

Housing and Local Government: An Evaluation of the Waverley Community Housing Officer Project

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Vivienne Milligan

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Social Welfare Research Centre
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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Vivienne Milligan

Margaret McAllister

5th February 1982.

PREFACE

This paper reports the first evaluation of the Waverley Community Housing Officer project : the project is the first planned and co-ordinated attempt by state and local government in New South Wales to implement a specific role for local government in housing. It was established in April 1980 as a two-year pilot project funded jointly by the Department of Youth and Community Services and the Housing Commission of NSW, and involves the employment of a housing specialist to establish housing policy and, within its framework, to undertake a range of housing programmes and housing-related services in a local government area.

One of the stated objectives of the project is the need for its evaluation. In August 1981, the Social Welfare Research Centre of the University of New South Wales was commissioned by the Consultative Group overseeing the project to undertake the first stage of that evaluation. Our findings, which relate to a substantially established but incomplete project, are presented in the following chapters. In Chapter 1, the origins of the project and the history of its objectives, practice and effects are documented. Chapter 2 describes the perceptions of the project reported to us by a large range of people directly connected with it. The records of the project and people's perceptions of these are placed in a context for interpretation in Chapter 3. Here it is argued that the project must also be evaluated against the broader economic, political and bureaucratic structures which pattern housing provision in Australia. Our considered assessment, integrating the hard data on the project, the judgements of it by interested groups and individuals and the societal context is discussed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 addresses the specific question of how the objectives, strategies and achievements of the project might be generalised, paying particular attention to its applicability to other local government areas. Our recommendations for the future of the project are contained in the sixth and final chapter.

POSTSCRIPT November, 1982

Under the broad objective of promoting local government involvement in low income housing, the Minister for Housing and Co-operative Societies, the Hon. Terry Sheahan, announced on September 30, 1982 the "Local Government Housing Initiatives Programme". The five key elements of the programme outlined were:

- i) Appointment within the housing administration of an adviser on Local Government housing issues
- ii) Establishment of an Advisory Committee on Local Government involvement in housing
- iii) Extension of the Community Housing Officer Experiment into new areas
- iv) Promotion of low income housing joint ventures with Local Government and the Housing Commission
- v) Use of Commonwealth/State funds for rental relief on schemes conducted by Local Government which comply with Commonwealth guidelines for assistance under the scheme.

The first three of these programme elements parallel recommendations 7 to 11 of this report (see pages 96-98). Recommendations 1-6 have already been endorsed by Waverley Municipal Council and where appropriate by the Minister for Housing and Co-operative Societies.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CHO	Community Housing Officer
CSHA	Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement
CWD	Community Welfare Department
CYSS	Community Youth Support Scheme
DEP	Department of Environment and Planning
EPA Act	Environmental Planning and Assessment Act
HC	Housing Commission of New South Wales
LEP	Local Environmental Plan
LGAs	Local Government Areas
PA-WS	Pine Avenue-Waverley Street
SCC	Sydney City Council
WAC	Waverley Action Committee
WMC	Waverley Municipal Council
YACS	Department of Youth and Community Services

CHAPTER 1 : OVERVIEW

We preface the substance of this chapter with a brief description of Waverley Municipality and its Council for the information of those readers unfamiliar with the area. The sections which follow document the background, the establishment and the progress to date of the Waverley Community Housing Officer (CHO) project.

1.1 Waverley

Waverley Municipality includes the eastern suburbs of Sydney from Dover Heights in the north to Clovelly in the south, with Centennial Park and Woollahra at its western and northern borders, respectively. The land-use of the area is predominantly residential, with extensive medium-density flat development near the coast and terrace house development further inland. Recent improvements to road and public transport networks through the opening of the Eastern Suburbs Railway and Bondi Junction by-pass have enhanced the convenience of the area to the city, and this, together with its good access to beaches and recreational facilities, has made it a preferred residential area to those with mobility and finance enough to join the higher-income move to inner city areas, thereby increasing pressure on the local housing market.

With a population of 63,750 at the June 1976 Census, Waverley contained approximately 2.3 % of Sydney's population on .22% of its land. There is negligible vacant land in the municipality and the proportion of flats and units is nearly 70% of the dwelling stock. The major features apparent in Waverley's housing market are the high cost of acquiring houses and units for home ownership, particularly for first home buyers; a continuing reduction in the rental dwelling stock, coupled with rapidly escalating rents; a low level of involvement by the public sector in the provision of rental accommodation (the Housing Commission (HC) has only 210 dwelling units in the Municipality); and the increased percentage of the housing stock becoming owner-occupied.

Waverley Municipal Council itself is located in the regional commercial centre of Bondi Junction. The four wards in the Municipality elect twelve councillors; its current composition is six representing the Australian Labor Party, three the Waverley Action Committee, and three independents. Council is structured into Administration, Engineering and Town Planning, Community Welfare, Health and Building, and Libraries and Cultural Activities

departments. It employs approximately 500 people in a ratio of 3:2 outdoor to indoor staff. The Community Welfare Department, wherein the housing officer is located, has a total staff of 45 under the charge of the Community Welfare Administrator. The department was formally constituted in 1978 and provides an extensive range of welfare services on behalf of Council.

1.2 Background to the CHO Project

The CHO project in Waverley Municipality commenced its two year pilot period in April 1980. The early definition of the project's rationale and objectives is contained in the funding submission¹ submitted by Waverley Council to the Minister for Housing and the Minister for Youth and Community Services in March 1979, and approved for funding late in that year.

Preparation of the submission was the culmination of a process of increasing awareness of the potential role that local governments might have in the field of housing, especially for low-income and special groups, and of the implicit role that local government already played through its planning and regulatory functions. The project has an over-riding goal of the development of an explicit role for local government in housing policy and planning, and housing-related activities and services. Formulation of the particular strategy of appointing a housing officer to work with Waverley Council is grounded in a constellation of factors operating in Waverley and in the broader housing market and housing policy field over the late 1970s.

While this is not the place to attempt a comprehensive analysis of all the dynamics contributing to an increased consciousness of housing issues and the operations of the housing market, it is important to mention some of the more significant immediate background events and processes. What follows can only pretend to be a broad-brushed account of some of the contextual factors operating over this period. The wider historical and societal context of the housing problem is further elaborated in Chapter 3.

Most crucially, the broad context was one of an increasingly apparent housing crisis. Existing public and private sector activities were seen to be inadequate to meet the housing needs of an increasing number of people, especially those reliant on rental housing.

In the public sector, there had been a reduction in real terms of the commitment of funds to housing under the Commonwealth State-Housing Agreement (CSHA) placing pressure on all state housing Authorities for more effective

use of their finances.² In New South Wales, the Housing Commission had been criticised for concentrating its efforts in broadacre estate developments on Sydney's edge; the developments were not cost-efficient if the infrastructural and social costs of urban sprawl were fully accounted and housing there the many people being displaced from the private rental sector of the inner city was insensitive to their long-term community affiliations. It was in this context of increasing demand for public sector housing,³ but reduced funding for that sector, and discontent over displacement, that local government became a focus for consideration of an expanded housing role.⁴

For example, in April 1977, the Local Government and Shires Associations, in conjunction with the Commonwealth Department of Environment, Housing and Community Development, convened a seminar on Local Government Involvement in Housing. In its Report published in 1978 the Cost of Housing Inquiry highlighted local government's existing involvement in housing by way of its mandatory responsibilities in the areas of town planning and building standards control, assessing the relationship and contribution of statutory regulations and other requirements imposed by local government to increases in land and housing costs.

In 1978 two major projects were undertaken on the subject of the role of local government in housing. The Local Government Association of N.S.W. secured the services of Colin Fuller, under the Commonwealth Executive Development Scheme, who produced a monograph on A Policy Role for Local Government in Housing, which was subsequently published by the Association. The Australian Housing Research Council (AHRC) commissioned a comprehensive study on Local Government Provision of Public Housing, by P.G. Pak-Poy and Associates. Also in 1978 statutory recognition of local government's potential for an expanded role as a housing provider was achieved in the provision (as yet unused) of the Housing Assistance Act 1978 which extended eligibility for receipt of CSHA funds to local government bodies, "for the provision of rental housing where the appropriate Minister of the State concerned considers that it would be more appropriate for such rental housing to be carried out by these bodies" (Section 12(2)(f)).

The persistent undersupply of cheap and secure housing was also causing concern for a number of housing consumer and welfare groups. Shelter NSW, a housing lobby organisation, prepared a discussion paper in 1977 on Housing and Local Government in which they argued that local government

authorities have a critical role to play in a number of facets of housing policy and implementation. The Tenants Union of NSW and other tenancy advice and welfare agencies were increasingly inundated with requests for housing assistance and information. In Waverley, where a distinctive housing problem was apparent,⁵ this led to the formation of a Housing Collective comprising representatives of the agencies concerned and other individuals affected by or involved in housing issues. The agencies shared information on what accommodation was available in the area and started developing an expanded awareness of the problems and ways that they might be tackled.

The presence in Waverley of community groups and activists concerned with housing problems and prepared to point to Council's role in them was an important factor in the process leading up to the CHO project. Before that process was set in motion, Waverley Council had a fairly minimal, albeit typical of most local government, interest in housing. Their increased interest was the result of a number of interconnected factors, a major one being the political effects of a debate within Council and the community which focussed on particular issues such as the then Council's failure to acquire the St. James Glebe,⁶ and the general question of Council's role as landlord and regulator of housing stock in Waverley. These concerns gained sufficient electoral support to return a Council explicitly oriented to the welfare of residents and to social objectives which favoured a more interventionist approach to meeting housing needs in the municipality. This Council took office late in 1977, with Councillor Page as Mayor.

Waverley Council had constituted its welfare functions into a Community Welfare Department in 1978. The activities and commitment of the welfare staff and the Mayor and key Councillors laid the immediate groundwork for establishment of the CHO project. Preliminary research into the housing needs and problems in the municipality had been undertaken in the latter 1970s and an innovative housing arrangement for elderly people (Group Homes) had been initiated, along with other housing-related welfare activities.

Preparation of the funding submission took place in the environment sketched above. The document was compiled by the Community Social Worker on Council, using some of the preliminary research done by her predecessors, and expanded by consultation with other Council officers and aldermen, community group representatives, and State Government officers from the prospective funding Departments, particularly Youth and Community Services who were then developing proposals for the now-constituted Emergency Accommodation Unit. The

project orchestrated through this process was carefully and explicitly directed towards developing a positive role for local government in housing.

1.3 Establishment and Progress

The submission for funding proposed the appointment of a Community Housing Officer to Waverley Council, "to work with social welfare, town planning, and other officers of Council and local community groups to stimulate the development in Waverley of services that would increase housing security and choice for residents". It proposed that the CHO work under the administration of Council's Community Welfare Department, and envisaged that representatives of the Minister for Housing and Minister for Youth and Community Services would establish a mechanism to ensure effective evaluation of the project. This mechanism took the form of a Consultative Group which, in addition to the State government representatives, comprised the Mayor (ex officio), officers of the Town Planning and Community Welfare Departments of Council, and representatives from the Waverley Housing Collective and the Local Government Association. The Consultative Group met formally with the CHO every three months during the course of the project.

Applicants for the CHO position were interviewed by a committee drawn from Council and the two funding departments. They selected Brian Elton, a graduate in Town Planning from the Polytechnic of the Southbank, London, and a former Senior Planning Officer in the Department of Town Planning of the London Borough of Wandsworth. His extensive work experience in local government, planning, housing policy, and research was cited by members of the selection panel as the most significant qualification Mr Elton held over the other applicants for the position. He commenced work at Waverley Council on 21st April 1980, initially under a lump-sum contract of \$16,000 p.a. In November 1980, with the agreement of the funding Departments, the salary was tied to Class 36 of the Local Government Award and granted CPI increases as from July 1980. Waverley Council undertook to provide a travelling allowance of \$1,900 p.a, increased to \$2,250 p.a. in the second year. In March 1981, Council assigned him the additional position of Deputy Community Welfare Administrator, with special responsibilities in the area of housing.

The CHO project has been in operation for 20 months. The progress of the project over that period has been, in general, to increase the involvement of Waverley Council in explicitly housing-oriented policies and activities. The purpose of this section of the evaluation report is to record in a

fairly static manner the nature and outputs of Council's involvement, as it has developed as a consequence of the CHO project.

A pilot programme of two year's duration which has both short and long-term goals will of necessity be incomplete. The multi-dimensional nature of its objectives also limits the clarity with which the project's effects can be recorded. Notwithstanding this, the intention here is to describe the major tangible outcomes of the project in a way which will provide the groundwork for assessment of the effects of the project.

A set of roles for the housing officer was suggested in the funding submission. These were further elaborated in the first months of the project's operation and may be grouped and listed as below, under five broad areas of concern. The reader is asked to bear in mind that such a record of outputs can only partially capture the dynamic process each role represents.

1. Research into the conditions prevailing in the various sectors of the housing market — analysis of the processes that have contributed to these conditions — their impact on groups in the community — establishing mechanisms aimed at monitoring changes in the housing market and identifying future trends and needs.
2. Development of housing objectives and policies sensitive to local needs — and linking these with Council's planning functions.
3. Direct provision, allocation and management of housing and the provision of ancillary housing services.
4. A community development role aimed at the co-ordination, sponsorship and support of community based housing and housing related services.
5. Lobbying other levels of government on housing issues of both a general and a specific nature.

(1) Research, Analysis and Monitoring Functions

Assessment of the housing situation in Waverley and the effect of the housing market on the security and choice of residents is a major function of the CHO project. One of the first tasks undertaken by the housing officer following his appointment was to extend the preliminary analysis on

which the funding submission was based, to identify and document the major features of current and projected housing conditions in Waverley, and to investigate ways that the Council could respond to the housing needs so identified.

The first major output under this heading was the preparation of a report on Housing in Waverley, presented to and adopted by Council in August 1980. Subsequent documents produced included a submission to the New South Wales Housing Policy Review (April 1981), and a report for submission to the Land and Environment Court in a case testing Council's refusal of development applications involving the loss of Boarding House Accommodation (August 1981).

The research undertaken by the housing officer has built up an information base on housing conditions in Waverley which points to the differential effects on particular groups in the community, especially low income groups such as aged pensioners, the unemployed, young people and disabled people. As a consequence of this analysis, Council has given priority to the groups most adversely affected by the conditions of the housing market through developing policies which attempt to counter these detrimental conditions.

To that end, the housing officer instituted a monitoring process whereby development applications which involve a loss of residential stock are directed to him for consideration of their social and economic effects. This has been applied in particular to development applications involving boarding houses. This monitoring system enables changes in the housing stock resulting from development applications to be identified. By a simple amendment to the development application form, introduced in September 1980, whereby residential details are recorded in addition to the usual building and structural details, the Engineering/Town Planning Department is able to monitor changes in residential densities and to refer particular applications to the housing officer where a reduction in housing capabilities is involved. These monitoring and research activities also provide a means whereby likely future trends in the housing market can be identified.

(2) Housing Policy Development

In a project having a specific objective of developing a positive role for local government in housing the development and adoption of an explicit housing policy by Council is a significant and essential achievement. The Housing in Waverley report presented to Council by the housing officer in

August 1980 proposed a number of housing objectives for Council and put forward a series of action strategies aimed at achieving these objectives. It acknowledged that there were limited financial and manpower resources then available in local government to be directed to housing purposes, and argued for initial intervention to be largely of a policy nature, in measures which would produce the greatest benefit at the least cost. The seven-point list of the objectives which Council formally adopted as its housing policy is contained in Appendix 1.

The strategies proposed to work towards the objectives were formulated as an agenda for Council's involvement in housing in both the short and long term, and involve activities in three main areas :

- . planner and regulator of development;
- . land development, building acquisition and management of housing stock; and
- . a community development role in facilitating the provision of a comprehensive housing service.

The policy is predicated on the principle that the development of an interventionist role by Council is an appropriate and relevant local response to the escalating severity of the housing crisis. It explicitly addresses its strategies to the need to improve housing choice and housing security for people most displaced and with least power to intervene in the housing market, a situation seen to involve them, and ultimately the community in general, in heavy social and economic costs.

Particular strategies being put into effect as a consequence of the development of the Council's housing policy include the preparation of a Local Environmental Plan(LEP) on Boarding Houses⁷; a draft proposal for an LEP on Strata Titling; negotiations for the purchase of housing stock, as well as re-allocations of existing Council property; and, in general, a growing Council awareness that in its role as a planner and regulator of development, it influences the local housing market substantially and thereby people's ability to gain access to satisfactory housing. Considerable importance has been placed on examining the interface between housing and planning policy development, with a view to highlighting and attempting to resolve conflicting objectives. A tangible outcome is the Town Planning Department's examination of its role in the implementation of Council's housing policy and review of their functions as they relate to housing.

(3) (i) Direct Provision, Allocation and Management of Housing

Council's residential property portfolio has increased only marginally over the period of the CHO project, and no properties have been purchased specifically for housing. The short-term goal of the project in this regard has been to demonstrate that Council can develop its role as housing provider and manager in line with its adopted objectives without expending large amounts of capital funds. This essentially educative role is the first stage of the Waverley "experiment" in local government provision of housing; the next stage, currently in progress, is to use the experience gained to enable expansion of its housing stock by generating capital from existing property holdings.

What has changed as a result of the CHO project to date is the way Council's dwelling stock is used. Prior to the appointment of the housing officer the properties were, in the main, let to Council employees or managed for Council by Estate Agents (at a cost of 5-6% of rental income). It is important to note that Council had not historically been concerned with deriving a "market rent" or an "economic return" from their dwellings, even though allocation and subsidisation were not formerly based on housing need. As well, some properties had remained vacant for considerable periods of time. The effect of the project and Council's explicit housing policies have meant that allocation of Council-owned stock is made on the basis of the housing need of the applicants, and that appropriate properties are made available for innovative housing arrangements and for emergency and crisis accommodation.

As a consequence, over the 18 months April 1980 to October 1981, Council has accommodated a total of 37 households in its medium and long-term housing stock, and a total of 215 households in emergency and crisis accommodation. These figures refer only to new tenancies over the period. Existing tenants "inherited" when Council took over the management of its properties from agents, or acquired properties for other purposes, are not displaced. The housing officer is only involved when the premises become vacant and his role then is in selection and allocation to tenants on a waiting list of applicants in housing need, who have either appealed for assistance directly to Council or been referred by local agencies. The housing officer functions as first point of contact for Council tenants in the case of grievances or requests for repairs and maintenance, and is involved in rent collection only in cases of arrears or other problems; rent collection is otherwise undertaken by the Accounts section of Council's administration.

The following descriptions indicate the range and use of Council's "on the ground" housing stock. Those listed all illustrate current usage of Council stock : there are a remaining 15 dwellings continuing their former usage as rental accommodation for Council employees. As vacancies occur these dwellings will be allocated in accord with Council's established housing priorities.

Pine Avenue-Waverley Street : Forty-two Council dwellings (36x1 and 2 bedroom flats and 6x2 and 3 bedroom houses) are now managed directly by Council and allocated to Waverley residents in need of low-cost accommodation. The properties were acquired by Council between 1971 and 1980 and were to be demolished in accordance with a long-standing road extension proposal (Hollywood Avenue). In January 1981 Council resolved to review the proposal and commissioned consultants to re-appraise the road extension and associated land-use development. The consultants report⁸ offered a series of options which examined the potential for reconciling conflicts in respect of road works, commercial development, associated car parking, and the housing needs of residents affected by the proposal.

As a consequence, Council established a working party to examine the options available to it for comprehensive redevelopment of the site to include the road extension, car parking, and residential accommodation with a public housing component. Council intends to retain ownership of a proportion of the dwelling units in the redevelopment — 50 units are anticipated — or assign a cash equivalent for purchase of housing stock elsewhere in the municipality, in the manner of the options available to it at the Newland Street site (see page 12).

Council has also resolved not to displace any of the present tenants during its term of office and is committed to re-housing the residents in housing need who will be displaced when the scheme is put into effect. Over 80% of the residents currently housed in the affected properties are eligible for public housing on the criteria used by the Housing Commission.

Pine Avenue-Waverley Street is the subject of a more detailed case study in Chapter 4 (see pages 64-70).

Tudor Lodge Boarding House : This eight-roomed Council-owned Boarding House was purchased in 1976 for the Hollywood Avenue extensions and formerly leased

to a private proprietor at a rent of \$100 per week. At the expiration of that lease the property was leased for the same rental to a management committee comprising workers from local welfare agencies, Council's housing officer and youth worker, and residents. Priority is given to young people and pensioner groups, with one room set aside for emergency and crisis accommodation. Seventy-six medium and short-term tenants have been accommodated in the House since March 1981 when the committee management model was established. In addition a Rental Bond Fund derived from the surplus of rental income over expenditure has been set up to assist with bond payments for people leaving the Boarding House, and others requiring rental bond assistance, to move into private rental accommodation.

Share-a-Home : Share-a-Home is a community-based housing programme providing a combination of medium-term and emergency accommodation for young people : over the past twelve months 103 people have been housed in Waverley through the programme. The project is operated by the Eastern Suburbs Community Youth Association which also manages Changes, the local Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS), and has attracted a \$20,000 grant from YACS in support of its operations.

