their private interests, whether or not they coincide with the wider public interest. They also have relatively fixed preferences (compared with other actors) and are reluctant to compromise or modify their agendas in order to accommodate other agendas. They have a positivist perspective that is less accepting of more subjective inputs. In contrast, Subjective Compromisers pursue compromises and are instrumental in engaging and maintaining relationships to that end. Objective Competitors tend to be quite adversarial and are more likely to oppose proposals or processes they disagree with than are Subjective Compromisers. This stance reflects their more compelling sense of the rightness and objectivity of their agendas.

Actors are likely to *bring* this Objective Competitors perspective to planning and decision-making and it is further *reinforced* or *moderated* by their experiences. Q-methodology is instructive in this respect; it assumes that the reconstructed perspectives reflect respondents' viewpoints at that point in time, based on their experiences and dispositions. At another time, in response to different experiences, actors may present a modified perspective or may even come to identify with a quite different perspective. Thus, actors have the potential to adopt a more deliberative approach in the future, perhaps in response to a more deliberative process. Objective Competitors respondents' experiences of the two wastewater processes, and their institutional location are also instructive in that most had more limited engagement with council actors than did Subjective Compromisers respondents. This negative experience reinforced their Objective Competitors perspective, whereas a more positive experience *may* have seen a factor emerge that was closer to the Subjective Compromisers perspective.

As noted, a single respondent had a mixed loading on the Objective Competitors and Subjective Compromisers factors. He was a Wanganui resident acting as a representative for a local 'watchdog' group. His view represented an interesting mix of Subjective Compromisers (who understood the importance of remaining engaged in order to exercise influence), and Objective Competitors (who felt marginalised, while

acknowledging that he risked co-option by engaging). This interpretation of the mixed loading supports the conclusion that the Objective Competitors perspective *may* be open to modification given a sound deliberative process.

Because Objective Competitors are generally less inclined to engage in a deliberative fashion, they are unlikely to gain sufficient intersubjective understanding of other actors' agendas, constraints and imperatives. This perspective can be self-reinforcing in the sense that actors are more likely to suspect bias if they have a poor understanding of other actors' motives (PCE, 2005b). Suspicion leads actors to engage in an adversarial fashion to protect their interests, thereby lessening the opportunities for gaining understanding (Solitare, 2005).

Such limited communication may also sustain conflicting procedural expectations. In the wastewater processes, for example, Objective Competitors respondents were disappointed about their level of influence, and responded with a hardening of their opposition. Had the councils been more inclusive, and particularly in the Palmerston North case, been more open about their agendas, then Objective Competitors respondents may have had more positive experiences. The New Zealand experience suggests most actors would respond favourably to an inclusive, deliberative approach (Hayward, 2000; Allen et al., 2002; PCE, 2005b). Therefore, it is possible that a modified, less adversarial Objective Competitors perspective would have appeared among actors in the two wastewater studies in response to a more inclusive process. This issue of causal relationships between actors' perspectives and experiences is discussed further in Finding Eight.

An Objective Competitors perspective presents a challenge to the central deliberative democratic assumption that actors' preferences are open to change if they can be encouraged to deliberate and seek mutual understanding. While there is potential for these actors to adopt a more deliberative perspective, the Objective Competitors perspective, which reveals a degree of intransigence among actors, clearly reflects elements of social choice theory, which assumes more fixed preferences and competitive behaviour. The single mixed loading on the Subjective Compromisers and Objective Competitors factors offers some prospect of change however. Here I consider the theoretical and practical implications of an Objective Competitors perspective for the goal of integrating citizens' agendas, and propose some responses.

The deliberative democratic assumptions underpinning my approach to the integration of citizens' agendas were set out in Chapter One, and can be summarised thus: Actors come to planning and decision-making with existing preferences that are open to change through a communicatively rational process that allows actors to gain a mutual intersubjective understanding of their own and other actors' agendas. Actors need to be willing to balance their private interests against the public interest (which may or may not coincide with their private interests) and be prepared to compromise in pursuit of agreement. These conditions will only be approximated in many situations because of institutional constraints and because of actors' perspectives and preferences.

Social choice theory challenges deliberative democratic theory in important respects that shed light on the Objective Competitors perspective. Social choice assumes that actors behave competitively; arguing from the position of fixed predetermined preferences that are mostly immune to change through deliberation and exposure to other agendas (Riker, 1982; Elster, 2003). Actors behave strategically when expressing their preferences and, at times, they may express false preferences and conceal information when seeking advantage (Forester, 1999).

I agree with Dryzek (1996:101), who argues from a deliberative democratic standpoint that "simple dismissal" of the social choice argument is an inadequate response. As the Objective Competitors perspective indicates, social choice and deliberative democracy both provide partial explanations for actors' democratic behaviour. Actors can choose to adopt a deliberative or competitive (or other) perspective, although their choices are underpinned by their existing perspectives and their experiences of planning and decision-making.

In the wastewater processes, the experiences of actors on the Objective Competitors and Subjective Compromisers factors largely tallied with their perspectives. Thus, Subjective Compromisers were motivated to compromise despite significant misgivings about the process and decision, while Objective Competitors remained opposed with similar misgivings. In those wastewater processes, actors' perspectives and experiences appeared to be largely mutually reinforcing. However, a more deliberative process *could* have facilitated a shift among Objective Competitors towards a perspective closer to Subjective Compromisers. The data were not clear about this (in particular, the single mixed loading on the Objective Competitors and Subjective Compromisers factor), and neither is the New Zealand evidence. Some commentators are optimistic that an inclusive approach motivates actors to adopt a public interest

perspective (Hayward, 2000; Allen et al., 2002; Tiakiwai et al., 2004; PCE, 2005b). Others caution that increased public participation sometimes leads to increased conflict (MFE, 1999a; LGNZ, 2004a-e).

The question is whether Objective Competitors' fixed preferences are really unamenable, or perhaps immune to change, regardless of their experiences of deliberation, or whether Objective Competitors can be encouraged to modify their approach? If the former is the case, then the deliberative democratic argument loses some practical applicability. Some deliberative theorists, such as Habermas (1996) and Cohen (2003) anticipate *transformation* of actors' preferences, while others argue this is too high a standard (Benhabib, 1996; Hayward, 2000). Most would agree that behaviour and preferences can at least be reformed, rather than transformed, by a sound deliberative process, so that collective, communicatively rational decision-making is possible (Young, 1995; Bohman, 1996; Dryzek, 1996).

It appears *most* actors in the wastewater studies would be at least *partly* motivated by deliberative conditions that encourage understanding and consensus seeking behaviour. Deliberative democratic theory suggests that this motive would also apply in wider populations. Probably there are no actors who have entirely static interests or intractable positions. Thus, while Objective Competitors are inclined to respond strategically and competitively, a simple social choice characterisation is overstated, since, as Dryzek (1996:93) observes:

...human subjectivity is better conceptualised in more open-ended and multidimensional terms, with different dimensions coming to the fore in different times and places, perhaps invoked by different institutional arrangements.

An Objective Competitors perspective does not invalidate the goals of deliberative democracy or integration of citizens' agendas; it simply makes them more difficult to attain. A shift in the Objective Competitors perspective is possible if deliberative processes encourage open, uncoerced communication and "reciprocal understanding and the coordination of actions" (Dryzek, 1996:112). In the next section I offer three responses to the Objective Competitors perspective.

Three responses to the problem of competitive perspectives

My first recommendation is a reiteration of the requirement for procedural clarity, and if possible, agreement. Establishing common procedural expectations in advance will reduce the potential for conflicts by obliging actors to be consistent with those expectations in their interactions. Clear expectations also provide decision-makers with some legitimate grounds on which to push ahead with decision-making. Procedural agreement enhances legitimacy because it requires all actors' acceptance of any rules, whether or not they correspond to their private interests. It also grants citizens some protection from unilateral or coercive dominant actors, particularly those able to use their institutional location as a powerful veto point.

However, even where it is achievable, procedural agreement may not satisfy some Objective Competitors because they are closely focused on substantive success for their agendas. These actors are more likely than Subjective Compromisers to withdraw from processes or oppose decisions, which will also put them at odds with Neutral Executives, who are focused on decision-making.

A second option counters this Objective Competitors response by seeking to establish behavioural norms that encourage a public interest perspective and discourage overly competitive behaviour. A number of democratic theorists, including Bohman (1996), Dryzek (1990, 2000) and Benhabib (1996) argue that almost all actors can be encouraged to seek out common ground because deliberative processes have intrinsic qualities that discourage overly competitive behaviour. Pellizzoni (2001:66) maintains that "a sincere perspective towards the common good" can be fostered through attention to behavioural norms. In the Wanganui wastewater process, for example, the Council was open about its requirement for an ocean discharge solution, and committed to engaging directly with citizens in deliberating over possible options. These qualities countered the risk of the council appearing biased or predetermined, and encouraged intersubjective understanding of the issues and agendas.

As seen in Chapters Four and Five, once actors in the Wanganui process were around the table, they were motivated to focus on seeking common ground²⁹. This was the experience of the single citizen-respondent loading on both Objective Competitors and Subjective Compromisers factors. As Benhabib argues:

²⁹ The sole exception was that actor, located on the Objective Competitors factor, who withdrew from formal involvement early in the process.

...the very process of articulating a view in public imposes a certain reflexivity on individual preferences and opinions...[and] forces the individual to think of what would count as a good reason for all others involved. One is thus forced to think from the standpoint of all involved for whose agreement one is 'wooing' (1996:72).

Once actors have advanced their claims in terms of a public interest, they will probably feel constrained to appear consistent and to publicly support decisions based on those claims. Actors' preferences may remain fixed, but the deliberative setting provides further motives (better chances of success for their agendas) and constraining norms (the need to appear impartial and consistent) that lead actors to modify their claims, and then commit to decisions and outcomes (Elster, 1998; Dryzek, 2000). In this instance, a procedural agreement has been reached where actors agree to attempt to seek consensus and to focus on defining the public interest. This is arguably a loss of rights, in that it requires attention to some form of good. However, the thrust of this approach remains procedural, in that the actors themselves elect to pursue the particular end. An approach such as this may require independent facilitation, but it is also facilitates decision-making by avoiding deadlocked processes.

The third response applies where it becomes apparent that a consensus is not achievable, or perhaps where the process is deadlocked. Then, facilitators or the actors themselves might elect to shift to a more instrumental, adversarial approach that still allows decision-making. Smith and Blanc (1997) suggest that a mediated form of competitive bargaining can sometimes accommodate competitive actors more successfully than an approach based on seeking understanding. It may also protect actors where, as discussed in Chapter One, there are power imbalances between bargaining groups. Successful mediated bargaining hinges on parties tempering their self-interest and not seeking strategic advantage, in recognition of the value of decision-making based on compromise (Forester, 1999). Such an approach may have offered more promise of a consensual process in the Wastewater 2006 process in Palmerston North, which was marred by ongoing adversarial conflicts. A bargaining approach must still offer some degree of satisfaction to all actors, and it must be closely mediated to restrict conflict. Bargaining does not necessarily entail any change in actors' agendas; rather, actors negotiate with the aim of compromise and agreement on a course of action rather than winning and losing (Smith & Blanc, 1997). This approach is very often what mediation aims to achieve, in the absence of changed preferences.

One risk of a competitive approach is that it alienates more deliberative actors such as Subjective Compromisers, or puts them at a competitive disadvantage. Mediation is critical for addressing such inequalities between actors. A further risk of a competitive approach is that the quality of decision-making suffers because, without deliberation, actors do not gain such a sound understanding of one another's agendas. An agreement based on intersubjective understanding is more likely to persuade actors of the merits of alternative arguments, whereas this approach is closer to competitive manoeuvring.

Each of the three responses offered here seeks to accommodate Objective Competitors' relatively fixed preferences and competitive behaviour, rather than simply object to them on democratic or normative grounds. These options will be considered further in the concluding chapter's summary of possible approaches to balancing effective integration and decision-making.

Finding Six: The integration of citizens' agendas is threatened by aspects of the Neutral Executives perspective

Neutral Executives emphasise the 'executive' activities of making and implementing decisions, over other activities such as public participation and advocacy, which are priorities for the other two factors. This perspective is a potential barrier to the integration of citizens' agendas because it elevates efficient decision-making over effective participation. Such a perspective can prevent other actors from participating meaningfully, thereby lowering the quality of deliberation and decision-making. Where council actors identify with this perspective, as in the two wastewater processes, they are likely to privilege decision-making and seek to ensure it is not impeded by participatory processes.

As with other perspectives, the Neutral Executives perspective reflects a mix of actors' existing perspectives and their experiences of planning and decision-making. In the two wastewater processes most Neutral Executives respondents were councillors and council officers. This indicated firstly, that councillors and council officers had more in common than separating them in terms of their perspectives on the issues under study; and secondly, that there was a strong connection between council actors' viewpoints and the Neutral Executives perspective. Not surprisingly then, this perspective also

reflects those mainstream views on planning and decision-making described in Chapter Two.

However, a small number of non-council actors also identified with the Neutral Executives perspective – three citizens who had all worked very closely with councils and had representative roles in their own organisations were in this position. Similarly, council actors may adopt a more inclusive, deliberative perspective as with the single councillor on the Subjective Compromisers factor. There were differences in the approaches taken by councils in the two wastewater studies. The Wanganui process was, in some respects, more deliberative and inclusive, and this was reflected in citizens' more positive perceptions of that process. It is quite possible that in a different study, more council actors would cluster with other actors around a more deliberative perspective.

The Neutral Executives perspective represents a potential obstacle to the integration of citizens' agendas in a range of ways. As presented in Chapter Five, Neutral Executives believe councils should be prepared to limit citizens' influence where necessary, and citizens should put aside their particular preferences in support of council-led decisions. Consequently, when council actors identify with this perspective, there will be fewer opportunities for all actors to gain an understanding of other agendas and constraints. Consultation will be undertaken primarily as a means of informing citizens and legitimising decisions (although in some situations, being informed is all councils require of citizens). Neutral Executives are concerned to comply with their consultative obligations and to maintain the appearance of legitimacy. Nevertheless, as in the wastewater processes, council actors who identify with this perspective may also restrict debates and maintain a narrow technical and biophysical focus, in order to avoid more contentious issues and to streamline public consultation.

Responses to the privileging of decision-making imperatives

My first response is to briefly reiterate the earlier recommendation that councils and other actors must establish clear procedural expectations, and if possible, agreements that grant citizens some procedural and substantive influence. Influence will motivate citizens to seek compromise, and offers them some protection from councils' marginalisation of citizens' agendas. However, council actors who identify with the Neutral Executives perspective also want to pursue decision-making without the delays that often come from additional public involvement. This council focus partly explains

why conflicts are often sparked by actors' different procedural expectations. Without some ability to influence processes and outcomes, it is difficult for citizens' agendas to be taken into account, and citizens may not accept the legitimacy of decisions (Frame et al., 2004).

Closely linked to that response, I also reiterate the recommendation that councils should encourage actors' engagement and mutual understanding as the basis of decision-making. Neutral Executives will need to be convinced of the value of such an investment in time and resources, particularly given the ever-present public and political concerns about the length of resource consent processes. In the long run, however, communicatively rational decisions will save time because actors are more likely to support decisions (rather than object or appeal) if their concerns have been acknowledged, and if they gain an understanding of other actors' agendas and constraints. Encouraging citizens' buy-in to processes, particularly at the early stages of process design and agenda-setting (including time prior to statutory processes) can pay off for councils in smoother, more durable decision-making. Where council actors can maintain citizens' buy-in, they are in a position to pursue substantive agreements that citizens can accept as legitimate. For this, Neutral Executives need to be convinced of the value of granting citizens sufficient influence, and Objective Competitors need to see the value in seeking compromise.

A third possible response addresses these obstacles arising from actors' perspectives. Where a stronger substantive agreement is not forthcoming, actors could seek compromise on the course of action that is the best solution to the problem, and that all actors *freely consent to*. This is broadly what Simon (1957) would have described as a 'satisficing' outcome; that is, an outcome which actors will be happy enough with, rather than a maximising outcome. Actors should be able to agree on the most acceptable course of action even if they personally prefer an alternative solution. This still requires actors to tackle substantive issues, but works by appealing to their sense of responsibility to reach a compromise solution. Thus, actors might begin by establishing procedural rules and agreeing on the nature of the substantive problem. Having reached an understanding of each other's views, actors should seek the solution collectively judged as the best legitimate response to everyone's concerns, even while individuals might personally oppose particular aspects of that solution. In terms of wastewater planning, for example, such an agreement might include incentives for waste minimisation, or monetary or other forms of compensation for citizens who accept a solution that disadvantages them more than others. Here,

procedural legitimacy becomes very important in the absence of full substantive agreement, particularly to guard against power imbalances among actors.

This option illustrates the benefits of adopting a deliberative approach similar to the Subjective Compromisers perspective. Subjective Compromisers respondents in the wastewater processes accepted agreements of this order, despite disagreeing with aspects of the solution, because they were broadly satisfied with the legitimacy of the two processes. Intersubjective understanding and value-criticality are important because actors need to acknowledge the validity of other viewpoints and the situated nature of their own agendas (Schon & Rein, 1994; Pellizzoni, 2001) before they can agree on a common problem and search for the best common response. As the research demonstrates, however, Objective Competitors and Neutral Executives may resist such a degree of communicative rationality. Neutral Executives would probably see this approach as facilitating decision-making, but would be concerned about councils committing to sharing a degree of authority. Objective Competitors would also want any agreement to advance their substantive claims.

My fourth response addresses situations where compromise or consensus is not attainable, but decisions are still required. Sometimes, actors simply cannot or will not agree, so decision-making cannot be dependent on gaining agreement from all actors. Thus, while councils should seek to take account of citizens' agendas, councils should have a policy on when it is legitimate to override public opinion and to make decisions unilaterally or coercively (Mansbridge, 1996).

This is a potentially controversial response, but the context for such a response is important. As discussed in Chapters One and Two, this research is bounded by a particular context – that of a representative democratic decision-making system where authority can be devolved but is only occasionally shared to any significant extent; and of a statutory decision-making context where decisions must be made within tight timeframes and following a broad prescription for consultation. A more participatory or more deliberative democratic approach would likely reject such constraints, but *within* this context of decision-making imperatives, such approaches may not always be possible as a response to more intransigent public opposition.

At present, approximately ninety-five percent of resource consents are non-notified, so they will already proceed without public consultation. Although some of those decisions to not notify are probably questionable, many will relate to issues that are not

controversial. Where consultation is required, participation does not always need to be extensive; for example, there will be situations where actors agree that public involvement is not necessary, such as on unproblematic technical issues. Councils certainly do need to take account of their obligations under the LGA 2002 with regard to public participation, and they should strive for decisions that are legitimate and durable. This recommendation simply prevents actors from being able to hold processes ‘to ransom’ and allows councils to respond to imperatives such as financial and time commitments.

The chief caveat is that, as demonstrated in Chapter Two, New Zealand councils often pay lip-service to consultation, which is seen as secondary to decision-making. Consultation lacks communicative rationality, and as in the wastewater processes, is vulnerable to manipulation by powerful institutional actors such as councils, in pursuit of their own interests. Thus, citizens already often feel forced to exercise influence through formal objections because they feel excluded from the production of those decisions. Where council actors identify with the Neutral Executives perspective, they may be relatively unconcerned by citizens’ sense of disenfranchisement, because their focus is on decision-making. But if councils are to be encouraged to facilitate the integration of citizens’ agendas, then these issues need to be addressed in a way that protects citizens’ ability to participate and advocate. The risk of endorsing councils’ overriding of public opinion in situations of intractable conflict (which councils potentially already do), is that citizens’ ability to participate may be less well-protected.

The next two findings return to issues common to all three perspectives, and that probably relate to all actors in planning and decision-making generally. They concern the role of actors’ perspectives in conflicts, and consider how those perspectives might be modified in order to resolve those conflicts.

Finding Seven: Tensions between actors’ perspectives are a barrier to the integration of citizens’ agendas

The six preceding findings demonstrate that conflicts between actors’ conflicting perspectives, and among the *procedural* and *epistemological* dimensions of actors’ perspectives, are often a critical, but under-recognised barrier to the integration of citizens’ agendas. Clashes between actors are typically viewed as conflicts between substantive agendas such as environmental, business and ratepayer interests.

Similarly, actual debates tend to focus on substantive matters such as facts and figures. However, in these findings the main distinctions between factors and between achieving an integrative process stem from differences in actors' underlying perspectives. This suggests that a focus on the substance partly misses the point, since many conflicts may be equally rooted in tensions between different perspectives.

