School of Media, Culture and Creative Arts

Representing ecological threats
and negotiating green built environment

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Declaration

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any degree or diploma in any university.

Signature: ……………………………….

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Abstract

Amid a prevalence of textual references about human-induced ecological threats in contemporary society, several studies have investigated the discursive production of such threats and their solutions by policy-making institutions. Yet, this focus on institutional discourse has suggested a less comprehensive analysis of how ecological threats are represented by engaged citizens attempting to influence environmental policy through truth-producing public conversation. Out of this context, this thesis was devised to investigate ecological threat representation in relation to social negotiation of meanings of *green built environment*. Specifically, it was designed to answer the question of how representation of ecological threats affects the meaning of green built environment and the practices through which this meaning is produced. Answering this question required a method of investigating the positioning, disruption, stabilization and mutual functionalization of ecological threats and proposed solutions in urban planning discourse. Theoretical insights from cultural studies, critical theory, psychoanalysis, geography and media studies were incorporated into a method of analysing various types of public and media texts about ecological threats and a proposed green built environment – North Port Quay, in Fremantle, Western Australia.

The analysis found that an apparently universal global ecological threat, such as climate change, was read in heterogeneous ways; and these readings were particularly influenced by sensual experience of environmental objects. It also found that production of meaning of green built environment depended upon a subject reading solutions into an environmental narrative that mutually functionalized with any significant ecological threats read into the narrative. It found that spatially and temporally immediate threats were more meaningful and motivating than distant, future threats; and that people responded conservatively when they realized that a sensually experienced object of the environment faced immediate threat. These findings have implications for understanding the relations of imposing and resisting green zones of capital accumulation, and for understanding the separation of analysis from action in liberal democracy. The findings suggest a way out of ecological crisis through an ethics of ecological threat representation that acknowledges the operation

of affective investment in practical reason. This thesis is expected to make an interdisciplinary contribution, encouraging dialogue between urban planning theory and cultural studies as well as between critical theory and studies on sustainability. It should also further understandings of the complex negotiations of both ecological threats and green built environments.

Figures and Tables

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Abbreviations

ACCC   Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

ANU   Australian National University

CUSP   Curtin University Sustainability Policy

EPA   Environmental Protection Authority

FFC   Fremantle Football Club

GBCA   Green Building Council of Australia

IPCC   Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

NABERS   National Australian Built Environment Rating System

NPQ   North Port Quay

USA   United States of America

1   Introduction: Ecological threats & built environments

This thesis was written in response to the prevalence of ecological threats in contemporary public texts; as an investigation of how representation of these threats can influence society and its production of built environments. The thesis describes dynamics of ecological threat representation operating in the social negotiation of meanings of green built environment. This chapter introduces the context for this thesis and the research question arising from a synthesis of important issues within this context. It then summarizes key findings of the thesis in terms of the mutual functioning of threat and solution in discursive operation; spatial and temporal range in representation; inversion in common sense; and, sensuality in environmental discourse. The third section of this chapter describes the methodology used to answer the thesis research question which is, in sum, a critical discourse analysis of public and media texts containing both ecological threats and mention of a proposed 'Green city'[1] property development known as North Port Quay. The final section of the chapter deals with the organization of the thesis and provides descriptive outlines for the following chapters.

1.1   Context and research questions

This thesis was written in response to the contemporary prevalence of ecological threats in utterances promoting or legitimizing institutional reform. For example, Al Gore (2007) – a well-known articulator of climate change threat – advocated global institutional reform in favour of entrepreneurs and inventors to deal with this ecological threat. While representations of ecological threats are common in 21st century environmental discourses, further research is required into the impact that these representations have on social relations, policy and culture. Substantial scholarly work has been undertaken to describe the discursive production of ecological threats at an institutional level (De La Bruheze, 1992; Gottweis, 2008; Hajer, 1995) and the rise of ecological modernization as a solution to ecological threats (Young, 2000) and then carbon control (While, Jonas, & Gibbs, 2010) amid various categories of environmental discourse (Dryzek, 2005). However, little has

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[1] 'Green city an Oz first' was the headline of an article about the proposed North Port Quay project published on page 1 of the Fremantle Herald on 31 May 2008.

been published on how these discourses – which tend to be examined as they are reproduced within the policy-making networks of politicians, bureaucrats, industry representatives, lobbyists and scientists – are reproduced by engaged citizens attempting to influence the policy making of democratic institutions. Contests over built-environment proposals provide an exciting opportunity for the examination of ecological threat representations by a broad mix of subjects due to planning and building-industry practices through which built environments are constructed socially and physically in relation to their local contexts. The built environment is subject to municipal, neighbourhood, investor, designer, buyer and tenant scrutiny. It leaves a trail of texts in the public domain such as financial proposals, development plan submissions and municipal meeting minutes, building licence applications, building-code-compliance documentation, tender documents, texts about technologies incorporated into the built environment, advertisements, corporate and public relations materials, news articles and the physical form of the built environment itself. These texts interact with a multitude of other texts, produced for local, regional, national and international audiences, in negotiations by readers. With buildings accounting for approximately a third of all energy-related carbon dioxide emissions worldwide (Koeppel & Ürge-Vorsatz, 2007, p. 64), there have been calls for policy intervention to reduce the ecological impact of the built environment. In the contemporary discourse of building and property development industries, *green built environment* has been represented as performing better than standard built environments largely in terms of mitigating climate change (Miller, 2010). For the purpose of this thesis, green built environment covers a range of terms including green building, zero-energy building, carbon-neutral building, sustainable building, carbon-neutral city, green city and eco-city. Cole and Lorch (2003, pp. 2-4) have argued that such positive intervention does not just mean technical fixes but also social and cultural change because the built environment embodies the knowledge and priorities of its creators. The building industry in much of the world has produced green building councils (World Green Building Council, 2011) and certification systems for identifying and marketing 'green buildings'. However, the apparent stabilization of the meaning of green building through certification by national councils of building industry representatives is open to destabilization within the contexts of actual building sites because these places involve interests beyond building and property development industries. A proposed built

environment's appropriateness or transgressiveness tends to be negotiated in public spheres geographically related to the proposed building site, and these spheres typically interact with local democratic institutions that would regulate development planning and building processes for the site. The contingent stabilization of meaning in the public sphere of what is appropriate and what is transgressive is integral to governance in contemporary society, which relies upon social acceptance of particular meanings and the discursive practices through which potential meanings are produced. However, meanings and discursive practices are inherently unstable because they are contingent upon and contestable through discourse (Torfing, 1999, pp. 91-92). Having observed that representation of ecological threats is a key feature in the negotiation of meanings of green built environment (Kerr, 2008), the central research question for this thesis is: How does representation of ecological threats affect the meaning of green built environment and the practices through which this meaning is produced? In answering this question, the research objectives of this thesis were to identify discursive mechanisms operating in texts containing representations of ecological threats in discourses around a particular green built environment; to critically analyse the ways in which meaning of green built environment is negotiated through operation of these discursive mechanisms; to describe any significant impacts of these discursive mechanisms on practices in domains around green built environment; to further scholarly understandings of the operation of public conversation in liberal democracy; and, to contribute towards an ethics of ecological threat representation that could, ideally, help to improve the quality of public discussion about this important social issue.

To answer the research question and achieve the objectives of this thesis, a particular green built environment project was selected as an empirical case for textual analysis. The project was a property development concept known as North Port Quay (NPQ) in Fremantle, Western Australia. The concept was launched publicly in May 2008 by a consortium of property developers claiming that NPQ would revolutionize environmentally sustainable living and achieve the highest possible rating for environmental sustainability. In setting out to occupy 345 hectares of sea bed near Fremantle Port, the consortium claimed NPQ could demonstrate leadership in sustainable development by being 'the world's first carbon free development' ("Why can't Western Australia lead the world in sustainable development?," 2008).

However, this legitimization strategy collapsed by late 2009 as the consortium's proposed green built environment clashed with pre-existing imagining of Fremantle and environmental sustainability in a discourse of public concerns about the project. The selection of North Port Quay and the collection of texts for analysis will be described in more detail in section 1.3 of this chapter.

In critically analysing ecological threat representations and discursive dynamics in the negotiation of green built environment indicated by the NPQ texts, this multidisciplinary thesis is expected to contribute to the fields of cultural studies, critical theory, geography and media studies. The author hopes that insights from this research will support democratic institutional capacity on issues of nature, society and urbanization while contributing to professional knowledge in the fields of environmental advocacy, architecture, urban planning, media and politics. The analysis done here suggests that an ethics of ecological threat representation should be developed to provide a way out of global ecological crisis. Such an ethics would work towards a receding horizon of environmental justice. It would work towards this horizon by recognizing – within ways of thinking – the affective investments of others in an object[2] of the environment and the antagonism produced when these investments are threatened. Put simply, the thesis suggests that recognizing aesthetic proximity in practices of democracy is a means to pollution reduction.

1.2   Summary of findings

Four key findings arose from this researcher's analysis of the empirical case of the contested green built environment project of North Port Quay at the heart of this thesis. The findings related to the mutual functioning of threat and solution in discursive operation; spatial and temporal range in representation; sensuality in environmental discourse; and, inversion in common sense of conservative and radical politics. Firstly, the important role of mutually functionalizing discursive mechanisms operating in environmental discourse (Hajer, 1995, pp. 272-273) was confirmed. The case demonstrated that *a lack of mutual functionalizing discursive*

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[2] The relation of object and affective investment is used throughout the thesis in the psychoanalytical sense of the relation between Lacan's *objet petit a* and Freud's drives as elucidated by Joan Copjec (2004, pp. 32-43).

mechanisms in representation disrupted signification of a green built environment. Mediated representation of the North Port Quay built environment signified various threats to audience members without also signifying solutions to these particular threats. This indicated an absence of universal perception of ecological threat representation. The lack of signified solutions in subject perceptions supported disruption of what the proponents' apparently intended to be a popular reading of the project as a green built environment. The second finding is that representations of solutions to distant, future, ecological threats were undermined readily by representations of local, immediate, threats to the environment. Successful resistance to radical environmental change, the empirical case showed, relied on a shifting of *spatial and temporal proximity in discussions* about the project from its proponents' proposed journey towards a sustainability utopia back to environmental struggles of the local immediate time where threats to aesthetics motivated social action. Thirdly, a local *popular movement was unified by desire to restore a sensually-experienced object* of the environment. This desire for restoration – represented as defence of 'our beaches' – was sufficiently moving and its representation sufficiently ambiguous for it to become the *empty signifier* required for the formation of a popular movement (Laclau, 2005, pp. 104-120), which could be reproduced so long as representation of the movement's action mutually functioned with the desire. The fourth finding is that texts of this local popular movement indicated a *conservative response to radical spatial imposition* of the proposed green built environment even though this response supported the electoral success of an apparently more radical political party (politically to the left of Labor) than the incumbent Labor party. The threat of spatial radicalism represented by the proposed built environment of North Port Quay triggered a conservative reaction operating through local subjects' drives to recover lost objects. This conservative response involved apparently radical politicians standing for conservation of existing places and place relations against the threat of radical change driven by the latest relations of capital accumulation. Put succinctly, the analysis suggests that signification of a solution to an ecological threat depends upon a subject's particular reading of threat inscribed in representation of the solution. The study suggests that spatial and temporal range in threat representation is a significant determinant of a threat's agency. It suggests that common sense understanding of radicalism and conservatism in urban development is inverted in contemporary society. The study also suggests that affective investment is agency for

democratic engagement in urban development politics, and that this investment not only produces antagonism but also the possibility for popular movements to aggregate in response to threats of aesthetic loss. At a broader level, the thesis suggests a way out of ecological crisis through an ethics of ecological threat representation that acknowledges the operation of affective investment in practical reason.

The thesis has implications for understanding how contemporary capital relations impose green built environments – as represented by expert representatives of building and property industries – in places where they may produce conservative reactions, antagonism and local popular movements. The dynamics of spatial and temporal gaps in ecological threat representations influence the production of policy and the legitimization of governance through liberal democracy as demonstrated in this study. Modifications to urban planning regulatory processes in Australia are shifting decision making for significant projects from the municipal level up to regional and state levels to smooth the process of realizing planning approvals for significant property development projects. These modifications risk a disregard in policy making of articulations of local citizens' perceptions of these projects' threats to their objects of affective investment. In other words, planning approvals may be given for a project by a state body in the absence of a local democratic institution that can deal with a local movement of people antagonized by their perceptions of the project's threat to their relations with objects of the local environment. The thesis suggests that more research is required into the democratic institutional handling of antagonisms and local populist movements through state and regional planning agencies. Such research could provide important insights into reproduction of the legitimacy of liberal democracy in situations where local antagonisms in relation to built environment production may be handled less democratically than in the past, even if these built environments are represented as solving threats of global ecological crisis.

1.3   Research methodology

Through a multi-method approach involving limited quantitative methodology within an overall qualitative research framework for studying discourse (Rapley & Flick,

2007, pp. 126-131), discourse analysis techniques were applied in a close reading of selected texts containing representations of ecological threats organized in an empirical study of a proposed green built environment project – North Point Quay in Fremantle, Western Australia. Applying an analytical approach that follows Foucault (1994) on regimes of practices, Hajer (1995) on environmental discourse and Chouliaraki (2008a) on naturalization, this approach enabled a description of how green built environment was negotiated during attempts to introduce and naturalize it within a local cultural milieu. The literature review (Chapter 2) was an integral component of this methodological approach, synthesizing theories of sustaining meaning that would enable the thesis to go beyond previous studies on the politics of environmental discourse. The literature supported an analysis describing not only institutional truth production but also popular truth production and their relations. It provided a way of examining how representations of ecological threats performed as discursive resources in urban development negotiations. This included a review of studies on the discursive production of ecological threats at an institutional level (De La Bruheze, 1992; Gottweis, 2008; Hajer, 1995) and the rise of ecological modernization (Young, 2000) then carbon control (While et al., 2010) as solutions to ecological threats. However, the specific problem posed by this thesis required a deeper understanding of how global ecological threats, such as climate change, interacted with local threats discursively produced in relation to the particular space of a proposed property development. To solve this problem, theoretical insights were adopted on the discursive implications of the particularity of universal representations (Laclau, 1996, pp. 20-35). Insights from the fields of cultural studies, critical geography, psychoanalysis and media studies were incorporated in an inter-disciplinary methodological approach that could address the disruption, stabilization, contestation and mutual functionalization of heterogeneous ecological threats in urban planning discourse. This approach supported an examination of how discursive dynamics of ecological threat representation influenced the production of meanings in the constitution of whether a proposed built environment would be a transgression of place (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, pp. 145-151). Research was undertaken in the following steps to achieve the thesis objectives:

1. In February 2009, Western Australian print media and the Internet were scanned for news of proposed green built environments in the metropolitan Perth region that were having their legitimacy contested in the public sphere

by way of ecological threat representation. Of several contested projects the proposed North Point Quay property development project[3] in Fremantle, Western Australia, was selected as the best case for empirical study because a substantial volume of texts had been produced around it including some that indicated moments of crisis (Fairclough, 1992, p. 230) that could potentially reveal aspects of environmental discourse otherwise naturalized. NPQ was also suitable because its discursive contest was ongoing at the time and the proposed development site was accessible[4] to the author, enabling competent text interpretation (Fairclough, 1992, pp. 198-199) within the local setting;

2. The context of the empirical case of NPQ was then researched and significant discursive threads from this context were described;

3. Newspaper, television and Internet media was scanned and public meetings attended in the process of collecting an archive (Rapley & Flick, 2007, p. 10) of 723 texts containing references to NPQ produced between 29 May 2008 and 31 December 2009. These texts were collected in the form of photographs or scans of pages from local and state newspapers and digital copies of related news blogs and online polling, digital audio-visual copies of news pieces from ABC1 Perth television, minutes in PDF format and digital audio and audio-visual recordings of meetings of the City of Fremantle Council, PDF files of Hansard of the Parliament of Western Australia, digital audio recordings of public forums and digital copies of Internet pages by three parties which best captured variation and variety of website representations (Flick, 2007, pp. 27-28). The archive is described in more detail in section 4.1 of Chapter 4;

4. A corpus of 180 discourse samples were selected from the archive on the basis of a text containing a reference not just to NPQ but also an explicit or implicit reference to an ecological threat;

5. Texts in the corpus were transcribed and stored in an NVivo 9 server as word processor texts and digital images for coding and analysis;

6. These texts and images stored in the NVivo server were reflexively coded (Rapley & Flick, 2007, p. 130) by media sources, speaker cases, thematic

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[3] The project's developer is a member of the Green Building Council of Australia (n.d.-b) and claimed to seek the council's Green Star accreditation for the designs of the site's commercial buildings (*North Port Quay reaches for the stars*, 2008).

[4] The analyst's university campus and residence (since 2005) were both located approximately 20 kilometres from the proposed development site.

nodes (*NVivo 8 Fundamentals: Starting to work with your material*, 2008, pp. 15-102) and sets (*Moving on in NVivo 8: Exploring, visualizing and sharing your material*, 2008, pp. 21-23) of chronological phase and media genre. After coding, all texts and images were subject to close readings by the researcher by broad chronological phase and by significant discursive theme supported by querying the NVivo server;

7. Methods of corpus-supported critical discourse analysis (Lee, 2008, p. 90) were applied by querying the NVivo server to identify significant objects and trace transformations of texts in the corpus;

8. Significant indications of the effects of discursive mechanisms (Hajer, 1995, pp. 268-276), intertextuality (Shapiro, 2001, p. 318), interdiscursivity (Bhatia, 2008, p. 175) and multimodality (O'Toole, 2006, p. 24) in the corpus were identified, described and analysed;

9. During the study, the researcher spoke to several social actors who were identified as speaker cases in the corpus. These discussions helped the researcher to understand the context of the NPQ contest, to identify texts relating to this contest and to check preliminary findings (Jewitt & Jones, 2008).

1.4 Organization of thesis and chapter outlines

The thesis introduces its research question, context and research methodology before describing where this research is situated within scholarly literature. The thesis then focuses on answering the research question of how representation of ecological threats affects the meaning of green built environment and the practices through which this meaning is produced. The answer to this question is sought through critical discourse analysis of the empirical case of North Port Quay. A single case was adopted rather than a series of cases in order to focus deeply within a case on the production of meaning through intertextual, multimodal interdiscursivity. That is, to seek indications of how meaning in subjects is produced between texts of various types and between discourses articulated within a particular time and place. The thesis is more interested in the complex production of meaning in a single case than in the identification of similarities and differences in meaning production across several cases. In approaching the case, significant discursive threads running through

social struggles around North Port Quay are identified and described. Criteria are then presented for selecting texts about North Port Quay for inclusion in the case archive. Narrower criteria are then presented for selecting texts from this large archive for inclusion in the corpus for analysis. The analysis is then presented in the form of a close reading of texts in broad chronological phases from the launch of the project, through its contestation in the context of a state election, through its relation to environmental credibility in Australia, through its apparent rejection in a Fremantle by-election and then through its final dismissal in the context of a Fremantle mayoral election. Important discursive mechanisms operating in the North Port Quay case are identified and then described in more detail to provide a deeper understanding of the operation of these discursive mechanisms in the formation of environmental social movements. The thesis then reflects on the implications of the North Port Quay findings for understanding how ecological threat representation influences the meaning of green built environment and practices involved in producing such meaning. Finally the thesis recommends further research in terms of identifying key discursive mechanisms in other contests over proposed green built environments. It also recommends research into the social implications of the current government policy shift away from engaged local publics attempting to influence urban planning decision-making by municipal councils towards constructed publics guiding urban planning decision-making by regional or state level government agencies. The thesis suggests that such research should focus on how antagonisms, arising in response to changes in local environments, are worked out through democratic institutions and other means.

Chapter 2 introduces scholarly literature that provides deeper context for the thesis and informs the methodology applied in answering the research question. The chapter introduces the epistemic context of this study in relation to writing on the emergence of risk society and ecological crisis as well as in relation to the contemporary cultural logic described in critical studies of urban built environments and discourses of their reproduction. Broadly, this section of the literature review describes a shift in public perception of the reliability of scientific expertise over the last century from a modern logic of scientific objectivity to a postmodern logic of scientific subjectivity with consequences for the politics of urban planning and environmental discourse. The literature indicates that contemporary cosmopolitan

society has a chronic awareness of the risk of global ecological crises as well as the subjectivity of knowledge, which provides agency for affective investment in objects around which local popular movements can aggregate. The chapter then reviews representations of ecological threats in literature chronologically, and the tendency for such representations, since at least the late 18th century, to be employed alongside calls for governmental reform. The limits of Earth's capacity to support the world's population or the industrial needs of populations is a theme that has run through ecological threat representation from Thomas Malthus' writing (1986, p. 584) at the turn of the 19th century to the discourse of sustainable development and, more recently, through discourses of ecological modernization and carbon control. Since the early 1990s, the representation of ecological threats has been of interest to scholars looking at truth production through discursive contests and the impacts of these contests on government policy. The chapter then examines the intersection of green built environment and policy production in contemporary society and describes discursive traces of this intersection at the turn of the 19th century in Ebenezer Howard's (1946) Garden City attempt to reform society through spatial reform towards – what we could now call – a green built environment. Calls for spatial reform alongside institutional reform in spatial governance practices have been made in the field of urban planning for green built environments (Kenworthy, 2006). These calls for reforms in spatial governance practices tend to favour decision making by bureaucratic elites, guided by constructed publics and driven by the priorities of capital. However, limiting spatial governance to the domain of engineers and other experts guided by futuristic vision statements of constructed stakeholder groups may deny other possibilities of civil agency, and as such may reduce the democratic opportunities of citizens. This section introduces literature on the complex practices in which policy is developed through contemporary democratic institutions, the media and citizens.

The last section in Chapter 2 reviews literature that informs the methodology of discourse analysis applied to the North Port Quay case to understand how representation of ecological threats influences the meaning of green built environment and the practices through which this meaning is produced. The literature at the start of this section describes how truth was produced in relation to ecological threats in previous cases, particularly how systems of meaning were

constructed and stabilized through discourses. The institutional dimension of discourses is described and related to the credibility and positioning of actors within communities producing environmental policies. Media and spatial practices in discourse are discussed briefly and incorporated into a discourse analysis approach that examines not only truth production in institutionalized policy networks but also its reproduction by citizens who may resist the institutionalized version of truth through alternative meanings of the institutional language in use. To put it concisely, the discourse analysis approach synthesized from literature presented in this section is not just concerned with the production of truth in institutional networks of interested credible actors (Hajer, 1995), it is also concerned with the production of truth by citizens and how it influences the reproduction of truth in institutions of liberal democracy (Dahlgren, 2009). The synthesis incorporates insights from literature on the open negotiation of meaning by subjects, on the temporary stabilization of meaning systems in hegemonic projects, on the production of social antagonism when systems of meaning are disrupted, on elements beyond signification that disrupt meaning through the power of sensory experience, on drives that motivate subjects, and on the emotional responses of subjects stabilizing meaning and producing community ideals. These insights inform an analytical approach to investigating environmental discourse in the public sphere that integrates theories of sustaining meaning beyond previous environmental discourse studies that have tended to focus on the reproduction of specific cognitive commitments by interested actors and their positioning in institutional networks.

Chapter 3 introduces the empirical case of the NPQ property development, proposed for a site adjacent to Rous Head at the mouth of the Swan River in Fremantle, Western Australia. Significant fields in the discursive contest of North Port Quay are described in this chapter to provide context for the discourse analysis to follow. A series of diverse but cognate readings map out the symbolic and mythic references as well as cultural narratives that structure public imagining of Fremantle and adjacent coastal areas. Firstly, the discursive construction of land-entitlement is described through time in space around the proposed project site. This description focuses on the construction of beliefs about land ownership and public versus private occupation rights to land in Fremantle. Secondly, the imagining of Fremantle community is introduced and illustrated by how this community identity was reproduced and

reworked successfully in the 1990s by the Fremantle Football club. Thirdly, a solicitation of the sacred (Gelder & Jacobs, 1998, pp. 22-25) inscribed in Fremantle's aesthetics of elegance (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, pp. 149-150) is described via a comparative reading of the eastwards passage through High Street in Fremantle and the eastwards passage through Sukuh Temple in Central Java. This comparative reading helps us to understand the significance of the temple iconography in Fremantle's streetscape produced in the early decades of European settlement and its more recent preservation and reproduction at the hands of local and national heritage movements. This reading introduces the sense of architectural transgression which was a significant element in the NPQ contest. Fourthly, the ocean beaches around Fremantle are described and their significance introduced in terms of their agency for pleasure and their symbolic function as Australia's borderland. Cultural transgression of beach experiences is discussed briefly in relation to several recent, coastal, property development projects. The chapter closes with a brief description of the launch, discourse and rejection of NPQ within this complex discursive context.

Chapter 4, the largest in the thesis, contains an analysis of the corpus of North Port Quay texts in broad chronological order. The chapter begins with a description of the archive of 723 texts collected about NPQ including an outline of the media technologies, genres and likely audiences of the texts. Broadly, the texts included news items, advertisements, editorials, letters, blog comments, presentations, cartoons, photographs, parliamentary Hansard, recordings of municipal meetings and other audio-visual materials. An explanation is provided on how 180 of these texts were selected for inclusion in the corpus for analysis. Broadly, texts were selected if they included at least one reference to an overt ecological threat such as 'rising sea level' or at least one reference to a covert threat such as 'sustainable development', with its suggested limits to Earth's carrying capacity (see Chapter 2 for a review of literature on sustainable development). The textual analysis is described in chronological discursive phases. The first phase deals with the public relations launch of the NPQ project on 29 May 2008 and its immediate mediation which involved constructing a controversy over the project and suggesting how NPQ images were read by credible voices and would be read by media audiences. Despite a public relations attempt to position NPQ as 'a world class model of sustainable development', the immediate media response problematized some of the

environmental claims and included readings of the project as a walled playground for a wealthy elite that threatened the environment of public beaches as well as public access to beaches.

The second phase analyses texts that relate to the politics of government approvals required for North Port Quay to be realized; many of these texts position the project as an important issue for candidates in the state election held on 6 September 2008. In the lead up to the election, proponents of the project attempted to demonstrate public support for the project in Fremantle and in the neighbouring coastal suburb of Cottesloe despite the incumbent local members of parliament standing firmly against the project. This demonstration of public support became untenable in media reporting on non-objective polling methods and the dubious work of NPQ's main public relations consultant, and because of the large proportion of passionate newspaper letters-to-the-editor published against the project; some positioning NPQ as an encroachment on the utopian community of Fremantle and a threat to the naturalized state of Fremantle's urban environment. Whereas, some letters in favour of NPQ positioned the project as progress towards making Perth a 'world class landmark' within a naturalized neoliberal competition of cities. As a political storm raging around NPQ was constructed in the media, the project's 'green city' credentials soon collapsed in a struggle between experts from different universities reported in the local press. A local university's sustainability expert, whose department had the most to gain from NPQ's realization, positioned the project as 'carbon-free' in terms of future operating emissions post construction while other academic experts derided this approach for ignoring the carbon-emissions and other environmental costs of the project's immediate construction (D'Anger, 2008a). Texts during this phase indicate an intensive discursive struggle over the scales of spatial, temporal and social frameworks in which the costs and benefits of NPQ could be argued. Advertisements for the project asked audiences to imagine ideal futures for themselves in an ecological modernist paradise: the world's most sustainable urban environment with abundant clean energy, clean beaches and abundant leisure time for clean family living. Meanwhile, the published voices of citizens and aspiring electoral representatives, mainly Adele Carles and Lynn MacLaren, from The Greens party argued that they didn't want their beaches and other elements of Fremantle disrupted by another coastal property development nightmare. The Labor

government was replaced by a Liberal government at the state election in which Labor narrowly held its lower-house seat of Fremantle against a major swing to Carles. Meanwhile, MacLaren was voted into the state parliament's upper house. The project manager of NPQ said the consortium would approach the new government for approval of its plan and register its designs with the Green Building Council of Australia (D'Anger, 2008c). However, the texts suggested that by September 2008, the project lacked the expression of public support and environmental credibility that it would need to gain approval from the new government of Western Australia.

The third phase focuses on an analysis of media texts carrying suggestions of NPQ being or not being green wash. In late 2008, the principle academic expert supporting NPQ attempted to defuse green wash accusations by arguing that critics were unaware of the latest technological advances that would enable the project to be 'carbon free', a term that was read commonly as meaning 'carbon neutrality'. This expert's claims were countered by other academic experts who challenged the objectivity of this expert and argued that no evidence had been presented to suggest the project would have environmental benefits. NPQ released a new advertisement in February 2009 that reaffirmed its claimed potential to lead the world in sustainable development ("North Port Quay can lead the world in sustainable development," 2009). This advertisement contained a list of overseas examples of ecological modernization projects mostly relating to green built environment below the subheading: 'North Port Quay aims to combine all these innovations to build a sustainable new community'. However, NPQ associations with sustainable development were undermined by media reporting of an Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) enquiry into NPQ's environmental claims.

In the fourth phase, a new series of advertisements for North Port Quay – associating the project not with ecological modernist urbanism but with a common sense of the site's beach environment – were introduced in highly visible ways after Labor's Jim McGinty announced he would resign as the state parliamentary member for Fremantle. This phase describes how NPQ became a major issue articulated in candidates' campaign materials and in candidates' live and mediated debates. The Labor party fielded the Fremantle Mayor as its candidate defending the seat against a popular challenge by Carles. While Carles stood clearly against NPQ in defence of

public beaches as did other candidates, Tagliaferri said he would keep an open mind about the project and tried to shift electoral debate away from the NPQ issue to the ecological threat of contamination from transporting lead carbonate through Fremantle. Several minor independent candidates announced they supported NPQ but then a scandal broke in the media that at least one of these candidates had financial interests linked to its consortium. In the construction of this news, scandal about candidates having financial interests in supporting the project was associated with a university expert's endorsement of the project's misleading environmental credentials. The Greens presented feminine images of the party and its candidate in the final weeks of the campaign, particularly the semiotics of Carles as mother. The campaign represented Carles protecting Port Beach and Fremantle's port facilities from intrusion by the 'Dubai-style' development of North Port Quay. The NPQ consortium attempted to appropriate the popular beach image through its own feminine spokesperson as its public relations campaign evolved in response to Carles' by-election campaign. However, the consortium failed to gain a popular reading of its spokeswoman as a competent mother defending our beaches. This meaning stabilized around Carles and helped her win the Fremantle by-election in May 2009. This was a historic victory in terms of an end to 85 years of Labor representation in the seat and the first time that The Greens party had won a lower-house seat in any state parliament of Australia.

In the fifth phase, North Port Quay may have disappeared from public representations around state politics but it remained a controversial issue within municipal politics until the Fremantle mayoral election in October 2009. In June, the Fremantle Council debated a motion to formally oppose the NPQ proposal and resolved to have its planning committee make a formal report on whether the project should be allowed to proceed. In July, a storm caused significant damage to the beaches around Fremantle and tore down a NPQ billboard, further disrupting the consortium's attempt to naturalize the project in place. This event supported the public position of Brad Pettitt, a university expert who had consistently argued against the environmental credibility of NPQ in media reports. Pettitt argued that climate change leading to fierce coastal storms was making coastal property development unsafe and unsustainable. Pettitt, also of The Greens party, announced that he would run for the position of mayor, and did so by articulating opposition to

NPQ as a key campaign platform. Pettitt structured his mayoral election campaign on an alternative green city concept that included an appreciation of Fremantle's existing built environment and a vision to protect its 'economic and social heritage', which he argued was under serious threat. The campaign was about inclusion in local democratic decision making against the backdrop of the threat of planning authorization being shifted from municipal councils up to state planning agencies, which could enable projects like NPQ to proceed without authorization by the local municipality. In late September, the Fremantle Council formally adopted its planning committee's recommendation that the NPQ project be rejected. On 19 October 2009, Pettitt was declared winner in the Fremantle mayoral election, signalling an end to tenable representation of NPQ having significant local support or legitimacy as a solution to ecological threats; at least before audiences in the time and place of this study.

Chapter 5 synthesises insights into the operation of ecological threats as discursive mechanisms in negotiations of green built environment gained from the textual analysis by chronological phase described in Chapter 4. The insights are analysed in relation to theories of discourse described in Chapter 2 and the discursive context described in Chapter 3. The insights are presented in four sections, each describing a reason why proponents' attempts to associate green built environment with North Port Quay failed in its popular readings. The first section describes how proponents' representations of NPQ lacked a mutually functionalizing discursive mechanism that could stabilize its signification of green built environment among Fremantle audiences. Images of NPQ signified particular ecological threats without signifying solutions to these threats, according to many in these audiences. This lack of solutions to these particular ecological threats disrupted proponents' intended reading of NPQ as green built environment; thereby indicating that *a lack of mutual functionalizing discursive mechanisms in representation disrupts signification* of green built environment. The second section describes how proponents' representations of NPQ as a solution to distant, future ecological threats were undermined by other speakers' representations of NPQ as a local, immediate threat to their environment. This successful resistance to NPQ relied on a shifting of *spatial and temporal proximity in discussions* about the project from proponents' proposed journey towards a sustainability utopia back to environmental struggles of the local

immediate time, where threats to aesthetics were powerfully evocative and could motivate social action. The third section describes how the local immediate ecological threats inscribed in NPQ stimulated construction of a discursive frontier behind which a variety of demands aggregated around a local popular defence of 'our beaches'. Speakers in this local popular movement, which carried several members of The Greens Party to elected office, claimed NPQ was a threat to the environment of the people. This local *popular movement was unified by desire to restore a sensually-experienced object* of the environment; defending 'our beaches' was sufficiently moving and yet ambiguous to act as the empty signifier contingently unifying people with heterogeneous claims in a popular movement. The fourth section described how this local popular movement was a *conservative response to the radical spatial imposition* of NPQ. The threat of NPQ's spatial radicalism triggered a conservative reaction operating through local subjects' drives to recover lost objects, as indicated in the election campaign materials of Adele Carles of The Greens Party. This successful campaign involved apparently radical acts by an apparently radical party in support of conserving existing places and place relations against the threat of radical changes – such as NPQ – driven by new relations of capital accumulation. The process of popular reading and local populist representation made NPQ an untenable green built environment for Fremantle audiences and broader Western Australian audiences.

The sixth and final chapter draws together the key findings to answer the research question precisely as follows: Producing a persuasive representation of green built environment is dependent on an intended green built environment's multiplicity of readings mutually functionalizing with conservative responses to a contextually associated ecology of threats; where conservative response is motivated by the sensation of a spatially and temporally immediate threat to the desired restoration of sensual experience of an object of the environment. What is the significance of this finding? Firstly, it has implications for the relations of contemporary capital through which large green built environments are imposed on places; producing conservative reactions, antagonism and perhaps popular movements. Secondly, there are implications for policy production and the legitimization of governance through liberal democracy from the dynamics of spatial and temporal gaps in ecological threat representations identified in this study. Thirdly, the power of affective

investment in discourse has implications for the discursive production and legitimization of environmental policy and research into this discursive process. The implications of this thesis suggest that an ethics of ecological threat representation may provide a way out of global ecological crisis. Such an ethics, working towards a receding horizon of environmental justice, would recognize the affective investments of others in objects of the environment and the antagonism produced when these investments are threatened. The thesis suggests that recognizing *aesthetic proximity in practices of democracy* could reduce the toxicity of late modernity by engaging citizens in the environmental issues in which their affective investments are at stake.

2   Literature review: Aesthetics of ecological threats

The previous chapter outlined the context, research question, findings, research methodology and organization of this thesis. This chapter reviews literature informing the analysis described in subsequent chapters. This analysis integrates theories of sustaining meaning beyond those of previous studies on the politics of environmental discourse. Literature for this thesis supports an analysis describing not only institutional truth production but also popular truth production and their relations. This chapter introduces the principal scholarly literature supporting the thesis by resolving the problem of understanding how representations of ecological threats could perform as discursive resources in urban development negotiations. Substantial previous work has been undertaken to describe the discursive production of ecological threats at an institutional level (De La Bruheze, 1992; Gottweis, 2008; Hajer, 1995) and the rise of ecological modernization as a solution to ecological threats (Young, 2000) then carbon control (While et al., 2010) amid various categories of environmental discourse (Dryzek, 2005). However, the problem posed by this thesis requires a method of understanding how global ecological threats, such as climate change, interact with local threats that are discursively produced in relation to the particular places of a proposed property development space. Broadly, the method must incorporate a way of understanding the discursive implications of particular universal representations in the local context of the case study. Specifically, an approach is required to address how global and local threats disrupt, stabilize, contest and mutually functionalize each other in urban planning discourse. To solve this problem, an inter-disciplinary approach has been adopted that incorporates insights in literature from fields that could broadly be described as cultural studies, critical geography, psychoanalysis and media studies. Much of this literature acknowledges radical shifts in cultural production since the mid 19th century, and descriptions of these shifts provide insights that can be used to unpack and understand the constitution of contemporary environmental discourse around a particular urban development issue. Literature that proves the existence of ecological threats or that proscribes their solution is only of interest here in so far as it can provide context for this thesis and insights into the operation of environmental

discourse. This thesis is not about solving an ecological crisis, it is about the politics of representing the crisis.

The chapter begins with a section reviewing literature on risk society and the postmodern urban condition. This section introduces the epistemic context of the thesis in relation to writing on the emergence of 'risk society' (Beck, 1995) and ecological crisis as well as in relation to the contemporary cultural logic described in critical studies of urban built environments and discourses of their reproduction. Broadly, this section describes a shift in public perception of the reliability of scientific expertise over the last century from a modern logic of scientific objectivity to a postmodern logic of scientific subjectivity with consequences for the politics of urban planning and environmental discourse. Studies of this shift provide a foundation for understanding the epistemic context within which ecological threats are represented and the meanings of green built environment negotiated in contemporary society. The literature indicates that contemporary cosmopolitan society has a chronic awareness of the risk of global ecological crises as well as the subjectivity of knowledge, providing agency for affective investment in objects around which local popular movements can aggregate.

The second section of this chapter describes principal literature on environmental discourse and insights into the representation of ecological threats. It reviews representations of ecological threats in literature chronologically, and describes a tendency for such representations, at least since the late 18th century, to coincide with calls for governmental reform. This coincidence of environmental and reformist discourses is illustrated by the theme about the limits of Earth's capacity to support the world's growing population or its industrial needs. This theme has run through ecological threat representation from the late 18th century writing of Thomas Malthus (1986, p. 584) to the discourse of sustainable development and, more recently, through discourses of ecological modernization and carbon control. The final part of this section reviews recent studies on the representation of ecological threats and its influence on the production of government policy through discursive contests in institutional policy networks.

The third section focuses on literature that illuminates the discourse of green built environment as well as policy making and the media. It examines the intersection of green built environment and policy production in contemporary society and describes discursive traces of this intersection at the turn of the 19th century in Ebenezer Howard's (1946) Garden City attempt to reform society through spatial reform. Calls for spatial reform alongside institutional reform are echoed in contemporary scholarship on spatial governance practices by scholars in the fields of urban planning and green built environment. This literature favours decision making by bureaucratic elites, guided by constructed publics and driven by the priorities of capital. However, other literature suggests that limiting spatial governance to the domain of engineers and other experts guided by futuristic vision statements of constructed stakeholder groups would deny other possibilities of civil agency and thereby constrain democracy. This section introduces literature on the complex practices through which government policy has been developed in the relations of democratic institutions, the media and citizens.

The fourth section of this chapter reviews literature that informs the discourse analysis techniques applied to the texts in the North Port Quay case to understand how representation of ecological threats influences the meaning of green built environment and the practices through which this meaning is produced. The literature describes truth production around ecological threats in previous cases, particularly how systems of meaning were constructed and stabilized in discourse. The institutional dimensions of discourse are then described and related to the credibility and positioning of actors within communities producing environmental policies. Media and spatial practices in discourse are then discussed briefly and key insights drawn for incorporation into a discourse analysis approach that examines not only truth production in institutionalized policy networks but also its production by citizens who may resist the institutionalized version of truth through alternative meanings of the institutional language in use. The discourse analysis approach synthesized from literature presented in this section is not just concerned with the production of truth in institutional networks of interested credible actors, it is also concerned with the production of truth by citizens and how citizens' truths influence the reproduction of truth in policy-making institutions. The synthesis incorporates insights from literature on the open negotiation of meaning by subjects, on the

temporary stabilization of meaning systems in hegemonic projects, on the production of social antagonism when systems of meaning are disrupted, on elements beyond signification that disrupt meaning through the power of sensory experience, on drives that motivate subjects, and on the emotional responses of subjects stabilizing meaning and producing community ideals. The synthesis informs an analytical approach to investigating environmental discourse in the public sphere that integrates theories of sustaining meaning beyond previous environmental discourse studies that have tended to focus on the reproduction of specific cognitive commitments by interested actors and their positioning in institutional networks. The North Port Quay case was approached for analysis through this synthesis of insights from the literature.

2.1   Risk society and the postmodern urban condition

This section describes a broad shift in public perception of the reliability of scientific expertise over the last century from a modern logic of scientific objectivity to a postmodern logic of scientific subjectivity with great consequences for the politics of urban planning (Dear, 2000, pp. 47-207) and environmental discourse (Latour, 2004, pp. 24-25). Studies of this shift provide a foundation for understanding the context within which ecological threats are represented and the meanings of green built environment negotiated in contemporary society. At the heart of this epistemic shift is an awareness of the risk of ecological crisis produced in modern institutions described by Ulrich Beck (1995, p. 127; 2011, pp. 1349-1354). However, Beck's (1995, p. 143) description of risk society and how modern institutions could mitigate risk through reflexivity has been criticized: firstly, for failing to acknowledge the role of economic power in restructuring a hegemonic order (Harvey, 2009; Mouffe, 2005, pp. 82-87); secondly, for assuming the rationality of subjects without acknowledging non-rational dimensions of meaning making (Dibley & Neilson, 2010). Zizek (2010, p. 328) described popular reaction to the risk of ecological crisis in the following terms: 'we *know* the (ecological) catastrophe is possible, probable even, yet we do not *believe* it will really happen'. A recent empirical study (Waisbord & Peruzzotti, 2009, p. 706) of a popular environmental movement found the social construction of risk anchored 'in nationalistic frames and localized politics' rather than in Beck's cosmopolitan reflexivity because journalism relied on local citizens as legitimate

primary definers of environmental risk (p. 704). The literature raises questions about how the gap has been constituted between Beck's rational cosmopolitan subject responding to global ecological threats and the apparently less-rational local subject identified in popular responses to ecological and environmental threats.

This gap was produced in the age of postmodernism (Torfing, 1999, p. 60) – among postmodern subjects (Zylinska, 1998, p. 97) – dominated by the logic of multinational capitalism (Jameson, 1984, p. 55). Postmodernism itself resists definitive description by any objective authority in postmodern terms. However, it can be described reliably yet contingently in relation to other modes of thinking in an acknowledged political mode of knowledge production. As an example, the most reliable definition of postmodernism according to the Urban Dictionary website on 25 October 2010 – with 261 'up' votes and 86 'down' votes – was written by 'entris' on 17 February 2005. Entris' definition – above which one can click a hyperlink button to 'buy postmodern mugs, tshirts and magnets' – of postmodernism is:

> A reaction to the work of Modern philosophers, most of whom created vast systems of meaning founded upon one central concept. In many religions, the central and beginning premise is some supreme being or concept. The postmodernist critique removes that central concept, it "decenters" the system of meaning. Postmodernism points out that all systems of meaning are in constant negotiation and flux, therefore claims of transcendent morality are suspect. Furthermore, postmodernism critiques all claims of "objective" truth by revealing that human subjectivity always exists in every truth proposition. (entris, 2005)

The Urban Dictionary is postmodern in the sense that it is a product of a decentred global network that Frederic Jameson (1984, pp. 78-80) called multinational capitalism, a third stage after monopoly/imperialist capitalism and market capitalism. Although the moral underpinning of the website is apparently a democratic ideal in the knowledge production of language, its producer and controller, Urban Dictionary LLC, represents itself as an organization of anonymity without any history except 'founded in 1999' shown on a page soliciting advertising (Urban Dictionary, n.d.) or place except 'PO Box 7775' in San Francisco found on a page describing contractual undertakings of the organization and its users (Urban Dictionary, 2008). This implies a quite different episteme to the Enlightenment mode of thinking indicated in earlier

lexicographical products such as the *Dictionary of the English Language* published in 1755, which represents clearly on its title page the author and reliability of knowledge being developed through time[5]. The architecture of the Urban Dictionary website, a simulated dictionary, is depthless to viewers. The website recalls Jameson's (1984, p. 82) description of the exterior of the postmodern *Bonaventura* building complex as depthless and placeless revealing 'only the distorted images of everything that surrounds it'. The Urban Dictionary can be understood to be postmodern in that it privileges space over time, gathering language and votes from across virtual space in ordering word definitions' apparent reliability. Also, as a global online shop and advertising site, the Urban Dictionary corresponds with Jameson's view that the fundamental object of postmodernism is 'the world space of multinational capital'(1984, p. 92). By the end of last century, postmodernism as a mode of thinking had become pervasive even in science. Nowotny (1999, p. 251) argued that the modern sense of objectivity – the aim of suppressing the personal – had had its day after coming into being in the mid 19th century with photography, cartography and other changing scientific practices. Jameson (pp. 53-54) concurred with this time frame, arguing that a waning of the 100-year-old modern movement became evident from the late 1950s in the art, philosophy, literature and even more clearly in the urban architecture produced since that time. For Nowotny, reliable knowledge in postmodernism would be produced in localized hybrid spaces in discourses involving accredited experts and lay people:

> It should be clear by now, that the modern time of Big Projects, Great Narratives, Universalism and Unification, of Big Problems and Big Solutions, are over... there is no global scientific objectivity, no set canon of rules, to be followed that will guarantee the truth or reliability of the outcome. Scientific objectivity will have to become localized and contextualized, fitted into the specificities of each case in which it might be and most likely will be challenged. (Nowotny, 1999, p. 259)

This radical shift over the last 150 years in the perception of reliable knowledge from becoming objective to being subjective has had ramifications for urban development

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[5] The title page reads: 'DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: IN WHICH The WORDS are deduced from their ORIGINALS, AND ILLUSTRATED in their DIFFERENT SIGNIFICATIONS BY EXAMPLES from the best WRITERS, TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED, A HISTORY of the LANGUAGE, and AN ENGLISH GRAMMAR. BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.' (Johnson, 1755)

discourse in its continual encounters with uniquely contextual localized places. The production of architecture and streetscapes shifted radically over this period and in some way reflected the postmodern movement (Harvey, 1989, pp. 66-98; Lefebvre, 1991). Jameson (1984, pp. 56-57) argued that urban architecture had a virtually unmediated relationship to the economy so it was not 'surprising to find the extraordinary flowering of the new postmodern architecture grounded in the patronage of multinational business, whose expansion and development is strictly contemporaneous with it'. To understand shifts in architecture and streetscapes, Lefebvre, Jameson and Harvey investigated constraints and agencies affecting people and organizations operating in and reproducing urban environments. Dear (2000, pp. 47-207) argued that these types of studies and his own readings of cities revealed that, by the end of the last century, rationality was no longer considered an innocent way of thinking for urban political programs; postmodernist critique had revealed that Enlightenment rationality concealed a logic of domination and repression. The downside of this public revelation was that new forms of spatial and social confusion may have constrained people's ability to take social action (Jameson, 1984, p. 92). Dear (2000, p. 65) argued that this confusion was being solved by 'a reconstituted vision of the politics of the local, founded in the distribution of micropowers and situated in the fragmented interstices between formal power structures' within rapidly changing global geopolitics. Such localized solutions relied on reconstituted political practices built upon an awareness that urban planning was about power and a realization that scientific innovation leading to technological utopia was a modern myth (Dear, 2000, pp. 119-213). The universal no longer had any real content; rather it had become a receding horizon articulated by particular actor groups providing their *particularism* a temporary universal representation (Laclau, 1996, pp. 20-35). In this age, the integrity of urban places would be determined in relation to 'hyperreality' (Eco, 1986), the contagious hyper-real simulations that Baudrillard (2005, pp. 27-30) saw threatening social reality. Eco (1986, pp. 16-47) perceived that reality had become an anticlimax overwhelmed by consumer passion for hyperreal imitations of objects and built environments that never existed outside of the imitations themselves. Baudrillard (1994b, p. 22) argued that simulation had overwhelmed reality to the point that 'the only weapon of power... is to reinject the real and the referential everywhere, to persuade us of the reality of the social' against the threat of contagious hyperreality. The real, and its representation, has more

agency in contemporary society because simulacrum hides the world's absence of truth (Baudrillard, 2005, p. 32). *Affect* – 'visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally *other than* conscious knowing' that drive human thought and movement (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010, p. 1)[6] – has been identified as having an increasingly important role in contemporary society particularly in relation to local targets for political action (Thrift, 2008, pp. 217-223). Affect consolidates local populist action by citizens feeling 'abandoned or betrayed by the political elites' as rising multinational power has constrained the margins of government manoeuvrability (Dahlgren, 2009, p. 23). Laclau (2005, pp. 76-115) argued that populist movements were constituted by three factors: the unification of a plurality of demands in an equivalential chain; the constitution of an internal frontier dividing society into two camps; and, the consolidation of this equivalential chain through the construction of a popular identity of 'the people' by subjects making an affective investment in an object embodying a mythical fullness within which these subjects' heterogeneous demands can be consolidated. Perera (2009, pp. 137-160) described the dynamics of the Cronulla Beach riots in Sydney in 2005 as a local populist movement mobilizing on the beach through affective investment in the beach and through identification with a frontier incorporating place and ethnicity. This internal frontier was signified in writing on a Caucasian youth's skin: 'you flew here we grew here' (Perera, 2009, p. 150). In another study, Perera (2010, p. 7) found that 'sustainability' could be 'a double-edged term... easily mobilized into defensive and insular nationalist discourses' despite its 'environmental, progressive and cosmopolitan associations'.