Council is closely involved in the Share-a-Home project through the activities of both the housing officer and the community youth worker, and two of the houses used in the project are leased at nominal rent from Council. The premises used by Changes are also leased from Council. All three properties were in Council ownership, acquired for road and car park proposals, prior to the CHO project.

By providing premises at a cheap rent, Council contributes to the cost-effectiveness of the Share-a-Home programme : their running costs are calculated at \$31.84 per bed space per week, compared with \$84.92 in the Youth Refuge programme run by the NSW Government.⁹

Group Homes - Aged Persons Housing Programme : The Group Homes project was initiated in 1978 by welfare staff on Waverley Council.¹⁰ It is an innovative project aimed at helping to meet the housing needs of local aged persons on limited incomes, and provides accommodation on a shared home basis. The first Group Home was located in a property acquired by Council for a road extension and other properties have been turned to that use on the recommendation of the housing officer as suitable premises are acquired or re-allocated. There are currently four Group Homes in Waverley using Council housing stock, and each provides accommodation for from two to five elderly residents. Operating costs

of the Homes are approximately \$1,180 p.a. per resident (excluding Council staff time) and rental return is \$1,560 p.a. per resident (\$30 p.w.). Establishment costs for each Home are approximately \$3,500, averaged from expenditure on the existing Homes. Funds have been budgetted by Council to expand the programme to six houses, and the possibility is being investigated of deriving further funds under the provisions of the Aged and Disabled Persons Homes Act. In time the surplus accumulated in each home will contribute to the programme's expansion.

Brighton Boulevarde Boarding House : This eleven-room licensed Boarding House was recently purchased by Council on a site zoned for open space purposes. Because of the need for low-rent accommodation in the area and consistent with Council's housing policy objectives, it was resolved not to demolish the building and implement the open space zoning, but to retain it as a Boarding House. It returns approximately \$200 p.w. rent and has added \$185,000 to the property assets of Council. The property is currently being upgraded within the limits of 1982 budget estimates.

Single Women's Refuge, Carrington Road : In response to the growing need for crisis accommodation for women, this large property (3x2 bedroom flats) has been made available to the Single Women's Refuge Collective on a 12-month lease and \$160 weekly rental. The property was acquired by Council for a local road extension and its interim use as a refuge rather than being left vacant is an example of the housing priorities of Waverley Council. The Refuge Collective has made application to the Housing Commission's Special Project Division for more permanent premises in the eastern suburbs area. YACS has granted \$90,000 to the Collective out of its Community Services Fund.

New Housing Stock - Newland Street : In addition to its existing and re-allocated housing stock, Council will be adding to its public housing stock by imposing conditions on the sale of air-space development rights over a Council site in Newland Street, Bondi Junction, adjacent to the commercial centre and currently used as a public car park. The site was purchased during the term of the previous Council and negotiations for the sale of air-space will return \$4 million to Council plus the allocation to Council of 30 one-bedroom units and 5 two-bedroom units in the residential blocks to be built above the redevelopment, which will include a multi-level shopping centre and car-park. The housing officer has been closely involved in these negotiations.

The developer, New World Properties, has agreed to allow Council the option of having the 35 units at the Newland Street development or to acquire equivalent stock elsewhere in the municipality. Council is currently considering the options : the second option is favoured by the housing officer as a way of getting stock "on the ground" more quickly and because more dwelling units may be acquired for the same cash equivalent, likely to be in excess of \$4 million, at sites other than the new development. As well, stock taken elsewhere may be more cost-effective to maintain than the luxury residential blocks planned for the Newland Street site.

Council's decision to use the surplus funds obtained through this development for housing purposes — rather than, for example, to off-set rate increases or transfer to its consolidated revenue — is a clear illustration of its change in attitudes and priorities over the course of the CHO project. Use of its existing stock more equitably and efficiently is also an example of the project's effects, but the new developments are additionally significant for their generation of new housing capital — capital that would have traditionally been expended elsewhere.

Opportunities for multi-use developments including public housing components exist at other properties owned by Waverley Council and negotiations for similar Council-private developer, or Council-Housing Commission developments, are proposed.

(3) (ii) Provision of Ancillary Housing Services

The ancillary services provided by Waverley Council through the housing officer are advice, information and assistance on a wide range of housing matters. These include advice and support in relation to landlord/tenant matters, assistance in finding alternative accommodation, and information relating to prevailing conditions in the home purchase and private rental market.

While the CHO project as originally conceived did not envisage the housing officer's role as service provision, the weight of demand and his placement in the Community Welfare Department (see Chapter 5 for further discussion of pros and cons of that location) meant that as the housing specialist for Council, he was called upon to undertake a considerable amount of housing assistance and advice. Table 1 over records the numbers of people receiving this service over the period June 1980 to December 1981. The figures include

referrals from other agencies, appointments with the housing officer, personal visits, and telephone contacts lasting more than 10 minutes. Since shorter telephone advice contacts were not recorded, the figures under-enumerate the total numbers actually using the housing assistance and advice services.

Table 1

<u>HOUSING ADVICE</u>				
<u>1980</u>	June	47	April	46
	July	38	May	48
	August	27	June	43
	September	37	July	32
	October	33	August	36
	November	37	September	29
	December	21	October	32
<u>1981</u>	January	35	November	47
	February	48	December	47
	March	42		

Analysis of a typical month — March 1981 — shows a break-up of assistance provided as follows :

- 17 for assistance in relation to landlord/tenant issues
- 21 for assistance in locating more secure, alternative, cheaper accommodation, of which 7 required emergency housing and 14 medium/long term housing
- 4 referrals to other agencies

The housing service activities of the housing officer are estimated by him to average about 1/7th of his in-office-hours working day.

(4) Community Development Activities

A community development approach to increasing residents' housing security and housing choice at the local level involves facilitating consumer representation and the promotion of skills for community management and self determination on housing issues. The CHO funding submission recognised the potential for an expanded role for local government in stimulating community-based housing initiatives, and this approach has been an important feature of the project's objectives and operation. The following section records some of the major

community development activities undertaken by the housing officer in pursuit of the project's objectives.

A "community development role in facilitating the provision of a comprehensive housing service" was one of the three broad strategies accepted by Council in its adoption of an explicit housing policy (see page 8). It committed Council to a policy of co-ordinating and supporting appropriate and viable community-based housing initiatives. A current example is concerned with assisting a local community group to establish a series of Group Homes for mildly intellectually handicapped people : Council has made application to the Department of Social Security on behalf of the group for funds to employ two project development officers (one full-time and one part-time) and to provide rental subsidies to each Home. Negotiations are also in process between the housing officer and a Waverley resident who proposes to acquire a property suitable for use as the first Group Home and to lease it to the project management committee at below market rent.

Also at the planning stage is a community managed Housing Planning and Tenancy Advice Service for tenants and existing/prospective home-owners. This was initially proposed to take the form of a new full-time housing information service housed in a "shop-front" property situated in an easily accessible location. Given current funding constraints, it may instead more appropriately involve a rationalisation of the housing related activities of existing local agencies. The service would free the housing officer from much of his housing advice work-load and, by being located and managed outside of Council, would avoid some of the dilemmas arising in cases where Council is involved in a dispute with tenants.

Other tangible outcomes of the community development policy are Council's provision of accommodation to the Eastern Suburbs Community Youth Association for their Share-a-Home project, and to the Single Women's Refuge Collective; a donation of \$2,000 to the Salvation Army towards refurbishing part of its citadel in Bondi Junction for use as a family refuge; its initiation and support of the Tudor Lodge Boarding House management committee; and its recognition of and negotiations with the Pine Avenue-Waverley Street Residents' Committee (formed to protest Council's proposed demolition of their housing). More generally, the housing officer functions as a resource person for local groups and agencies operating housing services or developing alternative ownership or tenancy models such as co-operatives¹¹ and rental housing associations.

The housing officer is currently investigating alternatives to direct Council management of its tenanted housing stock, towards enabling greater tenant control and security of tenure. A rental housing association in the style of Melbourne's Fitzroy-Collingwood Housing Association is one means whereby this may be achieved. Rental housing associations are a well-established model in Europe and are attracting greater attention in Australia of late. The South Australian Housing Trust, for example, is shortly to fund a number of such associations. In Waverley a proposal is being prepared by the housing officer for consideration by Council and the State Government regarding the future management of housing stock by a rental housing association.

(5) Lobbying on Housing Issues

While the explicit objectives of the CHO project are to expand the role of local government in housing in the various ways recorded, it is clearly grounded in the recognition that local attention to housing issues is not sufficient to tackle the complexity and extent of housing problems, nor to obviate the need for policies and initiatives at other levels of government. Accordingly the housing officer, through Council, has made representations to State and Federal Governments on a wide range of housing matters over the course of the project : a main focus of these lobbying activities has been to highlight the impact of State and Federal policy decisions on the local housing market. As well, he has been involved either directly or indirectly in a number of housing related inquiries and committees, for example he is a member of the Working Party on the establishment of Housing Co-operatives and a member of the Emergency Assistance Funding Committee of YACS.

Major submissions prepared by the housing officer have been to the Federal Government in respect of the form and content of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement (1980); to the Senate Standing Committee on Youth Homelessness (1981); to the State Government regarding recommendations contained in the Landlord-Tenant Reform Committee's report (1981); to the New South Wales Government Housing Policy Review (1981); and to the Minister for Planning and Environment requesting the preparation of a draft regional environmental plan addressing the problem of the loss of low-income housing opportunities in the inner city. He has also been involved in representations to the State Government over the use of the Eastern Suburbs Hospital site, located within the municipality and vacant for more than three years. Council has put forward a series of proposals for the Hospital site, including redevelopment of a part of it for public housing purposes.

The Waverley project has created wide interest and has given the housing officer numerous opportunities to disseminate information about the project and its objectives, and housing issues generally, through participation in seminars and presentation of lectures to students and other interested groups. Appendix 2 lists the organisations with which the housing officer has had contact in the course of his information, lobbying and other activities.

Notes (Chapter 1)

1. Submission for the Funding of a Community Housing Officer to work with Waverley Municipal Council, Waverley Council Minute Paper, March 1979.
2. In real terms, Commonwealth finance for housing dropped from \$43.7 per head of population in 1975-76 to \$22.5 per head in 1978-79 (calculated from Australian Bureau of Statistics figures).
3. In New South Wales, the Housing Commission waiting list increased from 30,000 in June 1979 to 35,000 in June 1980, and is currently 45,000 (figures rounded to nearest thousand).
4. Such a focus was co-incident with a wider debate about the role and structure of local government in Australia.
5. Documented in the funding submission as including a lack of low income housing, a lack of emergency accommodation, and a low standard of housing for the disadvantaged, op.cit. p.4.
6. St. James Glebe was owned by the Church of England until 1974 and let as low rental housing. Council was interested in buying the Glebe when the Church put it up for sale in 1974 but did not follow through for financial reasons. Instead the properties were sold to a private developer.
7. See Chapter 4 for a case study on the Local Environmental Plan and its use in Waverley towards preservation of boarding house stock.
8. Black et al (1981) Report on Hollywood Avenue Road Extension and Associated Land-Use Development, Unisearch Limited.
9. Further information may be obtained from the Eastern Suburbs Community Youth Association, 38 Denison Street, Bondi Junction.
10. Report by the Community Housing Officer in conjunction with the Welfare Officers on Council's Aged Persons Housing Programme (Group Homes), Waverley Council Minute Papers, October 1980.
11. Waverley Council through the housing officer co-sponsored a seminar on Co-operative Housing, held in August 1980.

CHAPTER 2 : INTERVIEW RESULTS

During October and November 1981 lengthy discussions were held with a wide range of people connected with the project. Such dialogue¹ provided us with detailed information on the process of development of the project and its particular programmes, and formed one basis for our assessment of it. In our view, an outstanding general feature of the majority of the interviews we undertook was the richly complex opinion which was forthcoming on a broad range of topics directly and indirectly related to the project.² The most central of these opinions,³ grouped by topic area and type of respondent, are charted in this chapter; their meaning as "evaluations" of the project is assessed later. Our respondents are grouped as follows:

- (i) those employed, past and present, by Waverley Municipal Council;
- (ii) those elected as representatives of the people of Waverley to its Council;
- (iii) those of the local community, including clients of the housing services and advocates from community groups of residents' needs; and
- (iv) those employed outside of Waverley within public sector institutions directly influencing housing provision or policy in New South Wales.

Appendix 4 lists the particular institutions represented in the interviews.

2.1 Council Officers

Of the ten council officers interviewed, all but one demonstrated reasonable to excellent knowledge and well formed opinions of the project; its origins, its development and its effects. Their attitude to a positive and expansive role for local government in housing and to the approaches of the project to this role in Waverley varied, in general terms, from highly favourable in six cases, cautiously favourable in three, to unfavourable in one. More detailed description of their opinions is grouped within the broad topic areas of the interview.

(1) Local Government's Role in Housing

The fullest explication of what this role could be was provided by the housing officer who demonstrated that local government has wide-ranging powers and

opportunities to develop a more comprehensive housing programme incorporating :

the direct provision of housing,
the allocation and/or management of housing stock,
co-ordination and/or provision of housing infrastructure,
housing cost subsidies or housing finance provision,
a housing information base for use by council and the community,
housing research,
planning and regulatory control of housing provision in the private sector,
supporting community based housing initiatives, and
housing advice and referral services.

All of the other officers who discussed the role in detail recognised the potential for many of the listed functions.

In responding to a question about whether local government should be expanding its housing role, all but the officer unfavourable to the whole concept of a housing programme were supportive, most emphatically.

The reasons given for their support emphasised

- (i) the prospect of local government's close links to local residents' need, providing the basis for more immediate opportunities and effective strategies for action;
- (ii) the worsening of the "housing problem" as structural changes in the Australian economy coupled with the "failure" of other levels of government through their policies and services meant housing inequity persisted, and
- (iii) local government having a share of responsibility for assisting in meeting social (or welfare) objectives, including those of adequate and secure housing provision.

As well, the housing officer elaborated the arguments for local government action in this way : while, historically, through its mandatory planning function local government has had a strong influence on housing provision (for example, through density, zoning and building standards/controls), this was largely unstated as policy and unrecognised or unacknowledged by many. Consequently, the equities of this historical practice had not been fully assessed. Yet it was highly appropriate that such functions be made explicit in the context of local government's accountability to the community. Secondly,

he saw the benefit of local government's "closeness to the people" as at least a two-sided one : not only was council better placed to respond to local needs than other tiers of government, councils also had a role in developing people's own initiatives and resources; that is, in fostering community response in a truly "participatory" democracy.

Those officers expressing caution in their support for innovative local government housing endeavours demonstrated some understanding of the elements of contradiction that abound in the housing market and that must be confronted in any interventionist scheme. These contradictions might be manifest when strategies have some opposing effects to those principally intended — for instance, council in competing for development/housing sites for establishing low rent public housing may stimulate the local property market in a way that results in increasing housing costs/scarcity for private market tenants. In other words, there was uncertainty expressed about what effects local government intervention may have in practice.

The officer who did not support any (explicit) role for local government in housing believed such a role would be a futile one, frustrated by lack of finance, only sought by "do-gooders" falsely raising the hopes of many while satisfying only a few, when in fact the "natural" processes of the market plus a state-level welfare housing authority were adequate bases for housing provision.

Those less negative spoke, when asked, of the limits to local governments' role in more pragmatic terms; mentioning a lack of finance, a lack of political support in some areas, and a lack of physical stock/sites. More as a statement of principle, the housing officer stressed that local government "couldn't go it alone". Local programmes must be established within the existing multi-levelled endeavours of government and community; that is, one objective should be to devise programmes to complement and supplement, not replace or conflict with, existing effective efforts.

These views of the possibilities (or, in one case, impossibilities) of local government centred housing action form the context in which the officers' opinions of the CHO project can be situated.

(2) Community housing officer project : expectations, goals, strategies and achievements

Because of the largely post-hoc nature of the evaluation we could not validly monitor the respondents' no doubt changing understanding and perceptions of the project during its course. What is revealed then mostly represents their current views, overlain where they could recall it with their understanding of how these developed over the past eighteen months.

All of the officers interviewed had worked for Waverley Municipal Council from the beginning of the project or before. Some, from the community welfare and planning sections, had been consulted during the preparation of the submission. With the exceptions of the Community Welfare Department (CWD) employees' "awareness" through increasing numbers of housing-related enquiries and the health and building department employees' "traditional role" in the maintenance of physical dwelling standards, the officers had no prior professional involvement with or significant interest in housing, per se. Further, most of them had what they now describe as limited expectations of what the project would achieve. Some recalled a "naive optimism"; "we were hopeful but we didn't know how to achieve anything". In summary, the expectations represent a mixture of "wait and see", "naively optimistic" and resistant.

By contrast, as would be expected, the housing officer's expectations on appointment were more detailed and far-reaching. In his view, the submission provided considerable scope and flexibility for an innovative, effective role; thus reflecting the commitment and skills of those involved in its preparation. Waverley Council at this time was known for its relatively well-developed orientation to social objectives, and the CWD, where the project was formally located, for having (among other characteristics) a history of close liaison and understanding between its bureaucrats and the leading politicians.⁴ Such a relationship is crucial if expertise is to effectively inform political decision-making. Finally, there was a tradition of neglect at all levels of government in Australia of explicit housing policy development; in this context, the project provided a unique opportunity to create and demonstrate a policy orientation to long-term housing needs. All these preconditions established a propitious base within which the housing officer believed he could apply his skills and experience to considerable positive effect.

Opinions of the goals of the project were generally consistent with officers' views of the appropriateness of a broad housing function for local government

geared to increasing housing security and choice, as discussed earlier. Since the project itself is designed as a strategy for initiating such a housing role, one's disposition to the project is centrally tied to one's view of that principle. In this case, the majority of officers supported the goals of the project. No-one articulated alternative approaches to the employment of a housing officer that, historically, would have been preferable in Waverley. The officer opposed to a housing role re-iterated his views in declaring the project "a political gimmick" that had no worthwhile objectives. The housing officer himself declared that he had refined the project's goals after his initiation into it. This refinement entailed giving priority to goals more oriented to security and choice of housing for groups whose conditions had most deteriorated through the long-term neglect of housing as a social priority.

Strategies for achievement of the project goals were reported with what appeared to us as confusion by some of the officers of council. We will discuss the possible sources of that confusion later; here we can establish that it seemed to centre around a lack of understanding of all the dimensions of the project — of how the welfare/service oriented activities of the project were integrated with its planning and community development functions. On the other hand, a number of officers enunciated a clear belief that all the functions are complementary and necessary to achieve the broad project goals. These officers held community development or planning roles in Council. Two or three officers, while recognising the place of all the strategies, suggested that during periods of the project the relation between them — particularly the welfare and policy development functions — had not been in balance, with a tendency for a welfare orientation to dominate.

To help us compare respondents' views of the achievements of the project we asked each one to nominate the outcome he or she thought the most important. Such an approach did not deny the possible perception of many achievements, but provided a functional focus, operational for us. The kind of achievements noted by the officers, and the criteria by which each was judged most notable, are presented in Table 2 overleaf.

Table 2

IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROJECT'S MOST IMPORTANT ACHIEVEMENT —
COUNCIL OFFICERS

<u>Achievement</u>	<u>Reasons</u>	<u>Number* of officers identifying</u>
Development of <u>policy</u>	clear, <u>enabling</u> framework for action; a starting point; oriented to longer term goals of the project	4
<u>Process of negotiation</u> about Pine Avenue/Waverley Street site	physically identifiable; established principle that planning could be a flexible process; produced attitude change to issues; set precedent of Council accepting responsibility for people displaced through its actions; elements of community development initiated	1
<u>Consciousness</u> in other municipalities of need for housing programme	a widespread effect appropriate for a pilot project	1
<u>Consciousness of wider social effects of planning process</u>	Changed awareness had been personally and professionally important and challenging	1
<u>Welfare</u> housing services	Because housing is a big problem	1
None	Nothing achieved	1

*One of the ten officers interviewed was a former employee who did not feel familiar enough with the current state of the project to nominate an achievement.

Other achievements which the officers in total drew our attention to included nearly all the more tangible ("on the ground") projects listed in Chapter 1 as well as individual attitude changes; political, bureaucratic and administrative changes within council; and support to and strengthening of community groups. These are discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

When asked to nominate undesirable or ineffective outcomes of the project, most officers' considered opinion was that no major ones had occurred. "Annoying" effects that the project seemed to have had, like bringing out into the open conflict between officers supporting a "traditional" role for council (distilled by the five R's-rates, roads, rubbish, rats and regulations) and those committed to more flexible, more responsive local government, were seen upon reflection as inevitable and necessary elements of the process of change. A conflict of expectations, say, between the community groups impatient for immediate change by Council and officers attempting, by measured degrees, to introduce strategies for change that would help create and maintain supportive environments for their longer term goals, seems to be an inevitable part of the forging of new relations until trust, credibility and understanding are established. Uncertainty abounds for us all in assessing the "right" process towards constructive change. To say that no major undesirable effects were seen by the informed officers is to say neither that they held the view that the project should be unchanging nor that all of its effects could yet be assessed. One outcome, reasonably expected by several officers was that of a demonstration co-operative project between Waverley Council, with its explicit housing objectives and innovative public housing schemes, and the State housing authority with its orientation to expanding public housing stock in the inner city. In the opinion of the housing officer, the groundwork is established in Waverley for such a co-operative venture.

