Practitioners' views on the past, present and future of social planning in Australia

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Abstract

This paper explores shifts and internal perceptions of social planning practice in Australia against the background of the profession's past, present and future. With the majority of people in Australia living in urban areas, most social planning occurs and is implemented in Australia's cities. For this reason – and also because it has a great deal of interdependence with the field of urban planning – the present and future of social planning practice has a critical role to play in the future of Australian cities.

Drawing on research findings from empirical survey research with sixty social planning practitioners in Australia, the paper briefly explores the diversity and shifting landscape of social planning practice over the past century before drawing on the survey findings to develop a picture of current social planning practice within Australia and the challenges and opportunities that its practitioners face. It explores social planners' views about the scope, core principles, values and practices of social planning in Australia and suggests some challenges for the future of social planning, a profession with an important role to play in creating sustainable futures for Australian cities.

Introduction

Social planning practice is complex and diverse. A brief literature review reveals that it has been practiced within a diversity of interrelated fields during the past century (Kahn, 1969), some of the most noted being social work and community organization (Lauffer, 1978; Perlman & Gurin, 1972), social policy development, social welfare (Townsend, 1975; Webb & Wistow, 1987; Walker, 1984), social service planning (Moffatt, George, Lee & McGrath, 1999), land use planning/physical planning (Perloff, 1963; Gans, 1968; Park, 1935; Paris, 1982; Mumford, 1946) and social development (Midgley, 1995; Hodge, 1975; Gore, 2003). Social planning has been conducted in one form or another by governments at all levels and of all political persuasions, corporations, not-for-profit community organisations, and communities (Moffatt et al., 1999). While widespread, its practice is also grounded in the urban context. As Park noted in 1935, social planning is "as old as politics and like politics, had its origin in the city, in the *polis,* and in the problems of civilized and sophisticated existence such as the conditions of city life permit and enforce" (p.19).

The scope of practices carried out in the name of social planning is vast and constantly changing (see for example Lauffer, 1978; Perlman & Gurin, 1972; Townsend, 1975; Webb & Wistow, 1987; Walker, 1984; Perloff, 1963; Gans, 1968; Park, 1935; Midgley, 1995; Hodge, 1975; Gore, 2003). The forces impacting on its practice and defining its scope have also been diverse. Given Moffat's suggestion that social planning operates as an "instrument of … democracy" (Moffatt et al., 1999, p. 312), it is not surprising that shifting political and economic conditions have been influenced the scope of social planning practice. Park for example, refers to the rise of social planning in the early 1930s as "the new vogue" (Park, 1935, p.19), and others suggest that the practice was a response to world economic crisis, lack of faith in free market forces and need for greater regulation through planning (Moggridge, 1982, p.84; Keynes, 1926; Mannheim, 1948; Remmling, 1975, p. 83-103). Conversely, as Bromley (2003) argues, the emergence of Thatcherism and Neo-liberalism in the late 1970s and during the 1980s, marked a dramatic shift away from the role of social planning in government as the political context created "an ideological climate in which planning for societal transformation or redistribution seemed subversive rather than reformist" (2003, p.827).

The shifting landcape of social planning practice has also been influenced by changes in emerging forms of knowldege. In particular, the shift in the later half of the 20th century away from the dominance of expert driven social science based knowledge towards a more pluralistic approach to knowledge – involving such processes as community engagement – has been particularly influential (Merrifield & Swyngedouw, 1997; Smith, 1997; Forester, 1989; Harvey, 1973). Other significant shifts relate to the changing landscape of planning generally, in particular, ongoing attempts to develop the social dimension of urban planning, argued by many to have been previously dominated by physical planning doctrine (see for example Simmie, 1974; Simmie, Tranmer, & Scheltingar-Koopman, 1973; Paris, 1982; Harvey, 1973; Duhl, 1963; Gans, 1968; Gilbert & Specht, 1977). Earlier attempts to link social planning and urban planning were later supported by the emergence of such frameworks as communicative planning (Healey, 1996), integrated planning (Sansom, 1993) and more recently sustainability (Prior, 2008; Sansom, 1993).