This literature suggests that although there is a chronic awareness of the risk of global ecological crises in contemporary cosmopolitan society, environmental discourse remains grounded in local places and increasingly integral to localized populist movements. The following section examines literature on the representation of ecological threats and its implications.

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[6] Gregg (2010, pp. 1-17) argued that there were at least eight broad contemporary theoretical approaches to understanding affect, and no certainty as to whether affect's immanence was a promised improvement or a neutral threat. Affect, never fully seperable from cognition, occurred as a passage of embodied intensities. It was also inseperable from practical reason, according to Zylinska (1998, p. 103).

2.2   Representation of ecological threats

This section describes insights into the representation of ecological threats that can be drawn from literature on environmental discourse. It reviews representations of ecological threats in literature chronologically, and describes a tendency for such representations, at least since the late 18th century, to coincide with calls for governmental reform. This coincidence of environmental and reformist discourses is illustrated by the theme about the limits of Earth's capacity to support the world's growing population and its industrial needs. This theme has run through ecological threat representation from Malthus to the discourse of sustainable development and, more recently, through discourses of ecological modernization and carbon control. This section closes with a brief review of recent studies on the representation of ecological threats and its influence on the discursive production of government policy.

Beck (1995, p. 127) argued that the threat of ecological crisis, described briefly above, was a discursive crisis deep within the institutions of industrial society rather than a problem of environs. We '*know* the (ecological) catastrophe is possible' (Zizek, 2010, p. 328) because of the prevalence of ecological threat representations across a wide range of texts in contemporary society. These representations may include a call for violent mass mobilization: such as climate change meaning 'getting on a war footing' (Dibley & Neilson, 2010, p. 150). However, representations of ecological crisis are often much subtler and calls for action less violent. Children may encounter these representations in school environmental programs and rules about hat wearing; to protect them from ultraviolet radiation breaching a depleted ozone layer. Workers may encounter them in texts about corporate social responsibility, mission statements and training materials. Representations about ecological crisis are often encountered through the mediated reproduction of governmental and global institutional discourses. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was created in 1988 to reproduce[7] ecological threat representations for a global media audience: its well-publicized reports cover not only the ecological effects of climate change but also 'second-order effects on human health and safety, livelihoods and prosperity' (Schneider et al., 2007, p. 798). Representations of ecological threats can be found in texts throughout history,

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[7] "It reviews and assesses the most recent scientific, technical and socio-economic information produced worldwide relevant to the understanding of climate change. It does not conduct any research nor does it monitor climate related data or parameters." (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, n.d.)

particularly alongside industrialization. Hughes (1980, p. 57) provided several examples from ancient treaties such as Roman architect Vitruvius' speaking out against lead poisoning caused by industrial air pollution. In essays published from the core of the globally expanding British Empire around the turn of the 19th century, Malthus (1986, p. 470) called for stricter moral and legal regulation of sexual relations in the name of reducing human misery and avoiding the ecological threat of extinction through unchecked rapid population growth. Within this argument, Malthus clearly articulated the Earth's limits to supporting unregulated population growth:

> The power of the earth to produce subsistence is certainly not unlimited, but it is strictly speaking indefinite; that is, its limits are not defined, and the time will probably never arrive when we shall be able to say, that no further labour or ingenuity of man could make further additions to it. But the power of obtaining an additional quantity of food from the earth by proper management, and in certain time, has the most remote relation imaginable to the power of keeping pace with an unrestricted increase of population. (Malthus, 1986, p. 584)

Malthus' contribution to human-reproduction discourse may have been challenged by feminist, post-colonial and corporate-pharmaceutical perspectives, but his notion of Earth's limits was reproduced as a key feature in discourses of sustainable development (Rogers, Jalal, & Boyd, 2008, pp. 20-22). In the early 1970s, Earth's finite capacity for absorbing pollution from and providing resources for continued global population and economic expansion became a widely discussed concept expressed in *The limits to growth* (Meadows, Meadows, Randers, & Behrens III, 1972). The Meadows report stimulated public debate about the trajectory of society making the planet uninhabitable through unchecked economic and population growth. This report and the discourse around it paved the way for sustainable development to be articulated in Gro Harlem Brundtland's report, *Our common future* (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987), echoing the limits idea of Malthus and Meadows:

> The concept of sustainable development does imply limits – not absolute limits but limitations imposed by the present state of technology and social organization on environmental resources and by the ability of the biosphere to absorb the effects of human activities. (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p. 8)

To deal with Earth's resource limits within the hegemony (Laclau, 2006, pp. 647-648) of economic development discourse, Brundtland called for the regulation of technology and social relations where Malthus had argued for regulation of sexual relations. Sustainable development was accepted as a consensus-building solution enshrined in *Agenda 21*, endorsed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992. Dryzek (2005, p. 16) argued that sustainable development became the central axis of contemporary environmental discourses. Despite its pervasiveness, sustainable development was not beyond critique. Sachs (Sachs, 1993, pp. 10-11) argued that sustainable development discourse was all about conserving economic development, not conserving nature: 'alternatives to development are black-balled, alternatives within development are welcome'. Hajer (1995, pp. 14-25) saw sustainable development functioning as a narrative within a more contemporary environmental discourse of ecological modernization, which assumed that existing political, economic, and social institutions could internalize environmental care. Young (2000, pp. 3-30) argued that ecological modernization – allying government, private corporations and non-governmental organizations – could be seen alternatively as a positive first step towards sustainable development or as a strategy for undermining environmental protection by legitimizing and sustaining the structures and systems responsible for environmental decline. Dryzek (2005, pp. 232-234) argued that ecological modernization discourse was agency for institutional change in the direction of democratic experimentation. Harvey (1996, pp. 382-383), by contrast, argued that ecological modernization discourse enabled big industry, big government and big science to tighten their grip on the world's resources. After ecological modernization, carbon control emerged as the latest dominant wave of representations in environmental discourse. While, Jonas and Gibbs (2010, pp. 80-86) categorized these waves as follows: 1) pollution control in the mid 1960s to late 1980s; 2) sustainable development with ecological modernization from the mid 1980s to mid 2000s; and 3) carbon control solutions to climate change from the late 1990s onwards. While et al. (2010, p. 86) warned that the latest wave could be deeply regressive with its powerful moral imperatives and national security undertones sustained by apocalyptic imagery. Through these successive waves of environmental discourse, the discursive production of human-induced ecological threats became a mainstream position. Texts throughout the world have become saturated with these representations. One of the better known texts is Al Gore's (2006) popular documentary, *An inconvenient truth*, which demanded that society be re-regulated to avoid its own doom through the apocalyptic scenario of human-

induced climate change. Al Gore represented environmental problems while advocating global institutional reform in favour of entrepreneurs and inventors (Gore, 2007). Hajer (1995, pp. 13-15) alluded to this type of political action when he detected a shift in environmental politics in the second half of the 20th century from a focus on the existence of an environmental problem to complex struggles over the meaning of an environmental problem. As society's knowledge became more saturated with environmental discourse and a nostalgia for remembered environments, it became more rational to demand that society be re-regulated to deal with environmental threats; latently the human-induced, climate-change apocalypse (Gore, 2006). As recognizing the threat of ecological crises became an acceptable position in international institutional discourses, it was problematized in cultural studies. Baudrillard (1994a, pp. 83-86) warned in *The Illusion of the End* that the scientific pre-figuring of humanity's own disappearance – which he saw exemplified by the 'experimental attraction' of Biosphere 2 in the Arizona desert – would sweep away the idea of self-preservation instinct and condemn humanity to regulating itself out of existence. Latour (2004, pp. 24-25), on the other hand, saw democratic opportunity in an episteme of ecological politics with all matters of fact, including nature, progressively being transformed into disputed states until nothing could be naturalized any longer.

In an investigation of whether ecological threats led to the emergence of new forms of governance in Europe, Gottweis (2008, pp. 265-286) found that radical uncertainty had become an inescapable condition of governance. Rather than promoting some sort of grass-roots democracy, radical uncertainty was agency for an ethics turn in which policy-making institutional actors tended to relate issues to themselves through a participant's view rather than an observer's view. These institutional actors tended to construct *pure publics* for the discussion of issues (despite there being no such thing as a public waiting for representation) at the expense of *engaged publics* (self-appointed participants whose struggles tended towards antagonistic structures). Gottweis also found that calls for urgent action on ecological issues meant trying to govern unforeseeable, unpredictable, infinite possible futures, and that this process of envisioning futures was a key site of political action in the struggle over meanings. The ethical task presented to humans of making decisions on an always uncertain terrain has been examined, particularly in relation to bioethics, by Joanna Zylinksa (2010, p. 160). Ethics is understood not as a set of rules but 'as a demand on being and a call to response and responsibility'

(Zylinska, 2005, p. 21). This understanding engages with Levinas' philosophy of humility in recognizing one's limitations (14) and Derrida's readings of Levinas (129). Barnett (2005, p. 9-17) also looked to Levinas and Derrida's readings in his examination of the geographies of ethical relation, beginning with the appearance of a demand to which one responds. Barnett emphasized the specific sense of temporality, 'the absolute nonsubstitutability of individual persons' (p. 11) and the intense separation in face-to-face relations (p. 12) that were privileged in Levinas' work. Knowing that subjectivity was formed in a 'temporized relation of response to otherness' (p. 18) could reorientate ethics away from either/or choices towards the practices of representation acknowledging the claims of others (pp. 19-20). Zylinska's (1998, pp. 99-100) examination of ethics in postmodern aesthetics began with Levinas' concept of responsibility; in which a subject's responsibility – for a disturbing otherness not fully understood – formed the subject through an ethical relation (Levinas, 1985, pp. 95-101):

> I speak of responsibility as the essential, primary and fundamental structure of subjectivity. For I describe subjectivity in ethical terms. Ethics, here, does not supplement a preceding existential base; the very node of subjectivity is knotted in ethics understood as responsibility. (Levinas, 1985, p. 95)

Derrida emphasized the excess of otherness in the heteronomy of a decision-making subject (2001, pp. 103) and the excellence of feminine welcome in the ethics of responsibility and hospitality (1999, pp. 15-45). Zylinska (1998, pp. 100-102) argued that the feminine sublime offered an ethical advancement through recognition of the subject-making specificity of each fearful and wonderful encounter with the uncertainty of the other. The feminine sublime, re-linking aesthetics with ethics, suggested that decisions were produced in the interaction of affect and reason (p. 104). An ethics of the feminine sublime could expose the ethical masquerade of master strategies imposing just solutions over vast urban territories (Copjec, 2004, pp. 169). Beck (2000, p. 221) argued that 'the hybrid world we live in and constantly produce is, at the same time, a matter of cultural perception, moral judgement, politics, and technology, which have been constructed in actor-networks and have been made hard facts by "black boxing'". Discourse analysis tools enabled Hajer (1995) and Gottweis (2008) to problematize such black boxes and trace the production of environmental problems and solutions through state policy institutions. Their work has provided important insights about the representation of ecological

threats as well as the productive mechanisms operating in environmental discourse; which shall be described in the fourth section of this chapter after a review of literature on green built environment, policy and the role of the media.

2.3   Green built environment, policy and the media

This section focuses on the discourse of green built environment as well as policy making and the media. It examines the intersection of green built environment and policy production in contemporary society and describes discursive traces of this intersection at the turn of the 19th century in Ebenezer Howard's Garden City attempt to reform society through spatial reform. Calls for spatial reform alongside institutional reform are echoed in contemporary scholarship on spatial governance practices by scholars in the fields of urban planning and green built environment. This literature favours decision making by bureaucratic elites, guided by constructed publics and driven by the priorities of capital. However, other literature suggests that limiting spatial governance to the domain of engineers and other experts guided by futuristic vision statements of constructed stakeholder groups would deny other possibilities of civil agency and thereby constrain democracy. This section also reviews literature on the complex practices through which government policy is developed in the relations of democratic institutions, the media and citizens.

Green built environment is a contemporary contribution to environmental discourses by the building industry[8], property developers, urban planners and other subjects involving representations such as buildings accounting for a third of all energy-related carbon dioxide emissions worldwide (Koeppel & Ürge-Vorsatz, 2007). Green built environments have been represented as performing better than standard built environments in terms of mitigating climate change (Miller, 2010). Green built environments, including their efficient integration with local physical context, are often connoted by rating symbols such as *Green Star* accreditation (Green Building Council of Australia, n.d.-a) in Australia. The legitimacy of these rating symbols is contingent upon negotiations within expert networks made up of representatives of

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[8] The industry's ecological impact has been discussed at international conferences for at least 25 years (Kerr, 2008, pp. 2-13).

industry, government and academia as well as subsequent successful market take-up[9] and public relations. The World Green Building Council (2011) has realized the position of tenably being able to represent itself as the peak international actor network for green built environment with its membership including more than 80 national building councils as of 2011. Some of these national councils have developed their own certification systems negotiated within national contexts in relation to international discourse of green built environment (Kerr, 2008, p. 60). In the same way that the national accreditation systems of green built environment are negotiated, so are green built environment projects; often through a process in which a property developer sets out to achieve corporate objectives through negotiations with investors, tenants, architects, engineers, contractors, rating agencies, local authorities and communities around a building site. If negotiation goes well for a developer, its green built environment will satisfy core corporate objectives as well as its target market's sense of appropriate measures for dealing with ecological threats; a sense of the meaning of green built environment that is contingent upon prior knowledge. Within this negotiation, a developer will tend to position itself as a moral actor in order to shape public perception of its green built environment project. Ericson, Baranek, & Chan (1989, pp. 269-383) have demonstrated how corporations do this through a dual strategy of knowledge production using informal relations based on trust and formal relations based on censorship in which the goal of public relations 'is to appear to be disclosing more while actually enclosing on what is publicized' (p. 383). However, as Ericson *et al* point out, corporations must share the field of public relations with many other types of organizations including marginal groups of citizens, which use publicity for their particular interests to show that they are organized and have relevant knowledge. For the green built environment, knowledge producers can be grouped broadly as follows: government legislature and government agencies; industry associations; news and information organizations; property developers; manufacturers and distributors of building materials; academic institutions; architects and other design consultants; environmental activists; local activists responding to the existing or proposed built environment; users and procurers of the built environment; and building contractors. Iwamura (2008, pp. 35-37) argued that knowledge producers could influence the building industry's evolution by mobilizing today's social context in which ecological threat representation was a worldly experience. Sophisticated actors in the building industry

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[9] The Green Building Council Australia has been successful in terms of market take-up. Revenue increased to AUD6.8 million and 261 new members joined in the 2007/2008 financial year, up from 173 new members and AUD3.5 million revenue in 2006/2007 (Madew, 2008, pp. 3-13) .

have attempted to do this through a discursive mechanism in which green building mitigates climate change and climate change mitigates resistance to green building (Kerr, 2008, p. 18). However, these actors' discursive resources may be less reliable than those in other industrial discourses[10] due to building industry practices through which the built environment is socially and physically constructed for local contexts. The built environment is subject to municipal, neighbourhood, investor, designer, buyer and tenant scrutiny. It leaves a trail of texts in the public domain such as financial proposals, development plan submissions and municipal meeting minutes, building licence applications, building-code-compliance documentation, tender documents, texts about technologies incorporated into the built environment, advertisements, corporate and public relations materials, news articles and the physical form of the built environment itself. These texts interact with a multitude of other texts produced at local, national and international levels, and 'become a locus of struggle in which the business of belief is negotiated by readers choosing textual sense on the basis of their worldly experience' (Frow, 1995, pp. 69-70). In a comparative study of green urban development in Manchester and Leeds, While, Jonas & Gibbs (2004, pp. 565-566) found that the meanings and implications of sustainability were determined by conflicts rooted in each city's respective complex geography amid contradictory economy-environment relations of post-industrialization. Harvey (2000, pp. 173-181) argued that contradictory relations in urban development were the product of a collision between spatial utopias and utopianism of the free-market process. Utopias of the spatial, going back to Thomas More's artificially created island of *Utopia*, were intended to stabilize and control social processes but they could not be materialized in an undegenerate form without radically challenging and disrupting the social practices of existing places (Harvey, 2000, pp. 159-173). Ebenezer Howard (1946, pp. 50-92) hoped to achieve an ideal stable society through the development of green-field city utopias managed by powerful corporations responsive to rent-paying tenant voters rather than to existing municipalities. These Garden Cities would adopt pollution-reducing and sprawl-reducing technologies as well as closed loop systems for turning sewerage into fertilizer for local food production. Howard's treatise, originally published in 1898 as '*Tomorrow: a Peaceful Path to Real Reform*' (Osborn, 1946, p. 9), called for city planning by technocrats:

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[10] Many technologies today are designed and manufactured far from their consumer communities and delivered in the physical form of black boxes such as laptop computers and mobile phones.

> It will no doubt be the work of many minds – the minds of engineers, of architects and surveyors, of landscape gardeners and electricians. But it is essential, as we have said, that there should be unity of design and purpose… Garden City is not only planned, but it is planned with a view to the very latest of modern requirements… (Howard, 1946, pp. 76-77)

The original title of Howard's treatise suggested that its objective was a process of social reform. The later title, '*Garden Cities of To-morrow*', suggested it was spatial utopias. This subtle inversion of objectives could be regarded as a kernel of reification or more critically as a contamination of the particular with the universal in a hegemonic relation (Laclau, 2006, pp. 650-655). This suggests that, rather than just identifying inversions, a critical examination of discourse around green built environment would identify affective investment in objects within the particularism of its place of enunciation. This suggests a return to Harvey's argument that places were disrupted by the coming to ground of the social process of free-market utopianism, requiring a space within which this process could function:

> … capital builds a geographical landscape of its own image at a certain point in time only to have to destroy it later in order to accommodate its own dynamic of endless capital accumulation, strong technological change, and fierce forms of class struggle.(Harvey, 2000, p. 177)

But how is this social process reproduced, resisted and perhaps distorted in the negotiation of green built environment through representations of ecological threats? Cole and Lorch (2003, pp. 3-4) argued that built environments embodied the knowledge and priorities of their creators and suggested that any positive intervention would require social and cultural change. However, rather than address the hegemony of this social process, they instead argued that environmentally progressive buildings were more likely to be built if the supply side had a better understanding of consumers' needs and expectations (Cole & Lorch, 2003, p. 7). Kenworthy (2006, p. 82) argued that eco-cities required vision-oriented reformist thinking and 'radical departures from normal planning and decision making processes'. Kenworthy (2006, pp. 82-83) illustrated this reform with futuristic vision statements involving constructed publics in Oregon, Perth and Vancouver; suggesting a positive global shift towards constructed publics for deciding urban planning policy away from antagonistic struggles about particular planning issues by engaged publics. However, limiting policy making in urban planning to the domain of engineers and other experts guided by the futuristic vision statements of

constructed stakeholder groups may deny other possibilities of civil agency, which emerge in heterogeneous forms from private into public spheres, motivated by engagement through affective investment (Dahlgren, 2009, pp. 83-93). This is particularly important given that public spheres are arenas of contested representations and interests rather than the domain of consensual facts and figures, (Lucy & Mickler, 2006, p. 74) endorsed and reproduced by experts. Democracy, according to Dahlgren (2009, p. 74), resides with citizens interacting with each other and power holders in communication chains that include the media. Subjects – bearing composite identities formed rationally and emotionally – identify themselves as citizens through senses of belonging to political collectives in which democratic institutions deal with collective antagonisms (2009, pp. 59-64). Journalism links citizens to public life through a mutual dependency of mass media and political elites; in a configuration in which they and citizens are increasingly dominated by economic elites (2009, pp. 48-51). Dahlgren suggested that while media performance supported the formation of imagined communities of citizens it was also integral to contemporary production of their domination: 'The media present themselves as guardians of the public interest and the political elites are framed with suspicion while the economic elites basically get edited out of journalistic discourses about power' (Dahlgren, 2009, p. 51). This process, operating in contemporary media representations in Australia, has been described as those assuming entrenched power reacting to a threatening logic of equivalence (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001, p. 155) – the emancipation of one group inviting almost immediate comparison with another – running through the unfinished project of democracy (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001, pp. 159-171; Lucy & Mickler, 2006, pp. 131-136). Dahlgren (2009, pp. 114-124) argued that, for democracy to happen, civic spaces had to be readily available for citizens to encounter and talk to each other in order to develop collective political action for engagement in the communicative spaces of policy making even though this engagement is challenged by expert knowledge and consumerism. Civic spaces in contemporary society are realized in the physical environment, mass media and social media as well as in the spaces between them; producing tension between the limits of territorial place and the potential of communicative space (Dahlgren, 2009, p. 116). Therefore, a critical analysis of green built environment negotiation in civic spaces relies on insights from studies in geography, critical theory and cultural studies described in the first chapter as well as an understanding that nowhere in the

world is untouched by human meaning-making processes and that built environments support semiotic systems (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, pp. 10-23). It also relies on an understanding that mass media shapes the construction of problems for society and legitimizes policy responses (Chouliaraki, 2007, pp. 130-141; Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke, & Roberts, 1978, pp. 81-177; Mickler, 1998, pp. 19-264), and that participatory media has an emerging potential (Dahlgren, 2009, pp. 149-181; Langlois, 2011, pp. 2-12) for involvement in this shaping and legitimization process; characterized by the particular technologies of each media genre (Ericson, Baranek, & Chan, 1991, p. 345). These insights from multiple disciplines provide a foundation for the empirical examination of green built environment negotiation by way of discourse analysis, which will be reviewed in the next section.

2.4   Discourse and agency of affective investment

This section reviews literature informing discourse analysis techniques applied to texts in the case study in order to understand how representation of ecological threats influences the meaning of green built environment and the practices through which this meaning is produced. This literature describes truth production (Bourdieu, 1987, pp. 204-207; Foucault, 1980, pp. 131-133) around ecological threats in previous cases, particularly how systems of meaning were constructed and stabilized in discourse. The institutional dimensions of discourse are then described and related to the credibility and positioning of actors within communities producing environmental policies. Media and spatial practices in discourse are discussed briefly and key insights drawn for incorporation into a discourse analysis approach that examines not only truth production – the rendering of truth in relations of discursively produced knowledge objects – in institutionalized policy networks but also its production by citizens who may resist institutionalized versions of truth through alternative meanings of the institutional language used. The discourse analysis approach synthesized from literature presented in this section is not only concerned with the production of truth in institutional networks of interested credible actors. It is also concerned with the production of truth by citizens and how citizens' truths influence the reproduction of truth in policy-making institutions. The synthesis incorporates insights from literature on the open negotiation of meaning by subjects, on the temporary stabilization of meaning systems in hegemonic projects, on the

production of social antagonism when systems of meaning are disrupted, on elements beyond signification that disrupt meaning through the power of sensory experience, on drives that motivate subjects, and on the emotional responses of subjects stabilizing meaning and producing community ideals. These insights inform an analytical approach to investigating environmental discourse in the public sphere that integrates theories of sustaining meaning beyond previous studies on environmental discourse and policy making. Such studies by De La Bruheze (1992), Hajer (1995) and Gottweis (2008) focussed more on the reproduction of specific cognitive commitments by interested actors and their positioning in institutional networks of policy production than on the articulations of engaged publics. This thesis requires a discourse analysis approach that draws more from poststructuralism and physchoanalysis.

Empirical research by De la Bruheze (1992) on 'radioactive waste' and by Hajer (1995) on 'acid rain', has shown how actors through discursive play turn representations of ecological threats and technical solutions into stabilized social constructions producing meaning through complex heterogeneous elements. De la Bruheze (1992, p. 140) described how radioactive waste was socially shaped 'by the interaction of a series of actors who defined problems and their possible solutions in ways that were heavily influenced by their education, training and institutional training': solutions were influenced by the ways in which problems were articulated while problem articulation was simultaneously structured by institutional practices. De la Bruheze's analysis of representations in and around the U.S Atomic Energy Commission demonstrated that knowledge of nuclear waste was not derived from nature but constructed through a process in which discursive opportunities and constraints were controlled by a bureaucracy enclosing in on what was discussed and publicized (1992, pp. 166-167). Hajer's (1995, p. 56) comparative study of the social construction of 'acid rain' relied on discourse analysis revealing how actors' routine reproductions of cognitive commitment provided permanence to discursive understanding. Hajer argued that the acid rain metaphor supported the formation of discourse coalitions among environmentalists, politicians, business leaders, scientists and other actors with varying perceptions; allowing discursive closure for a bewildering variety of discursive components, enabling repositioning of subjects and potentially altering discursive order and causing policy change. In achieving this

level of understanding, Hajer (p. 263) relied on Foucault's theories exposing the institutional dimension of discourse and how specific perceptions could be structured in society while simultaneously structuring society; discourses forming the objects which they articulate (Foucault, 1972, pp. 44-46). Hajer and Wagenaar (2003, p. 9) argued that traditional top-down bureaucratic structures had given way by the 21st century to a variety of problem-solving actors in policy networks of their own making in which politics was not only about content but also the 'rules of the game and a dynamics of credibility'. However, these policy networks are developed within and across imagined communities (Anderson, 1991, pp. 15-16), which determine the credibility of actors and their articulated positions within discourses. Communities and the objects within them are continually formed and reformed through discursive and other forms of cultural production, and it is in this process of production we can begin to identify Foucault's paradox of humans creating forms that imprison human creativity (Hutton, 1988, p. 137). Foucault (1991, p. 76) provided direction for 'rediscovering the connections, encounters, supports, blockages, plays of forces, strategies, and so on, that at a given moment establishes what subsequently counts as self-evident, universal, and necessary' by analysing a discourse according to its multiple constitutive processes, revealing 'increasing polymorphism as the analysis progresses' (p. 77). For example, green built environment should be seen in relation to and contingent upon codifications – green built environment meeting rating accreditation criteria – and truth domains – green built environment mitigating climate change – within regimes of practices developed through time. Chouliaraki (2008a) argued that, in these complex grids of co-articulation within social practices, meaning and power were always encountered previously; embedded historically in the social world:

> ... Foucault thinks of discourse as a productive technology of social practice, which subjects people to forms of power while, at the same time, providing them with spaces of agency and possibilities for action. I take this Foucauldian definition of discourse, where power and meaning always appear in a creative tension between agency and constraint... (Chouliaraki, 2008a, p. 675)

Seeing Foucault's emphasis on political struggles over discursive practices and social conflict as embodied in discourse, Chouliaraki (2008a, p. 680) advocated an analysis incorporating a historicized view of discourse as embedded in the material

technologies of texts – including the semiotics of language-image-sound – and in the asymmetrical relationships of media interaction. These relationships of media interaction are affected by the deployment of financial resources for advertising, procurement of expertise and the production of public relations events. They are also affected by the dynamics of credibility hierarchies in news media, which Ericson, Baranek and Chan (1987, p. 7) described in understanding who could speak as a credible news source or be published as a letter writer. Lefebvre's (1991, p. 33) method of reading spatial practices, representations of space and representational spaces can also be incorporated into a Foucault-style analysis. A multi-method approach (Miles & Huberman, 1994, pp. 41-43) can be adopted involving limited quantitative methodology and methods of corpus-supported critical discourse analysis (Lee, 2008, p. 90) within an overall qualitative research framework for studying discourse (Rapley & Flick, 2007, pp. 10-131). Such an approach could yield significant indications of the effects of discursive mechanisms such as positioning and mutual functionalization (Hajer, 1995, pp. 268-276). This approach could also account for the operation of intertextuality (Shapiro, 2001, p. 318), interdiscursivity (Bhatia, 2008, p. 175) and multimodality (O'Toole, 2006, p. 24) in texts analysed for this thesis. The researcher should become familiar with the discursive context in order to competently interpret texts and identify moments of crisis in and between them that can reveal otherwise naturalized aspects of a discourse (Fairclough, 1992, pp. 198-230). This approach could also be supported by discussions with social actors in the discourse to help a researcher understand the discursive context and check preliminary findings (Jewitt & Jones, 2008). Broadly speaking such an analysis would work towards Foucault's (1972, p. 44) idea of seeing the production of knowledge objects in the discursive relations 'between authorities of emergence, delimitation and specification'. However, Foucault's conception – at least as it is quoted here – deals with objects being produced in the discourses of people in positions of institutional credibility rather than in the discourses of ordinary folk and does not account for their resistances to the institutional meanings of these objects, which must be dealt with in this thesis in order to understand how the legitimacy of a proposed green built-environment is negotiated between its proponents, governmental institutions and local community. Howarth (2000, p. 83) saw a 'dearth of concrete analyses of resistance in Foucault's writing.' Collins (1999, p. 86) offered a solution to this by demonstrating that understandings of language usage developed by the Bakhtin circle of scholars could be applied in urban studies to identify resistance to institutional truth claims through the production of alternative

meanings of the institutional language in use. Bakhtin (1981, p. 276) described how opportunities for resistance existed in the moment that an utterance is understood against a background of other utterances (each with their own unique set of dialogic threads) in the mind of the listening subject. This assimilation process in the mind of a listening subject can be analysed when the subject makes a subsequent utterance through comparison to prior utterances around the subject. In Bakhtin's view, all discursive objects were open to dispute and wrapped in qualifications. An object was highlighted from one side by a speaker while dimmed from other sides by multi-voiced social opinion. Bakhtin (1981, p. 276) used the metaphor of a word being directed as a ray of light towards an object breaking up into spectral dispersion in 'an atmosphere filled with the alien words, value judgements and accents through which the ray passes on its way toward the object'. A word harmonized with some elements in this atmosphere and created dissonance with others because words were not neutral. Each word carried its past social contexts: its use in conversations of commerce, of family, of friends, etc. Speakers appropriated words, adapting them to their own expressive intention, from other contexts in which they had served other people's intentions. A speaker's appropriation of words could fail in discourse because language was not a neutral medium passing 'easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions' (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 294). Rather, words were overpopulated with the intentions of others and could sound alien in the voice of their latest speaker. Discourse was complicated further by a speaker's intention of using words in conversation in anticipation of a future response or answer. Speakers attempted to get readings on their own words by breaking through to the alien conceptual horizon of listeners and constructing their utterances on alien territory in which words were assimilated into listeners' conceptual systems. Put eloquently by Frow (1995, p. 70), utterances or texts had no intrinsic meaning in themselves but were the 'locus of struggle in which the business of belief is negotiated by readers choosing textual sense on the basis of their worldly experience'. Howarth (2000, pp. 104-132) drew on the work of Laclau and Mouffe to describe how hegemonic projects could temporarily construct stabilized systems of meaning in discursive nodes organized around signifiers such as 'free economy' amid these plays of open meaning. Disruption to any contingent system of meaning would be agency for social antagonism – social agents constructing an enemy responsible for blocking the realization of their lived-out identity. Social antagonisms could produce new social imaginaries if the myths they produced inscribed a broad enough variety of heterogeneous demands and identities. In examining iconography of Mary, the

mother of Jesus Christ, Kristeva realized that there were unsaid elements beyond signification that nevertheless profoundly affected speaking subjects: 'mother-woman is a rather strange "fold" (*pli*) which turns nature into culture, and the "speaking subject" (*le parlant*) into biology' (Kristeva & Goldhammer, 1985, p. 149). Pregnancy, a dividing line between nature and culture, offered a heterogeneity that exceeded its signifier and offered great potential for disrupting the meaning of woman (149). Kristeva had identified the operation of nature-culture dividing lines in the production of Western religious authority and discursive order – also see Barthes (1975, pp. 7-17). Comparing theories of Freud, Kant and Lacan, Copjec (2004, p. 34) argued that subjects were motivated by partial drives that contented themselves with 'the simulacra of the lost (maternal) object'. Copjec (2004, pp. 40-46) drew two other important conclusions for this research: that a subject's love of an object makes the object more than itself; and that the laws and ideals of a community are fabricated through idealization of dissatisfaction.

Insights like these from the field psychoanalysis indicate that there is much more to the production of stabilized meaning in society than what Hajer (1995, p. 56) described as 'the routinization of cognitive commitment' occurring at the institutional level of environmental discourses. Hajer (1995, p. 271) acknowledged that the power of sensory experience was indicated in 'essential moments in the process of proliferation and utilization of knowledge' but argued that it played less of a role in stabilizing meaning because sensory experiences were 'at the same time extremely vulnerable to critique'. Laclau on the other hand appealed to poststructuralist and psychoanalytic theory to explain how meaning was stabilized through subjects' emotional responses. Laclau (2006, pp. 652-654) argued that there was no such thing as false consciousness because the gap between the *Thing* and *petit objet a* in Lacanian theory was the basis of all signification; symbolic mediation – relying on sensory experience – was ever present in discourse. A study of drought by Bakker (2000, pp. 9-22) suggested that environmental discourse analysis, through identification of the discursive mechanisms described by Hajer, should also include an investigation of social antagonisms and the agency of nature (Bakker & Bridge, 2006, p. 20). Laclau's work on popular reason can be introduced to strengthen the analysis of environmental discourse by providing a theory of sustaining meaning that goes beyond Hajer's description of it being sustained by credible actors reproducing a specific cognitive commitment. Laclau (2005, pp. 76-115) argued that popular movements involved a unification of heterogeneous demands in an equivalential

chain consolidated through the construction of a popular identity involving affect as a radical investment to give it force behind an internal frontier dividing society. Combining Hajer's insights into environmental discourse with Laclau's theory on popular reason enables an appropriate investigation of environmental discourse in the public sphere, where institutional and popular discourses coincide as shall be demonstrated in the following chapters. With this literature in mind, a mixed analytical approach will be applied in describing the agencies and constraints in the negotiation of green built environment and for beginning to account for the effects of ecological threat representation on social practices in contemporary society.

2.5 Approaching the empirical case of North Port Quay

This chapter has reviewed previous works and described scholarly insights that form the basis of the thesis context, research design and methodology described in Chapter 1. These insights, to be applied in an empirical study of environmental discourse around urban planning, were developed in the fields of cultural studies, critical geography, psychoanalysis and media studies. The scholarly works providing these insights were organized in this chapter in relation to risk society and the postmodern urban condition; representation of ecological threats; green built environment, policy and the media as well as discourse and the agency of affective investment. First, literature on the threat of human-induced ecological crisis at the heart of risk society was reviewed in relation to critical studies of urban built environments. The literature indicated that contemporary cosmopolitan society had a chronic awareness of the risk of global ecological crises and the subjectivity of knowledge, which provided agency for affective investment in objects around which local popular movements can aggregate. A chronological review of literature about ecological threats found that such threats were often combined with calls for governmental reform. This was illustrated by the limits of Earth's capacity to support population and industrialization being a theme that ran through ecological threat representations from Malthus' writing to discourses of sustainable development, ecological modernization and carbon control. Contemporary scholarship, was reviewed, on truth production in institutional discursive contests about ecological threat representation and environmental policy. The chapter then focused on the production of policies for green built environment and examined the idea of reforming society through spatial

reform with its traces in Ebenezer Howard's Garden City at the turn of the 19th century. The literature review then showed how contemporary scholarship proscribing reforms in spatial governance to mitigate ecological threats has promoted policy decision making by bureaucratic elites guided by constructed publics and driven by capital accumulation priorities. Literature was then reviewed on contemporary practices of policy production and legitimization through citizens' mediated engagement with democratic institutions. This literature indicated that civil agency may be constrained by limiting spatial governance – in the face of ecological threats – to appointed experts guided by futuristic vision statements. Literature on discourse and its analysis was then reviewed and insights drawn for inclusion in the methodology for understanding how representation of ecological threats could influence the meaning of green built environment and the practices through which this meaning was produced. Truth production in ecological-threat cases was described, particularly in relation to how systems of meaning were constructed and stabilized through discourses. The institutional dimensions of these cases were described in terms of the positioning of actors producing environmental policies. Literature was then reviewed that provided insights on media and spatial practices in discourse that could be included in a methodology for examining truth production not only by institutionally positioned members of policy networks but also by other citizens. These insights related to the open negotiation of meaning by subjects, the temporary stabilization of meaning systems in hegemonic projects, the production of social antagonism when systems of meaning were disrupted, the elements of sensory experience beyond signification that disrupted meaning, the drives that motivated subjects, and the emotional responses of subjects that stabilized systems of meaning and produced community ideals.

These insights and theoretical approaches inform the analysis, described in the subsequent chapters of this thesis. The last chapter briefly introduced the empirical case of the NPQ property development, proposed as a carbon-free, sustainable development for the coast of Fremantle, Western Australia. Significant discursive fields in the contest of NPQ will be described in Chapter 3 to provide context for the discourse analysis by close reading in broad chronological order that will follow in Chapter 4. From this close reading, insights into the operation of ecological threats as discursive mechanisms in green built environment negotiation will be synthesized in

Chapter 5. These insights will be described mostly in relation to theories of discourse described in this chapter but also in relation to the case study's discursive context described in Chapter 3. Chapter 6 will conclude the thesis by describing the implications of discursive dynamics identified in the case study of NPQ in relation to representation of ecological threats and negotiation of green built environments. This final chapter will also make recommendations for future research.

3   Place in time: Constructions before North Port Quay

Imagine a world-class development offering magnificent islands in a ground-breaking engineering project on the coast at Fremantle. (North Port Quay, n.d.-b)

Figure 1: Rendering of North Port Quay (North Port Quay, n.d.-a)

The previous chapter located this thesis in relation to literature on postmodernism, ecological threats, green built environment and discourse analysis. This chapter will introduce the discursive context and the empirical case of the North Port Quay project. Significant discursive fields, articulated in public discussion of NPQ, are identified and analysed in order to make a more reliable critical analysis of the case in subsequent chapters. The discursive fields integral to public discussion of NPQ were identified as property, community, architecture and pleasure. Particular sedimentary knowledge in these fields was employed in publicly contesting the project; the particularity of this knowledge relates to the social, temporal and spatial contexts of representation in this case. Public discussion of NPQ was found mostly in media identifying with audiences of Fremantle, Western Australia, between late May 2008 and October 2009 (see Chapter 4, Section 4.1). The proposed site of the project, launched publicly on 29 May 2008, was an area of seabed (Figure 2) adjacent to Rous Head, occupied by Fremantle Port, at the mouth of the Swan River within the greater metropolitan area of Perth (Figure 3). NPQ's proponents located the project culturally at Fremantle, as demonstrated in the first sentence (shown above) of a voice-over for its video promoting the development and in its rendering with Fremantle Port in the background (top-right hand corner of Figure 1). The proponents held community consultation sessions in Fremantle to promote the project, the principle sustainability consultant for the project was based in Fremantle, public acts of resistance against the project occurred in Fremantle, the project featured heavily in the Fremantle press and was a major issue in the 2008 electoral race for the seat of Fremantle in the Western Australia parliament and in the 2009 by-election. The NPQ issue also featured in the 2009 Fremantle mayoral election.
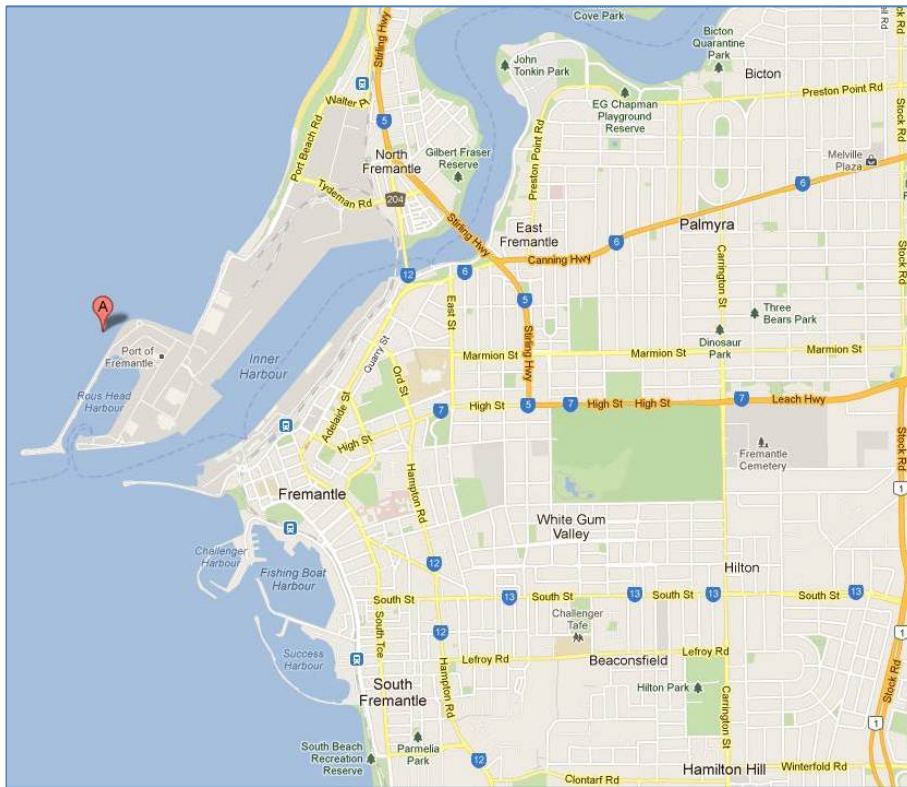
Figure 2: NPQ site marked 'A' in Fremantle municipal context. (Google Maps, 2012)
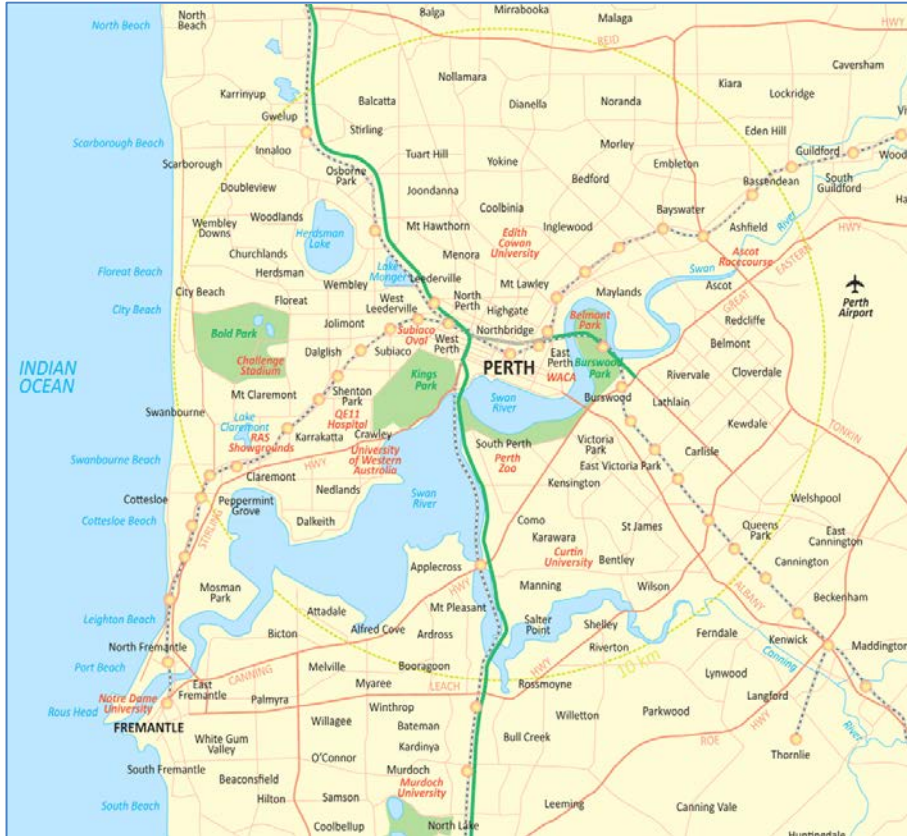
Figure 3: Fremantle & Perth metropolitan context. (Countrywide Publications, 2012)

The discursive fields of property, community, architecture and pleasure – integral to representations in the NPQ case – are described in the first four sections of this chapter. The first section describes the construction of land-entitlement narratives through time in space around the proposed project site, focussing on construction of beliefs about land ownership and public versus private occupation rights to land in Fremantle. The second section describes the popularly imagined Fremantle community and gives an example of how Fremantle community was reproduced and reworked successfully in the 1990s by the Fremantle Football club. The third section deals with appropriate built environment for Fremantle by drawing attention to temple iconography in Fremantle's streetscape produced in the early decades of European settlement and its more recent preservation and reproduction at the hands of local and national heritage movements. This section introduces the sense of transgression, which is explored further in the fourth section describing how the beach at Fremantle enables pleasure and functions symbolically as Australia borderland. The chapter closes with a brief description of the launch, discourse and rejection of North Port Quay within this complex knowledge context.

