man; and those of us who knew him and know his work, remember him warmly. In the years since then, the name of the Council has changed; it adopted its present name in 1974 and its concerns have broadened, as the extensive agenda of this meeting makes clear. I fear that what I have said is very general and does little to cover the matters comprehended within the extensive program. These are fields in which I have little expertness and competence, and they pose many difficult, some might think almost intractable problems. I start furthermore, as I have told, with a regrettably deficient education in criminal law, and the fields in which I have worked in the law have been rather different. They may be due to the fact that I am a creature of my times and environment, and I recall what Sir John Barry said about lawyers' attitudes to criminal law and associated matters forty years ago when I first learned the little criminal law I then knew.

I have pleasure in declaring this Conference open.

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## TUESDAY 14TH AUGUST 1979
### (Morning Session)

From the programme:
"Today we shall be looking at the area of urban development. In developing town planning schemes, there are opportunities to take into account social and environmental aspects that are relevant to crime prevention. It appears that such opportunities have not been taken in the past and that grave mistakes continue to be perpetrated. In the morning we shall be looking at these possibilities . . ."

**Urban Planning and Development**

CHAIRMAN:      Mr Geoff Sutton, Director of N.S.W. Bureau of Crime Statistics.
9.00-9.40 am   Dr. Trevor Lee, Senior Lecturer, Geography Department, University of Tasmania.
9.40-10.15 am  Mr Bob Graham, Planning Officer, Hobart City Council.
10.45-11.45 am Group Discussions.
11.45-12.30 pm Plenary Session.

**COMMENTS ON THE MORNING'S PROCEEDINGS:**

This was another successful morning with papers which were well delivered and the themes were nicely picked up in the group discussions.

There seemed to be some consensus of opinion that there are better ways of town planning than "broad acre" State Housing developments. The concept of "social mix" was vigorously discussed and it was felt that, given greater mix, there could be less stigmatisation of an area with a decrease in criminality as well as in human unhappiness. Interesting recommendations for improving "social mix" included a change of emphasis from renting housing to the economically disadvantaged in stigmatised areas, to subsidizing this group so that they can live where they wish.

An alternative was for the State to act as a Land Bank and to ensure that the majority of houses in their areas were for private development so that there would never be a preponderance of the economically disadvantaged in a housing area. Other recommendations included the provision of facilities and support services.

# URBAN PLANNING FOR CRIME PREVENTION: SOME SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAMMES

## By Trevor R. Lee†

### Introduction

In recent years the proportion of new housing constructed by public housing authorities has increased substantially, and in Tasmania at least 25 per cent of new dwellings are currently built by or for the Housing Division. The importance of housing and the broader residential environment as components of the quality of urban life underscores the need to carefully evaluate the bases and consequences of public housing policies.

This paper seeks to examine the social consequences of public housing policies within the broad context of a concern for crime prevention. In order to do this it is appropriate to first identify separately the issues of public housing policies and their consequences on the one hand, and on the other, the nature and incidence of deviant behaviour and the extent to which it varies throughout the city. However, it is the interface of these two areas that this paper seeks to explore. Two basic questions can be posed which encapsulate the nature of the relationship between housing policies, planning and social behaviour. The first is the extent to which broad planning strategies associated with public housing policies create environments which encourage deviant behaviour. The second question is whether modifications of the environment, through planning agencies, can have an effect on the behaviour of individuals. It is argued here that the causes of deviance are complex, and that explanations which seek to reduce deviant behaviour merely through the manipulation of the physical environment by planning agencies may be diverting attention away from more fundamental social questions which need to be addressed.