(3) Effects within the council bureaucracy

It will have become obvious to the reader that in reviewing the overall achievements of the project some of the officers centralised its effects on them in their individual positions while others were more conscious of its broader societal impacts. Of course, the two are not unrelated. Here, however, we centralise the effects experienced within the bureaucracy as debated by the officers with us. Prominent in discussion was the view that the project had acted as an initiator/catalyst for change within the bureaucracy to better reflect the objectives of council. In a "frenetic and challenging" period the

functions and styles of many of the officers in their roles had changed significantly. In particular, the explicit integration of planning and welfare objectives into the functions of both the community welfare and planning staff;⁵ the gradual broadening of the perceptions of the health and building department of the relationship of technical control of building standards to housing, planning and social policy; and the switch of emphasis to housing priorities across various departments, were noted as functional shifts. In their working relationships with each other, with the councillors and with community groups, many officers felt broader-based freer communication (less shackled by authority and institutional constraints) was developing. The housing officer had established precedents for cross-departmental meetings, for the right of officers to debate their proposals at Council, and for increased community group access to Council. The project, in terms of meeting its own goals, needed to break down institutionalised practices like the separation of planning and welfare functions. As a byproduct, it created a precedent for other officers in their roles as well. So, for example, the youth and children's services officers of the Welfare Department now have ready access to the planning staff over matters of joint interest which either group perceives. Such transformations have not been achieved without damaging effects on individuals clearly threatened by change or by "loss of their authority". However, such defensive responses cannot, in our and many officers' view, cloud the real developments in co-operative work relationships that are apparent here.

Beyond the bureaucracy, the more articulated debate between the officers of council had necessitated a more informed and analytical approach from the councillors to the reports or advice presented to them. How the councillors viewed this is discussed later in the next section, dealing with their responses to our questions.

2.2 Councillors

Eleven of the twelve elected representatives of Waverley Municipal Council were interviewed during the course of the evaluation.⁶ In general terms and not surprisingly, the views of the councillors on the issues raised in the questionnaire were polarised along party-political lines. Three of the aldermen, representing the Waverley Action Committee, a conservatively-aligned local interest group, were stridently unsupportive of the project goals, strategies and outcomes. The six members of the Australian Labor Party (ALP) interviewed were uniform in their general support for an expansive role for local government in housing and for the project, although their degree of interest and awareness differed in ways

which we detail below. Of the two independent councillors interviewed, one strongly supported the project and its situation in local government; the other was more "fearful" of change, although some positive achievements were noted.

Because most of the councillors were politically defensive, the depth and richness of discussion achieved in our other interviews was not so forthcoming here. We should emphasise that our approach to each interview was to attempt to draw reasoned argument from each respondent. In the case of the councillors opposed to the project and to local government intervention in housing we found the argument, usually along the lines that "there is a housing problem, but it's not our responsibility", quite glib. We find it difficult (both objectively and subjectively) to elaborate such a case on our own in the face of the demonstrated need and effects in Waverley, yet the opposition councillors did not articulate the argument for us but rather made undefended judgements of the kind "an ALP gimmick", "a waste of ratepayers' money", and "just theorising".⁷

Therefore, with some reservations about its worth, but with a view to comprehensive and accurate description,⁸ we provide hereunder a more detailed description of all of the councillors' perceptions.

(1) Local government's role in housing

All of the councillors were very aware of the traditional, implicit role of local government in housing and four of them (three WAC, one independent) supported only this kind of role (i.e. as the administrative and regulatory arm of State and Federal government policies). One of these aldermen, however, described his position as "mellowing"; he could envisage now, where before the project he had not, an "administrative role" for Council in maintaining rental stock within the local market. Five of the remaining councillors discussed the need for an expanded role, including the same range of initiatives as we listed on page 20. The limits they saw on this kind of role included, among recognition of the obvious financial and legal constraints, questions about how much initiative and innovation was possible; how much commitment Council could feasibly (i.e. politically) make; and the extent to which municipal resources could respond to expressed demand. The eleventh alderman (ALP) suggested that local government's role in housing should be singularly oriented to the immediate welfare of needy people.

Priorities within the general kinds of approach described above as administrative, wide-ranging and policy oriented, or welfare oriented, are clearly

established at the political level of decision-making so we make particular mention here of each politician's commitments. Of the ten alderpeople who were able to identify their priorities, all but two spoke in "people-oriented" terms — viz. explicit policies for low income or "needy" people, creation of "social mix", preservation of low cost rental housing. Within this group, three councillors referred to ALP priorities. Strategies for achieving these social goals were perceived quite broadly by some councillors to involve long and short term endeavours in community and bureaucratic co-operation; but more narrowly by others to be obtainable through ameliorative, individually-focussed services. The two aldermen with different priorities couched them in "economic terms" : priorities to ensure that investment in, and the development of, properties maximised profit to Council and that the landlord functions of Council were geared to the recovery of "realistic rents".⁹ These priorities were said to override social or welfare concerns.

Such priorities emerge from different value positions and from differing understanding of housing problems. Historically, housing had not been of interest to the Council,¹⁰ although an orientation to welfare/social issues had emerged in Waverley quite early relative to other local government authorities. For the two independent aldermen and one of the ALP representatives, housing had emerged prior to the project as a vital issue from their own experiences in the municipality. For the other ALP aldermen, housing had been just part of their general social concern. The WAC councillors said that they had not and in some cases, still did not have any personal experience of housing problems/issues. This lack of experience, coupled with a non-interventionist value stance perhaps provides an unpropitious base for the acceptance of innovative, active projects like the CHO project.

As will become evident in the following section, only one alderman — the independent with significant prior experience in the housing-related needs of residents — has shifted position over the 18 months of the project from one suspicious of it to one strongly supportive of it. At the same time, it could be noted that the opposition of the WAC councillors has not been destructive in practice — two of them would agree to an extension of the project on current funding terms and each of them describes the housing officer as very competent within his role, whatever it may be!

(2) Community Housing Officer project : expectations, goals, strategies and achievements

As we have explained in Chapter 1, the preconditions from which this project emerged included an explicit commitment from the Mayor of Waverley and some of his colleagues on Council to more priority for housing issues in the Council area. This commitment did not take the form of specific policy or action statements; it was more a general "concern" but it included a particular view that expert advice could help broaden the horizons of options and provoke more informed decision-making. Thus the expectations of the local political faction supporting the project were that the project officer would help them with "information, advice and clear thinking". One ALP alderman, consistent with his general orientation to the "needy" and his view of a "welfare approach" as the appropriate strategy, expected the project to be only a welfare service delivered on an immediate needs basis. Indeed, this alderman still sees the project only in those terms. The conservative and independent aldermen had limited or negative expectations of the project.

That the housing officer has met the expectations of councillors seeking expert advice was explicitly stated by five ALP, one independent and one WAC aldermen. In the words of one councillor, "he made it all seem possible ... almost easy". But perhaps more significantly the housing officer's effect in this advisory role was implicit in the kind of discussion which was forthcoming on housing matters. A clear and comprehensive understanding of the initiatives of the project and their analytical underpinnings was demonstrated by the majority of the supportive alderpeople. All four who spoke with most expertise directly attributed much of their understanding to the influence of the housing officer.

It became apparent in our discussions about the working relationship between the housing officer and the elected representatives that such influence had only been possible because both parties (political and bureaucratic) had been prepared to work for improved understanding and resourcing between the two levels of council's structure. The WAC aldermen disagreed in principle with direct aldermanic contact with a junior officer of Council and they dismissed his written reports as "difficult piles of paper". Clearly aldermen would have to have time and commitment for mutually influential relationships to grow. In this context, the housing officer directed his priorities in the first phase of the project towards working with the councillors in whom he found the most receptive attitudes and contributory actions.

Views of the goals and strategies of the project clearly derive from two (related) dimensions in each respondent; his/her understanding or theoretical frame and his/her value stance. To summarise the views given us of the objectives and strategies we have classified each councillor on the two dimensions noted above, as follows :

<u>Project Goals and Strategies</u>		
	Comprehensive Understanding	Partial or Inaccurate Understanding
Supportive Value Stance	6	2
Opposing Value Stance	1	2

Of the four councillors with partial understanding, two held what seems to us to be confused and contradictory views; the other two perceived the project strategies partially — one in terms of individual welfare actions only; the other in terms of property development functions only. Such misunderstanding was related to the unwillingness or inability of these councillors to absorb the written reports available to them.

In keeping with the style adopted in section 2.1 of this chapter, we have tabulated the most important achievements each councillor nominated. As party affiliations underlie the kind of achievements noted these are identified in Table 3.

Other achievements mentioned were wide ranging. They included : the increased awareness of the housing needs of special groups (including aged people, youth and boarding house residents); a commitment to local residents; planning to prevent discrimination, isolation and/or segregation of particular groups; and the effect on the bureaucracy, notably forging links between departments.

Undesirable outcomes of the project reported by supportive councillors, related to particular initiatives; such as the premature attempt to use litigation procedures to establish a precedent that undesirable social impacts of a development could be the basis for Council's rejection of it; and to "disappointment" expressed at the negative attitude held by some councillors and officers to the project. Unsympathetic aldermen regarded many outcomes of the project as undesirable — for instance, project services duplicated others; "rubbish" people were being helped with housing; and the "1000 page" research

Table 3

IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROJECT'S MOST IMPORTANT ACHIEVEMENT -
COUNCILLORS

<u>Achievement</u>	<u>Reasons</u>	<u>Number of Councillors Identifying</u>	<u>Political Group</u>
Increased <u>awareness</u> , understanding and actions of councillors, council bureaucracy, community	Provides climate for action; expertise; invaluable demonstration of potential to others; these foundations fundamental and can be translated into more tangible forms (e.g. "bricks & mortar")	4	3 ALP; 1 IND
Creation of public <u>housing stock</u> at low cost	Establishes precedent; good, innovative examples for Housing Commission	1	ALP
Development and planning <u>control</u> of processes of <u>displacement</u>	<u>Effective</u> commitment to low income people	1	ALP
<u>Welfare</u> initiatives; services (e.g. group homes for the aged)	Helps "needy" cases	2	1 WAC 1 ALP
Cosmetic achievements only	No real change; false investments in physically unsound, old buildings	1	WAC
Premature to say	May take 10 years to see effects, much stock on the ground still to be realised	1	IND
None	Changes would have all happened anyway; economic forces are determinant	1	WAC

outputs of the project were of no value. Most interestingly, a number of aldermen and officers of council were very uncertain about the effects of Council's recently adopted LEP on boarding houses. Because the project approach to the boarding house issue is innovative, complex and controversial it is the subject of closer attention in Chapter 4.

Supportive aldermen discussing the question of what the project had not achieved fell into two groups — those saying "nothing" and those saying "much" was not achieved. In the former case, the yardstick implicit was "relative to reasonable expectations"; in the latter, "relative to all that needs to be done". Both yardsticks are valid. Specific achievements hoped for but not yet accomplished included : a council funded (but not necessarily staffed) housing advice service; better tenant security; more housing stock; more evaluation of the basis for allocation of housing stock, especially the debate whether policy here should be uniform with, or complementary to, the Housing Commission's policy; and specific housing stock for the disabled. Many of the same desirable but as yet unaccomplished outcomes had been listed by the housing officer as priorities in the remaining months of the project's pilot phase.

2.3 Community

While we come third to the opinions of the people from the Waverley community this order does not reflect the importance with which we regard their contribution. The people whom we contacted during the evaluation included those acting as advocates on behalf of residents and other housing consumers; those in community-based organizations providing housing related services; and a sample of clients of the housing officer who had sought housing assistance from Council. The awareness of the issues surrounding the project varied across the groups. On the one hand, the clients' view of the "housing service" offered by the project officer was more narrowly based, deriving from their immediate individual needs. On the other, the community groups had a well developed awareness of the process of the project — many, in the spirit of its community development strategy, had been actively involved from the time of preparation of the submission.

The views of the clients,¹¹ as recipients of the project's service functions, are useful in the context of assessing that function as part of the broader programme. They are reported separately here for that reason. Clearly these people's views are based on their own experiences of housing crisis — from causes, in our sample, including harassment, eviction, and demolition — and the project officer's response to their need for assistance. Their views could

be summarised as threefold :

- 1) a belief that a housing programme of some kind, especially sensitive to the needs of local residents, should be a high priority for any Council;
- 2) a judgement that from their experience the housing officer had helped them to the fullest extent possible. The officer's style in being approachable, willing to come to the residents and "giving time" had made seeking help much less frightening;
- 3) a sense that there may have been a lack of interest in and support for residents' housing needs from some members of Council. This, from their point of view made the housing officer's job very difficult in that it put him in the contradictory situation of offering to help residents but having a partly unsympathetic Council controlling him. Their trust in the housing officer was such that they would have liked to see him have more power, a trust not extended to Council itself.

We will refer again to the role of the project's service functions in Chapter 4. Below we describe the opinions of the five community spokespeople interviewed. Each of these people had a broader awareness of the goals, strategies and programmes of the project. This awareness had developed alongside their own involvement in housing issues in the municipality. Chiefly this involvement centred around three strategies :

- (i) providing immediate housing assistance (emergency accommodation, information, legal advice, referrals, etc.) to people in housing need;
- (ii) simultaneously, extending to those helped the skills and resources to facilitate them helping themselves in the future and helping others in similar situations; and
- (iii) working to broaden the attempts to overcome the forces underlying the problems manifest locally.

One shared view that had emerged from their experiences was of the necessity for improved resident access to Council resources and, consistent with this, stronger resident involvement in local government decision-making.

The representatives of the community organizations expressed opinions much like those of the supportive officers and aldermen of the council as already reported. Therefore, we concentrate here on the additional arguments made. In particular, the community development strategy of the project can best be assessed from the community. Within this context all the respondents saw

the project as an excellent contribution, qualified only by the judgement that the council and the community still had a long way to go in terms of their mutual development.

(1) Community development and the project's history

Four of five people we talked to recalled having cautious or critical views of the earliest formulations of the project, both before and after the submission was made. In particular, they were uncertain about the kind of functions that local government could take up to meet the objectives of improving housing opportunities in ways complementary to their own efforts. They feared a bureaucratized welfare housing service aimed only at "band-aid" solutions would become established "in opposition to" their own community-based, community-resourced initiatives. However, once the project became established, the process of their involvement with it has produced mutual trust, shared understanding and reciprocal assistance. Such a process has not been without notable tensions, to which we have already referred. In particular, the need on the one hand for the housing officer to gain credibility and understanding through direct community involvement, but the risk at the same time that the orientation of the project in this way was counter to self-help and community development principles; the risk that expertise would overtake experience as the basis for housing assistance, is difficult to resolve. Over time there has been a shift in the housing officer's attention away from direct advice to a back-up role. However, this would not have come about except by the prior accentuation by the housing officer of day to day welfare aspects of the project because the CHO's skills and the community context in which he developed them provided one basis for strengthening the groups now working in expanded ways on housing problems. In the future, given the capricious circumstances of most community organizations, the housing officer may again have to expand his attention to immediate housing needs through the sheer pressure of public demand; demand emerging from the worsening housing circumstances that many people, city wide, are now facing. Such (highly possible) circumstances would mitigate against other strategies of the project, particularly its attention to the development of longer term planning control of housing needs. In this scenario the interrelation between the project and the community would have to be strengthened — we suggest some ways that this might occur in Chapter 6.

The process of community involvement perceived by the people we interviewed began unpropitiously in what are widespread circumstances of undeveloped council-

community interaction. From these beginnings, excellent developments have occurred in Waverley. Nevertheless, most of our respondents believed that despite its policy of "extending the ability of local people to participate in the planning process" Waverley council was still providing insufficient information for that objective to be fulfilled most effectively. As well, the relationship between council and the outside housing groups was centralised around the housing officer, suggesting too much dependence on the competence of one individual, they believed. Other supportive structures such as direct resident (especially tenant) involvement in the planning process, a regular newsletter providing information from council, or a housing sub-committee of council would be welcomed by those we interviewed. It is in these kind of ways that they argued more could be done.

Given the centrality of the community development approach argued by these groups, and by the project funders and supporters, the question of what is the essential contribution of a council-based community housing project remains. From the community's perspective, the project has made a major contribution by

- 1) creating a wider awareness of the relationship between housing and planning systems in Australia, and, relatedly

- 2) developing and demonstrating innovative mechanisms for using planning tools for housing objectives.

While such planning controls remain, however partially, within local government the monitoring and developing of their housing function is, it is now obvious, an essential part of their responsibility. As well, the housing-planning interface must be explored comprehensively at other levels of planning practice — notably in the state planning department and in the courts having jurisdiction over planning disputes.

(2) Project Achievements

To facilitate comparison of the point of view of the community spokespeople with those of council officers and councillors Table 4 lists the former group's nominated principal achievements of the project.

Table 4

IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROJECT'S MOST IMPORTANT ACHIEVEMENT —
COMMUNITY WORKERS

<u>Achievement</u>	<u>Reasons</u>	<u>Number of spokes- people identifying</u>
Expanding council's role and awareness in housing, including the formal policy	Enabling framework for development of processes and mechanisms geared to housing	4
Outstanding ambassadorial role in sensitising other local government authorities, state government departments and community workers to housing priorities	Basis for replication and extension of all the particular initiatives of the project, notably its adoption of planning functions to meet housing objectives	1

Rather than note any particular undesirable outcomes of the project, most of the community based people spoke of the need for caution in interpreting "the project". There was a danger they argued in equating the project to the need for a housing officer, where clearly objectives like explicit policy development or planning responsibility for housing could be developed in other ways within local government. The crucial need as they saw it was that these be developed; the virtue of the housing officer as the mechanism for this development is discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

2.4 State Government Departments and other Interest Groups

We interviewed people with senior responsibilities directly related to housing policy and housing provision in New South Wales or to local government planning and policy making. In the interviews, these respondents disqualified themselves from assessing the particulars of the project which were not familiar to them at first hand and concentrated on the institutional context within New South Wales in which the project is situated. Thus, it is from that perspective that we report their views here.

The issue most discussed was how this project worked toward the objective of demonstrating to local government that a different role in housing to any previously tried was feasible. The need for a demonstration of this kind, according to our respondents, emerged from two central factors — there was

an "overwhelming need" for more attention to housing provision, and there was considerable interest being shown, at least by socially conscious councils, in an expanded housing role for local government.

Without presenting all the arguments here, a fair summary of the position of all seven respondents was that each regarded the project as a highly successful demonstration of what could be achieved. Indeed its achievements had been beyond all their expectations. In particular, they singled out a number of attributes of the project that were most productive, from the perspective of the housing problem in general. These included :

- 1) the illustration to the wider community that local government could be competent and effective in housing initiatives given adequate funding and a skilled resource person;

- 2) the implication that the answer to housing problems may not be in a singular approach — that overall policy and flexible strategies aimed at prevention and amelioration were the fundamentals of an approach to public housing, not simply the immediate deployment of housing funds to new stock. That the Housing Commission, traditionally oriented to the latter-mentioned approach, had participated in funding the project was a significant breakthrough to be acknowledged here.

- 3) further to the principle that overall policy and flexible strategy provide the best framework for a housing role; the fact that, in Waverley, the approach taken had been shown to be far more cost-effective in the number of housing opportunities generated than the alternative of using the "seed-ing" money (\$35106) for "bricks and mortar" directly.

- 4) that the innovative joint funding programmes agreed to by the Housing Commission and YACS were a good base for generating more broadly conceived, integrative housing programmes.

- 5) that local government had a different role to play in the housing arena from that played by state government departments; that the roles had in practice become complementary, not duplicate or in conflict. For instance, the attention to local needs and special groups was a responsibility not taken up at the state government level.

To demonstrate the single "most important achievement of the project" seen by these people in a table is unnecessary; they unanimously reported that the demonstration of an effective role for local government in housing to the state government, to the community, and to other councils was its best

contribution. Of course, this judgement cannot be detached from the commitment of their auspices to local government taking a larger role in the housing arena.

It is within that shared commitment that a point of equivocation over funding responsibility emerged among the state government spokespeople. In three cases, the necessity for "seeding" of local government initiatives, the cost effectiveness of the actual housing programmes in Waverley and the principle that the sharing of responsibility and jurisdiction led logically to shared resourcing were argued. In the other three cases concern was expressed that limited money for public sector housing should not be directed to local government away from the Housing Commission. On the other hand, these same people recognised that local ratepayers could not reasonably be expected to pick up the full tab for local problems generated out of wider societal forces. But in the face of both full support for encouraging local government initiatives and the expressed "overwhelming need" for more attention to housing, an expansion of the resources to be drawn on for this issue seems inevitable to some of our respondents and to us. Four respondents were very satisfied that a project funded and run like the Waverley one could effectively use such resources to the total community's gain and that complete autonomy might unhinge the balance established between local interests and regional and state interests. The other three remained unconvinced. We return to the question of the accurate costing of the project in Chapter 4 and discuss the issue of responsibility for funding in Chapter 5.