3.1 Site entitlement: a short genealogy of space

This section gives a genealogical account of land-entitlement claims in the space, known today as Fremantle, because apparently ordinary concepts such as land title are really 'the product of a slow and long historical process' (Bourdieu, 1987, p. 204). The section provides a brief history of European colonization of this space; and the discourse enabling actors to make land-occupation claims over it such as the NPQ consortium's claim to 345 hectares at Rous Head in the name of the well-known public concern of 'sustainable development'. Deployment of public concern in narratives of land occupation around the proposed site can be traced through history to 1828, when British naval officer James Stirling successfully deployed the threat of French colonial competition as a reason for immediately settling the coastal area in and around the towns that he named 'Fremantle' after Captain C.H. Fremantle, on the mouth of the Swan River, and 'Perth' further upstream (Stratham-Drew, 2003, pp. 110-140). The eviction of local Aborigines began discursively through exploration cartography by naval officers and then physically by invading British colonists. The discursive element of this eviction process has continued to the

present by the general exclusion of Nyoongar words and names on European-imagined maps of the area (Mickler, 1991, pp. 72-74). The northern headland of the Swan River was named Rous Head by Stirling in his naval survey of 1827 after a friend, Captain H.J. Rous, while the southern headland was named Arthur's Head after another, Sir George Arthur, the Governor of Van Diemen's Land (Stratham-Drew, 2003, pp. 66-73). 'Improving' the land in terms of economic value (p. 120) formed the basis of settler entitlement to land around Fremantle and Perth under the British colonial institution, which dominated the organization of global sea trade. The coastal plain around Fremantle and Perth was swiftly surveyed, occupied and enclosed by settlers – backed by force of British arms and symbols of entitlement – to the exclusion of Nyoongar people, who lived and worked there (pp. 146-185). This exclusion occurred with the support of British-colonial discourse equating indigenous Australians with nature (Stratham-Drew, 2003, p. 211), which in the age of industrial capitalism was 'explored, colonised and exploited by capitalists and imperialists alike in cahoots with each other' (Giblett, 2004, p. 2). Capitalists and imperialists were often one and the same: Stirling argued that his large land holding in Western Australia was a legitimate entitlement for his surveying work as a naval officer and administrative work as colonial governor rather than being a return on his investment as a capitalist, as upheld by the Colonial Office (Stratham-Drew, 2003, pp. 111-424). Men of demonstrable capital and favoured colonial officers were awarded initial occupation rights to land in Western Australia by the Swan River settlement's Lieutenant Governor Stirling acting on behalf of the British Crown, which through the Colonial Office in London granted Stirling the opportunity to occupy 100,000 acres near Swan River (pp. 114-200). To convert occupation rights into land title the grant holders or their agents had to show improvement in the capital of land granted within 10 years. Otherwise the occupation right would revert to the British Crown for reissue to an alternative man of capital. Land grants were sold by some grantees as early as 1831, and by 1832 the land grant system had been replaced by the selling of Crown land in the area of Western Australia at a minimum price of 5 shillings per acre (p. 204). British invaders, as they were referred to by Stirling on at least two occasions, ignored the land-occupation laws and spatial organization of the invaded Nyoongar people (Carter & Nutter, 2005, pp. 4-98; Stratham-Drew, 2003, pp. 74-281). Nyoongar resistance against the social, economic and cultural disruption and exclusion from land by foreigners was met by the

overwhelming violence of British capitalists, their servants, troops, muskets and horses. The Colonial Office regarded the Swan River settlement as a private land speculation by capitalists (Stratham-Drew, p. 232), but provided sufficient funds and military support for it to endure. Stirling asserted in his settlement proclamation that he could grant occupation rights to all 'unoccupied land', but this wording was soon replaced by the term 'wasteland' in the settlement's regulations because the land was so obviously occupied by Nyoongar people (Carter & Nutter, 2005, pp. 4-28). Enclosing and seizing 'wastelands' belonging to Nyoongar people was partly legitimized for settlers by the pre-existing practice of enclosing and privatizing common lands and wastelands in the United Kingdom through enclosure acts. The settlement's 1829 regulations allocated land grants in square-mile sections – with a maximum 25% perimeter of river frontage – that could be converted to permanent, tradeable titles provided the grantee made capital improvements to the land (Stratham-Drew, 2003, p. 146). The constraint placed on Governor Stirling by the Colonial Office was to refrain from granting excessive river or sea frontage to any one settler. A decade later the British Secretary of State for Colonies, Lord John Russell, wrote that title was withheld to ocean-frontage land at Arthur's Head – which Stirling had claimed for himself – in anticipation of the land being required for the 'security, health or general convenience of the Public at large' (p. 424). The main shareholder of the Fremantle Whaling Company, which had set up operations on the land under lease from Stirling, wrote to the Colonial Office that any reallocation of Stirling's land grant with all the company's 'improvements upon it... would tend to destroy all confidence in colonial property, and put an end to Colonial Enterprise' (p. 424). What the historical records show is that claims for *public convenience* and *capitalist enterprise* were deployed in the earliest European discourse of coastal-land entitlement in Fremantle through to the present, as we shall see in the following chapter. These claims have overshadowed Nyoongar discourse about coping with incursion but not imagining the final surrender of inherited lands (Carter & Nutter, 2005, p. 49).

3.2   Imagined community of Fremantle

This section will describe the operation of Fremantle as an *imagined community* and provide an example of how Fremantle community imagining was reproduced and reworked successfully in the 1990s by the Fremantle Football club. Like other distinguishable populous groups, Fremantle meets Anderson's (1991, pp. 15-16) criteria for being an imagined community by being populated by people who mostly do not know each other, by having a boundary – albeit blurred – beyond which are other communities and by conceiving of a 'deep horizontal comradeship' for itself.

Figure 4: Map showing the Fremantle local government area in darker shading
(Commonwealth of Australia & PSMA Australia, 2007)

Like all larger than village habitations, most people in Fremantle do not know each other as individuals. The local government area (Figure 4) contained 24,838 people according to the most recent national census (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2007) and about a third of them were born overseas. More than two thirds lived in a separate house, while less than a third lived in a semi-detached house, terrace house or apartment. Four-thousand-six-hundred people had moved to the Fremantle local government area within the latest year of the census, half from outside Western Australia. Fremantle has a boundary beyond which lie other communities such as Cottesloe to the North, but the boundaries are not as clear cut as they appear in Figure 4. Fremantle was originally a town with a distinct physical border, the gateway to Western Australia from which people would travel up the Swan River by boat to Perth, the administrative capital of Western Australia. The first shipload of

private settlers accommodated themselves in tents in miserable conditions on the beach at Fremantle while waiting for land upstream from Perth to be surveyed and allocated (Stratham-Drew, 2003, p. 144). To get people housed quickly Mr J. S. Roe quickly surveyed town allotments in Fremantle and the first of these were sold by late 1829 (Ewers, 1971, p. 6). Roe's grid-like town plan remains largely intact to this day. As the Western Australia colony developed Fremantle grew as its distribution centre. The colony's first newspaper was set up there in 1830 as was its first printing press (Ewers, 1971, p. 13). The difficulty of getting large ships into and out of Fremantle port retarded its growth until dredging and construction works, headed by C.Y. O'Connor, radically altered the harbour by the turn of the 20th century. Thereafter, the town's population increased rapidly and in 1929 Fremantle was proclaimed a city (Ewers, 1971, pp. 94-129). The physical urban boundaries of Perth and Fremantle merged in the second half of the 20th century, but Fremantle remained a distinct community for people within and without the city. The municipality's Cultural Policy and Plan in 1999 described Fremantle's evolving urban identity, a unique mix with distinct features valued by residents and visitors alike:

> Its history as a meeting place for Aboriginal people pre-European settlement; its physical location at the mouth of the Swan River; its history as the Western Gateway to Australia and the first point of arrival for many immigrants; its importance as a working harbour and fishing centre; its significant heritage buildings; its strong labour history; its arts, cultural and sporting activities, and its community spirit all shape Fremantle's identity. (Porter, Moorhouse, Kins, & Peddie, 1999, p. 12)

There is a noticeable shift towards recognition of Aboriginal pre-history in the Fremantle area in municipality sponsored writing in the late 1990s compared to earlier works such Ewers' (1971) celebration of Fremantle's history in becoming *The Western Gateway* of Australia for European trade and communications. The title of the Cultural Policy and Plan, *Our Place*, seems to be an adaption of the book title, *My Place* (1987), by Sally Morgan which was published by Fremantle Arts Centre Press and reprinted 21 times by 1994. *My place* delivered Aboriginal narratives of Fremantle, Perth and Western Australia to a broad, geographically-dispersed audience[11]. Even if the choice of title was accidental, *Our Place*, represented a post-

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[11] The researcher read Sally Morgan's history-opening book on the opposite side of Australia in 1989 as required by the English curriculum of the Victorian Certificate of Education.

modern shift in making Fremantle more inclusive for the imagined community by transcending race and social class; by strengthening the 'sense of community' through promotion of 'the distinctive local identity of Fremantle' (Porter et al., 1999, p. 21). According to the plan, the municipality should do more to clearly distinguish Fremantle from other communities, and this work should be done with the river and ocean providing orientation and sense of identity for the imagined community. While this orientation seemed clear, the city's cultural planners had to address concerns articulated within the community that a cultural program focussing too narrowly on Fremantle's maritime heritage and early colonial built environment risked turning the city into a theme park:

> There is community concern that the definition of heritage is too limited and that there is at times a nostalgic view of what is 'good'. There is limited recognition of traditions outside 19th Century English heritage. Interpretation of historical sites is underdeveloped and there is insufficient documentation of recent history. (Porter et al., 1999, p. 13)

Hartley (1992, p. 454) argued that Fremantle could not be authenticated by its origins or current built environment because 'Fremantling,' had turned the place into a *pleasurama*, 'reality into sideshow, and symbolic identity into an import/export commodity'. When 2,000 journalists arrived there to produce the America's Cup media spectacle in 1986-1987, the Fremantle backdrop for the yacht race revealed its own strategic purpose in not only imagining Fremantle but also imagining Western Australia and Australia (Hartley, 1988, pp. 117-126):

> However, the visit of Bob Hawke, the genial prime minister of Australia, strolling the sunny streets of the Fremantle set after officially unfurling yet another gigantic Australian flag over the Roundhouse, WA's oldest building and first prison, suggests that the higher levels of government, at least, understand only too well the need to unify people into an imagined community of citizens who can be mobilized to see themselves as free to choose in the name not of ideology but of euphoria. (Hartley, 1988, p. 125)

Hartley described the Fremantle sporting spectacle to make the point that people made more sense of democracy as a competition for spectators than as a practice for citizens, yet this sense of spectatorship maintained by media through space is disrupted on the ground in Fremantle where democracy is sensed as something more intimate in the mosaic of a port town. The mosaic open work – bolstered by

municipal support for street art – enables a variety of locals and tourists to feel at home or at least part of the Fremantle theatre where a sense of comradeship can be felt by the cast. We can become actors in Fremantle because images of domestic narratives have been reworked as props on the Fremantle stage. Australia's cultural giants, the local front-men of major shifts in 20th century thinking, wartime Prime Minister John Curtin and rock music group AC/DC's iconic Bon Scott are represented in Fremantle by comic, Smurf-like statues – 21st century reproductions – that make payment of homage to Curtin and Scott in Fremantle an ambiguous act. Fremantle offers consumer relief from the daily suburban truth of Perth not quite being a post-industrial city. Perth remains the administrative gateway for exploiting Western Australia's minerals and forests in an enduring colonial act of arriving, seizing, converting and selling natural resources that were apparently underexploited by other people. The industries directly involved in this production were pushed out of Fremantle's centre to its fringes over the last century (Ewers, 1971, pp. 111-165), so that the town centre has been transformed into a post-industrial hub for consuming diverse cultural artefacts and services within the horizon of an Australia imagining; which in recent decades has become increasingly intolerant of ideas, people and institutions that could challenge the power of neo-liberal elites particularly owners of production (Cahill, 2004, pp. 86-94). In its centre, Fremantle's jails have become tourist attractions, its lunatic asylum an arts centre and its trades hall a Buddhist restaurant. The decoration of Fremantle's main upmarket corporate hotel includes the benches for day workers donated by communist leader Paddy Troy in mid last century. The popular Esplanade Park with magnificent not-quite-native trees was a beach last century. In the park, a Brazilian is upside down soliciting clients for his Fremantle capoeira business. Nearby, public grants have re-produced imaginings of late 19th century merchant society[12] in the West End of Fremantle; and within many

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[12] The Moores Building (Robyn Taylor, 1995, pp. 3-4) on Henry Street is a good example of Fremantle's merchant-class architecture restored to its former glory at the height of the Western gold rush in 1899. The building complex was erected on the site of William Moore's general merchant business, which opened in 1868, and was originally a family cottage later replaced by a townhouse, factory, warehouse, offices and stables. In 1899 a classical facade was constructed to unify the external appearance of the complex. Later the family moved its business to the O'Connor industrial area on Fremantle's fringe. The building gradually deteriorated along with the decline in trading businesses amid the rise of heavy industrialization and unionized labour in Fremantle in the early 20th century. The building was purchased by the City of Fremantle in 1986 and restored when funds came available through a Commonwealth Government grant for conservation of national estate properties in Fremantle's West End for the America's Cup. The building is now operated by the City as an art gallery.

of these low-rise buildings the 22-year-old Notre Dame University looks like it has been around for 115 years[13]. At least in this part of Fremantle, amid all this simulacra, the only things worth defending appear to be the stage itself and fellow actors. The back drop of this stage is clearly the port and the theatre is at risk without it, which is why Porter et al (1999, p. 14) in their cultural plan stressed that value of a working port being paramount. The cultural plan called for maintaining the depth and diversity of Fremantle's built and natural environment because such heritage was essential in enabling diverse Fremantle narratives. The Portuguese, Italian and other European migrants who settled there as well as artists and people on the economic margins who lived there when it was still cheap enough to do so all contributed to the diversity of Fremantle's narratives. Without this polyphony of voices, *heteroglossia* required for today's creative production (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 261-263), the Fremantle theatre would have collapsed into mundane suburban Perth.

Imagining of Fremantle community can be seen in the successful reproduction and reworking of this community identity in recent years in relation to the Fremantle Football Club (FFC). Haimes (2006, pp. 109-245) showed how the corporation owning FFC, launched in 1994, successfully exploited part of the Fremantle stage in order to build a large supporter base and revenue stream, despite the club's home ground being Subiaco and its original player affiliation with Claremont – suburbs identified with Perth rather than Fremantle. In its first season the club's players ran through an inflatable container ship rather than a traditional banner, leading to the club's *Rock and Anchor Ceremony* before home games (p. 141). Fremantle was the second Australian Football League club to be licensed for Western Australia after the West Coast Eagles, which represented a state-wide supporter base. The club looked for several points of differentiation from the Eagles in its own representation, class interest being key:

> However, the main differentiation instigated by FFC was the concept of FFC as a community club and it incorporated the moniker, "The people's Club", into its formal company documentation such as letterheads and fax cover sheets. This differentiation was attempted to show up the West Coast Eagles as being from the rich part of town with big corporate

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[13] Notre Dame University's signage appears prominently in the late 1960s urban scene of the popular musical film, Bran Nue Dae (Perkins, 2010), perhaps by design.

> sponsorship as its support (infamously drinking chardonnay) whilst FFC was a humble club supported by the common man with a "blue collar" background thus reinforcing the theme that the club was creating for itself as a working man's club from a working class port city. The indication of both clubs' research were that these differences were entirely superficial and both clubs draw support from all sections of the Western Australia society, not least of all Fremantle which is now occupied by middle class, gentrified society. (Haimes, 2006, p. 143)

The club's marketing relied on the language and imagery of a white, male dockworker resonating positively in its supporters' minds, despite the main demographic being middle-class. The only person resembling a dock worker in Fremantle's official chronology of events (Fremantle City Library, n.d.)[14] is Tom Edwards, killed at the height of local union power on Fremantle's waterfront. Bunbury (2006, pp. 74-80) describes how on 4 May 1919 a policeman struck Edwards, who was trying to shield a union leader from police violence. The assault occurred when a flotilla from Perth tried to quash strike action by Fremantle lumpers (dockworkers) refusing to unload a ship until a quarantine period for Spanish flu had expired. Edwards is remembered as a martyr who died for his family, fellow workers and Fremantle community. After his mile-long funeral procession, the Tom Edwards memorial fountain was constructed in Fremantle. Without naming Edwards, the football club's marketing consultants looked to a particular romanticised past in developing the clubs colours, logo and nautical identity (Haimes, 2006, pp. 153-175). Rather than an animal mascot typical of the Australian Football League, the consultants invented the *Dockers* nickname and inserted a *Docker* (a strong man who loads and unloads ships) in the club logo. The club's football jumper included an anchor and shipping lights in a dominant display that also represented the national flag of Fremantle's large Italian community. It is worth noting the chorus of the Fremantle Dockers' seafaring ditty with its perverse appeal – given the fate of Tom Edwards – to masculine violence through giving opponents the *Freo Heave Ho* (Freo being the popular abbreviation for Fremantle):

> Fre-o Way to go, hit 'em real hard and send them below
> Fre-o give 'em the old heave ho,

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[14] The chronology of events contains several references to port activities, but no other port worker is mentioned individually or collectively apart from Edwards. The chronology refers to the football club as the key event in 1995: 'Fremantle Football Club (the Dockers) played first game.'(Fremantle City Library, n.d.)

> We are the Fre-o Dockers
> Fre-o Way to go, hit 'em real hard and send them below
> Fre-o give 'em the old heave ho, we are the Freo Dockers (Haimes, 2006, p. 173)

Evidence that this representation worked came when a crowd of more than 12,000 marched through Fremantle in August 1997 to oppose a proposal that the Docker's clubrooms be relocated from Fremantle Oval to Subiaco (Haimes, 2006, p. 150). This demonstration indicated a deep horizontal comradeship in Fremantle imagined community, a sense of loyalty to the hard-working men who ensured colonial prosperity by loading and unloading ships moving between the western gateway to Australia and other parts of the world. Loyalty to the colony and devotion to an empire stretching back to antiquity is a meta-narrative sign-posted all along Fremantle's High Street. Some of the sign posts, neoclassical artefacts, are described in the following section as a reading of the sacredness they solicit[15]. The reading draws attention to an official, although apparently secret, meta-narrative stimulating viewers' understandings of appropriate built environment for Fremantle. This reading of the official meta-narrative is not intended to diminish the importance of the many other narratives operating in the Fremantle's prosaic. As Ron Davidson (2007, p. 287) points out at the end of *Fremantle Impressions*: 'Shake a tree in Fremantle and a master storyteller drops out'.

3.3 Reproducing temples in Fremantle

This section[16] explores the production and reproduction of a sacred-soliciting built environment in Fremantle, drawing attention to temple iconography produced in the first century of European settlement and its preservation and reproduction at the hands of local and national heritage movements since the 1970s. This reading of Fremantle's High Street illustrates how the streetscape solicits a sense of the sacred in its visitors, operating in a similar fashion to temple complexes such as Sukuh in Java. From purifying passage through the Whalers Tunnel under the Round House, the reading will proceed along High Street through an assemblage of neoclassical

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[15] Gelder and Jacobs (1998, p. 22) argued that 'sacredness and modernity solicit each other'.

[16] This section is a modified version of an article (Kerr, 2012) authored by the researcher which has been reproduced here by permission of the publisher (Taylor & Francis Ltd, http://www.tandfonline.com).

facades to Kings Square through a group of artefacts for Anglican, Masonic and nation-building narratives to the War Memorial on Monument Hill. This reading, described in the first person, suggests that these cultural objects perform symbolic functions that include providing places for the rituals of empire (Rich, 1989):

> The Empire required rituals, which old boys enthusiastically espoused... These rituals kept millions of people in their place. To orchestrate them, the British Imperialists became impresarios, directing a great worldwide extravaganza. Their outward appearance changed dramatically as the Imperial pageant became more elaborate. (Rich, 1989, p. 18)

On my initial visits to downtown Fremantle, I encountered something special, perhaps sacred, about the place beyond the effort that had gone into preserving a nineteenth to early twentieth century streetscape. The street plan cutting eastwards directly through Fremantle from Whalers Tunnel reminded me of the passage through Sukuh Temple in Central Java. The symbolic function of Sukuh's three terraces, through which I had passed, have been described by Duijker (2010, pp. 198-200): The first terrace, from the west, represented earth and the profane world; the second symbolized a middle world where the profane and sacred worlds met; and the third, in the direction an eastern summit, represented a sacred upper world where 'the souls of deities and deified ancestors dwelt'. Entering Sukuh temple, visitors passed over a floor sculpture of a phallus and vagina in a west-facing gateway in order to be purified. The National Library of Indonesia described the purification process at the temple gate:

> It is believed that the sculptures serve as a suwuk (magic spell or medication) to purify (to heal and release) any dirt that reside in the heart. That is why the sculptures are engraved on the floor in the entrance gate. People will pass through them, and therefore, any dirt sticking to their body will be cleansed. (National Library of Indonesia, 2003)

The cleansed visitor would walk through an eastward passage through three terraces surrounded to the north and south by carved-stone icons. The large rectangular architectural structures, statues and carved stone reliefs (see Figure 5) narrate the deeds of Bhima and other Hindu Javanese deities (Duijker, 2010, pp. 176-180). Duiker (pp. 179-180) argued that these reliefs narrate the *Nawaruci* quest in which Bhima takes his initial step towards salvation by obtaining 'the elixir of life' through

the magical conversion of boiling water. Beyond this terrace – continuing the eastward line from the purification gateway – the visitor can climb through to the top of a flat-topped pyramid upon which a large *lingga* (phallus)[17] was installed. This is the peak of the temple complex.

Figure 5: A child walking eastwards through Sukuh Temple (photograph
taken on 13 January 2007)

Fic (2003, pp. 49-54) argued that Sukuh Temple, built in 1437 at the site of a sanctuary devoted to ancestral mountain spirits since Neolithic times, was intended to provide divine protection for the Daha-Kadiri community within the waning Majapahit empire and to mobilize this community for war in defence of the core values and institutions of Hindu-Javanese civilization. The *lingga*, consecrated in 1440, elevated the Sukuh complex to the status of 'state temple' and bore the inscription 'the ruler of the world' (Fic, 2003, p. 53). Fic examined the Sukuh Temple complex for insight into the cultural organization of the Majapahit order.

The following reading of Fremantle provides insight into the cultural logic of an Australian port town with a heritage inventory of almost 4,000 entries (Hutchison, 2006, p. 6) and a World Heritage listed prison (UNESCO, 2010). Fremantle's built environment has been staunchly defended by locals (Davidson & Davidson, 2010,

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[17] The *lingga* is kept at the National Museum in Jakarta.

pp. 36-157) who remain devoted to an idea of Fremantle (Nichol, 2010). Fremantle is not a temple, yet its built environment has been defended vigorously in recent decades as if it was sacred. Gelder and Jacobs (1998, pp. 22-25) argued that sacredness was experienced in modern Australia as something unfamiliar or uncanny; something that is in place yet out of place simultaneously. In investigating the Aboriginal sacred in modern Australia, Gelder and Jacobs demonstrated that a sense of the sacred, or sacred effect, is realized in audiences through the production of public secrets:

> One always says to someone else that the sacred is secret. Its secrecy is always a matter of demonstration or performance.... After all, secrets cannot be secrets unless they are spoken about as such. (Gelder & Jacobs, 1998, p. 25)

To understand how a sense of the sacred is produced in Fremantle's audience, we should look for things in 21st century Fremantle that are in place but out of place. We should also identify secrets suggested by the built environment. The following reading identifies uncanny things and hints of secrets as it follows the line of High Street eastwards from the beach through Whalers Tunnel to Monument Hill and the Fremantle War Memorial. Equivalences are sought between High Street and the eastwards passage through Sukuh Temple to support this process of identification.

Starting at the water's edge at the nineteenth century landing place for new arrivals in Fremantle we stand on Bather's Beach and then pass through the darkness of Whalers Tunnel emerging directly under the Round House into the light gazing directly down High Street to King's Square (Figure 6) and beyond. Graham Nowland's (2006) examination of 75 novels containing passages about Fremantle reveals that novelists have focussed on shifting states of consciousness at Fremantle's threshold between land and water. Nowland (p. 147) argued that this threshold 'can be read as symbolically similar to the boundary between sleep and waking, the conscious and the unconscious'. Jon Stratton (2009, p. 61) took this spatially-induced limbo at the threshold of Australia a step further by arguing that those crossing it had to be reborn white while others were left outside in limbo or to drown. Stratton's and Nowland's awareness of rebirth at Australia's coastal threshold and the experience of emerging from Whalers Tunnel – constructed in 1837 at great

effort by a barely-performing company – suggest rebirth at what was once the threshold of the young Western Australian colony. The arrivals were reborn pure (and white by Stratton's argument) on the landside (Figure 6) of the tunnel, which was built at Henry Reveley's insistence to run directly under the Round House (Figure 7) despite its additional weight (White, 1976, p. 32). The tunnel and Round House function symbolically like the entrance, the porch, to King Solomon's Temple.

Figure 6: View down High Street from above the mouth of the Whalers Tunnel (photograph taken at midday on 12 August 2010)

In the early years of the Fremantle settlement, arrivals would have emerged from the tunnel, perhaps blinking in the sunlight, gazing directly down High Street to the front doors of the Church of St John the Evangelist (the patron saint of Freemasons) in King's Square (Figure 8). The Round House gaol stood over them suggesting retribution while St John's Church at the other end of High Street would have offered redemption. The Round House is presented by the City of Fremantle as the oldest remaining building in Western Australia. Visitors such as Kevin and Hillary in their travel blog (2009) describe it innocently as 'an old stone building that used to be a jail back in the day'. However, it was much more than that. The twelve-sided structure, which commands the western perspective down High Street, was built at the direction of the city's founders who wanted particular technologies for regulating people. Hudson-Rodd and Farrell (1998, p. 155) described the Round House as the

first symbol of British colonial occupancy for anyone approaching the settlement from the sea, even though its functional focus was domesticity:

> Here a gaol, which looked in on its own citizens, was built. The threat of disruption from 'natives', 'Lascars', 'locals', 'American sailors', China men' and 'lunatics' was deemed more important, it seems, than were attacks from outside intruders. (Hudson-Rodd and Farrell 1998, p. 155)

Figure 7: Westward view along High Street to the Whalers Tunnel and Round House (photograph taken on 12 August 2010)

Figure 8: Bather's Bay, through Whaler's Tunnel up High Street to St
John's Church – Fremantle plan of 1865 (Local History Collection, 1865) with
researcher's red lines indicating the symbolic route for arrivals

Hudson-Rodd and Farrell (1998, pp. 155-156) argued that the Round House was a colonial manager's attempt to control the local human population through secular rather than religious authority, and that its architect, Reveley, was greatly influenced by Jeremy Bentham and his panopticon prison design for efficient, absolute control of groups of humans. The Round House had insufficient scale for the Western Australia colonial project, and it became a temporary holding facility rather than a permanent prison through which many indigenous people passed en route to the Rottnest Island prison[18]. Heading inland up High Street the first two blocks are now largely deserted on any day, enabling full view of a series of facades typically preserved to a neoclassical architectural peak. The original facades served the interests of their European owners in what was then a busy trading district. This 'aesthetics of elegance', disguising the presence of commercial enterprise, was replicated throughout the colonized world (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 150). Fremantle's facades continue to make their building functions secret, such as the open-air car parks hidden by reproduced heritage facades on Essex Street. The High Street facades symbolize a prosperous heritage stretching back under the Round

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[18] At least 500 of the 5,000 Aborigines transported to Rottnest Island died there (Mickler, 1990, pp. 90-97).

House and across the ocean to the cradle of civilized knowledge in classical Europe. They enable the 22-year-old University of Notre Dame, operating behind many Fremantle heritage facades, to seem much older and European than it really is. These facades, with their mix of functionally redundant neoclassical columns and other icons, reproduce commitment to an imagined classical origin and imagined truth of European colonial thought[19]. An example is the mock column mounted within a Masonic-temple triangle in the peak of the facade of the Fremantle Return Services League (R.S.L) Club Wyola (Figure 9) at 81 High Street. The importance of columns and other part-temple icons guiding local Freemasons[20] is shown clearly by the Western Australian Master Mason's Grand Lodge certificate of 1949, 'often called the Pillars Certificate' (Rose, 2010, p. 64). Curl (1991, p. 117) argued that the lodge and its emblems enabled Freemasons to seek 'the memory of beginnings' and Solomon's Temple itself. The Fremantle Town Hall, the New Edition Bookshop facade (Figure 10) and other temple iconography in High Street form a lingering Masonic style[21] that was 'the essence of Neoclassicism' (Curl, 1991, p. 229).

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[19] Kaufman (Kaufman, 1987) argued that Victorian architecture, particularly its facades, was intended to be read like books containing abstract images of history in which representation of the Classic, for instance, was reduced to an essentialist pattern of pillar, base and arch. Abstract representation of architectural strength lead to superfluous masonry: a pillar, for example, would be represented in a superfluous way to signify greater strength than the pillar physically had.

[20] The Freemasons played a major role in the production of Fremantle's streetscape, indicated by the records of prominent people and buildings associated with Freemasonry in the Local history photographic collection of the Fremantle City Library. For example, 'Charles Alexander Manning, 1807-1869, came to Western Australia in the very early days and became the largest landowner in Fremantle. He was the first Grand Master of Freemasonry and the first honorary keeper of records and collector of rates for the Fremantle Town Trust'.(Local history photographic collection, 1855).

[21] Watkin (1995, p. 407) argued that the rise in popularity of Freemasonry in Britain in the late 18th century and early 19th century may have been due to the membership of King George IV, his father and other royalty in Masonic orders and their patronage of Masonic architecture.

Figure 9: Top of the facade of Fremantle R.S.L Club, High Street
(photograph taken on 12 August 2010)

Just before Kings Square, a prominent slab mosaic (Figure 11) in the centre of High Street is comprised of mythical images telling stories of Fremantle. The central slab of the mosaic contains the Round House and Whalers Tunnel as the focal point of a mythological arrangement. Above the round house there is a large Flying Angel with an open book, which is the icon 'etched into the memory of Fremantle city' according to the Flying Angel Club (n.d.); the Anglican mission to seafarers. The angel with the open book – who descends from heaven to land with 'his right foot upon the sea and his left foot on the earth' (*King James Bible*, 1990, p. 1445) – is a principal character in the story of the annihilation of urban fornication throughout the world and the rise of a New Jerusalem in *Revelations*, the last chapter of the Bible. This particular angel orders John, the narrator, to eat the book then 'Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship within' (*King James Bible*, p. 1446). Despite the mosaic, Fremantle locals enjoy telling stories about the prostitution, trade in illicit drugs and drunken brawls that have occurred on High Street because of its relation to the port. However, illegal activity has disappeared from public view in the undated, untitled and apparently un-authored mosaic; its recent production is kept secret. Gazing past the idealized Round House, Whalers Tunnel and Flying Angel on the mosaic's slab surface down High Street, visitors are encouraged to consider Fremantle's metaphysical aspects.

Figure 10: Facade of the New Edition Bookstore, High Street (photograph taken on 12 August 2010)

Figure 11: Mosaic on High Street adjacent to Kings Square (photograph
taken on 30 August 2010)

Heading east from the High Street Mall, a pedestrian immediately encounters Kings
Square – containing the new version of St John's Church and Fremantle Town Hall
surrounded by several works of public art of and about European Australians. Over
time, the square has been worked and reworked with a mix of artefacts which now
provide agency for narrating Anglican, Masonic, local and national experience. On
the eastside of the square a large circular mosaic about locals inducted into the Sport
Australia Hall of Fame represents local contribution fanning out into the Australia
nation-building project (see circular pattern in lower-left-hand corner of the 2009
image of King's Park in Figure 12 compared to the 1971 image in Figure 13).
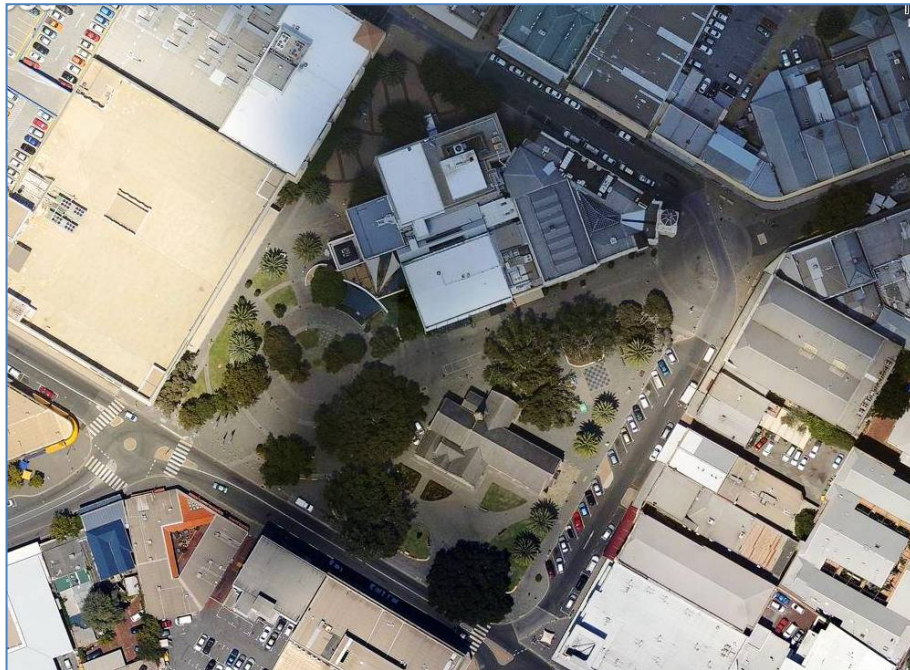
Figure 12: Satellite photograph of Kings Square on 15 February 2011 taken
for NearMap Pty Ltd (*Kings Square, Fremantle, WA*, 2011).

KINGS SQUARE
Showing St. John's Church (foreground), the Town Hall (top of photo) and the proposed area of park extension (car park, left centre).
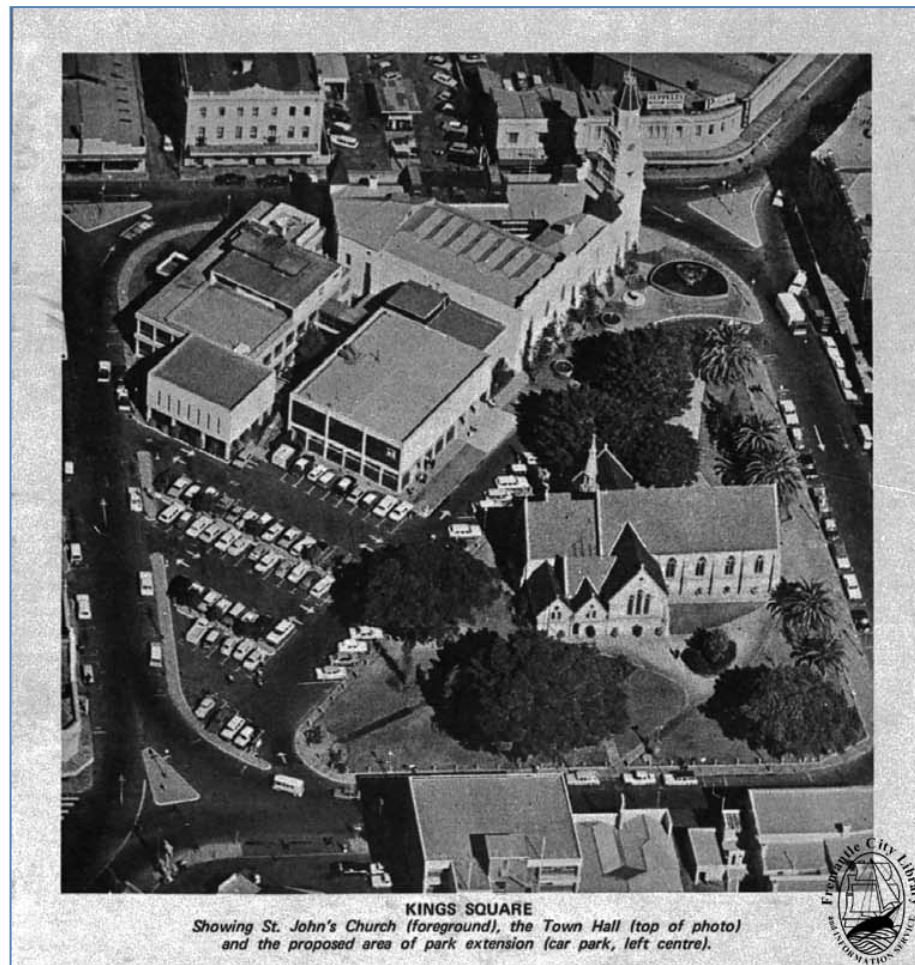
Figure 13: Aerial photograph of Kings Square taken in 1971 (Local history photographic collection, 1971)

Kings Square was created in the colony as a public reserve at what was then the far eastern end of High Street. However, within the first decade of settlement the square had been appropriated by the Trustees of Church Property of St John's Church (Ewers, 1971, pp. 29-30) upon which the first church was completed in 1843 and then reconstructed on the northern portion of the square in 1879 (1971, p. 30). Fremantle Council purchased the southern triangular portion of Kings Square from the church to build the Town Hall, which was completed in 1887. These alterations enabled an unimpeded view and traffic flow along High Street from the Round House up to Monument Hill, and later the construction of a tramline along this route. Brown (1996, p. 102) described the Town Hall as a 'grand monument of Victorian architecture' that opened up a metaphoric imperial respiratory system within the town. The Town Hall's construction was sponsored by Fremantle's elite, which at that time was comprised of 17 core business people 'united, with two exceptions, within the brotherhood of Freemasonry' (Brown, 1996, p. 1). The influence of this

merchant elite group slipped away with the industrialization of Fremantle in the 20th century. The clear sacred-soliciting line of High Street was embellished as the town plan responded to the opening of Fremantle's inner harbour to the north of High Street at the turn of the century (Tull, 1997) and Bather's Bay ceased to be Fremantle's place of international arrival and departure. By the 1960s, a one-way road system had been constructed around the square and a car park built within the square interrupting the High Street line (Figure 12). However, the car park has since been removed and High Street's passage through Kings Square has been cleared. The direct passage (Figure 8) along High Street from Bather's Bay to Monument Hill was restored by 2001 with the reopening of Whalers Tunnel to the public.

Heading out of the square and up the hill to the east along High Street, a visitor will catch a glimpse of Fremantle Prison then a mix of institutional buildings and houses before the peak, where High Street opens up to the manicured lawns of Monument Hill Memorial Reserve.[22] The Fremantle War Memorial stands upon this reserve, memorializing overseas warfare carried on in the name of empire and Australia. The memorial (phallus) seems to be something between a neoclassical column and an obelisk, an Egyptian symbol of defence through divine protection, which has been keenly reproduced in Masonic/Imperial architecture. The monument (Figure 14) commemorates World War 1, World War 2, the Korean War, Malayan Emergency and the Vietnam War (Government of Western Australia, 2004). Its construction was completed in 1928, replacing a large obelisk built there in 1867 for navigation purposes (see Figure 15).

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[22] Opposite Monument Hill at 200 High Street is the former Anglican Fremantle Grammar School, founded and run from 1882 to 1897 by prominent Freemason and federationist Sir Henry Briggs (Manford, 2012).

Figure 14: Fremantle War Memorial (photograph taken on 11 September 2010)

In producing the past in Fremantle, it seems that there has been a nationalist reworking of temple icons. This is indicated at the physical peak overlooking the city by the replacement of the old obelisk on Obelisk Hill (as it was described on the 1844 plan of Fremantle) with the Fremantle War Memorial on Monument Hill. If Fremantle is read in a Masonic light as a reproduction of King Solomon's Temple, the Whaler's Tunnel/Round House is its Porch, High Street is its House, and Monument Hill is for its Holy of Holies (Curl, 1991, pp. 81-88)[23]. Peter Lazar has described Freemasonry's influence on Australian culture through the membership of former Australian leaders, and argued that the movement could trace its roots to the building of King Solomon's Temple:

> Remarkably strong links are maintained between those early stonemasons and the Freemasons of today, through allegorical teachings based on the design and construction of ancient structures. (Lazar, 2009, p. 4)

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[23] This soliciting of the sacred on white male terms is anything but diminished by Solomon Street now running directly into Monument Hill along the Fremantle heights in the direction of the old Anglican Grammar School. The street name was changed on Fremantle maps from 'Mary Road' to 'Solomon Street' in 1951-1952 (Heritage Council of Western Australia, n.d.-a, p. 1) presumably because Elias Solomon had lived in the street at a house called Ocean View. Solomon was a prominent local businessman, founding president of the Fremantle Hebrew Congregation and the Fremantle Mayor in 1889-1891, 1896-1898 and 1900-1901 (Heritage Council of Western Australia, n.d.-b, pp. 4-5).

Figure 15: Photograph of the old obelisk at today's Monument Hill site
(Local history photographic collection, n.d.)

Or at least that's what Lazar would like us to believe in relation to the movement's claims to essentialist knowledge; namely, that the relationship between Australia and ancient sacred knowledge is reproduced in structures such as the Fremantle War Memorial. Note that the monument memorializes international rather than domestic conflicts, naturalizes defence of Australia as well as the provision of local people and resources for the defence of a larger imagined Australian community. It also naturalizes local participation in overseas conflicts at the behest of imperial power. Structures normalizing institutional violence occupy the high spatial and moral

ground in Fremantle: the Round House naturalizes state violence against people domestically while the war memorial naturalizes state violence against people overseas. Structures that work to normalize acts of colonial and imperial violence are well preserved in Fremantle. It is much harder to find structures or public artefacts in Fremantle that work to naturalize Indigenous claims, resistance or even reconciliation. In the same way that London's Millennium Bridge was constructed over the River Thames to connect St Paul's Cathedral in a straight line with the Tate Modern galleries of modern and contemporary art (Sir Robert McAlpine, 2011), Fremantle's High Street connects Monument Hill with the Round House and the Indian Ocean through King's Square and Queen's Square. These cultural reproductions reconnect an imperial past with the present and the colonial world with the highest ground in London at the centre of British Empire, St Paul's Cathedral. Architecture connecting Empire and God has been regularly reproduced to keep members of the Empire on the straight and narrow. This connection can be read in the dominant position of St Paul's Cathedral in the Pioneer Window of Fremantle's Church of St John the Evangelist. This window tells the story of emigration from England to Western Australia.

Bennett (1995, p. 162) argued that the 'shape of the thinkable future' depended on representations of the past and representations of the present's relationship with the past. Bennett (pp. 142-144) described how in the 1960s and 1970s the membership of conservation and historical societies increased across Australia. Locally, the Fremantle Society was established in 1972 to protect the city's built environment and other cultural heritage. The society (Fremantle Society, n.d.), supported by the National Trust, imagined Fremantle to be 'the Port City at the mouth of the Swan River in the Western most State of Australia'.

In 1972, the Labor Party, led by Gough Whitlam, won the Australian Federal election, enabling the loyal Labor electorate of Fremantle to connect with a Federal Government introducing radical policies. Whitlam's new nationalism included heritage and environmental policies representing the people's wishes against the self-interest of local business elites, multinational corporations and sometimes state governments (Bennett, 1995, p. 143). In a discourse of the people versus developers, the Whitlam government blamed degradation of the National Estate on the elevation

of private over public interest, and established the link that poor people suffered most from the loss of parkland and familiar urban landscapes. This link strengthened the populism and ultimately the power of the national heritage project. Heritage funds for Fremantle since the early 1970s have been directed towards memorializing the imperial/colonial movement within a nation-building context. This is indicated in the alteration of King's Square since 1971 to its current condition in which car parks have been removed and the sacred-soliciting geometry of High Street has become clearer. The aggressive reproduction of Fremantle's streetscape as a set of neoclassical facades signifying a glorious imperial, but over time increasingly nationalist, past ordered by Geometry and God has developed a certain expectation of architectural appropriateness within Fremantle community. To avoid transgression (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 149) in the eyes of this community, any large new architectural project in Fremantle should appear to be a reproduction of the imperial/Australian past or at least a close reworking of it. Fiske, Hodge and Turner (1987, p. 137) recognized that Australia's war memorials and other official monuments produced 'a foundation myth, a narrative which serves to legitimate the present order'. They argued that this project works in much the same way that Virgil's *Aeneid* was written to legitimate Augustan Roman rule in the Middle East by narrating a fake genealogy stretching back seven centuries. Similar to the Fremantle War Memorial, they described Kings Park War Memorial erected on the highest ground in Perth, defiantly asserting the power of men and the permanence of their nation:

> The monument is, literally, a dominant point of view from which to make sense of both the history and the present Western Australia. The cultural dominance of this white, male, colonising history is expressed in the geographical dominance of the obelisk which embodies it. (Fiske et al., 1987, p. 143)

Although awe inspiring, the Kings Park War Memorial would be symbolically impotent in terms of rejuvenating the empire if it was not connected to feminine representations in the landscape; such as Swan River in the background and the constructed pond in the foreground, which bears an apparently eternal flame and the words 'LET SILENT CONTEMPLATION BE YOUR OFFERING'.

Sukuh Temple was constructed in relation to the presence of holy water and spirits on Mount Lawu in Java. Fic (2003, pp. 47-53) argued that the royal *lingga* (phallus) was installed on Sukuh Temple several years after its construction to symbolically inject semen into the holy water running from an underground spring through the temple and down the hillside to the west, thereby reinvigorating the community and the realm during a period of intense political and military pressure. Santoso (2008, p. 82) argued that the construction of sacred-soliciting architecture on hillsides symbolizing cultural regenerative processes (*rejavanisasi*) was common during the final phase of the Majapahit empire. Can any indications of equivalences be found at Monument Hill? Like the *lingga* installation, the Fremantle War Memorial was placed at the peak of an architectural complex during the final phase of British Empire and decorated with icons (rosy crosses). Sukuh Temple was constructed on a hill offering the purest water to its followers, as was the War Memorial. A labyrinth of subterranean tunnels was constructed by Fremantle prison labourers in the late 19th century to pump water from under Monument Hill to a one-million gallon reservoir for redistribution back through the town to ships at port. The video played to visitors[24] about to tour these tunnels closes with the line: 'a place of imprisonment that released life-giving water'. Besides war and death, the Fremantle War Memorial suggests virility and birth. A plaque installed on the monument in 2010 by Fremantle Mayor Brad Pettitt symbolizes the relation of 'stress and strain' of birth through sacrificial death. This plaque contains the following quote:

> The memorial is the first Australian object that will meet the eyes of travellers coming from the westward and it will serve ... for all time as a dignified, silent, and reverent reminder of the stress and strain through which the peoples of the empire were called upon to pass, as well as a standing memorial to the sons of Fremantle and its districts who gave all they had, even to life itself, in service of their country.

This text on the plaque was extracted from a text written in 1928 by James Battye for inclusion in a secret time capsule placed inside the war memorial, which was discovered during renovation works and then returned to its resting place (Pettitt, 2010).