### Public Housing Policies

The role the state should play in housing is a function of political and social philosophy. Extreme views range from those which state that the responsibility for shelter lies with the individual or household and there should be no public involvement. A slightly modified stance, but still at the same end of the spectrum as the above view, is that public housing should only be provided for a very small minority, often referred to as the 'deserving poor'. At the other end of the spectrum are those views which regard shelter as a basic commodity to which all should have equal access, and which

should be administered publicly in the same manner as education or public transport. The means-tested screening of applicants for public housing in Australia ensures a high degree of association between low income families and public housing, and although the range of incomes and family-groups housed in the public sector is far broader than those in abject poverty, only some 11 per cent of Australian families are housed in the public sector.

Three key areas of policy are worth mentioning briefly before the social consequences of housing policies are outlined. The first is that state housing authorities in Australia pursue a policy of subsidizing the *dwelling* rather than the *individual*. This means that the states are actively involved in the construction and administration of a stock of housing, in contrast to policies which subsidize the individual by payment of a rent supplement to enable him to compete in the private rental market.

The second key policy area related to the location and nature of publicly owned housing stock. State housing authorities have built mainly low density detached single-family housing, often located in peripheral areas. Inner city redevelopment and high-rise public housing has been confined predominantly to parts of Melbourne and Sydney (Neutze, 1978, 94) although medium density housing has been an important element of recent peripheral estates in the Hobart area.

The scale of public housing estates is a third key policy subject to planning manipulation. The 'broad-acre' peripheral developments of Australian housing authorities have tended to be associated with very large scale housing developments, such as those of Green Valley in New South Wales, and Risdon Vale, Rokeby and Bridgewater on the periphery of the Hobart urban area. The rationale for large-scale developments of this nature has usually been couched in terms of economic and administrative economies of scale needed to produce the greatest number of dwelling units at minimum cost (Annells, 1979, 7).

There are a number of key characteristics of public housing estates and a variety of social consequences which are directly attributable to these policies. The peripheral location of many public housing areas is directly related to isolation, exacerbated by the relatively low levels of car ownership of many lower income families. The most obvious consequence of the scale of public housing estates is the creation of social environments with a high degree of demographic and socio-economic homogeneity. The question of *social mix* and the extent to which planning policies should attempt to achieve social heterogeneity within local areas will be taken up later in this paper, together with further consideration of the social significance of peripheral locations.

However, perhaps the most persistent criticism of public housing estates in Australia, and the most commonly related to delinquency and deviant behaviour, has been the lack of facilities to serve the local community. Lack of co-ordination between different state departments and housing authorities has often meant that even basic services have not been established until long after the first residents have moved into an area, while the under-provision of recreation facilities and other amenities for the young may persist as long-term problems. One obstacle to the provision of community facilities has been the inability, until 1978, of housing authorities to use monies from Commonwealth State Housing Agreements for the provision of community facilities (Annells, 1979, 8). However, other planning decisions not subject to this constraint have placed commercial interests above those of residents of public housing areas, exemplified by the location of a shopping centre for the Green Valley estate (Neutze, 1978, 55).

While other social consequences of public housing policies could be identified, those mentioned above have been the focus of most attention. There are also other distinctive characteristics of public housing areas, such as relatively high rates of unemployment, which do not reflect housing policies *per se*, but rather the social characteristics of those in public housing and their relative ability to compete for employment.

**Social Deviance in the City**

There is a vast literature on crime, delinquency and other forms of deviant behaviour, their relationships with urbanization, city size, and variations in deviant behaviour within cities. This literature has been reviewed comprehensively elsewhere (see for example, Scott, 1972; Harries, 1974; Herbert, 1976), and it would be redundant to replicate such reviews here. It is appropriate to point out, however, that within cities there have been well-defined patterns of crime and delinquency which characteristically decline in a regular progression from high rates in central city areas to low rates on the urban periphery (Shaw and McKay, 1942, 1969; Scott, 1972). Public housing policies may affect these patterns and rehousing from central to peripheral locations has been reflected in changing patterns of deviance in British and Australian cities (Scott, 1965, Herbert, 1976).