The implication of this finding is that many conflicts will only be satisfactorily resolved once actors refocus and pay attention to underlying perspectives. This is problematic because actors are often closely focused on pursuing their substantive agendas. As noted, perspectives are often implicit and unexamined, making refocusing difficult. And on many epistemological issues it is difficult to draw a clear distinction between a substantive agenda and the perspective underpinning that agenda. For example, a scientific claim that is being advanced may be closely informed by an underlying perspective on the value of scientific expertise. This does not invalidate attention to perspectives since the critical issue is to acknowledge how perspectives *inform* the overt agendas that actors pursue. It would be profitable for actors to step back and consider the contribution of these underlying epistemological and procedural issues. Consequently, these responses focus on rendering perspectives (and tensions between them) explicit, as a critical element in understanding and resolving many conflicts.

Where there *is* a broad consensus on a shared substantive agenda, there is less conflict. This is obvious, since a substantive consensus (for example, on the need to rehabilitate the Whanganui River) usually eliminates most substantive conflicts. However, in the absence of such consensus, tensions about underlying perspectives often surface. Conflicting views on issues such as actors' levels of influence, or what counts as a legitimate input will become more apparent and important as actors focus on pursuing their particular interests. This appeared to be the case in Palmerston North, where actors were split over issues such as costs and effects, and where conflicting perspectives became more apparent. As conflicts arose, so differences in actors' views about issues such as council neutrality and predetermination became more important. Then, a Subjective Compromisers perspective may be more influential in achieving a compromise, while an Objective Competitors perspective may be more likely to lead to an ongoing stalemate.

It seems likely that many actors would disagree with this finding on the importance of underlying perspectives to the integration of citizens' agendas. Most respondents from

the wastewater processes expressed little interest in the process apart from where it had impacted on their ability to advance their substantive agendas. This reflects Schon and Rhein (1994) and Wolsink's (2004) arguments that perspectives are mostly tacit and their contribution to conflicts unrecognised. Yet, as the different experiences of actors on the Objective Competitors and Subjective Compromisers factors demonstrate, underlying perspectives on issues such as types of knowledge or the importance of relationships are central to their differing views on the legitimacy of processes and outcomes. Hendriks (2005) notes that deliberative theorists often judge the legitimacy of a process against external "normative accounts of deliberative democracy", yet it is actors' *own* perceptions of legitimacy and their willingness to endorse outcomes that are often critical to a successful process. Their perceptions of legitimacy, in turn, are closely tied to the extent that a process resonates with their underlying "participatory storylines" (ibid.) or perspectives.

This problem comes back to the issue of rendering perspectives explicit so that actors' can gain an intersubjective understanding. As Smith (2006) found, conflicts can quickly become dichotomised and oppositional when actors have clashing underlying perspectives that prevent resolution because of a misunderstanding of one another's positions. The following responses focus on countering such incorrect assumptions among actors, so that space is opened up for finding common ground on substantive issues.

A response on the importance of attending to processes

The findings in this chapter illustrate the tendency for actors to underestimate the importance of participatory processes, and to regard them as something to be complied with in pursuit of substantive decision-making. I have argued that closer attendance to processes (as opposed to substance/content) is necessary because their contribution to conflicts is not well understood. As Hendriks (2005:14) observes:

Stories present deliberative practitioners with a window into how people understand and operate in the world, their stakes, interests and expectations (Forester, 1999). When we listen to "practice stories" we tend to concentrate on the more obvious accounts, especially those that relate to the *content* of policy. Our hearing, however, is often quite impaired when it comes to stories about *process*, such as who participates in policy development and how. But...in

some contexts productive deliberation hinges on our sensitivity to these more subtle storylines.

These procedural storylines or perspectives need to be rendered explicit through value-critical communication, so that actors can understand one another's different descriptions of common problems and possible solutions.

Finding Eight: Actors' perspectives, experiences and structural location are all critical elements in the integration of citizens' agendas

The final finding is that actors *bring* perspectives to the planning and decision-making process and those perspectives are *reinforced* or *modified* by their experiences and structural location. This finding has been foreshadowed in the previous findings, but it is significant because it demonstrates the importance of attention to processes that foster a deliberative perspective among actors. The finding demonstrates that conflicts are likely to be lessened where actors have a positive experience of processes and outcomes. However the finding also demonstrates that a good process is no guarantee of a positive response from actors, since some actors are less inclined to behave deliberatively in response to deliberative processes. Some actors are also more likely to be able to exercise control over processes and outcomes, due to their institutional roles (for example, most Neutral Executives in this study were council actors). However, this finding is more speculative than the other findings in that there is not sufficient evidence from the research to infer the relative importance of actors' perspectives, experiences or structural location, or the direction of the causal relationship between those elements. As discussed in Chapters One and Two, the primary focus of this research is on the phenomenon of actors' perspectives, which are likely to exist in some form other populations.

As discussed in Chapter Three, factors are simply an operationalisation of actors' subjective perspectives on an issue at a particular point in time. In response to their experiences, actors may shift from one perspective to another, or can come to cluster around new or modified perspectives. For example, some actors who identified with a Subjective Compromisers perspective at the time of the research could, in another setting, cluster around a perspective that was not previously revealed, but is less deliberative. Q-method research shows that sometimes actors' perspectives (e.g. political attitudes) change in response to experiences (Freie, 1997); at other times, on other issues, they are resistant to change (Pelletier et al., 1999). This may be

particularly the case with deeply held values, such as religious beliefs (Brown, pers. comm. 20 September 2006).

The research findings and evidence from the two wastewater processes demonstrate the impacts of perspectives, experiences and structural location, but not a simple causal relationship. Actors' experiences were certainly critical in this example: Subjective Compromisers respondents experienced both planning processes as more deliberative than did Objective Competitors respondents. Positive experiences reinforced Subjective Compromisers' deliberative perspective and encouraged a sense of ownership and legitimacy. Conversely, Objective Competitors' negative experiences reinforced their more competitive and adversarial perspective, and in some cases, encouraged their ongoing opposition. The assumption here is that actors bring existing perspectives to the process; actors do not arrive with completely unformed views on process, epistemology or substantive issues, although their views on some issues are likely to be poorly articulated. Nor do actors' perspectives spring newly formed from their experiences of the process, although actors may find themselves considering some issues (such as their roles and responsibilities in the particular process) for the first time.

Institutional location also appeared important. While actors from both Subjective Compromisers and Objective Competitors perspectives were involved in both processes, there was some evidence that Subjective Compromisers respondents were afforded greater opportunities for deliberation, due to their membership of formal planning groups and the stronger sense of inclusion this afforded them. This different treatment reinforced their different perspectives, and demonstrated the value of a more inclusive and deliberative process, and the importance of the institutional location of actors. Similarly, Neutral Executives respondents were all council actors with ability to control some veto points. It is reasonable to conclude that where actors who have such agency also cluster around a particular perspective, that perspective will be reflected in aspects of the process and outcomes.

There was also evidence that the Palmerston North process was the less deliberative of the two. Most Objective Competitors respondents were from the Palmerston North study (but so were a number of Subjective Compromisers respondents). It seems reasonable to conclude that the Palmerston North process would have benefited from being more deliberative, but would also have avoided some conflict if some actors had not identified so closely with the Objective Competitors perspective. Equally, however,

those actors clustering around the Objective Competitors perspective may have modified their approach if they had experienced a more deliberative process in Palmerston North. As noted in Chapter Three, Q-methodology is instructive in respect of this issue. Brown (2002) observes that sometimes factors are identifiably related to demographic characteristics, for example, a particular perspective is present in one location but not another, or among one occupational group but not another. At other times, factors do not bear any relationship to actors' structural locations. Each perspective demonstrably exists, but it is not always explainable in terms of categories such as demographic characteristics.

These examples demonstrate the combined impact of experiences, institutional location and perspectives. Objective Competitors and Subjective Compromisers both *disagreed* with the same two final decisions, yet they responded quite differently. Objective Competitors perceived the two processes as predetermined and biased, and they remained adamantly opposed to the two final decisions, to the point where some of those actors chose to object formally. In contrast, actors on the Subjective Compromisers factor perceived the processes as legitimate, and they chose to support both final decisions despite disagreeing with them. Both groups of actors justified their different final positions as the correct response, reflecting their different perspectives.

Thus, it is worth pursuing a deliberative process because many actors are encouraged to act more deliberately. Yet there are also actors who are less easily influenced by their experiences. I agree with Hendriks (2005) that actors bring their existing narratives and attitudes towards participation to the process, and these can be unchanged or challenged or reinforced by their experiences. The fieldwork evidence shows that attention to perspectives, experiences and structural locations is critical in pursuit of effective integration of citizens' agendas.

Conclusion

These eight findings concern the tensions between actors' perspectives, and their influence on the integration of citizens' agendas in local government environmental planning and decision-making. Aspects of these findings have attracted prior research in New Zealand, but most of the research reviewed in Chapter Two addresses issues of formal institutional arrangements and statutory practices, or the substantive issues and agendas themselves. There is a significant gap in the literature on actors'

perspectives on planning and decision-making and their impact on integration of citizens' agendas, as defined in Chapter One.

A significant aspect of these findings is that obstacles to the integration of citizens' agendas are often a result of very persistent epistemological and procedural conflicts. Such conflicts distract actors from seeking understanding and compromise, and present disincentives to actors seeking common ground. Additionally, the root causes of these conflicts are often in clashes between actors' underlying perspectives. Yet the tacit, unacknowledged nature of those perspectives is a barrier to conflict resolution. Actors are closely focused on substantive debates, so underlying epistemological and procedural tensions attract little attention. Yet goals such as becoming value-critical and establishing clear procedural agreement require considerable time and attention.

Actors' perspectives are clearly a significant barrier to resolving conflicts. Resolution will often involve the modification of actors' perspectives, yet some actors and their interests will benefit more (in terms of their agendas) from the status quo, or will be unwilling to critically examine their own values and preferences even though they may be contributors to conflicts. Additionally, as the fieldwork demonstrates, some actors are very closely wedded to ideas like the importance of neutrality and objectivity, and will see incentives to masking any alternative appearance.

A clear overall finding from this research is that all actors need to attend more closely to procedural arrangements, and for this, they require guidance on how to move forward in situations where conflicts limit the effective integration of citizens' agendas. I have addressed this in this chapter by offering a number of practical recommendations in response to each of the findings. In the concluding chapter, I will revisit the deliberative conditions for effective integration that were set out in Chapter One, in light of the findings in this chapter. I will summarise those findings and draw out some further practical recommendations for planning and decision-making practices, as well as areas for further research.

Chapter Seven – Conclusion

Introduction

This thesis examined conflicts in environmental planning and decision-making, focusing on tensions between actors' perspectives as a barrier to the effective integration of citizens' agendas. It also examined areas of opportunity for improving effective integration. In taking this focus, the research identified issues that have not been adequately addressed by existing research, and grappled with questions such as those posed by Bickerstaff and Walker (2005:2140):

At the heart of...tensions around issues of inclusion, consultation fatigue, power inequalities and the dearth of practical outcomes, lie the difficult and unresolved linkages between representative and participatory governance. What is the 'democratic' balance to be struck between formal politics and civil society, informing and listening to the public, professional and lay expertise, conflict and consensus? These are tensions that have not been adequately grappled with in policy arenas.

"Balances" must indeed be struck, as Bickerstaff and Walker (*ibid.*) argue, between representative democracy and a more participatory approach that takes better account of the diverse agendas, aims and expertise of different sectors of society, in decision-making. This study draws on deliberative democratic theory for its normative prescription for the effective integration of citizens' agendas into environmental planning and decision-making.

A key finding of this research is that there are obstacles to the effective integration of citizens' agendas, and that these are often a consequence of conflicts between actors' perspectives, as much as a consequence of conflicts over substantive issues such as technicalities, costs and physical effects. Yet actors' underlying perspectives have gone largely unrecognised by researchers and particularly by practitioners as a critical obstacle to more deliberative practices. This study addresses that lack of research attention to this important dimension of planning and decision-making.

This concluding chapter summarises the research findings and draw conclusions about the conditions required for the effective integration of citizens' agendas. It sets out theoretical and practical responses aimed at resolving the tensions between actors'

perspectives. Throughout the chapter I maintain a productive connection between the findings, theory and practice by offering practical responses informed by deliberative democratic theory. I finish by identifying a number of critical areas in which this research could be usefully extended in future studies.

Summary of thesis and key arguments

In Chapter One I discussed the challenge of integration of citizens' agendas, and introduced the potential problem of a lack of integration. From a deliberative democratic perspective, effective integration requires citizens have genuine opportunities to provide input and to influence processes and outcomes. For such effective integration, I identified a number of deliberative conditions that should be fulfilled if possible. It appeared from international evidence that these conditions are difficult to fulfil. It was also clear that the challenge of integration has not been adequately researched in the context of New Zealand local government environmental planning and decision-making. Consequently, I posed this research question:

What influences the integration of citizens' agendas in environmental planning and decision-making in New Zealand local government?

I also asked this subsidiary question:

What opportunities for more effective integration are revealed by this research?

I provisionally argued that the issues influencing integration arise in three areas: First, the local government institutional context often constrains public involvement through formal limitations such as statutory time frames and legal consultation requirements. Second, tensions between actors' substantive agendas provide an obvious point of conflict that may obstruct an effective integrative process. These two areas are quite well understood in the literature and in practice.

The third area is poorly understood; actors' underlying perspectives have a significant impact on the integration of citizens' agendas, yet they have attracted very little research attention. Actors often have strongly conflicting perspectives on issues such as the level of influence citizens should exercise, or the value of different types of knowledge. These conflicts prevent citizens from participating in a meaningful way and

lead to the exclusion of some agendas. This problem is particularly apparent where powerful institutional actors and orthodox agendas are dominant. The problem is also most acute in situations where a specific decision is required on a physical resource issue, such as an irreversible decision on a wastewater scheme. Such decision-making frequently creates a point of tension where exclusion and privileging occur, and where actors are likely to be at their most competitive and uncooperative. The effective integration of citizens' agendas is likely to be most difficult to achieve in exactly those situations where it is most important; that is, in situations where decisions have significant consequences for some citizens.

Chapter Two reviewed the literature in the New Zealand context. Almost all of this scholarship has focused on the statutory context and institutional practices and on conflicts between substantive agendas. Very little attention has been paid to actors' perspectives. The limited scholarship indicated that this could be treated as a coherent problem for this empirical enquiry, and this focus would be an important point of originality for this research.

The methodology was set out in Chapter Three, including the use of Q-methodology, which provides the second important point of originality. Q-methodology is a technique for the statistical and qualitative modelling of actors' subjective perspectives on a particular issue. It is suited to studies such as this, where a problem has been identified but its underlying causes are not well understood. Q-methodology has had very little use in New Zealand, and at the time of the research, no utilisation in research on local government. In this study Q-methodology is combined with qualitative interviews and documentary research in a study of wastewater planning processes.

The two local government wastewater planning processes are described in Chapter Four. These planning processes were illustrative of many of the problems concerning a lack of effective integration of citizens' agendas as well as some of the possibilities for better democratic practices. The fieldwork confirmed the importance of actors' perspectives as sources of conflict. It also enabled me to anchor the enquiry in specific empirical settings from which to draw inferences about wider planning and decision-making practices.

Chapter Five presented the results of Q-methodology and statistical factor analysis in the form of three 'factors'. Each factor described a whole subjective perspective on planning and decision-making that was present, at that time, among the actors in the

two wastewater studies. Each factor comprised actors' substantive agendas and a set of epistemological and procedural views (a 'perspective') on planning and decision-making.

Chapter Six presented the theoretical and practical implications of these data. Eight findings were presented on the tensions between actors' perspectives, and on their influence on the effective integration of citizens' agendas. Tensions between actors' perspectives were found to constitute significant obstacles to effective integration, yet they tend to be overlooked by actors in planning and decision-making as well as by researchers and commentators. Factor analysis revealed that many conflicts are driven by underlying epistemological and procedural tensions, and these tensions are often as important as conflicts over substantive agendas. Those perspectives and the sometimes-conflicting, sometimes overlapping relationships between them are represented diagrammatically below in Figure 9. For each finding I offered theoretical and practical responses for resolving the tensions that limit effective integration.

		Epistemological Dimension	
		Positivist Objectivist	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks single best answers • Prizes neutrality, objectivity and expertise 	
Procedural Dimension	Deliberative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative • Consensus / compromise-seeking • Accommodates procedural difference • Remains engaged in pursuit of compromise 		Social choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-determined • Adversarial and competitive • Less inclined to compromise • More focused on private interest
		Subjective	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intersubjective understanding • Value-critical • Accommodates epistemological difference • May be stubborn about strongly held beliefs 	

Figure 9: The theorised relationships between actors' perspectives

Seven conditions for the effective integration of citizens' agendas

Following the research findings and responses in Chapter Six it is now possible to draw conclusions about the potential for effective integration of citizens' agendas, and to clearly identify any obstacles to that goal. In this section I present a set of seven conditions that are required for a deliberative democratic approach to effective integration. This section returns to the four conditions that were proposed in Chapter One and that have provided a working definition for effective integration throughout the thesis. Those conditions are now modified in response to the findings, and three further conditions are added.

In terms of effective integration, the optimum outcome is that all seven conditions are in place. Essentially, this requires that decision-making is based on a full procedural and substantive agreement arrived at through a communicatively rational process and mutual understanding between actors of each other's agendas, constraints and imperatives. Consensus of this order would not require citizens' control of decision-making, although that is a possibility. Rather, it assumes actors have agreed on the problem and possible responses, and what impacts any decisions may have (Healey, 1997). Any decision then needs to be accepted by all actors as procedurally legitimate and authoritative and substantively persuasive (Young, 1995; Hayward, 2000).

Table 27: Seven conditions for the effective integration of citizens' agendas

<i>1. Citizens should have genuine opportunities to provide input and to influence processes and outcomes.</i>
<i>2. All actors should have clear procedural expectations and where possible, should reach agreement on processes, roles and levels of influence.</i>
<i>3. Procedural and substantive agreements should be based on actors' mutual, intersubjective understanding of each other's agendas, constraints and imperatives.</i>
<i>4. The integration of citizens' agendas should not prevent necessary decision-making from proceeding.</i>
<i>5. Citizens should be able to accept decisions as having authority if they are based on a process that is seen as integrative and therefore legitimate.</i>
<i>6. Councils should champion behaviours and processes that contribute to effective integration.</i>
<i>7. Where appropriate, participatory processes should be independently facilitated.</i>

First condition: Citizens should have genuine opportunities to provide input and to influence processes and outcomes.

Citizens need to feel their participation is meaningful, in that they have opportunities to provide input that is taken into account and that influences, but does not necessarily dictate decision-making. Under these conditions, citizens are more likely to remain engaged and have a sense of buy-in. As the Subjective Compromisers perspective demonstrates, these opportunities discourage competitive behaviour and encourage actors to seek intersubjective understanding as the basis of common solutions.

Councils should aim to ensure citizens have such opportunities by providing the space and time for engagement and by adopting an open-minded and value-critical perspective towards input. However, obstacles arise where council actors identify with the Neutral Executives perspective, because they are less willing to allow citizens sufficient influence, and where citizens identify with the Objective Competitors perspective, they resist compromises. Goodwin (1989:495) views the provision of genuine opportunities for citizens' input and influence thus:

...any programme aiming to mobilize consent may also have to ensure that people have the institutional framework and resources required to act upon the knowledge they generate and receive, and to be heard as well as consulted. The more 'effective' role of participation may thus be much more elusive and uncertain, focusing on participation as a process in which the objectives and actions are not settled in advance, but emerge from the act of participation itself.

Where councils do share some influence, citizens must be alert to the risk that deliberation becomes coercive, for example, through councils' rhetorical appeals to the public interest. This reinforces the importance of protecting citizens' ability to advocate and have their agendas taken into account. Independent facilitators can support citizens in situations where council actors are coercive. Independent facilitation is also critical in guarding against dominating behaviour by powerful actors within participatory structures. Lowndes and Sullivan (2004:61) caution that such structures can become a "new corporatism" where less powerful sub-groups are marginalised by other powerful actors.

Obstacles also arise when Neutral Executives and Objective Competitors privilege objective knowledge. This is problematic because *all* actors must be prepared to treat lay and local knowledge and other more subjective inputs as legitimate inputs if citizens are to have meaningful opportunities for input and influence. This is not to say that all inputs are of equal value or utility. Nevertheless, all actors need to engage open-mindedly, be value-critical, and seek a degree of intersubjective understanding of other actors' agendas. The incentive to adopt such a deliberative perspective is that it speeds and smoothes planning processes, and produces more legitimate, widely-supported and durable decisions. Council actors have a central role in encouraging and modelling a deliberative approach. However, a critical sticking point is that council actors may be among those who most strenuously resist such a shift in perspective, indicating that independent facilitation is required.