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[24] The researcher watched this video on 27 February 2011 in Fremantle Prison with other visitors before entering the tunnels under Monument Hill.

A draft conservation plan for the Monument Hill war memorial was prepared recently by Kelsall Binet Architects (2009) for the City of Fremantle. The draft (p. 8) argued that a perceived 'lack of respect' towards the significance of the site as a war memorial had been a recurring theme throughout the monument's history. This lack of respect towards the 'sacredness' of the war memorial had been voiced in response to gambling, drinking, vandalism, football, fun and fireworks at the site (pp. 31-33). The architects of the draft plan were well aware of this issue and of its resolution through linking the memorialisation of war with a sense of the sacred. They looked to religion for an understanding of environments that solicited the sacred, and found that only minimal change to the existing memorial reserve would be required to ensure that it continued to stimulate appropriate senses in its audience (pp. 106-108). The plan indicates that the deliberate reproduction of sacred-soliciting architecture along High Street will continue albeit in a barely visible way.

This reading of High Street, Fremantle, has provided insight into the production and reproduction of a built environment for Anglican, Masonic, nation-building and empire-regenerating narratives. Since the 1970s, Fremantle's heritage movement has mobilized Federal and local council resources to reopen High Street's direct line from the Indian Ocean, through Whalers Tunnel, through a series of temple facades to Monument Hill and the rising sun. This clarification of High Street's eastward line to Monument Hill supports a reading of equivalences in Fremantle's High Street and Java's Sukuh Temple. These equivalences can be grouped into three symbolic zones: the Round House/Whalers Tunnel and Sukuh Temple gateway representing purification and birth; Fremantle neoclassical facades and Sukuh stone carvings representing a meeting of profane and sacred worlds; Fremantle War Memorial and Sukuh Temple peak representing the sacred realm where deified ancestors, God and deities ensure reproduction of their respective communities. Fiske et al. (1987, p. 72) argued that the beach was also loaded with potential meaning for Australia urban myths, allowing 'different sections of society to find in it different ways of articulating, different ways of relating to, this deep biblical opposition between land and sea, or the basic anthropological one between culture and nature'. I turn to the beach in the next section to explore its agency for pleasure as well as its potential for borderland meanings, and how these relate to understandings in Fremantle audiences of transgression by coastal property development.

3.4   Fremantle beaches for pleasure and borderland

This section describes beaches around Fremantle then focuses on how beach environments stimulate pleasure and symbolise Australia's borderland. It illustrates beaches' agency and symbolic function in relation to recent social movements. Fremantle municipality is bordered by a range of beaches to its northwest, west and southwest; separating it from the great expanse of the Indian Ocean. On the northern side of Fremantle, the beach begins where the stone-wall-enclosed reclaimed land at Rous Head comes ashore. This wide-open beach, Port Beach, stretches 1.5 kilometres northwards before its name changes to Leighton Beach – known for its uncrowded, exposed winter surf breaks (*Leighton Beach Surf Forecast and Surf Reports*, 2010) – eventually connecting Fremantle harbour to Perth's fashionable Cottesloe Beach. To the west of Fremantle's centre, the beaches that used to exist – apart from Bathers Beach – have been converted through reclamation into parks and boat harbours so that the beach is not encountered again until the dog beach at South Beach at the southern end of the Fremantle Sailing Club. Port and Leighton beaches, exposed to views of Rottnest Island and harsh winds and waves coming in from the Indian Ocean, appear untamed physically and culturally (Fiske, 1983, p. 130) enabling senses of individualism and freedom for the surfers and walkers commonly using these beaches. South Beach, protected by Cockburn Sound, appears tame in comparison and ideal for community purpose with its calm sea, children's playground, manicured-grass picnic areas, BBQs, changing facilities and popular café:

> The cafe serves great food and it is frequented by the locals who enjoy morning coffee and reading while the children play around safely outside. Exquisite Western Australian Indian Ocean Sunsets are on offer here with a magical backdrop! The beach has an intimate community feel about it. (*Fremantle Beaches & Outdoor Pursuits*, n.d.)

Fremantle's beaches, like other urban beaches, have broad popular appeal. Beaches have wide potential for meaning making, enabling different ways of understanding culture and nature (Fiske et al., 1987, p. 72). Urban beaches, although transformed by human action, have an important symbolic connection with the ideals of unadulterated nature and Australia:

> If Australia meant, among other things, closeness with a harsh but still bountiful nature, such meanings could not be found in the city – unless it was on the surf beaches... Consequently the central image of the Australian beach is *not* that of a tropical hideaway. That does exist, but it is reserved for holidays, preferably outside Australia. The beach that contributes to everyday existence must be metropolitan, therefore urban... This new paradigm is the characteristically Australian beach which is urban *and* natural, civilized *and* primitive, spiritual *and* physical, culture *and* nature. (Fiske et al., 1987, pp. 54-55)

Contests over the binaries in this Australian beach paradigm frequently erupt in the public domain. In an article (Thomas & Harrison, 2010) on a proposal to introduce bans and fines for various activities at Cottesloe Beach, Western Australia's Premier Colin Barnett was quoted as calling this proposed crackdown 'un-Australian'. In the same article, entitled *Beachgoers hit with new bans*, Cottesloe's Mayor said the proposed prescriptive law reflected an absence of 'common sense and "decent values"' (2010). In this example, the beach apparently provided agency for disrupting the introduction of prescriptive laws on social behaviour. Fiske et al. (1987, pp. 70-71) argued that the beach provided agency for resisting common sense and rationality through an interplay of signifiers, which could be understood in light of Roland Barthes's work on the politics of pleasure in reading. Barthes (1975, p. 17) explained that 'the pleasure of the text is that moment when my body pursues its own ideas'. His pleasure was an experience of euphoria or moment of eroticism at culture's margin; the seam between culture and its destruction where culture dissolved and recurred (Barthes, 1975, pp. 7-14). Fiske explored this in more detail in his analysis of surf beaches such as Leighton. Through exposure to physical sensations on the beach relationships between signifier and signified were disrupted in the minds of people, enabling them to break from linguistic order, culture, control and ideology in order to experience linguistic disorder, nature, anarchy and pleasure:

> The insistence of surf writing on the senses, on the signifier rather than the signified, is a linguistic device that pushes the meaning of surfing closer to nature and further from culture. For the signifier is not a meaning, but a means to a meaning: it is embryonic culture crying for a signified: resisting this cry is a political resistance because it is resistance against control. (Fiske, 1983, p. 136)

For many people the beach provides relief from everyday pressures of urban life. On the beach at Fremantle this researcher can sense the call of scholarship, work and social obligations being diminished by an Indian-Ocean-filled horizon and the smell and sounds of the beach. The beach is a place for seeing other possibilities; a place for recognizing the imposition of common sense and resisting it. The beach can be read as nature because it appears outside of human regulation, or at least outside the realm of human property; apparently beyond the hegemony of commoditization. The pleasure agency and continually changing forms of beaches contribute to beaches remaining as commons rather than the property of individuals or corporations. The sense of beaches being beyond human regulation problematizes attempts to legitimize their private ownership. Beaches' resistance to being surveyed and mapped as stable lots problematizes their commoditization. Opposition to privatization of beaches in the Fremantle area can be traced as far back as early British settlement, as described at the start of this chapter. Constructing a border within an Australian beach is problematic but using beaches as symbolic borders around Australia is less so, as shall be demonstrated below.

Suvendrini Perera has problematized Australia's beach borderlands. Perera (2009, pp. 18-32) set out to do this by describing the unnatural construction of this nation through the blockade by Australian authorities of traditional sea lanes between communities in what is now Indonesia and what is now Australia. The sea lanes were blockaded in order to establish official Australian control of communications between people here and those outside. Through the process of Australia's federation, the traditional sea lanes between Western Australia and Asia were severed and the sea lanes strengthened between Australia's official ports – such as Fremantle – and official ports in Europe and other parts of the world. Considerable resources have been dedicated towards the defence of Fremantle port militarily and culturally since Captain Fremantle's arrival. Fremantle has an art museum, a military museum, a shipwreck museum and a vast maritime museum. The shipwreck museum provides an overview of European, particularly Dutch, contributions to voyages of discovery and trade with the Far East. The shipwreck museum features salvaged imperial wealth including the portico gateway to the Dutch colonial port fortress in Batavia (now Jakarta). The Maritime museum includes a display of Australia's failed defence of the America's Cup in yacht races off Fremantle port. The display

reproduces media records of Australia's brilliant challenge to the power of the United States of America by winning the Cup in 1983. This was a particularly symbolic event given that a yacht from the United States of America (USA) had won the Cup from the British, where it was created, in 1851 in sight of the imperial majesty of Queen Victoria and until 1983 no yacht from outside the USA had won the Cup. However, Australia's moment of brilliance proved to be short-lived when the Cup was returned to America after defeat in Fremantle in 1987. Besides the America's Cup, this large museum has displays dedicated towards European arrivals and the foundation of the Western Australia colony, maritime technologies as well as local contributions to major wars since Australian Federation. A display that disrupts the naturalization of Australia is that of a *prau* (wooden boat) from Roti Island in Indonesia. The boat is typical of the type seized and destroyed by Australia's coastguard in the defence of Australian waters. A display panel, entitled 'Setting up the Borders', describes how in 1829 Britain claimed 3-mile territorial waters around Western Australia, then in 1953 Australia was the first nation ever to claim the resources of an entire continental shelf. In 1968, territorial waters were increased to 12 nautical miles and then in 1979 territorial waters were extended to 200 nautical miles from the coast. This display suggests that the aggressor in the Indian Ocean is official Australia rather than impoverished Indonesian fishermen captured by the Australian defence force. The display is agency for disrupting viewers' belief in Australia's borders being natural and fixed far backwards through time. There is no natural Australian border, only an imagined one. Protection of this Australian border therefore must occur in the minds of the audience being addressed. The reproduction of symbolic borders for domestic audiences relies on physical objects such as ports and beaches, as explained by Perera:

> The symbolic significance of the beach extends from the historic to the everyday, the sublime to the banal, generating culturally resonating images such as Max Dupain's famous photograph *Form at Bondi* (1939)... On the beach two tensed, vigilant figures stand side by side, scanning the horizon under a darkening sky... The stance of the male figure in particular – widespread legs firmly planted on the earth, hands on hips – conveys a masculinist proprietorship over territory, supported by the nervous defensiveness of his female companion. (Perera, 2009, pp. 138-139)

The beach is the original invasion scene, the ultimate border for Australians, the place of exclusion, racial division and endless vigilance and fear, according to Perera. It is also the key stage for performing the Australian way of life. Perera argued that cultural memory of Cronulla Beach as a sacred Anglo-Australia site was agency for the mobilization of thousands of white Australians in December 2005 in a mob attack on racially-identified 'non-Australians' living in local suburbs:

> One participant likens the day's events to facing the (mythical) possibility of Japanese invasion in the Second World War. For others it stands for Anzac Day, for a memorial picnic at Gallipoli, for the turning away of the *Tampa*, for the streets of Iraq. It is homeland. (Perera, 2009, p. 150)

Perera's analysis of the performance of 'native-ized territoriality' on Cronulla Beach and Fiske's analysis of people's pleasure on beaches help explain why larger crowds have consistently gathered in recent decades to defend Perth's metropolitan beaches against property development projects rather than against projects proposed for other apparently natural environments. This is evident in the Fremantle coastal area where there have been major conflicts between large property developers and groups of local activists. The Save Freo Beaches Alliance was formed in recent years to protest against the Three Harbours Policy proposed by Western Australia's Department of Planning and Infrastructure. The policy, according to the alliance, would include a 'mega development, extending 1.8km into the ocean from Bathers' Beach to South Beach,' meaning that Fremantle's beaches would be enclosed by hotels, apartments and boating facilities. The alliance called on locals, through its homepage, to act to maintain the public status of beaches:

> Australian beaches are PUBLIC beaches. If YOU are against the proposed changes to YOUR beaches then YOU must act NOW... (Save Freo Beaches Alliance, n.d.-c)

Two-thousand-five-hundred people and several reporters attended the alliance's awareness and fundraising event by the beach (Figure 16) on 20 January 2008 including musician John Butler, who 'entertained an enthusiastic crowd of beach lovers' (Save Freo Beaches Alliance, n.d.-b).

Figure 16: Signalling 'WE SHALL FIGHT THEM ON THE BEACHES' in Fremantle, photograph taken on 20 January 2008 (Save Freo Beaches Alliance, n.d.-a).

Some property developers have tried to head off activist challenges like this by producing knowledge about sustainability and green built environment when converting coastal land into beach-front properties. Property developer Stockland represented its South Beach development, completed at South Beach in 2010, as a sustainability initiative:

> South Beach represents best practice in environmentally sustainable design; including water management in the public realm, waterwise plant selection and passive solar design. (Stockland Corporation, 2009)

Locals opposed to Stocklands' development argued that its construction would disturb old industrial ground at the site and cause toxic contamination. They also argued against the project's privatization of public coastline and its destruction of the South Beach foreshore (Jamieson, 2003). However, developers' attempts to produce a clean, green self image have come at a time of increasing public awareness of unethical practices by property developers seeking governmental approval for coastal projects. This became glaringly obvious after Western Australia's Corruption and Crime Commission began investigating allegations of municipal-council manipulation by developers of large coastal properties. In 2005 the commission

investigated attempts by representatives of the Canal Rocks property project at Smiths Beach 'to influence the Busselton Shire Council, public officers and politicians to support the development' (Corruption and Crime Commission, 2008, p. 1). The investigations tracked the activities of the lobbyists, Brian Burke and Julian Grill, working for Canal Rocks up until their involvement in the Port Coogee development. From the start, Port Coogee was a contentious project to be built on a site comprised of former industrial land and seabed five kilometres south of Fremantle:

> In 2004, Supreme Court proceedings were initiated by an anti-development group challenging the validity of decisions made in favour of the development. At a local level, passions became aroused and it wasn't uncommon for City of Cockburn Council meetings to be attended by large numbers from the public whenever Council was considering the Port Coogee development proposal. The development was of potential financial benefit to Australand and associated interests. (Corruption and Crime Commission, 2008, p. 29)

Public hearings were held by the commission in relation to Smiths Beach in 2006 and to Port Coogee in 2007. The Port Coogee hearings publicized the large cash donations made by proponents of the Port Coogee project to the then Cockburn Mayor, Stephen Lee, to fund his successful re-election campaign. Through these public hearings and their media coverage, the community of Fremantle and Western Australia learnt about the alleged wrongdoings of coastal property developers and how their consultants and lobbyists affected the outcomes of municipal elections and the partiality of public officials. Although Burke, Grill, Lee and others were not prosecuted in relation to these investigations, the public of Western Australia was well aware by 2008 of transgression in the privatization of coastal land. This awareness increased the legitimacy and popularity of people and organizations resisting developers on the beaches around Fremantle, proving electoral support for independent politicians and The Greens members standing against coastal development (D'Anger, 2008b, p. 1). Lindsay (2003, p. 26) described the emergent Greens' challenge to a binary of Labor party versus Liberal/National coalition in Australian politics as an 'electoral expression of "protest politics"'. In the Western Australian Parliament, Labor held government from February 2001 until September 2008 (Western Australian Parliamentary Library, 2008), when it was replaced by a

coalition government dominated by the Liberal party under the leadership of Colin Barnett (Australian Broadcasting Commission, 2008). Despite this change of government at the 2008 election, Labor's Jim McGinty held onto the lower-house seat of Fremantle as Labor members had done consecutively since 1924 (Parliament of Western Australia, 2012). McGinty resigned from parliament in April 2009 then Labor recruited Fremantle's independent Mayor, Peter Tagliaferri, to stand for the seat in the subsequent by-election, won by Adele Carles of The Greens party (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2009a). Greens members subsequently won elections to Fremantle's mayoral position and three other seats on the municipal council (City of Fremantle, n.d.b). At the federal level, Labor formed a national government in 2007 with Melissa Parke representing the greater Fremantle constituency (Australian Electoral Commission, 2012). Parke continued the party's consecutive representation of Fremantle since John Curtin held the seat as Australia's Prime Minister during World War II. A bronze statue of Curtin stands next to the Fremantle Town Hall in Kings Square, suggesting something about Fremantle's place in the institutional democracy of Australia.

3.5   The launch and disappearance of North Port Quay

It was onto the complex discursive stage, described in the four sections above, that North Port Quay was launched on 29 May 2008 by a consortium of more than 30 investors (Hatch, 2008). The consortium was headed by Strzelecki Group, (Strzelecki Group, 2009) which had been set up in the 1980s to undertake the Sorrento Quay development overlooking the Indian Ocean at Hillarys Boat Harbour, about 20 kilometres north of Fremantle. The group went on to develop Dolphin Quay and several other large waterfront property projects at the Mandurah Ocean Marina, about 50 kilometres south of Fremantle. The consortium was aware of the need to gain sufficient local support for the NPQ project in order to be able to represent Fremantle community's acceptance of it in planning negotiations with the state government and Fremantle Ports. This local-legitimacy strategy became even more important after the project's credentials began collapsing at the state level in the week after its launch: images of NPQ's primary lobbyist, John Halden, were repeatedly shown in *The West Australian* newspaper (Adshead, 2008; Robert Taylor, 2008) alongside images of disgraced lobbyists, Julian Grill and Brian Burke, in

relation to communications between lobbyists and state politicians as well as public servants. NPQ's Project Director, Chris Carman, said it would take six to nine months of public consultation to sell the idea to Fremantle community (Hatch, 2008). The project's master planner, Mike Day, was quoted in *The West Australian* newspaper as saying that the project would emulate the urban fabric of Fremantle using modern design:

> "We're trying to practice the kind of community building our forebears practised in the 1800s. Generations of people will live, work, play and be educated in these new urban settlements." (Hatch, 2008)

The article did not mention that 1800s development practices in Fremantle included the erasure and overwriting of the indigenous culture and community at the site; as described earlier in this chapter. Day presumed that sufficient legitimacy for the project could be gained by reworking some elements of Fremantle such as 'a compact, connected, mixed use, walkable neighbourhood' and 'all the diverse housing types' (Hatch, 2008). Given the trouble that other developers had had trying to get ocean-front developments off the ground in Fremantle, the project consortium anticipated that a greater good would have to be articulated in order to override local concerns. It recruited the services of 'one of WA's leading environmentalists', (*Today Tonight*, 2008) Professor Peter Newman, as a spokesman and sustainability consultant for the project. Newman, an urban planner known locally for defending the Fremantle railway station against closure, headed the five-month-old Curtin University Sustainability Policy (CUSP) Institute which was promised scholarship funding by the consortium for its engagement in the project. On the day of NPQ's launch, *The West Australian* dedicated four paragraphs to Peter Newman's comments on the project starting with the following:

> Professor Newman said he supported the proposal because it created a dense, compact, carbon emission-free development which used renewable energy and public transport and would create a better environment than the one it replaces. It created thousands of homes in the inner metropolitan area, rather than contributing to suburban sprawl. (Hatch, 2008)

If measured by the publicity it received in the first 24-hours of being made public, the NPQ launch was highly successful. Besides, occupying pages 1 and 3 of the main

daily newspaper in Western Australia, it was a prominent story in the 7pm Western Australia edition of the ABC News on 29 May 2010 (*WA Premier criticises Fremantle island plan*, 2008). The launch was reported in The Australian Financial Review newspaper as *Freo's free-for-all on islands in the sun* (Sprague, 2008), in other newspapers as well as radio and commercial television news services (*Latest News*, 2008). Voices of opposition to the project emerged immediately within this frenzy of media coverage. The then Western Australia Premier, Alan Carpenter, immediately opposed the project on the grounds that 'it doesn't make any sense to me whatsoever' (Sprague, 2008). It was also opposed by the standing, state, parliamentary member for Fremantle, Jim McGinty, and the member for neighbouring Cottesloe, Colin Barnett. A member of the Fremantle Society heritage organization, Barnett would go on to become Western Australia's Premier at the next election. On the day of the launch Mr Barnett said of the project: 'This isn't visionary, it's delusional' (Sprague, 2008). Besides distributing 10,000 promotional DVDs and pamphlets (Hatch, 2008), the consortium staged a program of public consultation in Fremantle in order to demonstrate that the project made sense. The consortium's strategy to legitimize NPQ became a struggle for common-sense acceptance in Fremantle, played out in local newspapers, political campaigns, council meetings and other public gatherings. The consortium's legitimization campaign focussed on associating the project with sustainability and carbon-emissions reduction. It ran a series of advertisements in Fremantle's newspapers arguing that North Port Quay 'could become the world's first carbon-free development' (Figure 23). Texts about NPQ published in the local papers of record, *Fremantle Herald* and *Fremantle Gazette*, were mainly clustered around three distinct events: the launch of NPQ in late May 2008, the state election in early September 2008 and the Fremantle by-election in mid 2009. The consortium's legitimization strategy of focussing its advertising and public relations resources on election campaigns in Fremantle backfired. The following chapter describes attempts by the consortium to claim the environmental high ground and their discursive failure in public encounters in Fremantle. The ecological risk of a carbon-constrained future articulated by NPQ's proponents was transformed into the ecological risk of the project's construction while their representations of investing in the city's future were transformed into unacceptable risks for Fremantle community. The threat of NPQ became an effective discursive tool used successfully by Adele Carles, The

Greens party candidate, to win the Fremantle seat in Western Australia's parliament; producing an historic electoral victory for The Greens and ending 85 years of continuous Labour Party representation in the seat.

This contest for North Port Quay in 2008 and 2009 was played out largely within and about the space of Fremantle. Actors made representations about the project within the context of an imagined Fremantle community and the thinkable future of the city while relying on constructed notions of land entitlement, appropriate built environment and urban coastal transgression described above. In the next chapter we shall see how actors in the NPQ case attempted to negotiate their interests by making representations about the project and its appropriateness or transgressions within this context.

This chapter introduced the North Port Quay case and described significant elements of its discursive context that will enable competent interpretation of texts from the case as described in the next chapter. Firstly in this chapter, the discursive construction of land-entitlement was described through time in space around the proposed project site of NPQ in Fremantle, Western Australia. This description focused on the construction of beliefs about land ownership and public versus private occupation rights to land in Fremantle. Secondly, the imagining of Fremantle community was described and illustrated by how this community identity was reproduced and reworked successfully in the 1990s by the Fremantle Football club. Thirdly, appropriate built environment for Fremantle community was described via a comparative reading of Fremantle's High Street and the passage through Sukuh Temple in Central Java. This comparative reading, which introduced senses of architectural transgression, demonstrated the significance of the temple iconography in Fremantle's streetscape produced in the first century of European settlement and its more recent preservation and reproduction at the hands of local and national heritage movements. Fourthly, the beaches around Fremantle were described in terms of their agency for pleasure and symbolic function as Australia's borderland. Cultural transgression of beach experiences was discussed briefly in relation to several recent, coastal, property development projects. In the fifth and final section of this chapter, an outline was provided of the launch, contest and disappearance of NPQ that will be examined by way of textual analysis in the following chapter.

4   Textual analysis: North Port Quay / ecological threats

The first chapter of this thesis introduced the context of its research question: How does representation of ecological threats affect the meaning of green built environment and the practices through which this meaning is produced? It also introduced a research methodology, developed from literature described in Chapter 2, to answer this question by applying discourse analysis techniques to a corpus drawn from an archive of texts gathered about the contested green built environment project of North Port Quay. Significant threads running through the discursive context of the NPQ case were described in Chapter 3. This chapter presents a close reading of NPQ texts, through which the operations of discursive mechanisms in the texts are identified. The chapter is organized in six sections. The first section describes the archive of texts gathered about NPQ then the process by which texts were selected from this archive to form the corpus for close reading. This section also describes how the description of this close reading is organized in this chapter by broad chronological phase presented in sections two to six. Section two describes a close reading of texts produced for the launch of NPQ on 29 May 2008 and its immediate mediation in television news as well as daily print news and corresponding online media. Section three deals with texts about NPQ produced during a period leading up to and through the Western Australian parliamentary election held in September 2008. Section four focuses on NPQ texts produced between October 2008 and early April 2009 which dealt mainly with the issues of whether NPQ's environmental credentials were 'green wash' and how these credentials were being investigated by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC). The fifth section describes a close reading of texts during a period leading up to and through the by-election for the state parliamentary seat of Fremantle in May 2009. The sixth and final section deals with NPQ texts during a period leading up to and through the Fremantle mayoral election.

4.1   Archive, corpus and organization of North Port Quay texts

This section describes the assembly of an archive of 723 texts about North Port Quay and then the selection of 180 of these texts to form the corpus for discourse analysis by close reading in broad chronological phases. It also describes the specific

characteristics of text sources and the positions of these sources in public spheres of Fremantle and Western Australia. Texts produced in these public spheres (Dahlgren, 2009) formed the archive so that reasonably local contributions to public discourse could be examined in relation to public regulation of local space. Texts were included in the archive if they emerged into these public spheres between 1 May 2008 and 31 December 2009 containing references to North Port Quay from any of the sources scanned for valid texts by this researcher. The sources, listed in Table 1, included the *Fremantle Herald* weekly newspaper, the *Fremantle Gazette* weekly newspaper, and *The West Australian* daily newspaper and its corresponding online blog about North Port Quay, Internet multimedia of the North Port Quay consortium, *ABC1 Perth* television news, minutes and audiovisual recordings of meetings of Fremantle Council, Hansard of the Parliament of Western Australia, Internet presentations of the Curtin University Sustainability Policy (CUSP) Institute, online versions of monthly newsletters of the Fremantle Port Authority, an audio recording of the public debate of Fremantle mayoral candidates and an audio recording of the public debate of Fremantle by-election candidates. The archive did not include direct mail distribution and public handout of flyers, newspaper insertions, press releases, email, online social networking sites and conversations in public places because of difficulties in capturing a representative set of these texts. All front pages of Fremantle's local weekly newspapers – *Fremantle Gazette* and *Fremantle Herald* – from this period were photographed and added to the archive (even if they did not contain a reference to North Port Quay) in case they were needed for analysis as key local news events around the North Port Quay issue. From the North Port Quay consortium's website, only the homepage, vision pages and coastal planning strategy-public submission pages and multimedia texts on these pages were included in the archive because of redundancies – such as its archive of media clippings and recordings – and the great volume of texts, which numbered hundreds if not thousands. Also excluded from the archive were notes of conversations about North Port Quay and site visits as well as site photographs taken by this researcher. Newspaper texts were captured in the archive as digital photographs or scans of whole pages in '.jpg' file format, television broadcasts were saved in '.wmv' format, websites were captured in a combination of '.mhtml', '.docx' and '.jpg' format, public forums were captured in recordings in a '.mov' or '.wma' format along with any field notes taken by this researcher in '.docx' format. Parliamentary Hansard,

council minutes, presentations on the CUSP website and the Fremantle Ports Community Newsletter were collected in '.pdf' file format. The archive is comprised of 723 texts (Table 1).

Source	Medium	# texts	Start of production period	Close of production period
Fremantle Herald	Weekly newspaper	438	31-May-08	26-Dec-09
Fremantle Gazette	Weekly newspaper	171	3-Jun-08	29-Dec-09
The West Australian	Daily newspaper & blog	44	29-May-08	17-Oct-09
North Port Quay	Internet multimedia	40	Downloaded 5 May 2009 to 16 November 2009	
ABC1 Perth	Television news	4	29-May-08	18-May-09
Fremantle Council	Meeting & minutes	4	24-Jun-09	23-Sep-09
Parliament of Western Australia	Hansard via Internet	16	9-Jun-09	27-Nov-09
CUSP website	Internet presentation	2	Downloaded 21 October 2009	
Brad Pettitt website	Internet	1	Downloaded 9 September 2009	
Fremantle Ports Community Newsletter	Internet archive	1	Downloaded 8 February 2011	
Fremantle mayoral debate forum	Public meeting	1	Recorded 22 September 2009	
Fremantle by-election debate	Public meeting	1	Recorded 5 May 2009	
	TOTAL	723		

Table 1: Composition of archive of texts around North Port Quay issue

The *Fremantle Herald* published the greatest number of texts on NPQ of any source in the archive except for the NPQ website, from which many texts were excluded from the archive for the reasons described above. The *Herald*, a free weekly newspaper with a masthead describing itself as 'Fremantle's own INDEPENDENT newspaper', had a significant presence in Fremantle municipality and the state's Fremantle electorate. Its principle income source was advertising, mainly from real estate companies and property developers but also, significantly during the archive period, from candidates contesting political positions. The *Fremantle Herald* (Smith, 2008) reported that the Circulations Audit Board in mid 2008 had recorded 81,960 copies of the *Herald* (including its Melville and Cockburn editions) being delivered to letterboxes each week compared to 64,179 copies of The Community Newspaper Group's *Fremantle Gazette, Cockburn Gazette* and *Melville Times*. The *Fremantle Gazette*'s masthead presents itself simply as 'Community' with the logo of the Community Newspaper Group, which is part of the global News Corporation group although its ownership is not promoted in the *Gazette* or on the Community Newspaper Group's websites. Both the *Fremantle Herald* and *Fremantle Gazette* are distributed for free through letter boxes in Fremantle, Beaconsfield, East Fremantle,

Hilton, North Fremantle, O'Connor, Samson, South Fremantle and White Gum Valley (*Fremantle Cockburn Gazette*, n.d.; Smith, 2008) and they are also given away at local news agencies. *The West Australian* was described by Shulze (2008) as the 'monopoly newspaper in Australia's fastest growing state' with weekday edition sales of 196,490 copies and weekend edition sales of 348,153. The NPQ consortium's website (*www.northportquay.com.au*) dominated Internet search results (*Google*, 2009) for queries lodged from Perth for the term 'north port quay' and the site was promoted heavily in the consortium's print advertisements; as we shall see below. The menu bar running across the NPQ website included eight options: Home, The Vision, News & Publications, The Project, Gallery, Investors, FAQs, and Contact Us. Home referred to the project's homepage featuring a video simulation of NPQ and voiceover against a continuous-slideshow backdrop of coastal images. The Vision page contained a library of interviews with six people endorsing the NPQ vision: 'Greg Poland of Strzelecki Holdings Pty Ltd' describing his personal vision as the 'driving force' for the project, 'Prof. Peter Newman – Sustainability Expert' demonstrating environmental support, 'Dale Alcock – Builder' and 'Vicki Sarich – Sorrento Quay East' demonstrating industry support, 'Geoff Marsh – Australian Test Cricketer' and 'Andrew Vlahov – Perth Wildcats' demonstrating community support. The News & Publications page refers to latest news, coastal planning strategy as well as archives of press reports, television and radio broadcasts about the project. The Project page refers to a series of videos, comprised of project simulations as well as coastal and urban scenes, advertising the benefits of North Port Quay. The Gallery page referred to a slide show of NPQ images and two television advertisements, both starting with a beach scene then cutting to a NPQ simulation, featuring Jane Marwick as a 'Radio Personality' and Shaun McManus as a 'Freo Docker'. The Investors page referred to a list of people representing 'some of Western Australia's best known and well respected companies' who would invest in NPQ. The FAQs page referred to and provided responses for 13 apparently common questions or concerns about the project. The Contact Us page provided email addresses and an opportunity to subscribe to an email newsletter on the project. The website was launched by Halden Burns, a Perth-based public relations firm, which was also responsible for managing NPQ's branding, advertising, government relations and community consultations in order 'to gain community and government support for the project' (Halden Burns, n.d.). *ABC1 Perth* is the local metropolitan

version of the state-owned Australian Broadcasting Commission's (ABC) national television service, *ABC1*; which had a weekly metropolitan reach of 8.34 million (57.9%) in Australia in its 2008/2009 fiscal year (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2009b, p. 3). The ABC's vision is 'to be trusted for playing a meaningful role in the lives of all Australians' (p. 7). Almost 21% of the *ABC1*'s content was comprised of unduplicated state-based, first-run television broadcasts in the 2008-2009 fiscal year (p. 136). *ABC1* had a 17.1 % share of the 6pm to midnight audience for free-to-air television in the Perth metropolitan area; which was the time slot and region for which the *ABC1* texts in this archive were produced. The City of Fremantle Council acted as a board of 13 elected members representing community interests at council and committee meetings (City of Fremantle, n.d.a). Six council members were elected by constituents in six wards within the municipality every two years; two councillors represented each ward and each councillor served office for four years. The mayor was voted in for a period of four years by eligible voters in the municipality. Members of the public can attend council meetings, put questions to council and freely access meeting minutes as well as agendas via the council's office or its website. Audiovisual recordings of council meetings were available from the council's office for a fee. The Parliament of Western Australia is comprised of a Legislative Assembly of 59 members elected from single-member electoral districts by a system of preferential voting (Parliament of Western Australia, 2011a) and a Legislative Council of 36 members elected from six multi-member regions by a system of preferential representation (Parliament of Western Australia, 2011b). The Legislative Assembly's functions included forming a government, approving the finance for government operations, scrutinizing the government's performance, legislating, providing a forum for matters of public concern and representing the people of Western Australia. The Legislative Council's functions included legislating, monitoring and reviewing government legislation, administration and expenditure; and, gathering information and publicising issues through committees, question time and parliamentary debates on motions and Bills as well as by petitions presented by members on behalf of the public. Members of the public can attend the viewing gallery of parliamentary sessions and download Hansard transcripts of the sessions from the website of the Parliament of Western Australia. The CUSP Institute's website publicizes and promotes the research and educational activities of this university department dealing with the idea of sustainability in public policy

theory and practice. The institute was established in January 2008, headed by Professor Peter Newman, and based in Fremantle (Curtin University Sustainability Policy Institute, 2011). Brad Pettitt promoted his electoral policy positions in a website that was promoted in newspaper advertisements and flyers and linked to regular events and online social networking during his campaign to win the electoral position of Mayor in October 2011. This website (www.bradpettitt.org) was directed at an audience of potential voters in the Fremantle municipality for at least several weeks before the election. The Fremantle Mayoral Debate forum was held at the Fremantle Town Hall on 22 September 2009. The event was advertised in Fremantle newspapers, on billboards in Fremantle and by email. By this researcher's count, several hundred people attended the debate which consisted of the facilitator reading emailed questions and taking questions from the floor put to the six mayoral candidates in attendance. The Fremantle By-election Candidates Debate was held on 5 May 2009 at the University of Notre Dame's Drill Hall in Fremantle. The event was advertised in Fremantle newspapers, on electoral blogs, and by billboards in Fremantle. Three-hundred people attended the debate (D'Anger, 2009) which ran for approximately 1 hour 45 minutes, consisting of a facilitator reading emailed questions and taking questions from the floor put to the 10 by-election candidates in attendance.

These 12 sources provided 723 texts for the archive, from which 180 texts (Table 2 and Appendices 1-180) were selected for discourse analysis on the basis of a text containing a reference not just to North Port Quay but also to an explicit or implied ecological threat. Explicit ecological threats in spoken, written or image form included climate-change, global warming, health hazard, safety issues, environmental damage, pollution, carbon, emissions, beach erosion, health impact, impact on beaches and past environmental disasters. Implicit ecological threats included the terms or images about carbon-free, carbon-neutral, sustainable development, sustainability (in relation to sustainable development), climate-friendly, environmentally friendly, lead exports (in relation to the risk of contamination at Fremantle Port), clean-up of past environmental disasters and sustainability expert. 'The Greens' was excluded from the category of implied ecological threats because it was treated as the title of a political party rather than a response to an ecological threat. Articles, advertisements, editorials, letters,

presentations and audio visuals containing North Port Quay and at least one ecological threat were transcribed. Images of the texts, transcripts and links to recordings were loaded into NVivo 9 software for storage, coding and analysis. Other articles, captured but not transcribed, on these news-page images are occasionally referred to in the analysis shown below in this chapter to indicate how ecological threats and NPQ interacted with texts outside the corpus.

Source	Medium	# texts	Start of production period	Close of production period
Fremantle Herald	Weekly newspaper	116	31-May-08	20-Oct-09
Fremantle Gazette	Weekly newspaper	30	3-Jun-08	29-Sep-09
The West Australian	Daily newspaper & blog	21	29-May-08	17-Oct-09
North Port Quay	Internet multimedia	2	Downloaded 1 July 2009 to 16 November 2009	
ABC1 Perth	Television news	2	29-May-08	9-May-09
Fremantle Council	Meeting & minutes	2	24-Jun-09	23-Sep-09
Parliament of Western Australia	Hansard via Internet	2	9-Jun-09	17-Jun-09
CUSP website	Internet presentation	1	Downloaded 21 October 2009	
Brad Pettitt website	Internet	1	Downloaded 9 September 2009	
Fremantle Ports Community Newsletter	Internet archive	1	Downloaded 8 February 2011	
Fremantle mayoral debate forum	Public meeting	1	Recorded 22 September 2009	
Fremantle by-election debate	Public meeting	1	Recorded 5 May 2009	
TOTAL		180		

Table 2: Corpus of texts for analysis

The 180 texts in the corpus contained a variety of representations about NPQ and ecological threats in a variety of genre of texts in the public spheres of Fremantle and Western Australia. The texts contained a total of 212 individual and institutional voices (Appendix 181) of variously positioned credibility within the texts. The utterances of these voices were often analysed in texts as second-order representations, which may not accurately account for the voice's original representation or context of the utterance. This has been signalled in various sections of Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 with phrases like 'quoted as saying' or 'reportedly said' but, for the sake of word efficiency, this has not been indicated in every instance for all texts. Discourse analysis techniques were applied in a close reading of and between these texts, presented in the following five sections of this chapter organized into discursive phases broadly by chronological order (Figure 17). This structure tolerated the presentation of some newspaper-page texts in multiple phases; for instance, a cartoon on a newspaper page is analysed in one phase and a letter on the

same page analysed in another phase. This presentation structure supported a description of the operation of discursive mechanisms in relation to significant events in the discursive phases; as presented in the following sections of this chapter.
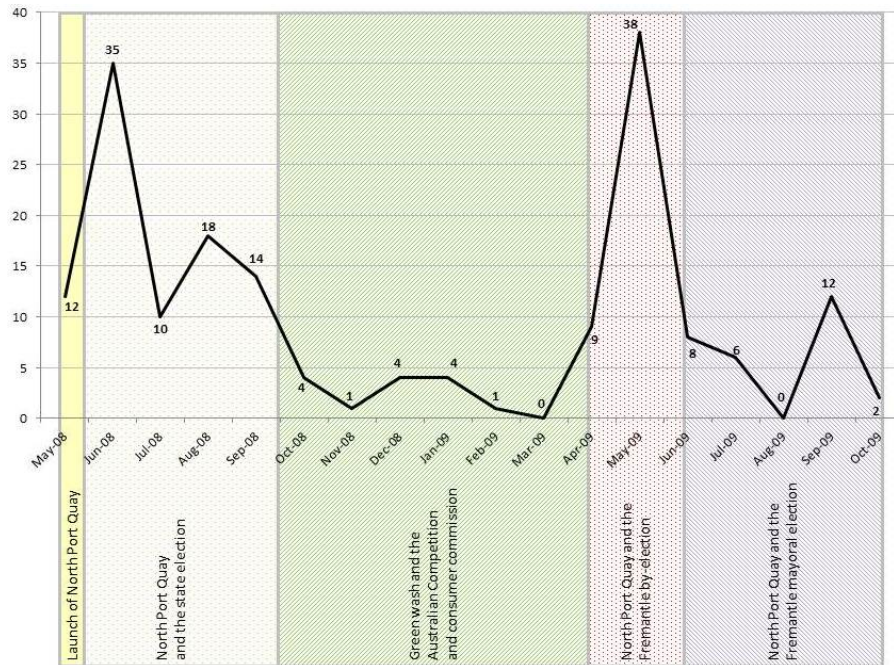
Figure 17: Number of texts each month shown broadly by phase in the analysis.

The launch of North Port Quay on 29 May 2008 is described in the next section of this chapter through an analysis of seven texts of various genres produced by NPQ, *The West Australian* and *ABC1 Perth*. The third section of this chapter deals with NPQ and the state election held on 6 September 2008 through a close reading of 85 texts published in the *Fremantle Herald*, *Fremantle Gazette*, *The West Australian* and *Fremantle Ports Community Newsletter*. The fourth section focuses on the issue of green wash and the ACCC through an analysis of 17 texts published in the *Fremantle Herald* and *Fremantle Gazette*. The fifth section deals with NPQ and the Fremantle by-election held on 16 May 2009 through an analysis of 50 texts produced by the *Fremantle Herald*, *Fremantle Gazette*, *The West Australian*, the Parliament of Western Australia, *ABC1 Perth* and the Fremantle By-election Debate forum. The sixth section deals with NPQ and the state election held on 6 September 2008 through an analysis of 25 texts produced by the *Fremantle Herald*, *Fremantle Gazette*, *The West Australian*, the City of Fremantle, the CUSP website and the Fremantle Mayoral Debate. Several of the texts are referred to in more than one of

these broad chronological sections, or referred to in more detail in the following chapter. Organizing the research this way has enabled the researcher to describe how representations of ecological threats operated as discursive mechanisms within and between the texts and how attempts were made to stabilize and destabilize particular meanings of green built environment within the local cultural milieu. The research was conducted in stages with the 180 texts in the corpus transcribed and stored in an NVivo 9 server for coding and analysis; the corpus was then subjected to reflexive coding and close reading; methods of corpus-supported critical discourse analysis were applied to identify significant objects and trace transformations of texts in the corpus; then significant indications of the effects of discursive mechanisms, intertextuality, interdiscursivity and multimodality in the corpus were identified and described within the chronological sections of this chapter for further analysis by theme in the following chapter.

4.2   Launch day for North Port Quay

The first section of this textual analysis describes discursive mechanisms operating in seven texts (Table 3) relating to the launch of North Port Quay on 29 May 2008. These texts (newspaper and television news, online blog, online poll and website multimedia) produced by North Port Quay, *The West Australian* and *ABC1 Perth* were subject to discourse analysis by close reading described below.

Text source	Description of item
ABC1	2008/05/29, Video & transcript of ABC1 Perth news footage
North Port Quay website	NPQ homepage image & transcription
North Port Quay website	Screenshot Greg Poland vision webpage image & transcription
The West Australian	2008/05/29, page 01, article
The West Australian	2008/05/29, page 03, article
The West Australian	News blog from 2008/05/29, accessed 2009/08/12
The West Australian	Results of online poll from 2008/05/29, accessed 2009/08/12

Table 3: Texts in analysis of launch day for North Port Quay

News of NPQ broke in *The West Australian* newspaper on the morning of the project's official launch on Thursday, 29 May 2008 (Figure 18). An image of the project occupied almost half of the front page. It was an elevated perspective of a wide canal between a vast, orderly, assortment of low and high-rise buildings. The

canal was empty except for the two, or perhaps three, boats travelling along it towards the viewer and several boats were moored at its sides. It read like a mechanical, futuristic city devoid of human presence. A flat landscape bearing erect, autonomous blocks amid well-defined transportation routes more resembled a circuit board than the city of Fremantle, known for its late 19th century retro-styled streetscape, described in Chapter 3. The signification – of a hypermodern canal city alien to Fremantle – was not lost on the newspaper's editorial department. The image supported the editorial department statement that the project read 'like a brochure for a grand Dubai development, only this one's proposed for the Fremantle coast'. The image also corresponded with the text's quoted reaction by Fremantle's Labor member of parliament, Jim McGinty: 'I don't like it'. The apparent public relations success in NPQ occupying the front page of Western Australia's newspaper of record, as it was laid out the day before the project's official launch, was disrupted by the article's image, headline and text suggesting controversy about an alien urbanism planned for Fremantle. This front-page article suggested readers continue to a report on page 3 to learn more about this new controversy.

Figure 18: Page 1 of *The West Australian* on 29 May 2008

The West Australian's treatment of NPQ in the report on page 3 (Figure 19) is an apparent public relations windfall for the proponents presenting their case for the project. The first source listed in the article is 'Project director Chris Carman', who is quoted directly for three paragraphs and indirectly for at least one other paragraph. The second source listed in the article is referred to for one sentence only:

> Planning Minister Alannah MacTiernan, leading a delegation of port authorities to China this week, considers the plan "ambitious".

The third source, 'sustainability expert Peter Newman' who has been 'enlisted' by the developers to support the project, is quoted directly or indirectly for four paragraphs. The fourth source is 'North Port Quay spokesman Mike Holtham' who is quoted for two paragraphs. The fifth and final source is the project's 'Master planner' Mike Day who is quoted for three paragraphs. Unlike page 1, the text on page 3 does not list any overtly dissenting sources. The article is true to its headline in presenting a 'Grand plan to build six island hubs of north Freo coast'. The images seem slightly less alien. People, although ant-like, and beaches are evident in the top image. In the lower image, from a satellite perspective, NPQ seems to fit snugly alongside Fremantle's port. The text describes the project from its proponents' perspective and the plan for it to be realized. However, this would have been read with alarm by some given the context of local activism against the corruption of coastal property development (see Chapter 3). The first sentence of paragraph 1 described the project as an 'ambitious $10 billion plan to build six islands across 345ha of seabed at Fremantle's North Quay... launched today by a consortium of some of Perth's leading property developers and wealthiest businessmen'. The second paragraph introduced ecological threats in the form of global warming and storm surges. It also introduced objects uncommon to Fremantle: a '3.5km seawall' protecting 20,000 residents as well as 'Venice-style canals and bridges'. Readers are informed that the project will 'face significant hurdles', particularly 'opposition from Fremantle Ports', which Chris Carmen hoped to overcome by selling the idea to Fremantle community through six to nine months of public consultation. Readers are informed that '10,000 promotional DVDs and pamphlets' would be sent 'to every residential address in Fremantle to promote this 'carbon emission-free development' and its 'Fremantle-friendly sweeteners'. The sweeteners apparently include boat pens, new beaches, a surf reef, a seawall for use as a fishing platform as well as wind, wave and solar energy production and rehabilitation of the seabed damaged by port activities.