One point which needs to be stressed when examining the incidence of crime and delinquency in areas of public housing is that there are many forms of social deviance, and that those forms such as theft and vandalism which are most detected, prosecuted, and documented in criminological studies are generally associated with groups of lower socio-economic status. It has been argued frequently (see for example, Wilson, 1973) that many forms of white-collar deviance, such as tax evasion and corruption, are undetected but may be equally or more destructive than overt acts of property violation.

There have been many attempts to explain patterns of delinquent behaviour. Ecological studies have linked crime and delinquency to physical characteristics of neighbourhoods and the social characteristics of their residents; yet others have forwarded theories of amonie and social disorganization and the emergence of a deviant sub-culture. No single explanation has found universal acceptance amongst criminologists and there is growing appreciation of the complexities associated with variations in human behaviour. With respect to crime and delinquency, Herbert has recently noted that:

Those theories of deviant behaviour which are conceptually attractive can rarely be verified in empirical terms. One result, common to all forms of social deviance research, is an abandonment of single-stranded theories and the acceptance of multi-factor solutions. An understanding, both of individual deviant acts and of the societal conditions in which they are most likely to occur is likely to require the analysis of many factors and their inter-relationships (1976, 89).

It is against this need for multi-dimensional explanations of social deviance that the ability of planning agencies to modify behaviour through the manipulation of the physical environment must be viewed. It is simplistic to believe that behaviour is shaped solely by the environment, and that if there are high rates of delinquency amongst residents of public housing estates then the design or the plan of the neighbourhood must be at fault and should be changed. This notion of environmental determinism has, however, had a long and persistent history in town planning and needs careful examina-

tion in the context of the ability of planning agencies to contribute significantly to long-term crime prevention.

## Environmental Determinism in Planning

The essence of environmental determinism is that social behaviour and well-being are intrinsically linked with man's physical environment. "It suggests that those human beings for whom architects and planners create their design are simply moulded by the environment which is provided for them" (Broadby, 1968, 14).

In the early days of urban planning determinist ideas were espoused most zealously by the Christian moralists. In North America, for example, Gans has outlined the role of Protestant upper middle-class reformers in the early urban planning movement (1972, 72-95). This group was disturbed by developments in the rapidly growing cities of North America, especially with the large numbers of non-Protestant, poor, European immigrants who were forced to live in slums and overcrowded tenements. These reformers held a facility-centred theory of social change, believing that if the poor were provided with decent housing, as well as parks and playgrounds, they would not only give up the slums but change themselves in the process.

A similar philosophy has been identified in Britain by Petersen (1968) who cites Charles Kingsley, a nineteenth century religious zealot who claimed that " . . . the social state of the city depends directly on its moral state" which in turn depends largely on " . . . the physical state of the city: on the food, water, air and lodging of inhabitants." Similarly, drunkenness was seen as "not a cause of evil, but an effect" brought about mainly by "bad air and bad lodging" (Petersen, 1968, 164).

While the extreme moral and spiritual healing powers of environment determinism have long-since been dropped from the planners' repertoire, the philosophy has lingered most persistently in debates on slum clearance and the effects of crowding in urban neighbourhoods. Dean (1949), for example, has argued strongly against links between social pathologies and slum areas suggesting that the relationship is only correlative and not causative, and that it does not explain individual differences in social behaviour within such areas. Similarly, Fischer's recent review of pathology and crowding concludes as follows:

It remains true that dense neighbourhoods are the sites of more pathology — crime, malnutrition, psychological disorder, and so on — than are less dense locales. But this correlation is mostly, if not totally, a result of *choice* or the *lack of choice*. People with the capacity, skills, and affluence to choose spacious settings do so; they also suffer from fewer pathologies — not because of their space, but because of their advantages. People who are disadvantaged suffer both from pathologies and from lack of choice; often the only places they can live are crowded ones. The oft-observed correlation between density and pathology is therefore largely a result of *self-selection* (1977, 114).