There are likely to be significant obstacles to a more deliberative approach where actors with less-deliberative perspectives occupy powerful institutional locations. As Lowndes (2002:100) observes, institutions embody power relations by privileging certain courses of action over others and by including certain actors and excluding others". Lowndes further notes, however, that institutions evolve over time, and in "unpredictable ways as actors seek to make sense of new or ambiguous situations, ignore or even contravene existing rules, or try to adapt them to favour their own interests" (ibid:100). In local government, where policy networks may be less well-formed or permanent, and where there are fewer disciplines of the type associated with central government and party politics, there are likely to be more opportunities for a deliberative shift. Reid (2005:13) observes that policy-making in New Zealand local government is relatively "dispersed" because the lack of strong party affiliations, caucus politics and central ideology "creates a degree of openness with regard to the shaping of policy agendas". Thus, the opportunity for a deliberative shift remains.

That dispersed nature of local government is now allied with a closer emphasis on community participation under the LGA 2002. The statutory institutional context for much local government planning has changed, even while actors within that context may continue to downplay the importance of public participation. As Thomas and Memon (2007:181) observe of the LGA 2002:

The new statute creates a space for actors outside of the mainstream of public policy institutions to participate. The introduction of the new purpose for local government, the community engagement provisions and general empowerment

provisions reduce obstacles in the agenda setting process and remove excuses for keeping issues off the local policy agenda, because mechanisms are provided to make it easier for communities to identify issues and have them recognised. With 86 territorial authorities engaged with their communities in this manner, there are more opportunities for policy windows to open. If the number of dispersed policy sites is greater, then it is more likely that policy might be influenced since more policy communities are interacting together to produce the coincidences and convergences among actors that drive change...Local authorities will be more active players with regard to all kinds of local policy issues, but it is still perhaps too early to judge whether the LGA will lead to better outcomes for community well-being.

These changed institutional settings will influence actors' perspectives over time, and are also likely to filter through to change the mainstream approach to planning under the RMA over time.

Second condition: All actors should have clear procedural expectations and where possible, should reach agreement on processes, roles and levels of influence.

The New Zealand experience and these research findings demonstrate the importance of actors having clear shared procedural expectations, particularly of one another's roles and levels of influence. This goes to the 'governance' aspect of actors' perspectives. Where possible, actors should reach *agreement* on processes, by involving citizens early on in developing ground rules and terms of reference for planning processes. Such involvement guards against citizens gaining unrealistic expectations of influence, and provides them with some protection from manipulation by dominant actors. It also allows citizens to make good decisions about how and when to engage. As Borrie et al (2005:28) argue:

There is the potential for "death by consultation". For that reason consultation needs to be co-ordinated and its purpose made clear to the wider public/community who can then determine the relevance and implication of each consultative process and whether or not they wish to participate.

Clarity of expectations should be achievable, but procedural agreement is problematic because it requires those institutional actors who are able to exercise veto over processes, to involve citizens in the design of processes, and perhaps to influence

outcomes. Council actors should take primary responsibility for facilitating procedural agreements, because they are responsible for initiating and coordinating planning and decision-making processes.

Procedural agreement is difficult to achieve where actors have conflicting views on what is important. Objective Competitors and Neutral Executives are very focused on the substance of decision-making and give less priority to deliberative activities. Neutral Executives also believe councils should retain independent control of processes and outcomes. Both groups of actors tend to assume that some differences among actors may be insurmountable. Thus, they are inclined to behave like 'partisans' (Schon & Rein, 1994) who behave competitively rather than seeking opportunities for agreement or compromise.

Citizens tend to develop unrealistic expectations of influence, which then become an obstacle to agreement. This stems from a lack of clarity about roles, but it also reflects their unsustainable view of officers and councillors as neutral, impartial actors who will allow citizens a significant degree of influence. Council actors do seek to maintain an appearance of impartiality and openness, yet they clearly often have significant biases of their own. For all these reasons, then, council actors find it very challenging to establish procedural agreement among actors, even though they are the institution best placed to do so. The remaining five conditions address aspects of this problem.

Third condition: Procedural and substantive agreements should be based on actors' mutual, intersubjective understanding of one another's agendas, constraints and imperatives.

The goal of consensus relies on the "ability of citizens to evolve a generalised will through reflection and discourse" (Pelletier et al., 1999:105). The assumption is that, through deliberation, a communicatively rational agreement can emerge where citizens attend to public interests *alongside* their particular notions of the good, since the two sets of interests are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Actors pursue agreements based on a mutual, value-critical, intersubjective understanding of one another's agendas, constraints and imperatives. This understanding is central to communicative rationality because taking critical account of the perspectives present "enlarges the understanding of everyone...moving them beyond their own parochial interests" (Young, 1997:399). Difference becomes a resource rather than something to be transcended in pursuit of a single rational decision (Calhoun, 1995). Intersubjective

understanding motivates actors such as Subjective Compromisers to seek compromise while allowing them to retain separate agendas, and counters the tendency for decision-making to be universalising and assimilationist. As Subjective Compromisers demonstrate, actors can *accommodate* ongoing disagreements while allowing decision-making to proceed.

Significant obstacles must be overcome in establishing this condition, but it is not necessarily unachievable. Objective Competitors and Neutral Executives do not value intersubjective understanding very highly and are likely to resist adopting a value-critical perspective, particularly given the premium they place on an appearance of objectivity. These actors may be unwilling to invest time and effort in gaining understanding because they see it as having limited instrumental value to the pursuit of their agendas and to decision-making. For actors such as Objective Competitors who are competitive and have relatively fixed preferences, deliberative activities may simply appear to slow their progress.

The Local Government Commission (2005) also noted, in its recent review of the LGA 2002, widespread concerns within local government at the costs and time that is currently required in complying with consultation obligations. Negative views about slowing progress are likely to be common among council actors, and perhaps citizens. As Ericksen et al. (2003) and Borrie et al. (2005) have argued, council actors really require far more guidance from central government agencies on how to interpret their consultative obligations under the LGA 2002, and on how to consult meaningfully. Such guidance should extend to adopting a more value-critical approach that allows actors to effectively explore values-based conflicts.

Communicative rationality is also hindered by Objective Competitors and Neutral Executives, because they are less willing to acknowledge and challenge the subjective beliefs that underpin their agendas. These 'policy frame' conflicts become an obstacle to honest reflection on issues (Wolsink, 2004). So long as some actors are unwilling to seek intersubjective understanding, there are risks for those actors such as Subjective Compromisers who do; for example, councils may take advantage of their sense of responsibility to understand and accept councils' agendas.

These obstacles simply reinforce the importance of ongoing engagement between actors to facilitate mutual understanding. Actors in the wastewater studies who identified with the Subjective Compromisers perspective chose to remain engaged and

had a stronger sense of influencing outcomes. They responded by seeking compromises and with a sense of responsibility to support subsequent decisions. In contrast, actors on the Objective Competitors factor lacked understanding and were closely focused on advocacy and competition. They reported a sense of exclusion and disengagement from the consultative bodies established by the two councils. This sense of disenfranchisement further discouraged these actors from seeking compromise.

Councils have a critical role in encouraging engagement and understanding as the permanent local-level institution at the centre of participatory processes. Independent facilitation will be required at times, so that council actors can engage sufficiently themselves, and to prevent dominant actors from controlling processes. Research on the LGA 2002 indicates that citizens' capacity, in terms of time and money, continue to be obstacles to participation (Borrie & Memon, 2005). Where possible, councils should consider supporting citizens to engage early and often, and resource them to develop the skills for effective participation. If necessary, councils or central government should consider compensating citizens, particularly where they take the time to be members of formal groups, for the time and expense of engagement. Compensation including daily rates and accommodation may be more common in higher profile special forums such as citizen's juries. Such practices have been recognised in Australia (Carson, 2006) and Spain (Font and Blanco, 2007) as a very effective means of maintaining jurors' engagement. In New Zealand local government public consultation, compensation that covered expenses such as travel and meals may be more acceptable to councils and ratepayers. However, as Memon and Thomas (2006) note, councils are already overstretched in funding the cost of consultation without central government support, so this would not be an inconsiderable additional commitment, and some criteria would need to be attached to the funding decision.

Finally, councils should be prepared to offer citizens some influence in design of processes and setting agendas, and potentially, over outcomes, for example through co-management arrangements based on government-community partnerships for management of projects such as wastewater schemes, and resources such as native forest reserves (Robson and Kant, 2007). A degree of procedural influence is a significant incentive for citizens to remain engaged and to seek understanding and consensus (Frame et al., 2004). More substantive influence is also important, as it signals that councils are genuine about listening and taking account of input. The

alternative is that councils make procedural and substantive decisions unilaterally, but risk ongoing delays, objections and appeals.

The pay-off for this council effort and commitment can be considerable. Better understanding of agendas and constraints can work to moderate actors' competitive, adversarial behaviour, and encourage citizens to pursue compromise. Councils that model deliberative behaviour will also encourage citizens to be similarly deliberative. And for citizens, engagement leads to opportunities to exercise influence they may not otherwise have, despite the legislated opportunities for consultation that exist. At times, however, processes will be protracted so that only those actors who are able to engage over a long time will exercise much influence. Where there are risks of consultation fatigue, councils could resource citizens to remain engaged, for example, through reimbursement of expenses.

The risk for citizens is that their efforts in engagement may not bring any additional influence. Citizens may simply acquire specialised planning knowledge rather than have their lay knowledge incorporated in any meaningful sense (Bickerstaff & Walker, 2005). Citizens' understanding may lead to their co-option to a professional or council perspective, and to the marginalisation of their own agendas. Such co-option was seen as a risk by actors clustering on the Subjective Compromisers factor. Co-option will be seen as a problem if citizens are unable to gain the substantive outcomes that they seek. Other dominant institutional actors may simply continue to engage instrumentally and be unwilling to seek understanding or compromises. Procedural agreement and independent facilitation will provide some protection from exploitation for those actors who do engage honestly.

As decision-making deadlines loom, Hillier (2002) argues that conflicts tend to intensify, leading actors such as Objective Competitors to behave competitively rather than deliberatively. Hillier (ibid:263) notes that "decisions tend to imply the end of a process, but deliberation in principle is ongoing...the closer and more final is [the] point of closure, the more participants will be motivated to act strategically rather than discursively". Nevertheless, other actors such as Subjective Compromisers may see incentives in decision-making deadlines to strive for compromises. Thus, it is important councils facilitate processes that allow decision-making to proceed while encouraging deliberative behaviour among actors. The next condition addresses this issue.

Fourth condition: The integration of citizens' agendas should not prevent necessary decision-making from proceeding.

This condition pragmatically acknowledges that decision-making must often proceed, whether or not consensus is achieved, because of regulatory and statutory obligations. At times, deliberation will not produce agreement or provide adequate guidance to decision-makers. Such situations may arise despite councils' consultative efforts, perhaps through the intransigence of some actors, or through opposition from parochial local interests (Lane & McDonald, 2005). In these situations, councils should make decisions while continuing, so far as possible, to foster a deliberative integrative process for taking account of citizens' agendas. As noted, this condition is bounded by the particular practical and statutory context for RMA and LGA 2002 decision-making. In other contexts with less stringent decision-making imperatives, a more participatory democratic approach would possibly rule out such a condition as potentially anti-democratic.

Necessary decision-making poses challenges for effective integration because the range of agendas present is not often easily reducible to a single agreement or to a compromise position. A robust deliberative process is often required for a genuine compromise to be reached. As the wastewater planning processes and New Zealand experience demonstrate, citizens who compromise may end up serving other dominant actors' private or institutional interests (Forgie et al., 1999; Hayward, 2000). This risk is reinforced by Neutral Executives who emphasise decision-making and downplay the importance of citizens' engagement. Dominant actors may cast the expression of opposing agendas as time-wasting and unconstructive (Frame et al., 2004). In this way, the rhetoric of consensus is mustered to validate dominant agendas, such as the institutional status quo, while obstructing the integrative process (Lawrence & Daniels, 1997; Hunold & Young, 1998; Bickerstaff & Walker, 2005). In such situations, council actors have a responsibility to be even-handed in their treatment of agendas, and independent facilitators also have an important role in protecting less powerful actors.

These risks are clearly present although they can be overstated. Decision-making in New Zealand local government is partly circumscribed by existing plans and by statutory obligations including requirements for public consultation. Bickerstaff and Walker (2005) observe that theorists and commentators often emphasise consensus as the basis of decision-making. Yet this emphasis risks underestimating the ability of dominant institutional actors to appear to accommodate public input while actually

retaining control over veto points. It is likely that *none* of the options canvassed in this chapter represent an entirely genuine, uncoerced agreement because, as Mansbridge (1996:51) observes of deliberative processes, “in the real world...there are no conditions free from the threat of sanction or use of force”. While decision-making is necessary, councils and other actors must also be committed to achieving effective integration through citizens’ participation. The conditions listed in this chapter are focused on achieving that balance of decision-making and an effective integrative process.

I also recommended two courses of action in Chapter Six that were focussed on allowing decision-making to proceed in the *absence of a substantive agreement*. First, I argued that actors should be encouraged to agree on the course of action that is the best solution to the problem, even if they personally prefer an alternative solution. This practical option requires clear agreement on procedures and on the nature of the substantive problem. Procedural legitimacy is critical because actors are being asked to accept solutions they may disagree with. Actors will need to understand one another’s views of the problem, and commit to relatively non-instrumental, non-competitive behaviour. The incentive for councils to encourage such engagement is that it facilitates decision-making that actors can accept as legitimate.

A second approach applies in situations where actors remain opposed to agreement. This focuses on deliberation at a ‘strategy’ level where there are fewer points of tension. Councils should establish such strategic forums where actors are encouraged to build relationships and deliberate on wider public interests and longer-term considerations. There is less pressure to compromise and fewer references to the specific points of conflict that excite self-interest and on which actors can win or lose. However, such strategies must remain explicitly linked to decisions, so that actors have an incentive to focus on issues of public interest and to seek to influence strategic outcomes (Lane & McDonald, 2005). Thus, it is critical that councils demonstrate their own commitment to these processes and outcomes, and encourage citizens to engage and gain an understanding of wider issues as a counter to a narrower parochial focus.

The fifth condition for effective integration is a further pragmatic response to situations where decisions are required, but substantive agreement is not achievable.

Fifth condition: Citizens should be able to accept decisions as having authority if they are based on a process that is seen as integrative and therefore legitimate.

Where actors cannot reach a substantive agreement, they should aim to establish a 'reasoned procedural agreement' that provides sufficient procedural legitimacy for them to accept decisions *regardless* of their view of those decisions. Legitimacy is achieved because the other conditions for effective integration are in place. This was effectively how actors on the Subjective Compromisers factor viewed their consent in the two wastewater processes. Maori actors on that factor, in particular, accepted the process as legitimate and the outcome as the best they could achieve at the time, despite their forthright opposition.

As with agreements on substantive courses of action, proposed under Condition Four, a reasoned procedural agreement still requires that the other conditions for effective integration are in place. Such an agreement may be less risky than calls for substantive agreement, which can mask the coercion of citizens in the name of 'consensus' or 'compromise'. Bohman (1996), Cohen (1996), Benhabib (1998) and Dryzek (1999, 2000) all support the pursuit of some form of reasoned procedural agreement on issues such as how to cooperate and make decisions.

This recommendation appears in this chapter as a logical conclusion to the research findings when they are considered in combination. It is a response to the challenges and possibilities that the three perspectives offer, but it still relies on some assumptions about those perspectives holding true. First, a reasoned procedural agreement can fail if actors perceive a process as biased or predetermined, or if they have a sense of exclusion. To illustrate, actors on the Subjective Compromisers factor felt the two planning processes were sufficiently legitimate to allow their acceptance of the decision, given their quite deliberative perspective, and despite their misgivings about council manipulation and bias. In contrast, actors on the Objective Competitors factor perceived the process as overly biased and lacking legitimacy, and this reinforced their more competitive and oppositional stance. As discussed in Chapter Two, it is common for citizens' sense of legitimacy to be threatened by their suspicions about councils' and other actors' biases. Thus, the test of procedural legitimacy is a significant challenge for New Zealand local government.

The second hurdle for a reasoned procedural agreement is that it relies on actors' willingness to accept decisions on the basis of procedural legitimacy. Some actors,

such as Objective Competitors, may not be satisfied without more substantive influence. However, where these actors can be persuaded to modify their preferences through appeals to procedural fairness, then agreement should be possible. To that end, I have proposed two further conditions, with critical roles for council actors, aimed at encouraging such deliberative behaviour.

Sixth condition: Councils should champion behaviours and processes that contribute to effective integration.

Councils should take primary responsibility for championing those behaviours and processes outlined in the first five conditions. This reflects councils' status as the permanent local-level environmental planning and decision-making institution which resources most processes and largely controls and implements outcomes. Even while ownership of community outcomes under the LGA 2002 rests with communities, councils can offer the commitment and leadership that is necessary if significant changes to actors' perspectives and practices are to occur. Councils are more likely to have expertise in procedural aspects of planning and decision-making than lay citizens, whereas this research shows that many citizens tend to ignore, or be unaware of those issues, until such point as they impact on their pursuit of substantive agendas.

This condition is challenging for councils, because it requires a shift away from the Neutral Executors perspective that council actors in the wastewater studies identified with. That perspective also reflected views common to councils in New Zealand generally. For example, I recommend councils share some influence over processes and substantive decisions, yet many council actors may be unwilling to do so. I also recommend councils adopt a more value-critical stance, yet actors on the three perspectives present in this study are closely wedded to an ideal of neutral, objective council actors. The New Zealand experience also shows that councils often fail as champions of planning processes, yet without their support, citizens have little ability to influence outcomes. In a variety of ways, then, council actors need to be convinced of the value of championing a more deliberative approach. The dividend for doing so is in more effective integration and more durable, legitimate decision-making.

An important reason for councils to champion a deliberative approach is where agreement (procedural or substantive) is obstructed by actors' competitiveness or their limited willingness to compromise. Objective Competitors, in particular, are competitive and tend to have relatively fixed preferences. Even so, I concluded that deliberative

democratic assumptions about the possibilities for actors changing their preferences still hold. Objective Competitors do not have entirely static interests, so where the conditions for effective integration are present, a shift in actors' behaviours and preferences ought to be possible.

Thus, councils should seek to establish behavioural norms that encourage a public interest perspective and discourage actors from sole pursuit of private agendas when this prevents agreement. Councils should routinely emphasise actors' ongoing engagement, open communication, understanding and consensus-seeking behaviour. This is a practical response, since the aim of balancing effective integration and decision-making hinges on overcoming intractable conflicts and avoiding unacceptable delays.

Seventh condition: Where appropriate, participatory processes should be independently facilitated.

Where effective integration of citizens' agendas remains elusive, councils should engage independent facilitators or mediators who can ensure procedural conditions are met while allowing council actors to engage actively. This recommendation is a response to findings from Chapter Six, but would have potential costs and logistical obstacles, so that the appointment of facilitators would need to be carefully considered.

It is clear from this research and the New Zealand experience that citizens need to be well-supported and encouraged to engage, yet it can be difficult for councils to assist citizens. Council actors are often perceived (sometimes justifiably) as biased or predetermined. This perception drives citizens' unmet expectations of council neutrality, and erodes the legitimacy of the process for citizens. Council actors need to champion and model deliberative behaviour, and to encourage other actors towards more consensus-seeking behaviour, yet this is difficult for council actors to do if they are suspected of predetermination. In such situations, independent facilitators provide citizens with some protection from powerful actors and the rhetoric of public interest and compromise (Benhabib, 1996). Independent facilitators can encourage all actors to articulate their agendas in terms other actors will find reasons to accept, and to commit to decisions arising from such deliberative processes (Young, 1995; Benhabib, 1996; Dryzek, 2000).

Mediation between competing interests is particularly important where actors remain unwilling to deliberate or seek consensus. Mediation encourages those more competitive actors to moderate their behaviour (Smith & Blanc, 1997), thereby protecting other actors from overly adversarial processes. As Schon and Rein (1994:176-178) note, some actors are only motivated to seek agreement and make mutual adjustments in those “situated policy controversies” where decision-making is imminent. Independent facilitation provides a sense of procedural legitimacy that is an important prerequisite if citizens are to remain engaged, since all require conditions that protect their ability to have meaningful input and to exercise some influence.

None of this discussion should be taken to suggest that increased participation and deliberation are *always* the best solution to decision-making problems. Intractable conflicts, particularly, will not always benefit from further deliberation. As Lowndes and Sullivan (2004:69) argue, partnerships between actors should allow for genuine involvement and decision-making influence, but such arrangements must also guard against the “danger that problems [of dominant, unrepresentative actors] may be compounded by additional, standardised, layers of ‘partnership’ activity”.

The seven conditions proposed here are a result of my assessment of the influence of actors’ perspectives on the goal of integrating citizens’ agendas. In many situations, only some of these conditions will be met or partly met. This is understandable since, in the real world of planning and decision-making the perspectives identified in Chapter Six will often be present (or a variant will be), as will the various constraints and imperatives identified in Chapter Two. Thus, these conditions are intended as something for *all actors* to aspire to, and for planning and decision-making practices to adjust to.

