

Situating Master-Planned Estates

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ABSTRACT

Master-planned estates (MPEs) are proliferating as an urban residential form, particularly in the rapidly expanding urban fringes of Greater Metropolitan Sydney, Melbourne and South East Queensland. As crucibles of urban change, MPEs have the potential to reshape urban residential structures and refashion ways of relating in urban residential neighbourhoods. They thus require more rigorous analysis: as an empirical phenomenon; as a new social formation; and as a manifestation of the privatisation of the public realm. Australian urban researchers have begun to turn their attention toward the MPE. This paper critically engages with these understandings of master-planned estates (MPEs) in the Australian context. We argue that the conclusions about the nature of the MPE phenomenon are currently limited because they are drawn from a narrow range of case studies of just one form of MPE: the master-planned community. Based on a preliminary analysis of findings emerging from our research into MPEs in the Greater Metropolitan Region of Sydney, we sketch the diversity of MPE forms that are emerging. From this we suggest the need for a more robust analytical framework and, drawing on Sydney examples, sketch the dimensions such a framework needs to consider. These will be necessary to guide analysis of the complex development and governance processes that underpin MPEs, as well as analysis of the varied patterns of sociability their different forms are likely to produce. We argue, therefore, for a broader theoretical and empirical scope for the research agenda and tentatively suggest directions for that agenda.

INTRODUCTION

Master-planned residential developments are becoming important as a part of the urban residential fabric and as an increasingly popular means of residential provision. A recent national conference aimed at developers and local planners, for instance, positioned them as ‘the key to handling rapidly growing population pressure in outer suburban areas’ (<http://www.halledit.com.au/conferences/mpud/>). MPEs have also engendered strong political debate. For some they are the precursors of the death of the public realm and the birth of an anaemic form of limited citizenship (Davis 1992, McKenzie 1994, Low 2003, Gleeson 2005, Hillier and McManus 1994). For others they offer a cost-efficient means of supplying the physical and social infrastructure to service new development (Webster 2002), while increasing local governments’ capacity to achieve planned development objectives and meeting an apparently burgeoning consumer demand (Minnery and Bajracharya 1999). It is no surprise, then, that master-planned residential developments have recently begun to attract significant research attention.

This paper begins our critical engagement with understandings of master-planned estates (MPEs) in the Australian context in order to develop a research agenda that broadens the theoretical and empirical scope of existing research. We begin by outlining the orientation of current Australian research on master-planned estates, emphasising the necessity of research that is sensitive to how MPEs take shape in the Australian urban context. In the next section we deepen our engagement with this literature and suggest that whilst researchers in the Australian context recognise the diversity of the MPE phenomenon, conclusions and research agendas have been based on a relatively narrow spectrum of case studies. We go beyond this to suggest that research also requires a more *extensive* approach in order to grasp the diversity of MPE forms that are emerging, beyond those captured by existing typologies and, relatedly, to grasp the diversity of socio-spatial and socio-political outcomes they are likely to manifest. To support our case, we draw on a preliminary analysis of findings emerging from our research into the format of MPEs in the Greater Metropolitan Region of Sydney.

MASTER-PLANNED ESTATES: ORIENTATIONS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH

The MPE phenomenon is well-established in the United States. Whilst there are no definitive statistics, it is estimated that in the USA 10% of new residential development is estimated to occur within MPCs (Low 2001) and, by 2000, 4 million dwellings were estimated to exist within gated communities (Sanchez and Lang 2002). Perhaps inevitably, then, Australian researchers have drawn upon American analyses in seeking concepts, models, and analytical generalisations to guide interpretation of a seemingly parallel phenomena arising in our midst. In particular, two broad analytical frameworks seem to be informing the study of the phenomenon in Australia thus far: new urbanism and a distinctively dystopian strand of critical urban studies.

Two major projects to date by the Australian Urban and Housing Research Institute (Blair et al. 2003) and by a multidisciplinary research group at the University of Queensland (Muirhead et al 2003) are concerned with, *inter alia*, whether and how these developments might generate and sustain social capital and cohesive community. This work’s vision of the master-planned residential development shares common ground with that of the new urbanism¹: The thrust here is the presumption that social

¹ New urbanism is a US-based design movement encouraging integrated, socially diverse, walkable neighbourhood development based around principles of mixed-use and a somewhat nostalgic return to traditionalist neighbourhood and community values, facilitated through the detailed design and layout of community amenities, streetscapes and housing

capital can be engineered as an outcome of design and infrastructure, and particularly the provision of communal civic and community spaces (for critiques see Talen 1999, Winstanley et al. 2003). These research projects are, in part at least, critically exploring that proposition.