Overall : The diversity of opinion and interest about the project contained in this chapter relates as much to the prevailing views of each respondent and his/her institutional context as to the project itself. The unravelling of the origins of opinions therefore is a difficult task, ultimately each reader will judge for himself/herself the validity of the comments made about the project. To help in that assessment, Table 5 summarises the responsibilities and concerns of each of the major interest groups whose representatives were interviewed by us. In our evaluation, we use the subjective views placed in this chapter as one yardstick by which we sum up in Chapter 4.

TABLE 5

RESPONSIBILITIES AND INTERESTS OF PROJECT ACTORS

<u>Interest Group</u>	<u>Role/Responsibility in Project</u>	<u>Major Areas of Concern in Outcomes of Project</u>
NSW Government		
- politicians		Electoral benefit
- Youth and Community Services	Funding Accountability Consultative Group	Cost-effectiveness Success/failure of community development model Effect on emergency accommodation provision Generalisability
- Housing Commission	Funding Accountability Consultative Group	Generalisability Cost-effectiveness Effect on public sector housing — increased/ reduced pressure for welfare housing Pressure for CSHA funds
- Department of Environment and Planning		Implementation of state and regional planning policy Effect on urban consolidation Generalisability
Local Government Association	Consultative Group	Effects on other councils Applicability to other councils Effectiveness of CHO vis-a-vis other strategies
Waverley Municipal Council		
- Councillors	Receptiveness to submission Financial support Adopting policy Accountability Consultative Group	Local political benefit Maintenance of housing stock Community improvement Effectiveness of CHO vis-a-vis other strategies Cost-effectiveness
- Community Housing Officer	Policy recommendations Implementation	Success of project Adoption and implementation of housing policy in WMC

...continued overleaf

continued ...

<u>Interest Group</u>	<u>Role/Responsibility in Project</u>	<u>Major Areas of Concern in Outcomes of Project</u>
Waverley MC (cont.)		
- Welfare staff	Implementation Adaptation of procedures Consultative Group	Success of project Adoption and implementation of housing policy in WMC Integration with and support for other welfare programmes Effectiveness of CHO vis-a-vis other strategies
- Planning/Engineering staff	Implementation through DAs/LEPs Adaptation of procedures Consultative group	Integration with/infringement on established professional roles Effectiveness of CHO vis-a-vis other strategies
Community	Ratepayers, voters	Cost-effectiveness Maintenance/improvement of community amenity Property development rights
- tenants, special needs groups	Consumers, clients	Availability of cheap/secure housing Access to information and advice
- community groups	Advocates Supporters of CHO project Consultative group Implementation	Generalisability Availability of cheap/secure housing Success/failure of community development model
Developers, builders	Housing provision	Regulation of industry Effect on profitability
Evaluators	Documentation Assessment Communication	Criteria for assessment of success/failure Increased housing equity Generalisability

Note : The framework for this Table is derived from Watt (1981) p.5.

Notes (Chapter 2)

1. While the same set of questions was asked of each respondent the interviews were structured dynamically — our understanding, developed through successive conversations, and the opinions of previous respondents, were incorporated into later interviews. The ordering of the interviews was random, with the exception of the housing officer who has interviewed last. Officers were chosen for interview on the basis of seniority or on the proximity of their work to the functions of the project.
2. Topics covered included : the nature and limits of a role for local government in housing; the characteristics of housing problems in Waverley; the involvement of the respondent in the project, both historically and currently; the perceived objectives, process, and direct effects of the project; the criteria for the respondent's evaluation; the criteria for our evaluation; the project's future in Waverley; and its generalisability.
3. An extensive record of material was accumulated : it is only possible in the confines of the report to select that which seems to our judgement most pertinent to the evaluation purposes.
4. A former Council community worker is now an elected councillor, for instance.
5. Perhaps the best manifestation of the changed functioning of the planning staff is contained in a draft report prepared by that department for council examining "the role of the Town Planning Department in the implementation of Council's Housing Policy as set out by the Community Housing Officer and adopted by the Council in August 1980". The report's, constructive, informed and co-operative style is striking.
6. Despite our repeated attempts to arrange an interview, the twelfth alderman was unable to meet with us.
7. Ratepayers' money was not used to fund the pilot project.
8. Crucially an evaluation is based on a relation between one's own value orientation and understanding and the documentary material available. Such an argument applies both to ourselves and to you the reader. Thus we are very conscious that whatever judgements we, as the official evaluators make, each reader will form his own evaluation. We would be confident of fuller and fairer assessment flowing if as much of the range of material as we came across is presented in a concise way for our readers to reflect on.
9. We understood these aldermen to mean by "realistic", realistic to the market, not to the tenant's ability to pay.
10. All but two of the councillors had been elected for their first term before the initiation of the project.

11. In our evaluation survey we underrepresented the "client point of view" in favour of the view of all those people who have particular roles or responsibilities in relation to the implementation of the project. Given our major time and resource limits, we made this choice because :
- i) Clients of the programme's service function are less in a position to assess their experiences in relation to the project's overall objectives,
 - ii) the project's service function is regarded by its supporters as a more minor one.
- Informally we established in a number of conversations that the housing officer was highly skilled and thorough in handling the day to day needs of local housing consumers.

CHAPTER 3 : UNDERSTANDING THE HOUSING PROBLEM

The Waverley CHO project is an explicit attempt to intervene in the housing market at the local level with the aim of improving the housing circumstances of local residents in both the short and longer terms. Any such strategy is based in

- (i) a model of how the housing market works, including the origins ("causes") of housing problems, and
- (ii) assumptions about how the state at the local level can operate to achieve short and longer term change in this market.

Our understanding of both these aspects of the housing question is introduced in this chapter. Our first section examines the nature of housing and describes the history of housing problems in Australia. The problems manifest at present in inner city areas like Waverley are situated in this historical context in section two. Thirdly, the role the state at the local level has played (historically) or may play (logically) is discussed.

Our central aim in this chapter is to broaden the terms of evaluation of the project to encompass answers to the questions :

- (i) why was the project necessary?
- (ii) what are the yardsticks, historical and theoretical, by which its effects can be gauged?

3.1 Historical Developments of the Housing Problem

The nature of housing. Fundamentally housing provides shelter for (the vast majority of) the population of any society. This role is performed in a bewildering variety of ways — consider the materials of construction, the design of building, the form of tenure and the spatial relation of dwellings. Within such physical and legal frameworks, the nature and intensity of human occupancy and interaction also vary vastly. In this way, as well as simple shelter, housing becomes a social system, representing the economic and social norms of its particular historical/concrete circumstances. Housing, as shelter and social system, is a reproductive system helping recreate the fabric of society as we know it. In other words, and like the institutions of school and the family, the home is one domain for the reproduction of the personal, social and economic characteristics that pattern particular kinds of workforces, with skills, resources and dispositions appropriate to their time.

In capitalist societies, housing is also a commodity produced in a distinctive economic system¹ and exchanged in a market place where it has money value for its seller (owner) and value in use for its consumer (occupier). This means that, through its exchange, housing must satisfy two ends : financial gain for its individual owner, on the one hand, and universal material need on the other. These two values; of housing as a necessary social good but also as profitable individual private property, are always in potential contradiction. Over the last two centuries the historical manifestation of the tension between private and public interests in this arena has repeatedly produced the housing problem; the failure of the private production system of housing to satisfy all human need of it. Constantly, government as the nexus of public and private interest has attempted to mediate/manage this conflict in the interests of both; in other words it repeatedly mitigates but, simultaneously, reproduces the conditions for conflict. To this time, private property interests and societal interests are each constantly threatened by the dynamics of their interplay. Housing's profitability remains volatile; housing provision uncertain and unequal for many people in many places.

The Australian Context. In Australia's development as a (largely) capitalist society, the nature of housing and the housing problem have been manifest in a variety of ways, reflecting the general economic and social forces defined above, but as well, its particular geographical characteristics and its cultural and political evolution. It is not possible to develop a detailed analysis of Australian housing within the priorities of this report. We have chosen here to emphasise the changing form of housing problems and not attempt the bigger exposition of all sides of the question.² Basically we make this choice because government, in general, and the project, in particular, is problem oriented.

At the turn of the century, the problem most apparent here was the physical one of bad housing conditions which had come to characterise our large urban centres and remote rural areas. Social and economic disadvantage was spatially co-existent with "poor" housing so simple causal links of poverty to physical condition were presumed. Ameliorative attempts by government at solution were derived from this view;³ dominantly they sought through planning and building regulations, emergent for the first time in the 1920s, to ensure better ventilation, sanitation and drainage, less crowding and more open space. Much of the power to control the physical standard of dwellings was vested with local government.⁴ Enshrined in the legislation was the creation of the Australian dream as a free-standing, single-storeyed cottage on a quarter-acre block of land. This vision, the association of more traditional housing with poverty;

and innovations in public transport (notably, the extension of the railways), created the necessary preconditions for the urban sprawl on a suburban pattern that emerged. While this suburban shift and expansion of Australia's metropolitan areas occurred along the lines described, a significant percentage of the older cities' population, around 10%, remained poorly and insecurely housed in the "condemned" styles of the inner city.

However, in the prosperity for the domestic economy associated with the growth of the suburbs and the assumptions about the elimination of poverty which had precipitated the sprawl, housing problems were not so apparent in the cities; rural areas presented some difference here.

During the several phases of expansion of Australia's domestic economy around rural and mining ventures, shortages of infrastructure, including housing, for the necessary labour forces were a constant threat to development. The "failure" of the private sector to provide the right housing in the right place at the right time largely because such provision would not have been profitable for it, has meant that a major social cost has been borne, but often not acknowledged, by all taxpayers, most of whom live in urban areas. This cost has been incurred as all levels of government, within a so-called "booster" philosophy, have used land grants, public housing schemes, decentralisation policies and financial grants and subsidies to create more profitable conditions for private development. Soldier settlements, the establishment of Whyalla⁵ and the current development of the Hunter Valley are clear well known examples of the public subsidy of short and long term, private, individual or company, interests. Local governments in rural areas during these periods have often acted directly as developers of land and providers of housing, facilitating economic vitality in the local (parochial) short term interest.

The most distinctive feature of Australian housing has undoubtedly been the predominance of home ownership. The aspiration, shared by richer and poorer Australians to "own your own home" has played a significant role in many aspects of our geographical, economic and political evolution. When compared to other capitalist societies, relatively high levels of home ownership were achieved in Australia as early as the second half of the 19th century. In 1891 just over half the houses were owner occupied although levels were lower in metropolitan than in non-metropolitan centres. Furthermore such high levels have been maintained and extended this century, so that only Iceland out-ranked our 69% level in 1971. Across this time a major expansion in owner-occupancy levels is notable after World War II.

Australia then was characterised by major population growth generated through a large-scale immigration policy and concentrated in urban centres that were becoming the spatial locus of the expanding manufacturing sector. Such a changing economic and population base in the cities inevitably produced new demands on the housing system and "new" problems in its response. By the war, the notion of cheap (i.e. below market cost) finance for home purchase had already been developed; Western Australia and Queensland had legislated to that effect. But after the war, housing policy was almost exclusively oriented to the extension of owner occupancy to the rapidly expanding workforce, generated through a large-scale immigration programme, serving the growing manufacturing sector. The political purpose lying behind such policy is clearly evident in the rhetoric of the politicians of the time. Mr. Duggan, the Deputy Premier of Queensland, in arguing for Commonwealth support for a home ownership scheme within the Commonwealth-State Housing Loan Agreement, said in 1953, '(this)...would not only make a better citizenry generally but also would promote greater industrial harmony. I feel that if a workman owned his house and therefore had a great interest in it, he would be disinclined to be influenced by extraneous matters raised by a few demagogues'. Mr. Gair, the Premier of Queensland, claimed that 'Home ownership encourages a sense of responsibility in the individual and is an antidote to any of the "isms" that may exist here. If a man is given a stake in the country his sense of responsibility and citizenship is increased'. The Premier of Victoria, Mr. A.A. Dunstan, said, that the person who could afford the deposit necessary for home purchase was '... invariably an exemplary citizen, a symbol of achievement, purpose, industry and thrift'.⁶ Such views have spawned a plethora of acts aimed at providing long-term, low interest-rate home finance; there can be no doubt they crucially underpin the "success" of that tenure form in contemporary Australia. But to accompany the "success" of these endeavours to extend the opportunity of a home of your own to everyone, two other outcomes are also worth noting. As with much housing policy, the efficiency and justice questions surrounding owner occupancy remained largely unexamined in public and professional discourse;⁷ and throughout the post war period a spatially and temporally fluctuating proportion, around an average 30% of Australian dwellings, remained outside the ownership of their occupiers; at the same time that "second homes" for a significant group of wealthier Australians became popular.

The majority of dwellings not owner-occupied were held as investments by private sector landlords. A substantial portion of the rental stock has been let on insecure and unpropitious leaseholds at relatively high cost, except at times of government rent control, to households unable to afford to buy

homes. As well, created by government, contemporaneously with the facilitation of owner occupation, a small, physically, locationally, and socially segregated sector of public housing grew to house the "deserving" poor. This sector had become about 6% of the stock held by 1971. People unable to find the scarce cheap housing for themselves but disqualified by family structure, race, gender or age from public housing, were unattended in their housing needs, save by voluntary organizations' ameliorative efforts. Substantial numbers of homeless and poorly, expensively or insecurely housed people remained throughout Australia during its most prosperous period of the sixties and early seventies. Many of these were concentrated in the inner suburbs deserted by those with more housing choice. As well, at least ironically for the ecological theorists whose ideas had been dominant in policy to then, but tragically for the families affected, the social problems arising from the isolation and lack of facilities of the new, spacious suburbs (Mount Druitt, Green Valley in Sydney, for example) were becoming as apparent again as had been those of the turn of the century inner city.

The historical demarcation during the creation and growth of Australia's housing stock into a large owner-occupied sector, publically subsidised; a small, costly public housing sector; and an exploitative and volatile private rental sector is distinctive by world comparison.⁸ As such it has produced distinctive problems in the contemporary climate of economic uncertainty and crisis. Some of these are discussed more specifically, in relation to Sydney, in the next section.

3.2 Aspects of the Housing Problem in Contemporary Sydney

A finer scale analysis at this point of our discussion seems appropriate to focus attention to the place and period in which the project is directly situated.

In the constant flux of the housing system as described above, Sydney experienced an unprecedented boom in the expansion of its housing stock in the decade from 1962 to 1972. Much of the new construction took the form of home units and, later, town houses.⁹ Home units, economically viable because of the higher ratios of dwellings per site; production economies of scale; and technological innovation possible in their construction, had become readily marketable after the 1961 N.S.W. Strata Titles (Conveyancing) Act, in accord with the well-established principle of individual home ownership, legitimated this tenure form for multi-unit developments. The localities where the new constructions were concentrated included some of those "blighted" by

the negative attitudes to old housing that had been created; significant demolition of stock and redevelopment took place across Sydney's inner and middle ring suburbs. It is apt here to note that while renewal was a significant phase of Sydney's recent history, the process was far less extensive than that achieved in the major urban centres of the U.S.A. and the U.K. In both those societies, renewal programmes were massively subsidised by public authorities. Here, constrained largely to the private market, a more selective pattern of redevelopment, often capitalising on prime locations for luxury housing, occurred.

The conditions which had produced the boom around the redevelopment process; viz. a buoyant domestic economy; higher rates of new household formation generating high levels of demand; and the minimum regulation and control of building, scale and density standards, all changed during its trajectory, such that a turn around before its time became inevitable. In particular, public outcry, organised through resident action groups, at large, poor quality flat development; its influence on local councils, who, parochially inclined to resident interest, tightened building standards and open space requirements; and for a time, the reduced availability of cheap finance for construction changed the profit conditions in the building sector to such an extent that production at the cheaper end of the market dwindled.¹⁰ When construction levels picked up (to about 50% of their former levels) higher-cost, higher-priced town houses replaced flats as the most numerous form. In this way the conditions for a new shortage of lower-priced housing were precipitated. As this shortage has deepened, it has been accompanied by rapidly escalating house/flat prices, not simply reflecting short term supply and demand imbalances but significant longer term or recurrent tendencies in the housing market as well. Two of these relevant to the current tensions in the housing market will be discussed here.

High costs and intensified scarcity in a market where real demand for the product is ever present always spawn speculative opportunities, especially in those submarkets under most pressure. The land and housing markets in Australia are notorious for this type of speculative activity. Probably more than any other process, unproductive speculation in housing by those with only an investor's interest in it, has yet again in the late 1970s destroyed the tentative basis for housing security that had been building for more people in the long boom than ever before. Much of that speculative investment this time has been inner city centered;¹¹ we discuss why shortly and in chapter 4

some of the effects in Waverley and the project's response to them are examined.

The other tendency, a new one, has occurred around the internationalisation of the financial sector. This shift has produced intensified global competition for financial opportunities and supra-national control of the amalgamating finance corporations. Historically, however, Australia's finance sector has been intricately tied into our domestic housing economy through the practice of owner occupancy. Here, governments acting to contain the wage/profit conflict immanent in high house costs but also to extend the 'privilege' of owner occupancy have found it necessary to control interest rates and financial reserves. Through this process, however, the financial sector supplying housing finance has its profit directly curtailed by the government. As a consequence, big, diversified finance capital interests have become reluctant and unreliable participants in the housing finance sector. One outcome of this reluctance has been the development of the large role of government banks and the government nurtured building societies in housing finance provision. Thus while on the one hand, this practice has fuelled the expansion of the financial sector, simultaneously succoured and controlled by government regulations; on the other it has created mortgage dependence on the part of most Australian families. This dependence in the new climate that has led to the loss of government control over interest rates, threatens a major wage push and profit squeeze in the domestic economy. As well historical levels of owner occupancy look unlikely to be maintained; serious long term inequities between a property owning class with inheritance rights and free of a capital gains tax, and the growing numbers of non-owners seems likely. The immediate effects of the breakdown in financial capital's traditional participation in the domestic housing market (i.e. providing below market cost finance), has been increased pressure on the private rental market and public sector housing and many serious social problems for those groups most affected by higher costs/homelessness. While political attitudes to which groups are deserving of public sector housing have gradually broadened since the sixties, economic circumstances have changed in such a way that the nett result is that more eligible people are being excluded from this sector than ever before.

Pressure on local government to respond to a worsening housing crisis, emerges in part from a context like this because generalised processes like those described here have particular localised effects.

In Sydney's inner city, heightened conflict over housing resources has been most apparent. This conflict can be seen as a direct outcome of both the general forces in the market and some co-incident, more localised processes. In the 1970s in the market described, a constellation of factors including increasing congestion; the shift of employment opportunities (and locations) from the manufacturing (suburban) to the administrative and service (centralised) sectors; an emergent 'middle class' nostalgia about old housing, once rejuvenated; and higher fuel costs, operated to orient the preferences of many of those with more choice in their housing situation to inner city locations — unprecedented levels of demand were experienced there.

While it appears to some analysts that the so-called "gentrification" of the inner city provides the "natural" private market solution to problems "there", the reality, carefully examined, is more complex. For one, urban consolidation policies have politicised the process and without clear equity guidelines. Patently too, along with satisfaction of middle class housing preferences, poorer households have been systematically displaced, first by demolitions for flats and expressways and now by high prices. Some others remain, tentatively, in insecure housing circumstances, while a third group is left with no choice in the "spacious isolation" of the far Western suburbs. In this process the spatial arrangements may be changing, but the social relations are not.¹² Physical standards may no longer be the problem; prohibitive costs now threaten the security of many households. Government guidelines, once again, have been lacking in any clear exposition of social objectives.¹³ The conditions for profitable investment but not low priced output again are dominant : Sydney city's luxury residential sector, the urban consolidation of the rich, is perhaps the best distillation of this contradiction. It is in these general and historical circumstances that Waverley's housing situation of intensifying tension between conflicting interests can be understood.¹⁴ And what of local government's particular role in retrospect and in prospect?

3.3 Local Government and Housing

A full analysis of the historical role of local government in the housing system would benefit from a two fold classification; that of its implicit and explicit actions. It is generally acknowledged that local government has wide ranging powers in relation to housing issues and that many local councils are involved in the direct provision of housing and housing infrastructure; in the regulation and control of physical and space standards of housing; and in resourcing/providing housing-related welfare services. Typically, the orientation of such functions has been toward parochial vested interests, to

particular needs groups or to rural populations.

However, in fact, local government's implicit role in all areas especially through its planning functions has probably been far more extensive in its social and economic effects. More significantly, from an evaluator's point of view, by virtue of being implicit this role has been literally unintended. Using the example of the impact of residential development control, it has been possible to illustrate some of the implicit policy objectives underlying current planning practices.