Critiquing the research and areas for further research

The use of Q-methodology to reconstruct actors’ perspectives, and the provision of recommendations based on those perspectives are key points of originality in this research on New Zealand local government environmental planning and decision-making. Inevitably, by emphasising the productive connection between empirical work, theories and practice, this study raises a number of questions that could be usefully addressed in future research. This section considers the utility of Q-methodology for this research and identifies a number of areas for further investigation.

The utility of Q-methodology for this research

Overall, Q-methodology is well-suited to this research. Its main value to this research is in the interpretive and largely inductive approach that was employed. It is interpretive in that the factors are a product of the meanings that actors attach to situations based on their own subjective viewpoints. So far as possible, the Q-sorting statements and resultant factors are inductively derived from respondents' own interpretations, rather than from *a priori* categories, as with a conventional survey. The research seeks to avoid imposing categories and meaning, prior to data analysis. Respondents' viewpoints are operationalised through Q-sorting and statistical factor analysis, which allows for theoretical and practical inferences to be drawn about other populations in a way that would not be possible with qualitative interviews alone.

Qualitative interviews played a critical supporting role to Q-methodology in this research by supplying the concourse of statements for Q-sorts and aiding the interpretation of Q-sort data. The factor interpretation in this study is more rigorous, accurate and fine-grained for the use of interview material to draw out underlying meanings. Other data from documentary sources and observation further support the analysis of factors by locating them in particular structural locations.

One potential drawback of Q-methodology, as deployed in this research, is its inability to clearly state the causal relationships between actors' perspectives (the factors) and actors' experiences and other aspects of their institutional and structural location (e.g. the deliberative qualities of the planning process). As discussed in Chapter One, however, this study began from the theoretical assumption that perspectives are largely *implicit* and *underlying*, in that they inform actors' agency and the way that they interpret and respond to contexts. This assumption is linked to the closely related concepts of policy frames (Schon and Rein, 1994; Dayton, 2000), discourses (Sabatier, 1993; Wolsink, 2004) policy storylines and narratives (Hajer, 1995; Hendriks, 2000). That interpretation and response is often *unconsciously* informed by actors' perspectives (Webler, Tuler, & Krueger, 2001). Perspectives may also form part of more explicit institutional policy positions and collectively-constructed discourses, but they may also be individual and poorly-examined. Perspectives also change over time and are potentially open to more intentional modification in response to actors' experiences (Barry and Proops, 1999; Dayton, 2000). Thus, my starting assumption on the relationship of perspectives to the goal of effective integration and to other aspects of structure was that perspectives inform the roles that actors adopt in planning and

decision-making, but that their experiences of those processes will, in turn, modify their perspectives.

The findings from this research reinforce the starting assumption about the iterative and causal relationship of perspectives and structure. The findings address the specific nature of the perspectives present in the study context, and the impact of those perspectives on the conduct of an effective integrative process, and the prospects for, better integration. Essentially, actors' perspectives are open to modification given (a) an integrative approach that emphasises the deliberative qualities set out in the conditions above, but (b) some actors are likely to remain less tractable than others and this is a function of the perspective they adopt during planning and decision-making.

Q-methodology identifies perspectives that are difficult to discover with conventional survey techniques, but that are likely to be present in wider populations, particularly those engaged in similar activities. As noted, however, it does not allow *confident predictions* about the prevalence or strength of those perspectives, or about the likelihood that particular groups of actors will identify with a certain perspective (e.g. council actors with the Neutral Executors perspective). Predictions about dependent/independent relationships are more commonly a feature of experimental methodologies employing a before/after research design. Q-methodology can be used in test-treatment-retest experiments (see for example, Walton, 2006), but it is more commonly used for uncovering previously unrecognised facts that can subsequently be tested using more conventional R-methodologies. Three particular areas of the research findings have suggested hypotheses that could be profitably tested in this way.

Two hypotheses for testing are (a) that the ideal of neutrality and objectivity is very widespread among actors in planning and decision-making practices; and (b) that it is persistent among those actors. The ideal of neutrality and objectivity is a significant source of conflict that leads to differing expectations of actors' roles, discourages open-mindedness, and bolsters dominant actors' positions, particularly institutional council actors. The scholarship indicates that it is a problem that is well-recognised and extensively critiqued by theorists and commentators. Yet factor analysis suggests it remains a persistent ideal that is commonly subscribed to by council actors and citizens. There is a lack of connection between theory and practice in terms of the refutation of this ideal. Further research should therefore be aimed at establishing (a)

how persistent this ideal is, and (b) how widespread the ideal is among different populations and groups of actors.

The second area where further confirmation would be useful is in the finding that there is a strong correlation between the Neutral Executives perspective and council actors' views of the role of citizens. In this study, the Neutral Executives perspective was almost exclusively populated by council actors, while other perspectives were almost exclusively populated by citizens. This finding is supported by the New Zealand evidence discussed in Chapter Two, which shows that many council actors have a compliance mentality and quite negative view of public involvement. Further research could establish who adopts the Neutral Executives' view of citizens' roles and what the consequences are when council actors adopt such a perspective, or adopt a perspective that is more conducive to promoting integration.

The third hypothesis is that the deliberative democratic assumption about the openness to modification of actors' perspectives is overstated, and that some actors are more intransigent regardless of their particular experience of planning and decision-making. The starting theoretical assumption for this study is that perspectives are brought to the process but can be modified, and that there are significant benefits to an effective integrative process – otherwise, why endeavour to conduct such a process? However, the empirical findings indicate that, in the study context, there are some actors whose preferences are less open to change following exposure to a robust deliberative process. If this is the case more generally, it challenges a common assumption among deliberative democratic theorists and may confirm aspects of a rational choice theoretical argument. One approach to further research is to establish the degree of independence of actors' perspectives by testing perspectives before and after actors' experiences. Research could establish the strength of a specific experience (of more or less deliberative processes) as a variable that impacts on actors' perspectives. For example, Walton (2006) employed a test-retest methodology to examine the effect of deliberative discussion on individuals' environmental preferences. In that study, she found that deliberative processes enhanced actors' understanding of environmental issues and led to more informed decision-making.

Guidance for actors on achieving value-criticality and communicative rationality

A number of the findings and recommendations indicate that all actors need more guidance and support if they are to take account of the different types of knowledge

and agendas that are present in decision-making. Actors' different perspectives present some obstacles to effective integration, such as the privileging of objective knowledge and the marginalisation of more subjective agendas. While most actors clearly value expert input and guidance, few, if any would want decision-making by experts to replace democratic decision-making processes. Subjective Compromisers and Objective Competitors clearly want to provide input and, if necessary, to contest other expert input. Often, however, conflicting types of knowledge and agendas are difficult to synthesise in pursuit of practical solutions (for example, scientific versus local knowledge of wastewater effects).

Further research could be usefully aimed at two issues. First, at developing practical frameworks to guide decision-makers through the process of synthesising knowledge and agendas without unduly privileging some knowledge, or simplistically granting equal value to all agendas. Approaches such as decision support systems (see Chapter Six) may offer a framework that is useful in some situations. Second, further research should consider how to foster a more value-critical perspective among those actors who are likely to see it as an unnecessary, time-consuming distraction from substantive decision-making.

Further assessing the influence of actors' perspectives on effective integration

The research findings also indicate that the substance of actors' agendas may sometimes be less critical to how well they are taken into account than the procedural and epistemological dimensions of actors' perspectives. Conflicts between perspectives are an important limiting factor and a brake on decision-making, yet their contribution goes largely unrecognised. Further research could confirm or qualify this finding on the impact of perspective-driven conflicts, and would support or qualify arguments for the importance of attention to robust processes. Further research would also be likely to uncover variations on those perspectives or additional perspectives. The research approach used in this thesis could be replicated as a way of testing this finding. It is suited to reconstructing actors' perspectives and identifying the trade-offs actors make between different aspects of planning and decision-making.

Exploring the utility of Q-methodology as a tool for planning and consultation

Further investigation is warranted on the application of Q-methodology as a *practical tool* in actual planning and decision-making, rather than simply in research on these

activities. Q-methodology would have particular application in the resolution of more intractable conflicts, such as those between expert/scientific and local/lay agendas, because it operationalises actors' subjective perspectives on issues. Q-methodology has previously been used as a public consultation tool in environmental planning in just a few instances (see for example Fairweather et al., 1994; Steelman & Maguire, 1999; van Eeten, 2001). It warrants further exploration as a complement or alternative to conventional consultation techniques on issues such as land usage, which bring together a wide range of agendas and perspectives, and which often seem stymied by the sheer diversity of viewpoints. In those situations Q-methodology offers a technique for exploring conflicts and identifying the most promising directions for further investigation, particularly where it is employed at an early stage in an inquiry.

Conclusion

This research was sparked by my growing realisation that council planning and decision-making is as much a product of uncertain human behaviours and underlying perspectives as it is the result of rational activity. Both the conduct of planning processes and their final outcomes are often strongly influenced by the hard-to-define, sometimes seemingly incomprehensible subjective perspectives of various actors. At times, these forces overshadow quite rational objective imperatives; at other times they reinforce the dominant orthodoxy; just occasionally they are truly deliberative and inclusive. Yet despite their significance, once this study was underway it became apparent that the influence of actors' perspectives was only poorly-understood by researchers in this context. Research to date had focused on institutional arrangements and practices and on substantive conflicts over physical resources, almost to the exclusion of examining actors' perspectives as a source of conflict.

The problem this study initially set out to answer was: *What influences the integration of citizens' agendas in environmental planning and decision-making in New Zealand local government?* and the subsidiary question: *What opportunities for more effective integration are revealed by this research?* The empirical study was narrowed, following a review of scholarship, to focus on the influence of perspectives on the integration of citizens' agendas. My aim was to identify obstacles to an effective integrative process, which I saw as requiring a deliberative, communicatively rational, inclusive approach to planning and decision-making. I also sought to identify remedies to those problems through the productive connection of theory and practice. A research strategy was

designed that combined Q-methodology for exploring subjective perspectives, with a study of two actual wastewater planning processes. This original approach allowed me to identify the subjective perspectives present in those populations and to consider their influence on actual practices and decision-making outcomes.

It is clear from this study that actors' perspectives often pose significant barriers to an integrative process, but some perspectives also offer opportunities for resolving these problems. Contrary to much existing scholarship, conflicts over *substantive* agendas are often less of a contributor to opposition and delays than is commonly thought. The integration of citizens' agendas is clearly also limited by positivist, rationalist perspectives that privilege objectivity, both in knowledge and agendas, and in actors' dispositions and planning practices. Integration is further limited by competitiveness and by actors who seek to overly influence or dominate processes and outcomes. Nevertheless, there is also *potential* in those deliberative perspectives that are more value-critical and that seek intersubjective understanding of all types of knowledge and agendas. These compromise-seeking perspectives are likely to contribute to more communicatively rational planning and more legitimate and durable decisions.

It is critical that changes occur where those perspectives are present that create obstacles to the effective integration of citizens' agendas. Council actors, in particular, must recognise their ability to have agency in fostering more deliberative perspectives. Yet change is often very difficult because of the persistence and durability of actors' perspectives, and because of the strong sense of 'rightness' that often accompanies their agendas. Change is further obstructed by the tacit, unacknowledged nature of most perspectives and of their contribution to conflicts. It is important to remember that both actors' perspectives and their experiences are contributors to potential outcomes. Therefore it will always be worth pursuing change through deliberative processes.

The experiences of actors with more deliberative perspectives are clearly instructive in terms of the direction that must be taken for more effective integration. As set out in the recommendations, actors need to be encouraged to commit to more deliberative perspectives. Councils and other institutional actors, in particular, have a critical role to play in fostering a deliberative environment and in championing deliberative behaviour. As Bickerstaff and Walker (2005:2140) recently observed:

Unless and until the current political enthusiasm for participatory activities is matched by genuine processes of institutional reflexivity and change, centring

on the structures and practices of democratic decision-making, then the impacts in terms of reinvigorating civic society and empowering citizens will be minimal.

Other actors also need to respond to council actors' commitments with a shift in their own perspectives. *Transformation* of actors' persistent underlying beliefs is too high an aim; yet through commitment to adopting a more value-critical approach based on mutual understanding, actors can certainly achieve more communicatively rational planning as a legitimate basis for durable decision-making based on the effective integration of citizens' agendas.

Appendix One – Information sheet (PNCC)

Local authorities and community-based decision-making:

Developing local environmental agendas

INFORMATION SHEET (Opinion Survey)

Tena koe and greetings! Thank you for taking the time to read this Information Sheet and for considering taking part in my research on Wastewater 2002/2006.

The Researcher

My name is Simon Nash. I am a doctoral student in the School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work at Massey University, Palmerston North. I can be contacted at my University office by phoning (06)350-4241, or at home (06)355-5398, or the School Secretary on (06)350-5799 ext.2821. My fax is (06)350-5681, and my e-mail is S.J.Nash@massey.ac.nz

My research supervisors are able to be contacted for any queries that you have. They are:

Dr. Christine Cheyne
School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work,
Massey University
Ph. (06) 350-5799 ext. 2816
Email: C.M.Cheyne@massey.ac.nz

Dr. Kerry Taylor
School of History, Philosophy and Politics,
Massey University
Ph. (06) 350-4238
Email: K.A.Taylor@massey.ac.nz

The purpose of the study is to examine public involvement in local authority planning and consultation processes. I am focusing on physical resource issues, in particular, on aspects of the Palmerston North City Council's plans for wastewater treatment and disposal. The research will assess how citizen's preferences are integrated into council planning and decision-making processes. I will be seeking to understand what factors affect the process of communicating and understanding between local authorities and citizens.

Agreement for this case study has been reached with Mr. Paul Wylie, the Chief Executive Officer for the Palmerston North City Council.

Your participation

You have been identified as a potential participant in this research project because of your involvement and interest in the planning and consultation for Wastewater 2002 and Wastewater 2006. Because of this involvement, I would like to invite you to participate in the research. Should you agree to take part, the research involves an opinion survey.

The opinion survey

I would like you to complete an opinion survey. This survey should not take more than 30-40 minutes to complete. If possible, I would like to be present when the survey is undertaken, so that I can ask you some questions about your responses. If that is not possible, I can post the survey to you at an agreed address, and it can be completed in your own time and returned by post in the stamped addressed envelope provided. The survey will require you to sort a number of statements relating to the Wastewater 2002 and 2006 processes according to your opinion. The purpose of the survey is to establish your understanding and opinion of particular aspects of the Wastewater 2002 and 2006 processes.

The Consent Form

If you agree to take part in the research, please complete the enclosed Consent Form and return it to me in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope.

Your rights

Your participation in the research is entirely voluntary. You have the right at any time:

- to decline to participate, or refuse to answer particular questions;
- to withdraw from the study at any time;
- to ask any questions about the study at any time;
- to request that any particular information given by you be treated confidentially;
- to be given access to a summary of the findings of the study when it is concluded.

I would like your permission to identify you in the written thesis and in related publications. However, you have the right to request that any information be treated in the strictest confidence, and that it not be linked to you. However, given the small number of people involved in Wastewater 2002 and 2006, it will not be possible to guarantee your anonymity.

A summary of the research findings will be given to you once the thesis is completed.

Section 1.01 This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Protocol 01/116

Thank you for your consideration,

Simon Nash

Appendix Two – Information sheet (WDC)

Local authorities and community-based decision-making:

Developing local environmental agendas

INFORMATION SHEET (Opinion Survey)

Tena koe and greetings! Thank you for taking the time to read this Information Sheet and for considering taking part in my research on Wastewater 2002/2006.

The Researcher

My name is Simon Nash. I am a doctoral student in the School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work at Massey University, Palmerston North. I can be contacted at my University office by phoning (06)350-4241, or at home (06)355-5398, or the School Secretary on (06)350-5799 ext.2821. My fax is (06)350-5681, and my e-mail is S.J.Nash@massey.ac.nz

My research supervisors are able to be contacted for any queries that you have. They are:

Dr. Christine Cheyne
School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work,
Massey University
Ph. (06) 350-5799 ext. 2816
Fax: (06) 350-5681
Email: C.M.Cheyne@massey.ac.nz

Dr. Kerry Taylor
School of History,
Philosophy and Politics,
Massey University
Ph. (06) 350-4238
Fax: (06) 350-5662
Email: K.A.Taylor@massey.ac.nz

The purpose of the study is to examine public involvement in local authority planning and consultation processes. I am focusing on physical resource issues, in particular, on aspects of the Palmerston North City Council's plans for wastewater treatment and disposal. The research will assess how citizen's preferences are integrated into council planning and decision-making processes. I will be seeking to understand what factors affect the process of communicating and understanding between local authorities and citizens.

Agreement for this case study has been reached with Mr. Colin Whitlock, the Chief Executive Officer for the Wanganui District Council.

Your participation

You have been identified as a potential participant in this research project because of your involvement and interest in the planning and consultation for the Wastewater Project. Because of this involvement, I would like to invite you to participate in the research. Should you agree to take part, the research involves an opinion survey.

The opinion survey

I would like you to complete an opinion survey. This survey should not take more than 30-40 minutes to complete. If possible, I would like to be present when the survey is undertaken, so that I can ask you some questions about your responses. If that is not possible, I will post the survey to you at an agreed address, and it can be completed in your own time and returned by post in the stamped addressed envelope provided. The survey will require you to sort a number of statements relating to the Wastewater Project processes according to your opinion. The purpose of the survey is to establish your understanding and opinion of particular aspects of the Wastewater Project processes.

The Consent Form

If you agree to take part in the research, please complete the enclosed Consent Form and return it to me in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope.

Your rights

Your participation in the research is entirely voluntary. You have the right at any time:

- to decline to participate, or refuse to answer particular questions;
- to withdraw from the study at any time;
- to ask any questions about the study at any time;
- to request that any particular information given by you be treated confidentially;
- to be given access to a summary of the findings of the study when it is concluded.

I would like your permission to identify you in the written thesis and in related publications. However, you have the right to request that any information be treated in the strictest confidence, and that it not be linked to you. However, given the small number of people involved in Wanganui Wastewater Project, it will not be possible to guarantee your anonymity.

A summary of the research findings will be given to you once the thesis is completed.

Section 1.02 This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Protocol 01/116

Thank you for your consideration,

Simon Nash

Appendix Three – Consent form

Local authorities and community-based decision-making: Developing local environmental agendas

CONSENT FORM FOR SURVEYS

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the research project explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time and to decline to complete any part of the survey.

I agree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that my name will not be used without my permission, and that the information provided will only be used for this research and publications arising from this research project.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet, and on the understanding that (**delete the two options that do not apply**):

Either

1. The researcher may identify me in connection with my surveyed responses in the thesis and any related publications that arise out of the research.

Or

2. The researcher may identify me in connection with my surveyed responses in the thesis and any related publications that arise out of the research, apart from those responses that I request to remain confidential.

Or

3. My surveyed responses will remain confidential, and I shall not be directly identified in any way, shape or form.

(Please delete the option that does not apply): **I am available** / **I am not available** for the researcher to visit and conduct the survey in person.

If you are available for a visit, please circle all of those dates which are suitable, or nominate a preferred alternative date. I will contact you to arrange an actual meeting time and location.

20th June **21st June** **24th June** **25th June** **Other:**

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Contact Phone Number:

Appendix Four – Research Agreement

Statement of Purpose and Research Agreement
between
the City Manager, Palmerston North City Council
and
Simon Nash, PhD student
School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work,
Massey University
(referred to as ‘the researcher’)

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this research is to carry out case study fieldwork investigating aspects of the planning and consultation processes for the development of wastewater treatment and disposal solutions at Palmerston North City Council. The research is conducted primarily for the purpose of obtaining a PhD degree.

This Statement of Purpose and Research Agreement relates specifically to Palmerston North City Council, the planning processes for Wastewater 2002 and Wastewater 2006, and the researcher. It does not apply to any other organisations or individuals involved in the research process.

There are four types of data to be collected:

- Interviews
- Surveys using Q-method
- Observations
- Documents

The aim of the research is to investigate the process of planning and consultation, and in particular, to better understand the nature of communication and understanding between staff of the local authority and other stakeholders in the case study. Although participating staff will be asked their views and opinions on various issues, it is in their formal capacity (e.g. Unit Manager, Planning Officer, etc.) that they are involved. Participants in the research will only be identified by their formal role and not by their individual names in the thesis and any subsequent publication arising from the research.

Interviews and Q-method surveys

It is agreed that the researcher may have access to certain Council staff for the purposes of:

- i. conducting interviews (one interview of no more than one hour duration with each staff member), and/or
- ii. having staff undertake a self-administered Q-method survey (requiring no more than 30-40 minutes of their time)

Staff will be invited to participate in either or both the interview and survey procedures, and an appropriate location and time for these procedures will be agreed to with the staff involved.

Access to interview and survey participants will be sought on an individual basis. Each individual will be approached by letter and will be given information about the research, the nature of the interview and/or survey process, and the uses of the interview and/or survey material.

Interview and survey participants will be asked to sign a consent form.