In the critical urban studies vein, research examines what we might think of as ‘the dark side’ of master-planned development. Here, there have been close case studies of long established largescale master-planned estates concerned, respectively, with their existence as exclusionary social formations (Gwyther 2002, 2005) and as potential instruments of governmentality—carriers of strategies and tactics capable of rendering their populations quiescent and governable (Bosman 2003). Additionally, there has been a series of ‘thought pieces’ on the principles, purposes and impacts of the master-planned delivery of residential development (Hillier and McManus 1994, Gleeson 2003, 2005). The work shares common ground with a distinctive dystopian strand of US-literature that has addressed a range of residential enclaves serving residents united by common interest, by lifestyle preference, or by the desire for securitised living (see Davis 1992, Knox 1994, Boyer 1994, Judd 1995). The most influential work here has been Blakely and Snyder’s (1997) *Fortress America*, the title portraying its focus on developments that are materially, psychologically or symbolically gated to produce enclaves actively resisting or at least largely unconcerned with being imbricated into a broader urban fabric and public realm. This work, its typology of MPEs and its associated arguments about their motivations and divisive impacts has been the starting point for numerous analyses within and beyond the US (Low 2003, Glasze 2002, Blandy et al. 2003).

Gleeson’s (2003, 2004) work in particular shadows this dystopian vision of the MPE, positioning them as expressions, simultaneously, of privatism and privatisation². *First*, they are expressions of incivility, signalling a retreat to an ethic of privatism amongst a populace concerned to distance itself from a broader urban collective marked by income, ethnic and value difference. Distancing occurs by means of self-selection to a ‘habitat’ governed by design and behavioural norms. MPEs, as havens of class-filtered suburbia, make an attractive proposition to those seeking homogeneity, social distinction and—in a climate where a discourse of urban disorder and fear is rampant—security and protection. The non-resident can be designed out of these exclusionary communal formations. *Second*, they are instantiations of a neo-liberal retreat from the universal provision of public infrastructure. MPEs habitually involve, under a variety of arrangements, the private financing, provision and/or management of community amenities and infrastructure and often result in their exclusive use by estate residents, either *de jure* under community title or *de facto* under the psychological and/or symbolic impacts of their design and layout. The genuine public realm is made vulnerable or erased in either case such that, for Gleeson, MPEs represent a departure from the social democratic commitment to a democratic public sphere underpinned by equitable access to fundamental ‘public’ amenity and services. Together, then, privatism and privatisation, lead inevitably to the emaciation of the public sphere.

There are two important messages that emerge from these quite different veins of Australian research. First is that MPEs require more intense investigation both in their own right and as one manifestation of the transformation of urban life and urban structure in contemporary Australia. MPEs reflect a host of urbanisation trends and processes and emergent city structures that are refashioning the socio-spatial

forms (Katz 1994). Its outcomes in the US include such master-planned townships as Celebration and Seaside in Florida, and Kentlands, Virginia.

² Though more recently Gleeson (2005) has attended to the potential of MPEs, given the largescale on which they are planned, to recast the Australian suburb in more sustainable mode.

structure of Australian metropolitan centres. While these trends and processes may be widespread in advanced capitalist urbanisation, we lack both the fundamental empirical research to enable us to trace the forms they assume in Australian cities and, relatedly, we lack the basis from which to conceptualise them confidently and comprehend them adequately (see Randolph 2004, Horvath 2004).

The second important message we take from extant research is the need to be alert to the temptation of using essentially anglo-american derived concepts and critiques to generalise to Australian urban and suburban development and, following this, to derive principles and practices for interpreting and managing Australian urban change. Despite drawing on concepts and critiques arising from a US context, both strands of work outlined above are highly conscious of the potential dangers of applying such concepts to the unique institutional, socio-political and cultural conditions that have shaped Australian urbanisation and, more specifically, its suburbanisation. For instance, both highlight the evidence that the relationship to the nostalgic and romanticised notion of ‘community’ so well exploited by master-planning, new urbanist developers in the US is likely to be somewhat ‘cooler’ (Pusey 2003) in Australia. Australian suburban community studies have indicated strongly that community has tended to be appreciated pragmatically for its practical and lifestyle value, as a quality to be consumed rather than adopted as a moral and ethical framework for living (see Richards 1990, Bryson and Winter 1999).