A study undertaken in 1978 by a group of Masters students at Sydney University Department of Town and Country Planning,¹⁵ based on an analysis of 39 local Councils' statutory documents, codes, and guidelines established that in planning and development regulation practices:

- (i) the nature of the controls and the trend in standards restricted the market's flexibility and increased product cost;
- (ii) following from (i) the controls tended to reinforce the existing socio-economic pattern of the metropolitan area;
- (iii) the interests and attitudes of some groups, in particular those who wish to maintain the status quo, are more effectively represented than others;
- (iv) local government perceives its role as the securing of "the public interest" but the public is defined as the local rather than the regional public which ensures that parochial objectives take precedence over regional objectives, and the "public interest" is defined as the securing and maintenance of local residential amenity. Effects flowing elsewhere from this approach are unaccounted; and
- (v) residential amenity is consistently defined in terms of a low rise, landscaped, detached housing environment. This narrow definition has implications which restrict housing opportunities for certain groups and restrict the development of alternative housing types.

Clearly local government in these functions has had the (unintended?) effect of maintaining the status quo conditions of housing, yet the preceding analysis

makes it apparent that the status quo does not cater for all housing need and that housing supply is repeatedly threatened by unstable and crisis prone tendencies. This means, among other things, that the vast arena of explicit and implicit actions of governments, of all levels, in the market : stimulating it, substituting for it or supplementing it, have not been consistent enough nor sufficient to create the conditions for greater housing equity. Clearly a higher priority for housing justice is called for at all levels. Local government whether it likes to think so or not cannot escape its responsibility; clearly there can be no justification, once it is recognised, for the maintenance of an ad hoc status quo of unexamined effects. Its challenge is to properly investigate the crucial interweaving role that it plays in the process of translating housing, planning and other social policies into practice and to incorporate, in co-ordination with other government and community interests, into that practice measures which improve the probability of an equitable distribution of housing resources. How does the Waverley project meet that challenge?

Notes (Chapter 3)

1. This system includes all the property, development, building, financial and management institutions; its political, legal, planning and regulatory controls; the economic and social rules or customs that link its institutions and actors and the actors themselves — land-owners, developers, builders, bankers, real estate agents, solicitors, planners, building inspectors, etc.
2. A full, historical analysis of the evaluation of housing in Australia, in fact, has never been written.
3. The view was succinctly put in the Royal Commission on Workingmen's Housing, held in 1909, where it was proclaimed that the 'healthy, law-abiding Australian worker required spacious surroundings with fresh air and light'. (Quoted in, Jakubowicz, A. (1972) A New Politics of Suburbia, Current Affairs Bulletin, April, p.340).
4. Its major legislative framework for action, the Local Government Act was gazetted in 1919.
5. Aungles and Szelenyi (1979) develops the 'Whyalla story', including particular attention to local government and its conflicting involvement with the state government and the private sector. Included in the article is a quotation originally from one of the annual reports of the South Australian Housing Trust which well illustrates the general argument being made.

"It has always been Trust policy to aid individual development within South Australia. The formation of the Trust in 1937 was intended as a boost to industry as a means of providing good, reasonably priced accommodation in an area where a new industry was creating such a demand ... The labour requirement of the industry directly determines the degree of development of the Trust". (p.25).
6. Quoted in Jones (1972).
7. An interesting recent account of equity considerations in Australian housing is given by Max Neutze in Troy (1981, Ch.5).
8. The following table, reproduced from Kemeny (1976), indicates this distinctiveness and poses the question of whether the relationship of owner-occupancy levels to indicators of material well-being is as direct as is sometimes taken for granted.

Table 6

Home ownership rate and rank order of per capita Gross National
Income of selected industrialised societies, 1971

Country	Percentage of owner-occupied dwellings	Rank order of GNI per capita
Iceland	70.8	12
Australia	68.7	8
New Zealand	68.1	14
United States	62.9	1
Canada	55.9	3
Belgium	55.9	11
Britain	50.1	16
France	43.3	10
Sweden	35.5	2
West Germany	34.3	5
Switzerland	27.9	4

9. Table 7 below details the amount and form of new housing construction from 1959-1979.

Table 7

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF ANNUAL
HOUSE AND FLAT^(a) COMPLETIONS IN THE
SYDNEY STATISTICAL DIVISION^(b) 1959-79

YEAR ended 30th June	NUMBER		TOTAL	PERCENTAGE	
	HOUSES	FLATS		HOUSES	FLATS
1959	18352	1538	19890	92.3	7.7
1960	19208	3268	22476	85.5	14.5
1961	18544	5739	24283	76.4	23.6
1962	16433	5069	21502	76.4	23.6
1963	14715	4683	19398	75.9	24.1
1964	15161	6655	21816	69.5	30.5
1965	15890	11718	27608	57.6	42.4
1966	14611	12983	27594	52.9	47.1
1967	13384	9950	23334	57.4	42.6
1968	15230	11610	26840	56.7	43.3
1969	16326	13893	30219	54.0	46.0
1970	16543	15741	32284	51.2	48.8
1971	15514	17431	32945	47.1	52.9
1972	15355	14765	30120	51	49
1973	13411	15683	29094	46.1	53.9
1974	12042	14864	26906	44.8	55.2
1975	9738	13134	22872	42.6	57.4
1976	9811	7702	17513	56	44
1977	10474	5998	16472	63.6	36.4
1978	11007	4836	15843	69.5	30.5
1979	12167	4864	17031	71.4	28.6

(a) Classification changed to "OTHER DWELLINGS" in 1974.

(b) 1971 boundary.

Source : Australian Bureau of Statistics, New Dwellings Completed in Statistical Divisions and Local Government Areas, N.S.W., 1961-1979, various publications.

10. Stilwell (1979) and (1980, Ch.4) document the forces influencing changes in the building and construction sectors along these lines.
11. Percentage changes in house price levels have already been widely reported. Turnover figures, one indicator of a speculator's market, are a useful addition in this context. Percentage increases in the number of house sales from 1976 to 1979 in the Sydney Metropolitan area averaged 41.3% with a standard deviation of 27.1%. Of the 45 metropolitan LGAs only the three inner areas of Marrickville, South Sydney and City of Sydney matched the new or expanding areas of Colo, Fairfield and Windsor in their turnover rates; all more than one standard deviation unit above the average.
12. David Harvey has described the allocation of housing opportunities in the city by analogy to the allocation of seats in the theatre : in the latter, those who get there last get the worst seats; in the former, those with least resources the worst locations. Historically, the poor "filled up" the inner city; now the stage has changed and they "choose" elsewhere.
13. While the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act requires the assessment of social and economic impact of development it provides no guidelines for the equation of different impacts (see Chapter 4 for fuller discussion of this).
14. Both the submission for the CHO project (1979) and the CHO's report on Housing in the Municipality (1980) include a more detailed discussion of the current conditions of the local market.
15. Derived from Bennett et al (1978).

CHAPTER 4 : ASSESSMENT

In this chapter we confront the task of synthesising all our research findings toward a formal assessment of the project's contribution to the challenge of developing the role of local government in housing. The project is a complex one and its assessment involves recognition of its various levels. Consider that :

1) there is a single, clear overriding objective — to increase housing opportunity and housing security for all groups;

2) when situated in contemporary Waverley, this objective begs an immediate priority of increasing housing security for those groups most disadvantaged in their housing choice and security;

3) when situated in local government, the assumption that such objectives can be met through local government function is made;

4) a number of strategies; including research, lobbying, planning, community development, direct provision, management and servicing, are, operating together, seen as necessary for the effective fulfilment of the objective;

5) the particular programmes implemented are numerous and take many forms, as described in Chapter 1;

6) the effects of the project, like any, may be long and/or short term; tangible and/or intangible; localised and/or widespread; contradictory; ambiguous; or uncertain;

7) the opinions and interests of all of us in relation to the project vary ;

8) the opinions and interests of all of us in relation to the evaluation of the project vary;

9) the project and our views of it do not exist in isolation; they cannot be understood or assessed in isolation from the wider political and economic context determining housing provision, housing need and our ideas about these.

Many methods of evaluation are available to us. No single model, however, incorporates all the considerations we see. Thus we use elements of many of them in working for a descriptive synthesis, simultaneously having in mind three criteria for evaluation :

- 1) the project's own terms —
that is, an assessment of the consistency of its goals, strategies and effects;
- 2) the subjective reality —
that is, an assessment of the effect of the project in relation to the opinions of those with interest/involvement in it;
- 3) the objective reality —
that is, an assessment of the effect of the project in its wider societal and historical context.

The project's own terms, the opinions of the interested parties, and its wider material context, have been the subject matter of Chapters 1, 2 and 3 respectively. To accomplish our aim for this chapter we have chosen three different approaches which we do not attempt to reconcile but leave to the reader to select from depending on his/her interest in the evaluation.

Section 4.1 takes a case study approach; in
Section 4.2 cost assessment is discussed; and in
Section 4.3 a summary list of findings is given.

4.1 Case Studies

While the project has all the tangible programmes and outcomes listed in Chapter 1 to its credit, it is not possible or necessary to provide a full analysis using our criteria of each one.¹ Instead, a case study approach is being used to provide a distillation of what the project is and how it measures up to our criteria for evaluation. The two case-studies — of the boarding house Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and the Pine Avenue-Waverley Street (PA-WS) issue — are not chosen arbitrarily. Between them they include all of the strategies we have recorded in Chapter 1 and it is a widely held view that, of the particular tangible outcomes, they together represent the most important.

Case 1 : The boarding house Local Environmental Plan

Waverley municipality's LEP relating to boarding houses (LEP No.4) is an attempt to use council's statutory planning powers under the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EPA Act) to preserve the stock of boarding house accommodation in the local area. Below we discuss the context in which the LEP emerged, its strategies and its predicted effects, before reviewing the project in this light.

Context : In Chapter 3 we described how the decreasing supply of new dwellings coupled with increased demand by middle income home buyers and investors for centrally accessible locations had produced an intensively competitive submarket in Sydney's inner city in the 1970s. This market was characterised by high levels of speculation, record rates of property turnover and rapidly escalating prices. Two phases of demand can usefully be identified. In the earlier phase, attention focussed on the ornate, old-fashioned 19th Century housing most suitable for owner-occupation by small families. As market supplies of this housing dwindled or its cost became relatively dear, investor/speculators seeking to maximise benefit in a vibrant climate shifted their interest to a wider range of property styles. As an early indicator of this change, in 1967, the first 'old flat building' (1930s construction) was converted from its original title to Strata Title and sold as individual dwelling units. Flowing from this precedent, but not until market conditions became conducive as new construction levels dropped, extensive numbers of old multi-dwelling buildings were converted and sold at suddenly inflated prices. Some of these became owner-occupied for the first time but the bulk formed the stock of a new higher-priced rental sector in the now popular inner city.²

One of Sydney's major areas of concentration of old flats is Waverley municipality : it had approximately 9,000 of them in the 1961 Census before the NSW Strata Titles (Conveyancing) Act of that year affected production levels.³ Not surprisingly, the conversion process has been dominant there. Fourteen per cent of all conversions of old flats have taken place in Waverley; only Woollahra (15%) and North Sydney (19%) record higher levels. As well as the conversion of old flats to Strata Title, significant numbers of flats built in the boom of the 1960s but not Strata-Titled (i.e. clearly intended at the time for the rental market) were also retitled. This process has been particularly intensive in Waverley : by mid 1979 for the city as a whole 74% of the total new stock had been Strata-Titled; for Waverley Municipality the proportion was 93%.

One of the accommodation forms that became incorporated in this speculative process in Waverley was the boarding house. Between 1974 and 1981, Council records suggest about 90 of the 237 existing licensed boarding houses, involving up to 1000 of an estimated 3350 boarders, had been demolished and re-developed or converted to Strata Title. Demolition or conversion has not required development applications for Council consent so the process has so far been unfettered; its consequences officially ignored. Those groups

traditionally boarding (typically from among the aged, pensioners, the disabled, ex-prisoners; young adults and the unemployed), with limited access to other forms of housing, have often been made homeless by this process. Its effect has been to place considerable pressure on local emergency and short-term accommodation services and on the Community Welfare Department of the council, the housing officer (since 1980), and community housing organizations.

It was within this context that Council's proposal that its housing policy be applied to consideration of the effect of the loss or conversion of boarding house accommodation developed. In particular, Council began to develop the policy objective to argue that tenants and lodgers had a basic right to continuity of residential security. However, while such policy clarified Council's intentions in regard to housing priorities it did not provide any effective basis for ensuring that these could be met. Such a basis, however, can be established through the use of statutory powers to reinforce housing policy. It was recognised that in the integration of housing objectives into planning practice, a more effective strategy for preventing the loss of boarding house accommodation might be found.

Strategy : LEPs are statutory instruments providing local control of the planning responsibilities designated in regional and state policy. Gazetted under the new EPA Act, they serve the functions of the previous town and country planning schemes and interim development orders but extend the scope of local authority control to issues including social and economic impact, conservation, protection and heritage, which were not previously directly within planning jurisdiction.

In this example, the boarding house LEP was envisaged by the housing officer as an appropriate strategy for requiring development consent in cases involving loss or conversion of boarding house accommodation. Subsequently, the draft LEP was prepared jointly by the town planning section of Council and the housing officer, in consultation with advisors from the Department of Environment and Planning. This draft was certified for exhibition on the 26th August 1981, exhibited from 3rd-17th September 1981, and approved by Council for request for gazetting on the 26th January 1982.

In effect the LEP aims to :

- (i) "encourage the efficient use of land for residential purposes by requiring development consent to any reduction in the present stock of boarding-house accommodation within the Municipality;
- (ii) provide that the Council of the Municipality may avert the cumulative adverse social and economic effect on the community generally which may result from the significant loss of private rental boarding-house accommodation in the Municipality;
- (iii) encourage the maintenance of the existing proportion of boarding-house accommodation in the Municipality, having regard for the significant role played by boarding-houses in the housing market, and having regard for the need to maintain and encourage an adequate range and choice of housing generally; and
- (iv) require economic implications to be taken into account where boarding-house accommodation is upgraded to acceptable public health and fire safety standards".

(Draft LEP)

It is proposed that these aims are facilitated in two ways through the LEP :

1) The consent of Council must be sought for the purpose of altering a boarding house and converting the building to another use; or changing the use of a building from a boarding house to another use which may be as a dwelling house.

2) Before consenting to any development involving demolition, alteration or conversion of a boarding house, Council must assess whether

- (i) "the development will result in any reduction in the existing number of households (or units of accommodation on the land which is subject to the proposed development) and the effect of any such reduction on the preservation or improvement of the stock of boarding-house accommodation within the Municipality; and
- (ii) any loss of such boarding-house accommodation may cause adverse social and economic effects on the community, individuals or social groupings".

(Draft LEP)

In requesting gazettal of the LEP, Council has made some further recommendations enabling flexibility in practices outside the planning mechanism itself to

better ensure their particular aims are met. These recommendations are reproduced below from the council papers of the 26th January 1982.

"When Council formulates its forthcoming policy on Section 94,⁴ contributions for community facilities in general, provision be made for contributions and a reserve fund towards low-rental public housing under Section 94 of the Planning Act in respect of redevelopment projects involving a loss of low-rent accommodation such as boarding-houses.

In consideration of any applications involving additions to, or conversion to boarding houses, erection of new boarding houses, Council resolve to relax these standards including on-site car parking standards which unnecessarily discourage provision of boarding house accommodation, and that each application be dealt with on its merits".

In this set of ways a rationalisation of boarding house provision is being sought to overcome both the social and economic disadvantage to lodgers displaced through change of land-use of the house and to overcome the economic disadvantage to owners of maintaining or upgrading inefficient boarding houses. It is impossible yet to talk about the full effects of this action although at its present stage some responses are observable and others can be anticipated.

Evident effects :

- 1) Both objections to and support for the proposals from boarding house owners or operators;⁵
- 2) Significant interest in the LEP mechanism for other applications from within WMC and from other councils; and
- 3) Development of understanding of the LEP strategy for planning control toward social objectives, within WMC. This was evident in our discussion in Chapter 2; one officer saw it as the most important achievement of the project.

Potential effects :

- 4) Judging from the evidence of earlier boarding house conversions, a number of smaller houses may be lost because the assessment of their nett social and economic impact points in favour of a development option;
- 5) Operators of larger boarding houses may now find the clarity of policy and the offer of material or regulatory support, a secure base for making investment decisions in favour of retention, upgrading, expansion or enhanced management of their operations;

6) Depending on the success of Council in seeking to raise revenue under Section 94 of the EPA Act, new boarding house construction by council alone, or in conjunction with private enterprise, may occur;

7) As the nett result of 4, 5 and 6 above, a higher number and proportion of boarding house lodgers are likely to have more security of tenure and a better standard of housing;

8) Other LGAs may suffer increased rates of loss of boarding houses as the effects of Waverley's programme force speculators to look elsewhere. (Obviously similar policies, but mindful of local needs, could be developed elsewhere. In Chapter 5 we comment more on the dangers of Waverley 'going it alone');

9) Following from 4, 5, 6 and 7 but mindful of 8, some relief of pressure on emergency housing supplies may ensue;

10) The profitability of boarding house properties as short term speculative investment will be curtailed; and

11) More accurate monitoring of the boarding house stock will be possible.

Assessment :

Clearly the programme demonstrates how the flexible staging of a number of strategies including policy development, research, lobbying, planning control and financial management can be directed to housing objectives through local government. Crucially, local government's right and responsibility to use planning instruments to support housing objectives is established by this example. Whether these strategies can be effective in stabilising or increasing private market low cost housing provision cannot be known yet though theoretical and historical perspectives can shed some light here. Some of the predicted outcomes appear to be positive in relation to the boarding house objective; others appear to be negative. If such is the case, this intervention, like most, will have complex, possibly contradictory effects. However the history of the programme itself has been a flexible one and we should not imply that it is now fixed or finalised. Clearly in its further development attention will have to be given to the criteria for assessment of adverse social and economic effect.

Such attention is not only necessary at the local level : the whole framework of the EPA Act provides no explicit guidelines for equating conflicting interests. In a recent litigation, involving the Sydney City Council, the judge did not support Council's refusal of consent for a redevelopment on the

grounds of the likely adverse social and economic effect on the low income residents being displaced. He emphasised that those effects had to be considered from the property owner's point of view as well as those of the affected residents. However, in ruling in favour of the property owner he did not explain how the equation of the owner's loss of development rights was made with some 50 people's loss of housing, except to state that "it was not his view that owners of property should be required to subsidise those on low incomes."⁶

If such remains the legal interpretation of the new planning regime in NSW one implication is that social objectives cannot override property rights in the planning process and the historically evident inequalities inherent in housing provision must remain. In this difficult context what experiments like the Waverley one seek to do with clear housing objectives in mind is to use planning mechanisms integrated with other initiatives to increase the competitiveness of the market at the least profitable end; the end where few options traditionally exist. In this case it is hoped⁷ that the LEP mechanism and associated direct financial subsidies and cost-cutting strategies encouraged by council may change the market conditions sufficiently in favour of the retention or expansion of boarding house operations. Such a result could resolve the conflict of interest between the property owners and the lodgers to the extent that reasonable economic returns and reasonable housing conditions, for those most disadvantaged relatively speaking, could be assured. Whether the courts will uphold such a balance between different interests can only be established in practice as no clear guidelines for equating different interests have been spelt out. If rulings continue to be in favour of property owners, far greater levels of government subsidy than at present may be necessary to meet current housing needs. At this stage, it can be said that the Waverley boarding house initiative offers a low cost alternative that may well gear the private market to meeting a wider range of housing needs.

Most of the evaluative comments made above relate to the project's own criteria and to the relation of the programme to its wider societal context. In considering people's opinions of the LEP programme — the subjective criteria for assessment — two comments are worth making. Firstly, several people demonstrated clear understanding of the content and strategies of the LEP proposal and this we see as an important off-shoot of the project if its innovations are to be extended. Secondly, two clear value positions underlie people's assessment of the proposal : one supports the use of planning mechanisms to orient the market more toward social objectives; the other, a so called

"laissez-faire" stance, denies planning the right of social objectives but does not deny its "technical" role. In our view the second stance is a false one — there may be a case for no planning, a truly laissez-faire stance, but planning can never be only technical : technical mechanisms inevitably have social effects. By this clarification of the two value positions, our argument should become clear : planning, if it exists, inevitably has social effects; it follows by reason that it should have social objectives. The EPA Act and the Waverley LEP proposal are both explicit statements of this principle.

Case 2 : Pine Avenue-Waverley Street proposed development

The development of the Pine Avenue-Waverley Street issue (PA-WS) is one context where all the strategies implemented by the housing officer and the Council to meet the project's objectives have been applied. We assess it here in a similar way to the previous case study.

Context : Throughout the 1960s in Sydney most LGAs had gazetted comprehensive local planning schemes aimed at providing explicit guidelines for all future land-use developments. Like all planning practice, the local plans reflect two important sets of ideas :

- i) ideas about planning style that are in vogue — in the 1960s, emphasis on master planning and on physical planning is notable; and
- ii) the dominant ideas about how planning and the property and land-use allocation systems work — for instance, planning for residential land use in the 1960s had come to be regarded as the means for controlling "excessive" higher density redevelopment by containing it in designated areas.

These ideas come to be perpetuated perhaps long after they are worthy or appropriate when whole new statutes of planning, such as emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, are institutionalised in law and in practice. In New South Wales, a complete review of planning policy has produced a new framework guiding local government planning since 1979 when the EPA Act was gazetted. However, integration of the purposes of that Act into local planning practice is a slow and difficult process to effect.