Initially, the Palmerston North City Council staff whom the researcher seeks to interview and/or survey include:

(insert relevant staff titles once potential participants have been selected)

It may also be appropriate to interview and/or survey other staff in the following departments/units:

(insert as appropriate)

Observations

It is agreed that the researcher may attend public meetings related to Wastewater 2002 and Wastewater 2006 as an observer. The researcher will make notes about what he observes and hears during meetings.

Observation will not include Part II meetings or public-excluded meetings.

The researcher will not participate in any discussions at meetings.

Documents

It is agreed that the researcher may have access to order papers, in-house working and discussion papers, public consultation documents and any other documents which relate to Wastewater 2002 and Wastewater 2006. Where these documents

relate to Part II of public meetings, or to other settings which are not public meetings, the researcher undertakes to treat such material confidentially.

Confidentiality for the purposes of this section of the Agreement means that no material will be used in such a way as to publicly identify the authors of the document or the results of the matters discussed or addressed.

General

A number of other fieldwork issues need to be addressed. These are set out below (there may also be as yet unidentified issues which arise from negotiating this Research Agreement with each Council):

Protection for Council and Staff

It is clearly intended by the researcher that the interests of the Palmerston North City Council and its staff should be protected at all times. In particular, there is no intention to cause any harm from the publication of material relating to the research. The Council and staff will be protected in several ways, as set out below:

- i. Staff who are invited to participate in interviews and/or survey procedures will be provided with an Information Sheet explaining the nature and scope of the research and the intended uses of the interview and survey material (see attached).
- ii. The researcher will seek the explicit and informed consent of each potential staff participant. This includes their consent to attribute that staff member's responses to them in both the thesis and any publications arising out of the research.
- iii. Staff who are invited to participate in interviews and/or survey procedures have the right to decline to participate, or to choose not to participate at any point during the interview and/or survey, or to withdraw from the research project at any subsequent point in time before the final draft of the thesis is completed.
- iv. Staff who participate in interviews will be furnished with summaries of the interviews in which they participated, and offered the opportunity to verify these.
- v. The researcher seeks to be as unobtrusive as possible during observation of public meetings, and to make only reasonable requests of staff for assistance with obtaining documents. The interviews and surveying will be conducted with a very limited number of staff, and will involve a maximum of two hours of their time.

Opportunity to comment on research findings

The researcher agrees to provide the City Manager with a copy of (i) the sections of the thesis which outline the fieldwork involving the Palmerston North City Council and its staff; and (ii) the sections of the thesis in which data collected during such fieldwork are analysed. This material will not be available until a penultimate draft of the thesis is completed. Upon receiving a copy of the relevant sections of the thesis, City Manager will be invited to forward any comments on the descriptive and analytical material within a specified time frame (no less than a fortnight). Where there are any significantly different perspectives expressed by the City Manager about that material, this will be acknowledged by the researcher in the final draft of the thesis.

A summary of the research findings will be given to the Palmerston North City Council upon completion of the project.

Ownership of data or material produced

All data generated from interviews, surveys and observation will remain the property of the researcher.

Copyright

Copyright of thesis material and subsequent related publications will rest with the researcher.

Signed:

**(insert name) City Manager
Palmerston North City Council**

**Simon Nash
Researcher**

Date:

Appendix Five – Interview schedule

Questions for interviewee at start of interview:

- Has the Consent Form been read, signed and collected?
- Are there any questions or comments before we start?

Points to be noted with interviewee at start of interview:

1. Information from this interview is to be used primarily for developing surveys. It will be presented along with other material from a range of sources (including other interviews, submissions, reports, media, etc.) in the surveys, with no attribution at all.
2. ‘Stakeholders’ as referred to in the interview, are everyone involved in the planning and decision-making processes - including planners, elected members, consultants, etc., as well as members of groups the wider community.
3. I’m focusing on environmental values, such as “green” issues, preferences for sustainable solutions, and so forth. That doesn’t mean that other issues are less important—just that this is the focus for my research.
4. I want to get your perspective as far as possible. Don’t be too concerned to tell me what you think a planner or engineer (or whomever) should say, or what you think that the Council’s (or other institution’s) position is.

Interview Schedule

(Section A) Identifying values

1. What sorts of agendas have emerged over time? Has there been anything like a primary agenda? Have a range of stakeholders supported that agenda?

(Section B) The outcome/decision/consensus versus understanding

2. What do the various stakeholders think of the outcome or expected outcome of the planning process?
3. Are the various views adequately reflected in the outcome?
4. Has a particular position been asserted over others? Which position or positions have been asserted? Why?
5. Were stakeholders working towards reaching agreement or just expressing their different views? Did stakeholders discount their own, or others’ values and preferences in an attempt to reach consensus/agreement?

(Section C) Integration of values/the process

6. Were the various views presented adequately taken into account during the process? For example, did stakeholders feel that they were given due attention? Were they able to treat the decisions made as legitimate?
7. Should stakeholders’ preferences that are based on values and personal beliefs rather than science, economics, etc., be allowed to be expressed in the process? Should they be taken account of? Why/not?
8. Did the planning processes encourage stakeholders to attempt to understand each other’s positions? To what extent did stakeholders reach an understanding of alternative points of view and values?

9. Does the formal resource consent process function to allow or prevent stakeholders from expressing value-based positions? Does it allow them to be taken into account?
10. How well thought out and expressed are the more value-based perspectives of stakeholders? What effect does that have on their being taken into account?

(Section D) Explicitly subjective values versus other values and preferences

11. Should values and preferences (such as “green” values) be given any less or greater weighting than other factors? (e.g. economic and technical considerations?)
12. Do stakeholders view some values and preferences (such as for environmental sustainability) as different or of less value than other preferences? Does this affect the stakeholder’s decision to express those points of view?

(Section E) Stakeholder behaviour

13. To what extent are stakeholders’ values and preferences altered by their being part of the planning process, and by their increased understanding of other imperatives and preferences? Are their positions modified as a result?
14. Do stakeholders sometimes discount their own preferences in order to reach consensus or agreement? What happens to their earlier values and preferences then? And is that a reasonable or fair outcome?
15. Were some stakeholders able to influence the process and outcome more than others? If so, why? Is this appropriate? If so, why? What is it about the status or role of some stakeholders that allows this to happen?
16. Does the process encourage ongoing involvement in civic life in general and local government activities in particular?

(Section F) The role of stakeholders

17. Do stakeholders (members of the public) have other aims than seeing their preferences realised? If so, what are those aims?
18. What are the perceived roles of the various stakeholders in the planning and decision-making processes? What do stakeholders see their status as being? Are some stakeholders more powerful or influential than others?
19. What is it the job of each stakeholder group to do? Do members of the public simply present their positions, or do they have a more extensive role? Do officials interpret, persuade, advocate, advise, etc.? Where do the stakeholders' roles stop?

Appendix Six – Concourse of 181 statements

4 statement themes:

1. Processes (format of decision-making, consultation, fairness/equity, legitimacy, balancing issues, etc.)
2. Actors (relationships, who is included/excluded, means to agreement, etc.)
3. Substantive issues and their role/status (technology, science, economics, etc.)
4. Personal and corporate values and ethics and their role/status (environmental, spiritual, etc.)

4 categories within each theme:

- (a) Definitive (statement or claim about the meaning of something, or how something is)
- (b) Designative (issues of fact, claims to be factual)
- (c) Evaluative (expressing the worth of something)
- (d) Advocative (opinion; how something should or should not be)

Theme One: Processes

Category A: Definitive

Everyone has had to bite the bullet in reaching agreement, and most people will feel reasonably satisfied with the compromise solution.

There has been widespread public consultation on wastewater plans, which would suggest substantial public support for the Council's proposal.

The elected Council itself is a group with a point of view, and then the officers that are providing advice to the Council also have a particular point of view.

The Council officers have tried to facilitate the expression of public opinion rather than expressing their own particular views.

Many people felt that the process was over by the time that the Council had announced what its proposed scheme was.

The revised wastewater scheme was a case of the Council not liking the outcome of consultation and trying to change it.

There was a bias in the consultation towards the more literate members of the public, and towards those who felt comfortable making a written submission.

People do not necessarily need to agree with the outcome, they only need to consent to it.

Participants aimed to win arguments rather than to reach consensus.

The normal consultation process is making submissions, writing letters and so forth. But iwi don't have to play that game because of their Treaty of Waitangi status.

Because this was a big expensive project it justified a major consultation effort to discern public views.

The strong relationship that Council has with Iwi was reflected in the fact that there were no tangata whenua submissions on the resource consent.

I trust government to represent the public interest in protecting the environment, and to ensure equitable and fair outcomes.

The more that a group felt that they were heard, the more they were likely to think that they were having an influence on the decision.

Public participation is all about gaining the informed consent of all active parties potentially affected by the decision.

Because of the high cost, the proposal for land-based discharge and treatment was presented to the ratepayers in such a way as to be doomed from the start.

The decision over the preferred scheme was not made collaboratively with Māori.

Category B: Designative

The Council officers have been pushing a particular agenda.

Public weariness from over-consultation is evident now.

It is impossible to have a totally open process at every step.

There have been few schemes in the country which have been through such a rigorous process of consultation.

The personalities of staff can make or break the process.

Local government planners have an obligation to protect, facilitate and empower communities as part of the maintenance of local democracy.

An effort has been made to discern the opinion of people at large.

The Council has made decisions in an open and transparent manner.

The advice of planners and other “experts” was treated as authoritative, while public opinion was treated as lacking authority.

Category C: Evaluative

You've either got to have a lot of political clout or you've got to have a well thought through case, or both.

Local government often struggles to respond to a range of opinions, and instead, tends to privilege some views over others.

The wastewater project was so well covered that it was a great performance in public consultation.

The process of reaching agreement on a course of action comes at the expense of the interests of the weaker participants.

The process forced participants to understand and take account of the needs, interests and values of others.

Community groups feel that the decisions that have been made are legitimate decisions.

Everybody believes that they have had a fair crack at the wastewater planning and either their view has prevailed and influenced the outcome, or it hasn't because it was a minority view and others prevail over it.

There's not much that could have been said by the public that wasn't, and there's not much that was said that wasn't taken on board by the Council and an attempt made to accommodate that view.

The resource consent applications are not only the product of an extensive consultative process, but also reflect total community consensus.

Independent facilitation or chairing of the process was crucial if it was to succeed.

The Council's presumption, that the granting of these consents is just an irritating formality, is irresponsible.

It is more important to solve problems than to make decisions that are democratically legitimate.

Most people accept the outcome or the decision that has been made as being legitimate. That is, they can live with it and they believe that the authority had the right to make that decision.

People were mostly satisfied with the process and that they were heard. But they weren't always satisfied with the result of that.

The Council haven't had to upset anybody. Not one individual that I know of. This has been a very non-confrontational process.

Consultation and community meetings are just there to rubber-stamp a decision already taken by the Council.

People are more likely to abide by plans and policies if they feel they had a chance to have a say in the development of decisions.

Most people realise that resource consents are dictated by powers outside their control.

Too much emphasis was being put on consultants "pummelling the Council into submission" and not enough on what the public wanted.

Traditional local government structures are designed to reflect the needs, values and aspirations of dominant groups.

The consultation process has been flawed from start to finish albeit handled with expensive finesse.

The voicing of concerns by individuals and groups through meetings and submissions has allowed for better understanding on all sides.

Category D: Advocative

Every recommendation or submission needs to be justified with evidence.

Public dissent is undesirable and something to be got over.

The council should not tilt towards any one interest group.

Building trust, allowing everyone to have their say, and encouraging respectfulness are all features of a good process.

The process should attempt to build trust and respect among the different participants.

The process should leave people with a better understanding of each other's way of speaking, approaches, viewpoints, and so forth.

The process should operate according to consensus.

Decisions should be made on available evidence rather than rhetoric or political power.

My chief concern is that the decision making process should be fair and equitable.

If someone makes a compelling case for something it should change the course of the outcome.

The achievement of workable solutions to concrete problems is more important than the presentation of individual views and preferences.

The council should make it easy for people to participate.

Many people thought that because land-based treatment had received strong support through public consultation, it was just a matter of getting on and getting something built.

Council officers have said: "here's the dollars, the timeframe, the consent conditions, and the constraints – now within that you decide what you want, and we'll take that to Council".

It is quite important to present a reasonably well considered opinion on the wastewater issue. It is going to be criticised, so it has to be well thought out.

Participants in wastewater planning who expressed a different point of view to the majority one were sometimes treated as if that were divisive or working against an agreement.

The consultation process should educate people about the range of issues confronting the disposal of wastewater.

There should be formal equal opportunities for speaking rights among participants.

There should be equal access to information (written and oral) among participants.

Unacceptable decisions should not be railroaded into practice.

Theme Two: Actors

Category A: Definitive

Face-to-face public meetings tend to advantage individuals who are logical, adversarial and argumentative.

There's still a gap between what some interest groups want, and what other interest groups want, and that's not been resolved.

Consensus almost always means that the values of dominant majorities have marginalised the concerns of minorities.

It is not the number of people who participate that matters, but the quality of the interaction for those that do participate.

Iwi are very patient. Provided they trust and believe that the Council are moving in the right direction and are going to get there, they are fairly happy.

Policy outcomes will always reflect dominant perspectives about the way that people are and the way that the world works.

Only certain members of the community can be involved in something like this. If you want to understand a complex issue like this, you have to put in time and energy, and most people are just too busy running their lives.

The values and interests of the powerful, articulate and persuasive actors are given more weight than those of others.

Some participants are able to present their positions as "objective" or "common-sense" or "rational", and to label opposing positions as "emotional" and "subjective".

The people who are effective at getting heard are more civic-minded and have a public good focus, rather than a narrow agenda.

Category B: Designative

Policy-making will be improved by the inclusion of all stakeholders.

Expert bodies or individuals are best suited to determine how, where and under what circumstances resources should be allocated and used.

Interest groups altered their positions as the process went on.

All parties with a clear interest in the issue needed to be included in the process.

Local control and direct stakeholder participation is necessary in decisions that may affect the community.

Category C: Evaluative

There was always a willingness within the community to find a way through to achieving a solution that the majority could go with.

You have to moderate your point of view to reach an agreement, and that is a worthwhile process.

The various groups having input into the process have discounted their own preferences in order to reach agreement. There has been an awful lot of goodwill.

Grass roots community participation improves decision-making processes and ensures new voices are heard.

One positive result of this process is a stronger relationship with the Council.

Category D: Advocative

Any additional wastewater treatment will be a huge improvement and this opportunity should not be jeopardised by excessively finicky public demands.

Council staff and politicians should reach out to and draw in their strongest adversaries instead of attempting to marginalise or discredit them.

Why should today's generation pay the whole cost for a scheme which is also going to benefit future generations? Future ratepayers should pay a big share.

We should not be involving citizens directly in decision making unless they are technically well-informed.

Participants should leave behind their particular experiences and points of difference in order to aim for unity and a common good.

Theme 3: Substantive issues and their role/status

Category A: Definitive

This is a technically complex and multi-dimensional issue. Those who are able to put the time and research into understanding the issues and into becoming articulate and targeted in what they say, become very influential.

This is not a case of environmental purity versus the spoilers. It's a debate about higher environmental standards versus absurdly higher standards.

There has been a considerable shift in public opinion since the wastewater scheme's early days, as a result of increased understanding of the issues and of what the Council is doing.

One of the things that has modified my position has been the financial implications to this community.

Community thinking on the tensions between economic, social, cultural and environmental issues has changed with more weighting now being given to the affordability issues.

The Resource Management Act benefits those who can afford the smart lawyers, the consultants and the scientists.

There was a considerable section of the community who said “We’re not interested in the cost, we think it should be land-based disposal regardless”.

The main issue for most of the community was whether the Council would continue to discharge to the river or shift to land discharge.

Issues like this that involve a lot of technical input, have to be well thought out.

Technical experts are able to present their viewpoints as “objective” factual evidence that cannot be challenge, while using it in support of a particular preferred outcome.

If you put yourself in the shoes of some of the technical people at the Council, then you’d probably make the same decisions that they do.

A relatively informal submission at a consent hearing will basically be ignored if it is not that well thought through in a technical sense.

Category B: Designative

Affordability is the sole driving factor when considering options for wastewater treatment.

The Council is pursuing the best quality treatment available, in accordance with community preferences, and within its budget.

Some of the commercial and economic interest groups were initially prepared to support an environmentally friendly option.

The wise use of nature is best achieved through rational, efficient, scientific, technological management for the benefit of the greatest number of people.

In the end, it was a question of the Council not wishing to pay for a better scheme.

Land disposal of treated sewage, in the right situation, is a safe and sensible use of a resource.

The choice of wastewater scheme is not a health issue.

Those who dispute the scientific evidence are now few and far between.

Technology and chemicals pose relatively low risks and these risks are controllable through technology.

The main driving forces behind the decision on the final scheme are price and technical complexity.

When the significant costs of land-based treatment were revealed along with the likely rates increases, the community response shifted dramatically.

Category C: Evaluative

Cost-benefit analysis offers policy makers a way to assess the most objective and efficient means to respond to this challenge.

The level of opposition to the proposal is very low indeed, and that reflects the merits of the scheme.

People will have an increased well being from the proposed scheme for treatment and water discharge.

The general community perception is that the Council is doing their best to upgrade sewage within the constraints of what can be afforded.

Over time, a great deal of community understanding of the wastewater process has emerged.

I am suspicious of the role that money can play in corrupting decision making processes.

The final wastewater proposal represents the well considered, informed and agreed view of this community about its own environment.

Category D: Advocative

Council expenditure should be directed towards improving water quality, rather than monitoring, consultation and other related activities.

There is no point wasting money by setting standards that are better than the bathing standards required.

While economic growth has positive benefits for the community, clearly conservation has not been afforded the value it should have.

If you want to initiate an issue that isn't being actively considered by the Council, you've got to be in some position of influence, or you've got to have a pretty well-researched case, and you've got to have perseverance.

Regardless of cost, the Council should go to land disposal of effluent, despite treating to the appropriate standard.

Science, not emotional or political reactions, must serve as the foundation for policy decisions.

Prime horticultural land should not be used for disposal of wastewater or growing trees.

Non-technical criteria should be considered in decision making.

The public should be involved in deciding what technical information should be gathered and how it should be gathered.

Theme 4: Personal and corporate values and ethics and their role/status

Category A: Definitive

A 5% sewerage discharge to the river wouldn't have any public health effect, but it has a spiritual effect.

Even if the water being discharged in to the river were technically pure, the discharge would still not be totally acceptable.

Iwi probably lead our society in wanting a river free of sewerage, and society generally will probably follow them in taking that view.

The key point asserted by Māori was that land-based treatment was the only wholly acceptable way of assimilating the wastewater.

The cultural and spiritual expectations of Pakeha are not written into the Resource Management Act and are therefore totally ignored.

Policy decisions are never objective – rather, they will always reflect the cultural, social, institutional and economic context in which they arise.

Environmental or “green” groups are still dissatisfied that there is discharge to water.

Some of “green” or environmental groups were unrelenting about getting wastewater out of the river and ocean at all costs.

It is difficult for an “outsider” to assess the effects of the discharge on local iwi, as it is an inherently cultural and spiritual evaluation.

Affordability values and environmental values are both important to people.

All life and its environment are subject to limits inherent in the cosmos. Not all things that people wish to do are possible and nothing that people do is done without cost.

There is a general acceptance amongst the Council that personal subjective values are as important as the financial and technical imperatives, or more so.

If the planned discharges are an improvement on the present, then we can accept that discharges may not cease immediately.

Environmental concerns appear to be largely focused on recreation and fishing rather than the health of the ecosystem itself.

Any man-made change in a natural system is likely to be detrimental to that system.

The Council are attempting to analyse and understand the cultural and spiritual and attitudinal perspectives on the wastewater issue, rather than simply come at it from a technical and financial, “hard” process.

Category B: Designative

There is no such thing as an entirely objective, value-free position.

Environmental problems are part of a more general crisis of human values and ethics at the end of the twentieth century.

From the outset there has been a climate of opinion in the city that wanted sewerage out of the river.

Discharge of sewage to rivers and streams, impacts directly on the mauri of those waterways. The natural balance that exists amongst all things is disturbed and in many cases irreversibly damaged.

Issues such as recreation, cost, and Māori culture are rated by the community as significantly less important than the risk to health.

Many Pakeha New Zealanders are also offended by water disposal of effluent.

Only a small number of pakeha hold any spiritual values in relation to the river.

Environmental regulation is necessary and trade-offs for economic reasons are inappropriate.

The larger the human economy becomes, the more nature suffers.

Category C: Evaluative

It can be difficult or impossible to reach consensus on difficult values-based issues.

Participants change their individual and collective viewpoints as a result of collective deliberation, even in a way that is often at odds with their personal values.

Environmental groups have taken an idealistic point of view. Affordability has not been high on their agenda.

This whole process of discharging wastewater is abhorrent to all Kiwis, not just Māoris.