DEFINING THE MPE: DIVERSITY AND THE MPE PHENOMENON

Before the lessons of this research are used to guide the extension and expansion of research into Australian MPEs, there is cause to pause for thought and to review what it is that constitutes the MPE phenomenon as it is taking shape in Australian cities. We need to be clear on what it is we are studying. Indeed researchers often begin with the assertion that there is no definitive definition (Minnery and Bajrachayra 1999, Gwyther 2005). Definitions drawn from the anglo-american literature tend to focus on new urbanist development (Katz 1994, Frantz and Collins, 2000) or, alternatively, on forms of proprietary community—privately owned, privately governed estates, defined by resident-only access to communal infrastructure and facilities and by distinctive bounding and securitisation of the development, physically through gates and road closures (Webster 2002, Blakley and Snyder 1997) or through the symbolic impact of ‘sod-off architecture’ (Blandy et al. 2003). There is enormous variation in character and features of the developments captured here.

Australian definitions differ, yet also encapsulate a tremendous diversity. The loose definition suggests MPEs are large scale, integrated housing developments produced by single development entities that include the provision of physical and social infrastructure. They are predominantly located on the ‘growth frontier’ of the city’s fringe though are also increasingly to be found on sizeable urban renewal sites (Minnery and Bajrachayra 1999, Gwyther 2005, Gleeson 2005, Yigitcanlar et al 2005). Within that broad definition, Australian MPE researchers work with the notion of a spectrum relating to the intensity of master-planning (see Gwyther 2005, Muirhead et al. 2004, Blair et al. 2003, Yigitcanlar et al. 2005). At one pole of the spectrum is the conventional planned estate where development complies with an overall vision of design and layout, often maintained through restrictive covenances on house and landscape design features. Somewhere in the middle fall lifestyle estates where physical and social amenity, often in the form of recreation or leisure facilities, are provided to support particular lifestyle options. At the other pole is the master-planned *community*, where the strategic intention and scope of master-planning is intensified through place-making approaches aimed at producing ‘community’ as a social code and value system amongst residents. At this end of the spectrum, extensively planned

integrated development, incorporating physical and social infrastructure, are frequently complemented by programs of community development and various forms of ‘community compact’ (including behavioural [as opposed to design] convenances) used to mastermind social interaction and nurture community sentiment, binding residents and developers to the vision and localised practice of ‘community’.

The notion of a spectrum does suggest that a diversity of development, social and governmental phenomena sits under the loose definition and its related terminology. However, Australian work to date has focused almost entirely on the MPEs to be found at one end of the spectrum: those rightly called master-planned *communities*, predominantly a largescale, outer suburban greenfield phenomenon. There are good reasons for this. These master-planned communities (and we consciously change the nomenclature here to MPCs) are large in scale, with: populations of 20-30 000 are not unusual (see Bosman 2005, Minnery and Bajracharya 1999). Their concentration on the city fringes means they connect to a host of specific and immediate planning challenges: the roll-out of adequate services, integration into the established urban fabric, environmental sustainability, the development of social attachment to place and community in greenfield contexts. In many ways they are the obvious starting point for research. However a major drawback of this research emphasis is that we are still without a real grasp of the diversity of the MPE phenomenon, of the variety in the structures of provision and governance arrangements that frame development in various parts of the spectrum, and of the likely forms of sociability they are likely to engender. The key questions then are how should we go about developing that grasp and what is the nature of the more extensive research agenda that it suggests?

Developing a typology of master-planned estates

Typology is a useful place to start in the attempt to grasp the various forms and characteristics of master-planned estates. At a descriptive level, it operates as a useful heuristic device, and can complement notion of a spectrum of development forms by filling out the parameters of a framework for analysis that, ultimately, will move us beyond the descriptive to the theoretical (see Grant and Mittelsteadt, 2004). We find Blakely and Snyder’s (1997) US-derived categorisation of gated developments a useful analytical and empirical exemplar. We are aware that such a typology is not directly relevant to either Australia or MPEs (as we described in the preceding section). We are interested in using the general aspects of Blakely and Snyder’s typology, not its specific application to gated communities. We start with the three major types of development identified by Blakely and Snyder that have parallels with the MPE: *lifestyle communities*, *prestige communities* and *security zone communities*. Subtypes are then developed according to four features. *First* is the function of enclosure: whether it is created to signify and enforce a common estate identity and/or lifestyle, the desire for status-differentiation, or the desire for a defensive function. *Second* is the nature and degree of boundaries and security features. Here there is a continuum of enclosure and securitisation moving from developments characterised by fully permeable, largely symbolic features (faux gates, elaborate estate entrances, resident-only signage) to more elaborate systems of gates and perimeter walls, video and intercom systems, and security-guards. *Third* is the nature of amenities and facilities within the development. These range from relatively modest, shared recreational amenities and to more complex systems of services and commercial infrastructure provision. The *final* differentiating feature is type of resident. Blakely and Snyder (1997) emphasise the traditional axes of social segregation—age, class and race—as the primary axes of differentiation, attracting to a given development broadly homogeneous identity and interest groups. In the table below, we align Blakely and Snyder with