Figure 19: Page 3 of *The West Australian* on 29 May 2008

An Internet version of this article published the same day on *The West Australian* website included hyperlinks to a poll and a blog, headed 'NEWS BLOG: A shrewd plan to tackle the city's booming population woes or an environmental nightmare?' The poll suggested that its audience was divided into two camps in relation to NPQ; into an affirmative view of 'Finally, an insightful plan to house the city's exploding population' and a negative view of 'An environmental nightmare and an insult to Fremantle's unique fabric'. The poll, which closed at an undisclosed time and date,

represented 70% of respondents for the affirmative view and 30% for the negative without disclosing the number of respondents. This division between respondents suggested the question reproduced the discourse of sustainable development because of the respondent choice of reading as the provision of a new technology to cope with rising population or an environmental nightmare. The poll also reproduced discourse of the city because of the division between supporting the inevitable growth of the Perth metropolis and harming the character of Fremantle. The construction of the poll suggested that the editorial department of *The West Australian* expected their audience to find NPQ more acceptable at the scale of the Perth metropolis rather than at the narrower scale of Fremantle. The blog positioned *The West Australian* extending its corner of the public sphere to its Internet audience albeit within the suggested constraining divide of the blog heading, which also suggested the newspaper's authority in reading public opinion: 'A shrewd plan to tackle the city's booming population or an environmental nightmare'. The blog attracted 134 responses: 99 were posted on 29 May after its release that day at 7:19am and another 35 were posted between 30 May and 6 June 2008, the day of the last entry when this blog was last accessed by this researcher on 12 August 2009. Of these responses, 35 contained ecological threats and were included in the corpus for analysis. The ecological threat of storms and rising sea levels was associated with NPQ in these utterances because of its proposed location and seawall. A respondent named 'Cap'n' wrote, 'it won't be a sea wall they'll need, it'll be an all-encompassing dyke'. Another, 'Ness' wrote: 'How will that '3.5 km sea wall' protect the island from storm surges and rising sea levels?' Irony and parody were discursive tools of some blog respondents. In the example below, 'Smithers' adopted an apparently affirmative position while deriding NPQ as a playground for the wealthy elite – often the other in these texts was greedy developers – doomed by the environmental blowback of consumerism:

> *Smithers* Says:
> May 30th, 2008 at 8:09 am
>
> I say build it! As global warming takes it's grip and a huge winter frontal system or remnants of a tropical cyclone drift down the coast, combined with a king tide and rising sea level - I'll be keen to see what happens. During an event like this I can't wait to see all of those precious mega rich Perth tossers running out of their newly rendered mcmansions, all of

those born to rule small business proprietors and of course WA's local
CUBs all running to their European cars and Toorak tractors trying to get
out as the entire edifice gets hammered by a storm created by rampant
western consumerism. Bring it on.

'SickofPessimism' responded that the seawall building experts would be capable of
solving any rising seas threat to NPQ. Others in favour of the project argued that an
earlier Mandurah canal development had not ended in environmental crisis as some
had predicted and had become a model for several other coastal developments built
around Perth. Others in favour argued NPQ would be a sustainable development
preventing urban sprawl that would be a model for other cities. It would also help
Perth to make progress in a global competition of post-industrial cities associated
with sustainable development, as argued by Jude:

> It seems like a brilliant opportunity for the WA government to prove its
> not all about exploiting the country for resources as the development
> looks like it can set a global benchmark in sustainable development -
> something which developers around the world can learn from. Its time
> for perth to move forward.

Jude also argued that NPQ deserved 'a FAIR GO, it would be environmentally
criminal not to consider it' to help overcome a metropolitan land shortage due to
native title claims, to reduce environmental destruction through suburban
development and to set a possible 'international benchmark for high quality carbon
free developments'. The carbon neutral claims for NPQ were challenged by
'Michael' for ignoring 'the many thousands of tonnes of diesel required to move that
amount of earth'. The project was challenged by other respondents for impacting on
a marine environment while there was surplus of land for development around Perth.
The most commonly referred to place in the blog, besides NPQ, was Perth followed
by Fremantle Port then Fremantle.

By the evening of 29 May, news of the NPQ launch had been included in news
broadcasts for the Perth Metropolitan area from all major television stations
including the ABC, Chanel Seven, Chanel Nine and Chanel Ten (North Port Quay,
n.d.-c). These news broadcasts focussed on the launch using video footage of the
project's 3D model and information by NPQ as well as press conference interview
footage and interviews with opponents. Major themes, which are analysed in the

ABC1's news broadcast below, included the ambitious scale of the project over the sea, its sustainability credentials and immediate controversy surrounding it.

This news item (*WA Premier criticises Fremantle island plan*, 2008), shown on 29 May, was structured to show a public controversy about North Port Quay as a rationale for introducing the proposed development to viewers:

> *Anchor:* A controversial plan to build a six billion dollar man-made island village off the coast of Fremantle is already drawing fierce opposition. Leading the criticism is the premier Mr Alan Carpenter, who says the plan makes no sense and that he hopes it never happens.
>
> VLS High Angle. A digital 3D model of North Port Quay emerges as an island out of the sea from plan to grey concrete forms with zoom in. Subtitle: 'Corporate video'.
>
> *Voiceover:* It is known as North Point Quay
>
> LS High Angle. Camera pans left as the grey concrete forms become a coloured built environment, a modern city of low and high-rise buildings amid orderly streets and blue canals with the ocean and a blurred shoreline in background.
>
> *Voiceover:* and it is being sold as an environmentally friendly development like nothing ever seen in Australia.
>
> CS Chris Carmen in front of a blind-covered window and blue screen bearing project images and the text 'Mandurah Ocean Marina Entered by; Benchmark Projects'. Subtitle: 'Chris Carman NORTH PORT QUAY'.
>
> *Chris Carman:* We truly believe that this is going to be a world class model of sustainable development.

These environmental claims were problematized by voiceover and by visual representation of cars travelling along North Port Quay's seawall.

> *Voiceover:* The development would be powered with renewable energy
>
> VLS High Angle. Model of urban islands behind seawall. Camera pans left.
>
> *Voiceover:* but with cars allowed on the islands the proponents were forced to qualify

MS High Angle. Model of seawall, with cars on it, a canal in middle ground and buildings, roads and trees in background. Camera pans right along seawall with cars travelling upon it.

Voiceover: their claim that it would be one of the world's first carbon-free developments.

CS. Peter Newman sitting in the same place as Chris Carmen was earlier. Subtitle: 'Peter Newman NORTH PORT QUAY'.

Peter Newman: It's going to be carbon-free in terms of the the way in which the people who are living there are powered.

LS High Angle. Model of a large low-rise structure, with several medium-rise buildings, a canal then the seawall, ocean and the coast behind it, a canal and several low-rise buildings on left. Camera pans left.

Voiceover: The project has the financial backing of 40 of the state's most influential business people

LS High Angle. Camera pans left. Model of a large glass building in middle ground and Fremantle port in background. Then a grand canal with several bridges over it leading to more buildings.

Voiceover: and property developers.

VLS High Angle. The port facility in middle ground, the Swan River mouth and Fremantle in background and sea in foreground, right and background. Camera pans right from the port out to sea.

Voiceover: But the premier says it would cause horrendous problems for the area.

Alan Carpenter: I don't like it.

CS. Alan Carpenter with tree and brick building in the background. Subtitle: 'Alan Carpenter PREMIER'.

Alan Carpenter: I won't support it, I oppose it, and it doesn't make any sense to me whatsoever and as long as I am able to I will oppose it.

MS. Port Beach with Colin Barnett talking to reporter in foreground with the port facility and sea in background.

Voiceover: The local MP has accused the developers of arrogance.

CS Back of Colin Barnett's head and shoulders, facing reporter with an otherwise empty beach and uninterrupted ocean horizon in background.

Voiceover: For eyeing off an area owned by the state.

CS Collin Barnet speaking with beach and the Fremantle port's seawall in background. Subtitle: 'Collin Barnett COTTESLOE MP'.

Collin Barnett: I am totally opposed to reclaiming seabed for housing.

MS Downtown Fremantle streetscape, focus on outdoor cafe seating at Gino's cafe in popular South Terrace.

Voiceover: However, the Fremantle Mayor is

MS Three people seated around cafe table outside.

Voiceover: keeping an open mind.

CS Peter Tagliaferri speaking to camera with low-rise facades of downtown Fremantle in background. Subtitle: 'Peter Tagliaferri FREMANTLE MAYOR'.

Peter Tagliaferri: It is a big development but I think it's a conversation that we shouldn't just shut out.

After providing these reactions by state and local politicians, the visual was cut to an eroded sand dune with a seawall in the background and to ocean scientist 'Chari Pattiarachi UWA', who warned that the project would cause long term erosion problems for nearby beaches. The visual returned to the simulation of NPQ, focussing on the extent of its seawall with a voiceover saying that the project would be protected from storm surges and rising sea levels. Then Peter Newman said that its inhabitants would be better off than people living in a suburb further up the Swan River. The final scene was a shot of the reporter standing at Rous Head with sea and the beach in background who said that despite growing opposition, the developers would push ahead in seeking environmental, planning and development approvals: 'They expect the seabed lease application alone to take up to three years'. The coast was a major visual element in the *ABC1* news piece's construction of opposition to NPQ. Growing opposition was constructed with viewers informed that NPQ meant the seabed would be occupied by wealthy developers and nearby public beaches eroded. The visual cut back and forth mainly between a simulated flight over of a futuristic canal city and the current site of coastal water against the port facility, a beach or ocean horizon. The simulated creation of NPQ from plan to the sprouting of grey blocks that were rendered colourfully to become the futuristic city succeeded in

capturing media attention and in setting a base around which the news scenes were constructed in the *ABC1* broadcast but also on other news broadcasts introducing the project (North Port Quay, n.d.-c). The simulations were made publicly available on the North Port Quay website.

The homepage of the NPQ website contained a video simulation of the project turning from plan to concrete blocks to a colourful island city, as described above in the *ABC1* broadcast described above. As the video simulation runs, there is soothing background music and a voiceover which introduces NPQ in terms of its coastal metropolitan location and its leadership in an apparent competition – based on ecological modernization principles – to be the most environmentally sustainable property development. NPQ is represented to be progress in environmental improvement:

> *Voiceover*: Nestled between Indian Ocean and Perth, North Port Quay will set a new standard in environmentally sustainable development. North Port Quay will set the standard by which all other developments will be judged. Homes and businesses will be powered by wind, wave and solar energy. It will be a carbon-free development that actually creates a better environment.

While the video simulation ran, the background slides of the homepage changed so that there were four levels of broadcast occurring: background music, voiceover, background slides, and video simulation. The elements seemed to correspond so that the video of a simulated grand canal in the foreground corresponded to a photograph of leisure boats at harbour in the background and a simulated aerial perspective of a beach at NPQ in the foreground corresponded with a background picture of a lone surfer catching a wave in the background. Past photographs of coastal leisure were combined with simulations of an urban coastal future. The voiceover said that it was 'a place for people with homes, schools, cafes, beaches, fishing platforms, cycle paths and walkways'. A viewer may, however, have encountered dissonance at this point because the video simulation showed cars travelling along bridges and along a seawall around a city rather than people cycling, walking or fishing. This inconsistency was detected by journalists covering the launch and it supported the problematization of the proponent's 'carbon-free development' as indicated in the *ABC1* broadcast described above.

On 30 May 2008, the day after the launch, news articles on NPQ were published in Australia's major Australian daily newspapers, *The Financial Review* (Sprague, 2008) and *The Australian* (Gosch, 2008). However, national news coverage quickly subsided as did chatter around the immediate postings of images and information about NPQ on websites such as YouTube (*Proposed North Port Quay Development*, 2008) and skyscrapercity (*North Port Quay, Perth*, 2008). Newspaper reports in the archive and corpus indicate that NPQ remained a major issue for a Western Australian audience for another 3 weeks, but for more than another year for audiences associated with Fremantle.

4.3   North Port Quay and the state election

This section deals with North Port Quay and the state election held on 6 September 2008 through analysis of 85 texts (Table 4) in the *Fremantle Herald*, *Fremantle Gazette*, *The West Australian* and *Fremantle Ports Community Newsletter*.

Text source	Description of item
Fremantle Gazette	2008/06/03, page 01 article
Fremantle Gazette	2008/060/3, page03, article
Fremantle Gazette	2008/06/03, page 11, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2008/06/10, page 01, article
Fremantle Gazette	2008/06/10, page 04, article
Fremantle Gazette	2008/06/10, page 15, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2008/06/17, page 11, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2008/07/15, page 09, letter
Fremantle Gazette	2008/07/29, page 01, article
Fremantle Gazette	2008/08/05, page 09, letter
Fremantle Gazette	2008/09/09, page 09, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/05/31, page 01, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/05/31, page 03, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/07, page 01, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/07, page 02, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/07, page 04, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/07, page 06, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/07, page 09, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/14, page 01, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/14, page 02, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/14, page 04, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/14, page 06, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/14, page 07, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/21, page 04, letter

Table 4 (continued over 3 pages): Texts in analysis of North Port Quay & the state election

Fremantle Herald	2008/06/21, page 06, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/21, page 07, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/28, pages 02-03, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/28, page 03, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/28, page 04, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/28, page 05, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/28, page 07, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2008/06/28, page 15, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/07/05, page 01, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/07/05, page 04, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/07/12, page 01, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/07/12, page 03, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/07/19, page 03, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/07/19, page 06, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/07/26, page 02, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/07/26, page 05, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/02, page 04, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/02, page 06, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/09, page 04, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/16, page 03, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/16, pages 06-07, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/23, pages 02-03, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/23, pages 04, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/23, page 05, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/23, page 06, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/23, page 09, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/23, page 11, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/23, page 12, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/23, page 16, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/23, page 18, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/30, page 04, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/30, page 06, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/30, pages 16-17, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/06, page 01, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/06, page 14, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/13, page 03, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/13, page 06, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/13, page 07, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/13, page 08, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/20, page 01, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/20, page 02, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/20, page 06, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/20, page 27, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/27, page 01, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/27, page 04, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/27, page 05, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2009/01/03,p08, opinion
Fremantle Ports Community Newsletter	2008/06/01, page 02, article
The West Australian	2008/05/30,page 09, article and opinion
The West Australian	2008/05/30,page 20, opinion
The West Australian	2008/05/31,page 02, article
The West Australian	2008/05/31,page 22, letter

The West Australian	2008/05/31,page 61, advertisement
The West Australian	2008/06/02,page 03, article
The West Australian	2008/06/02,page 22, letter
The West Australian	2008/06/04,page 22, letter
The West Australian	2008/06/05,page 02, opinion
The West Australian	2008/06/07,page 62, advertisement
The West Australian	2008/06/09,page 22, letter
The West Australian	2008/06/14,page 56, advertisement
The West Australian	2008/06/21,page 24, advertisement

On 30 May 2008, *The West Australian* dedicated all the editorial space on page 9 (Figure 20) to issues around NPQ. The dominant article on page 9 constructed the project as a potentially 'divisive election issue' with 'the Government and Opposition split over merits':

> Alan Carpenter and Attorney General Jim McGinty are against it but opposition Leader Troy Buswell and shadow planning minister Simon O'Brien say it should get a chance.

Premier Alan Carpenter was quoted as appealing to common sense in rejecting the proposal. Troy Buswell was quoted as describing Carpenter's reaction as indicative of a government without vision, and as describing the proposal as being deserving of proper consideration. Simon O'Brien was portrayed as going further in supporting NPQ by arguing that it supports his party's vision of relocating heavy port operations from Fremantle to Cockburn Sound. Planning Minister Alannah MacTiernan warned that the project was 'too large' to be publicly acceptable. Fremantle Ports' Chief Executive Officer, Kerry Sanderson, argued that encroachment by residential developments like NPQ threatened port operations worldwide. Fremantle Mayor Peter Tagliaferri was portrayed as being ambivalent about an apparently exciting proposal that would be met with concerns about reclamation, integration and transport. Save Freo Beaches Alliance convenor Michael Martin said that the rejection of the Three Harbours project meant that Fremantle locals 'were against the privatization of the seabed'. The spokesperson of the FuturPerth think-tank said that 'nay-sayers' should listen to details yet to be offered by proponents.

Figure 20: Page 9 of *The West Australian* on 30 May 2008

The main image on the page is a post-industrial city, surrounded by a seawall, with ocean before it and an industrial port facility at its rear. Below the image, credible sources voice their opinion of the proposed project. Alan Carpenter was quoted as saying that while a startling project may work in Dubai it wouldn't work at Fremantle Port. Kerry Sanderson said the project could be sited in other places but not at Rous Head. Troy Buswell was quoted calling for the 'visionary proposal' to be given proper consideration. Peter Tagliaferri said that the project was divisive but the

Fremantle and Western Australian communities could handle the conversation around it. Michael Martin was quoted as saying that any volunteer groups opposing NPQ would face a significant challenge from the project's well-resourced proponents. The president of the Royal Institute of Architects, Rod Mollett, was quoted as saying this interesting project would face challenges in terms of access and harsh environmental conditions.

The article to the right-side of the page represents support from the boating industry for NPQ because of a shortage of boat pens in the metropolitan area. The article at the bottom of the page is an editorial comment that argued for the visionaries of NPQ to be heard over the voices by 'Fremantle's "not in my backyard" establishment'. The comment by Daniel Hatch said that there were engineering and environmental issues around the project that would have to be worked through in cooperation with the state government and Fremantle Ports. Unlike the leader article on the page, the comment elides local social concerns in the state electorates of Fremantle or neighbouring Cottesloe represented by Jim McGinty and Collin Barnett. It suggested that Carpenter, McGinty and Barnett were lacking leadership for opposing NPQ before being briefed on it. The comment presumed that NPQ's proponents had the right to properly brief parliamentary representatives, who would determine the project's fate.

NPQ also featured on *The West Australian*'s main editorial page on 30 May. The piece indicated an appeal to the imagined common sense of readers in which it would be wrong to hastily condemn the project without assessing its merits. The editorial criticised the 'naysayers' reacting to this 'massive' project, and argued against the usual dialectic of 'for and against' despite its own production of for-and-against positions in its news articles on NPQ (see above). The text advised readers that the project's proponents should 'win the public support that would give them the political leverage they need in seeking government endorsements' by being candid and responsive to public concerns. Public support was required because the project affected public interest by changing 'the face of Fremantle' and by being based on 'what is now publicly owned seabed'. The editorial then attempted to defuse anticipated objections by arguing that NPQ may be not out of place at the proposed site despite its scale and that there was an argument for not considering the release of

seabed for development different to the release of land for development. The overall theme of the editorial points to the importance of providing information about the project to the public, presumably through the media. *The West Australian* on 30 May 2008 tended to reduce NPQ issues to contests – 'MPs divided', 'Boat trade backs quay' and 'port in a storm' in the headlines – while its editorial on the same day called for common sense against 'absolute judgements' before the proposal had been 'thoroughly and publicly examined and debated'. The newspaper produced a dialectic then advised readers to be above the dialectic.

The following day, 31 May, NPQ was featured in two articles on page 2 of *The West Australian* but the news focus had shifted. The first article, which is not included in the corpus, described division in the state Labor government by representing Michelle Roberts, the Indigenous Affairs and Heritage Minister, in disagreement with Alan Carpenter over a sex-comment scandal and the merits of a briefing on NPQ in relation to possibilities for low-cost housing. The second article, headlined 'State "stifling" development debate' told a story of 'Perth's leading property developers and wealthiest businessmen' behind the '$10 billion North Port Quay plan' launching a 'scathing attack on the state government' for shooting down the plan:

> Developers' lobbyist John Halden said Alan Carpenter and Jim McGinty
> were patronising the community by stifling debate.

Halden was quoted as saying that he had 'never seen a more put-your-head-in-the-sand approach from politicians than about this project' because of their fear of substantial debate and the election cycle. He said that a poll conducted by the NPQ consortium indicated that 58% of residents in Fremantle and Cottesloe favoured construction of a marina to reduce pressure on the Swan River. Alan Carpenter was represented as maintaining his stance of giving an honest answer and quoted as appealing to common sense:

> "It didn't make sense three years ago, it doesn't make sense today and I
> don't believe it will ever make sense," he said. "I don't think the proposal
> fits the area... It's massively too large, it's in the ocean, it involves the
> seabed. What is wrong with giving an honest answer?"

The final paragraph of the article represented Halden criticising Carpenter and McGinty for 'rejecting a project that would lead the world in environmentally friendly development'. Peter Newman was then introduced as a sustainability expert and NPQ consultant who was reportedly disappointed at the lack of support for this 'cutting-edge project'. In closing, the article encouraged readers to view '**LABOR GO-TO MAN**' on pages 6 and 7. Although the articles on these pages are not included in the corpus, they signalled corruption around NPQ through a representation of John Halden's description of lobbying practices in relation to the Labor government. The article, 'Go-to man says lobbying is about skills, not contacts', associated Mr Halden with cabinet leaks and practices implying corruption of the Labor government. Mr Halden was described as a former Labor Party State secretary and Upper House MP who had become the 'go-to man for businesses seeking access to all levels of government.' The article mentioned the investigation into the lobbying practices of other former Labor Party ministers, such as Norm Marlborough and Brian Burke (a reminder of governmental corruption around the property development proposed for Smith's Beach). This article closed with references to NPQ in relation to issues raised in the page 2 article described above.

The first letters to the editor on NPQ appear on page 22 of the 31 May 2008 edition of *The West Australian*. The page's main headline was 'Fremantle island plan is exciting' with three letters underneath in support for NPQ. Yet, to the left of this headline there was a heading in bold, '**I DISAGREE**' over a subheading '**IT'S A RIDICULOUS PROPOSAL**'. To the right there was a photograph of the Western Australian icon, Alan Bond, over a letter headed 'Congratulations'. The letter sarcastically congratulated Bond for getting back on the rich list after being released from jail so that he could start repaying those who had lost money in his fraud. Alan Bond was known as a radical, successful entrepreneur and coastal property developer until he was disgraced and jailed for fraud. The page layout suggested majority support for the Fremantle island plan while signalling that the audience should beware of spectacular coastal property developments. So how did *The West Australian* represent the immediate reactions of readers to the NPQ proposal? In the 'I DISAGREE' letter, Alyssa Nixon Lloyd of West Perth is positioned as being stunned and frustrated 'to see money poured into such an extravagant proposal when it is clearly not in the best interest of West Australians'. Although writing from West

Perth in relation to a community of Western Australians, Nixon-Lloyd firmly located the NPQ project as an encroachment on 'the wonderful, vibrant city of Fremantle' and threat to 'the fantastic community of Fremantle'. Fremantle is an ideal place and community – utopia within Perth's dull metropolis – so why change it. The language employed – the phrases 'encroaches on' and 'tragedy if this abhorrent development were to degrade... in any way' – typical of environmental discourse, was used to defend the urban status quo:

> It encroaches on the wonderful, vibrant city of Fremantle, one of the few metropolitan precincts which do not deserve the tag "dull". It would be a tragedy if this abhorrent development were to degrade the fantastic community of Fremantle in any way.

This paragraph clouds semiotic distinction between defending natural environments and defending urban environments. Fremantle is natural. Natural is urban. Nixon-Lloyd described NPQ as 'moronic thinking inside the box' before arguing for rational progress for the state and nation through the development of local rather than foreign-copied solutions to 'a drying climate' and other future challenges. Interestingly, 'low-carbon emission' is not read as being an important challenge. Nixon-Lloyd positioned herself as a 21-year-old engineering/science student angry about having, in future, to fix 'problems caused by irrational decisions'. The letter depicted the importance of 'us' as the 'isolated' Perth, Western Australian and Australian communities progressing rationally to stave off ecological threats and other challenges, including the introduction of a copy of a radically different alien city; NPQ here is simulacrum. The other interesting point about this letter, the first of many letters published in newspapers in relation to NPQ, is its reading of Peter Tagliaferri in opposition to the project despite earlier representations of him in the above media texts as being ambivalent or even in favour of the project. Under the page's main heading, 'Fremantle island plan is exciting' there are three letters in support of NPQ, and all three contain some form of ecological threat. The heading is interesting in that it locates the plan firmly on the coast of Fremantle. The first letter of support, by Roy Stall, represented the opinion that the project would be realized and be a Western Australian asset like the Hillarys, Coogee and Mandurah coastal developments despite opposition by 'doomsdayers from the Premier down' who 'say it will be the end of civilization as we know it, the sky will fall in, the waves will

wash away everything and it will be an environmental disaster'. This letter also suggested the environment meant both natural and cultural products. The next letter, by Tim Clovica, suggested a common sense reaction to the NPQ as a 'Fremantle coast development' being progress within a neoliberal framework making Perth 'a world-class landmark' within the national and international tourism market, and by being a 'showcase for environmental sustainability using wind, wave and solar energy'. The representation then shifted to condemn the reactions to the project by Labor Party politicians, Jim McGinty and Alan Carpenter, who were 'two lethargic, lefty naysayers'. The letter attempted to shift discourse about NPQ to discourse about state politics, in which the project performed as a discursive resource. This letter criticized McGinty and Carpenter for their rejection of the NPQ proposal but elided the similar position taken by Colin Barnett of the Liberal Party. The last three paragraphs of the letter did not refer to NPQ, but focused instead on Western Australian politics and the importance of progress towards the ideal of people making 'things happen':

> What WA desperately needs are some politicians with some ideas and a sense of vision which extends past the next election – or next week for that matter.

The shift from discussing NPQ to discussing broader issues was made clearer in the third and final letter paginated under the general heading, 'Fremantle Plan is exciting'. This letter, by Glyn Ashley of Connolly, does not mention North Port Quay by name but infers it in the first paragraph by referring to Alan Carpenter's earlier statement on the project being inappropriate because Fremantle was not Dubai. The writer also inferred NPQ in the third paragraph with the tabling of 'ambitious imaginative proposals'. The letter focused on the importance of building the tourism sector to enable 'our beautiful country' (Australia) to survive future economic competition when it had exhausted its stocks of natural resources. The letter depicted Dubai's government as an enlightened body that had made an ideal neoliberal response to the threat of resource depletion within an international economic competition.

The first print advertisement for NPQ was published in *The West Australian* on 31 May 2008 in the world news section on page 61. The half-page advertisement, which

would appear again in subsequent days in the *Fremantle Gazette* and *Fremantle Herald*, was headlined 'NORTH PORT QUAY' with a subheading 'QUAY TO A VIBRANT FUTURE'. The foreground image in the advertisement is NPQ's corporate logo, a compass rose with the letter N indicating north. The background image is a compilation: pleasure boats and a seated young woman apparently basking in the sun on a boat deck in the foreground; and an aerial perspective on the NPQ rendering in the background highlighting a canal and lined by a mix of high and low-rise buildings. Over this compiled image is the picture of 'AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE BOATING FRATERNITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA' endorsed by five people: two linked to associations and three linked to marine businesses. The letter describes an infrastructure capacity crisis for the boating industry – ultimately threatening jobs – that would be alleviated by NPQ. It also links support from the boating industry to NPQ being the solution that the proposed Three Harbours project failed to provide because of its threat to existing beaches. NPQ would create rather than destroy beaches, according to the letter which closed by urging 'the relevant authorities to expedite the approval process to allow this visionary concept to become reality'. To the right of this letter is a list of facilities at NPQ. The first item on the list, 'World's First Carbon-Free Development', regards environmental problems as a competitive opportunity. The second and third items refer to boating infrastructure, the fourth item is 'Three New Public Beaches' and the fifth is a '3.5km Public Fishing Platform'. This is followed by a list of benefits in terms of a 'world-class mixed residential development' providing '3,000 new jobs'. Then there is a focus on lifestyle with the list referring to free public car parking, new surf reef, walkways and bike paths, electric bus and water taxis, restaurants and cafes. Readers are then encouraged to have a say and find out more at www.northportquay.com.au.

Page 1 (Figure 21) of the *Fremantle Herald* on 31 May 2008 constructed a political storm raging over the scale and fashion of NPQ as a 'Dubai-style development' protected by 3.5 kilometres of 'sea walls designed to withstand global warming sea surges'. The article assumes that its readers already know about these 'controversial plans' which would see public seabed reclaimed for housing and other buildings effectively more than doubling the size of Fremantle. The image in the article has a lone male surfer, an icon used by Fremantle Football club, pondering the offer of a new surf break to replace the one he would lose in the photograph. The image

invoked NPQ as a Fremantle issue. Further down the page, the article entitled, 'Green city an Oz first', constructed an environmental case for NPQ by representing the environmental problem as being about carbon emissions and for which NPQ was a solution:

> FREMANTLE sustainability expert Peter Newman says the North Port Quay plan, the first carbon-neutral development in Australia, would be a virtual power station.

Figure 21: Page 1 of *Fremantle Herald* on 31 May 2008

Professor Newman was the only source for this article and his position as expert in claiming that NPQ would be a green built environment was not questioned. The article suggests that a 'green city' is a carbon-neutral city. The coverage of NPQ was continued on page 3 of this edition with the political storm article concluding that Fremantle Ports would probably hold the 'trump card' preventing NPQ occupying the site off Rous Head. The main article on page 3, headlined 'It's Venice or Dubai?' over a rendering of NPQ, represented 'HOWLS of protest' greeting the developers who have 'their sights on a huge slice of seabed off Rous Head, North Fremantle'. Common-sense responses to the NPQ proposal are suggested to the left of these articles with images and reactions of 10 people. Seven of these apparently common-sense voices of Fremantle community are clearly against NPQ, two are for it and one is ambivalent. Those against said the proposal was 'progress gone stupid', 'completely insane and unbridled greed', 'disgusting' and that it would 'take away the quaint charm of Freo'. They also said that it should be built somewhere else, preferably away from beaches and the port. The ambivalent voice 'wouldn't be fussed if it went ahead' but doubted it would proceed because 'locals here are stuck in their ways.' The two voices for NPQ both said the conversion of the space into development land for people and for business would be a good thing. One also said, 'I'd like to live there. It's kinda cool.' Headshots of people in this common-voice construction contribute to its credibility. The representation of both genders in each row, mix of ages and physical features in the layout of these headshots suggests a balanced, credible representation of Fremantle community.

Two days later, on 2 June, NPQ was endorsed in a page 3 news article and image in *The West Australian*. Although presented as news, the article works more like an advertorial. It provides several reasons why NPQ should proceed, rebuts Alan Carpenter's earlier quoted rejection and contains all three quoted sources in favour of the project. The first source, 'Tourism Council WA chief executive Graham Moss' reproduced many of the ideas presented in the above NPQ advertisement when he said 'the project offered an environmentally friendly opportunity to develop a world-class facility'. The second-quoted source Richard Zandvliet 'lashed out' at Alan Carpenter for refusing to consider the project given that it represented progress and that its 2,200 boat pens were 'desperately needed':

"If he (Mr Carpenter) had his way we'd still be driving a horse and cart.
This is a private consortium which is just saying 'here we go, here's the
land and the ocean, it's completely degraded, let's do something with it'
– has it (the Government) got something better?"

Mr Zandvliet is constructed as a popular voice and a victim who cannot secure or is unable to afford a boat pen for 'his 36-yacht currently languishing on the hard stand at the Two Rocks Marina'. Victimhood is suggested by reporting the years that it took Mr Zandvliet to save for the boat, the high cost of a boat pen and the requirement of 'a special floating pen to accommodate his disabled daughter'. The third source, 'Marine Broker Brendon Grieve,' who is also one of the five sources listed as representing the WA boating fraternity in NPQ's advertisement described above, is quoted using the following identical text which appeared in that advertisement: we 'have thousands more boats today than when the last boat ramps were built on the metropolitan coastline more than 20 years ago'. This coincidence of phrases, if noticed, would reduce the credibility of the voices, the article, the journalist Flip Prior and the newspaper. The same half-page advertisement was published in the *Fremantle Gazette* on 3 June and in the *Fremantle Herald* on 7 June.

Four letters about NPQ were published on page 22 of *The West Australian* on 2 June. Two of the letters included ecological threats. The first, by Graham Chittleborough of Applecross, attempts to move attention away from the spectacular aspect of the development proposal to world sea-level rises swamping its proposed low-level islands; and to associate this swamping with past problems with reclamation at Coogee Beach. The other letter, by Peta Paton, also warns about sea level rises and suggests that NPQ's developers 'are global warming sceptics'. The letters depict the threat of rising sea levels as the main environmental issue around NPQ. Three of the letters about NPQ on this page associate the project with Fremantle while the fourth locates it within Australia. All four letters are written by people represented as residing outside Fremantle.

An article on NPQ, headlined 'Port plan triggers concerns' was the main story on the front page of the *Fremantle Gazette* on 3 June. The main thrust of the story was the response by credible local voices to the 'futuristic... $6 billion islands development

off Fremantle's coast'. Only one of the quoted sources was in favour of the development while three were against. The first source quoted was 'Curtin University professor of sustainability, concept consultant and Fremantle resident Peter Newman' who said it would be 'the first carbon-free development of its kind in the world'. The second quoted source was 'Fremantle Society president Ian Alexander' who said the society would rally against the development on the grounds that there was no need to reclaim the beach for urban development:

> The ocean waters off the beaches should be available for all people to enjoy and should not become elitist residential or marina developments.
>
> He said the development would erode, if not destroy, the visual and peaceful amenity of Port and Leighton beaches.

Ian Alexander attempted to alter the environmental problem so that NPQ was threatening local beaches rather than the consortium's representation of carbon-reduction demands threatening business-as-usual urbanization. The next source quoted was 'Save Freo Beaches Alliance convenor Michael Martin' who said many people opposed privatizing the sea-bed for residences. He also represented concern about the project's environmental impacts and predicted that local voluntary groups would find it hard to oppose the developers' resources. The fourth source quoted was 'Fremantle Ports chief executive Kerry Sanderson' who expressed concern about the project, saying the site was 'needed to meet trade needs... and port-related purposes'. The coverage continued on page 3 with an article that headlined NPQ as 'little Venice'. The images supporting this article include the developer's renderings of a sea-walled, post-industrial city above and a motherboard-style, grand-canal, image below. The developer's renderings are interpreted by the *Gazette*'s editorial staff as being 'futuristic' and 'Venice-style'. The Venice image is problematized in the article by a quote from 'Greens South West Regional MLC Paul Llewellyn':

> "While Venice is sinking into the sea, we're planning the next Venice in Perth – the only thing missing from the plans are the gondolas."

Paul Llewellyn said that he was wary of developers' broken policies, and he represented The Greens as supporting genuine sustainable development while being 'opposed to privatizing the seabed'. Also in the article 'Fremantle Mayor Peter

Tagliaferri' is represented as cautiously favouring the development; 'Fremantle MLA Jim McGinty' is represented as opposing it because of negative impacts on the marine environmental, port operations and social fabric; and 'Opposition planning spokesman Simon O'Brien' said he was in favour but with some environmental reservations. The article closes by advising its readers of pending public consultations and to seek more information at the NPQ website.

On 4 June, seven of the 17 letters from readers on page 22 of *The West Australian* refer to NPQ. Five of these seven letters articulate ecological threats. The only image on the page is the grand canal/motherboard image, captioned 'Fremantle island project,' under the dominant heading on the page: 'Give project a chance'. NPQ is represented as being a hot issue for the newspaper's readers, and the project is clearly located in Fremantle. The headline appropriates and modifies the 'give peace a chance' phrase popularized by John Lennon's song of that name often sung by protestors at anti-war rallies. However, in this headline we have the suggestion of proponents of a private property development chanting: all we are saying, is give project a chance. The final paragraph in the letter, by John Leach, directly below this headline argued for giving the project a chance on the basis that it was visionary and could work in the future:

> But why not give the project a chance? Mr McGinty and Mr Carpenter,
> will you be remembered in 100 years?

The letter attempted to describe NPQ as an historical event, as progress, like the opening of the Swan River's mouth a century ago to clear the way for ships to dock at Fremantle's inner harbour. The letter argued that the experts of the 1890s against harbour construction turned out to be wrong, just as those now against NPQ – specifically Alan Carpenter, Jim McGinty and Kerry Sanderson – would be proven wrong in future. The letter below, 'The lesson', argued that NPQ would be swept off its sand foundation by the harsh sea environment, and that it would interfere with the port and cause 'untold environmental damage'. The letter suggested that only an engineer without knowledge of the local coastal environment would suggest building an 'ocean-based suburb off Fremantle'. Another letter, 'Let them have it', was written as a parody against 'them', 'the rich people' who could afford to build higher

and higher seawalls and rebuild their houses if they were destroyed by rising sea levels. The heading 'let them have it' could be read as let them, the wealthy elite, live at NPQ and suffer the brunt of rising sea levels. The final, longest letter provided another indication of previous representations of the project meaning a playground for the rich for some readers of *The West Australian*. The letter headlined, 'It will add to social inequality', is a response to previous representations about NPQ and frustrated boat owners (such as the article in this newspaper on 2 June described above) amid other representations of global and local threats:

> On the one hand, spiralling fossil fuel prices, global warming, food shortages and terrorism are alarming realities internationally; while on the home front, drought, housing unaffordability, street violence, rising food prices and chronic homelessness impinge harshly on the lives of big sections of WA society.
>
> But in another sector of society, life is plagued with other concerns: it's the scarcity of moorings for the family yacht, finding a decent restaurant and having housing with ocean views that cause endless angst.
>
> Sure, lots of people have worked hard and can claim they deserve the rewards that come with status and wealth. But today that argument is obsolete given the depleting ecological capacity of the planet to sustain extravagant developments such as the Fremantle proposal.
>
> It's not exciting, it's obscene and grubby: an ambitious grab for extravagant living by the extremely wealthy beneficiaries of the current boom times. The ordinary working families of WA continue to contend with the hostile environment of the rising cost of living on every front: food, fuel and affordable housing.

Representations of international threats were combined with local threats within an overall limits argument constructed against NPQ: the 'depleting ecological capacity of the planet to sustain extravagant developments'. NPQ was an 'obscene and grubby' grab for limited resources that should be shared with 'ordinary working families of WA' who 'contend with the hostile environment of the rising cost of living on every front'. We see here resource limits and sustainable development demands being associated with rising food, fuel and housing prices and demands for fair distribution of resources. The solution to local 'street violence, vandalism and criminal behaviour' caused by people being disenfranchised 'from sharing in the prosperity of a society' is 'better schools and hospitals'; which would do more to

'dispel the "Dullsville" tag' than 'some Dubai-style resort'. The association with a Dubai resort could be read as a foreign attempt to impose more social injustice on the community. Dubai was associated with NPQ in another letter, by Allan Pereira, which responded to the letter by Glyn Ashley on 31 May described above. The letter asked what would happen to Dubai's tourism industry when its oil runs out then asked why billions of dollars needed to be spent 'creating land that only a few will be able to afford to live on?' The letter offered the solution of investment in agricultural technologies to 'sustain us beyond oil and climate change'. The above letters use NPQ as a discursive resource to argue for investment in alternatives that would yield greater public goods within the context of depleting resources; the limits argument upon which sustainable development was constructed.

One day later, on 5 June, the cartoon inside the cover of *The West Australian* reproduces some of the letter writers' readings of NPQ as an obscene playground for the rich being designed behind closed doors by a handful of greedy people. The cartoon appeared under the heading, 'Chinese submarine theory ends up getting beached', over an article making fun of a dead-end investigation into whether Jim McGinty and Michael Martin were conspiring within the Attorney-General's department to agitate against NPQ through the Save Freo Beaches Alliance. The cartoon (Figure 22) is an attempted parody of popular readings of NPQ. The architectural model, in the cartoon to be developed by 'FREO OFFSHORE ISLE DEVELOPMENTS P/L', is a densely built-up island with sign-boarded buildings including 'CASINO', 'LIGHTHOUSE APARTMENTS' and 'GOLF COURSE TOWERS'. The project proponents hold glasses of champagne indicating a windfall for finding an alternative development. One of the proponents says, 'NO LANDFILL REQUIRED'. Another says, 'I LIKE IT'.

Figure 22: Cartoon on Page 2 of *The West Australian* on 5 June 2008

On 7 June, two articles about NPQ were published on the front page of the *Fremantle Herald.* The dominant article, 'Lawyer to lobbyist', was about how the former Western Australian premier, Peter Dowding, was helping NPQ as an unpaid lobbyist 'to contact Fremantle movers and shakers the week before the electrifying project was unveiled'. The article discusses whether Peter Dowding's lobbying business was improving due to 'the fall from grace of lobbyists Burke, Julian Grill and John Halden (all former parliamentary colleagues)'. Below this article, there is a large image of the abandoned Fremantle power station over a caption reminding readers of past efforts to keep developers' hands off Fremantle: 'The battle to save the Fremantle power station was thought to have been fought and won years ago, but now it's off the interim heritage register and could once again be at the mercy of developers.' To the left of this image is an article, headed 'Surging response to six-island plan' which contained a reference to ecological threats described in the many letters about NPQ published in this edition. Inside the front page, an opinion piece by Peter Newman is headed 'No personal gain' with a picture of 'Prof Peter Newman'. The piece is written by Peter Newman to make it clear that he has not gained personally from his role as NPQ's 'sustainability advisor'. Peter Newman tackles criticism of his role head on:

> That this innovation requires debate is obvious but it should not descend into suggestions that the sustainability components are just some greenwash and that expertise is being sought for purely private gain.

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Peter Newman argued that it was more important that innovative experiments in sustainability such as this 'carbon-free development' proceeded as 'we approach a carbon-constrained future'. Besides focusing on competition for carbon resources the Newman piece closes with a comment on competition for cultural capital, arguing that Perth could become a global leader due to NPQ:

> Perth has an opportunity to become a global leader due to this visionary concept.

This sentence written in the 'No personal gain' piece by Peter Newman is repeated in NPQ's advertisement, entitled 'MYTH VERSUS FACT', published in the same day's edition of *The West Australian* and published on 10 June in the *Fremantle Gazette*. It occurred under the myth entitled, 'The scale of it is "over the top"'. The exact reproduction of this sentence from the, as then unpublished, advertisement may have suggested that Newman's representation of independence was constructed in association with NPQ public relations. A press release published directly below Peter Newman's piece is from Strzlecki Holdings' media contact, David Christison, on behalf of the NPQ consortium. The press release attempted to defend the reputation of Peter Newman as a 'sustainability expert' and head of CUSP. The piece quotes 'NPQ concept director Chris Carman' describing Peter Newman's relationship with NPQ as being the provision of advice without direct payment because any research projects funded by NPQ would be channelled through CUSP as research scholarships.

The letters on pages 4 and 6 of the same edition construct a high-degree of scepticism in Fremantle community about technical experts and property development projects. The first letter on page 4, entitled 'Energy costs', was written in scientific terms in dialogue with Professor Newman's previously reported statements. The letter argued that the construction costs of building, infilling of sea and construction of seawalls would make a positive energy return on NPQ light years away. The letter asked Peter Newman to make his calculations of the concept's carbon neutrality public, and asked whether buildings exposed to the harsh environment of the Indian Ocean could be sustainable. The letter closed in a moral language, arguing it was a crime against nature to build over the sea when so much

land was available. The language in the next letter, 'Promote population policy', began by asking, how much money 'rich people' wanted:

> It reeks of self interest again, at the expense of the environment, public beach and community wishes.

The letter associated NPQ with environmental damage caused by developers of large coastal projects, such as Port Coogee nearby:

> Professor Newman should get real and promote a sustainable population-limit policy and start protecting the natural environment from cashed-up private developers and their friends.

Also on page 4, the letter 'No fake islands for Fremantle' was written in populist terms: 'We have one planet, one Australian coastline. Go away!!!' Above this letter, the *Fremantle Herald*'s cartoon, 'Rooshead Project' was a populist parody in the perceived language of the NPQ consortium ('www.bigseabucks.com'): 'A wonderful concept in money-making with eco aspects tacked on to get the locals on side'. The letters continued on page 6. 'Whale of a time', was written in spiritual terms, about the value of natural encounters (particularly with whales) at the Rous Head site that the project would destroy. Another letter on this page, 'Wind power?' was written in terms of environmental science as a dialectic with Peter Newman arguing that if the concern was global warming and petroleum scarcity why were 'boat slips for power boats such a prominent feature' of NPQ. Similarly alluding to an underlying commercial logic was a letter entitled 'Green WDV':

> We need sustainable and visionary development, but building onto the seabed cannot be efficient or sustainable. Why can't these principles be carried into developments proposed for urban in-fill areas or the new developments along the freeway?

The NPQ consortium attempted to respond to objections raised with a new advertisement with the heading, 'NORTH PORT QUAY', and subheading, 'MYTH VERSUS FACT', published in *The West Australian* on 7 June 2008 and in the *Fremantle Gazette* on 10 June. The advertisement asked readers to make up their own mind by visiting the NPQ website or after reading the representation of a myth and then a fact, to put the record straight, for things said 'in the past few days' that the consortium considered widely inaccurate. The 'myth' list – in which each myth

corresponds to a 'fact' – provides insight into what images of NPQ meant for many readers:

- It will be overwhelmed if there is a tsunami or a rise in sea levels due to global warming.
- Venice is sinking. This will also sink over time.
- The scale of it is "over the top".
- It will become a gated community and an enclave for the rich.
- It is not compatible with the operations of the port of Fremantle.
- It will encroach on Fremantle and ruin what we already have.
- It's all about profit for the developers.
- It'll never happen (Premier Alan Carpenter).

By mid June 2008, *The West Australian* had moved on from the NPQ issue to other news stories. The last letter on NPQ, by Harry Reeves in the rural Western Australian town of Mount Barker, was published on 9 June, and entitled 'Fremantle Folly'. The letter opened with sentence taking a stand against the NPQ-world-leader proposition articulated by Peter Newman and the consortium:

> In a frenzy to be a world leader we have to admire the imagination of a conglomerate of millionaires in proposing to "build" an artificial island at the mouth of the Swan to rival a Dubai resort.

Although the NPQ consortium would post two more half-page advertisements in *The West Australian* in 2008, on 14 and 21 June, it could not tenably claim public support at the state level by indicating responses published in Western Australia's newspaper of record; despite NPQ's intense public relations and advertising campaign.

In the meantime, NPQ remained an important issue in Fremantle's news media. The main article, 'It's a "world beater",' on the front page of the 10 June edition of the *Fremantle Gazette* focused on Peter Newman's statement that NPQ would be 'a World first'. The first two columns of the article represented Peter Newman's position in favour of NPQ; emphasizing his credentials as 'professor of sustainability at Curtin University' and his position that the development would attract 20,000

people to Fremantle without 'affecting the city's heritage'. The article constructed conflicting views, but on balance the credible local voices represented were in favour of the major impact NPQ would have on Fremantle. It is interesting to note how the page of this article constructed the greening of Fremantle with a picture, above this article, of Fremantle Mayor Peter Tagliaferri and others on bicycles alongside a short article entitled, 'In tandem to a greener mode'. Whereas, on page 4 of the same edition, 'Cottesloe MLA Colin Barnett' opposed NPQ because it would deny locals access to 'their beaches', compound local traffic problems and because NPQ did not own the site or have a government mandate to develop it. WA Planning Minister Alannah MacTiernan said she opposed NPQ unless there was "significant" community support for it. The subsequent edition of the *Fremantle Herald*, on 14 June 2008, had NPQ as its main page-one story with the headline, 'Wide support for islands plan'. The article envisaged Western Australian community support for NPQ as indicated by a survey commissioned by its proponents, although scepticism about the survey is suggested by the language employed around it in the article:

> THE massive $10 billion North Port Quay proposal – a six island development off Rous Head – has strong community support, according to a WA-wide survey.
>
> John Halden, high profile lobbyist and spruiker for the proponents North Port Quay, said a survey of 407 people across the state by Patterson Market Research (the folk who do Westpoll) found 60 per cent would be happy for the development to go ahead if it got a tick on environmental and planning grounds.

Turn the page of this edition and more scepticism about NPQ is suggested on page 2 by the articles 'Dowding roots for NPQ' and 'Carbon clash'. In the carbon clash article 'Adam McHugh, a Murdoch University sustainability expert,' challenged NPQ's 'carbon-free assertion' by arguing that 'carbon-neutral claims needed to be tested against energy used to create the massive... development, not just the energy to run the completed project'. The article constructed a dialectic in which Peter Newman reportedly defended his position on the grounds of particular technologies to be employed and reiterated that he would not be working with the NPQ consortium unless it was intending to build a world-first, self-sustainable city. The dialectic ended with McHugh arguing that fees from NPQ 'posed a conflict of interest with Prof Newman's role at the university' and said the partnership should be

put through the university's ethics committee. Peter Newman's reported response, the final word in the article, suggested scepticism about the independence of university experts:

> However Prof Newman brushed the criticism aside saying, to put such enterprises through an ethics committee would bog down – and potentially erode – much-needed university funding.