Involvement in the consultation process does make you rethink your underlying values. You are forced to see outside your own vision.

It is important to recognise the submissions that are being made that are emotional rather than based on facts, and to treat them accordingly.

The decision by council to continue to discharge to water all year round was an incredible disappointment for Māori.

The Council has acted in a manner that is both responsible and careful in providing for the sustainable future of its community.

The continued resistance to the proposal is from a minority of the population who are radicals and extremists.

The Council has tried to promote good holistic wastewater management which looks at the social, cultural and environmental as well as the technical and economic.

Category D: Advocative

Alternative methods of disposing of waste should be encouraged, such as composting toilets and grey water disposal at people's homes.

Do not channel filth into any waterway, because the health of our people is paramount.

Ethical values and norms should be accorded equal standing to economics as a basis for environmental policy making.

Cities all around the world are facing the same problems, but they must plan for discharge into waterways to cease. Time and money must be allocated to work towards finding a sustainable solution.

Attitudes towards enhancing and protecting the environment are changing, and the council must take note of the change.

A key challenge is to seek strategies that respect both Māori and European traditions in interpreting, understanding and protecting the natural world.

Personal values should not be allowed into this debate at all.

A large wastewater land application scheme is unwelcome in my area, and I would strongly oppose any such scheme.

Sewage produced in the city should be disposed of within the city boundary.

Sewage volumes should be reduced by reducing the community's use of water.

Society needs to proactively identify and assert its key priorities for a healthy and sustainable future.

Sometimes people's intuition is more important than a lot of technical know-how on issues.

An assessment of the effects of discharges on water quality must include an assessment of the social and cultural aspects.

Values, not evidence, belong at centre stage in the process.

Appendix Seven – Q-sorts loading by factor

Factor Matrix with an X Indicating a Defining Sort			
Q-sorts	Factor One Subjective Compromisers	Factor Two Objective Competitors	Factor Three Neutral Executives
1	-0.0595	0.3776	0.6267X
2	0.3952	0.5079X	0.1161
3	0.0694	0.5953X	0.4401
4	0.6181X	0.1419	0.3690
5	0.3475	0.6843X	0.0098
6	0.0683	0.4553X	-0.0715
7	0.1235	0.6338X	-0.0808
8	0.4687X	-0.0458	0.4082
9	0.2146	0.4469X	-0.0975
10	0.2113	-0.1671	0.7346X
11	0.4832X	0.2412	-0.1302
12	0.6220X	0.2822	0.0798
13	0.4294	0.3420	0.5212X
14	0.2261	-0.0342	0.4764X
15	0.6417X	0.3202	0.3376
16	0.3817	-0.2043	0.5965X
17	0.4901X	0.2644	0.4266
18	-0.0062	-0.2875	0.8124X
19	0.3196	0.0363	0.6329X
20	0.1552	-0.0076	0.6846X
21	0.6583X	0.1368	0.2695
22	0.4055	0.0510	0.4603X
23	-0.0076	0.0934	0.5548X
24	0.6756X	0.4116	0.1068
% Explanatory Variance	16	12	20

Bibliography

- Ahdar, Rex (2004). Māori spiritual concerns and the secular state. *The New Zealand Law Journal*, June, 208-210.
- Allen, Will, and Ockie Bosch (1996). *Shared experiences*. Paper to a Symposium on Resource Management issues, visions and practice. Lincoln University, 5-8 July.
- Allen, Will and Margaret Kilvington (1999). Why involving people is important: The forgotten part of environmental information system management. *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Multiple Objective Decision Support Systems for Land, Water and Environmental Management*. Brisbane, Australia.
- Allen, Will, Ockie Bosch, Margaret Kilvington, John Oliver and Malcolm Gilbert (2001). Benefits of collaborative learning for environmental management: Applying the Integrated Systems Knowledge Management approach to support animal pest control. *Environmental Management*, 27 (2), 215–223.
- Allen, Will, and Margaret Kilvington and Chrys Horn (2002). *Using participatory and learning-based approaches for environmental management to help achieve constructive behaviour change*. Lincoln: Landcare Research.
- Allen, Will, Rosemary Du Plessis, Margaret Kilvington, Bevan Tipene-Matua, and Ann Winstanley (2003). *Involving the public in science and technology decision-making: A review of national and international initiatives*. Wellington: Ministry of Research, Science and Technology.
- Amy, Douglas (1987). Can policy analysis be ethical? In Frank Fischer and John Forester (Eds.), *Confronting values in policy-analysis: The politics of criteria* (pp.45-65). Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.
- Anderson, Charles (1987). Political philosophy, practical reason, and policy analysis. In Frank Fischer and John Forester (Eds.), *Confronting values in policy-analysis: The politics of criteria* (pp.22-44). Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.
- Anderson, Joel (2001). Competent need-interpretation and discourse ethics. In William Rehg and James Bohman (Eds.), *Pluralism and the pragmatic turn: The transformation of critical theory* (pp.193-224). Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Aplin, Graeme (2000). Environmental rationalism and beyond: Toward a more just sharing of power and influence. *Australian Geographer*, 31 (3), 273–287.
- Arnstein, Sherry (1971). A ladder of citizen participation in the USA. *Journal of the Royal Town Planning Institute*, 57 (4), 176-182.
- Arrow, Kenneth (1963). *Social choice and individual values* (2nd ed.). New York: Wiley.
- Babbie, Earl (1992). *The practice of social research* (6th ed.). Belmont, California: Wadsworth.
- Bachrach, Peter, and Baratz, Morton (1962). Two faces of power. *American Political Science Review*, 56, 947-952.

Bibliography

- Baker, Rachel (2004). *Rationality and health and lifestyle choices for people with diabetes: A Q methodological investigation*. Paper to the 20th Annual Conference of the International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity, University of Georgia, September.
- Baker, Virginia, Jeff Foote, Jan Gregor, Don Houston and Gerald Midgley (2004). Boundary critique and community involvement in watershed management. In Kevin Dew and Ruth Fitzgerald (Eds.), *Challenging science: Issues for New Zealand society in the 21st century* (pp.88-107). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Barfoot, Cushla (1999). *Iwi consultation under the Resource Management Act (1991): An exploration of contemporary practice*. Unpublished Masters Thesis, Lincoln University.
- Barry, John, and John Proops (1999). Seeking sustainability discourses with Q-methodology. *Ecological Economics*, 28, 337-345.
- Benhabib, Seyla (1996). Toward a deliberative model of democratic legitimacy. In Seyla Benhabib (Ed.), *Democracy and difference: Contesting the boundaries of the political* (pp.67-94). Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Berg, Bruce (1998). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Berke, Philip, Neil Ericksen, Jan Crawford, and Jenny Dixon (2002). Planning and Indigenous People: Human Rights and Environmental Protection in New Zealand. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 22, 115-134.
- Berman, Evan (1997). Dealing with cynical citizens. *Public Administration Review*, 57, (2), 105-112.
- Beverly, Paul (1998). The mechanisms for the protection of Māori interests under Part II of the Resource Management Act 1991. *New Zealand Journal of Environmental Law*, 2, 121-156.
- Bevir, Mark and R. Rhodes (2002). Interpretive theory. In David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (Eds.), *Theory and methods in political science* (2nd ed.) (pp.131-152). Houndsmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan,
- Bickerstaff, Karen and Gordon Walker (2005). Shared Visions, Unholy Alliances: Power, Governance and Deliberative Processes in Local Transport Planning. *Urban Studies*, 42, (12), 2123–2144.
- Bioethics Council (2004). *The cultural, ethical and spiritual dimensions of the use of human genes in other organisms*. Wellington: Author.
- Blaikie, Norman (2000). *Designing social research: The logic of anticipation*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Blake, James (1999). Overcoming the 'value-action' gap in environmental policy: Tensions between national policy and local experience. *Local Environment*, 4 (3), 257-278.
- Blyth, Stephen (1999). *Shifting to a sustainable city? Citizen participation in Wellington's "Our City – Our Future Strategy"* Unpublished Masters Thesis, Massey University.
- Bohman, James (1996). *Public deliberation: Pluralism, complexity and democracy*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

- Bohman, James and William Rehg (1997). Introduction. In James Bohman and William Rehg (Eds.), *Deliberative democracy: Essays on reason and politics* (pp.ix-xxx). Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Borrie, Nancy, Ali Memon, Neil Ericksen and Jan Crawford (2004). *Planning and governance under the LGA: Lessons from the RMA experience*. University of Waikato, Hamilton: International Global Change Institute.
- Borrie, Nancy and Ali Memon (2005). Long-term council community plans: A scoping survey of local authorities. University of Waikato, Hamilton: The International Global Change Institute.
- Bosch, Ockie and Will Allen (1996). *Monitoring and adaptive management paper*. Alexandra, New Zealand: Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research.
- Bostwick, Matthew (1999) 'Widening the net': *An examination of strategies for involving citizens in local decision-making*. Unpublished Masters Thesis, University of Auckland.
- Brewer, Gene, Sally Selden and Rex Facer (2000). Individual conceptions of public service motivation. *Public Administration Review*, 60, (3), 254-264.
- Brooks, Josie (2000). Labour's modernization of local government. *Public Administration*, 78 (3), 593-612.
- Brown, Steven (1980). *Political subjectivity: Applications of Q methodology in political science*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Brown, Steven (1996). Q methodology and qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 6 (4), 561-567.
- Bryman, Alan (2004). *Social research methods* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Buckingham-Hatfield, Susan and Susan Percy (1999). Constructing future local environmental agendas. In Susan Buckingham-Hatfield and Susan Percy (Eds.), *Constructing local environmental agendas: People, places and participation* (pp.186-192). London: Routledge.
- Buhrs, Ton (2000). The environment and the role of the state in New Zealand. In P. Ali Memon and Harvey Perkins (Eds.), *Environmental planning and management in New Zealand* (pp.27-35). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Buhrs, Ton (2002). New Zealand's capacity for green planning: A political-institutional assessment and analysis. *Political Science*, 54 (1), 27-46.
- Buhrs, Ton and Graeme Aplin (1999). Pathways towards sustainability: The Australian approach. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 42 (3), 315 – 340.
- Bunting, Stephen (2002). The influence of the Local Government Act No3 1996 on policy development in local government. *Public Sector*, 25 (1), 16-19.
- Burke, Kym (2004). *A review of innovative approaches to meeting the LGA 2002 challenge of identifying community outcomes*. Wellington: Local Government New Zealand.
- Burns, Danny, Robin Hambleton and Paul Hoggett (1994). *The politics of decentralisation: Revitalising local democracy*. Basingstoke, UK: MacMillan Press.
- Burt, Joy (2001). The community is heard. *Planning Quarterly*, September, 19-21.

Bibliography

- Bush, Graham (1995). *Local government and politics in New Zealand*. Auckland: Auckland University Press.
- Bush, Graham (2004). Open mindedness: The nub of codes of conduct. *New Zealand Local Government*, May, 36.
- Bush, J, S. Moffatt and C.E. Dunn (2002). Contextualisation of local and global environmental issues in North-East England: Implications for debates on globalisation and the 'risk society'. *Local Environment*, 7 (2), 19-133.
- Bush, Judith, Peter Phillimore, Tanja Pless-Mulloli and Christine Thompson (2005). Carcass disposal and siting controversy: Risk, dialogue and confrontation in the 2001 foot-and-mouth outbreak. *Local Environment*, 10 (6), 649–664.
- Calhoun, Craig (1995). *Critical social theory: Culture, history, and the challenge of difference*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers.
- Capdevila, Rose and Rex Stainton Rogers (2000). If you go down to the woods today...Narratives of Newbury. In Helen Adams and John Proops (Eds.), *Social discourse and environmental policy: An application of Q-methodology* (pp.152-173). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Carson, Lyn (2006). Improving Public Deliberative Practice: A Comparative Analysis of Two Italian Citizens' Jury Projects in 2006. *Journal of Public Deliberation*, 2 (1), 1-18.
- Chandler, David (2000). Active citizens and the therapeutic state: the role of democratic participation in local government reform. *Policy & Politics*. 29 (1), 3–14.
- Chart, Jane (1998). *Mediation. Resource Management Law Reform, Working Paper No.22*. Wellington: Ministry for the Environment.
- Cheyne, Christine (1997). *Public participation in local authority annual planning: 'Spectacles and acclamation' or prospects for deliberative democracy?* Unpublished PhD Thesis, Massey University.
- Cheyne, Christine (1999). After consultation: The challenge facing democratic governance. *Political Science*, 50 (2), 209-224.
- Cheyne, Christine (2002). Public involvement in local government in New Zealand: A historical account. In Jean Drage (Ed.), *Empowering communities? Representation and participation in New Zealand's local government* (pp.116-155). Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Cheyne, Christine, and Margie Comrie (2002). Involving citizens in local government: Expanding the use of deliberative processes. In Jean Drage (Ed.), *Empowering communities? Representation and participation in New Zealand's local government* (pp.156-186). Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Chopyak, Jill, and Peter Levesque (2002). Public participation in science and technology decision making: trends for the future. *Technology in Society* 24, 155–166.
- Christiano, Thomas (1997). The significance of public deliberation. In James Bohman and William Rehg (Eds.), *Deliberative democracy: Essays on reason and politics* (pp.243-277). Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.

- Cohen, Joshua (1997). Deliberation and democratic legitimacy. In James Bohman and William Rehg (Eds.), *Deliberative democracy: Essays on reason and politics* (pp.67-92). Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Cohen, Joshua (1996). Procedure and substance in deliberative democracy. In Seyla Benhabib (Ed.), *Democracy and difference: Contesting the boundaries of the political* (pp.95-119). Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Collins, David (2001). To recommend or not to recommend? The planner's role in the judicial process. *Planning Quarterly*, September, 7-8.
- Cockburn, Cynthia (1977). *The local state*. London: Pluto Press.
- Conklin J. (2006). *Dialogue mapping: Building shared understanding of wicked problems*. Chichester, England: John Wiley and Sons.
- Connelly, James and Graham Smith (1999). *Politics and the environment: From theory to practice*. London: Routledge.
- Considine, Mark (1994). *Public policy: A critical approach*. Melbourne: MacMillan.
- Controller and Auditor-General (1998). *Public consultation and decision-making in local government*. Wellington: Author.
- Controller and Auditor-General (2000). *Reviewing a long-term financial strategy and funding policy: Experiences of the early nine*. Wellington: Author.
- Creswell, John (1994). *Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Cronin, Karen and Laurie Jackson (2004). *Hands across the water: Developing dialogue between stakeholders in the New Zealand biotechnology debate*. Victoria University of Wellington.
- Crotty, Michael (1998). *The foundation of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Australia: Allen and Unwin.
- Day, Donald (1998). *Public participation in the local government annual plan process*. Unpublished Masters Research Paper. Victoria University of Wellington.
- Dayers-Winterbottom, Trevor (2004). Primus inter pares: Major projects under the RMA. *The New Zealand Law Journal*, October, 416-424.
- Dayton, Bruce (2000). Policy frames, policy making and the global climate change discourse. In Helen Adams and John Proops (Eds.), *Social discourse and environmental policy: An application of Q-methodology* (pp.71-99). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- De Vaus, David (2001). *Research design in social research*. London: Sage.
- Department of Internal Affairs (1992). *Public consultation in the local authority annual planning process*. Wellington: Author.
- Department of Internal Affairs (1995). *Is public consultation working? The local authority annual planning process*. Wellington: Author.
- Devine-Wright, Patrick (2005). Local aspects of UK renewable energy development: Exploring public beliefs and policy implications. *Local Environment*, 10 (1), 57-69.

Bibliography

- Dietz, Simon, and Giles Atkinson (2005). Public perceptions of equity in environmental policy: Traffic emissions policy in an English urban area. *Local Environment*, 10 (4), 445–459.
- Dixon, Jenny (2005). Enacting and reacting: Local government frameworks for economic development. In James Rowe (Ed.), *Economic development in New Zealand* (pp.69-86). Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Downs, Anthony (1957). *An economic theory of democracy*. New York: Harper Brothers.
- Drage, Jean (2003). The impact of New Zealand local government legislation on political representation. *Public Sector*, 26 (2), 11-15.
- Drage, Jean (2004). *The councillor role: Local government representation in a shifting political environment*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington.
- Drage, Jean (Ed.), (2002). *Empowering communities? Representation and participation in New Zealand's local government*. Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Dryzek, John (1990). *Discursive democracy: Politics, policy and political science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dryzek, John (2000). *Deliberative democracy and beyond: Liberals, critics and contestations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dryzek, John (2001). Legitimacy and economy in deliberative democracy. *Political Theory*, 29 (5), 651-669.
- Dryzek, John and Christian List (2003). Social choice theory and deliberative democracy: A reconciliation. *British Journal of Political Science*, 33, 1-28.
- Dryzek, John and Jeffrey Berejikian (1993). Reconstructive democratic theory. *American Political Science Review*, 87 (1), 48-60.
- Dryzek, John and Valerie Braithwaite (2000). On the prospects for democratic deliberation: Values analysis applied to Australian politics. *Political Psychology*, 21 (2), 241-266.
- Durie, Mason (2004). Understanding health and illness: Research at the interface between science and indigenous knowledge. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 33, 1138-1143.
- Durning, Dan (1999). The transition from traditional to post-positivist policy analysis: A role for Q-methodology. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 18 (3), 389-410.
- Durning, Dan and Will Osuna (1994). Policy analysts' roles and value orientations: An empirical investigation using Q-methodology. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 13 (4), 629-657.
- Eckerberg, Katerina, and Eva Mineur (2003). The use of local sustainability indicators: Case studies in two Swedish municipalities. *Local Environment*, 8 (6), 591–614.
- Elster, Jon (1998). Deliberation and constitution making. In Jon Elster (Ed.), *Deliberative democracy* (pp.97-122). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Elster, Jon (2003). The market and the forum: Three varieties of political theory. In Thomas Christiano (Ed.), *Philosophy and democracy: An anthology* (pp.138-158). New York: Oxford University Press.

- Ericksen, Neil, Philip Berke, Janet Crawford and Jennifer Dixon (2003). *Planning under sustainability: New Zealand under the RMA*. Hamilton: International Global Change Institute, The University of Waikato.
- Fairweather, John (1990). *The Q-method and subjective perceptions of food in the 1990s. Research Report No. 204*. Canterbury: Agribusiness and Economics Research Unit, Lincoln University.
- Fairweather, John and Simon Swaffield (2000). Q method using photographs to study perceptions of the environment in New Zealand. In Helen Adams and John Proops (Eds.), *Social discourse and environmental policy: An application of Q-methodology* (pp.138-151). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Fairweather, John and Simon Swaffield (2001). Visitor experiences of Kaikoura, New Zealand: An interpretative study using photographs of landscapes and Q method. *Tourism management*, 22 (3), 219-228.
- Fairweather, John, Simon Swaffield, Lisa Langer, Jacky Bowring and Nick Ledgard (1994). *Preferences for land use options in the Mackenzie/Waitaki Basin: A Q-method analysis of stakeholders' preferences for visual images of six land uses on four land forms. Research Report No.224*. Canterbury: Agribusiness and Economics Research Unit, Lincoln University.
- Fearon, James (1998). Deliberation as discussion. In Jon Elster (Ed.), *Deliberative democracy* (pp.44-68). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fischer, Frank (2003). *Citizens, experts, and the environment: The politics of local knowledge*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Fischer, Frank and John Forester (Eds.), (1987). *Confronting values in policy-analysis: The politics of criteria*. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.
- Flyvbjerg, Bent (1998). *Rationality and power: Democracy in practice*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Flyvbjerg, Bent (2001). *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Focht, Will, and James Lawler (2000). Using Q methodology to facilitate policy dialogue. In Helen Adams and John Proops (Eds.), *Social discourse and environmental policy: An application of Q-methodology* (pp.100-122). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Fookes, Tom (1999). *NIMBYism at the neighbourhood level: Cases and analysis. Department of Planning Working Paper Series, Number 99-4*. Auckland: University of Auckland.
- Font, Joan, and Ismael Blanco (2007). Procedural legitimacy and political trust: The case of citizen juries in Spain. *European Journal of Political Research*, 46 (4), 557-589.
- Forester, John (1993). *Critical theory, public policy and planning practice: Towards a critical pragmatism*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Forester, John (1999). Dealing with deep value differences. In Lawrence Susskin, Sarah McKernan and Jennifer Thomas-Larmer (Eds.), *The consensus building handbook* (pp.463-493). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Bibliography

- Forgie, Vicky (2001). *Submission-makers' perceptions of the annual plan process in New Zealand local government*. Unpublished Masters Thesis, Massey University.
- Forgie, Vicky (2002). Submission-makers' perceptions of the annual plan process. In Jean Drage (Ed.), *Empowering communities? Representation and participation in New Zealand's local government* (pp.226-257). Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Forgie, Vicky, Christine Cheyne and Philip McDermott (1999). *Democracy in New Zealand Local government: Purpose and practice*. Palmerston North: School of Resource and Environmental Planning, Massey University.
- Forret, Joan (1998). Scientific evidence and environmental litigation in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Environmental Law*, 2, 39-62.
- Frame, Tanis M., Thomas Gunton and J. C. Day (2004). The Role of Collaboration in Environmental Management: An Evaluation of Land and Resource Planning in British Columbia. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 47 (1), 59–82.
- Fraser, Nancy (1997). *Justice interruptus: Critical reflections on the 'postsocialist' condition*. New York: Routledge.
- Freeman, Claire (2004). Sustainable development from rhetoric to practice? A New Zealand perspective. *International Planning Studies*, 9 (4), 307-326.
- Freie, John (1997). The effects of campaign participation on political attitudes. *Political Behaviour*, 19, 133-156.
- Gambetta, Diego (1998). "Claro!" An essay on discursive machismo. In Jon Elster (Ed.), *Deliberative democracy* (pp.19-43). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gleeson, Brendan (2000). The politics of consent notification. In P. Ali Memon and Harvey Perkins (Eds.), *Environmental planning and management in New Zealand* (pp.115-122). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Gleeson, Brendan and P. Ali Memon (1997). Community care: Implications for urban planning from the New Zealand experience. *Planning Practice and Research*, 12 (2), 119 – 132.
- Goodwin, Philip (1998). 'Hired hands' or 'local voice': Understandings and experience of local participation in conservation. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 23, 481-499.
- Goven, Joanna and Julie Wuthnow (2004). Challenging scientific legitimacy: Citizen participation and technoscience. In Kevin Dew and Ruth Fitzgerald (Eds.), *Challenging science: Issues for New Zealand society in the 21st century* (pp.51-67). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Gregory, Robert (1989). Political rationality or 'incrementalism'? Charles E. Lindblom's enduring contribution to public policy making theory. *Policy and Politics*, 17 (2), 139-153.
- Gregory, Robert (2003). Political life is larger than intervention logic. *Public Sector*, 26 (1), 4-7.
- Grudens-Schuck, Nancy, Will Allen, Tasha Hargrove and Margaret Kilvington (2003). Renovating dependency and self-reliance for participatory sustainable development. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 20, 53-64.