Burke’s broadly parallel typology which was developed to incorporate Australian evidence of gated development (see Table 1).

Table 1 Blakely and Snyder’s (1997) Typologies of Gated Communities

Type	Features	Subtypes	Characteristics	Type (Burke 2001)
Lifestyle	-Emphasis on common amenities for a leisure class of shared interests: may involve small-town nostalgia; may be urban villages, luxury villages, or resort villages	-Suburban new town	-Master-planned project with suite of amenities and facilities	Secure resort communities
		-Golf & leisure	-Shared access to amenities for an active lifestyle	
		-Retirement	-Shared access to amenities for an active lifestyle	Secure rural residential estates
Prestige	-Reflect the desire for image, privacy and control: focus on exclusivity over community; few shared facilities and amenities	-Executive middle class -Top-fifth developments -Enclaves of the rich and famous	-Restricted access; usually without guards -Secured access for the nouveau riche: often have guards -Secured and guarded privacy to restrict access for celebrities and very wealthy; attractive locations	Secure suburban estates
Security zone	-Reflect fear; involve retrofitting fences and gates on public streets; controlling access	-City perch	-Restricted public access in inner city area to limit crime or traffic	Secure apartment complexes
		-Suburban perch	-Restricted public access on urban periphery to limit crime or traffic	Urban security zones
		-Barricade perch	-Closed access to some streets to limit through traffic	

Source: Developed from Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004) and Burke (2001)

In what follows, we draw on preliminary analysis of findings from a scoping exercise we are currently undertaking that aims to plot the form and variety of MPEs in the Sydney Greater Metropolitan

Region³. In so doing, we want to speculate on the usefulness of a typology of this nature for understanding the master-planning phenomenon in Australia. The preliminary analysis of our scoping exercise suggests that many of the master-planned developments extant or emerging in Sydney can productively be aligned with Blakely and Snyder’s broad category of *lifestyle communities* where status and security are less important drivers than a broadly common identity forged around lifestyle preference and/or life-cycle stage. The *suburban new town* subtype equates with master-planned communities such as Camden’s Harrington Park (3000 dwellings) and the forthcoming Marsden Park (700 dwellings) in Campbelltown, as well as a series of other suburban MPCs being developed across the region by Landcom, the state government’s corporatised residential property development vehicle (see Table 2). These are certainly the most extensive form of development and have attracted the most analytical attention thus far. Various forms of leisure-focused developments are also widespread, equating with the *golf and leisure* subtype. One example is Cape Cabarita at Concord which includes a host of recreational and leisure facilities. Finally, Sydney is awash with developments in the *retirement community* category. The Retirement Village Directory (www.itsyourlife.com.au/villages_nsw.asp) lists 241 different retirement villages in Sydney alone, without considering the Central Coast, lower Hunter or Illawarra. These last two subtypes undoubtedly overlap to some degree with the next category of *prestige communities*.

Table 2 Lifestyle Communities

Suburban new town subtype

Location:	Harrington Park, (Developer: Taylor Woodrow. Fairfax, Harpak Developments), Camden
Site:	600has, Greenfield, Outer suburbs
Size:	3000 dwellings
Dwelling type/density:	Primarily detached family homes, low density
Mix:	Residential
Tenure:	Predominantly owner-occupied
Community title:	Community website, community welcome facilitator
Public realm:	Primary school, child care centre, community centre, playing fields, clubhouse, tennis courts, walk/bike, paths
Covenances:	Regulation of design features (with covenances)

Location:	Marsden Park (Developer: Landcom, plus private construction firms) Campbelltown
Site:	37 has, in-fill, town centre
Size:	700 dwellings
Dwelling type/density:	Free standing ‘garden homes’, terraced houses, home offices and courtyard developments, retirement village, low to medium density

³ In confirmation of the range of MPE formats and of the vastly divergent ways in which seemingly similar terminology is applied, an encyclopedic audit is neither feasible nor necessarily useful, given that Sydney’s rate of residential expansion would render it outdated almost instantaneously. Nonetheless a scoping exercise is helpful to ground our sense of the nature of the phenomenon and its variability.