In Waverley municipality, a comprehensive master plan for the expanded development of Bondi Junction was adopted in 1969. Within that plan, the Council had particular responsibility for the redevelopment of the local road networks

around the Bondi Junction commercial centre. To this end, Pine Avenue and Waverley Streets were earmarked for incorporation into an extension of Hollywood Avenue to link it with Oxford Street, Bondi Junction (see map overleaf). This extension was proposed after an "approximate" assessment of likely traffic needs and in the interests of "street design and tidiness in planning".⁸

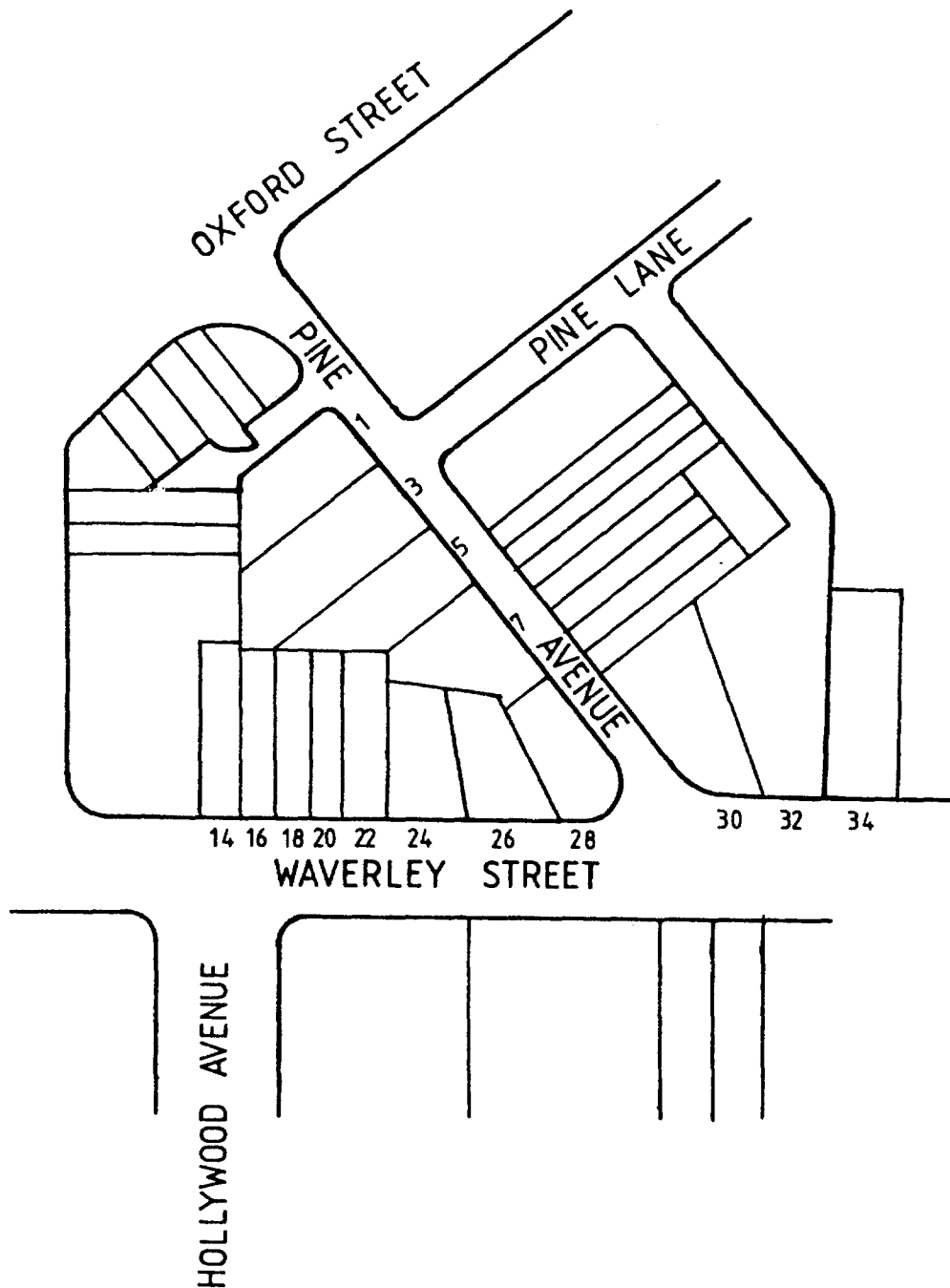
One effect of the 1969 planning decision for this area was to immediately determine what short and long term land uses and what property ownership patterns would emerge in the vicinity of the site. Post 1969 all investment decisions were being taken with the proposed extension singularly in mind; the area was "in limbo" years before any direct action on the roadworks was mentioned. Council, for instance, began systematically acquiring properties along PA-WS to the sole end of preparing for the construction of the extension. Between 1971 and 1980 fourteen properties were purchased by Council at a total cost of \$1,427,450. Forty-two dwelling units were included among the acquisitions. Subsequently they had been let through local real estate agents on the private market or, in some cases, allocated to council employees, usually at below market rents.

Strategy : During his research into the housing conditions of the residents of Waverley and his assessment of the resources of the Council useful for meeting these needs, the housing officer came to regard the PA-WS area as important in three main ways :

- (1) as a reservoir of housing stock and development sites already acquired by Council (for demolition);
- (2) as a region including a significant number of low income tenants, many of whom, it had been assessed, would have difficulty re-housing themselves at reasonable cost and standard elsewhere in the municipality in the present market;
- (3) as property that was under-maintained and in poor condition (probably because of its demarcation for eventual demolition) causing hardship for existing tenants.

Considering these findings and the housing policy objectives of Council, the housing officer sought to raise the PA-WS development proposal for discussion in the hope that a more flexible planning approach than that envisaged in 1969 could be developed to respond to changing community circumstances and Council priorities. At the same time, resident complaints about the condition of their housing extended Council's awareness of PA-WS as a more immediate issue

PINE AVENUE-WAVERLEY STREET, BONDI JUNCTION



Source : Black et al, Report on Hollywood Avenue Road Extension and Associated Land-Use Development, April 1981.

for attention.

Council's initial response to the debate that ensued was to commission a report to re-assess the need for the road extension as part of the Waverley Town Plan. An urban land use and transport study group (ULTRA) in association with Unisearch Limited, of the University of New South Wales, undertook the research between January and April 1981. Their report was received by Council in June 1981. The findings of the report supported the view that more flexibility in designing the road extension was possible; to demonstrate that, six different options were described and evaluated in terms of their potential advantages and disadvantages.

Upon receipt of the consultant's report Council committed itself to a full re-appraisal of the 1969 plan with the expressed intentions that it

- i) believes in the basic rights of tenants to continuity of residential security;
- ii) believes that the community should share in the financial gains of commercial development and, in order to achieve this end, Council should participate in joint schemes with the private sector where appropriate; and
- iii) that it has a responsibility for traffic management in the Bondi Junction area.

With these principles established Council, on the 2nd June 1981, agreed that

- i) in the life of this Council nothing will be done to jeopardise the security of the tenants in the Waverley Street - Pine Avenue area;
- ii) it endorses in principle the aims of Option B3 (see below) contained in the Report of the Unisearch consultants;
- iii) a working party chaired by the Mayor be set up to report to Council by the end of February 1982, on ways to implement the aims of a staged B3 Option having regard to the principles established (quoted above);
- iv) a representative of both Grace Brothers and Mirvac (as the principal adjacent commercial owners), the Pine Avenue-Waverley Street Residents' Committee, the NSW Housing Commission and the Department of Environment and Planning be invited to act on the working party in conjunction with the Town Planner and the Housing Officer of Waverley; and

- v) Council would continue to carry out maintenance and repairs on the properties in accordance with its obligations as a landlord and such work would be undertaken in conjunction with the tenants of those properties.

Option B3 retains the proposed road extension but at the same time increases off-street parking space and maximises the development potential of the area by including both housing and commercial development. The residential component envisaged is a mixture of high and low rise buildings with a 3:1 floor space ratio. It is anticipated that 50 units (or their cash equivalent) will be obtained in perpetuity for housing low income people.

Recommendations i) and iv) above clearly commit Council in ways consistent with the CHO project. The first establishes a precedent for Council in guaranteeing the security of tenants, albeit for a specified period; the fourth, flowing from community development and public participation goals, seeks to involve all interested parties including residents in the design and implementation of the redevelopment. It is of note here that the resident struggle to prevent the road extension had gained considerable momentum as the re-appraisal became public. In the ensuing process the polarised positions of residents seeking to prevent the demolition of their housing on the one hand; and proponents of the road extension, including Council, on the other, have come together in a resolution that will displace the residents but with full recognition of and responsibility for this acknowledged. The housing officer has played a key role in mediating this conflict in favour of a compromise sensitive to all interests.

The working party has commissioned reports from the housing officer and town planning department to assist its task, and has reached the stage of having several further recommendations endorsed by Council. These include :

- i) an undertaking by Council to re-house (on the same site or another site within the Bondi/Waverley area) all residents displaced by the development;
- ii) a resolution to investigate the type of assistance required by individual residents for future re-housing, having regard to criteria used by the Housing Commission for determining needs levels. Where such criteria are not applicable consideration will be given to other assistance (not necessarily directly financial), with each case to be considered on its merits;

- iii) an agreement that if after having provided for commitments to existing residents, surplus housing stock exists, then it be made available to persons who are resident in the municipality and who are deemed suitably qualified by virtue of the application of Housing Commission criteria;
- iv) an intention to seek a rental subsidy for the low cost accommodation provided in the development, in recognition that Council will have, through the above-mentioned actions, assisted in reducing the number of persons dependent on the supply of government housing;
- v) the intention to maximise the financial benefit to the community by obtaining the proposed low-cost housing on alternative site(s) in the area rather than on the PA-WS site where the residential development will be costly to build and maintain. In this way an estimated 50% extra dwelling units may be gained for the same monetary contribution.

Although we have chosen, appropriately here, to emphasise the likely housing outcomes of the proposal, it should also be noted that the road and car park plans have been maintained at a level consistent with the original intentions of Council and with current needs as assessed by the Consultants.

Effects : As with the LEP case study it is premature to fully document the outcomes of the PA-WS programme. If progress continues as planned, the intentions just listed foreshadow the most likely outcomes. Some definite outcomes have already occurred and these can be summarised as :

- 1) establishment of a precedent for local government to take responsibility for re-housing people displaced by redevelopment judged necessary in the interests of the whole municipality;
- 2) establishment of criteria for housing allocation on a locally determined needs basis;
- 3) changes in planning practice — the re-appraisal has resulted in the modification of a planning decision seen as final and the implementation of a flexible planning process oriented to multiple objectives;
- 4) greater involvement of residents in the planning process (although we would hesitate to assess this "involvement" favourably on a community development yardstick, as the freedom of the existing residents to determine their own housing circumstances has never been likely, given Council's unchanging commitment to the road extension);
- 5) establishment of a model for both the equitable and efficient use of community resources for housing provision purposes;⁹

- 6) more sensitive attention to the management and maintenance of existing council housing stock. This has followed from council's recognition that the PA-WS stock, currently owned, is a short-term resource for meeting housing need as well as a long-term resource for the municipality's wider needs; and
- 7) some persistent uncertainty about or resistance to the whole development of the PA-WS issue, notably from some officers and aldermen of council whose intransigence in the face of changes in "their ways of doing things" has already been noted in Chapter 2. In our view, these people are unlikely ever to change their assessment — probably regardless of the efforts of the housing officer. Nevertheless this opposition has not substantially interfered with their professional contribution to the needs of the working party.

Assessment : We have identified our assessment of some of the particular outcomes of the PA-WS issue in the preceding section simultaneously taking account of the project's own terms, the wider reality of how issues like PA-WS normally develop, and the views of all those connected in some way with PA-WS. In summary our broad view is that the process (regardless of further outcomes) of PA-WS distills the project. It demonstrates that explicit attention to housing objectives at the local level — through flexible, innovative and comprehensive strategies of planning, regulation and analysis, community involvement, policy development and service provision — is possible and can achieve significant change in the understanding of housing issues and, subsequently, in the efficiency and equity of housing provision.

4.2 Cost Assessment

In Chapter 2, Section 4 we aired the uncertainty of some State Government officials over the "bottom line" costs of the Waverley CH0 project. While it was not within our brief to examine the costs and benefits of the project via a formal econometric analysis, we are mindful that such an assessment is often expected in an evaluation report. We address the issues surrounding the relevance of a costs and benefits kind of analysis of the project in this section.

Many of the benefits of this project defy monetary valuation in their own right : they are wide ranging tangible and intangible social benefits valued by each of us against our own set of priorities. For our purpose, we have used historical precedent, economic logic, the subjective views of others and our own social priorities as yardsticks by which to judge the

costs and benefits of the project. Clearly from these bases we have argued that the outputs are positive; we have documented our reasoning throughout the course of the report.

Actual dollar costings of the project have been reported wherever data of this kind has been available. However, many of the project outcomes cannot be dollar costed — consider for example the importance of profoundly re-orienting the planning practice of a town planning department toward acknowledgement of the relevance of their decision-making to housing provision. In another way, even where project inputs can be quantitatively valued, they also have a qualitative value. For instance, one input to the project can be described as the application of extensive time by a skilled and dedicated officer. In quantitative terms this same input is represented as an actual expenditure of \$16,594 pa for the first year and \$18,512 pa for the second year of the project. This tally is regardless of the qualities of the officer yet these qualities have contributed to the success of the project.

As well as these difficulties, two other issues complicate precise cost-benefit reasoning. Firstly, future costs and future benefits are uncertain; we would be deluding ourselves if we thought we could satisfactorily account these in precise terms, yet we would judge them as relevant to our assessment. Secondly, a full and fair assessment of programme costs has to consider the opportunity costs forgone by drawing resources away from potential alternatives. Ultimately this question reduces again to one of priorities. The responsibility for judging the worth of a project cannot be escaped by resorting to dollars as a single basis for decision-making. Having said that cost-benefit analysis is not an end result, that is, it does not itself provide a decision, we acknowledge that it can be developed as an aid to our judgement.

In the case of the Waverley project the funding bodies involved have a responsibility to be using their resources to equitable and efficient ends — the project can be examined narrowly or broadly in relation to these. The broad terms have comprised the substantial part of this assessment; more narrow terms are ascribed below.

The cost to the State Government of the project has been \$35,106 for one salary over two years, plus a \$3000 contribution to the cost of the evaluation. In comparison to direct housing provision, this represents the cash equivalent of about 50% of the cost of purchasing one average house in the Sydney

region in 1982. In numerical housing terms, it has provided the opportunity for the creation of at least 85 new housing units¹⁰ of public housing stock and the re-allocation of 37 vacant or arbitrarily allocated Council-owned dwelling units. In terms of people housed, outside of the medium or long term lettings of the stock just mentioned, 215 households have been found emergency or short term accommodation in Council property (excluding the Single Women's Refuge) and many more have been assisted to gain entry to the private and public housing markets.¹¹ Also on the credit side, Council's stock of appreciating property assets has been maintained and most properties are returning reasonable rents, at least beyond the costs of their maintenance.

The cost to Waverley Municipal Council is more difficult to assess. Some costs are only partly attributable to the influence of the project; others cannot be separated from general allocations. The expenditures which are straightforward include the following:

(1) \$6000 spent on the research for the Pine Avenue-Waverley Street site. This resulted in no immediate monetary return but became part of the process whereby the potential for obtaining 50+ new units of housing dedicated to public housing in perpetuity at no cost to Council (other than the cost already incurred when the properties were purchased for demolition for the single objective of road widening) was achieved.

(2) \$1900 pa in the first year and \$2250 pa in the second year, paid to the housing officer as a travelling allowance.

(3) \$2000 donated to the Salvation Army for refurbishing a property for use as a family refuge.

(4) \$185,000 expended from Council's open space fund to an appreciating property asset via the purchase of Brighton Boulevard Boarding House, Bondi.

(5) An indeterminant amount (between \$5000 and \$20000)¹² to be spent from the 1982 budget for upgrading the property referred to in (4), in order for it to meet health, building and fire standards for operation as a community boarding house. The boarding house currently returns \$200 per week in rent which can be offset against the actual refurbishing costs. Alternatively, these costs can be absorbed within the property value gain thereby earned.

(6) In 1981, \$21000 spent on the establishment, operating and staffing of four Group Homes. This was offset by \$12000 rental income in the same year. In 1982, \$22500 for the continued operation of these four homes and the establishment of two new ones has been allocated. Expected revenue during 1982 totals \$19000. There are two other ways the Group Homes programme could be assessed. A comparison with the cost of nursing homes, or to the Housing Commission aged people's units would provide one yardstick of efficiency. As well, a more intangible benefit could be accounted - viz. an assessment of the contribution they make to the more efficient use of the total housing stock. The evaluation of particular programmes is not our chief concern but we would recommend that they be further evaluated.

In terms that are more difficult to establish precisely the following costs are noted:

(7) The deployment of the time of officers other than the housing officer toward housing endeavours. A fair assessment in this case would have to balance the future returns of more preventative measures being instigated (especially through the planning process) against the traditional cost of ameliorative measures implemented through the Community Welfare Department. As well, if there is a shift of staff resources toward housing this may be offset by more efficient management of other Council responsibilities.

(8) Another indeterminant amount (see note 12), not more than \$10000, expended to upgrade the properties of Pine Avenue and Waverley Street for their interim use as rental housing. Whether this cost accrues to the project is debatable: the properties were being used for some housing purposes before the CHO project but Council was defaulting on its responsibilities as a landlord by undermaintaining the stock. The expenditure committed in response to residents' complaints about the condition of the properties was an inevitable and rightful one for Council while the stock remained in use or remained standing.

All of the expenditures by WMC noted above are tied in their application to the objectives of the housing policy of Council : their benefits are the subject matter of the whole report. To summarise here, reduced to hard terms, we would argue that the project has been a clear demonstration that, essentially for the outlay of one salary, significant housing effects "on the ground" can be achieved in a local area. However, the striking

outputs of the Waverley case may not be replicated exactly elsewhere because this Council had a substantial store of housing stock and of valuable development sites. In other words, the nett costs of the project could be higher in other areas, if the same emphasis is given to direct provision. Notwithstanding the direct provision of housing, no dollar costs, other than salary and incidentals, are inherent in the project goals and strategies.

We have argued in this section the cost effectiveness of the project over the last twenty months. In looking to the future and beyond Waverley, we would add that the housing problem is expanding in such a way that significant inroads into redressing it will not necessarily continue for the same relatively low level of funding and that higher priority must be given to a commitment by all levels of government to housing.

4.3 List of Findings

All the preceding content has established a full record of the goals, strategies and programmes of the CHO project in Waverley. The effects that flow directly from its strategies and the way they are implemented, as we understand them, are summarised here.

In terms of the more direct housing effects the project can:

1. *Demonstrate that co-operative ventures with the private sector can generate significant permanent gains in public housing stock or surplus capital for housing programmes.*

The Newland Street development (Chapter 1.3) and the proposals for Pine Avenue-Waverley Street (Chapter 4.1) illustrate this result.

2. *Introduce and/or support through subsidy, innovative housing programmes for special groups.*

In Waverley, the Group Homes projects, the community based boarding house and the Share-a-Home project (Chapter 1.3) have been instigated. Each of these programmes is, or will become self-supporting.

3. *Demonstrate that opportunities exist or can be created for relatively inexpensive provision of short or medium term accommodation for allocation to people on waiting lists for housing assistance. In this way the overall demand for public housing is reduced.*
-

Example programmes in Waverley include Share-a-Home, Tudor Lodge Boarding House, Brighton Boulevard Boarding House and the current use of the properties along Pine Avenue and Waverley Street. In these programmes, priority in allocation to local residents has been endorsed.

4. *Provide a new mechanism for housing special needs' groups currently excluded from mainstream public housing programmes.*

In Waverley, single people currently denied access to public housing have been housed in Council stock; people with limited mobility, denied locational choice in state public housing, have been offered local housing; and those with special needs (the frail aged, mildly intellectually handicapped people, for instance) have been included in special housing programmes.

In ways that will translate more indirectly to housing stock, the project can:

5. *Demonstrate that planning powers can be used to implement explicit housing objectives.*

In Waverley, the use of planning mechanisms has been especially geared to facilitating the retention of existing housing where its loss would result in decreased local housing choice for low income groups. (see Chapter 4.1)

6. *Provide a basis for first hand monitoring of the local housing market, thereby producing the potential for more sensitive and more immediate response to changing needs.*

As an example, recognition of the diminution of the boarding house accommodation and of the "issue" of Pine Avenue-Waverley Street can be attributed to this function.

7. *Bring about the implementation of formal Council housing policy which then acts as an enabling framework for housing programmes.*

Waverley's policy is explained in Chapter 1.3 and a summary of its objectives is provided in Appendix 1.

8. *Support and/or extend the effectiveness of community based housing service agencies.*

Notably in Waverley, the Bondi Beach Cottage and the Eastern Suburbs Community Youth Association have been strengthened through Council's contributions.

9. *Provide skilled assistance to housing consumers, especially by the housing officer playing a mediating role between them and housing bureaucracies.*

This service has occupied a fluctuating proportion (around 1/7th) of the housing officer's time, with an average of 38 major enquiries a month being handled (see Table 1, p14).