- Grundy, Kerry (1996). Community participation in resource management—Fact or fiction? In *Resource management: Issues, visions, practice. Symposium proceedings*. Canterbury: Centre for Resource Management, Lincoln University.
- Gunder, Michael (1998). *Can communicative planning speak for all? The theory's imbedded discrimination towards difference, diversity and nature*. Auckland: Department of Planning, University of Auckland.
- Gunder, Michael (1999). *Planning for joy: Planning practice as the mediating of the Others' desires*. Auckland: Department of Planning, University of Auckland.
- Gunder, Michael (2000). Urban policy formation under efficiency: The case of the Auckland City Council's Britomart project. In P. Ali Memon and Harvey Perkins (Eds.), *Environmental planning and management in New Zealand* (pp.294-308). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Gunder, Michael (2006). Enough is enough: It's time to act! *Planning Quarterly*, June, 18-20.
- Habermas, Jurgen (1984). *The theory of communicative action*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Habermas, Jurgen (1990). *Moral consciousness and communicative action*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Habermas, Jurgen (1996). *Between facts and norms*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Hajer, M. (1995). *The politics of environmental discourse: Ecological modernisation and the policy process*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Haig, Brian (2005). An abductive theory of scientific method. *Psychological Methods*, 10 (4), 371-388.
- Halseth, Greg, and Annie Booth (2003) "What works well; what needs improvement": Lessons in public consultation from British Columbia's resource planning processes. *Local Environment*, 8 (4), 437-455.
- Harrison, Carolyn, Richard Munton and K. Collins (2004). Experimental Discursive Spaces: Policy Processes, Public Participation and the Greater London Authority. *Urban Studies*, 41 (4), 903-917
- Hayward, Bronwyn (2000). *Beyond consensus: Social learning in urban planning*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Otago.
- Healey, Patsy (1997). *Collaborative planning: Shaping places in fragmented societies*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press.
- Hendriks, Carolyn (2002). Institutions of deliberative democratic processes and interest groups: Roles, tensions and incentives. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 6 (1), 64-75.
- Heywood, Andrew (2002). *Politics* (2nd ed.). Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave.
- Hillier, Jean (2002). *Shadows of power: An allegory of prudence in land-use planning*. London: Routledge.
- Hollis, Martin (1994). *The philosophy of social science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bibliography

- Hoppe, Robert and Margarita Jeliaskova (2004). *Policy work in the Netherlands: The case of the Ministry of Education, Sciences, and Culture*. Paper to the 20th Annual Conference of the International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity, University of Georgia, September.
- Hucker, Bruce (1998). Governance, consultation and models of democracy. *Planning Quarterly*, March, 16-19.
- Hughes, Phil (2000). *Local Agenda 21 in the United Kingdom: A review of progress and issues for New Zealand*. Wellington: Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment.
- Hughes, Phil and Paul Honeybone (2000). *Sustainability indicators for New Zealand cities and communities*. Paper to the New Zealand Planning Institute Conference, May, Christchurch.
- Hunold, Christian and Iris Young (1998). Justice, democracy and hazardous siting. *Political Studies*, XLVI, 82-95.
- Hutchings, John and Laura Hogg (2002). Planning outside the Resource Management Act. *Planning Quarterly*, March, 4-7.
- Hutt, Marten (2004). Shared contemplations: How a science policy ministry is responding to science under challenge. In Kevin Dew and Ruth Fitzgerald (Eds.), *Challenging science: Issues for New Zealand society in the 21st century* (pp.33-50). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Javison, Edgar (1994). *Public participation in New Zealand regional councils*. Unpublished Masters Thesis, Massey University.
- Jennings, Bruce (1987). Interpretation and the practice of policy analysis. In Frank Fischer and John Forester (Eds.), *Confronting values in policy-analysis: The politics of criteria* (pp.128-152). Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.
- Johnston, Jane (1998). *Environmental dispute resolution and consultation within the RMA: A case study—The Fitzherbert Avenue cross river transportation dispute*. Unpublished Masters Thesis, Massey University.
- Justice, Megan (2001). Procedural justice and social learning. *Planning Quarterly*, March, 16-18.
- Kenyon, Wendy (2005). A critical review of citizens' juries: How useful are they in facilitating public participation in the EU Water Framework Directive? *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 48 (3), 431-443.
- Kerr, Simon (1995). *Discursive design in policy analysis: Epistemology, hermeneutics and communicative rationality in an applied case study*. Unpublished Masters Thesis, Lincoln University.
- Kerr, Simon (1997). *Prospects for discursive design in environmental policy: Reflections from theory and practice*. Paper to New Zealand Political Studies Association Conference, University of Waikato.

- Kilvington, Margaret, Jo Rosier, Roger Wilkinson and Claire Freeman (1998). *Ecological restoration in an urban context: Social opportunities and constraints*. Christchurch: Landcare Research.
- King, Gary, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba (1994). *Designing social inquiry: Scientific inference in qualitative research*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Klein, Ulrich (2000). Belief-views on nature: Western environmental ethics and Māori world views. *New Zealand Journal of Environmental Law*, 4, 81-119.
- Klein, Ulrich (2001). Integrated resource management in New Zealand: A juridical analysis of policy, plan and rule making under the RMA. *New Zealand Journal of Environmental Law*, 5, 1-54.
- Klijn, Erik-Hans and Koppenjan, Joop (2000). Politicians and interactive decision making: Institutional spoilsports or playmakers? *Public Administration*, 78 (2), 365-387.
- Kline, Paul (1994). *An easy guide to factor analysis*. London: Routledge.
- Knight, Stephen (1999). *Agenda 21 in New Zealand: The experience of selected city and district councils*. Auckland: Department of Planning, University of Auckland.
- Knight, Stephen (2000). *Agenda 21 in New Zealand: Not dead, just resting*. Auckland: Department of Planning, University of Auckland.
- Knight, Stephen, and Pacific Rim Institute of Sustainable Management (2000). *Sustainable development in New Zealand: Here today, where tomorrow?* Auckland: Pacific Rim Institute of Sustainable Management.
- Kuhn, Thomas (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Laird, Frank (1993). Participatory analysis, democracy, and technological decision making. *Science, Technology, and Human Values*, 18 (3), 341-361.
- Lane, Marcus and Geoff McDonald (2005). Community-based environmental planning: Operational dilemmas, planning principles and possible remedies. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 48 (5), 709-731.
- Latour, Bruno (1987). *Science in Action: How to follow scientists and engineers through society*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Lawrence, Rick and Steven Daniel (1997). Procedural justice and public involvement in natural resource decision making. *Society and Natural Resources*, 10 (6), 577-589.
- Lee, Stuart and Wolff-Michael Roth (2006). Community-level controversy over a natural resource: Toward a more democratic science in society. *Society and Natural Resources*, 19, 429-445.
- Lewis, Jane (2003). Design issues. In Jane Ritchie and Jane Lewis (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage Publications.
- Lewis, Jane and Jane Ritchie (2003). Generalising from qualitative research. In Jane Ritchie and Jane Lewis (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage Publications.

Bibliography

- Lindblom, Charles (1959). The science of muddling through. *Public Administration Review*, 19, Spring, 79-88.
- Lindblom, Charles and David Cohen (1979). *Usable knowledge: Social science and social problem solving*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Local Government Commission (2005). *Initial review of the Local Government Act 2002 and the Local Electoral Act 2001*. Wellington: Author.
- Local Government New Zealand [LGNZ] (2000). *State of strategic planning workshops: Background paper*. Wellington: Author.
- Local Government New Zealand [LGNZ] (2003a). *The knowhow guide to assessing water and sanitary services under the Local Government Act 2002*. Wellington: Author.
- Local Government New Zealand [LGNZ] (2003b). *The knowhow guide to decision making under the Local Government Act 2002*. Wellington: Author.
- Local Government New Zealand [LGNZ] (2003c). *The knowhow guide to governance under the Local Government Act 2002*. Wellington: Author.
- Local Government New Zealand [LGNZ] (2003d). *The knowhow guide to the regulatory and enforcement provisions of the Local Government Act 2002*. Wellington: Author.
- Local Government New Zealand [LGNZ] (2003e). *The Local Government Act 2002: An overview*. Wellington: Author.
- Local Government New Zealand [LGNZ] (2004). *Enhancing New Zealand's resource management performance*. Wellington: Author.
- Lofland, John and Lyn Lofland (1995). *Analyzing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis* (3rd ed.). University of California: Wadsworth.
- Lowndes, Vivien (1996). Varieties of new institutionalism: A critical appraisal. *Public Administration*, 74, 181-197.
- Lowndes, Vivien (2002). Institutionalism. In David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (Eds.), *Theory and methods in political science* (2nd ed.) (pp.90-108). Houndsmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan,
- Lowndes, Vivien, Lawrence Pratchett and Gerry Stoker (2001a). Trends in public participation: Part 1 – Citizens' perspectives. *Public Administration*, 79 (2), 445-455.
- Lowndes, Vivien, Lawrence Pratchett and Gerry Stoker (2001b). Trends in public participation: Part 2 – Local government perspectives. *Public Administration*, 79 (1), 205-222.
- Lowndes, Vivien, and Helen Sullivan (2004). Like a horse and carriage or a fish on a bicycle: How well do local partnerships and public participation go together? *Local Government Studies*, 30 (1), 51–73
- Luckin, David and Liz Sharp (2004). Remaking local governance through community participation? The case of the UK community waste sector. *Urban Studies*, 41 (8), 1485–1505.
- Lynn, Laurence (1999). A place at the table: Policy analysis, its post-positivist critics, and the future of practice. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 18 (3), 411-424.

- MacKenzie, Jody, and Naomi Krogman (2005). Public involvement processes, conflict, and challenges for rural residents near intensive hog farms. *Local Environment*, 10 (5), 513–524.
- Mackie, Gerry (1998). All men are liars: Is democracy meaningless? In Jon Elster (Ed.), *Deliberative democracy* (pp.69-96). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- MacLennan, Barbara (2000). *Deliberative democracy: Developing best practice in territorial local authorities*. Unpublished Masters Thesis, Massey University.
- Mansbridge, Jane (1996). Using power/fighting power: The polity. In Seyla Benhabib (Ed.), *Democracy and difference: Contesting the boundaries of the political* (pp.46-66). Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- March, James and Johan Olsen (1989). *Rediscovering institutions*. New York: Free Press.
- Massey University Department of Marketing (2001). *New Zealanders and the environment: International Social Survey Programme*. Unpublished Report, Massey University.
- Match, Peter (2004). A personal view of the art of consultation. *Planning Quarterly*, December, 4-5.
- Matunga, Hirini (2000). Decolonising planning: The Treaty of Waitangi, the environment and a dual planning tradition. In P. Ali Memon and Harvey Perkins (Eds.), *Environmental planning and management in New Zealand* (pp.36-47). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Matunga, Hirini (2006). The concept of indigenous planning as a framework for social inclusion. *Planning Quarterly*, June, 24-28.
- McAnulla, Stuart (2002). Structure and agency. In David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (Eds.), *Theory and methods in political science* (pp.271-291). Houndsmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- McAvoy, Gregory (1999). *Controlling technocracy: Citizen rationality and the NIMBY syndrome*. Washington: Georgetown University Press.
- McCarthy, Thomas (1991). *Ideas and illusions: On reconstruction and deconstruction in contemporary critical theory*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- McKeown, Bruce, and Thomas, Dan (1988). *Q methodology*. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.
- McNamara, Padraig (2004). Local government's requirements to consult. *The New Zealand Law Journal*, September 2004, 361-364.
- Memon, Ali (2001). Planning in New Zealand under the Resource Management Act: A report card. *Impact Assessment New Zealand*, 55, 3-7
- Memon, P. Ali and Harvey Perkins (2000). Environmental planning and management: The broader context. In P. Ali Memon and Harvey Perkins (Eds.), *Environmental planning and management in New Zealand* (pp.11-24). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Memon, Ali and Gavin Thomas (2006). New Zealand's new Local Government Act: A paradigm for participatory planning or business as usual? *Urban Policy and Research*, 24 (1), 135–144.

Bibliography

- Ministry for the Environment [MfE] (1999a). *Striking a balance: A practice guide on consultation and communication for project advocates*. Wellington: Author.
- Ministry for the Environment [MfE] (1999b). *Your guide to the Resource Management Act: An essential reference for people affected by, or interested in the Act*. Wellington: Author.
- Ministry for the Environment [MFE] (2004). *Your guide to the Resource Management Act*. Wellington: Author.
- Ministry for the Environment [MFE] (2005a). *Quality planning*. Retrieved 5th April 2005 from <http://www.qualityplanning.org.nz/>
- Ministry for the Environment [MfE] (2005b). *Effective participation in resource consent processes: A guide for tangata whenua*. Wellington: Author.
- Ministry for the Environment [MfE] (2005c). *Resource Management Act: Two-yearly survey of local authorities 2003/2004*. Wellington: Author.
- Mitcalfe, Kate (2001). Fronting up: Mediation under the Resource Management Act 1991. *New Zealand Journal of Environmental Law*, 5, 195-225.
- Mitchell, Chris (2003). The new local government legislation. *Public Sector*, 26 (2), 2-5.
- Morcol, Goktug (2001). Positivist beliefs among policy professionals: An empirical investigation. *Policy Sciences*, 34, 381-410.
- Morcol, Goktug (2002). *A new mind for policy analysis: Towards a post-Newtonian and post-positivist epistemology and methodology*. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers.
- Morgan, Richard (2000). The practice of environmental impact assessment in New Zealand: Problems and prospects. In P. Ali Memon and Harvey Perkins (Eds.), *Environmental planning and management in New Zealand* (pp.94-104). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Morrison, Basil (2002). *Governance in the 21st Century: The implications for local government and environmental management*. Paper to the Joint Congress for the New Zealand Planning Institute and the Planning Institute of Australia, Wellington.
- Murray, Jeff and Simon Swaffield (2000). Policy myths in resource management. In P. Ali Memon and Harvey Perkins (Eds.), *Environmental planning and management in New Zealand* (pp.74-79). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Nalbandian, John (1990). Tenets of contemporary professionalism in local government. *Public Administration Review*, 50 (6), 654-662.
- Nash, Simon (1998). *Local authorities and public consultation in the No.3 Act planning process: An Honours research report*. Palmerston North: School of Social Policy and Social Work, Massey University.
- Neill, Beth (2003). *Reflections on relationship-building between tangata whenua and local government: Notes from research and practice*. Hamilton: The International Global Change Institute, University of Waikato.
- Neuman, W. Lawrence (2000). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

- Neumann, Zoey (1998). *Community for diverse societies: Discourse and democratic engagement as strategies for a modern model of community*. Unpublished Masters Thesis, University of Auckland.
- Newson, Malcolm and Liz Chalk (2004). Environmental capital: An information core to public participation in strategic and operational decisions—The example of river 'best practice' projects. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 47 (6), 899–920.
- Niskanen, William (1971) *Bureaucracy and representative government*. Chicago: Aldine-Atherton.
- Nowotny, Helga (1993). A new branch of Science, Inc. In Rene Von Schomberg (Ed.), *Science, politics and morality: Scientific uncertainty and decision making* (pp.63-84). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Ombler, Kathy (1998). Agenda 21: An update. *New Zealand Local Government*, April, 30-33.
- Ong, Su-Wuen (2001). I've got more experts than you: Experts and the Environment Court. *New Zealand Journal of Environmental Law*, 5, 261-285.
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment [PCE] (1996a). *Public participation in environmental decision making*. Wellington: Author.
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment [PCE] (1996b). *Public participation under the Resource Management Act 1991: The management of conflict*. Wellington: Author.
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment [PCE] (1998a). *Kaitiakitanga and local government: Tangata whenua participation in environmental management*. Wellington: Author.
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment [PCE] (1998b). *The cities and their people: New Zealand's urban environment*. Wellington: Author.
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment [PCE] (2000a). *Ageing pipes and murky waters: Urban water system issues for the 21st Century*. Wellington: Author.
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment [PCE] (2000b). *Local Agenda 21 in the United Kingdom: A review of progress and issues for New Zealand*. Wellington: Author.
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment [PCE] (2001). *Managing change in paradise: Sustainable development in peri-urban areas*. Wellington: Author.
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment [PCE] (2002). *Creating our future: Sustainable development for New Zealand*. Wellington: Author.
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment [PCE] (2003). *Illuminated or blinded by science? A discussion paper on the role of science in environmental policy and decision-making*. Wellington: Author.
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment [PCE] (2004). *Missing links: Connecting science with environmental policy*. Wellington: Author.
- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment [PCE] (2005a). *Turning hopes and dreams into actions and results: Whangamata, a case study of community planning in a coastal area*. Wellington: Author.

Bibliography

- Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment [PCE] (2005b). *Working together in Thames-Coromandel: Guidelines for community planning*. Wellington: Author.
- Patton, Michael (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Pelletier, D., V. Kraak, C. McCullum, U. Uusitalo and R. Rich (1999). The shaping of collective values through deliberative democracy: An empirical study from New York's North Country. *Policy Sciences*, 32, 103-131.
- Pellizzoni, Luigi (2001). The myth of the best argument: power, deliberation and reason. *British Journal of Sociology*, 52 (1), 59-86.
- Perkins, Harvey and David Thorns (2000). Urban sustainability and city planning. In P. Ali Memon and Harvey Perkins (Eds.), *Environmental planning and management in New Zealand* (pp.348-354). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.
- Perkins, Harvey and David Thorns (2001). A decade on: Reflections on the Resource Management Act 1991 and the practice of urban planning in New Zealand. *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*, 28, 639-654
- Peters, B. Guy (1999). *Institutional theory in political science: The 'New Institutionalism'*. London: Pinter.
- Previte, Josephine, Barbara Pini and Fiona Haslam-McKenzie (2007). Q Methodology and Rural Research. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 47 (2), 135-147.
- Ravenscroft, Neil, Nigel Curry and Susan Markwell (2002). Outdoor recreation and participative democracy in England and Wales. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 45(5), 715-734.
- Rehg, William (1994). *Insight and solidarity: A study of the discourse ethics of Jurgen Habermas*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.
- Rehg, William and James Bohman (2002). Discourse and democracy: The formal and informal bases of legitimacy in "Between Facts and Norms". In Rene von Schomberg and Kenneth Baynes (Eds.), *Discourse and democracy: Essays on Habermas's "Between Facts and Norms"* (pp.31-60). New York: State University of New York Press.
- Reid, Mike (2002). Exploring the rhetoric of partnership: The dynamics of local government reform in New Zealand. In Jean Drage (Ed.), *Empowering communities? Representation and participation in New Zealand's local government* (pp.304-342). Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Reid, Mike (2005). *Policy effectiveness and the new Local Government Act*. Discussion Paper, University of Waikato, Hamilton: The International Global Change Institute.
- Rhodes, Roderick (1995). The institutional approach. In David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (eds), *Theory and methods in political science*. London: Macmillan.
- Riker, William (1982). *Liberalism against populism*. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman.
- Ritchie, Jane and Jane Lewis (Eds) (2003). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage Publications.