Mix:	Residential, connected to existing economic (commercial and retail), social and community infrastructure (incl. public hospital, public library, art gallery) ie Park Central complex
Tenure:	Primarily owner-occupied
Community title:	Courtyard communal spaces within individual dwelling complexes
Public realm:	Parklands, lake, barbeques, walking tracks
Covenances:	Detailed regulation of design features (with covenances)

Golf and leisure subtype

Location: Cape Cabarita (Developer: Rosecorp Ltd), Hen and Chicken Bay, Parramatta River

Site: 4 has, Brownfield, 12 km from city centre

Size: 400 dwellings

Dwelling type/density: Town houses and apartments, medium density

Mix: Commercial and retail development

Tenure: Primarily owner-occupancy

Community title: Private rotunda wharf, Swimming pools, tennis courts, Gym, Spa, Steam room, Sauna, Common room/ function centre, Community common/ village green, Communal barbeque area, Arts and crafts room, Community potting shed. Symbolic gating via signage (Private road/ Residents only) Community web site, Site for residents/members to promote products and services to other residents/members

Covenantance: Detailed regulation of design features (with covenances)

Retirement subtype

Location: The Grange, (Developer: Lend Lease) Waitara

Site: In-fill development, North Shore, Established suburban

Dwelling type: Villas, townhouses and apartments, medium density

Mix: Residential

Tenure: Predominantly owner-occupied (strata title)

Community title: Lounge and community centre, billiards room and library, bowling green, croquet lawn, swimming pool and spa, tennis court, exercise room, barbeque area

Owners corporation (recently assumed control from developer)

Public realm: None. Gated development.

Examples of *prestige communities* in Sydney tend to be more intensively bounded and have additional security features, though the defensive properties of these communities are as much derived from developers' desire to secure a distinctive marketing identity and their keen sense of consumers' status-aspiration as they are from fear of crime (see Table 3). Jacksons Landing (Pymont) could be classed in the *top-fifth development* subtype. Its waterfront setting, high quality public domain, community title recreation facilities, and 24-hr gatehouse security provide the required flavour of prestige and high market values that filter out all but high income earners. Liberty Grove (Concord) could be equated with the *executive middle class* subtype. This is Sydney's largest gated community but, significantly, distinguishes itself as much by its elaborate array of high quality leisure and recreational amenities as it does by its gating. In fact, Sydney's relatively few fully gated communities are, generally, more appropriately thought of as prestige rather than security developments. Sydney has relatively few examples of *security zone communities* where the purpose of enclosure could genuinely be said to be

deflecting a fear of crime (see Table 4). There are multiple examples of individual secured apartment buildings, though rather than being retro-fitted in response to a discourse of fear as Blakely and Snyder’s typology suggests, these are generally new-build developments meeting broad market standards of security technology. However, the suburban Macquarie Links estate (Campbelltown)—while also being a golf estate—could now sit in this category. Despite being walled and having security gates since its inception in 1997, Macquarie Links did not become a fully gated, closed-access estate until 2004 when residents chose to have the gates closed, carry identity cards and have security guards record the number-plates of vehicles entering the estate (O’Sullivan 2005). This estate’s location directly opposite the restive public housing estate of Macquarie Fields make it perhaps Sydney’s most pointed example of estate securitisation in response to the perceived threat of crime.

Table 3 Prestige Communities

Executive middle class subtype

Location: Liberty Grove, (Developer: Anka), Concorde

Site: Inner west

Size: 788 dwellings

Dwelling type: Detached houses, town houses, apartments, medium density

Mix: Residential and residential services

Tenure: Predominantly owner-occupied

Community title: Pools, sauna, tennis/basketball courts, gyms, gardens, walk/bike tracks, playground, BBQ
24-hr patrolled security, gated

Public realm: None: Gated development under community title

Covenances: Detailed regulation of design features (with covenances)

Top-fifth developments subtype

Location: Jacksons Landing (Developer: Lend Lease), Pyrmont

Site: 12 ha brownfield (former industrial site), 2km from city centre

Size: 1 500 dwellings

Dwelling type/density: Town houses and apartments, some high-rise, high density

Mix: Commercial and retail development

Tenure: Owner-occupancy, private renting mix (54% suburb-wide in 2004)