Page 4 of the same edition is also all about NPQ. At the top of the page is a letter from Peter Dowding of Fremantle in which he offers support for NPQ and offers to work as a lobbyist for it. Then there is a letter by Margaret Davis of South Fremantle against 'Crazy plans' involving the construction of high-density, high-rise, residences on beach fronts. The final letter, by Joe Loss of Fremantle, argues against NPQ as an act of manipulation by lobbyists working for developers, who would promise the world but then break these promises; as he experienced in relation to the Northbank development. Both of these letters against NPQ raise issues about social qualities of built environment to support their arguments. The combination of letters on this page suggests that NPQ only works in the interests of those in a position to make money directly from it. A letter published on page 6 is also about NPQ, but only in terms of its association with Peter Newman. The letter, by Roger Underwood of Palmyra, argued that the *Fremantle Herald* should not have labelled Professor Peter Newman a "sustainability gun for hire" given his real concern for people and environmental issues as demonstrated in the past. Page 7 of the *Herald* contained a half page advertisement (Figure 23) asking, with patriotic appeal, the audience to consider the issue in terms of winners over losers, 'Why can't Western Australia lead the world in sustainable development?' The advertisement's images attempt to transfer several signifieds to NPQ: underwater marine life suggesting healthy ecology; solar panels and wind turbines suggesting green technologies; a surfer suggesting Fremantle's coastal amenity; a woman with a baby on the beach suggesting a healthy environment for future generations; the motor scooter suggesting a fun coastal, urban lifestyle. The bottom section of the advertisement contains an aerial rendering of the concept and a sentence associating it with 'carbon free', a relatively little known assembly of words[25] which could provide the

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[25] A Google search on 2 November 2009 produced 8,600,000 listings for 'carbon neutral' and only 402,000 for 'carbon free'.

consortium an opportunity for producing routine cognitive commitment to new meaning for its target audience:

> North Port Quay would create an entirely new, environmentally sustainable coastal development and could become the world's first carbon free development.

Figure 23: Advertisement on Page 7 of *Fremantle Herald* on 14 June 2008

A modified version of this half-page advertisement was published in *The West Australian* on 14 and 21 June 2008 (Figure 24), in the *Fremantle Gazette* on 17 June and in the *Fremantle Herald* on 28 June. The differences in the modified version include an additional sentence – 'Imagine clean beaches, energy from the sun, the waves and the wind and an electric cart in every home' – the replacement of the underwater image with a beach image, replacement of the surfer-on-wave image with a lone powerful looking wave, and the replacement of the woman-with-child image with the image of an apparent family in a golf buggy. These advertisements asked their audiences to imagine ideal futures for themselves in an ecological modernist paradise: the world's best sustainable urban environment – a kind of utopia or new Atlantis – with abundant clean energy, clean beaches and abundant leisure time for clean family living. Nobody is working or stuck in traffic in this post-industrial, urban paradise.

Figure 24: Page 24 of *The West Australian* on 21 June 2008

NPQ remained a major controversial issue for Fremantle community in the 21 June edition of the *Fremantle Herald*. Most of the letters on page 4 were about NPQ as was most of the letter text on page 6. Page 7 contained two articles and an advertisement about NPQ. The main features of the letters on page 4 included environmental threats to beaches and buildings produced by waterside property development in Fremantle and the protection of local public resources. The last

paragraph on the page, from the letter by Tony Harrison of Albany, demonstrated how these themes were put together:

> I know the people of Fremantle and local suburbs have campaigned to save Port Beach and Leighton Beach from development over the years. If this development is allowed to go ahead, you will lose your beaches, surf clubs and restaurants due to coastal erosion by filling in more of your coastline. It will happen, it's already happened at Rous Head. Even Dubai is having erosion problems, don't let it happen here.

The main article on page 7, 'Council divide on NPQ', portrayed Fremantle Mayor Peter Tagliaferri supporting the plan because it ticked 'a lot of boxes'. He said it was in line with CY O'Connor's concept of extending the harbour beyond Rous Head, it could lead to a '$10 million boost to rates' and because NPQ would pay for 15% of its residences to be made available for Homeswest public housing. Councillors Robert Fittock and Bill Massie were reportedly in favour of NPQ as was Doug Thomson, although with a reservation about traffic issues. Councillor Jon Strachan was not in favour based on past coastal development experience in Fremantle:

> "They showed a lot of pictures of pretty girls and a lot of sunsets but no nuts and bolts, he said.
>
> The South Beach "eco" Village had been spruiked as a sustainability model "and now it's McMansions with black roofs."

Councillor Brad Pettitt, 'who heads up Murdoch University's sustainability department' took a similar position:

> The community could be forgiven for being suspicious – "given the failures of past developments to live up to their sustainability promises", he said.
>
> He was unhappy about reclaiming the seabed, fearing it would unleash a rash of coastal development. He also had fears of the impact on Port and Leighton Beaches.

Problems with the project were also reportedly expressed by councillors Les Lauder, Donna Hanney and John Dowson. Councillors John Alberti, Alice King, Georgie Adeane and Shirley Mackay were reported as not returning 'the *Herald*'s calls'. Below this article there is a modified version of the advertisement, 'Why can't

Western Australia lead the world in sustainable development?' This version asks, 'Why can't Western Australia have a world class tourism destination?' It contains a different set of images suggesting things that tourists do. Note that all eight people in the image are white, the clothes are predominantly white, the handbag and shopping bags are white; this predominant whiteness suggests an attempt to invoke coastal living, sanitation and purity. The advertisement may have produced antagonism in some quarters, particularly its implication that Fremantle was not already 'a world class tourism destination'.

Six pages of the 28 June edition of the *Fremantle Herald* had texts with the NPQ issue in relation to ecological threats. An article running across the top halves of pages 2 and 3 has the headline 'NPQ to block views of Rotto' over the top of an image of a view to Rottnest Island from Port Beach. The image has been altered in an attempt to show how NPQ's seawall, low-rise buildings and skyscrapers would block views of the island. The corresponding article is about the NPQ consortium being able to spend $100 million to lease and then buy the 345 hectares of seabed for its proposed site. Once reclaimed, land at the site reportedly could be worth more than 10 times that amount. The article constructed Ann Burns as outlining the structure through which the proposed site could be purchased and pointing to precedents such as Port Coogee to the south of Fremantle:

> The lease would convert to freehold, subject to approvals to give NPQ's backers "certainty" and "protect the public interest in gaining full value for the land", NPQ spin doctor Ann Burns, of Halden Burns communication, said.
>
> "[The] lease would provide NPQ with sufficient certainty at an early stage to justify the further significant investment required to progress the proposal."
>
> Examples of the government's willingness to flog off WA ocean bed include Port Coogee, the Mandurah Ocean marina, the Exmouth marina and Oakajee (a private sector port), Ms Burns said.

The final third of the article is about NPQ disrupting views from Port Beach to Rottnest Island. The article below this is headlined: 'The end of our beach, warns Cottesloe mayor'. It envisaged NPQ damaging three aspects of the local

environment, and suggested that environmental expertise was subjective, unreliable and deployable for political games:

> The development's "intrusion" over the ocean bed and loss of vistas was an issue, but beach erosion was a bigger one, Mr Morgan told the *Herald*.
>
> "We already have concerns about the groynes to the south of us."
>
> NPQ proponents had used the development's sustainable pedigree loud and long, backed by Curtin University expert Peter Newman, but no experts had been heard from on the impact on beaches, Mr Morgan said.
>
> "I don't think that anyone could give an iron-clad guarantee."
>
> And in the game of "expert poker" widely differing views could be put on the table, he said.
>
> "[The developers] could up an expert, then I could raise them an expert and double it."

The article portrayed Western Australia's coastal activist groups 'galvanising in the face of massive developments in the pipeline', which would damage beaches: "People who value those beaches ought to be concerned."

Letters against the project were published on pages 4 and 15 in this edition, constructing NPQ as benefitting the rich over the interests of ordinary folk. A.M. Collins wrote against Peter Dowding's reference to people against NPQ being part of "the chardonnay set". The following extract from this letter depicted the political journey of people against NPQ:

> He insults us with the language he uses. My grandfather worked the wharves in Fremantle and was blinded in an industrial accident on those whares in the 1930s, when men died in the bellies of ships because doctors wouldn't attend them. He spent a large part of his life fighting for the working conditions of ordinary men like himself who did not have guaranteed wages and didn't always feed their families. My parents started their working lives in factories, Mr Dowding. Our family hasn't moved far from Fremantle and our roots, but you have forgotten the heart and soul of the place.

Towards the end of this letter a relation is constructed between working people, beaches and their horizons of freedom; all threatened by NPQ: 'We, the working

Western Australians cannot live by the beach in expensive suburbs but have always had the free beaches and the free horizon to go to escape suburbia'. NPQ would destroy the free horizon for all those who could not afford to sail out past the elite development to encounter it again.

The image of ordinary folk versus wealthy elites is constructed on a broader scale in this edition. On page 5, the opinion piece by Norman Erickson is headed, 'People power'. Turn over to page 7 and a reader would encounter NPQ's advertisement, headed: 'Why can't Western Australia lead the world in sustainable development?' People power is written by a 'disability pensioner with a background in community housing' completing 'a masters degree in sustainable housing'. The NPQ advertisement is sponsored by a major property development consortium. Norman Erickson, photographed seated with his arm around the statue of a dog, described NPQ as an 'elitist' non-antidote to 'the very unsustainable form of development which is creating both environmental and social (affordability) issues'. The antidote suggested by Erickson is a 'bottom-up' approach via small clusters of state-supported community dwellings with their own renewable power generation and food production capacity. Over the page, we see large scale renewable power generation at the NPQ post-industrial city with a happy family at leisure driving in an electric buggy. The people at NPQ are envisaged as happy consumers not involved in production. Whereas, Erickson's piece envisaged small communities of people producing power and food for their own needs before distributing any surpluses.

On 5 July 2008 the *Fremantle Herald* introduced campaign preparations for the Western Australian state election. It did this on page 1 (Figure 25) by constructing the 'battle for the beaches' as potentially turning the electoral tide in the Fremantle seat from Labor to The Greens. The contest for North Port would be an element in the battle to be fought between the Labor incumbent Jim McGinty and The Greens' Adele Carles, who 'previously ran as a Coastal Independent over development at South Beach':

> With pollsters predicting a swing against the Liberal party and a swing to Greens in this election, Liberal preferences could nudge the Greens over the line in Fremantle – fuelled by anger over development plans such as three harbours, Victoria Quay and now North Port Quay.

The photograph on page one showed Adele Carles and Lynn MacLaren – who would stand for the South Metropolitan Region seat – standing on the beach unified in their defence of Fremantle's beaches.

Figure 25: Page 1 of *Fremantle Herald* on 5 July 2008

These women 'want to put a protective green blanket over Freo's beaches and its view of Rottnest'. 'Fremantle is under siege,' Adele Carles was quoted in relation to

its social, heritage and community aspects. In regard to NPQ in particular, Carles was portrayed as a local person articulating positions already taken by other members of Fremantle community as suggested by earlier letters in the *Herald*:

> "We are against seabed being privatized – it's an insult to the Australian way of life. We love our views of Rottnest,"...

Protecting our beaches is represented as an act of patriotism. The other article on page 1, 'Rocking NPQ', depicted a close association between the electoral battle and the envisaged impact that NPQ would have on Port Beach's aesthetics.

The letters on page 4 of this edition construct arguments against NPQ and other coastal developments based on how they produce environmental risks such as highly destructive beach erosion. A letter by Max Vallis in the *Fremantle Gazette* on 15 July depicted the Indian Ocean as a 'very tough opponent' for anyone intending to build adjacent to it or upon it. Local lives were shaped 'by Mother Nature: wind, sea, corrosive salt and the sun'. One letter in the *Fremantle Herald*, by Marion Blair, on 5 July focused on the extent of sand dunes erosion caused by the Port Coogee development and then envisaged noise pollution and other environmental disruptions in the proposed reclamation process for NPQ:

> Who wants to spend time on a beach watching and listening to barges trundling along. How many are needed? How many a day for how long? And where is the material coming from? If it isn't barges there, how about trucks along the roads through Fremantle and long past Cottesloe.

The environmental effects include disturbances to nature (where is the material coming from) and to culture (who wants to spend time on a beach watching and listening to barges trundling along). This merging of culture and nature in representation was a key feature of ecological threats in utterances against NPQ. Local ecological threats were seen from particular personal positions. Threats from the environment were often articulated as threats to cultural objects such as buildings, a car park or a veggie patch. Threats to the environment were articulated as threats to particular environmental experiences or aesthetics. The threat of NPQ disrupting the vista from Port Beach, for instance, was a threat to the relations of people and what they could see; a threat to a particular sensation from seeing.
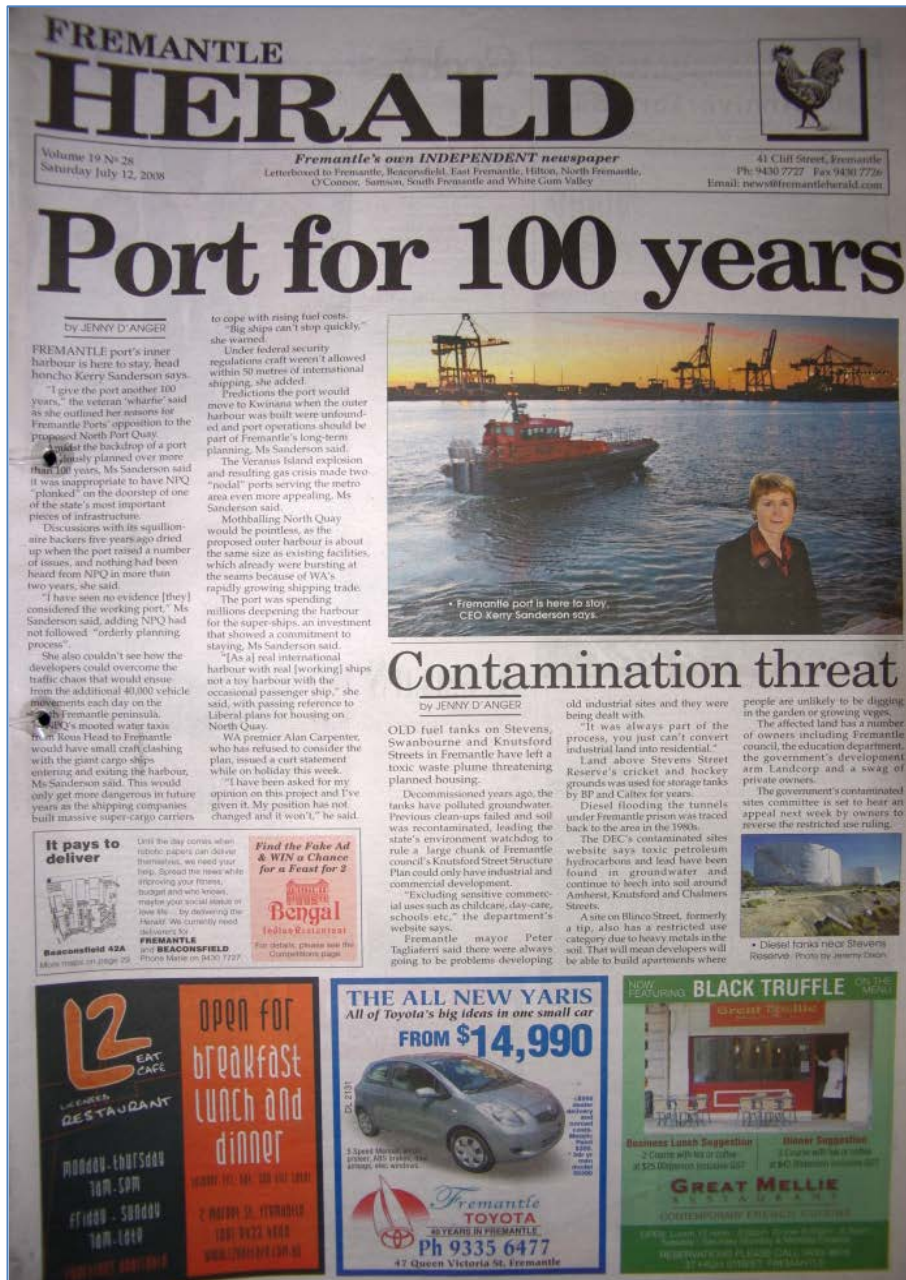
Figure 26: Page 1 of *Fremantle Herald* on 12 July 2008

On 12 July 2008, NPQ and ecological threats appeared together in articles on pages 1 and 3 of the *Fremantle Herald*. Page 1 (Figure 26) portrays Fremantle Port's 'CEO Kerry Sanderson' being against NPQ because its increased road and boat traffic would compromise port operations and therefore endanger the state's physical and economic security: "Big ships can't stop quickly," she warned. In the article's image, Sanderson is in the foreground with a tugboat, the port facility and sunset in the background with the caption over water: 'Fremantle port is here to stay, Kerry

Sanderson says'. Sanderson is portrayed as the veteran 'wharfie' in charge of 'a port meticulously planned over more than 100 years' who expected to see Fremantle Port operations continuing on an increasingly bigger scale for another 100 years. Sanderson is the only source for the article apart from Alan Carpenter who is introduced near the end, remaining fiercely against NPQ. Below the image, the page's other article, headlined 'Contamination threat', is about the problem of ecological threats for residences arising from old industrial sites in Fremantle. The coincidence of these two articles on page 1 supports Sanderson's argument that NPQ shouldn't be '"plonked" on the doorstep of one of the state's most important pieces of infrastructure'.

On page 3 of the same edition an article, 'NPQ support drops', describes declining support for the project recorded in a second survey commissioned by the project's developers. The article focused on the anger of *Herald* readers about their encounters with leading questions asked in a telephone survey by Patterson Market Research. The article suggested NPQ's 'squillionaire backers' had conspired for years and were attempting to manipulate public opinion. These ideas were carried into the subsequent edition on 19 July. An article on page 3 about the 'Fremantle Greens' planning to protest outside a NPQ meeting, had Adele Carles articulating this view:

> NPQ plans had been "hatched in secrecy" over five years and the proponents were now in marketing mode in an attempt to convince the government it had public support, Ms Carles said.
>
> "The Greens are opposed to this outrageous attempt to privatise our seabed...

Two of the three letters on page 6 of this edition were about NPQ. The letter by M Cunningham argued that 'our sea and beaches should not be for sale' and that NPQ's proponents should support smaller, diversified, land-based approaches to sustainable development. The letter articulated a pragmatic approach that 'our river' should only be threatened or damaged in the interests of Western Australian community, not just for a wealthy few:

> North Port Quay's fantasy island for the wealthy, at the mouth of our river, poses a very real safety and security threat, not only for the port, but also for the environment.

> The opening of the river mouth and building of the port had negative environmental impacts. NPQ is going to add to this, but without the benefits for WA the harbour gives.

The other letter, by CE Dortch positioned the writer in accordance with credible public opinion against the project including 'WA premier Alan Carpenter, the mayor of Cottesloe [Kevin Morgan], Fremantle Greens candidate Adele Carles, the Fremantle Port Authority and many hundreds of citizens, about the environmental doubtfulness, total impracticality and essentially trivial character of North Port Quay...'. The construction of a groundswell of public opinion against NPQ was disrupted in the *Herald* the following week when it reported on page 2 that the rally against the project on 19 July 'attracted just 50 or so people' against a much larger number of participants at the proponents' meeting:

> While the small but vocal group shouted "POQ NPQ" outside the Esplanade Hotel, inside 132 attended a forum on the 345-hectare development.
>
> From the hotel entry NPQ's PR man David Christison and the group's sustainability expert Peter Newman watched on smiling before walking back inside.

On page 5, in the opinion piece entitled 'Tides of change' by Mary Jenkins, NPQ is a minor problem within the larger problem of state and federal government failure to tackle global environmental issues through appropriate coastal planning. The global environmental problem is conceptualized as the problem of overcoming the habit of enacting 'every greedy thoughtless whim':

> Everyone will have to accept this is a sort of war that we have to fight together globally.
>
> We need to try our best to change our past ways of using resources extravagantly.

The writer asked whether developers and others – 'most generation X and Ys' – had the 'right to use, abuse and vandalise our natural coastline, wetlands and bushlands'. The natural environment is envisaged as belonging to all, or at least to locals; and this construction is integral to the case against NPQ: 'Seems the end of Fremantle and our beaches as we know them!'

The ownership construction in this opinion piece was largely absent from the dominant article on page 1 of the *Fremantle Gazette* on 29 July: 'Call for quay talks'. The article described the NPQ briefing on 19 July and the protest outside. The Liberal party's position was articulated by its candidate for Alfred Cove, Chris Back, who was 'at a community briefing for the project'. Dr Back supported 'further study of the project, including wide community consultation, environmental impact assessment and an economic feasibility study prior to any decision being taken on whether to move ahead.' This position was distinguished against the 'out of hand' rejection of the project by the 'Premier and Member for Fremantle'. The article had 100 protestors at the anti-NPQ rally sending 'a clear message that privatising the seabed was not an acceptable option', according to Adele Carles. The text against 'privatizing' in the *Gazette* was less emphatic than in the *Herald*'s reported defence of 'our beaches'. Although, at the end of the article, via a quotation attributed to Adele Carles, the *Gazette* suggested environmental credibility was something other than needless extravagance:

> "We want to see these ridiculous plans shelved once and for all," she said. "I encourage NPQ to demonstrate its environmental credentials and commitment by creating a carbon-neutral suburb on land."

Earlier in the article, NPQ had been envisaged as becoming 'the world's first carbon-neutral development' with '100,000sqm of office space and homes for up to 20,000 people'.

In the first two weeks of August 2008, the discourse continued in the letters pages of the *Fremantle Herald* and the *Fremantle Gazette*. On page 4 of the *Herald* on 2 August, the letter 'Carbonated' by David Hawks argued that Peter Newman's claim to carbon neutrality was unsubstantiated as was his claim that an ethics check on 'his institute' accepting funding from the developer would slow down progress. The letter also highlighted the developer's 'ingenious' refusal to reveal questions in the survey used to claim public support for NPQ. A cartoon on the same page represented four executives at a meeting table with this text in a bubble:

> I don't know why they don't believe we're green minded

Why we even smoke our cigars OUTSIDE the board room these days...

On page 6, the letters against NPQ focus on coastal environments, public relations and media representations. A letter by Francois Carles described how his family viewed the DVD of NPQ as a fantasy movie featuring tropical fish in marine parks where fishing was banned, not the sort of fish that are in danger from fishing around Fremantle. A letter, by 'Lynn Maclaren Candidate for South Metropolitan Region Greens WA', argued the *Herald* was wrong, and perhaps not disinterested, in describing the rally against NPQ as a flop: when it 'drew almost 100 people on three-day's notice by email'. The letter asked why the seabed should be sold for less than floor tiles at $27.30 per square metre, then closed by asking readers to consider better approaches to environmental and social issues than those offered by NPQ: 'Do we really have to wait 10 years, privatise our seabed, and build 345ha of islands to tackle climate change and housing affordability?' The *Gazette* published letters in favour of NPQ in its 5 August edition. 'Chris Carman, project manager, North Port Quay, Como' claimed to have extensive video footage of the rally against NPQ showing 'there was a maximum of 53 people in attendance' rather than the 100 suggested in the earlier edition. He claimed that the proponents would continue their 'program of wide community consultation' and were 'encouraged by the broad public support for this bold and visionary concept for a truly sustainable development'. The letter below, by Nik Varga of Riverton, was headed 'North Quay plan supported'. On 9 August, a letter by 'Adele Carles Greens Fremantle candidate' argued that the *Herald* had misrepresented the action against NPQ as a flopped rally rather than a well-attended, effective picket: 'John Halden, NPQ's lobbyist certainly wasn't smiling smugly with sustainability advisor Peter Newman – we saw him running for cover.' The letter attempted to bring NPQ's envisaging of future environmental threats back into the present:

> NPQ is attempting to win public opinion with the misleading advertising it is disseminating. This plan is a distraction from the real challenges we face. The twin problems of global warming and peak oil are here.
>
> We want our planners focusing on how to adapt to these challenges to secure our children's future.

> We want genuine sustainable development now – our government has
> done a lot of talking about renewable energy, public transport, green
> buildings, walkable neighbourhoods, livable cities. We don't have the
> luxury of talking about this for the next decade.
>
> We must now act. I can't look my children in the eye and tell them that
> we "the adults" are onto this because we're not.

Opposition to NPQ was constructed by closing the proximity of ecological threats
and by appealing for public action in the name of motherhood: threats must be dealt
with here and now by the people and their government for their children's sakes.
This closing of proximity and the soliciting of an emotional response to motherhood
undermined NPQ's suggested rational that environmental problems lay in the future
in the form of carbon constraint; a construction about resource limits which pre-
supposed a system of self-interested users paying higher prices in future to consume
things generating carbon emissions. The *Herald* responded directly below the letter,
arguing that Adele would have needed thousands at the rally because of 'WA
planning minister Alannah MacTiernan secretly revving up the NPQ developers
behind-closed-doors with her teasing challenge ('Surge of support...', *Herald* June 7,
2008) to try to win over public opinion (and therefore gov't support)'. The response
then linked the fate of NPQ to that of Alannah MacTiernan, the state government,
and Fremantle MP Jim McGinty:

> *We reckon your only hope against NPQ (and all the other secret sea-bed
> developments we don't know about yet) is for WA premier Alan
> Carpenter (if re-elected) to 'bury' this 'disorderly' planning minister in
> the ailing health 'swamp' (ie portfolio). Now that would be a teasing
> challenge! Local MP Jim McGinty has looked pretty sick since he set out
> years ago on his white charger to try to fix our health system.*

Figure 27: Page 3 of *Fremantle Herald* on 16 August 2008

Motherhood and close proximity of environmental threats were deployed in The Greens campaign advertisement for the state parliamentary election published in the *Herald* on 16 August (Figure 27). The advertisement calls on readers to take action and vote green to protect 'our' things: 'our remaining parks and open space'; 'our beaches and coastal foreshores'; and 'our children'. Greens candidates, Adele Carles and Lynn MacLaren, stand on Port Beach by the proposed site of NPQ with Fremantle Port's industrial facilities in the background. In terms of 'unique' Fremantle and its historic significance, the long list of election issues deployed in the

advertisement includes a call for a local rail link, affordable housing, support for public teaches, nurses and doctors as well as a rejection of lead exports, the Three Harbours expansion and housing over the seabed. Above the advertisement is an article, entitled 'Freo to be WA's freewheelin' city', about 'Freo councillor' Brad Pettitt promoting the introduction of a bike sharing scheme, which had already swept across Europe: Bike sharing is aimed at reducing car use for short trips which would also reduce traffic congestion, noise and air pollution. He was photographed above the article with a rack of shared bicycles in Barcelona: green means being European and sharing resources.

In the same edition an opinion piece by Peter Newman, 'Freo's own sustainability guru,' runs across pages 6 and 7 as the only editorial on these pages. In the piece – entitled 'Wealth, purity and sustainability: A personal journey' – Peter Newman is envisaged as hitting 'back at the critics' and explaining why he supports NPQ. The piece includes renderings of the new beach by a canal in NPQ and a water taxi moving past the project's seawall. The *Herald*'s introduction of Peter leaving Murdoch University's Institute for Sustainability and Technology to 'become Curtin Uni's Professor of Sustainability at its Freo-based policy institute' suggests that it is timely that he defend his endorsement of projects by wealthy developers:

> He raised a few eyebrows when his name appeared on ads spruiking
> ING's development at Victoria Quay, but that was nothing compared to
> the reaction when he joined North Port Quay's team which is planning
> for an island development in the port.

Newman's piece immediately addressed the idea that 'it is somehow impure to support "developers" and that sustainability cannot be facilitated by such wealthy projects' by arguing that his life experiences had enabled him to see that businesses must lead on sustainability. Before relaying these experiences he argued that Fremantle community should not be too concerned because 'all aspects of this North Port Quay project would be subject to planning and environmental assessment'. In other words, have faith in scientists and planning experts. He argued that in the 'fight against global catastrophe' we were 'all on a sustainability journey'; defining sustainability as being 'about the interaction between survival of the environment and the human issues of social justice and economic viability'. He then located his

own position on the sustainability journey as being about the limits of oil production and the planet's capacity for absorbing particular types of air pollution. The environmental threats that he was concerned with were abstract, or at least highly mediated by capitalism and science. Newman envisaged ecological threats at the global scale although their solutions were local:

> My particular approach to sustainability is dominated by peak oil and its contribution to climate change and this has put me squarely in the "brown" corner of the "green" movement, concerned with resources, waste and related issues of urban form.

He argued that 30 years of experience and the ups and downs in the sustainability field had led him to understand that change for sustainability required the unified effort of civil society, government and business. The 'process of change for sustainability was and is never very pure'. The sustainability journey was envisaged as a political journey requiring pragmatic rationalism: 'political change doesn't happen through a group hug'. He described his sustainability journey since 1979 working with other community activists to reopen the Perth-Fremantle railway for which he was criticised for compromising his academic role, which 'was worth it'. He then worked in state government to renew Fremantle in the lead up to the America's Cup race which he was criticised for at the time. Spending money on 'entertaining rich boat people' rather than on other projects was 'not pure and perfect' but he tried to make the most of it by re-inventing 'our future infrastructure and economy'. He then worked on sustainability and infrastructure in state and federal governments before seeing the sustainability focus shift in recent years towards business. He constructed the need for large, scale, 'bold sustainability' – such as NPQ – exercised by business based on markets being more powerful than representative democracy and government being subservient to capital:

> Arguments about what governments should do about peak oil and climate change has come down to how they can implement change without upsetting business. There's plenty of community awareness about the issues, but they seem caught in the act of balancing and can't lead unless they feel business follows.
>
> It's why I believe business leadership on sustainability is so important. If companies can demonstrate how to be carbon-free, especially oil-free, then markets will take over and drag governments with them. Bold

> sustainability needs to be demonstrated by business before governments can be bold.

> North Port Quay is one example of this. It is big and bold enough to influence far beyond the local. I don't for a moment believe its developers are working for purely idealistic beliefs, just as I know governments aren't.

NPQ's 'bold sustainability' would influence far beyond the local. The stakes were high, and extending corporate power over democratic institutions was apparently integral to this bold sustainability project: 'The project is not pure and perfect, but it is a great opportunity for significant demonstration of the carbon-constrained future.' Peter Newman also talked about the development being motivated by 'the needs of people similar to those who came' for the America's cup. He portrayed these people repeatedly as 'they'; like arriving colonists who know what they want:

> They want a small city for boat oriented people. They also want a legacy... They chose a site that hasn't been pristine ocean for 100 years...

Such a proposed re-colonisation of Fremantle had been alluded to earlier by NPQ's master planner, Mike Day, in a quote published by *The West Australian* on 29 July 2008: 'We're trying to practice the kind of community building our forebears practiced in the 1800s.' Newman's piece portrayed NPQ's developers as progressive colonists who followed his advice on 'showing what a 100 per cent renewably-powered development can do, complete with electric vehicles', and 'without impacting on the places Freo people live now'. The piece closed by describing all the city's inhabitants impure in terms of sustainability and then calling for utopia: 'We have to live with imperfection and seek a better world'. Letter writer Charles Dortch (page 16 of the *Fremantle Herald* on 4 October 2008) parodied Newman's approach as the 'predicted story of the very beginning of the New Land (NPQ)' for 'my children (the Great Unwashed of present-day Fremantle)'. Looking back on NPQ and other controversial property developments, letter writer Bryn Davis (published on page 13 of the *Fremantle Herald* on 20 December 2008) described a "Terra Nullius" (a presumed empty land) approach to property development in Fremantle. Newman's call for a journey towards sustainability utopia was echoed in the NPQ advertisement (described in the next section) published in February 2009 with its subheading

promising 'to build a sustainable new community', which may invoke the question: What would happen to the old community?

On 23 August 2008, the *Fremantle Herald* published a special edition – entitled 'The development issue' – focusing on planned residential, commercial and industrial property projects in and around Fremantle. The articles on page 2 and the map on page 3 showed readers what was 'in-store'. The article portrayed 'mayor Peter Tagliaferri' predicting that Fremantle could become a 'real' city by 2020 with its population reaching 35,000, not including the expected 20,000 people in NPQ. This prediction was envisaged within the context of an expected doubling of Western Australia's population in the next 10 years. Peter Tagliaferri 'shrugged off concerns about the impact on beaches and the coast': '"We have been coast huggers since 1827," Mr Tagliaferri said.' The article introduced his 'Cockburn counterpart' Stephen Lee as presiding over a bewildering array of developments to make that municipality a 'residential and industrial powerhouse'. A list of 59 projects with brief descriptions was displayed under the headline 'What's in store'. This list corresponded to the image of a map of the Fremantle and Cockburn municipalities upon which the 59 project sites had been coloured red. The map suggested that about a third of the two municipal areas would be covered by the new developments, and that most of the coastline (including the new boundaries made by developments over the sea) would be occupied by a few of these developments. On other pages, the edition explored what all this development and population growth could mean. An article on page 6, 'Blue collar to blue blood,' envisaged the consequences of these changes in terms of a shift in political concern away from working-class and environmental issues to economic issues and an overwhelming of the Labor party's traditional powerbase:

> WITH thousands of people set to move into millionaire neighbourhoods
> along the coast from Fremantle to Cockburn, Labor's stranglehold is
> under threat, warn political experts.

'Murdoch University politics lecturer Dr Ian Cook' argued that the demographic overwhelming of Labor voters was underway, but it would be accelerated by the influx of up to 20,000 new residents into new property developments such as South Beach Village and Port Coogee and those included in the Cockburn coastal plan.

NPQ would exacerbate this shift in demographics as it would attract a mass of wealthy people to a much larger Port Coogee style of development:

> Throw in the same number of residents in North Port Quay and the south west corridor would swell with what the Murdoch academic calls a new "kind of money".

> Last year people paid a whopping average $3.2 million for 500sqm blocks on the seabed at the former industrial backwater, now called Port Coogee.

Next to this article another article, 'Dying to fit in', envisaged expected resource shortages due to local population growth; particularly the issue of solving space shortages in graveyards. The first line reproduced the sustainability signifier in an unusual context: 'EVEN in death, sustainability is the buzzword.' In the same edition on page 9, NPQ was closely associated with Port Coogee in the 'development issue' opinion piece by Andrew Sullivan; 'a long-time coastal campaigner at both Coogee and Leighton, an architect and urban planner by profession and now the Greens (WA) candidate for the seat of Cockburn':

> Gob smacked I was by the shear scale and audacity of the proposed NPQ (North Port Quay). The proponents want to fill in an area of ocean 10 times larger than Port Coogee, engulfing much of Port Beach in the process.

> They obviously think they can get around the somewhat apologetic promise made by Alannah MacTiernan that the likes of Port Coogee will never happen again. Perhaps their ex-Labor lobbyists know all too well how to circumvent the stated opposition from both Carpenter and Barnett.

Andrew Sullivan welcomed the prospect of boat ramps and marinas at Rous Head as well as the carbon neutrality, public transport and ecological modernization concepts of NPQ but would not countenance its proposed sea infill for housing:

> But spending $2 billion filling in the ocean for housing is a hopelessly unsustainable extravagance. It is also environmentally irresponsible in the face of climate change and rising sea levels.

Using NPQ as a benchmark for wastage and unfair resource distribution, Andrew Sullivan called for infrastructure resources (in terms of economy) for people within the electorate. He was starting to campaign for the state election:

> If there's enough money in the system to spend billions of dollars on filling in the ocean for a few thousand well-heeled people, surely there's enough to build a train line through Cockburn that an entire community can prosper for generations to come.

Another 'development issue' opinion piece, by long-time 'Freo' local Bryn Davis, was published on page 11. In terms of Fremantle community, the piece – 'Living on Planet Ugly' – represented three 'areas affected by the current rash of proposals; our waterfronts, our heritage and the environment': After being physically cut off from the beach (a place of wonderful childhood experiences), the community was now being 'visually cut off from the water'. NPQ was envisaged as being integral to environmental threats:

> We only have to look at the Six Islands development as a case study which brings up quite a number of unanswered problems. For example, the effects of climate change and rising sea levels, the erosion of beaches north of the development, the massive traffic problems that would arise when a population of 15,000 to 20,000 new residents are installed, and associated parking problems from this massive increase in traffic, the huge disruption throughout the whole development stage (up to 10 years), the blocking of the views of the ocean, etc.

Note the mutual functioning of 'climate change and rising sea levels' here, which will be taken up in other texts. The piece closed by portraying the loss of local community control over planning decisions since the 1990s, 'when it seemed that the battle to save our heritage buildings and streetscenes had been won'. A *vox populi* response to the 'development issue' was constructed on page 12. All but one of the 12 people interviewed suggested that property development or higher density was positive but within certain constraints: Development was inevitable progress, but it should suit European lifestyles not American lifestyles, be low-rise, be visually appealing and be done in a way that didn't upset the 'Fremantle vibe', didn't spoil the beaches and didn't cause parking problems. Development should be done in a way that was good for local business, done in a way that looked after the environment and done in a way that worked for local community by responding to

public voices of community concern. NPQ was the only project mentioned and it was not positive like other development for the area:

Marianne Johnson of High Street

"It's a positive thing indeed. Fremantle is alive, it's great. As long as we don't go and spoil the beaches, which should be for the people, it's fine by me. I'm definitely against the North Port Quay development."

One voice, Cyril Levitt of High Street, was clearly not in favour of development or higher density for Fremantle:

"I've lived here for 47 years since it was a small fishing town. They've ruined a good town is all I have to say."

The problem of an expected further influx of people into Fremantle was reproduced in an article on page 18 (Figure 28) with the headline, 'Aussie way of life under threat' over a photograph of a large dense crowd of people. Although no dark-skinned people are shown in the Fremantle community *vox populi*, they do appear in this image. The strong-looking, dark-skinned man with head shaved facing the camera from the image centre may suggest dangerous non-whites in the crowd.
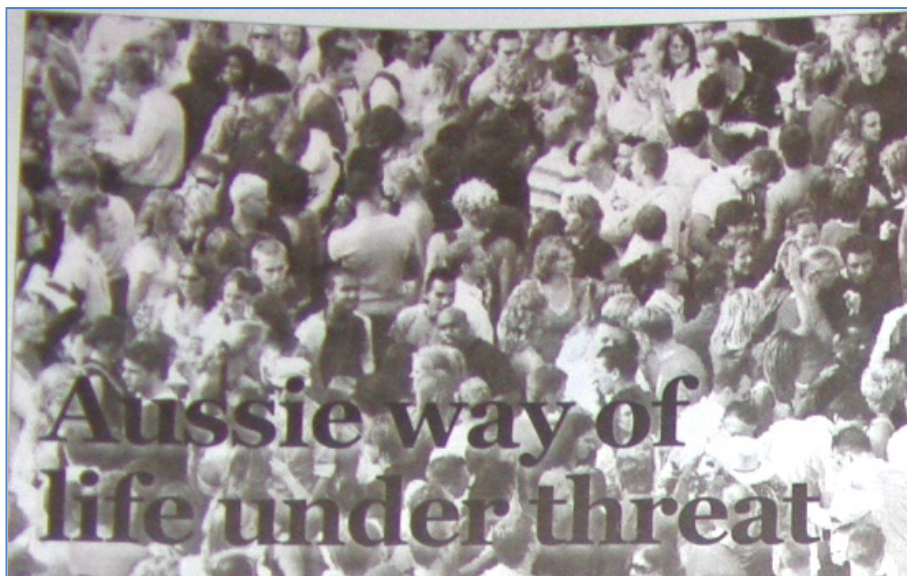
Figure 28: Image on page 18 of *Fremantle Herald* on 23 August 2008

The article articulates a threat to the Australian way of life in Fremantle and Cockburn from the influx of migrating masses:

A MURDOCH University lecturer has warned the expected influx of people into Fremantle and Cockburn could threaten the Australian way of life.

The uni's head of social sciences and humanities, Jim McBeth said the extra people would have a dramatic mostly negative impact.

"Crowding people in will be very difficult in an Australian context because of the nature of our culture, which is used to more open space," he said.

An Australian cultural ideal is represented on the facing page (Figure 29) in the 'Humble Paradise' image of a single-storey house with metal-roofed veranda in a large-fenced yard.

Figure 29: Pages 18 and 19 of *Fremantle Herald* on 23 August 2008

This expected migration would cause social alienation, the appearance of graffiti and litter in public places as well as considerable stress on the natural environment, particularly the 'beach resources along the southern coast of Fremantle'. The article closed by saying that although mayor Peter Tagliaferri expected there would be at least 10,000 people moving into Fremantle in the next 10 years, there would be an additional 20,000 if NPQ went ahead. The realization of NPQ increasing competition for limited natural coastal resources is reproduced in the cartoon on page 4 of the

subsequent edition of the *Fremantle Herald* on 30 August. A woman reading the newspaper sits on a seawall and says to a man with a fishing rod standing next to her:

> If they build that development in the water it'll bring maybe 20,000 extra people to FREO

The man, with a catch of three quality-size fish, suggests self-interest by replying:

> They'd better be vegetarians then.

Page 4 of the *Fremantle Herald* on 23 August 2008 featured the first of several letters published in response to Peter Newman's opinion piece ('Wealth, purity and sustainability: A personal journey'). The letter, 'Just no faith' by Ari Antonovsky of Fremantle suggested the community's attitude towards large developers, their experts and politicians:

> A carbon neutral city would be a fantastic idea. And it's not that the vision is not worthy – it's sublime. The problem is that we who live and love Fremantle have no faith that the developers, architects and state politicians will turn these ideas into reality.

The letter celebrated the ambience of Fremantle before the 'cash-it-in' crowd came to the city without community consultation to develop architecture for foreigners and aliens that may suite other suburbs:

> Architecture that would fit well in Dubai or on the moon, but not in an authentic 19th century seaport.

The other two letters on this page do not refer to NPQ but they suggest a deep sense of discontent about business dominating governance, which should be accepted according to Newman's opinion piece. The letter 'Big losers?' referred to Melville council possibly losing $21 million in investments placed through multinational expert organizations. The letter 'Heavy cost!' criticized the state government for allowing Magellan Metals to transport lead carbonate through Fremantle despite its failure to clean up lead contamination at Esperance port. The letter criticized government experts as well as the company's head Dr John Yeates. On the facing page (page 5) an opinion piece, 'Against the tide of development', by Graham

Chittleborough responded to Newman's opinion piece. The writer is positioned as 'one of the state's pioneering "scientific" environmentalists', a local who holds four degrees including a PhD and DSc. and who 'says planners should push people away from the coastline, where they are likely to swamped by rising sea levels'. The piece asked rhetorically whether NPQ was 'truly sustainable' then answered 'the answer is a definite "No!"'. The writer attempted to close a black box around NPQ being unsustainable in terms of it not being able to withstand 'well-documented, self-accelerating rises in sea levels globally'. The piece asked readers to address the broader environmental and social issues of rising sea levels and millions of displaced people rather than the narrow 'Wealth and Purity' issues articulated by Newman. A letter on page 8 by Charles Dortch of Fremantle, entitled 'NPQ a threat to our coast', argued that anyone who believed Professor Newman's assessment that NPQ was sustainable would believe anything. The letter envisaged 'our beaches' as 'infinitely more important... than the narrowly focussed, though massive-scale investment interests'. Another letter on the page, 'Pale green!' by Gillian Saunders of Hamilton Hill, argued that no one was fooled by 'local MP Jim McGinty's pre-election greenwash' given that the Labor politician would dance to the tune of a developer-driven state planning department after the election. To support this argument, NPQ was depicted as a developer currently deploying 'spin doctors' to manufacture public support in preparation for a submission to the planning department. These letters positioned the community responding to the threatened destruction of their beaches by NPQ. Throughout this special edition ('The development issue') on 23 August 2008, NPQ was constructed in the voices of credible, but apparently disinterested, locals to mean environmental threat rather than environmental solution.

In the following edition of the *Fremantle Herald*, on 30 August 2008, Peter Newman responded to critics of his opinion piece through a letter on page 6. The writer responded to Charles Dortch by arguing that he did not use sustainability as a buzz word but in terms of his important work in trying to 'integrate economic, social and environmental matters'. The writer responded to Ari Antonovsky by arguing that Fremantle's poorer past was not as rosy as suggested and that being a backwater was not sustainable and offered nothing for young people. To Graham Chittleborough, Newman responded that NPQ's '5-metre sea wall' would keep it safe from rising sea levels. The writer reproduced the mutual functioning of global warming and carbon

emissions then argued in support of 'business prepared to go carbon-free'. The writer responded to the many people including 'Jim McGinty (in his newsletter)' saying that 'we must protect our beaches from NPQ' by arguing that NPQ would improve Port and Leighton beaches and create three new beaches through proven engineering methods. Finally, Newman's letter responded in agreement with a section of Andrew Sullivan's opinion piece that the private sector should support 'carbon-free developments and good public transport' in Cockburn. A half-page campaign advertisement for the state election was published below this letter for Julie Hollett of the Christian Democratic Party. The advertisement, with a ballot card directing preferences towards the Liberal Party away from Labor and, last of all, The Greens, featured two images of Julie Hollett with Swan River waters and Fremantle's Maritime Museum in the background. Below the main image and 'Vote 1 – Julie Hollett' is an apparent biblical quotation that may have suggested an affiliation for sustainability arguments: 'what we are sowing, our children are reaping'. Campaign advertisements are a major feature of this edition. On the facing pages (Figure 30), an advertisement was placed on page 16 by the Save Freo Beaches Alliance and on page 17 by The Greens party. The advertisement by Save Freo Beaches Alliance asked readers to vote for candidates who opposed the development of coastal properties. The advertisement suggested constituents vote for candidates against NPQ in order to undermine its proponents' attempt to represent public support for the project:

> Meanwhile, the backers of the North Port Quay mega-development
> spruik its supposed environmental credentials and aim at 'proving' public
> support before they take their proposal to the next State Government.

The beaches are represented in the advertisement as complex, fragile, natural systems relying on 'replenishment by wind, waves and currents that shift sand up the coast' which would be endangered by reclamation for housing projects. Rising sea levels are envisaged as threatening almost 30,000 buildings between Fremantle and Mandurah due to global warming, and the state Labor government's policies as endangering rather than protecting buildings from these threats. The advertisement called for the development of facilities for recreational boating at Rous Head rather than on Fremantle's beaches and argued that NPQ was too large for the site. Protection of the beaches against property development was depicted as a unifying

idea in the community: 'Candidates for the state election on 6th Sept know the voting public want the coastline protected. Voters must ask whom they will trust to campaign on this issue beyond election day!' The summary table on candidates and coastal development in the lower section of the advertisement indicated that The Greens and Labor candidates were preferred by the Save Freo Beaches Alliance over the Liberal party candidate.