- Ritchie, Jane, Liz Spencer and William O'Connor (2003). Carrying out qualitative analysis. In Jane Ritchie and Jane Lewis (Eds). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. London: Sage Publications.
- Roberts, Alasdair (1995). "Civic discovery" as a rhetorical strategy. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 14 (2), 291-307.
- Roberts, Craig (1997). *An examination of strategic management in the Wanganui District Council: A case study*. Unpublished Masters Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington.
- Robson, Mark and Shashi Kant (2007). The development of government agency and stakeholder cooperation: A comparative study of two Local Citizens Committees' (LCCs) participation in forest management in Ontario, Canada. *Forest Policy and Economics*, 9 (8), 1113-1133.
- Rorty, Richard (1979). *Philosophy and the mirror of nature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Rorty, Richard (2001). The ambiguity of "rationality". In William Rehg and James Bohman (Eds.), *Pluralism and the pragmatic turn: The transformation of critical theory* (pp.41-52). Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Royal Commission on Genetic Modification [RCGM] (2001). *The report of the Royal Commission on Genetic Modification*. Wellington: Author.
- Ruru, Janet and Janet Stephenson (2004). Wahi tapu and the law. *The New Zealand Law Journal*, March, 57-59.
- Paul Sabatier and Hank Jenkins-Smith (1993). *Policy change and learning: An advocacy coalition approach*. Westview Press.
- Sager, Tore (1994). *Communicative planning theory*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Salmon, Justice Peter (1998). Access to environmental justice. *New Zealand Journal of Environmental Law*, 2, 1-9.
- Sandercock, Leonie (Ed.) (1998). *Making the invisible visible: A multicultural planning history*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.
- Schomberg, Rene Von (2002). The erosion of our value spheres: The ways in which society copes with scientific, moral, and ethical uncertainty. In Rene Von Schomberg and Kenneth Baynes (Eds.), *Discourse and democracy: Essays on Habermas's "Between Facts and Norms"* (pp.219-238). New York: State University of New York Press.
- Schomberg, Rene Von (Ed.) (1993). *Science, politics and morality: Scientific uncertainty and decision making*. Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Schon, Donald and Martin Rein (1994). *Frame reflection: Towards the resolution of intractable policy controversies*. New York: Basic Books.
- Scott, Anne and Bevan Tipene-Matua (2004). Cultural conflict and new biotechnologies: What is at risk? In Kevin Dew and Ruth Fitzgerald (Eds.), *Challenging science: Issues for New Zealand society in the 21st century* (pp.126-145). Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.

Bibliography

- Selman, Paul (1996). *Local sustainability: Managing and planning ecologically sound places*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Selman, Paul (2004). Community participation in the planning and management of cultural landscapes. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 47 (3), 365–392.
- Schmolck, Peter (2002). *PQMethod Manual*. Retrieved 1 September 2002 from [http://www.rz.unibw\(muenchen.de/~p41bsmk/qmethod/pqmanual.htm](http://www.rz.unibw(muenchen.de/~p41bsmk/qmethod/pqmanual.htm)
- Silverman, David (1993). *Interpreting qualitative data: Methods for analysing talk, text and interaction*. London: Sage Publications.
- Simon, Herbert (1957). *Models of man*. New York: Wiley and Sons.
- Simon, Katerina Heremoana (2003). Searching for synergy: Māori/indigenous and scientific conservatory values: The affinity proposition. *Journal of Māori and Pacific Development*, 4 (1) 44-58.
- Skelton and Memon (2002). Adopting sustainability as an overarching environmental policy: A review of section 5 of the RMA. *Resource Management Journal*, 10 (1) 1-10.
- Smith, David and Maurice Blanc (1997). Grass-roots democracy and participation: A new analytical and practical approach. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 5, 281-303.
- Smith, Paul (2006). The application of critical discourse analysis in environmental dispute resolution. *Ethics, place and environment*. 9 (1), 79–100.
- Snape, Dawn and Liz Spencer (2003). The foundations of qualitative research. In Jane Ritchie and Jane Lewis (Eds). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers* (pp.1-23). London: Sage Publications.
- Solitare, Laura (2005). Prerequisite conditions for meaningful participation in brownfields redevelopment. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 48 (6), 917 – 935.
- Somerville, Royden (1999). Implications for local government of proposed changes to RMA. *Resource Management Bulletin*, 3 (2), 13-18.
- Somerville, Royden (2004). *Improving the RMA: Legal principles*. Paper to Local Government New Zealand workshop: Improving the RMA, 23 June, Wellington.
- Stainton Rogers, Wendy (2003). *Social psychology: Experimental and critical approaches*. Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.
- Steelman, Toddi (2000). Agency perceptions about public involvement in national forest management. In Helen Adams and John Proops (Eds.), *Social discourse and environmental policy: An application of Q-methodology* (pp.123-137). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Steelman, Toddi, and Lynn Maguire (1999). Understanding participant perspectives: Q-methodology in national forest management. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 18 (3), 361-388.
- Tenbenschel, Tim (2000). Health prioritisation as rationalist policy making: Problems, prognosis and prospects. *Policy and Politics*, 28 (3), 425-440.

- Tenbenschel, Tim (2002). Interpreting public input into priority-setting: The role of mediating institutions. *Health Policy*, 62, 173-194.
- Tewdwr-Jones, M. and H. Thomas (1998). Collaborative action in local plan-making: Planners perceptions of 'planning through debate'. *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*, 25, 127-144.
- Thomas, John (1995). *Public participation in public decisions: New skills and strategies for public managers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Thomas, Steven, and P. Ali Memon (2007). New Zealand local government at the crossroads? Reflections on the recent local government reforms. *Urban Policy and Research*, 25 (2), 171–185.
- Tiakiwai, Sarah Jane, Chris C Tanner, Apanui Skipper, Glenis Philip-Barbara and Angeline Greensill (2004). *Finding common ground: Dialogue on wastewater management to address Māori cultural and spiritual values*. Hamilton: National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research.
- Tolich, Martin and Carl Davidson (1999). *Starting fieldwork: An introduction to qualitative research in New Zealand*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Van Eeten, Michel (2001). Recasting intractable policy issues: The wider implications of the Netherlands civil aviation controversy. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 20 (3), 391-414.
- Voigt, Christina (2002). Environmental mediation and the Resource Management Act 1991: Resolving resource management problems or compromising the environment? *Auckland University Law Review*, 9 (3), 912-949.
- Von Dadelszen, Mark (2006). How an "historic and probably unique accord" works. *Planning Quarterly*, June, 21-23.
- Walsh, Theresa (2004). Best practice consultation on high profile projects. *Planning Quarterly*, December, 14-15.
- Walton, Marsha (2006). *An investigation of the effects of deliberative discussion on environmental preferences, using the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as a case study*. Unpublished PhD thesis, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.
- Warburton, Diane (Ed.), (1998). *Community and sustainable development: Participation in the future*. London: Earthscan.
- Warnke, Georgia (2001). Taking ethical debate seriously. In William Rehg and James Bohman (Eds.), *Pluralism and the pragmatic turn: The transformation of critical theory* (pp.295-318). Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Webler, Thomas, Hans Kastenholtz and Ortwin Renn (1995). Public participation in impact assessment: A social learning perspective. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, 15, 443-463.
- Webler, Thomas, Seth Tuler and Rob Krueger (2001). What is a good public participation process? Five perspectives from the public. *Environmental Management*, 27 (3), 435-450.

Bibliography

- Webler, Thomas, Seth Tuler, Ingrid Shockey, Paul Stern and Robert Beattie (2003). Participation by local government officials in watershed management planning. *Society and Natural Resources*, 16, 105-121.
- Weimer, David (1999). Q-method and the isms. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 18 (3), 426-429.
- Weston, Joe (2004). EIA in a risk society. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 47 (2), 313–325.
- Wilson, Jessica (1996). *Public participation and the Resource Management Act 1991: Participation for whom?* Unpublished Masters Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington.
- Wirth, Uwe (2004). *What is Abductive Inference?* Retrieved 9 February 2004 from <http://www.rz.uni-frankfurt.de/~wirth/index.html>
- Wolf, Amanda (1997). *The roles and value orientations of policy professionals in New Zealand.* Unpublished Report, Victoria University of Wellington.
- Wolf, Amanda (2002). *Diversity research: "Medium-n" social science methodologies for policy analysis.* Paper presented at the 2002 Conference of the Sociological Association of Aotearoa New Zealand, December 5-7, Christchurch.
- Wolf, Amanda (2004). The bones of a concourse. *Operant Subjectivity*, 27 (3), 145-165.
- Wolsink, Maarten (2004). Policy beliefs in spatial decisions: Contrasting core beliefs concerning space-making for waste infrastructure. *Urban Studies*, 41 (13), 2669-2690.
- Yankelovich, Daniel (1991). *Coming to public judgement: Making democracy work in a complex world.* New York: Syracuse University Press.
- Yin, Robert (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, Cal: Sage Publications.
- Young, Iris (1990). *Justice and the politics of difference.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Young, Iris (1995). Communication and the other: Beyond deliberative democracy. In Wilson, Margaret and Anna Yeatman (Eds.), *Justice and identity: Antipodean practices* (pp.134-152). Wellington: Bridget Williams Books.
- Young, Iris (1997). Difference as a resource for democratic communication. In James Bohman and William Rehg (Eds.), *Deliberative democracy: Essays on reason and politics* (pp.383-406). Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- Young, Stephen (1998). The United Kingdom: A mirage beyond the participation hurdle? In William Lafferty and Katarina Eckerberg (Eds.), *From the Earth Summit to Local Agenda 21: Working towards sustainable development* (pp.179-203). London: Earthscan Publications Limited.

Court cases

- South Taranaki Energy Users Association Incorporated v South Taranaki District Council* (1997, CP5/97).
- Takamore Trustees v Kapiti Coast District Council* (2003) NZRMA 433.

Te Runanga o Ati Awa ki Whakarongotai Inc and Takamore Trustees v Kapiti District Council (EC, Wellington, W23-02, 4 July 2002, Judge Treadwell).

Wellington International Airport Ltd v Air New Zealand Ltd (1991) (Court of Appeal). *New Zealand Law Review* 671

Primary documents

Palmerston North City Council official documents

City Wastewater Community Liaison Group (1996). *Report to Council, public consultation Stage 1*. Palmerston North: Author.

City Wastewater Community Liaison Group (1999). *Wastewater 2006. Which way from here?* Palmerston North: Author.

City Wastewater Community Liaison Group (2000). *Wastewater 2006 public consultation results*. Palmerston North: Author.

Palmerston North City Council [PNCC] (1996a). *Future treatment and disposal of the City's wastewater—consultation process*. Palmerston North: Author.

Palmerston North City Council [PNCC] (1996b). *Wastewater '2002': Consultation briefing*. Palmerston North: Author.

Palmerston North City Council [PNCC] (1996c). *Wastewater '2002': Consultation process—policy and philosophy*. Palmerston North: Author.

Palmerston North City Council [PNCC] (1999). *Wastewater 2006: Representative options, July 1999*. Palmerston North: Author.

Palmerston North City Council [PNCC] (2000a). *Newsletter on the council's preferred scheme*. Palmerston North: Author.

Palmerston North City Council [PNCC] (2000b). *The proposed scheme for Wastewater 2006: A report to the council from the Wastewater Project Steering Group, November 2000*. Palmerston North: Author.

Palmerston North City Council [PNCC] (2000c). *Wastewater 2006: Information sheets*. Palmerston North: Author.

Palmerston North City Council [PNCC] (2000d). *Wastewater 2006 newsletter*. Palmerston North: Author.

Palmerston North City Council [PNCC] (2001a). *Manawatu River data assessment*. Palmerston North: Author.

Palmerston North City Council ([PNCC] 2001b). *Submissions made to the Palmerston North City Council's wastewater treatment plant consent applications*. Palmerston North: Palmerston North City Council.

Palmerston North City Council [PNCC] (2001c). *Wastewater 2006: Description and assessment of effects on the environment: Summary*. Palmerston North: Author.

Bibliography

- Palmerston North City Council [PNCC] (2001d). *Wastewater 2006 newsletter*. Palmerston North: Author.
- Taiepa, Todd (2000). *Māori values and the Wastewater 2006 Project*. Palmerston North: Massey University.
- Taiepa, Todd (2001). *Cultural implications of the Palmerston North City Council's preferred option for the Wastewater 2006 project*. Palmerston North: Massey University.
- Wastewater Project Steering Group (2000a). *Report to Palmerston North City Council on the preferred scheme, March 2000*. Palmerston North: Author.
- Wastewater Project Steering Group (2000b). *Report to Palmerston North City Council on the proposed scheme, November 2000*. Palmerston North: Author.

Manawatu Evening Standard articles

- Bodell, Albert (1999, 3 December). Councillors too busy for waste issue. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.
- Boyes, Nicola (1999, 28 September). Public wastewater response 'promising'. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.1.
- Boyes, Nicola (1999, 13 October). Residents alarmed by sewage option. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.3.
- Editorial (1996, 3 September). Glamorous—no, necessary—yes. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.9.
- Editorial (1996, 14 November). Land-based option best. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.11.
- Editorial (2000, 31 January). Cleaning up the Manawatu. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.8.
- Editorial (2000, 24 March). Caught in the middle. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.8.
- Editorial (2000, 24 November). Trying to get it right. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.8.
- Editorial (2001, 9 July). Dirty water debate. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.8.
- Morgan, Jon (1999, 13 July). City council's wastewater options under scrutiny. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.7.
- Myers, Jo (1996, 31 August). Keeping city's waste-water system up to standard will be costly. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.8.
- Myers, Jo (1996, 12 November). Land disposal system the favoured option. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.
- Myers, Jo (1997, 26 June). \$40m 'too much' for clean river. *Manawatu Evening Standard*.
- Myers, Jo (1997, 11 July). Public opinion 'must be heard'. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.3.
- Myers, Jo (1997, 20 August). Ammonia level 'only problem'. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.
- Myers, Jo (1997, 9 September). 'Opportune' to drop appeal. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.1.
- Myers, Jo (1998, 11 August). Land-based system could cost \$46m. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.3.
- Myers, Jo (1998, 19 December). Decisions. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.7.

- Myers, Jo (1999, 10 June). Meeting water quality 'might not be so costly'. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.3.
- Myers, Jo (2000, 24 November). Key feature cleansing effect of Mother Earth. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.3.
- Myers, Jo (2000, 24 November). Sewerage upgrade gets okay. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.3.
- Myers, John (2000, 29 January). Effluent option suggested. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.1.
- Myers, John (2000, 31 January). Effluent opposition expected. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.1.
- Myers, John (2000, 17 March). Water plan seen being hard to sell. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.3.
- Myers, John (2000, 23 March). Wastewater 2006 approved. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.3.
- Nash, Tina (2002, 9 October). Waitarere resident slammed by Mayor. *Manawatu Evening Standard*.
- Paton, Christina (2001, 30 April). Reports just a load of effluent. Letters to the Editor, *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.8.
- Paton, George (1997, 1 September). Delay unfair. Letters to the Editor, *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.9.
- Saunders, John (1996, 4 September). Plan interests users. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.
- Saunders, John (1997, 24 June). Discharge extension sought. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.
- Saunders, John (1997, 25 June). City council 'not serious' about effluent. *Manawatu Evening Standard*.
- Saunders, John (1997, 26 June). Regional council 'disappointed' by pollution response. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.
- Saunders, John (1997, 7 August). Pressure up over sewage. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.
- Saunders, John (1997, 30 August). Landowners express sale interest. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.
- Saunders, John (1997, 12 September). 'Disposal' approach slammed. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.3.
- Saunders, John (1998, 8 August). Effluent options canvassed. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.
- Saunders, John (1999, 26 April). Cowie hopes city will stay with plan. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.
- Saunders, John (1999, 13 July). City faces \$76m sewage bill. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.1.
- Saunders, John (1999, 13 July). Sewage choices unveiled. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.3.
- Staff reporter (1997, 25 June). Mayor wants reality check on river clean-up. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.
- Staff reporter (1998, 8 August). Wastewater study in formative stages. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.

Bibliography

Staff reporter (2001, 8 June). Council seeks consents for wastewater plant. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.

Staff reporter (2001, 10 September). Wastewater wins award. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.1.

Staff reporter (2003, 6 May). Wastewater dispute settled. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.1.

Staff reporter (2003, 11 August). Wastewater upgrade starts soon. *Manawatu Evening Standard*, p.2.

Submissions and statements to Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council hearing on Wanganui District Council's "Wastewater Project" resource consents application (1992)

Boyack, John (1992). *Submission of John Boyack, General Manager, Manawatu-Wanganui Area Health Board.*

Mills, Craig (1992). *Submission of Craig Mills, Chairman, Combined Recreational Users.*

Palmer, Stephen (1992). *Submission of Stephen Wade Palmer, Wanganui resident and District Councillor.*

Submissions and statements to the Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council hearing on Wanganui District Council's "Revised Wastewater Project" resource consents application (2001)

Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council (2001a). *Decisions and recommendations of the hearing committee to the Minister of Conservation.*

Manawatu-Wanganui Regional Council (2001b). *Joint Officers' planning and technical report.*

Taylor, Dean (2001). *Evidence of Dean Taylor, Water and Wastewater Manager, Wanganui District Council.*

Wrigglesworth, Allan (2001). *Submission of Allan Wrigglesworth, Chairman, Friends of the Shoreline.*

Wanganui Chronicle articles

Laurence, Dave (1987, 7 October). City Council's financial position under fire. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.2.

Laurence, Dave (1987, 30 October). Report highlights health risks in Wanganui River. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.1.

Laurence, Dave (1987, 30 October). Wanganui to seek Govt finance for sewerage. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.3.

Laurence, Dave (1988, 5 November). Two objections to water proposal. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.8.

Laurence, Dave (1989, 24 February). Occasional health risks from beach pollution. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.7.

- Laurence, Dave (1989, 25 February). Finance key to city's sewerage progress. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.3.
- Laurence, Dave (1989, 7 June). Health Board tells city to upgrade sewerage system. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.3.
- Laurence, Dave (1989, 20 September). Notice served to remove wastes from river. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.1.
- Laurence, Dave (2001, 5 November). Significant sewerage changes set for approval. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.2.
- Laurence, Dave (2001, 24 November). The best of compromises. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.8.
- Laurence, Dave (2002, 4 April). Hardship and liability headaches for Council. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.3.
- Staff Reporter (1988, 8 September). Caygill: Refuses sewage scheme finance. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.1.
- Staff Reporter (1989, 28 April). Board applies pressure over discharges into Wanganui River. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.3.
- Stoneman, Gayelene (1988, 1 July). Industries to pay for discharge of wastes. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.1.
- Waters, Simon (2002, 16 March). Wanganui booming, analysts say. *Wanganui Chronicle*, p.1.

Wanganui District Council official documents

- Wanganui District Council and McDermott Miller Group (1990). *Wanganui Wastewater Working Party community survey*. Wanganui: Author.
- Wanganui District Council [WDC] (1991a). *Wanganui District Council wastewater scheme: Resource consent applications and submissions*. Wanganui: Author.
- Wanganui District Council [WDC] (1991b). *Wanganui wastewater scheme: Environmental impact assessment*. Wanganui: Author.
- Wanganui District Council [WDC] (1999). *Building a better community*. Wanganui: Author.
- Wanganui District Council and Montgomery Watson (2001a). *Revised wastewater scheme: Assessment of effects on the environment*. Wanganui: Author.
- Wanganui District Council & Montgomery Watson (2001b). *Revised wastewater scheme: Assessment of effects on the environment. Appendix D: Cultural effects report: Ngati Apa*. Wanganui: Authors.
- Wanganui District Council & Montgomery Watson (2001c). *Revised wastewater scheme: Assessment of effects on the environment. Appendix J: Record of consultation*. Wanganui: Authors.

Other media sources

- Dekker, Diana (2000, 29 January). Up in arms. *Evening Post*, p.9.

Bibliography

Iserles, Tali (2002, 31 October). Resident taking PNCC to court. *Horowhenua Mail*, p.1.

Iserles, Tali (2003, 19 June). Sewage details to go to beach care group. *Horowhenua Mail*, p.3.

Kennedy, Liz (2002, 20 June). Residents unite to fight sewage decision. *Horowhenua Mail*, p.1.

Staff Reporter (2002, 4 July). Fight over discharge heading for long haul. *Horowhenua Mail*, p.1.

Staff Reporter (2002, 20 November). Little support over wastewater discharge. *Focus on Foxton*, p.4.

Staff Reporter (2002, 4 December). River water could be used for drinking, says Boyle. *Focus on Foxton*, p.4.