Community title: Swimming pool, tennis courts, Gym, Spa, Steam room, Sauna, Community Centre
Gate house security office (24 hr), plus on gated apartment complex with communal space

Public realm: Parklands, walkways

Covenances: Detailed regulation of design features (with covenances)

Table 4 Security Communities

Suburban perch subtype

Location: Macquarie Links, (Developer: Monarch), Campbelltown

Site: 25min to Sydney airport

Size: 350 dwellings

Dwelling type: Detached houses, villas, apartments and lodges, low to medium density

Mix: Residential, hotel and conference centre, golf course

Tenure: Predominantly owner-occupied

Community title: Roads, parks, flora and fauna reserve, walking tracks, picnic areas pool, tennis courts

24-hr security, concierge, fully walled

Public realm: None: Gated development under community title

Covenances: Detailed regulation of design features (with covenances)

So Blakely and Snyder’s typology is a starting point. Its guidelines can frame and organise initial analysis and it comfortably accommodates the largescale suburban master-planned community. However, there are obvious points where the typology’s categories and the form of MPE we find in Sydney are somewhat misaligned. Perhaps more revealingly, there are Sydney examples that can find no place in this typology. Two examples will illustrate. First is Landcom’s development of Victoria Park at Zetland, 4km from the CBD (see Table 5). This 25 hectare brownfield redevelopment of the former Leyland car manufacturing plant and Naval Supply Store at South Dowling St, will soon house 2 500 dwellings as medium to high density apartments, town houses and home offices. It also incorporates an affordable housing component. Ultimately it will contain 35 000 sq m of commercial and retail space and 8 000 sq m of commercial community facilities (e.g. medical centre, child care facilities). While there are closed-access community title facilities within individual building complexes there are also extensive publicly owned and maintained, public-access parklands, walking and cycle tracks and picnic areas. It is a master-planned ‘new town’ community but one that will be integrated into its surrounding *urban* fabric and, most probably, its surrounding established communities. Second is the example of the rural residential sub-divisions that characterise the outer fringes of the Sydney GMR (e.g. Wollondilly Shire). These involve the master-planned development of sizeable residential lots around communal agricultural land and rural amenities held under community title by residents who are attracted by the lifestyle aesthetic but not its workload.

Our point is that the diversity of forms of master-planned estates that we find in Sydney exceeds that of Blakely and Snyder’s typology. Nor, as we argued in the previous section, is this diversity satisfactorily captured by the notion of a spectrum of master-planning defined by the increasing intensity of attention to strategically-intended design that characterises Australian attempts to capture the range of master-planned forms (see Gwyther 2005). We argue, then, that range of additional cross-cutting dimensions need to be incorporated before it is possible to capture the complexity of emergent master-planned forms. We strongly suspect that master-planned estates, the forms of sociability they sustain, the impact they have in shaping socio-spatial differentiation, their imbrication in the extension of civic privatism and, ultimately, their impact of the public sphere of urban life is over-determined by the diversity we suggest above. Grasping this will require us to expand our research focus beyond the current focus on suburban MPCs.

Table 5 Brownfield new town

Location: Victoria Park (Developer: Landcom [with Cox Richardson and Hassell] with Austcorp and Waltcorp)

Site:	25 has brownfield (former industrial site), 4km from city centre, Zetland
Size:	2 500 dwellings
Dwelling type/density:	Apartments (some highrise) and townhouses, home offices including affordable housing component, high density
Mix:	Residential, Commercial (25 000 sq m) and retail (10 000 sq m) to be developed 10 000 sq m of retail, plus 8 000sq m of commercial community uses
Tenure:	Owner-occupied, private renting mix, with some social housing
Community title:	Shared courtyards and pools within apartment complexes Landcom sponsored community group and events (e.g. jogging clubs, mothers' networks)
Public realm:	Parklands , Walkways and cycle paths, Barbeque and picnic areas Developed by Landcom and handed back to local authority
Covenances:	Detailed regulation of design features (with covenances)