Gans has argued that the predominantly physical perspective of the planner, and the predominantly social perspective of the sociologist establishes polar positions which interfere with planning solutions. He claims that:

The physical environment is relevant to behaviour in so far as this environment affects the social system and culture of the people involved or as it is taken up into their social system. Between the physical environment and empirically observable human behaviour, there exist a social system and a set of cultural norms which define and evaluate portions of the physical environment relevant to the lives of people involved and structure the way people will use (and react to) this environment in their daily lives (1972, 5).

Gans draws the distinction between the *potential environment* perceived by the planner and the *effective environment* which is that version of the potential environment adopted by users (1972, 6-7). For example, a park designed by a middle-class landscape architect reflects his perception of the facility and its use, and his own values and training, and these may, or may not conform with the perceptions and expectations of the intended users.

However, the concept of environmental design which has been given most attention in relation to its effects on criminal behaviour is Newman's notion of 'defensible space' (Newman, 1972). This is, however, a micro-feature of design rather than a macro-element of urban planning, and the concept has been subject to critical appraisal in recent times. Mawby, for example, concludes that " . . . modified design will not prove a panacea for crime control, even if it is desirable for other reasons" (1977, 178). Mercer also cautions against thinking that defensible space means the end of urban crime. He believes that Newman's concept has

. . . cut down or displaced those crimes where the opportunities provided by the physical characteristics of the environment played a significant part. . . . But (Newman) has not told us anything about crime or the criminal. He has made it more difficult for the criminal to operate, so that the less committed may yield to the increased difficulty, but the rest he has forced elsewhere (1975, 95).

## The Social Consequences of Housing Policies Reappraised

If the notion of environmental determinism is seen as simplistic and behaviour is not necessarily a direct response to environment, what implications does this have for the perceived problems of public housing areas?

Certainly a questioning of the notion of environmental determinism should not be seen as refuting the need for community resources and recreation facilities. The existence of public housing reflects basic social and economic inequalities and differences in the ability of social groups to compete for scarce resources such as housing. The under-provision of community resources in isolated housing estates exacerbates the differences between groups in their accessibility to a wide range of resources. Newer public housing areas are commonly characterised by young families and large numbers of latch-key children, low income families, and a high proportion of single-parents and other welfare recipients. These social characteristics, in combination with the existing under-development of physical resources within public housing areas suggest that policies of positive discrimination are necessary to achieve an equitable distribution of resources throughout the broader community.

But would the provision of adequate community facilities entirely eliminate deviant behaviour from public housing estates? What if community facilities in public housing areas are themselves vandalised or abused, as they commonly are, albeit by a minority of residents? Again, it does not refute the need for community and recreational facilities, but merely highlights the fact that the lack of facilities is only one facet of more fundamental social inequalities. If due recognition is given to the broader social inequalities which exist within Australian society, the question then becomes one of determining the extent to which public housing policies, as a welfare service, alleviate or accentuate social inequalities.

The very existence of public housing reflects fundamental social and economic inequalities and differences in the ability of social groups to compete for scarce resources such as housing. While the economic barriers to owner occupation or private rental accommodation are considerable for many low income families, there are also considerable social barriers imposed by key personnel in financing agencies and rental

agencies. Thus bank managers, landlords and real-estate agents can, and do, discriminate against particular social groups who may be regarded as a high risk, or who deviate from narrow social and moral norms. Particularly affected by the discretionary activities of the 'gatekeepers' to housing resources are groups such as Aborigines, migrants and single-parents (Lee, 1977).

The provision by public housing authorities of good quality housing at a reasonable cost represents a major reduction in inequalities of access to basic shelter. It is paradoxical, however, that in reducing social inequalities through the provision of subsidized housing, further social inequalities are created through policies which develop large, homogeneous, isolated, and peripheral public housing estates.