A small but powerful thread of research seeks to explore social planning from a practitioner's perspective, what some refer to as the 'lived experience of practice' (see for example Hemmens, Bergman, & Moroney, 1978; Frieden, 1967; Rein, 1969; Beringer, 1977). This research, focused specifically on the experience of *social*

planning practitioners, can be placed in the context of a similarly small body of studies seeking to understand the practice of planning more broadly through the 'practice stories' of planning practitioners (see for example Forster, 1993; Hummel, 1994; Sandercock, 1998; Healey, 1992; Campbell & Marshall, 2000, 2002; Burton, 2008)). These studies cover similar issues to those explored in this paper, including the principles underpinning social planning (Kaplan, 1973) and planning practice more broadly (Campbell & Marshall, 2000, 2002; Burton, 2008); the diversity of practices that compose social planning (Dyckman, 1966; Beringer, 1977) and planning practice more broadly (Healey, 1992; Burton, 2008); the changing nature of social planning practice (Bromely, 2003; Francesconi, 1986; Frieden, 1967) and planning practice more broadly; and the way in which social planning is understood and valued (Campbell & Marshall, 2000, 2002; Rein, 1969).

While some of these studies focus specifically on practitioners' lived experience and view of social planning (Beringer, 1977) and of planning more broadly within the Australian context (Burton, 2008), none focuses specifically on practitioners' experience of contemporary social planning practice, either internationally or within Australia. This paper seeks to begin addressing this hiatus and understand the new complexities of social planning practice through an analysis of the findings of a survey of practitioners conducted in early 2009 by the authors.

The survey explored six themes; firstly, where and how social planners work; secondly, the 'core principles and practices' of social planning; thirdly, the 'challenges and opportunities' that face practitioners; fourthly, the 'understanding' of social planning in various sectors; fifthly, the status of social planning, or how it is valued; and finally the emerging set of 'credentials and qualifications' that are held by social planners. Given the necessary brevity of this paper, we discuss only the first three of these themes here, with plans for fuller publication later.

Survey aim, distribution and response

The aim of the survey on which this paper is based was to explore practitioners' views on the current settings in which social planning is practiced, the scope of social planning, the principles and practice that underpin the practice, its characteristics and status in Australia and the challenges and opportunities the profession faces.

The web-based survey was distributed via several established email lists used to communicate with social planning practitioners in various levels of government and in non-government settings. Direct quotations from respondents are identified by their practice setting only and abbreviated as follows: PC (private company or consultancy; CO (community organisation) and LG (local government). Sixty responses were received, predominantly from practitioners in New South Wales (NSW), with one response from a Queensland practitioner.

Survey respondents varied in age and experience. Of the 51 (85 per cent) who provided details of their gender and age, just over three quarters were female (76.5 per cent, 39) and less then a quarter female (23.5 per cent, 12). The high ratio of female to male respondents (3:1) reflects the make-up of the field – social planning, as one respondent noted, has "traditionally been a female-dominated profession" with "links to similarly female-dominated professions and the concept of civic housekeeping... a natural extension of their work inside the home (LG).

There was a good mix of respondents from all age groups: the largest number of respondents (29.4 per cent, 15 of 51) were aged 45-55, followed by the 25-34 age group (27.5 per cent, 14) and 35-44 age group (25.5 percent, 13), with fewer

respondents in the 55 and above (15.7%, 8) and under 25 (2%, 1) cohorts. The ratio of females to males in the 45 and above age cohorts (approximately 1:7, 20 females to 3 males) is much greater than in the 44 and below age cohorts (approximately 2:1, 19 females to 9 males), suggesting that the female dominated nature of the profession may be changing.

Where and how social planners work

Professional social planners are found in many government and other settings and fill numerous roles. They have been involved in the development of legislation, evaluation of social programs, creation of designs or models for service delivery, and in the development of advisory committees and policy boards related to the development of human service programs. At the sub-state and community levels, they may be employed by agencies under governmental or voluntary auspices. Frequently, they are engaged in planning activities aimed at specific service sectors or populations – such as the judicial system, health care, mental health, or youth services, to name just a few. Others are employed by direct service agencies or by local government, frequently commenting on the social impact of urban planning.