BEYOND TYPOLOGY AND SPECTRUM: DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSING MASTER-PLANNED ESTATES

We suggest that six additional dimensions need to be considered⁴. Each of these adds to the features worked into Blakely and Snyder's typology and adds complexity to the notion of a spectrum of MPEs defined along a single axis from the loosely through to the intensively and strategically designed. *First* is location. Whether the site is outer suburban greenfield, suburban in-fill or inner urban brownfield will have very significant implications for the likelihood of a development's integration into the surrounding urban fabric as well as its social and economic networks. Large brownfield MPCs (e.g. Lend Lease's Jacksons Landing at Pymont and Landcom's Victoria Park at Zetland) though similar in design intensity to outer suburban MPCs (e.g. Harrington Park at Camden) are profoundly different entities in this regard. *Second* is the development's scale and relative uniformity of housing stock. Smaller master-planned developments are likely to target a distinctive market niche and ultimately to operate as homogeneous enclaves while the largest MPCs that operate at a suburb scale cannot easily be typified as enclaves (Dodson and Berry 2003). Alternatively, developments with a mix of detached and terraced houses, apartments, home offices and courtyard developments (e.g. Landcom's Marsden Park in Campbelltown, Lend Lease's proposed St Mary's development) are likely to result in a greater household, lifestyle and value mix than that of more uniform suburban estates of detached family homes (e.g. Penrith's Glenmore Park). So the development's scale and the uniformity of its housing stock have significant ramifications for its tendency to produce socio-spatial homogeneity and exclusiveness.

Third, and directly related to both previous factors, is tenure. Suburban MPCs and fully gated developments tend to be dominated by middle- to high-income owner-occupiers. For instance, Macquarie Links is 80% owner-occupier (Campbelltown City Council 2004). Additionally, there is a propensity for first home buyers to dominate in suburban master-planned developments. By comparison, brownfield sites in inner locations are likely to have far greater diversity of tenure and housing career mix. For instance the suburb of Pymont, location for Jacksons Landing, is 54% private-

⁴ These dimensions draw on and extend upon Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004).

rental reflecting its CBD location, the diversity of dwelling types available and the mix of household forms attracted to its locale: group households of students, DINKS, new-start families, empty-nesters (REF). Victoria Park has a similar demographic. Diversity of tenure and the related ‘churn’ this brings to the neighbourhood will have significant implications for the nature of community that develops as well as its tendency for an inward focus.

Fourth is the land-use mix of the development. Many master-planned estates are purely residential or contain additional residential services, which may extend to recreational facilities, retail, cafes and even schools. Others—particularly those conceived at the suburb scale—also contain commercial and employment components (e.g. Victoria Park in Zetland, the Norwest Business Park and residential development in Baulkham Hills) and thus are likely to generate higher levels of self-containment, and to result in closer integration of home and work lives. They may also address the problem of social isolation felt by women living in predominantly residential estates (Johnson 1997).

The fifth and sixth dimensions involve a greater degree of complexity as they move beyond dealing with facets related to MPE design and characteristics to dealing with processes shaping the production of these estates and their character as social formations. They are worthy, therefore, of more sustained discussion. The *fifth* dimension we propose is policy context and the extent of public regulation under which MPEs are planned and delivered. The habitual critique of MPEs as sites of the removal of public regulation is derived from a US-context where laissez-faire rather than interventionist planning systems have predominated. More interventionist planning and policy contexts, such as that of NSW, are likely to result in the planning and delivery of MPEs involving extensive engagement of local and state government authorities. In NSW for instance, there is a history of creating State Environmental Planning Policies (e.g. SEPP 26, SEPP 56, SEPP 59) which require the master-planning of sites within specified Sydney regions. Moreover, local government authorities have been enthusiastic advocates of the use of master-plans as a mechanism for enhancing existing planning instruments⁵. Some councils (e.g. Randwick City Council, the City of Sydney) require the production of master-plans for all developments above a defined size. Others have used the Development Control Plan instrument to produce their own site-specific master-plans which are then enacted by private developers (e.g. Hornsby Westleigh Precinct DCP). As an additional master-planning approach, many authorities have required a staged development approval process for large residential developments wherein a general concept master-plan is considered by the planning authority before more detailed, phased applications for development approval are accepted. Not surprisingly then, local governments have been inclined to endorse master-plans as a means of achieving the integrated and holistic development of sites, securing the timely delivery of social and physical infrastructure, and enhancing their ability to meet local authority development objections across their jurisdiction. Moreover, a large number of master-planned estates across Sydney have been more directly publicly-driven. Landcom now focuses its activities on the delivery of master-planned estates in partnership with private developers. It is currently in the