The most obvious of the negative benefits of public housing from peripheral estates is the reduction in accessibility to other activities and services within the city. The economic advantages of subsidized housing must, therefore, be offset against the financial burden resulting from a longer journey-to-work (Willoughby, 1974, 70), and more difficult access to a wide range of centralised facilities and services. There may also be considerable social costs of dislocation associated with relocation in a peripheral area through disruption of social networks. This social and physical isolation may have the greatest effects on the least mobile sections of the population including the elderly, children and female single-parents dependent on relatives for moral support and practical domestic assistance (Lee, 1978).

It can also be argued that the policy of establishing large distinctive housing estates also has an adverse effect on social equality through stigmatization of the neighbourhood. Not only is public housing the only government welfare service provided in a manner that clearly identifies the recipient (Annells, 1979, 4), but adverse labelling of public housing estates may become common among non-residents (see for example, Damer, 1974; Gittus, 1976, 225-226). Davidson (1979) has developed a hypothesis connecting the level of crime a community suffers, with its attitudes, perceptions and reactions to crime. He suggests that there are three extreme varieties of criminal environment in which the interplay between the social reaction to crime, the offenders, and the agents of control may be observed. The first two of these environments (*neighbourhood as a fortress* and *neighbourhood as a refuge*) need not concern us here, but Davidson's comments on the third — *the stigmatized neighbourhood*, are worth considering.

> In some circumstances the dislocation of perceptions, fears and attitudes may be so powerful that a neighbourhood becomes branded and acquires a notoriety out of all proportion . . . (A)n area may achieve a false reputation for deviancy and . . . once labelled its inhabitants begin to live up to the expectations imposed upon them. The social reaction to crime can, through a process of stigmatization, produce an environment where crime flourishes or at least is believed to flourish (Davidson, 1979, 8).

The stigmatization of an area by non-residents may also be reinforced by the perceptions and actions of law enforcement. Police perception of an area of deviance, however well-founded that perception, may lead to increased surveillance, increased apprehension, and paradoxically an increase in the crime rate, especially for deviant behaviour such as juvenile delinquency which generally has a low rate of detection. Where law enforcement manpower is numerically finite, the diversion of police to stigmatized neighbourhoods must reduce surveillance in unstigmatized neighbourhoods, thereby lowering apprehension and producing a 'lower' crime rate. The adverse labelling of neighbourhoods falls,

therefore, within the ambit of *methodic suspicion* in which neighbourhood of residence may be used by police as an indication of potential law violation (Baldwin, 1974, 130).

Thus, public housing policies which create distinctive, easily identified and stigmatized neighbourhoods may, in pursuing this form of planning, be creating further social inequalities. In addition to feelings of harsher treatment by the judiciary for residents in areas with a bad reputation (Baldwin, 1974, 127), stigmatization of a neighbourhood may affect an individual's prospects in employment, finance and a host of other interactions in which the perceptions of a 'right' or 'wrong' address may influence decision-making. This focuses attention back on the concept of social mix and whether or not there should be greater heterogeneity of socio-economic groups within neighbourhoods.

## Social Mix

The term social mix is generally taken to mean socio-econonic heterogeneity within a neighbourhood and/or a mixture of dwellings for different social classes (Heine and Sarkissian, 1976, 1). An erudite review of the concept (Etherington, 1974) has revealed that social mix has been advocated as a means of achieving a wide variety of goals, some of which are conflicting. These range from considerations of equality of opportunity, to practical considerations of improving the physical functioning of the city. Some of the early nineteenth century advocates of social mix felt that a heterogeneous community would "raise the standards of the lower classes by nurturing a spirit of emulation" (Etherington, 1974, 5). This viewpoint is still widely held, especially in relation to deviant behaviour. A recent press report, for example, cites psychiatrist Dr Eric Cunningham-Dax as saying it was a mistake to encourage 'problem' families to live closely together. "But if a problem family were rehoused in a better neighbourhood, the neighbourhood would tend to upgrade the family, provided the family was being helped" (*The Mercury*, 10/5/79).