The survey sought firstly to understand the environments in which respondents practiced. Of the 60 respondents, two thirds (66.7 percent, 40) undertook social planning in a local government setting, and the remainder (33.3 per cent, 20) in a private company or consultancy. Of these, 2 worked in more then one setting: one in both a private company/consultancy and in a non-government /community based organization, and the other in both a private company/consultancy and in local government. No respondents reported conducted social planning in a state or federal government setting.

The majority (53.4 per cent, 32 of 60) indicated that most or all of their current work is spent on social planning or related matters. The remaining respondents spent either half their time (18.3 per cent, 11) or less than half (28.3 per cent, 17) on social planning matters. A larger proportion of male respondents (83.3 per cent, 10 of 12 who indicated their gender) than female respondents (56.4 per cent, 22 of 39) spent most or all of their time working on social planning or related matters.

The majority of respondents (58.3 per cent, 35 of 60) operated as sole practitioners or as the only social planner in an organisation, which suggests social planning is a rather solitary profession. A greater proportion of those respondents working in private companies or consultancies work alone (70 percent, 14 of 20, compared to 52.5 per cent, 21 of 40 of those in local government). Of those who worked in a social planning team (41.7 per cent, 25 of 60), 18 provided information on the size of these teams, which varied from two to seven people.
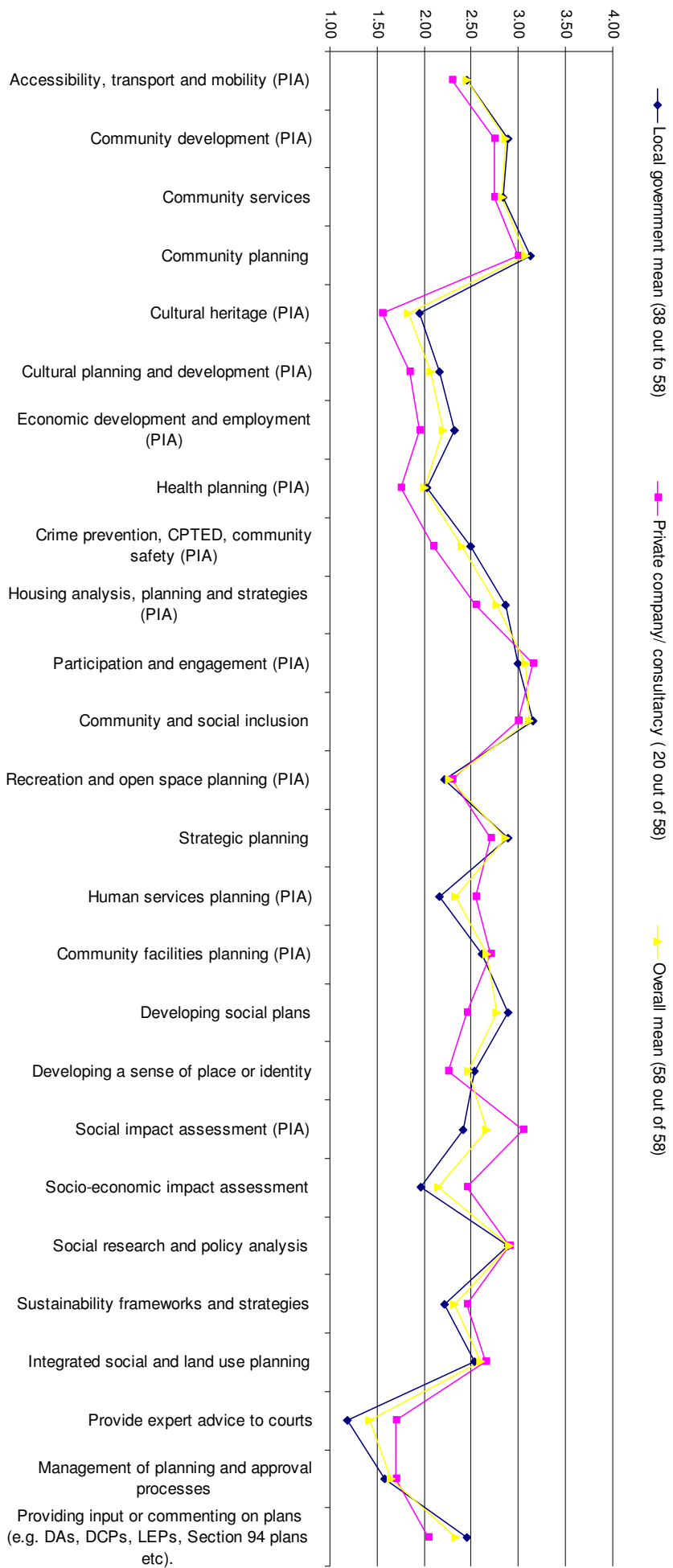
The social planning work of these practitioners was more likely to be applied in an urban context, with half the respondents (30 of 60), stating that their social planning work was 'mostly or always' in an urban context. A slightly smaller proportion (43.3 per cent, 26) conducted social planning in a mix of both rural and urban contexts, and only a small proportion (6.7%, 4) worked only in rural contexts.