10. *Demonstrate that more flexible building regulations, density controls and open-space standards can expand housing opportunities.*

The relaxation of car space requirements for boarding houses, where an estimated one in five lodgers have cars, is an example of Waverley's initiative here.

11. *Increase the probability of attracting government grants for special housing programmes.*

In Waverley, we would predict that the demonstration so far of initiative and competence in housing programmes will attract grants/loans in the future. To date a number of Council-supported community schemes have attracted funding, for example Share-a-Home.

12. *Contribute to the upgrading of housing quality using subsidies or direct ownership.*

Waverley Council's interest in the boarding house stock has extended to the purchase and upgrading of one boarding house. Private sector boarding house proprietors will be assisted in the future in their efforts to meet contemporary building standards and fire regulations.

13. *Play a lobby role for local government and local communities in State and Federal level housing policy formulation.*

During the course of the pilot project a number of opportunities have existed for Council, through its housing officer, to make representations on matters of housing policy. (see Chapter 1.3)

14. *Respond to State government policy guidelines by fine tuning them to match local conditions.*

Group Homes in Waverley represent a local application of the urban consolidation policy - the more efficient use of stock which simultaneously frees up other stock for the market. As well, the boarding house LEP is an innovative application of the statutory powers granted to local government under the EPA Act.

15. *Establish a principle that the public sector take responsibility for residents displaced as a result of its actions. In this way the pressure on the Housing Commission created by other government instrumentalities can be alleviated.*

In Waverley, Council has agreed to re-house, at affordable prices, residents displaced through the redevelopment of Pine Avenue and Waverley Street.

16. *Use litigation procedure toward the objective of preserving special purpose housing for low income residents.*

In 1981, Waverley Council attempted to get legal advice on the interpretation of the "adverse economic and social impact of a development". (see Chapter 4.1)

17. *Implement new management guidelines for local public sector housing stock.*

Chapter 1.3 describes the existing and foreshadowed initiatives in Waverley.

18. *Demonstrate that the flexible integration of a number of strategies increases the effectiveness of housing initiatives.*

The whole record of the Waverley experiment is a demonstration of this.

In terms of changing awareness or understanding of housing issues the project can have effects like:

19. *Providing a forum for public debate of housing issues.*
20. *Increasing the understanding of officers and councillors of housing problems and housing strategies. During the process of changing awareness, if polarised views exist within the council on local government's responsibility in the housing arena, exposure and exacerbation of this may occur.*
21. *Sensitising the planning staff to the housing effects that flow from planning decisions.*
22. *Catalysing other local government areas to take initiatives in housing.*

Chapter 2 of this report demonstrates how these kinds of changes have been experienced in Waverley.

In terms of the organisational structure and functioning of Council this kind of project operates by:

23. *Triggering greater cross-departmental exchange on housing issues, with flow-ons to better communication on other matters of common interest.*
24. *Forging stronger links between Council and the community.*
25. *Attempting greater integration of the bureaucratic and political arms of Council.*

Attempting to breakdown hierarchically structured bureaucratic practices.

All of these kind of changes have not worked without conflict in Waverley, where the attempts to change traditional management practices and traditional views of accountability and authority have caused some friction between officers and councillors supporting and opposing the changes.

In terms of the structure of the project we would suggest that this experiment has:

27. *Demonstrated that joint funding by government departments with complementary interests is beneficial in extending ideas about the scope of the project's strategies.*
28. *Shown that the use of a full-time, experienced and trained housing officer is a very effective means for catalysing a formal role for local government in housing.*

Notes (Chapter 4)

1. Details of each programme could be made available by Waverley Municipal Council.
2. The following table gives quantitative detail of the conversion phenomenon.

Table 8

CONVERSIONS OF EXISTING^(a) FLAT
DEVELOPMENTS AND DWELLINGS TO STRATA TITLE
SYDNEY STATISTICAL DIVISION 1962-80

<u>YEAR</u> <u>ended 30th June</u>	<u>NO.</u> <u>DEVELOPMENTS</u>	<u>% ALL STRATA</u> <u>RESIDENTIAL</u> <u>DEVELOPMENTS</u>	<u>NO.</u> <u>DWELLINGS</u>	<u>% ALL STRATA</u> <u>RESIDENTIAL</u> <u>DWELLINGS</u>
1962-1966	0	0	0	0
1967	2	0.4	18	0.3
1968	6	1.2	33	0.6
1969	2	0.3	13	0.2
1970	8	1.3	60	0.7
1971	2	0.3	6	0.1
1972	2	0.3	12	0.1
1973	0	0	0	0
1974	39	4.4	336	2.8
1975	63	6.2	622	4.6
1976	179	22.5	1223	12.4
1977	349	37.5	2372	21.4
1978	259	36.5	1687	23.8
1979	303	45.8	2189	31.7
1980	220	27.4	1623	18.7

(a) built prior to 1961

Source : Registrar General's Department, Register of Strata Titles.
Personal survey by V.R. Milligan, SWRC University of New
South Wales and Sample Survey Centre, University of Sydney.

3. Table 7 , in Note 9 of Chapter 3 demonstrates the take-off in flat construction after 1961.
4. "Section 94" refers to section 94 of the EPA Act which states among other detail and qualification that where a council, "being the consent authority, is satisfied that a development, the subject of a development application, will or is likely to require the provision of or increase the demand for public amenities and public services within the area, the council may grant consent to that application subject to a condition requiring —

- (a) the dedication of land free of cost; or
- (b) the payment of a monetary contribution, or both"(p.66).

5. The gist of support and objections is summarised, from Council papers as :

1. Excessive interference with rights of property owners, beyond accepted public health, safety and amenity regulations.
 2. Will adversely affect sale price and value of boarding house properties if purchasers are aware that conversion to dwelling-house or flats may not be approved, particularly since return from, and demand for boarding house is diminishing, with high maintenance costs.
 3. Responsibility for providing low-rent accommodation for unemployed and aged, etc., should be Government's and burden should not be placed on private boarding house owners.
 4. Suggestion that the smaller less economically viable boarding houses be permitted to close, to give greater capacity for larger boarding houses to survive, having regard for the fact that 15 + rental rooms makes it operationally viable (and desirable) for part-time or full-time resident manager.
 5. Many boarding-houses had been converted because operators believed Council did not encourage retention of such accommodation.
 6. Council should encourage additions and upgrading of boarding houses where environmentally acceptable to make more efficient use of land for needed accommodation.
6. Quoted from the judgement in the case Bauer Holdings Pty. Limited and J.L.J.H. Pty. Limited -v- Council of the City of Sydney.
7. A fine tuning exercise like this must be quite delicately balanced and it is premature, we believe, to speculate on the outcome, other than to support the good faith of the initiative with some optimism.
 8. This attitude is derived from the consultants' report to the State Planning Authority of NSW on Bondi Junction in 1969 and reported in Black et al (1981, p.7).
 9. There is insufficient room here to describe the detailed alternatives being evaluated as schemes for the commercial and residential re-development of the site, in conjunction with the road extension. Council papers provide more information but since a proposal has not been finalised it is premature to argue all its costs and benefits.
 10. The actual number of dwelling units achieved will depend on which options Council seeks to pursue in relation to Newland Street and PA-WS. However in the former case, 35 units are guaranteed; in the latter, an economic feasibility study has shown that 50 units of public housing can be achieved on site. Thus 85 units in total is a minimum outcome.
 11. In two cases housing was sought (and found) through the Special Allocations Committee of the Housing Commission. This means that in only two cases pressure was put on existing public emergency housing. (The Special Allocations Committee takes urgent cases of housing need "out of turn" from the waiting list and considers them in relation to established criteria for immediate placement in housing).

12. The amount is indeterminant because the money was allocated within a general fund for maintenance; specific programme costs are not ascribed.

CHAPTER 5 : GENERALISABILITY

As the CHO project is a pilot one, assessment of its generalisability is an essential part of the evaluation process and is specified in the guidelines drawn up by the Consultative Group. In this chapter we focus on the applicability of the project to other local government areas by examining : the preconditions and other criteria which might have a bearing on the effectiveness of its replication; other mechanisms which may support and extend its effects; and the appropriateness of the CHO model vis-a-vis other methods of developing and implementing a comparable housing role at the local government level. To help formulate our views on generalisability we questioned each of our interview respondents about it; studied the literature on local government's role in housing; and familiarised ourselves with the housing endeavours of several other councils.

As will be obvious from the preceding chapters, the factors which bear on the success of the CHO project as a model for extending local government involvement in housing are complex and multi-dimensional. The approach by which we thread a way through this complexity is to firstly identify some of the major preconditions present prior to the definition of the CHO project as an appropriate strategy for Waverley Council, and to anticipate what preconditions would be essential in other local government areas; secondly to consider what other criteria or co-requisites operated in Waverley and to point to those most significant in terms of the project's replication in other areas; and thirdly to report on co-incident and alternative means of meeting comparable housing objectives. Our assessment of the wider applicability of the project is derived from this context and concludes the chapter.

5.1 Preconditions

The perceptions of our respondents to the question "why Waverley?" and our understanding of the processes leading up to the establishment of the CHO project (charted in Chapter 1) allow identification of the most significant preconditions as falling into three groupings : the broad context of a housing "crisis" and its particular manifestations in Waverley, combined with developments in government policy and funding prospects; the composition and interests of Waverley Council itself; and the presence in Waverley of community groups and activists concerned with housing issues.

The housing situation : The historical and political context of the current housing situation has been discussed in Chapter 3, and some of the more immediate developments in housing policy and debate, particularly with respect to a role for local government, have been mentioned in Chapter 1. It suffices here to recapitulate that these processes created an environment where recognition of a housing problem and its manifestation at the local level, and a readiness to attempt and support innovative solutions (or, more accurately, part-solutions) combined to enable the proposal put forward by Waverley Council to receive favourable consideration as a pilot programme funded by State government. Most of our Waverley respondents were clearly of the opinion that the financial support of the State government was crucial to the establishment of the project; without "seeding" in this way good intentions were likely to be only very slowly effected in practice.

From the point of view of the spokespeople from the Housing Commission and the Department of Youth and Community Services, the Waverley submission came at a time when they were looking for means to diversify their housing and community development activities, respectively. The Waverley proposal included identification of the major housing problems in the area and espoused an explicit strategy for attempting to counter them : this specificity elicited a confidence at State level (particularly in the Housing Commission) to "give it a go". Both the recognition and articulation of housing problems and of local level strategies and the willingness of the State authorities to support the attempt were necessary but not sufficient conditions for the establishment of the project in Waverley — we will consider later whether they are necessary or sufficient for extensions of the project to other areas.

Waverley Council : All of our respondents when asked to consider the pre-conditions in Waverley for establishment of the CHO project mentioned Council's attitude towards housing and/or the welfare of its residents as a major factor. While some of these comments, from those opposed to the project, were derogatory the majority were framed in positive terms. Some cited particular issues such as Council's concern with the situation of aged residents or, more generally, with residents being displaced by rising rents and the loss of cheap accommodation. Those more closely involved with the establishment of the project placed it in the context of Council's priorities towards the welfare of residents, seeing housing as a particular facet of this concern and one which Council wished to develop further by the injection of expertise and a stimulus to greater awareness of its present and potential role in housing. The willingness of Waverley Council, through its key members and officers, to accept housing as

a problem for which it had some responsibility and for which an interventionist role at the local level would be appropriate and desirable, was an important and necessary precondition.

Council's concern with the welfare of residents was demonstrated by the activities of its sizeable Community Welfare Department : the existence of such a Department of Council, or at least the existence of an active and involved welfare staff, was also cited by some respondents as a precondition. The argument given was that unless a Council already had other welfare workers first priority should not go to appointing a housing officer but rather to a generalist community worker who would, ideally, also be able to undertake housing-related functions. Our consideration of this argument is integrated with our consideration later of the most appropriate location, structurally, for an officer whose concerns cross the traditional separation between welfare and policy and planning.

Waverley community : Not surprisingly, all our community spokespeople cited their presence and activities in Waverley as part of the preconditions for the project. A number of the Council and State government interviewees, particularly from the Department of Youth and Community Services, also considered that the individual and collective activities of the groups and agencies were very significant in the definition of the project and its placement in Waverley.

Two points of view can be identified in assessing the importance of an active local community as a precondition for establishment of the CHO project. One, held by the majority of our respondents, was that an active and aware community provided valuable input and support to a Council attempting an innovative and progressive project, particularly when part of its brief was to involve Council in a community development role vis-a-vis housing. The other, minority but informed, view was that such a community had less need of a Council-located housing officer; that through their own activities and lobbying of Council and other levels of government residents could gain greater control over the conditions affecting their daily lives without the risk of subordination or token participation initiated by a Council, however genuine in its concern. Further to this point of view, it can be argued that in a climate of very limited resources, seeding of local housing initiatives has to spread widely; those LGAs with significant community involvement may not have as great a total need as those without such a base.

Clearly there is value in both points of view but at this point we must note that, for Waverley, the presence of community groups and activists concerned with housing was an important factor in the establishment of the project.

It is more difficult to define the importance of community groups in assessing generalisability to other areas and this, perhaps more than the other pre-conditions identified above, cannot be judged in isolation from other conditions present in any particular area.

5.2 Co-requisites

The preconditions identified in the previous section are, of course, not irrelevant to the subsequent progress of the project. This section concentrates however, on additional criteria which can be identified as contributive factors to the success to date of the Waverley experiment and which we assess to be of most significance for consideration of its effective replication. These are : the style and skills of the housing officer; Council's responsiveness towards developing and implementing an explicit housing policy; and the physical opportunities for Council activity in housing.

It is not proposed to examine these factors in detail here, as they have received some attention in earlier chapters. Their significance in assessing generalisability rests in attempting to separate their operation in Waverley from their operation in a project like that defined and put into effect in Waverley; i.e. which "happened" to be in Waverley and which "happened" to have Brian Elton in the position of housing officer. We endeavoured in our interviews to invite assistance in this task : nobody, including ourselves, found it easy to do. For this reason, and for the obvious reason that we cannot really know how the project would have worked in another place in the absence of its having done so, we ask the reader to share our reservations about the value of this section.

Comments about the style and skills of the housing officer were unanimously favourable in our interviews. A number added riders to their opinions on the process and outcomes of the project to the effect "I don't think this could have been achieved without Brian Elton", that is, literally "without Brian Elton " not " without a housing officer". Asked to identify the particular style and skills which elicited this sort of confidence, most respondents cited knowledge and experience of planning, policy development, research, and local government's political and bureaucratic functions, combined with negotiating and communicating skills and a personal style of approachability and concern. Clearly there is no reason why these skills are only to be found in Brian

Elton, and when assisted by explicit job descriptions and training, other prospective housing officers could be as effective. We can only conclude this section with a quote from one of our respondents that "before the Waverley project we didn't even know there was one Brian Elton".

The decisiveness of Waverley Council's concern with the housing needs of its residents has been mentioned in the section on preconditions. Here we identify additional factors, which include their willingness to : adopt an explicit housing policy and support implementation of strategies proposed; examine the effect of traditional planning and regulatory functions on housing; integrate housing policy with town planning and welfare policies and practices and respond to community recommendation and action. These may be subsumed under the overall criteria "being oriented to the welfare of residents and to that end accepting responsibility for developing flexible ways of improving their housing security and choice."

Waverley Municipality includes the major regional commercial centre of Bondi Junction. This has given them a particular advantage in negotiations over the development of Council-owned sites in its vicinity, an advantage which might not extend to many other urban and rural municipalities. The Newland Street Car Park site, for example, is a prime site for development of the commercial and residential mix planned there : that Council was able to negotiate a return of approximately \$8 M. (including \$4 M. worth of housing stock — see pages 12-13) rests on the desirability of the site in the local real estate market. Previous Councils had an interest in buying up property for future planning goals; particularly for roadworks and open-space, and a substantial store of properties involving about sixty residences had accumulated up to the commencement of the CHO project. These physical opportunities have clearly had a bearing on the extent to which the project has been able to use Council-owned stock or generate new stock for housing purposes and cannot be ignored in other Council's consideration of their prospects for replicating Waverley's housing initiatives. However, we must remind readers that the direct provision of housing is only part of the objectives of the CHO project.

5.3 Other approaches

We are aware that other methods of developing and implementing housing policies and programmes in local government have been tried or could be introduced. It is difficult to judge the latter in the abstract and we have not undertaken that task for this report. We have however examined briefly some examples from other councils in Sydney where housing officers have been appointed recently or

where explicit housing policy is being developed. Some of the similarities and differences of these endeavours to the Waverley CHO project are discussed below, after which some further suggestions drawn from our interview material and from secondary sources are presented.

Other councils : Two other Sydney councils have created, from their own finances, a position for a housing officer. In Randwick, a community housing/ community development officer was appointed in September 1981. While it is premature to examine the full effects of that appointment our prediction from the Waverley experience would be that for it to succeed in the manner of its predecessor it would minimally require the full time attention of one very committed and capable person. This coupling of housing with another substantial responsibility would in our view mitigate against success, at least in the short term.

Sydney City Council (SCC) agreed to fund a housing officer at about the same time as Randwick; their stated purpose was to "mimic" the Waverley model. A permanent appointment of a former health inspector was made in the Department of Health and Community Services. It would in many ways be inappropriate to generalise from the structure and functions of SCC to other LGAs because its characteristics are unique in the region. Within this qualification, however, there are differences in the SCC approach to the housing officer project which, we believe, reduce its likely effectiveness in this or other areas if replicated. These differences and their likely effects include :

(i) The orientation of the role is to a welfare and community support one only. No formal recognition of the role of planning functions is included in the job description and although this council has an extensive planning department, including housing specialists, no structures have been created through the project to integrate planning and housing policy.

(ii) The establishment of the position has been as a permanent one within the existing bureaucracy, with no cross-departmental or external accountability. Such a traditional bureaucratic role is unlikely to produce the cross-departmental fertilisation and support so constructive in Waverley.

(iii) The officer appointed has neither prior planning nor housing expertise or experience, yet these skills have been identified from the Waverley experience as crucial to the implementation of the project, at least as conceived there.

Because of these differences and their likely effects we believe the SCC's housing officer project severely curtails the possibilities of "success" at

all comparable to the Waverley case. Another way of looking at this case would be to argue that while the initiative is designated 'housing officer' the effect will be more like having a housing social worker, oriented to ameliorative not preventative solutions.

Leichhardt Council has for some time shown interest in an explicit housing role. To help establish this it has set up a sub-committee of residents and aldermen to advise council on housing matters. It has sponsored a one-day housing seminar for interested local groups, officers and aldermen of council¹, and on one tenancy issue, involving markedly increased rentals imposed on low income residents, has given substantial legal and political back-up to the tenants. However, in a similar time period to the Waverley experiment, it has achieved little more toward its housing objectives than we have documented here. More importantly the aldermen have repeatedly expressed their frustration with the lack of expertise available to 'feed' their housing interest. Leichhardt to us demonstrates the difficulties of local councils developing a housing role unassisted; at the same time it demonstrates the preconditions favourable to a CHO project.

In the last case, that of North Sydney, approximately \$6,000 has been allocated by Council for employment of a consultant to research the housing needs of the municipality and to make recommendations to Council about its future housing role. Such a function is certainly a necessary and appropriate one for the careful specification of a housing policy geared to local conditions. As well, an initiative like this demonstrates a commitment by that council to a housing thrust.² However, it seems ironic that for approximately one third the annual cost of the housing officer, only one of his potential manifold functions can be implemented³ and that it must be, by its definition, isolated and inflexible.

All these local government experiments are themselves offshoots of the Waverley project and illustrate the widespread local government interest it has attracted. They demonstrate that a disposition to a housing role exists; they simultaneously suggest that clearer understanding, more financial support, and more housing expertise will together be required to match the Waverley success.

Other suggestions : The most commonly suggested alternative to the CHO model was the introduction of in-service training programmes for local government officers. While this was cited in response to a question on alternative models, most of our respondents who suggested it added that it was not necessarily an alternative to a housing officer but an additional or coincident

approach. We don't propose here to specify what the auspices and coverage of a training programme should be. However for the purposes of providing a basis for the possible development of this model, identification of what seem to be essential components is appropriate. The first is that it should have a State-wide auspice, such as through the Local Government Association or through State government, preferably within the housing portfolio. The second is that it should cover both general and specific information : including information on the housing market and housing policy, the role of local government, community development principles, and the dual planning/welfare approach. The third is that it should include training in skills appropriate to effective development of a change-oriented process, including negotiating inter- and intra-department relations, media handling, and community resourcing.

Other suggestions which may be of interest to readers but which we do not propose to examine here include orienting community profile research to housing conditions and housing needs; and the development in local government of forward planning departments which would include a housing planning component. These suggestions have potential to contribute to a greater awareness in local government of housing and housing-related issues but do not on their own provide viable alternatives to all the functions of the CHO model.