Figure 30: Pages 16 & 17 of *Fremantle Herald* on 30 August 2008

In the advertisement on page 17, Greens candidates Andrew Sullivan and Adele Carles are shown with South Beach (the site of an enduring community struggle against a large property developer) apparently in the background. The language of the advertisement was a familiar call to arms in British discourse for protection of the local against foreign invaders using Winston Churchill's phrase used to rally support against Nazi Germany in World War II: 'We Will Fight Them On The Beaches!' Adele Carles and Andrew Sullivan are represented as the community's heroes in an apparently similarly unequal struggle against foreign aggression:

> Andrew & Adele have led brave and just public campaigns to defend our beaches from environmental and social vandalism.

Each has faced slander, intimidation, threats of financial ruin and determined, aggressive campaigns of misinformation organized by some developers and their lackeys.

The highly controversial Port Coogee and spectacularly uninspired South Beach developments ARE NOT PROGRESS. They are the irrevocable and disastrous results of a weak council and compliant WA government response to corporate pressure, against which a staunch but unequal battle is fought.

WE MUST NEVER ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN AGAIN!

With Andrew and Adele as our local members. WE WILL FIGHT THEM ON THE BEACHES AND WIN!

A week later in the 6 September 2008 (election day) edition, the *Herald* reported on page 1 (Figure 31) that Peter Newman had told a NPQ forum that development planning for large projects should be handed to the state after the election because local council couldn't handle it. A potentially powerful call for social action was paginated on the page with the article, 'Prof: give Freo planning to the state', published directly above the image of a bulldozer demolishing a riverfront home and an article referring to the state Heritage Minister's decision not to stop the demolition of '100 years of heritage'. The page suggested, trust Peter Newman and Fremantle's history will be lost.

Figure 31: Page 1 of *Fremantle Herald* on 6 September 2008

On page 14 of the 6 September edition, G Stone wrote a letter calling for preservation of a low-density Fremantle against 'corporate greed and pseudo-green principles'. The writer portrayed property developers as laughing at the mobilization of green incentives for high-rise and high-density development as well as local sustainability gurus. The writer argued that it was more important to protect local people's health and safety as well as their access to limited resources through maintenance of Fremantle's current local urban-environment mix:

> As buildings get higher, they literally overshadow capacity to grow productive gardens or solar-heat water, and public spaces become wind tunnels like in the city of Perth, not sunny user-friendly parks. As blocks subdivide in Hilton, trees are destroyed and birdlife disappears hence compromising the 'lungs of the planet' and removing people yet further from nature.

The writer argues against the perception of Brad Pettitt that high-rise development is not a mark of prosperity, rather 'it is the independent thinking and character of Fremantle that make it stand out as unique, innovative and vibrant, willing to identify prosperity as more than the sum of its apartments'. Another letter, by Rusty Christensen, reminds readers that Fremantle itself was developed rather than being natural:

> However, we must accept the view that Fremantle exists because of 'development': much of the town is built on reclaimed land from the sea and the original wetlands.

The development issue remained a key feature of this edition of the *Fremantle Herald* on election day. On the page facing these letters, there is an opinion piece by planning minister Alannah MacTiernan entitled 'Ministerial Direction' and below it a smaller opinion piece entitled 'No protection for your backyard', which includes an extracted, enlarged sentence: 'Ms MacTiernan's government is not pro planning, they are pro development'.

The *Fremantle Gazette*, in an apparently delayed positioning of editorial balance, published a letter by Maggie Poole-Johnson on 9 September 2008 in response to Chris Carman's letter published on 5 August. The writer reiterated the position that the gathering outside NPQ forum was a picket rather than a protest to a 'Dubai-style' development that was 'an appalling waste of money to line the pockets of a few and attract the kind of wealthy people who are titillated by extravaganzas'. Priorities should be set straight and 'billions of dollars would go a long way' to dealing with issues of homelessness, glue sniffing and marginalized indigenous people in Fremantle. In terms of ecological threats, the project was described 'as foolhardy in the light of climate change, global warming and rising sea levels'.

On 13 September, the *Fremantle Herald* continued to prioritize discourse about NPQ amid its coverage of the election results. On page 13, an advertisement by Jim McGinty thanking Fremantle for re-electing him to parliament was placed alongside a much large opinion piece on NPQ with a large image. The image was a rendering of the project, showing in the foreground, a boat (possibly a water taxi) passing by a seawall with cars upon it; and showing in the background an organized, post-industrial city with medium rise and high rise buildings with canals and trees around them. Below this image, ran the headline 'Questions unanswered' (Figure 32). The same image was published by the *Herald* on 23 August in a slightly smaller size under the headline, 'Against the tide of development', with the opinion piece by Graham Chittleborough; on 16 August in a much smaller size with Peter Newman's opinion piece, 'Wealth, purity and sustainability: A personal journey'; and in a small cropped version on 31 May with the article headed, 'It's Venice or Dubai'. The image was apparently used to signal a radical, alien mode of development. The page 13 opinion piece and its context suggested that despite the election (in which the Labor Party's Jim McGinty won the Fremantle seat and the Liberal party won state government) and Peter Newman's assurances, questions remained about the radical, alien NPQ development proposal.
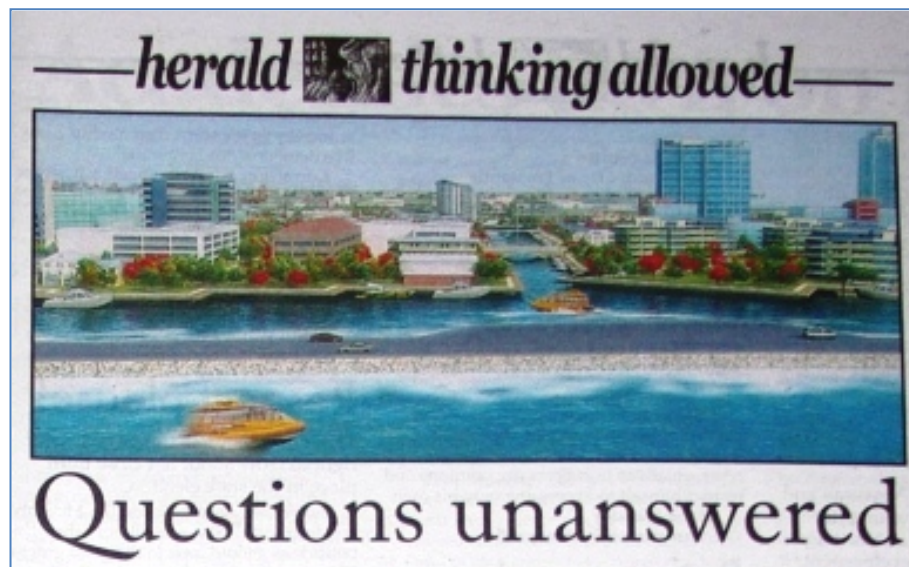
Figure 32: Image & headline, page 3 of *Fremantle Herald* on 13 September 2008

The opinion piece was written by David Hawks, positioned as a well-qualified academic, a 'retired Curtin University emeritus professor and Fremantle resident'. The writer suggested the *Herald* had provided too much editorial space for Peter

Newman 'to advertise his sustainability credentials' and to act as the 'chief marketing agent' for NPQ in using sustainability 'to add a green tinge'. The writer asked a series of questions of Peter Newman:

1. When, after including construction carbon emissions, will the project be carbon neutral?

2. Who has determined that the sea bed is degraded and what does degraded mean?

3. How many of the development's 2,000 boats will be diesel or petrol driven?

4. Why not use available alternative land-based sites?

5. Why is the sea a suitable site for residential development given that Port Coogee was a one-off development?

6. What percentage of income for Peter Newman's Curtin University unit will be derived from NPQ?

7. Why was this unit's involvement not processed through the university's normal ethical procedures?

The writer suggested that Peter Newman's association with NPQ was misguided if not self-serving. The writer also suggested that any case for the project's sustainability collapsed in the face of expected rising sea levels and the cost of maintaining residential properties in a marine environment. The main article on page 9, headed 'Academics turn on Prof', depicted Peter Newman's fall from grace within the academy because of his support for NPQ and the state taking planning responsibility away from local council:

> FREMANTLE academics have taken Curtin University professor Peter Newman to task publicly over his support for North Port Quay.
> At a sustainability forum attended by a swag of boffins last week Murdoch Uni lecturer Adam McHugh challenged the prof to prove he'd done his homework on claims NPQ would be carbon neutral.
> "He said there was no methodology. He admitted it in front of the crowd and went on to try to defend it saying 'it's just a dream'," Mr McHugh said.

Further down the article, councillors are quoted calling Newman's reported proposal for the state to take over municipal planning as having alarming ramifications for

local democracy. Lower down the page is a large advertisement in which Adele Carles of The Greens said 'Thank you Fremantle' for support in the election:

> Thank you for making Fremantle a very unsafe seat.
>
> We came close this time, stay with us. Next time we'll make history and break into the lower house of parliament for the first time.

A green-glowing image of Earth is shown in the lower section of the advertisement above the text 'Let's do it for our planet.' The advertisement was significantly larger than Jim McGinty's on page 3 and its message is significantly different. Jim McGinty offered to help represent locals in parliament, while Adele Carles called on locals to make a better future for 'our' holistic world. A letter on page 8, 'Oasis Freo?' by Geoff Dunstone, argued that 'developers and their tame politicians, bureaucrats and academics' would plead altruistic motives 'especially for the lunacy of the NPQ development' despite developers being in it purely for the money. The writer argued that their pleas should be rejected so that Fremantle would become 'an oasis in the world of untrammelled architectural and wankerdom that prevails in the 21st century'. The front page (Figure 33) of the *Fremantle Herald* on 20 September included a large image of an envisaged higher-density future for Fremantle and metropolitan Perth with the port facilities on Rous Head overrun by skyscrapers. The image related to a 2050 scenario developed by University of Western Australia architecture professor Richard Weller that was reported in more detail on page 27. Above the image an article, headlined 'Port feeling the tug', envisaged the appointment of Simon O'Brien as transport minister as increasing the chance of Fremantle's port facilities being relocated by the state government thereby leading to the demise of Fremantle: 'Mr O'Brien first raised the idea last year when he announced his vision for North Quay to become a housing estate'. Fremantle Mayor Peter Tagliaferri responded that Fremantle was defined by its port and this would risk it becoming 'just another suburb':

> "This is a once in a lifetime opportunity by the Liberals to destroy Fremantle."
> Labor MP Jim McGinty said anything that attacked the port attacked Fremantle.

Figure 33: Page 1 of *Fremantle Herald* on 20 September 2008

On the following page an article, headed 'NPQ relaunch queried', reported that NPQ had amended its plans after community consultation and was now ready to discuss with government the process for gaining tenure of the seabed. NPQ was also ready to register its designs with the Green Building Council of Australia for rating assessment, according to its spokesman Chris Carman. However, 'Fremantle councillor Brad Pettitt, whose day job is sustainability expert at Murdoch Uni,' said little had changed except a lowering of the seawall which 'made a mockery of claims it was required to protect the islands from rising sea levels'. The mutual functioning

of carbon control, climate change and rising sea levels was maintained by Pettitt to disrupt the environmental case for NPQ:

> "It must mean that the experts decided that climate change was going to be less severe than we thought about three months ago," he said. "Doesn't match the recent science I would suggest."

NPQ's amended plan was portrayed as making its relaunch palatable for approval by 'the new Barnett Liberal government'. Fremantle Society president Ian Alexander said he would lobby the new premier, Colin Barnett, 'who is a long-standing member of the society'. On the facing page, an article headed 'Port Coogee density raised', portrayed financially self-interested councillors voting in favour – against community protests – of allowing property developer Australand to add another 30 dwellings to its development, 'adding another few million to the bottom line'. Below this, an article headed 'Threat to Freo policing', positioned the Liberal government threatening to 'emasculate the regional role Fremantle has played for more than a century' by downgrading its police station from its regional role. On page 6, Peter Newman, 'Professor of Sustainability' at 'CUSP', wrote a letter responding to the criticism of him in the previous week's edition. The writer argued that a state development authority would not 'mean the end of local democracy', rather it would enable regional perspectives more consideration in particular project areas of Fremantle and thereby enable the city not to loose its regional status. The writer also argued that CUSP was not established with money from big business like NPQ, rather it was set up to support postgraduate research and teaching at Curtin:

> Our main activities so far have been teaching a Masters in Sustainability Studies, and research in fields such as climate change and energy policies, coastal sustainability, deliberative democracy and governance, ecotourism, migration and diaspora, new technologies, sense of place, sustainability economics, sustainability education, sustainable transportation, urban and regional sustainability.

Further down the page, a letter 'So appealing' by Sandy Boulter ('LLB'), 'Coordinator SpeakOutWA!', argued that the community would be less suspicious of 'Prof' Newman's support for a Fremantle regional development authority if he also supported the right of legal appeal against unlawful or unmeritorious development approvals: 'and give our poor local government town planners a break from the

developer tactics they often suffer in the absence of such rights'. Another letter, 'Answers please' by Joe Dortch, argued that Peter Newman should not have declined to say 'how many tonnes of rock and concrete' would be needed for North Port Quay' given that he and his clients should have known since they promised the development would be 'sustainable and carbon-neutral'. The writer, through calculations and references, argued that it would take about 50 million tonnes of rocks and sand and 5 million tonnes of concrete to reclaim the site and build the seawall, generating more than 1.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. The writer represented NPQ's sustainability claim as nonsense:

> Add the emissions from manufacture of all other materials, and production of NPQ's construction materials alone could emit double the CO2 saved annually by phasing out wasteful incandescent light-bulbs across Australia, as recently legislated, or by taking half a million cars off the road (*www.environment.gov.au*). A comment on North Port Quay's website suggests it doesn't plan to offset construction infill. It should, because it doesn't need to be in the ocean in the first place. So, please, NPQ tell us how construction will be sustainable.

The article, entitled 'Fitting in', on page 27 suggested that fitting in 3 million people in the greater Perth metropolitan area by 2051 would be a major planning problem. The principle source for the article was 'University of WA professor Richard Weller':

> Prof Weller's number crunching shows that to accommodate everyone, another 651,078 homes or 788,147 apartments will need to be built.

The article envisaged various scenarios for dealing with the rise in population, but did not offer any alternative population scenario, and described the principle problem of urban sprawl in Perth was having to jack-up the new suburbs with white sand – which was running out – because the low-lying land was too close to the water table. The city scenarios described by Richard Weller included Food City, Car Free City, Seachange City, Tree Change City, Vertical City, River City, Surf City and Diversity (the image on page 1 of the same edition). Richard Weller said NPQ and Port Coogee would fit into the Surf City scenario but 'dumping fill into the ocean would be "aesthetically questionable"; NPQ was "sprawl towards Rottnest".

The main article, entitled 'By pass backdown', on page 1 of the *Fremantle Herald* on 27 September carried the subheading 'Libs also cool on North Port Quay'. The article reported that incoming planning minister John Day supported a marina and public boat ramp at the site 'but said party leader Colin Barnett had assured his electorate the 345 hectare plan wouldn't get his backing'. The article reported that Mr Barnett had called the NPQ backers arrogant for 'thinking they were entitled to buy the ocean bed'. A letter on page 4, 'Pete v Bryn?' by Beck Wilson, accused 'sustainability professor Peter Newman' of being ignorant, cynical, partial in defining progress and not speaking 'for our kids':

> To create mindlessly, ugly, expansive developments in the name of progress is a misnomer and cynical. Progress and sustainability can be intrinsically linked, however understanding of what we see as progress needs to be re-quantified to include the things that are vital to positive social and environmental outcomes. Destruction of the environment jeopardises our very survival and is therefore unsustainable. Continued expansion without regard for people and their need to live in clean, safe, positive environments is also not sustainable.

On page 5, an opinion piece by Michael Martin, 'convenor of Save Freo Beaches Alliance', was published beneath a photograph of a large group of people assembled outdoors. The image caption read, 'Thousands turned out to save Freo's beaches'. The writer argued that members of the alliance were ready to support an opposition group to NPQ now that a change in government opened the possibility of the project going ahead as indicated by the minister for transport's call for a residential development on Rous Head. The writer argued that NPQ would by inundated during storms at high tide as sea levels rose between one and four metres at a long-term cost to taxpayers:

> The risk for future generations of tax payers is that the threat from long-term sea level rise is being minimised in the interest of short-term profits.
> Will the developers be around in 50 years and willing to pick up the tab for additional and substantial capital works to protect assets threatened with inundations? I think not!
> The tax payer will be in line to pay at the very time that such inundation is occurring all along our coast and rivers.

The writer argued that you did not have to be an academic to see that NPQ was not sustainable because its construction should be considered before 'setting down to the detail of how the buildings will be powered and people transported'. NPQ represented greed-fuelled nonsense, which the writer called on the new government to constrain:

> Residential development immediately on the coast or on land reclaimed from the sea-bed is not only unsustainable, it is manifestly stupid.
> The need to plan for sea-level rise, pull back from the coast and impose some limits to greed is screaming at us. But will our new state government listen?

The texts described above suggest that by the end September 2008, NPQ lacked the expression of public support and environmental credibility that it would need to gain approval from the new government of Western Australia. Looking back on the election, the *Fremantle Herald* on 3 January 2009 published the photograph of Lynn MacLaren and Adele Carles of The Greens party that it used in its 1 July 2008 article (Figure 25) representing them wanting to put a protective blanket over the beaches by winning seats in the state election. The 3 January article depicted Lynn MacLaren waltzing into the Upper House of state parliament, and 'environmental pin-up boy Bob Brown' promising national support for 'GREEN Machine' Adele Carles in the next election after she almost had won the seat of Fremantle with 'the highest-ever Green vote for a lower house seat in Australia'.

4.4   Green wash and the ACCC

This section focuses on the issue of green wash and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission through a close reading of 17 texts (Table 5) published in the *Fremantle Herald* and *Fremantle Gazette*. The positioning of Peter Newman as an objective sustainability expert had been undermined by 13 September 2008 in relation to his association with North Port Quay; as indicated by the news, letters and opinion pieces described above. Not only was the perceived objectivity of its chief environmental expert problematic, NPQ also had problems with environmental accreditation from the peak organization representing green building in Australia. The letter, 'Sea Green?' by Ian Scott published in the Fremantle *Herald* on 30

August stated that the Green Building Council of Australia had adopted a new policy on sea infilling, which made projects 'including sea infilling not eligible for Green Star assessment'. Green Star was the council's system for rating the design of environmentally friendly buildings. The writer stated:

> In other words the Green Building Council of Australia will not even consider offices, houses or hotels built on new sea infill as being appropriate in terms of environmental acceptability.

The letters and news articles published in the *Fremantle Herald* in October emphasized the environmental problems of NPQ, including Newman's carbon-free claim described as being built on 'a miraculous carbon-free terra-formation'.

Text source	Description of item
Fremantle Gazette	2009/02/10, pages 24-25 advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2008/08/30, page 04, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/09/13, page 03, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2008/10/04, page 16, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/10/11, page 02, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/10/11, page 04, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/10/18, page 15, letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/11/29, page 05, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2008/12/20, page 03, article
Fremantle Herald	2008/12/20, page 13. letter
Fremantle Herald	2008/12/27, page 14, cartoon
Fremantle Herald	2008/12/27, page 16-17, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2009/01/03, page 16, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2009/01/10, page 14, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/01/17, page 04, cartoon
Fremantle Herald	2009/04/25, page 35, letter
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/02, page 01, article

Table 5: Texts in analysis of green wash & the ACCC

In late November, the newspaper published an opinion piece by Environmental Consultant and local leader John Bird who made a subsidiary argument that NPQ's 'conceptual boldness, varied architecture and advanced environmental performance' would attract tourists. However, the main news article on page 3 of the 20 December 2008 edition contained the heading 'ACCC probe an abuse of the law' over a text and images of NPQ. The images and their subheadings suggest opposition between 'NPQ sustainability consultant, Professor Peter Newman' reportedly saying that NPQ's opponents were 'probably unaware of the latest technological advances', and

'Murdoch sustainability expert Brad Pettitt' reportedly saying that 'NPQ should make its supporting evidence available for scrutiny'. However, rather than immediately announcing an ACCC enquiry into the 'green credentials' of NPQ, the article begins with the project's CEO, Greg Poland, calling the investigation "desperate and shameful". Although the ACCC reportedly would not confirm that an investigation was underway, Greg Poland confirmed it in his reported comments:

> "Unnamed complainants have objected to statements that [NPQ] would be the world's first carbon-free development."

A summary of the major news events of 2008 published in the *Fremantle Herald* in the last edition of 2008 and the first edition of 2009 reaffirms NPQ's importance for Fremantle community. The 'www.bigseabucks' cartoon is run again representing NPQ as a 'wonderful concept in money-making with eco-aspects tacked on to get locals on side'. The image of NPQ with the boat travelling past its seawall (which typically appeared near texts opposing the project) is shown with a caption about sustainability coming 'at a cost – views of Rottnest would be obliterated'. In May 2008, the big news item is represented as an alien invasion of our beaches: 'IT's D-Day as developers continue their assault on our beaches, with the mother of all developments, the $10 billion North Port Quay'. Then for June 2008 the big news is represented as: 'DEBATE on North Port Quay itself is almost over-shadowed by the *Herald*'s cheeky reference to project consultant Peter Newman as a sustainability gun-for-hire'. This theme is continued with a picture and caption representing a big news item in December 2008: 'Peter Newman hangs out with his lapdog (that's the one with the white mane, big teeth ... oh, you know what we mean)'. The main article on page 14 of the *Fremantle Herald* on 10 January 2009, with the headline 'NPQ under more fire', depicted a growing body of expert local criticism against the claimed environmental benefits of NPQ. The article reported 'Professor Troy - son of the fiery Freo unionist Paddy Troy -' of the Australian National University (ANU) criticising the project, following 'reports that NPQ's claims the project will be carbon-free were under investigation by the ACCC:

> The ANU professor was also scathing of NPQ's treatment of its critics, especially those who had taken their concerns about the sustainability claims to the ACCC.

He said it smacked of arrogance for the project's "self-appointed experts" to claim the high moral ground.

"It is as though they claim that their 'expertise' elevates them beyond review or reproach," he said.

Professor Newman was flying out for a US tour to promote his book on planning and climate change when the *Herald*...

A week later, the *Fremantle Herald* published a letter by David Hawks supporting Professor Troy's position and calling inadequate Newman's earlier response to criticism of his carbon-free claim:

To observe that one "can aspire to be carbon-free overnight" hardly seems an adequate response. At least Prof Troy cannot be dismissed as "an objector unaware of rapidly emerging technologies.

NPQ reproduced its claimed potential to 'lead the world in sustainable development' with an advertisement, published as a two-page spread, in the *Fremantle Gazette* on 10 February 2009 (Figure 34). This advertisement suggested NPQ would be international best practice in sustainable development. The advertisement contains a list of overseas examples of ecological modernization projects mostly relating to green built environment below the subheading: 'North Port Quay aims to combine all these innovations to build a sustainable new community'. The advertisement claims that the overseas projects are valid examples of sustainable development, although it is impossible to confirm this claim without considerable research into the projects. This list can be read as an attempted association of NPQ with other green built environment projects in the mind of the reader; although their real relationship is only their appearance together in an advertisement – see Fairclough (2000, pp. 161-162). Many list-reliant advertisements will be referred to the following section on the Fremantle by-election campaign. By presenting a list, the project's proponents could avoid critique on a single issue relating to NPQ, which had been troubling them as demonstrated in the texts above. The advertisement's list of symbols of green built environment is associated with the abstraction of an ideological dilemma – whether the reader is for or against doing things sustainably. The advertisement calls on the reader to take a stand on this dilemma by supporting the NPQ project. This type of media call associated with dilemma's has been described by Chouliaraki (2008b, p. 219), and it will be deployed again in the campaign advertisements in the following section. Finally, there is a mix of the patriotic, managerial and scientific phrases used

in the advertisement. After briefly describing the list of ecological modernist projects, there is a switch to the kind of local populist terminology typically employed by the Fremantle Football Club: 'C'mon Freo, let's put it all together and lead the world'.
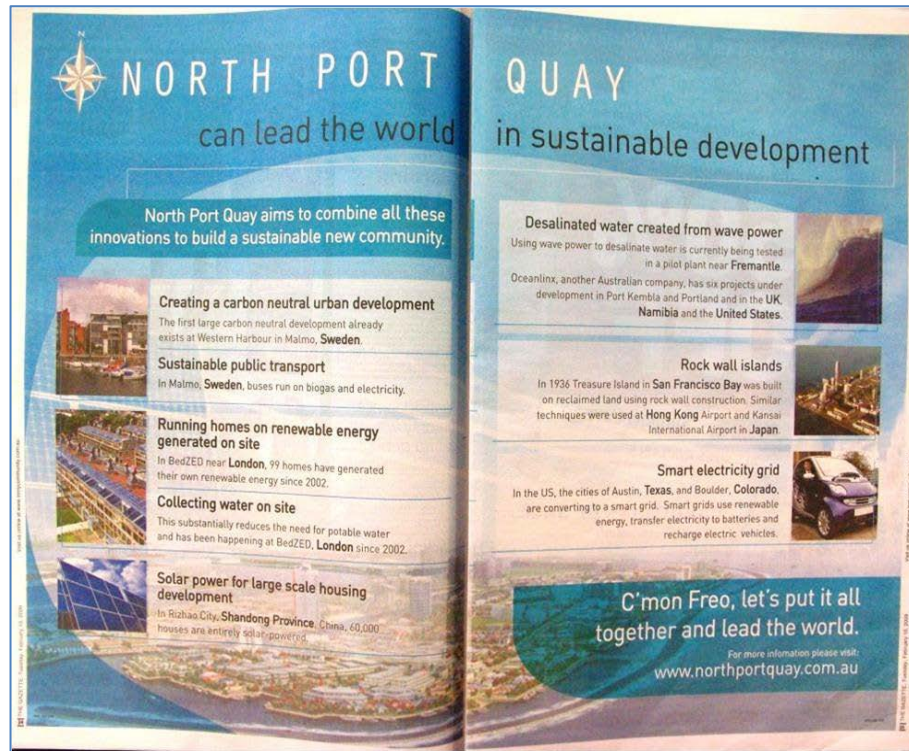
Figure 34: Pages 24 & 25 of *Fremantle Gazette* on 10 February 2009

A letter, by David Hawks, published in the *Fremantle Herald* on 25 April 2009 argued that NPQ had 'yet to define carbon neutrality, let alone demonstrate it when taking into account the energy costs of the project's construction'. The letter said that while many of NPQ's representations were laudable, its proponents had not been able to argue why it should be built at sea in 'perhaps the most hazardous environment imaginable'. The writer argued that NPQ was really a financially inspired theft of the sea through privatization:

> ... NPQ expects a greater return on its investment given the preference of the wealthy to live close to the coast.
> To allow this development, however, represents a morally and ecologically indefensible sequestration of a public asset, the sea.

Despite the criticism of its use of unsubstantiated environmental claims, NPQ's media and public relations campaign provided a reasonably stable association between 'carbon neutrality' and the project in the minds of its target audience in Fremantle, as suggested in paragraph 4 of the front-page news article of the *Fremantle Herald* on 2 May 2009: 'The proponents aim to make the project carbon-neutral and have the backing of sustainable cities guru Peter Newman'. However, this association for many may have been disrupted severely on 9 May 2009 by the reporting of an ACCC enquiry into NPQ's environmental claims; see the *Fremantle Herald* front-page report, 'ACCC wags finger at carbon claims', and *ABC1* news broadcast of 9 May described in the next section on NPQ in the Fremantle by-election.

4.5   North Port Quay in the Fremantle by-election

This section deals with North Port Quay and the Fremantle by-election held on 16 May 2009 through an analysis of 50 texts (Table 6) produced by the *Fremantle Herald*, *Fremantle Gazette*, *The West Australian*, the Parliament of Western Australia, *ABC1 Perth* and the Fremantle By-election Debate forum. On 3 April 2009, Jim McGinty announced he would resign from his position as member for Fremantle which he had held since 1990. A by-election would be held on 16 May 2009 to elect a new member for the Fremantle seat in the lower house of the Western Australian parliament. NPQ resumed its advertising campaign in the *Fremantle Herald* on 18 April 2009 but with a new image (Figure 35).

Text source	Description of item

ABC1	2009//05/09, Transcript of ABC1 Perth news footage
Fremantle By-election Debate	2009//05/05, Transcript of Fremantle by-election debate
Fremantle Gazette	2009/04/21, pages 14-15, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2009/04/28, page 06, article
Fremantle Gazette	2009/04/28, pages 18-19, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2009/04/28, page 20, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2009/04/28, page 26, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2009/05/05, page 03, article
Fremantle Gazette	2009/05/05, page 07, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2009/05/05, page 10, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2009/05/05, page 32, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2009/05/12, page 01, article
Fremantle Gazette	2009/05/12, page 03, article
Fremantle Gazette	2009/05/12, page 2009/, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2009/05/12, page 10, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2009/05/12, page 14-15, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2009/05/12, page 26, advertisement
Fremantle Gazette	2009/05/26, page 05, article
Fremantle Gazette	2009/06/09, page 09, letter
Fremantle Herald	2009/04/18, pages 06-07, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2009/04/25, pages 08-09, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2009/04/25, page 24, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/02, page 01, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/02, page 12-13, advertisement, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/02, page 15, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/09, page 01, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/09, pages 02-03, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/09, page 04, letter & cartoon
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/09, page 05, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/09, page 06, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/09, page 08, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/09, pages 10-11, advertisement & article
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/09, page 16, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/09, page 30, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/16, page 03, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/16, page 04, letter
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/16, pages 08-09, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/16, page 10, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/16, page 14, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/23, page 01, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/23, page 03, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/23, page 04, cartoon
Fremantle Herald	2009/05/23, page 07, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/06/13, page 05, opinion
Hansard of WA Parliament	2009/06/09, Hansard Maiden speech by Carles
Hansard of WA Parliament	2009/06/17, Hansard Inaugural speech by MacLaren
The West Australian	2009/05/06, pages 16-17, advertisement
The West Australian	2009/05/12, page 16, article
The West Australian	2009/05/15, page 18, advertisement
The West Australian	2009/05/16, page 19, advertisement

Table 6: Texts in analysis of North Port Quay in Fremantle by-election

Figure 35: Pages 6 & 7 of *Fremantle Gazette* on 18 April 2009

The consortium's new advertisement focused on 'Fremantle's future' and it applied a terminology of economics and employment typically uttered in political advertising: 'Fremantle – the perfect place for North Port Quay. An investment in our environment, jobs and our way of life'. The closing line of the advertisement, 'It just makes sense', and the lack of project renderings or new technologies in the image suggested that little would change with the construction of North Port Quay. In the foreground of the image, a lone surfer walks along Port beach away from camera. The blond surfer, who looks out to sea, could be read as a mother image with the board appearing against the raised thigh in place of a child. The location, perspective and placement of the surfer was perhaps an attempt by North Port Quay to reduce the effectiveness of an anticipated advertising campaign by Adele Carles, who was photographed in the same location for her advertisement with Lynn MacLaren in the 2008 state election. Compared to that advertisement on 16 August 2008 (Figure 36), the new NPQ advertisement was apparently intended to suggest equivalences in relation to an idealized Fremantle as well as the value of beaches and open space; a major residual difference being The Greens' opposition 'to housing over the seabed'.

Figure 36: Page 3 of *Fremantle Herald* on 16 August 2008

The new advertisement for NPQ, 'It just makes sense', with the Port Beach image was published on large billboards in Fremantle and it was published over two facing half pages in the *Fremantle Herald* again on 25 April 2009 and in the *Fremantle Gazette* on 21 April and on 28 April. The letter, by David Hawks, in the *Herald* on 25 April referred to this advertisement on a billboard near Pioneer Park as 'presuming to define Fremantle's future'. A different version of this advertisement for NPQ was shown in *The West Australian* on pages 16 and 17 on 6 May. The image was replaced with a photograph of former Australian test cricketer Geoff

Marsh enjoying beach cricket with healthy young white people on Port Beach with the sea and Rous Head port facilities in the background. The text of the advertisement, headed 'Building a better future for Fremantle', suggests an appropriation of Adele Carles' campaign messages and images in relation to NPQ. Geoff Marsh was portrayed as a father who wanted to protect beaches for future generations, in his words:

> Western Australians love going to the beach. It's a great place to have fun with the family and that's why I think our beaches need protecting for future generations to enjoy.

The text then said 'as well as creating 4,500 jobs', NPQ would extend Port Beach, create two family beaches, protect Port Beach from erosion and power homes and businesses by renewable energy. The usual advertisement tagline about NPQ being an 'investment in our environment, jobs and way of life' then appears above Geoff Marsh's signature and above the NPQ logo and the text 'It just makes sense'. The advertisement suggests that NPQ is the ideal urban coastal development for right-minded Western Australians.

A suggestion of NPQ supporting candidates in the Fremantle by-election was made in the *Fremantle Herald* on 25 April in a page-24 article, headed 'No NPQ'. In it, the independent Liberal candidate Carmelo Zagami reportedly expressed disappointment that NPQ had decided not to financially support any candidate even though he would support the project because it would 'create jobs and boost tourism'. However, the article confirmed that NPQ was waging its own campaign through the election. 'NPQ spokesperson Anne Burns' said the consortium would 'continue with its own campaign to win official support for its $6 billion plan'. On page 6 of the *Herald* on 28 April the article, 'What they will fight for', envisaged 'Greens candidate Adele Carles' standing against NPQ while Independent Carmelo Zagami and Independent Nik Varga were standing for NPQ. The other candidates appeared ambivalent on the issues in this article, which did however represent candidates standing in relation to a range of environmental threats. Carles wanted to ban lead exports through Fremantle and promote renewable energy. Labor candidate Peter Tagliaferri was concerned about climate change and lead transport. Socialist Alliance candidate Sam Wainwright was passionate about environmental issues relating to the port and about

converting 'Australia's power generation to 100 per cent renewable energy by 2020'. Family First candidate Andriette du Plessis was against genetically modified foods and lead exportation through Fremantle. Carmelo Zagami was against lead transport through Fremantle. Independent Rosemary Lorimar was against lead being shipped from Fremantle.

On 2 May 2009, the issue of NPQ was represented as a key election issue in the main article, headed 'Three in Freo race want NPQ and Labor is "keeping an open mind"', on page 1 of the *Fremantle Herald*:

> NORTH PORT QUAY is shaping up as a Fremantle by-election issue with its consortium buying advertising to promote the project ahead of the May 16 poll.
>
> At least three independent candidates publicly back the futuristic project and Labor's Peter Tagliaferri is "keeping an open mind".
>
> But the Greens' Adele Carles is opposed outright to the plan to fill in ocean off Rous Head in North Fremantle and build four artificial islands topped with apartment towers...

'Lobbyist Ann Burns' is reported as saying that NPQ had paid for large newspaper advertisements and billboards during the campaign because 'the proposal was "too significant" to be used as a political football'. She called on Adele Carles to retract a 'statement that NPQ would destroy Port Beach'. The article suggested the Liberal premier was opposing the project but that this position could be altered by hard lobbying 'behind the scenes'. The article continued onto page 13 (right in Figure 37) with the construction of Labor's new opposition leader, Eric Ripper, being open to a formal project submission for NPQ. This Labor position was made more apparent in the following paragraph, which reiterated Adele Carles position, and then clarified the Labor position in the comment of Peter Tagliaferri which distances NPQ from the by-election:

> Ms Carles, who almost unseated veteran Jim McGinty in 2008, accused Labor of a "back-flip": Carpenter and McGinty said no... now we have Labor opening the door on this Dubai-style... development which will be an environmental disaster and gridlock traffic in Fremantle and along Stirling Highway."

> Mr Tagliaferri says NPQ isn't actually in the Fremantle electorate, and
> "it's got a lot of hurdles to go through but I'm keeping an open mind".

Towards the end of the article, independent candidates Steve Boni, Nik Varga and Carmelo Zagami are reported as supporting the project, but with possibly questionable motives: 'Messrs Boni and Varga say they have not received any funding from NPQ'. Nik Varga's full-page campaign advertisement appeared on page 12 (left in Figure 37) adjacent to the article but dominating the two-page spread.

Figure 37: Pages 12 & 13 of *Fremantle Herald* on 2 May 2009

Nik Varga's campaign advertisement – which also appeared as full-page advertisements in the *Herald* on 9 May and 16 May and in the *Fremantle Gazette* on 28 April, 5 May and 12 May – used images typically associated with Liberal party election campaigning: a white man in an indigo cambric shirt with colonial heritage and an Australian flag in the background. The advertisement suggested that true-blue Nik Varga stood for Australia and colonial mercantile tradition, expressed in the Fremantle market building. The advertisement's text suggested that a former liberal voter was taking electoral matters into his own hands by standing for Fremantle because the 'the port city' had stagnated since the America's cup. The city was no longer living up to his lifestyle expectations which is why he found himself 'heading

to Hillarys Boat Harbour' (developed by Strzlecki group, which headed the NPQ consortium), among other issues:

> That's why I won't give my preferences to the Greens, they are the party of opposition.
>
> They oppose growth, they oppose change and they oppose making Fremantle a more vibrant place.

Nik Varga campaigned for more police on the streets for a greater feeling of safety and for Fremantle to keep its port but without live sheep and lead exports. Varga also campaigned for NPQ because it would create thousands of jobs and stood against the Three Harbours proposal because it would remove public beaches, put more traffic on the roads and 'ruin the views'. This sentence suggests an attempt to transfer complaints against the active NPQ proposal to the no-longer-active Three Harbours proposal. The advertisement ended with a description of Nik Varga: 'An Independent with a Liberal voice in a Green wilderness.' In the May 9 advertisement, a prominent subheading was added to Nik Varga's advertisement to more openly call for votes against The Greens' vision for Fremantle: 'For Fremantle's future don't vote greens.' Steve Boni's first full-page campaign also appeared in the 2 May edition of the *Fremantle Herald*. The full-page advertisement also appeared in the *Herald* on 9 May and 16 May, and in the *Fremantle Gazette* on 28 April, 5 May and 12 May. The advertisement's images suggested that Steve Boni stood for a lifestyle around empty cafes, moving power boats and sea. The text was about Steve Boni being part of Fremantle community, his family, his migration journey from Italy, his fondness of the fishing boat harbour, cappuccino strip as well as Fremantle Dockers and his desire to see Fremantle preserve its character and heritage while developing rather than losing its vibrancy. He combined an appeal to segments of the local community with neo-liberal demands which included giving 'North Port Quay' a fair go:

> 'As an Italian-Australian I understand the importance of giving someone a fair go. Now Fremantle needs a fair go.'

Steve Boni also stood for making Fremantle safer and more appealing, and for keeping its port but without lead exports.

The Greens presented feminine images of the party and its candidate in the final weeks of the campaign, particularly the semiotics of Carles as mother. Page 3 of the *Fremantle Herald* on 5 May 2009 (Figure 38) carried an image of 'WA Greens member Lynn MacLaren, Greens candidate for Fremantle Adele Carles, Marianna Erkens and Kim Dravnieks' standing on Port Beach facing the camera in a stance of relaxed confidence. The image and corresponding article represent Green women, Adele Carles in particular, protecting the beach, Rous head and its existing port facilities from intruders on behalf of their community. This message was articulated clearly in the lead paragraph: 'FREMANTLE Greens candidate Adele Carles wants the State Government to tell proponents of the controversial North Port Quay development that Rous Head is off limits...' NPQ was represented in the article by its spokeswoman Anne Burns who argued that 'the world's first carbon-free community off Rous Head' would be 'significant to WA' and that its developer had been forced to enter the by-election debate due to 'misleading and false comments' by Carles about the project's destruction of Port Beach. The discourse reproduced in the *Gazette* played in favour of Carles' campaign, as indicated by other articles and images on this page. To the right of the image a brief article, headed 'GREENING FREMANTLE' promotes the subsidized procurement of native plants. Below The Greens women-on-beach image, images of healthy women are used to positively advertise services; another advertisement carries the face of a child but no men appear on the page. On page 7 of the same edition, a half-page advertisement features an image of Carles as mother walking along a Fremantle street holding hands with two daughters and accompanied by husband and their eldest daughter. The advertisement is a call for action and political change for Fremantle in the form of votes 'so she can continue her hard work in critical areas such as protecting Fremantle Markets tenancies, keeping our port working, and opposing off-shore housing developments'.

Figure 38: Page 3 of *Fremantle Herald* on 5 May 2009

The Fremantle By-election Debate was held on the evening of 5 May at the University of Notre Dame. Ten of the 11 candidates in the by-election participated in the recorded debate (see appendix 7) – independent candidate Rosemary Lorimar was absent. Each candidate was provided two minutes to deliver an introductory statement about their purpose in standing for election but only one candidate mentioned NPQ in their opening statement. Adele Carles did this early in her statement after establishing an ethical position on campaign donations, which by proximity may be read in association with support for NPQ. In the opening

statement, Carles positioned The Greens as against political donations, against NPQ and for retaining public ownership of the seabed, for Fremantle's port but without lead exports, for family security and for Fremantle Hospital:

> *22:15 Adele Carles:* I acknowledge the Nyoongar people as the traditional owners of the land. I'm here tonight representing The Greens, a party that has grown out of concern for social justice and the environment. We do politics a bit differently in The Greens because we know that our support comes directly from the community. There are big issues in this election. I'm just going to quickly touch on them. Political donations from property developers. The big parties accept them. We don't it's that simple.
>
> *22:41 Applause and cheers*
>
> *22:43 Adele Carles:* If elected I'll be pressing for strict restrictions on politic on political donations. North Port Quay the developer has no more right to the seabed than you or I. This is public seabed. Their proposal is no different from us asking the government for a free block of land in Kings Park. We would be laughed out of town if we tried it. If this Dubai-style development goes ahead, it will be the kiss of death for our working port of Fremantle. So we need to be very careful about what we are doing. Lead exports. Let's not forget that it was the Labor government that got us into this mess a year ago when they approved the plan. When The Greens challenged them in parliament, we were ridiculed. Paul Llewellyn is here. He was the one that challenged them. Now they have back flipped for political gain. The Greens are the only party that has stood against lead in Fremantle from the very start. I support increased funding for police services in Fremantle to keep our community safe. As a mother I know that family security is a big issue for all of us. I also support the retention of a 24-hour emergency department at Fremantle Hospital as an important regional centre of course we need a well-funded Fremantle Hospital. Finally, I'll leave you with one of my favourite sayings. If you do what you've always done you'll get what you've always got. We've had 85 years of Labor if you vote for Labor this time you are going to get an opposition back bencher. I'm sorry Peter. But if you vote green
>
> *24:19 Bell sounds*
>
> *24:19 Adele Carles:* you'll get an independent voice in our parliament. The choice is yours.

An hour later into the debate, an email question was read that asked whether candidates supported NPQ and whether they had received any campaign resources from its proponents. Nik Varga answered that he supported the development subject

to Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) approval but had not received any financial support or inducement. Some conjecture was heard from the audience during this response. Rob Totten answered that he would not support NPQ because it was a speculative project. Jan ter Horst answered that that he did not support it because plenty of land was available for development unlike in other cities. Carmelo Zagami answered that he hadn't closed the door on it, but may support it subject to EPA approval, because it could provide jobs; and that he had not had any financial inducements. Steve Boni answered that the community should have a really good look at it to see whether it should go ahead, but there were more important projects to look at in the meantime; and that he had no financial inducements. Peter Tagliaferri answered that he had absolutely not received any financial support or donations from NPQ. Tagliaferri would keep an open mind but not consider supporting the project until it had gone through the stringent environmental hurdles that it faces. Julie Hollett said there was no money coming to her way but was undecided and wanted to see debate about this stunning development project as presented by the proponents and Peter Newman but that it was up to the community and government to decide:

> *1:16:40 Julie Hollett:* No there is no money coming to me, um and and and I just want to say that um I am not decided about this. I don't ah I I want to ah see the community, see the government engage in excellent debate over this issue. When I go and look ah at the website of what they are proposing and I listen to Peter Newman I think it's absolutely stunning actually. I think it's a stunning, stunning development pro ah um ah ah project but that doesn't necessarily mean that we are going to embrace that. So I am not decided but I hope that this community will engage in a an very effective eh debate over this ah

> *1:17:29 Bell sounds*

> *1:17:29 Julie Hollett:* and ah we'll get the best outcome.

Carles answered that while it sounded like a good development it was 'just in the wrong place' because the seabed was public property. The audience responded with six seconds of applause after she answered with a giggle that she had not received any donations from its developers. Sam Wainwright's answer produced the most vocal audience support and applause for these questions about NPQ. Wainwright responded with an appeal to nationalism, egalitarianism and public ownership; to the

people not giving way on NPQ to have rich people, yuppies peering down on them. This evoked great applause and cheers. Peter Newman's environmental claims were dismissed as 'guff' by Wainwright who said the proposal should be cast out of Fremantle because if its developers persisted they would end up having to drive bulldozers over bodies. The positive audience response to Wainwright and Wainwright's engagement with this response indicated that a heroic solidarity narrative had a greater affect on the audience and speaker in a large public gathering than in news media:

1:17:58 Sam Wainwright: As Jan said we live in Australia not Hong Kong. We do not need to fill in the ocean floor to create space for housing for rich people and in so doing privatize something that belongs to all of us. Not just to the people of Fremantle but don't the people of Midland and Armadale have a right to to attend a beach and not be overlooked by yuppies peering over their peering over their balconies.

1:18:17 Laughter and applause

1:18:17 Sam Wainwright: as well. I mean don't they. I mean

1:18:20 Laughter, applause and cheers

1:18:24 Sam Wainwright: It's

1:18:24 Applause

1:18:26 Sam Wainwright: The the mind boggles if if if and this guff about it being carbon neutral. What about the the millions of litres of diesel that are going to have to be burnt to dump rocks onto the ocean floor. If Peter Newman wants a sustainable village build it at Armadale or Midland for people who really need it. And if

1:18:41 Applause and cheers

1:18:41 Sam Wainwright
If

1:18:42 Applause and cheers

1:18:44 Sam Wainwright: If I tell you what. If

1:18:46 Applause and cheers

1:18:48 Sam Wainwright: If

1:18:48 Applause and cheers

1:18:49 Sam Wainwright: If if the jokers pro proposing this thing are fair dinkum. They they are going to have to drive their bulldozers over bodies. I'll give you the tip. Alright.

The *Fremantle Herald* on 9 May 2009 published an article on page 1 and continued on page 3 headed 'Socialist shines in debate' and 'Socialist a star of Freo debate'. On page 1, the *Herald* reproduced the audience's positive response to Sam Wainwright but then immediately contextualized it in a representation of the by-election's real politics:

> SOCIALIST candidate Sam Wainwright (centre) had them eating out of his hand during Tuesday night's Fremantle by-election debate when he called for a roll-back of privatization.
> But audience cheers won't mean much come polling day – it's a two-horse race and pundits gave the debating points to the Greens' Adele Carles over Labor candidate Peter Tagliaferri.