The assumption that social mix will lead to social interaction between different groups has, however, been questioned by planners and sociologists (Gans, 1972; Mercer, 1975, 86-91). Gans, for example, rejects extreme heterogeneity which, he feels, is likely to inhibit communication, whereas moderate heterogeneity provides sufficient compatability for communication to take place, thereby facilitating learning of different social values and attitudes (1972, 147-148). Mercer (1975, 87) suggests, however, that we still do not have sufficient understanding of what the terms homogeneity and heterogeneity mean, and he poses fundamental questions, such as whether similarities in socio-economic class are more important than, say, differences between neighbours in child-rearing strategies or social values.

A fundamental distinction needs to be made, therefore, between a mix spanning the full spectrum of socio-economic groups, and a more limited concept of heterogeneity in which public housing tenants are interspersed through areas of private rental accommodation and blue collar areas of owner occupation. At the very least, a policy of social mix in which the residential locations of public housing tenants could not be easily distinguished from other tenure groups of similar socio-economic status would do much to remove the problem of the stigmatized neighbourhood and the social inequalities which can be attributed to the nature of many current public housing estates.

## Conclusions

Exploration of the relationships between the social consequences of public housing policies and the incidence of deviant behaviour in cities raises many complex issues which need to be examined carefully. One striking paradox of this

complex relationship is that, in the Australian complex, the fundamental question is commonly posed in the reverse manner to that in Britain and North America. Rather than ask whether there is a decline in social deviance with rehousing, characteristically through slum clearance, the concern in Australia seems to be whether the establishment of public housing estates and their common lack of community facilities promotes higher incidences of deviant behaviour.

The simple answer is that in all national contexts deviancy exists before and after rehousing. It may well be slightly ameliorated by improved housing conditions, or it may well be exacerbated through lack of recreation facilities, but the critical point is that there is no simple connection between environment and behaviour. Deviancy reflects wider social considerations and fundamental social inequalities, and it requires multi-faceted explanations and solutions. Even if inadequate community facilities do contribute to delinquency in areas of public housing, the provision of adequate recreation facilities will not in itself eliminate deviant behaviour in housing estates which are isolated and stigmatized. More fundamental questions of social inequality must be tackled if any real success is to be achieved in this field.

The score-sheet for social consequences of public housing policies suggests that while government housing sharply reduces social inequalities of access to decent shelter at reasonable cost, planning policies related to the location and nature of public housing estates may exacerbate other elements of inequality. This reflects not so much on the housing authorities themselves, but on broader government and welfare agencies which have failed to recognize and come to grips with the multi-faceted nature of social need and social inequality.

Fundamental social inequalities explain why there is need for public housing at all. Within a framework of governmental concern for housing, and within the financial constraints facing public housing authorities, distinctive housing policies and planning practices have developed. These policies and practices may, inadvertently, have created further social inequalities which arise from the nature of public housing estates. As such, attention has become focused on the characteristics of housing estates, especially the problems caused by isolation, homogeneity and lack of community facilities. The 'solution' to these characteristics has tended to become the 'problem', and the more fundamental issues of a broader social inequality have been forgotten. Only when public housing policies and urban planning agencies embrace this broader framework can we hope to make any headway in long-term crime prevention.

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# SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN THE INNER CITY

## BY BOB GRAHAM

### 1. Why Concentrate on the Inner City?

All of us who live and work in urban areas have impressions about the inner parts of our cities. These impressions are largely formed by our own experience, and secondly through popular attitudes.

Our own experience is predominantly a visual one. Most of the inner city is seen as an area of ageing building stock, changing land uses, traffic congestion, poor environment, poor quality housing, and a general appearance of neglect and decadence. Our attitudes are formed through a number of channels but popular attitudes can be summarised to include at least the following:

● the inner city is an area in which poor people live;
● the population is transient;