Respondents working in private companies or consultancies on average have longer experience in social planning than those working in local government. The majority (65 per cent, 13 of 20) of those from private companies or consultancies had 11 or more years of experience in social planning, while the majority (87.5 per cent, 35 of 40) of local government practitioners had less than 10 years experience. Notably, all

respondents who indicated that they had 20 years or more experience worked in private companies or consultancies (35 percent, 7 of 20).

Based on a scale of 1 (never) to 4 (very often), social planners were asked how often they undertook various kinds of work. The categories provided were drawn from local council and private company position descriptions and the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) social planning competencies (the latter are marked 'PIA' in Figure 1). Results of this question are illustrated it Figure 1.

Figure 1: Frequency with which respondents undertook different activities

Legend:
- Local government mean (38 out fo 58)
- Private company/ consultancy (20 out of 58)
- Overall mean (58 out of 58)

Activities (top to bottom):
- Accessibility, transport and mobility (PIA)
- Community development (PIA)
- Community services
- Community planning
- Cultural heritage (PIA)
- Cultural planning and development (PIA)
- Economic development and employment (PIA)
- Health planning (PIA)
- Crime prevention, CPTED, community safety (PIA)
- Housing analysis, planning and strategies (PIA)
- Participation and engagement (PIA)
- Community and social inclusion
- Recreation and open space planning (PIA)
- Strategic planning
- Human services planning (PIA)
- Community facilities planning (PIA)
- Developing social plans
- Developing a sense of place or identity
- Social impact assessment (PIA)
- Socio-economic impact assessment
- Social research and policy analysis
- Sustainability frameworks and strategies
- Integrated social and land use planning
- Provide expert advice to courts
- Management of planning and approval processes
- Providing input or commenting on plans (e.g. DAs, DCPs, LEPs, Section 94 plans etc).

Based on the mean average of all respondents, the areas of practice 'often' engaged in by respondents were: community and social inclusion (3.12 mean); community planning (3.08 mean); participation and engagement (3.07 mean); social research and policy analysis (2.90 mean); strategic planning (2.87 mean); community development (2.87); managing community services (2.82 mean); housing analysis, planning and strategies (2.77 mean); developing social plans (2.77 mean); community facilities planning; conducting social impact assessments (2.67 mean) and integrated social and land use planning (2.60 mean). In general, the frequency with which respondents in local government and in private companies/consultancies undertake each kind of practice is similar. However there were a few noticeable differences. On average, respondents working in private companies/consultancies were more likely to prepare social impact assessments and socio-economic impact assessments, and provide expert advice to courts.

Core principles and practices of social planning

The survey sought to understand the core principles, values and practices that practitioners feel might 'define' social planning. To explore this, respondents were asked to identify those areas of work that best represent the 'core' of social planning, as well as the most important principles that underpin social planning practice. While there was a range of views, the responses suggest some consensus about core principles and practices of social planning. These are illustrated in Figure 2, which shows those principles identified as most important at the centre, and the nominated core practices, or areas of work in the outer ring. Areas are proportional to the number of respondents identifying them. The practices dislodged from the periphery are those that are contested by the respondents (see discussion below).