5.4 Generalisability

Principles : Chapter 3 establishes a base argument that housing in Australia is characterised by the long-standing problem of providing adequate affordable housing for all groups. Recent trends suggest that the crisis in housing provision is worsening; certainly some traditionally accepted responsibilities for the problem, notably at Federal government level, are being abandoned. Simultaneously local government in N.S.W. has formally endorsed the principle of an expanded role in housing and housing-related functions.⁴

Logically we see no reason why all LGAs should not seek to raise their awareness of housing issues and to develop overt housing objectives and functions. The vast majority, however, are under-developed in means that might meet such ends. Pak-Poy and Associates' 1978 study of local government and housing identified four major obstacles to a housing role :

- (i) parochialism of interest — more geared to localised and immediate needs of existing residents and/or ratepayers and not to regional or national interests;
- (ii) a lack of qualified personnel experienced in housing policy and housing administration;

- (iii) maximum work-load of existing staff suggests no room for expansion of functions unless more efficient management objectives can be introduced; and
- (iv) a lack of stability in decision-making militating against extensive initiatives which could be threatened by abandonment.

In addition we would add

- (v) that rate-pegging policies and reductions in the whole public sector money base have meant that funding resources are now more over-stretched than ever.

Based on our assessment of the Waverley experience we believe that the CHO project can militate against each of these obstacles in the following ways :

Against (i) by gearing housing objectives into short-term (ameliorative) and long-term (more preventative) programmes, based on a broad understanding of the whole housing market;

Against (ii) by providing housing expertise within the Council bureaucracy and by incorporating housing knowledge into policy and administration;

Against (iii) by expanding the staff of Council and establishing a basis for community management of community initiated and supported services;

Against (iv) by changing political, bureaucratic, and community understanding of housing strategies, and perpetuating housing initiatives through legal and community-based mechanisms (dedication of housing stock in perpetuity, for instance); and

Against (v) by generating its own resources for housing priorities (for example by self-supporting housing schemes, housing schemes generating profit, negotiations with the private sector, levies etc., and by effecting control processes preventing absolute loss of housing stock.

For these reasons and from the assessment of the project's operation in Waverley to date we support in principle the applicability of the model to local government in general. However, in practical terms we acknowledge a number of further obstacles, suggested by our examination of the preconditions and co-requisites operating in Waverley, by our assessment of the other models tried or suggested and by reference to the finding of other studies on local government and housing. These limit the generalisability of the project for

the following main reasons :

- 1) the lack of preparedness of many areas to introduce a CHO project;
- 2) the limited number of skilled officers presently available;
- 3) the limited funds for initiating the projects; and
- 4) that housing may not be a first priority in many areas.

Areas : In the context of these limitations, a major consideration for a useful assessment of generalisability is to define the sorts of areas where the project could best be replicated. Based on our interview material and the assessments already made — and bearing in mind that separating out particular criteria as more crucial than others distorts the interaction of all the factors bearing on the operation of the project — we can specify the most obvious and commonly cited criteria was that of a sympathetic Council. That is one which is already developing a cognizance of local government's implicit effect on housing and the validity of pursuing a more explicit and expanded role. Indications of this might include the collection of preliminary data on housing conditions of the area, awareness and discussion of how council planning functions affect housing, and an understanding on the part of at least some councillors or officers of the value and need of an explicit local government role in housing. The experience in Waverley compared with other areas suggests that these criteria are essential preconditions if the appointment of a housing officer is to be more than, say, a specialist social worker or a property manager. While the presence of a competent housing officer on Council's staff will be a catalyst to expanding that Council's awareness of housing issues, it seems unlikely that this process can work effectively in an unsympathetic or antagonistic environment.

Another major consideration relates to the social, demographic and economic characteristics of areas. Our respondents had a range of opinion on this, from "all areas" to "only high need areas", although most argued for some selectivity. The most commonly cited were inner city areas, middle ring suburbs with potential for urban consolidation, areas with a high proportion of tenancies, newer outer suburban (particularly western suburbs) areas, and country areas (particularly those in a state of change such as the Hunter Valley). Two points of view emerged : that replication should wait for individual Councils to identify themselves and their areas as appropriate to employ a housing officer and that a general principle saying that housing officers are desirable per se was too rigid; or secondly that a conscious

extension of the project should be made in selected areas based on different criteria such as demographic characteristics, its mix of housing and industrial/commercial development, and Council structure and interests. Our assessment favours the latter opinion although in view of the limitations imposed on us by having only the experience of one Council and one area from which to generalise it is difficult to be very convincing about which areas. Further assessment is clearly necessary and we will return to this issue in our conclusions and recommendations.

Funding : So far we have subsumed the complex of factors important to replication of the project into a two-fold circumstance : a sympathetic council in a selected area. The question remains whether any other factors stand out as essential to the replication of the project. In our view one does : the continuation of State government support. There are reasons of both practice and principle which underlie our view.

In principle :

- 1) while the project is based in local government it seeks to make a contribution to housing provision consistent with the needs of the community in total; to increase housing security and choice for all groups,
- 2) the strategies of the approach are direct applications of State government policies on public housing, on urban consolidation, on community development, on emergency accommodation and on housing policy in broad terms. However, there is a notable difference that while such policies at State level are the responsibility and function of separate departments; in this model they are explicitly co-ordinated in the one initiative;
- 3) without responsibility to State government as well as local government being maintained, the effects of a housing programme will become parochial and most vulnerable to the vagaries of the local political climate; and
- 4) areally based projects must be overseen and co-ordinated at a higher level to ensure that unintended adverse effects do not flow out of one region to others.

In practice :

- 5) Previous experience suggests that local government is an extremely reluctant and less effective participant in new policy areas without outside seeding;

6) the project provides 'value for money' when compared with other "seeding" initiatives or with direct State government expenditures (see Chapter 4.2).

Structure : We do not have the space to report our extensive documentation of people's views of the structure of the Waverley project. Here we draw on those views to summarise the two issues that seem most important to consideration of its extension : location and accountability.

The crux of the issue of where to best locate the housing officer position is a debate about its merits within or without a planning department. In WMC, outside the planning department, the officer (a trained planner) has had a crucial effect on the planning process and on planning staff. In SCC such an effect is unlikely from outside the planning department. In principle, much the same argument applies here as it did with respect to the conditions appropriate in Council generally. If there is a negative or antagonistic disposition within a planning department to planning for housing objectives then that will not be a suitable location for a housing officer. Clearly each LGA should be assessed separately in relation to this question, but because a spin-off of the project is to break down traditional interdepartmental barriers to integrative social policy initiatives, we would expect in all cases that some difficulties of acceptance and implementation will be experienced. A new housing officer should be prepared in training to expect and work with such circumstances.

With respect to accountability, a mechanism was created in Waverley under the conditions of the funding agreement so that oversight of the two State Departments' investment could be maintained. In practice this Consultative Group played only a minor role in servicing the project but it did provide an important context by being partly "outside of Council" and by being more mindful of regional issues. Because local-state government integration is increasingly necessary to a full attack on housing problems, a committee like this may be a useful mechanism to that end. As well, a less experienced housing officer could use it in a resourcing and support role.

Wider applicability : Our recommendations about specific extensions of the project and its generalisability are contained in the next chapter. In concluding this one some comment about the wider applicability of the CHO model is appropriate. Because the broad objective of the project has been the establishment and testing of a local government role in housing, all the discussion on generalisability has been oriented toward that level of government

and the lessons that the project has provided in that context. However we also consider that aspects of the project as developed in Waverley, notably its use of a flexibly integrated set of strategies for implementing housing programmes, offer a useful model for government initiatives at State and Federal levels as well.

Notes (Chapter 5)

1. Brian Elton helped to resource the committee and the seminar.
2. North Sydney Council has further demonstrated its commitment by co-operating with the Housing Commission in the development of local sites for public housing.
3. Formal research probably occupies 20% of the housing officer's time in Waverley, although this has fluctuated over the period of the project.
4. The recommendations contained in Fuller (1980) were formally endorsed at the Local Government and Shires Associations annual conference in 1981.

CHAPTER 6 : RECOMMENDATIONS

With respect to the pilot Community Housing Officer project in Waverley we make the following comments and recommendations:

1. In the interest of fulfillment of its longer term objectives and in the interest of completion of the planned initiatives we recommend that the project in the same form be extended for a period of at least two years.
2. It is our view that although the Commonwealth is primarily responsible for ensuring the equitable provision of housing resources, state and local governments have inescapable roles within this. This project has demonstrated that a joint commitment of state and local government resources is a fair and effective method of meeting common housing objectives. It is therefore recommended that salary, administrative and travel costs be shared between the State government and Waverley Municipal Council in the following way: administrative and travel costs continue to be met by WMC, and salary costs be apportioned at least in the ratio 2:1; State government:WMC. The salary range should remain fixed to an appropriate local government officer's award.
3. Waverley Municipal Council consolidate and extend its housing role in Waverley by further developing means to decentralise appropriate elements of its housing function. To this end Council should consider a number of strategies and actions like;
 - a) Furthering community involvement in housing initiatives. This involvement could be facilitated by:
 - i) expanding direct support for local housing services and limiting the direct role of the housing officer in these services,
 - ii) providing more information to the community on housing matters, possibly in a regular newsletter,
 - iii) establishing a housing sub-committee of Council; comprising appropriate aldermen and officers of council, community groups involved in the provision of housing services, residents of Waverley municipality and other interested parties, under the terms of Section 530a of the Local Government Act, 1919.
 - iv) supporting innovations in the community based administration and management of housing stock.
 - b) On the basis of proven experience and competence in developing and managing housing programmes, seeking state and federal funding for new housing initiatives. In particular the feasibility of joint ventures with the private

and public sectors should be examined further. In this context the proposed redevelopment of the Pine Avenue - Waverley Street area deserves immediate attention.

c) Encouraging the extension of the training of Council staff in housing related issues.

d) Formalising an information base on the supply and demand characteristics of the local housing market.

4. Waverley Municipal Council use established mechanisms within its Community Welfare Department to appraise its housing role within Council's broader social objectives.

5. Separate evaluation of particular Waverley housing projects, such as the Group Homes for aged persons and the Community Boarding Houses, be undertaken by the appropriate State/Federal Government department with a view to extending the models established in Waverley to other local government areas and to other sectors of the housing administration.

6. To assist in monitoring the financial costs and benefits of the project and of particular housing initiatives, Waverley Municipal Council establish a separate accounting procedure to enable income and expenditure items resulting from its housing role to be readily identified.

With respect to the application of the Community Housing Officer project to other areas, we recommend that:

7. There be a gradual extension to areas where the respective Council's interest and awareness is demonstrated and where housing issues are sensitive and/or opportunities for development of projects for low-priced housing exist.

8. Future Community Housing Officer projects be administered from the Ministry of Housing, but that a structure be set up to advise the Minister on the establishment of new projects and on their co-ordination. This Advisory Committee should comprise representatives from the Housing Commission of NSW, the Department of Youth and Community Services, the Department of Environment and Planning, the Local Government and Shires Association of NSW, Waverley Municipal Council and NSW Shelter. If new growth areas are selected for projects, a representative from the Deputy Premier's Department should be included on the Advisory Committee.

9. The Minister for Housing appoint, for a two year period, a policy advisor on local government and housing, reporting directly to the Minister and located in the Ministry. The policy advisor would also service the Advisory Committee; assist in the selection, training and support of Community Housing Officers; monitor unintended effects of the projects in other areas; and investigate other methods of extending local government's role in housing.

10. State Treasury allocate appropriate funds to the Minister for Housing to establish a Community Housing Officer training programmes' budget to be used to assist the Advisory Committee and the policy advisor to effect the objectives of the Advisory Committee as contained in recommendations 8 and 9.

11. In the first year of the project's expansion, funds commensurate with those currently allocated to the Waverley project be granted, through the State Treasury, to establish five new Community Housing Officer projects in areas chosen after consultation with the advisory committee.

12. Evaluation of the development of local government's role take place two years after the implementation of the preceding recommendations.

APPENDIX 1

WAVERLEY COUNCIL HOUSING POLICY STATEMENT (Adopted August 1980).

Objectives —

1. To adopt and implement the principle, that local authorities, as the tier of government closest to the people they serve, are well placed to assess and respond to the housing needs within their areas.
2. To promote housing in the context of settlements which integrate facilities, amenities, employment opportunities and community supports and to promote co-operation and self help in the development, maintenance and management of housing resources.
3. To pursue measures which widen access to suitable homes for all households. Additional assistance will be given to households in need to have increased access to homes which meet their requirements.
4. To increase security of tenure for people in private rental accommodation and to ensure information and advice is available to people whose homes are likely to be affected by the activities of the private and the public sectors.
5. To facilitate the provision of emergency, short and medium term accommodation for people in crisis situations and those with special housing needs.
6. To improve living conditions for households in accommodation which requires up-grading and/or repair by using existing Health and Building powers, and any other means open to the Council.
7. To ensure that in the private sector an appropriate range of dwellings are available to meet the Municipality's changing housing needs.

APPENDIX 2 : LIST OF ORGANISATIONS WHICH HAVE HAD
DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE CHO PROJECT

1. LOCAL COUNCILS

Gosford	Campbelltown
Sutherland	Sydney City
Warringah	Wagga
Manly	Ashfield
Leichhardt	South Sydney
North Sydney	Ryde
Salisbury, S.A.	Burwood
Townsville, Q'ld.	Hawkesbury
Broken Hill	Lithgow
Hawthorne, Vic.	Blue Mountains
Freemantle City, W.A.	Unley, S.A.
Tumut	Armidale
Randwick	City of Sandringham, Vic.
Canterbury	City of Prahran, Vic.
Shoalhaven	Marrickville
Blacktown	Woollahra

2. STATE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Department of Youth and Community Services
Housing Commission of NSW
Department of Environment and Planning
Health Commission of NSW
Public Solicitors Office/Head Office and Local Branch
NSW Advisory Council
Womens' Co-ordination Unit
Dept of Consumer Affairs — Rental Advisory Service
Anti-Discrimination Board
Dept of Technical and Further Education

3. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

Dept of Social Security

Senate Standing Committee — Youth Homelessness

Senate Standing Committee — Expenditure (Care for Aged)

Department of Housing and Construction

Advisory Council for Inter-Government Relations

4. NON-GOVERNMENT WELFARE AND HOUSING AGENCIES

Salvation Army — Brisbane Street

Bondi Beach Cottage

Changes, CYSS

Eastside Community Help Organization, ECHO

Kings Cross Refuge

Kings Cross Detached Youth Work Program

Housing Information Referral Service

New South Wales Shelter

Bondi/Waverley Tenants Association

Chapel By The Sea

Single Women's Refuge Collective

Royal Blind Society

Redfern Legal Centre

Dulwich Hill Community Centre

5. PEAK ORGANISATIONS

Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW

Youth Refuge Association

Council on the Ageing

Royal Australian Planning Institute

Council of Social Service of NSW — NCOSS

Australian Council of Social Service — ACOSS

6. PUBLIC COMMITTEES, TASK FORCE, WORKING PARTIES, ETC.

NSW Housing Co-operative Working Party
NSW Task Force on Domestic Violence

7. COMMUNITY AND RESIDENT GROUPS

Waverley Housing Collective
Petersham Residents' Committee
Waverley Action for Youth Services — WAYS
Eastern Suburbs Community Youth Assn. — ESCYA
Pine Avenue/Waverley Street Residents' Committee
Youth Issues Collective
Housing Commission Tenants Association
Youth Housing Coalition
Macintyre Development Unit

8. FURTHER EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS

University of New South Wales
University of Sydney
University of Newcastle
University of New England
Swinburn Institute

9. OTHER GROUPS

Waverley Interagency
Manly/Warringah Interagency
Canterbury Interagency
Builders' Worker's Group
Australian Housing Research Council
Dover Heights Girls' School
Land and Housing Consultative Council
Prince Henry Hospital

APPENDIX 3 : ANALYSIS OF WORK TASKS UNDERTAKEN BY THE COMMUNITY HOUSING
OFFICER OVER A TYPICAL ONE MONTH PERIOD

<u>In Office Hours</u> (based on a 35-hour week)	<u>Hours</u>
Intra-departmental meetings	8
Inter-departmental meetings	6
Meetings with government and non-government agencies	12
Research, preparation, and writing of reports	32
Correspondence (including internal memoranda and outgoing mail)	15
Activities related to the development and management of community housing programmes	30
Advice and support to individual clients	20
Administrative and management functions	14
Lectures and student resourcing	3
<u>Total</u>	: 140 hours

Outside Office Hours

Council meetings	16
Development and management of community housing programmes	10
Support to local community and resident groups	10
Lectures, seminars, and public meetings	8
Preparation for the above	10
<u>Total</u>	: 54 hours

APPENDIX 5 : INTERVIEWEES

Thirty-five interviews were conducted altogether with representatives of the following organisations. They are grouped in accordance with the sections of Chapter 2.

- (1) Community Welfare,
Engineering and Town Planning,
Health and Building, and
Administration
Departments of Waverley Municipal Council;
- (2) Australian Labor Party,
Independent, and
Waverley Action Committee
Councillors of Waverley Municipal Council;
- (3) Changes, Bondi Junction CYSS;
Eastside Community Help Organisation;
Bondi Beach Cottage;
NSW Shelter; and
Housing Information and Referral Service;
- (4) NSW Department of Youth and Community Services;
Housing Commission of NSW;
The Ministry of Housing;
Local Government Association of NSW;
NSW Department of Planning and Environment; and
Sydney City Council.

More informal discussion was held with a number of other people, including housing consumers in Waverley, and representatives of Randwick and Leichhardt Councils.

APPENDIX 5 : EVALUATION — OUR PURPOSE AND PRACTICE

Those readers familiar with the literature on evaluation will know that, as with any approach to understanding and assessment, controversy and conflict about its philosophical, methodological and political underpinnings is as widespread as discussion itself. We have not addressed these broader issues in any depth, as our highest priority is to make comment pertinent to the practice of those with immediate interest in the project, not to contribute to "academic" or theoretical argument about evaluation. However, within that emphasis, a brief declaration of our evaluative framework is appropriate.

While we had no involvement with the Waverley CHO project prior to commencing the evaluation, our personal and professional backgrounds had produced a range of experiences, skills and interests in contemporary urban housing problems and strategies for their solution. As well, one role of the Centre employing us (the Social Welfare Research Centre) is to provide critical assessment of public sector initiatives in community welfare, including housing. Thus our collective experience and this commitment were the bases from which our agreement to undertake the evaluation emerged. The project's Consultative Group provided a draft brief which became the basis of our evaluation planning. After discussion with the Consultative Group the general conception, purpose and methodology of that evaluation was established. It is set out below.

Concept

In general terms, we would characterise our style of evaluation as one incorporating :

- 1) a personal and professional interest in the evaluation and its use;
- 2) a declaration of the subjective (i.e. conscious) and value-based nature of evaluation, rather than a (mystifying) claim to an objective or value-free basis;
- 3) the adoption of a broad-based model for evaluation which draws the criteria for understanding and assessment of any particular project from the whole political and economic structure from which it derives and in which it is set; and
- 4) a methodology enabling focus on the full, dynamic process of development of the project, not merely on its most tangible and/or measurable outcomes.

Purpose

Within the general conception outlined above, we saw our particular responsibilities as :

- 1) providing a careful, systematic record of the project's development and contribution — (the hard data);
- 2) establishing the nature of the relationship of the project to the broader housing system;
- 3) assessing the extent to which the apparent "success" of the project was sustainable after more careful analysis;
- 4) reporting widely and freely our findings, thus contributing to the dissemination of whatever can be generalised from this particular pilot; and
- 5) recommending refinement, expansion or curtailment of the project in order for it better to meet its objectives from a local government base.

Method

The development of methodologies consistent with the concepts and purposes discussed above is not well advanced in evaluation research. For instance, many models deny the worth of subjective, value-explicit approaches to assessing social practices — cost benefit analysis for instance reduces impacts on people to their economic cost, and by so doing implies that the latter is the yardstick for equating and thereby judging costs and benefits of a project development. In other cases the methods are not appropriate for assessing social objectives. A statistical approach for instance, establishes pre-conceived notions (hypotheses) of what is to be expected, tests these by narrow quantitative yardsticks for statistical significance while the wider social significance is unexamined.

In this case, our belief that we have the right and responsibility to judge for ourselves, together with the considerable limitations placed on assessment of a project like this if it is restricted to hard data, have influenced us toward developing a more complex methodological approach. Thus, in shaping the evaluation, we attempted to develop a flexible, interactive analysis, drawing on the knowledge, interests and needs of the principal project actors (council officers, councillors, community groups, officers of state government departments).

Rigorous method was developed through an open, exploratory process of familiarisation, argument and informed synoptic judgement. Such a process elevated qualitative data (feelings, meanings, values) and a holistic view (the project inseparable from its wider societal context) and within this, detailed attention to the particular relationships involved (viz. the project and the council, the community, the evaluators and the controlling interests). Our methods of inquiry included in-depth interviewing, careful observation and reflection, as well as comprehensive monitoring of records and reports relating to the project. Our method of exposition relies on full and careful description more than formal analytical methods. More detail on the evaluation process is interwoven within the body of the report; for completeness, here, we identify three practical limitations that curtailed the approach described in this appendix, viz. our time to evaluate was limited to three months; the pecuniary resources available were relatively small; and, most importantly, many of the developments of the project, geared to longer-term objectives, could not yet be assessed.

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