⁵The term master-plan refers to a loosely defined mechanism of planning regulation over an entire site which produces an overall vision to guide development. The level of detail in that vision can vary enormously as can the scale at which it operates, from an entire suburb to a site for a few dozen dwellings. When the state government formed a Master-plan Review Taskforce, the Property Council of Australia’s (2003) submission complained that it was ‘not clear what a master-plan actually means as the definition in the regulations are broad and what is required of master-plans ranges for different sites and council areas on the whim of the Council. The proliferation of local governments’ deployment of master-plans in multiple ways resulted in the amendment of Environmental and Assessment Regulation 2000 as part of the 2005 reform of the NSW planning legislation. While Councils are now restricted to using DCPs or requiring Stated Development Approval process, their ability to intervene in what is commonly understood as a master-planning process remains strong.

process of developing 26 estates of various scales across the Sydney GMR. The process involves close monitoring of the detail of development applications by private developers. In the case of Victoria Park for instance, Landcom maintains ownership of the land until after the development firm lodges a development application, ensuring that it can veto any application that does not meet its master-planning aspirations.

Crucially, this means that master-planned development does not necessarily mean a diminution, through privatisation, of the public capacity to oversee and shape the direction of MPE development. Instead, the Sydney example that a variety of governance mechanisms are used to shape their delivery in ways that blur the notion of public/private, state/market dichotomy (also see Forsyth 2002 and Gleeson 2005). MPEs do not necessarily involve a process of privatisation but, rather, can involve complex and hybrid forms of regulation that guide their planning and delivery and their relationship to the public realm. Clearly, the policy context for MPE development and the form and content of public-private collaboration involved in their planning and delivery is critical to the form the MPE takes and fundamental to its integration with the direction of broader strategic development within its environs.

The *sixth* and final dimension is the extent to which, within the MPE, traditionally public elements are infused with privatism. This occurs across at least three domains: communal spaces, collective service and infrastructure provision, and institutions for community governance. Sydney's MPEs range from having all communal areas held fully under community title, therefore excluding unrestricted public access (e.g. Cape Cabarita at Concord, Macquarie Links at Campbelltown), to combinations of community title and publicly accessible communal spaces (e.g. Victoria Park), to estates with no community title (e.g. Glenfield at Campbelltown). When it comes to collective infrastructure and service provision, widespread privatisation appears to be a rarity, confined to the more fully gated examples. Conversely, however, there is evidence that the sequencing of public infrastructure roll-out and related public funding flows are shaped to provide state-funded infrastructure to greenfield MPEs. Finally MPEs may develop private governance structures at the community level to govern communal property and enforce adherence of restrictive covenants (e.g. body corporates) and, increasingly, to manage and nurture the process of community development within the estate. These can be sponsored by the MPE developers or contracted by residents for management by private firms rather than organised publicly. In the Illawarra's Hayward Bay development, for example, a consulting firm has been contracted to initiate a community group and establish connections among residents (Singer 2005). More extensive case study work is required to develop a better understanding of the range of private governance structures within Sydney's MPEs. In any case, there is a spectrum from public through to privatised across each of these domains. Where an MPE sits on this spectrum will be a fundamental determinant of the extent to which an estate remains embedded in public networks of space, infrastructure and local governance or develops as an enclave, exclusive of the public domain and seceding from the public realm.

CONCLUSION

This paper has made a case for broadening the research agenda on MPEs empirically, to incorporate the variety of forms they take, and analytically to extend to an additional set dimensions that, we argue, are likely to result in non-trivial differences in the social formations that result from MPE development. Drawing on extant examples of MPEs in the Sydney GMR we have attempted to unpack these dimensions. We argue that a better understanding of the interplay of these dimensions will be crucial to understanding the broader effects MPEs have on critical dimensions of urban sociability, social

diversity and inclusion, the parameters of socio-spatial differentiation and, ultimately, the depth of the collective life of cities.

It is clear that MPEs are no unitary entity. In fact, they are emerging for different reasons, and under a range of different conditions in differing urban and regional contexts. This has significant implications for whether these developments necessarily produce 'a balkanized landscape of inward looking communities' (Gleeson 2005: 5), whether they inevitably produce regressive, exclusionary and inequitable outcomes (e.g. Glasze 2002) and whether they result in an undermining of the public realm. It may be, as Grant and Mittelsteadt (2004) suggest that they should not be considered as a unified set of urban forms or that no single analytical framework will be able to account for the diversity of processes driving them and the diversity of outcomes derived from them. However, our ability to establish whether MPEs, in all their complexity, can be harnessed in ways that shape inclusive, diverse and equitable social landscapes will require further development of our understanding of the phenomenon.

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