Figure 2: Core social planning principles (centre) and practices (periphery) identified by respondents.
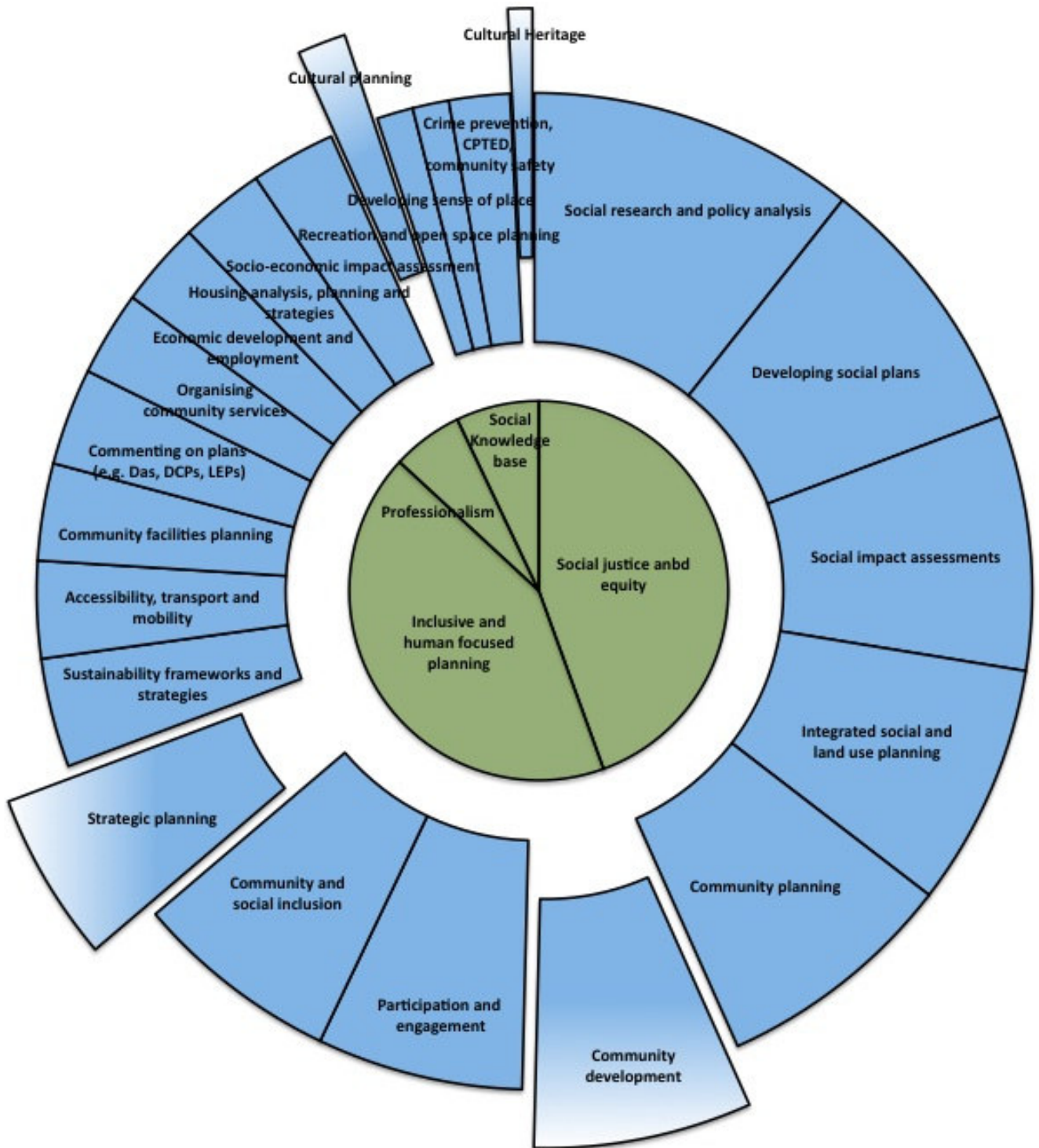
Core social planning practices

Participants were asked which practices, or 'areas of work' best define the 'core' of social planning. The categories provided were the same as those used in the question about the kinds of work the respondents currently do (drawn from local council and private company position descriptions and the PIA social planning competencies). Respondents could select up to five of the 26 areas provided. Analysis of the results shows a spread of views about which areas are 'core' to the practice of social planning. However, there is a reasonable level of agreement about a number of core practices – with the following areas being selected by a third or more respondents: developing social plans (42.3 per cent, 22 of 52), social impact assessments (40.3 per cent, 21); integrated social and land use planning (38.5 per cent, 20); community planning (38.5 per cent, 20); participation and engagement (34.6 per cent, 18); community and social inclusion (32.7 per cent, 17); and community development (32.7 per cent, 17).

In selecting these practices as defining the 'core' of social planning, some respondents referred to a number of tensions in determining what constitutes *social planning* practice and expertise and what constitutes that of other professions. Briefly, these include tensions between community development and social planning, between cultural planning and social planning, between strategic planning and social planning, the blurred line between social planning and other planning practices that results from emerging integrated planning frameworks; and ultimately the tension between strategic social planning and everyday social planning practices within local government.

Whilst cultural planning and development (9.6 per cent, 5 of 52) and cultural heritage (3.8 per cent, 2) were identified as core areas of practice and expertise, a number noted that cultural planning was increasingly being "situated as a stand alone practice, not necessarily nested under the umbrella of social planning" (PC). Similarly, while a third identified community development (32.7 per cent, 17 of 52) as a core component of social planning practice, some saw a distinction between the fields of social planning and community development.

Principles underpinning social planning

Respondents identified (in their own words) the most important principles that underpin social planning. Our analysis of responses suggests these might usefully be grouped into four areas: social justice and equity, inclusive and human focused planning, planning supported by a sound social knowledge base, and professionalism. These are explored in more detail below.

The most common responses were various descriptions that might be grouped under the principle of 'social justice and equity'. These included the need for social planning to maintain equitable access to facilities and services; equal rights to social, economic and environmental opportunities; intergenerational equity; upholding human rights; fairness in distribution of benefits; relative equity; and the opportunity for all within the community to participate effectively in processes affecting them. Effective participation was perceived as having appropriate levels of input into decisions, being listened to, and having mechanisms in place that empower people or, where appropriate, enable advocates to speak on their behalf.

These responses suggest that it is by adherence to principles of social justice and equity that social planning practitioners feel their profession makes most valuable contribution. Responses expressed the potential of social planning to intervene to

reduce the inequalities and injustices that are created by such processes as "economic rationalism" and "free-market fundamentalism". In the words of one respondent, social planning helps to balance "the advice provided by developers and economists" (PC) with other perspectives, so that governments and organisations can take a more balanced approach to the planning of societies. This echoes the view of Ferge, who describes social planning and policy as a "palliative or corrective instrument" for the machinations of capitalism (1979, p. 50).

The responses also imply a deep awareness of the role of social planning in addressing a range of other social inequalities and injustices, resulting from social and environmental as well as economic factors. For example, a belief in the need to pursue equity for future generations who will be impacted by the present actions and lifestyles was apparent, with respondents identifying a need to "improve the quality of life for current and future communities". Another dimension of social justice and equity that emerged was the role of social planning in enabling community engagement and inserting a range of community views into the planning process. For example one respondent noted the importance of:

> Engagement of people in the planning process, particularly in community capacity building, where people in a community are able to develop their own solutions and input to plans (LG).

Another prominent set of principles identified by respondents might be described as "inclusive and human focused planning". These included: putting "people first in the planning process" and "a focus on the disadvantaged groups in our communities (community harmony and social inclusion). One respondent wrote of the need to:

> Understand community needs and ensur[e] these needs are addressed, including provision of a range of housing, social and community infrastructure and services (LG).

Respondents identified the characteristics of an inclusive and human focused approach to planning, including promoting the development of stronger, diverse, connected and sustainable communities; focusing on empowerment and developing community and individual strengths; creating planning processes that are socially inclusive and deliberately seek to engage minority or 'hard-to-reach' groups; and promoting individual and community health, wellbeing and quality of life. As one respondent noted, a core principle of social planning is that it should "put people and communities first in the development equation - or at least move towards that" (LG). Another wrote that:

> Social planning provides the core to the foundations of creating a community. In achieving positive social outcomes we are able to achieve a better level of community well being (PC).

The need for inclusive and human focused planning is also implied by a number of comments that express the need for social planning to be conducted in an integrated and holistic way. For example, one respondent noted a need for "more holistic approaches in understanding the impacts of various developments/lack of services/ lack of facilities on the broader community" (PC). As another saw it, social planners must be able to do more than "add the human perspective to building and engineering projects" (PC). Another noted that desirable outcomes require more than a social planner "providing comments on [economic plans], DAs, the LEP and consolidated DCP" (LG). The role of social planners was seen to extend beyond implementing or delivering "soft infrastructure solutions" to involvement in "raising

professional, elected member and community capacity in understanding how to develop well functioning communities" (LG).

The third core principle to emerge was the need for a sound social knowledge base and methods (7). For example, one respondent noted:

> It is the repeated reference back to sound research (rather than doctrine) … which is the most valuable contribution, that social planning currently, makes (LG).

Another noted the need to draw on sound social science in social planning: "developing social plans using demographic projections to plan for the future service needs of the community" (LG). Another noted:

> Quantitative measures are what fuels decision making. Social planning needs more resources to advocate for social justice issues and the significant impacts these issues can have if left unmanaged (LG).

There is increasing recognition of the valuable contribution that can be gained from more qualitative "issues based knowledge", "target group based knowledge", and "community based knowledge" obtained through collaborative processes of engagement that allow a "broad range of voices" of affected groups/ communities to be heard (LG). These sources of knowledge were seen to provide increasing focus and increased credibility to social planning initiatives, otherwise often ignored or thought to be founded on "immeasurable or intangible" facts (PC).

Finally, a smaller proportion of respondents (6 of 52) identified a range of principles that might be grouped under the heading of 'professionalism', including professional conduct, ethics, integrity, reflection and objectivity.

The changing scope of social planning: challenges and opportunities

The majority of respondents (63.5 per cent, 33 of 52) thought the scope and understanding of social planning had changed over time, a large number were unsure (28.8 per cent, 15) and a small number thought it had not changed (7.7 per cent, 4). Changes identified included: an increase in the value and acceptance of social planning; a broadening of the scope of social planning practices; the emergence of a more strategic form of social planning coupled with a growing acceptance of the idea of social sustainability; and a greater role for social planning in emerging integrated planning frameworks. In addition to identifying specific changes, many respondents went on to describe a range of issues, challenges and opportunities that they saw as likely to impact on the future of social planning in Australia. Both these sets of comments are explored below.

Respondents indicated that the scope of social planning had broadened considerably in the past few decades to include such new practices and principles as: planning healthy environments and health impact assessment; crime prevention; community engagement; social sustainability; social impact assessment; strategic social planning and place making. A consequence of this increasing scope is that, as one respondent put it, "social planners have to wear a lot of hats to cover all bases" (PC). Reasons for aspects of the increasing scope included:

> There is currently a convergence between social planning and health planning, mainly because health services are recognizing the need to influence lifestyles towards active living (PC).

New inclusions such as crime … there has been an increase in community concern about safety in recent years which has increased the emphasis placed on this field (PC).

Respondents also identified significant shifts in the "scale of issues" that social planning practitioners are being asked to address, including "the global financial crisis/recession", "climate change/sea level rises", "risks of pandemics" and "exponential population growth" (LG and PC). They also noted increasing pressure on limited and scarce resources, raising issues of equity and justice that must be dealt with:

Equity for some time has meant bring people up to a certain level, in the future it may mean that some people may have to lower their life style so that others can have a more equitable access to resources" (PC).

Similarly, another mentioned the need to "[evolve] social planning so it fits in with [emerging challenges of] our modern world such as the economic downturn" (LG). Without such adaptation, social planning itself could be seen as an "added expense that drained limited resources" (LG).

While such shifts were seen to bring significant challenges for the field, some respondents also framed them as opportunities:

An opportunity in the current global crisis and emerging peak oil / climate change crisis to deepen our collective thinking about how to pursue sustainability and leverage greater commitment to social benefits (LG).

Another respondent predicted the "economic downturn will provide an opportunity for greater emphasis on community and the need for [equity of resources] so that communities can ride out the difficult times" (LG).

Respondents believed that the focus of social planning has shifted from traditional areas of social planning such as community development, human services and facilities planning, to "focusing on social sustainability/socio-economic impact assessment and strategic social planning" (PC). Some suggested that strategic social planning (including 'social auditing' and 'social due diligence', driven by principles of social sustainability, had emerged as a core social planning practice within local government, with one noting:

As the need for councils to ensure their practices and service provision are more socially sustainable increases, the social planner's role has become more defined. (LG).

Respondents noted several dimensions to the integration of social planning into other areas of local government, for example:

Shift from command and control practices/processes to consultative and participatory methods and the association of consultative techniques and community engagement with social planning practice (LG).

Broader and more inter-related land use, transport and infrastructure, and housing planning (LG).

Process of full integration [of social planning] with traditional land use planning will be long and arduous (10 years at minimum) … The challenge for social planning is to strengthen its relevance in land use planning and to be more strategically focused in planning for communities" (LG).

In NSW, the integration of social planning with other forms of planning has been recently strengthened through the emergence of the NSW Department of Local Government's integrated planning and reporting framework for NSW Local Governments (2006). Once it is passed into law, this framework will replace the existing mandatory social plan with an integrated planning framework that includes a 10-year community strategic plan, and a resourcing strategy that provides a vehicle for realising long term community aspirations. The integration of social planning in this framework may, as some respondents noted, cause new shifts in scope for the field, and will provide challenges and opportunities to social planners:

Social planning is [currently] seen as a low level, detailed community activity, whereas the new integrated planning framework with its emphasis on community focused strategic planning that is based about such principles as equity, give social planning the opportunity to [be] successfully elevated as a high level strategic, corporate activity (PC).

It will enable community/ social planning to be placed as a critical and core element in New South Wales local government … as a change driver and motivator around which other strategic planning decisions should be made - not as currently where the economic imperative reduces the social planning possibilities (LG).

Some local councils that currently don't value social planning might use the integrated planning process associated with community strategic plans to devalue the role of expert social planners by dispersing social planning functions, allowing planners from other backgrounds claiming social planning expertise without appropriate training, and consequently devaluing perceptions of [the] field (LG).

The proposed changes to the NSW Local Government Planning and Reporting Guidelines propose the removal of the requirement for Local Government to develop Social Plans. [This] could potentially reduce the role of Social Planning across Local Government (LG).

This legislative shift in NSW highlights the role that governments can play in legitimising or conversely destabilising the practice of social planning. Respondents believed other legislation such as the NSW *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979)* created similar challenges for social planning.

Conclusion

This paper provides an opportunity to reflect on contemporary social planning practice within Australia from the perspective of 60 social planners. It comes after something of a hiatus in such research and in a context where, as one respondent noted, social planners rarely have time to "reflect at length on the nature of their work", or on "the theories and principles ...underpinning their practice" (PC) and where, as another respondent put it, "there is limited understanding of what other social planners currently do and how that relates to their own work" (LG). Reflection on the practice of social planning sheds light on the principles and values that shape planning processes and outcomes within such complex social structures as cities.

This paper suggests that contemporary social planning practice is built on four sets of principles: social justice and equality; inclusive and human focused planning; planning supported by a sound social knowledge base; and professionalism. All of these, but most especially the first three, align with strong global concerns needing to be addressed in a holistic and co-coordinated manner at local, national and international levels. The analysis also suggests that the scope and understanding of social planning has changed significantly over time. Key changes identified included: an increase in value and level of acceptance of social planning; a broadening of the scope of social planning practices; the emergence of a more strategic form of social planning coupled with a growing acceptance of the idea of social sustainability; and a greater role for social planning in emerging integrated planning frameworks. Again these align with broader social trends of an increasingly urgent nature.

Finally, the paper outlines a range of issues, such as emerging integrated planning frameworks, that are thought to impact on the future of social planning in Australia and which present both challenges and opportunities. The challenges and opportunities that social planning practitioners face are evident with regard to the growing demands for sustainable cities, the awareness of the range of social initiatives that will be needed to address climate change, and at the same time, widespread recognition of the many impediments that presently obstruct these goals.

These conclusions serve as a foundation for further analysis which will also include those survey findings omitted here. A further paper will focus more closely on a detailed comparative examination of the difference between the contemporary research findings presented within this paper and the earlier social planning practice described at the beginning. The insights gained from analysis of the survey can be further enhanced through comparative anaylsis with earlier research, which will help develop understandings of how social planning practice and the principles and values which underpin it have changed and developed over time.

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