On page 3, the *Herald* focused on the popular response to Wainwright's position, particularly his stance against privatization and NPQ. It reduced the candidates' stance on the NPQ proposal to a 'yes', 'no' or 'open mind'. It represented Carles as a popular, competent candidate and mother while representing Tagliaferri as troubled and unpopular:

> SAM WAINWRIGHT was the name on people's lips as they tramped out of Notre Dame university's drill hall following Tuesday night's by-election debate.
> Quizzed on a range of topics by both ABC political guru Peter Kennedy and a 300-strong audience the wharfie drew cheers with his call for a rollback of privatised public utilities.
> His open hostility to the North Port Quay proposal also won loud approval.
> "I live in Australia and we don't need to privatise the ocean…if NPQ want a sustainable village build it in Armadale or Midland where they need it," he said to cheers and applause.
>
> Asked whether they'd received donations from NPQ's backers all 10 (Rosemary Lorrimar did not turn up) replied "no".
> Nik Varga and Steve Boni said they were definitely in favour of the project while Mr Tagliaferri, Carmelo Zagami, Rob Totten and Julie Hollett were "keeping an open mind".
> Jan ter Horst, Ms Carles and Mr Wainwright opposed it.

"Sam was the dark horse," Mr Kennedy later told the *Herald*, adding he had even carried the audience with his call to nationalise mining.

The Greens' Adele Carles came close to matching the Socialist Alliance candidate's crowd appeal, deftly dealing with a question about her party's policy to legalise prostitution and whether she'd want it as a career path for her own daughter.

She said sex work wasn't a career for any woman but the industry wasn't going away and prostitutes should enjoy the same rights as other Australian workers.

Labor's Peter Tagliaferri appeared ill-at-ease, being swatted with questions about his time as mayor, and earning grumbles from the floor following some answers.

The implication from the question at the by-election debate that some candidates were receiving financial support from NPQ – even though it was denied by all candidates present – was reproduced in this page 3 article, but it was suggested in a much more overt way on page 1 (Figure 39). The main article, headlined 'NPQ lobbyist advised campaign', described how 'former Labor MP John Halden – a paid lobbyist for the North Port Quay project – has emerged as a behind-the-scenes adviser to Fremantle by-election candidate Nik Varga'. The secondary article on the page, headed 'ACCC wags finger at carbon claims', described how NPQ had overstated its green credentials and been told by the ACCC to 'tone down its carbon-neutral claims' or face a $1.2 million fine. A week before the by-election, the *Herald*'s front page positioned North Port Quay's proponents as liars caught out attempting to corrupt democratic process in Fremantle and the meaning of carbon neutrality.

Figure 39: Page 1 of *Fremantle Herald* on 9 May 2009

The main article, headed 'Green veteran boosts local campaign', on page 2 of the 9 May edition described how Senator Bob Brown – a widely recognized symbol of environmentalist struggling against corporate greed – had flown to Fremantle to officially launch Carles' campaign. It represented Carles as genuinely wanting to make Fremantle the "most sustainable city in the world": "The Greens don't use the word lightly...creating a truely sustainable city requires an integrated vision." This sustainability vision was outlined and differentiated from the NPQ version in terms of producing green jobs, building sustainable suburbs on land rather than 'Dubai-

style mega-development on the public seabed', supporting bike riding over car driving and installing solar panels as well as insulation in every Australian home starting 'with the poorer houses and moving up'. The Greens' sustainability vision was an appeal to current households of voters over the NPQ sustainability vision that was more likely to appeal to limited business interests and a future constituency that had yet to move into Fremantle. Other texts on pages 2 and 3 of this edition position Tagliaferri as a loved family man – both son and father – of Fremantle. This image was exemplified in Tagliaferri's advertisement, 'Putting Fremantle First', which featured a picture of a mother on a sheet-draped couch hugging a young girl and an infant boy and a captioned text attributed to the mother which stays silent on NPQ while focusing on the ecological threat of lead:

> "Peter was one of the first to stand up against lead in Freo port. He's still standing up today.
>
> I know we can trust Fremantle's future to him."
>
> – Sara Jooste, Mum

This advertisement across the bottom of page 3 was undermined by an advertisement published directly above, headed 'Peter Tagliaferri Putting Fremantle Last', by John Dowson. A full page advertisement, headed 'We're supporting Peter Tagliaferri,' on page 7 which reproduced the image of Sara Jooste and images of 14 other people with corresponding attributed quotes was undermined by a full-page advertisement on the facing page, headed 'PETER TAGLIAFERRI: RESIGN IMMEDIATELY', attributed to 111 people representing themselves as people who had paid for this ad. This advertisement provided four reasons for Peter to resign because of failure as Mayor of Fremantle including a hypocritical environmentalist position in relation to NPQ:

> You call yourself an 'environmental campaigner' when you refused to reject the proposed total destruction of Port Beach by NPQ.

Here we see NPQ being used as a discursive resource for attributing a lack of environmental credibility. The cartoon and letters on page 4 of the *Herald* suggested positions on NPQ were integral to the outcome of the by-election. The cartoon shows

the 11 candidates forming a human train. The only candidates with campaign issues attributed to them in the cartoon are Tagliaferri with 'NO LEAD, MORE POLICE' and Carles with 'NO NPQ, NO LEAD'. Tagliaferri was drawn in a suite with a necklace of mayoral medals and Carles was drawn in a feminine necklace and dress similar to the red dress that she wore on the facing page in an image of the Carles family in a full-page advertisement, headed 'ADELE CARLES CARES ABOUT THE PEOPLE OF FREMANTLE' (a half-page version of this advertisement would appear on page 9 of the *Fremantle Gazette* a few days later). The advertisement positioned Carles as a caring mother, overtly in the attributed quote: 'As a mother I understand…' Returning to the facing page 4, three of the six letters published there associate NPQ with the election outcome. A letter by Greg Poland, the lead developer for NPQ, attempts to correct Carles' statement that 'North Port Quay would destroy Port Beach' and then reach out to The Greens in an offer of reconciliation. This offer may have suggested that, by this stage of the campaign a week before the by-election, Poland saw Carles' victory as being inevitable. The final paragraph of the letter suggests acceptance of this victory and limitation of sustainable development to renewable energy:

> I would hope to work closely with the Greens and all Western Australians who share the common goal of sustainable development based on renewable energy.

The opinion piece on page 11, 'NPQ v Cockburn Coast', by Andrew Sullivan argued against NPQ's attempt to limit sustainable development to renewable energy post construction:

> There is no definition of sustainability that would encompass filling in the ocean to create a new residential suburb. For the North Port Quay developers to suggest otherwise is sheer marketing folly.

And towards the end of this lengthy piece against NPQ, Sullivan calls for a broader social view of sustainability that involves community participation in decision making incorporating public as well as private resources:

> Social sustainability cannot be achieved when developers constantly put themselves at odds with the community. As we watch the Leighton

development begin to rise we should remind ourselves that win-win solutions can be achieved with a bit more effort and a lot less ego.

It just beggars belief that so many politicians have been suckered in by flashy marketing and hired guns being paraded about town by the NPQ developers. Calls for a "fair-go" by the developer's PR machine remind me of cigarette salesmen. Now we have some snake-oil peddling by-election candidates jumping on the medicine-man's wagon.

A true "fair go" will eventuate when government insists that resources, both public and private, are spent on truly sustainable urban planning and infrastructure that enhances the lives of the whole community.

It's time to bury the NPQ folly at sea and move back to the land to fulfil our needs.

Below this piece and across the bottom half of page 10 was an advertisement, headed 'North Port Quay will create jobs for thousands of people', featuring 'radio personality' Jane Marwick as the NPQ spokeswoman reading a newspaper; apparently a page filled with advertisements for 'Hospitality and Tourism', 'Sales and Marketing' as well as 'Trades and Technical' positions. Marwick is quoted as endorsing NPQ because it would create jobs amid business closures and thousands of job losses by injecting billions of dollars into the economy. The text attributed to her ended with the latest NPQ slogan: 'an investment in our environment, jobs and way of life'. The same advertisement also appeared on pages 14 of the *Fremantle Gazette* on 12 May and in the *Fremantle Herald* again on pages 8 and 9 on 16 May.

On the evening of Saturday 9 May, the *ABC1* broadcast news of Carles' concerns over Fremantle by-election candidates receiving financial support from NPQ:

> *Adele Carles*: This looks more like the Melbourne Cup than you know a by-election. Suddenly 11 candidates popped out of nowhere and suddenly very big ads with this pro North Port Quay message anti Greens stuff being printed.

Links were then drawn between NPQ and Nik Varga's Real Estate business, suggesting that he was hiding from the media as it became apparent that this was yet another instance of big property developer versus coastal community. The piece also suggested that Peter Newman's claims of carbon neutrality or carbon free were false and complicit in NPQ's legitimization strategy. Like Varga, it suggested that Professor Newman was in hiding. Meanwhile, Brad Pettitt represented the view of

'other environmental academics' who were happy that the ACCC had intervened to monitor the advertising of Newman's unsubstantiated claims.

VCS Computer screen close image of Nik Varga in suite jacket and tie next to his on-screen contact details.

Voiceover: Attempts to contact Nik Varga today were unsuccessful.

LS High Angle. Camera pans left in a circular motion over 3D model of North Port Quay showing extent of the proposed development with tall buildings and a large green oval in the central foreground, low-rise buildings, streets and canals in the mid-ground and Swan River mouth, a seawall, boats and ocean in distance.

Voiceover: The concerns come amid claims from another candidate that he was approached by NPQ representatives and told he would get their support if he preferenced Labor ahead of the Greens. NPQ backers have rejected the allegation.

CS Reporter on street, pedestrians and shops in Fremantle mall background.

Voiceover: Coastal developments in WA are always controversial and the North Port Quay proposal is no exception. It's shaping up as the defining issue in Fremantle's by-election.

MS Peter Newman in park walking towards camera.

Voiceover: The proposal has been heavily promoted by sustainability expert

CS Peter Newman in park next to Swan River. Mounts Bay Road and Perth city are in the background.

Voiceover: Professor Peter Newman from Curtin University

CS Computer screen image of North Port Quay compass rose logo on a light blue background.

Voiceover: as a carbon neutral

LS High Angle. Camera pans right to show model of trees and greenery in foreground, a canal, white motor boats at dock, parked cars and white motor boats on boat ramps with roads, green space and buildings in background. Camera continues to pan right to show a canal bridge with many cars moving over it and more white motor boats at dock, a road with cars and tall buildings in the background.

Voiceover: development. But the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission recently questioned such claims and says it will monitor

MS A motor boat on trailer being guided by a person down a boat ramp from a 4-wheel drive in a marina with many boats in the background.

Voiceover: future advertising.

MS Dozens of motor boats stacked three high in a sheltered structure

Voiceover: Peter Newman did not return calls to the ABC

MS A very large white motor boat in a marina surrounded by smaller motorboats and sailing boats at dock.

Voiceover: and the North Port Quay proposal

MS Large white luxury motor boats at dock with sedge grasses in foreground and trees in background.

Voiceover: is now being described as a development

LS High Angle. Camera pans right to show model of white motor boats at dock, boats parked on land, roads, trees and many medium and high-rise buildings in middle ground.

Voiceover: aiming to achieve the highest possible rating for environmental sustainability.

MS Brad Pettitt facing camera walks along a street with mailbox and trees in background. Camera pans left as he walks.

Voiceover: Other environmental academics are now happy that the ACCC is now monitoring the advertising.

CS Brad Pettitt with street and urban park in background. Subtitle: 'Assoc. Prof. Brad Pettitt MURDOCH UNIVERSITY'.

Brad Pettitt: The claims for carbon neutrality or the new term they are using which is carbon free I think are claims are that

CS Brad Pettitt shrugs shoulders.

Brad Pettitt: um are claims they provide no evidence for and there is no sense that they that can be justified.

The main article, headed 'Donation challenge', on the front page of the *Fremantle Gazette* on 12 May reported Carles challenging other candidates to declare whether

they had 'received political donations from property developers'. By the article's front-page treatment just four days before readers would go to vote, the *Gazette* positioned political donations from property developers as the key by-election issue. In the article, independent Steve Boni is quoted defending the idea of political donations from property developers: 'Singling out developers is just another form of discrimination'. Family First candidate du Plessis and Labor candidate Tagliaferri were reported as saying that they had not received donations from developers. That donations were being made by developers is confirmed by independent Zagami who is reported as saying that he had been approached but refused to accept the donation. On page 3 the main article, headed 'Port a leading issue', represented candidates putting forward 'their policies at Fremantle by-election forum'. The article reported reflections on the meeting by independent candidate Zagami, independent candidate Boni, Family first candidate du Plessis and Labor candidate Tagliaferri, and it positioned NPQ as the primary issue in the list order of the first two paragraphs:

> North Port Quay, Fremantle Markets, lead transportation through Fremantle and the future of the port were the main issues debated at the forum last week.
> Other issues included homelessness, High Street upgrades, violence in the community, more police and security in the central business district, and the environment.

Below this article was an article, headed 'Big guns fired up for Greens candidate', with a large corresponding image of Carles and 'Greens leader Bob Brown'. The article suggested that the by-election was an opportunity for a special historical moment, according to a leading authority on green politics in Australia. It also reported The Greens launching their own plan for making Fremantle a leading sustainable city, suggesting that sustainable cities could be reduced to orderable categories and framed in the competitive way according to neoliberal thought:

> Senator Brown said he was "very excited" about the coming election.
> "This is a very, very special election," he said.
> "Electing Adele to the floor of Parliament will pay a huge dividend to the people of Fremantle and to the people of WA as well."
> Senator Brown and Ms Carles also used the visit to launch an ambitious campaign to make Fremantle "one of the country's leading sustainable cities".

An advertisement for Sam Wainwright included a list of 10 policies starting with '100% renewable energy by 2020' and 'Nationalize the mining industry' then ending with 'No North Port Quay – don't privatize our beaches' and 'Boycott Apartheid Israel – Revoke South Coast Transit Contracts'.

The *West Australian*, in 'People in North Port Quay ads feel duped', on page 16 on 12 May reported that 'people photographed as part of an advertisement for the $10 billion North Port Quay development' claimed they were misrepresented. The article focused on the personal impact of unethical behaviour by NPQ's proponents, who had already been prevented by the ACCC from abusing the term 'carbon neutral':

> Mathew Hawksworth, 29, of Mosman Park is quoted as saying: "We need a project like this to create jobs in construction, retail and tourism."
> Mr Hawksworth said he never gave such a quote and his name was used without permission.

Communication Manager for NPQ, Anne Burns, defended the endorsement practice and said the surprising complaints were a misunderstanding.

On 15 May an advertisement, headed 'A letter to Fremantle residents', for NPQ featuring Burns was published on page 18 of *The West Australian*. The same advertisement was published again a day later on page 19 on the day of the Fremantle by-election. The advertisement text is constructed as a letter from Ann Burns to the people of Fremantle, who 'may have heard a lot about North Port Quay in the last few weeks of the Fremantle by-election'. The main image in the advertisement is a head-shot of Burns, similar to headshots used in the by-election advertisements, in front of a traditional sailing boat apparently gliding along a coast lined with shipping containers. The advertisement appeals for voters to trust Burns as a capable person, but also as a capable woman, endorsing the idea the NPQ 'just makes sense'. The letter from Burns argued that there were many important positive 'facts' about NPQ that needed to be pointed out amid the 'sort of misleading talk you would expect in an election campaign'. The letter closed with a reiteration of NPQ being envisaged as a 'world leader in sustainable development' and an appeal for voters to give NPQ a fair go – the right of equal opportunity for capital within neoliberal discourse – by voting a certain unspecified way in the by-election:

Our goal is to make North Port Quay a world leader in sustainable development, with homes and businesses powered by wind, wave and solar energy.

With all these benefits why can't we discuss this?

North Port Quay is asking for a fair go. When you vote, please keep these things in mind.

Ann Burns

On the day of and the day before the by-election in West Australia's most popular newspaper, this half-page NPQ advertisement suggested that the by-election outcome would seal the project's fate. It is plausible that the advertisement indicated that NPQ's proponents understood that voters knew which candidates supported a discussion of the project and who rejected it, and that a maternal figure would be most trusted in the delivery of this message.

On election day, Saturday 16 May 2009, the *Fremantle Herald* reported on page one that the by-election result would be close, likely to be decided on preferences but regardless of the result Fremantle's 'days as a safe Labor seat' were over. The newspaper reported preferences being directed to Labor from the Christian Democrats, Family First and independents Varga, Boni and Lorrimar. The Greens would receive preferences from liberal independent Zagami, Socialist Alliance candidate Sam Wainwright and independent Van ter Horst. Two of the five letters published on page 4 associated the by-election with NPQ and ecological threats. The 'NPQ fails green test' letter by Ian Scott, 'Accredited Professional, Green Building Council of Australia' (GBCA), argued that by-election candidates must be informed that NPQ would not meet the 4-star National Australian Built Environment Rating System (NABERS) criteria, and therefore a GBCA, rating if it was built on sea infill. The writer also argued that NPQ was madness and that it was wrong to start the 'sustainability meter' only after filling in the sea:

This is akin to saying the building of a six-wheel drive urban assault vehicle to take the kids to school is OK as long as it runs on recycled chip fat. The problem is not so much the running of the vehicle, it's the lunacy involved in building such a thing.

The other letter, 'Green switch', described how the writer Roel Loopers, a 'traditional Labor voter', had come to the hard decision of voting for The Greens candidate in the by-election after watching the candidates debate in which Tagliaferri's performance was 'insipid' while Carles and Wainwright were excellent:

> I changed my mind after personally asking Mr Tagliaferri to openly state whether he opposed the NPQ development. When asked he hid behind the EPA, which would give the proposal intense scrutiny.
>   Does he approve our ocean being taken over by private developers? I suggest, as many others have said to me, that his "I am open minded about it" is simply polite speak for saying he actually supports it but doesn't want to lose votes.

After the problematization of Tagliaferri's open mindedness, the writer asked what Labor had done for Fremantle over the years and articulated the voter trust in Carles that had been appealed to in the Carles campaign:

> A win for the Greens will shake them all up I hope. I feel in good hands with Adele. Go Green Freo!

On the facing page 5 a full-page advertisement for Carles, headed 'TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!', called for social action from voters like Loopers:

> The future of Fremantle is in our hands. This is the day that **<u>YOU</u>** can make the difference.

On Saturday evening, Carles celebrated victory in the Fremantle by-election. After all valid 20,684 votes cast had been counted (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2009a), The Greens candidate had received 54% of votes on a two-party preferred basis (a 16.5% positive swing to Carles) over Labor candidate Tagliaferri with 46% (0.1% swing against Labor). There was a 30.2% swing against the Liberal party which had not run a candidate in the by-election. Carles received 44.1% of primary votes, followed by Tagliaferri with 38.6%, Zagami with 5%, Varga with 3.5%, Wainwright with 2.3%, Hollett and Boni with 1.7%, du Plessis with 1%, Ter Horst with 0.9% and Totten with 0.3%. The election result was widely reported and analysed in a variety of media, but not in association with both NPQ and ecological threats until an editorial was published a week later, on 23 May, in the *Fremantle*

Herald. The editorial, 'Labor's lost love', was published directly below the news article, 'NPQ not on my watch: Premier', which began with the words: 'PREMIER Colin Barnett says North Port Quay is dead in the water'. This article connected NPQ to the election result with John Halden reported as saying that the result showed that 52% of voters wanted the project to go ahead, but then Carles responded that the former politician couldn't do his maths: "They made NPQ an election issue, but it backfired." The 'Labor's Lost Love' editorial, which was continued on page 7, attributed the electoral result to a history of disappointing Labor representation since the late 1980s, particularly failure in the face of rising pressure from property developers and successive planning ministers who were 'hard-headed and dismissive of local sentiment':

> Port Coogee, ING on historic Victoria Quay, Three Harbours and now
> North Port Quay were the limit for many. McGinty's failure as a
> supposed Labor powerbroker to curb MacTiernan's thirst for coastal
> development was the last straw.
>   For too many Labor – the party that practically gave away hectares of
> sea bed at Coogee, earning developer Australand untold millions in
> profits – had become the party of the seedy and the greedy.

The editorial then described The Greens as running a better campaign, being faster off the mark and more in touch with local sentiment while Labor's Tagliaferri suffered from his messy pre-selection, haunting council decisions and disastrous 'fence-sitting on North Port Quay'. The *Herald*'s article, 'This is a port key', on page 3 included Carles attributing electoral victory to The Greens policy successes in areas where Labor had failed to respond to people's concerns, and also to the affect on voters of NPQ injecting itself into the election:

> She says the party's focus may be dealing with climate change and
> the environment but it has developed policies across all areas of
> government, including workers' rights, social justice, regulating the
> economy and providing public transport.
>   "[It is] the left-wing space [formerly] occupied by Labor," Ms Carles
> says. "They deserted and aligned with corporations and abandoned the
> environment. We have attracted mainstream voters. We have seen a very
> clear message people want action."
>   She said her strong stance against North Port Quay provided her with
> a boost but the proponents had shot themselves in the foot by elevating
> the project into an election issue.

"Their candidate [Nik Varga, number one on the ballot] only got three per cent," she said. "We now know there is not the support for NPQ."

The article then described Carles rebutting political experts who had attributed The Greens victory to the Liberal party's decision not to run a candidate, her preparation for the 2011 election and how she would cope being a member of parliament and mother of three daughters. The *Herald*'s cartoon on page 4, entitled 'HOW GREEN IS MY CITY' (Figure 40), celebrated The Greens' historic victory while parodying its significance in terms of achieving an alternative green-built-environment vision for Fremantle. The cartoon image of this ideal green Fremantle includes people and a dog relaxing in a park or household back yard. The only overt indication of built environment is the traditional corrugated fence in the background (perhaps suggesting a fence around Fremantle community). An elderly woman, sitting on a sawn log, rather than a manufactured chair, speaks in a mundane voice about The Greens victory:

Well we can all relax now. NPQ is history. The market rents will be renegotiated. The Soap man will return. The lead nasties will ship via Hilarys No high rise will sully our skyline. And we'll keep the beaches how we want them.
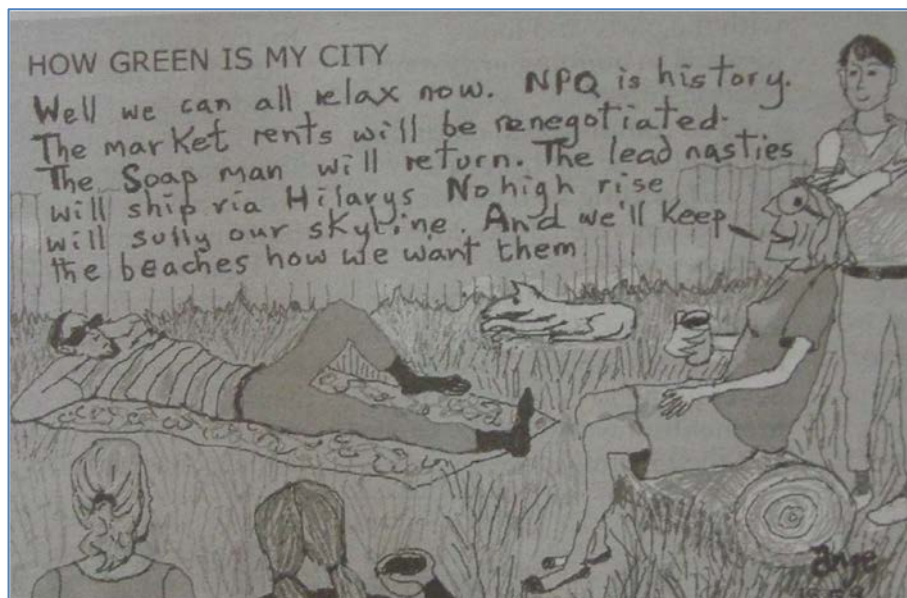
Figure 40: Page 4 of *Fremantle Herald* on 23 May 2009

Through parody the cartoon may have suggested to some that Fremantle's green victory would be a fleeting one so people should remain on guard rather than relax.

On 26 May, the *Fremantle Gazette* reported Greg Poland's take on the by-election in 'Quay: Opponents misinformed' on page 5:

> Greg Poland from the Strzlecki Group, main proponent of the North Port Quay (NPQ) development, has spoken out about what he believes is misinformation both in the media and among politicians about the proposal.

Poland argued that it would protect North Beach from erosion rather than extend it. The article quoted Carles as saying NPQ would be a highly speculative risk with little prospect of financial return: 'In terms of risk, I would rate NPQ as being on par with putting your money on the roulette wheel at the casino'.

On the evening of 9 June 2009, Carles gave a maiden speech in the lower house of the Parliament of Western Australia with about 100 people present in the public gallery above the chamber. An edited abridged version of this speech was published as an opinion piece in the *Fremantle Herald* on 13 June on page 5. In the maiden speech, Carles' environmental position was constructed around the maternal interest of child safety and from this position she would be able to cooperate with other politicians of similar interest. This position was articulated in the first paragraph of the speech as recorded in Hansard:

> I am here to work towards a safe future for our children. I know that we are all joined by a common desire for our children's future… I am here on the wings of the Australian Greens, the Fremantle Community and people right across our state who care for our environment.

In the second paragraph, Carles associated the voice of Fremantle community in opposition to big corporations with this maternal position:

> Fremantle people chose a community voice this time, one that will not sell out to big corporations and one that has the very essence of Fremantle at heart... the result on election night spoke for itself. It was a victory for our democratic system because people power won the night. We did not start out with as much money as the other candidates. I am not the likeliest of candidates myself, being a woman with three young children.

In the third paragraph, Carles thanked the hundreds of volunteers and other people who supported her campaign including her husband for providing for the family and three children, who provided inspiration for environmental activism:

> I also thank my generous and loving husband, Francois Carles. You provide a rock-solid foundation for us, and I am so grateful for this. I also acknowledge my three daughters, Genevieve, Claudia and Charlotte: you give me the daily inspiration to keep standing up for our environment.

The third paragraph paid tribute to The Greens politicians who came before her. The fourth paragraph suggested how Carles was formed politically through the affect of her mother's and her adopted indigenous brother's heroic struggles.

> Those years were very hard for the three of us. My mother struggled to make ends meet as a sole parent without government support… My mother knew she had to get Andrew back to his country and his people, so we returned to Perth when we finished school. The transition to Western Australia was a culture shock, particularly for my brother Andrew. He did reunite with his people but he had to face the cold reality of what it meant to be Aboriginal in this state. It meant being under suspicion and being subjected to overt racism. It is a testament to his strength of character that he has gone on to work as a health worker helping Indigenous people in remote desert communities… He is sitting at the back of the chamber with our mother, a woman who I also pay tribute to, a woman who courageously raised two children and never gave up on her Aboriginal son receiving an education.

A political action response to affect is articulated in the fifth and sixth paragraphs, in a way that suggested the power of affect in an urban person could overcome dominant real estate discourse to enable a reconstruction of history, providing justice for indigenous people in the recognition of their land being stolen, their forced relocation and in some cases their massacre. An adequate response to affect would enable progress in the redistribution of land and the provision of housing to the homeless. Carles described being haunted by the memory of a young Nyoongar man desperate for a place to stay, and this haunting memory must be met by action. It suggested that progress relied on emotional as well as rational response, which Carles constructed on the logic of equivalences:

> The image of him still haunts me. In my time here I will endeavour to work with this government to secure funding for additional crisis accommodation. It is inhumane that in a wealthy state like ours hundreds

of people sleep rough on the streets every night in the city. We can do better than this.

In paragraph 7 of the Hansard speech Carles described the privilege of owning a home in Fremantle, and how in her part of town there was more interest in community engagement and reification of the past than in consuming new technologies. This description could suggest why locals resisted NPQ being realized as a walled city for consuming future sustainable technologies:

> People walk and cycle; children roam in and out of our homes. People rarely sell their houses here. They are not interested in bigger houses, the latest appliances or new cars. There are no lock-down garages or security gates to keep people out. We have our doors open so that people can come in. It is almost old-fashioned, and I would not trade that for the world. It is this sense of connection and desire to preserve what is special that sees Fremantle people being active citizens and politically engaged.

In paragraph 8 Carles paid tribute to various heritage campaigners who saved many historic buildings in Fremantle since the 1970s. In paragraph 9, Carles linked the indigenous notion of 'country' and Aboriginal learning with her mobilization against coastal property developers. Carles appropriated the legal argument for recognition of indigenous land rights to recognize urban people's collective rights to spaces through an enduring connection to these spaces:

> I chose to stand up for South Beach because it is my country. I use the word "country" in the way that Aboriginal people have taught me. It is my place of belonging. It holds spiritual significance for me. I know many other people who feel like this about their beach.

Carles then quoted Greens Senator Christine Milne on how loving a special place enabled empathy with other people's love of special places and 'to stand up for one special place is to begin the process of standing up for them all': 'It is the beginning of becoming a global citizen.' Carles described in paragraph 10 global citizens being marginalized through the labelling of them as activists despite these citizens acting when government's failed to do so in 'taking responsibility for our environment'. In paragraph 11, Carles thanked people in Western Australia who had stood up for a special place or a variety of environmental ideals against the odds. She provided an example of people standing up against the threat of violence, arrest and legal cost orders to protect from timber industries a native forest in Margaret River that acted

as a crucial carbon sink. She then linked this type of environmental action to Fremantle community campaigns in which 'many of us unwittingly became campaigners as we saw our special places being threatened by inappropriate development' by the beach and on nearby brown-field sites:

> During the boom years we had a lot foisted on us, from houses on the ocean at Port Coogee, to high-rise apartments in the dunes at South Beach, to lead contamination at South Beach, to the proposal to build apartments on top of the toxic tip site at South Fremantle, to the ING proposal on Victoria Quay, to the three harbours proposal – the list goes on.

The paragraph (12) ended with the government endorsed introduction of the lead carbonate ecological threat to Fremantle and the suggestion that government siding with a disreputable mining company against local community had contributed to the illusion of NPQ's proponents:

> The final insult, to top it all off, was last year's approval to export lead carbonate through the port of Fremantle. No wonder the North Port Quay consortium was under the illusion that anything goes in Fremantle.

In the remaining paragraphs, Carles articulated the need for community, business and government to be involved in strategic planning for Fremantle as a 'residential port' that regarded health and safety as the highest priority. Carles then depicted the ecological threats of oil-resource limits and climate change, and the potential for catastrophic consequences in the form of sea level rises, species extinction and dislocation of millions of people. Carles argued that government could solve these problems through policy and legislation. In particular, through the adoption of renewable energy production and the prevention of any new coal-fired power stations. Carles argued that government inaction could not be justified: 'imagine trying to justify it to a child, a child who is now learning about global warming'. Carles argued that government should introduce the sort of ecological modernizing technologies that Newman had previously argued for in support of the case for the NPQ. Carles also argued for job creation, which echoed NPQ's campaign. A key difference was about the ownership and, by inference, rent seeking from these technologies. Another point of differentiation was that ecological modernization should be done for the sakes of 'our children' – as opposed to some other white, consumer society suggested in NPQ's advertisements. Carles argued:

> We must rise to the challenge of transforming our polluting energy industry into a clean industry. This is an opportunity for innovation and new job markets. Now is the time in this state to upgrade our out-dated and unreliable electricity grid infrastructure. We need to invest in high-quality intelligent grid design which will produce energy savings and efficiencies in the long run and which can be powered by renewable energy. That is the type of investment that our children will thank us for. Such a grid will prevent blackouts and save consumers money. Ironically, renewable energy is free once we have the infrastructure in place because no corporation can own the sun or the wind. This is the smart way forward and it is the ethical way forward. We Greens like to ask: In 50 years' time, will our children be looking back at us smiling?

The importance of the child figure in governance was reiterated through to the end of Carles' speech: 'I remind members that it is about the children'.

4.6   North Port Quay in the Fremantle mayoral election

This section deals with North Port Quay and the state election held on 6 September 2008 through a close reading of 25 texts (Table 7) produced by the *Fremantle Herald*, *Fremantle Gazette*, *The West Australian*, the City of Fremantle, the CUSP website and the Fremantle Mayoral Debate. In this section we see that although NPQ had largely disappeared from public representations around state politics, it remained a controversial issue within municipal politics until the Fremantle mayoral election on 19 October 2009.

Text source	Description of item
Brad Pettitt website	2009/09/09, Brad Pettitt Policy – North Point Quay (NPQ) transcription
City of Fremantle Council	2009/06/24, Transcript of Fremantle Council Meeting transcription
City of Fremantle Council	2009/09/23, Fremantle Council Meeting minutes
CUSP website	2009/06/27, RESILIENT CITIES presentation slides by Newman
Fremantle Gazette	2009/09/29, page 05, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/06/27, page 02, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/06/27, page 06, letter
Fremantle Herald	2009/07/04, page 01, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/07/04, page 05, letter
Fremantle Herald	2009/07/04, page 11, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/07/04, page 27, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/07/11, page 05, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2009/07/25, page 06, letter
Fremantle Herald	2009/09/05, page 05, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2009/09/19, page 01, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/09/19, page 02, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/09/19, page 03, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/09/19, page 04, cartoon
Fremantle Herald	2009/09/19, page 05, opinion
Fremantle Herald	2009/09/19, page 07, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2009/09/19, page 11, article
Fremantle Herald	2009/10/03, page 03, advertisement
Fremantle Herald	2009/10/24, page 04, cartoon
Fremantle Mayoral Debate	2009/09/22, Transcript of the Great 2009 Freo Mayoral Debate
The West Australian	2009/10/17, page 32, opinion

Table 7: Texts in analysis of North Port Quay in Fremantle mayoral election

The City of Fremantle Council at its monthly meeting on 24 June debated a motion to formally oppose the NPQ proposal. The motion was moved and chaired by deputy mayor John Dowson in Tagliaferri's absence. Dowson said it was important to reject NPQ immediately because the issue was a distraction for council and it related to ongoing state government consideration of the future of Fremantle port. The NPQ concept should be rejected, according to Dowson, because 'a five-year-old' could see it wouldn't work on environmental grounds. Jon Strachan moved that the motion be deferred pending a proper review by the City of Fremantle's Planning Services Committee: 'I want the report to set out why we don't support it and on what grounds and as such I think we should have a planning officer write a report to that end.' Bill Massie supported Strachan's successful motion to defer the rejection because NPQ was a great development and he wanted to see its proponents and the Murdoch university objectors come together before council and debate the proposal: 'it is a great proposal and I believe not the first time in the world to reclaim some water'. Les Lauder then argued that a debate would be a waste of time since voters

had made their opposition to NPQ known in the by-election. Lauder argued that the council should reject NPQ on principal without waiting for a Planning Services Committee report because it was clearly unacceptable to the community in the same way that the council would reject any kind of nuclear power station proposed for Fremantle. The following extract from a transcript of the council meeting shows how the discourse around NPQ now included representations of community opposition indicated by the by-election:

> *20:56:21 Les Lauder*: …Um on the matter of public debate if this was a major issue in the recent ah by-election for Fremantle and the electorate overwhelmingly rejected the idea. Um the and our own premier has unreservedly and absolutely rejected the concept. Um now let's not make too many bones about this. This is simply a speculative project to make a lot of money. It's dressing itself up ah in this rather flimsy cloak by using terms such as sustainability and so on. Now eh the very idea of a place like Western Australia which is one of the largest self-governing areas of the world needing to reclaim first extra land is so ludicrous. Now you could make a case in Hong Kong which is hemmed in, has very little land and has huge population pressures. We don't have that. If these people who are saying that they want to do a sustainable project were actually serious they would do it on land. It's got nothing to do with sustainability at all. It's simply wanting to eh sell eh very expensive eh housing projects eh out over the ocean and if it were to go ahead you could be certain that at least half of them would be bought by overseas eh people. Nothing wrong with that in itself, but this isn't something for the Fremantle community at all. Now councillor eh Strachan ah was worried about how this would stand up this vote on principle on a matter of principle how this would stand up ah if the developers changed their plans. Well, for me this is something very fundamental and basic. If someone was proposing to put a nuclear power plant in the centre of Fremantle and then said oh well we're going to we've taken that away we are only going to do one half the size it's still unacceptable. Now why would we waste our overworked planning department's staff's time on doing a report that it the community has shown it doesn't want. That's a waste of time and money. Um and if if the developers were to change their project um we can deal with that at the time but you know we have to stand for principle and the principle is clear. Nobody apart from the odd odd person

> *20:59:03 laughter for 2 seconds*

> *10:59:04 Les Lauder*: Um very odd person who likes living in an egg box. Um ah what a terrible way to describe Hilton I must say that

it is really quite offensive to the people of Hilton. Nevertheless um the overwhelming

20:59:18 John Alberti: Get a life councillor Lauder, get a life.

20:59:19 Les Lauder: if if you want to if you want to find out what if you want to make a decision on the basis of what the community thinks

20:59:25 John Alberti: Go forwards not backwards.

20:59:28 Les Lauder: let's have a referendum if you want to do that. But we have to stand for something. And its if the public has told us very clearly that the public don't want this that the public doesn't want this. Why waste time on reports and so forth when it's so obviously alien to ah Fremantle's interest. How on Earth would you get 20,000 people um one assumes with cars um through North Fremantle for one thing. I mean um if you just start thinking about it it's it's just not what Fremantle wants. Certainly we've got large areas of Fremantle that we can and will redevelop but Fremantle's future doesn't depend on a speculative project stuck out in the ocean that will probably be washed away in the first um major storm we get. Let's not even think about the um the carbon footprint that's going to stomp on this area if such a thing's built. I mean it's just ludicrous absolutely ludicrous. It would be the destruction not the salvation of Fremantle. It would be the destruction of Fremantle. It's nonsense and I support this recommendation.

21:00:37 Les Lauder sits. John Alberti raises hand.

21:00:40 John Dowson: Councillor Alberti.

21:00:41 John Alberti stands.

21:00:42 John Alberti: I think councillor Lauder got it all wrong actually. He says the community and doesn't want it. That's only a minority that wants it eh doesn't want it. Ah you know how many people have you actually spoken to that actually want it. You know you remind of a grumpy old man you remind me

21:00:58 John Dowson: Excuse me Councillor Councillor Alberti

21:00:59 John Alberti: you telling people you tell people

21:01:00 John Dowson: Councillor Alberti Councillor Alberti I'm asking you to withdraw that comment please.

21:01:05 John Alberti: No I'm not

The *Fremantle Herald* reported on this exchange and the deferment of Dowson's motion for the council to reject the project in an article, headed 'NPQ debate turns nasty', on page 2 on 27 June. Page 6 of this edition included a letter by Peter Newman arguing that Dowson should not so readily dismiss it as 'unsustainable' because NPQ – described by Newman in the present tense – is less-car based than typical development and 'demonstrates the next generation of carbon-free technologies in city building. Newman argued that no-one at recent events outside Fremantle objected to NPQ being presented by him as an example of sustainability.

> I have spoken about urban resilience and sustainability with NPQ as an example, in the US, across Australia and last week in Canada at a big local government sustainability conference. No-one has said this is obviously "unsustainable", they just want to know more.

Newman's presentation, 'RESILIENT CITIES Responding to the Crash, Peak Oil and Climate Change' (Newman, 2009), for events away from Perth was uploaded on the Curtin University Sustainability Policy Website. The 151-slide presentation included a rendering of NPQ on slide 139 suggesting that this large coastal development in Perth was urban progress against the threats of climate change, peak oil and economic downturn because it was a 'Carbon-free development based on renewable, Smart Grid and electric vehicles'. The presentation contained images of sustainable development innovations from around the world that were included in the NPQ advertisement published in the *Fremantle Gazette* on 10 February 2009 (see Figure 34); including the projects in Malmo, Sweden, on slide 129, BedZED in London on slide 130, Rhizao Solar City in China on slide 125 and Treasure Island Eco-City on slide 120. These projects were included along with nine other slides of projects in a section of the presentation representing 'Green Oriented Development' by ensuring 'every new building and development is green'. In the letter to the *Herald*, Newman argued that NPQ's technologies were the type endorsed by Obama, a combination which Al Gore was describing as 'the "Moon Shot"… to go 100 per cent renewable in 10 years'. However, Newman's representation to Fremantle community about technological development overcoming environmental challenges was undermined a few days later when a storm tore down NPQ's large billboard in downtown Fremantle and caused other damage as well as extensive erosion of local beaches. Encountering the damaged billboard by chance on a visit to Fremantle

produced an uncanny response in the researcher. The advertisement, headed 'Fremantle's future' published extensively during the by-election campaign (Figure 35), was torn down and twisted. The left half of the billboard bearing the text 'Fremantle – the perfect place for North Port Quay' was facing the ground leaving the lone surfer standing on Port Beach with the open sea on her right, the port facility in the background and the word 'future' above and 'It just makes sense' below. The scene was not wasted on the *Fremantle Herald*'s photographers who published a photograph of the damaged billboard with a compilation of images on page 27 (Figure 41) of its 4 July 2009 edition. Text below the image suggested local people had realized that NPQ was unnatural, despised by nature. Also that its proponents were incompetent when it came to making something sustainable:

> MANY locals have disputed claims a proposed four-island development off Rous Head is "Fremantle's future" but now nature's getting in on the act too.
> Monday's high winds ripped North Port Quay's billboard from its moorings along the Phillimore Street tracks, bent it in half and tossed it onto the footpath.
> "Shows what the wind thinks of NPQ," a local inspecting the damage quipped.
> "They can't even make a sustainable sign," another observed. There were no injuries or other damage.

Figure 41: Page 27 of *Fremantle Herald* on 4 July 2009

The image compilation showed extensive beach erosion and storm damage in relation to the construction of Stockland's self-proclaimed luxury Islands apartment complex of 'environmental sustainability' (Stockland Corporation, 2011) on the dunes at South Beach, in relation to NPQ and in relation to potential property development at North Coogee. The headings on the page 'Wave power' and 'Wind power' parody ecological modernization claims such as those made by Newman. Rather than culture dominating nature, the page described nature threatening culture. The associated text began on page 1 with the article, 'Storm smashes South Beach',

and an associated image of the beach's disappearance due to the storm, suggesting that this could occur more regularly because of climate change. On page 27, 'Murdoch University sustainability unit chief Brad Pettitt said the damage was a glimpse of things to come for Fremantle from climate change' and then described this threat being exacerbated by local coastal property development:

> "The future of our beaches is not being assisted by developments such as Port Coogee that interrupt the natural movement and replenishment of sand on or beaches," the Fremantle councillor said.
> "This is why we need to be extremely cautious with proposed island developments like NPQ as it could be expected they would have a similar impact on Leighton and Mosman Beaches."

An article on page 11 described how The Greens party now had three members of parliament based in Fremantle: Carles and MacLaren in state parliament and Scott Ludlum in the Australian Senate. It described the port city being emptied of Liberal parliamentary representation altogether and Labor representation being whittled down to a lone federal member, Melissa Clarke. It described MacLaren criticizing the 'four-island North Port Quay proposal' in her inaugural speech to parliament:

> She liked the idea of using renewable power and sustainable technology but was totally opposed to filling sea bed; the developers should seek to build their dream on-shore.

In an opinion piece on page 5, Pettitt made a similar argument in the context of saying that NPQ was a major by-election issue that should not have degenerated into personal character attacks on its supporters such as Newman. He then argued that debate on the future of Fremantle in the upcoming council elections should respect a diversity of views and not be about 'negative personal attacks'. He also suggested, by way of questions, that he was of a similar mindset to Newman in believing that new property development was integral to the sustainability of Fremantle but different in suggesting that new developments should complement the city's heritage:

> Fremantle is at a crossroads: Do we want to remain a busy, vibrant regional centre or are we happy to become a quiet but pleasant tourist and entertainment town? How do we be a green, sustainable city without substantial new development? How can innovative new developments best complement the city's heritage?

Weeks earlier, on the day of the state by-election on 16 May 2009, the *Fremantle Herald* had published an article on page 2 announcing that Brad Pettitt would run for office in the Fremantle mayoral election. Pettitt reportedly said that he made the announcement at that time so that the decision was not seen as being based on mayor Tagliaferri losing in the by-election. Pettitt, pictured with sleeves rolled up for business in an image paginated with the article, was represented as a 36-year-old 'generation Xer' mover and shaker in a network of concerned 'young Freo people'. He was also positioned in the article as the 'head of Murdoch University's sustainability school' and someone who was 'highly critical of the North Port Quay project'.

On 11 July, the *Fremantle Herald* published an opinion piece by Adam McHugh of Murdoch University taking Newman to task for continuing to represent NPQ's 'supposed "carbon-free" qualities' despite the ACCC investigation. It also suggested that Newman had ignored the problematic realities of carbon neutrality and established methods of accounting for carbon:

> I can assure *Herald* readers there are in fact methods to account for carbon, some of which are already enshrined in federal law and others that are strictly defined by the International Organization for Standardization and the Kyoto treaty...
> Perhaps Peter Newman's denial of the existence of these methods is in the past. Perhaps he has developed competency in this area. If so, an important question remains: Could any estimation of NPQ's future net emissions by him or his institute (which, as I understand it, will benefit from scholarships funded by the NPQ developers) ever be unbiased?
> In other words, if, lo and behold, NPQ turns out not to be carbon-free, could any "analysis" conducted by anyone who was listed on NPQ's project team ever be trusted?

Newman responded to McHugh in a letter published in the *Fremantle Herald* on 25 July 2009. The letter indicated a change in Newman's representation. Although two thirds of the paragraphs in McHugh's piece on Newman's carbon-neutrality referred to NPQ expressly, Newman's 383-word response does not mention the project by name. Rather, it responds to McHugh's accusations by arguing for 'necessary demonstrations' of sustainability for conducting research on de-carbonization. It is also interesting to note that Newman emphasized the role of community as well as

industry in these necessary demonstrations: 'they must involve government, private and community sectors or else they will not in the end be sustainable'. Whereas, Newman had marginalized the importance of community participation in decarbonisation demonstrations in August 2008 in his opinion piece that argued in favour of NPQ: 'bold sustainability needs to be demonstrated by business before governments can be bold'. Perhaps Newman had realized between his letters of 27 June 2009 and 25 July 2009 that it was no longer credible in the Fremantle public sphere to argue that NPQ was a 'green city' concept.

Brad Pettitt structured his mayoral election campaign on an alternative green city concept that included an appreciation of Fremantle's existing built environment and a vision to protect its 'economic and social heritage', which he argued was under serious threat in his opinion piece – Fremantle's other heritage – published on page 5 of the 5 September 2009 edition of the *Fremantle Herald*. The piece included an image of Pettitt on a bicycle on an urban street happily riding ahead of dozens of other cyclists. In the piece, Pettitt argued extensively in favour of new property development in Fremantle on the basis that the city had stagnated and was no longer considered an important urban centre by state planners. He argued that a 'bold vision' for Fremantle would be required to overcome threats to Fremantle's social heritage and economic heritage. Although Pettitt was positioned in the piece as mayoral candidate and head of Murdoch University's School of Sustainability, Pettitt did not make any explicit representation of ecological threats. Instead he argued that Fremantle community had protected its past and the time had come to start protecting its future by 'saying "yes" to substantial new developments that are compatible with our historical strengths':

> This new development should be the heritage of the future; high quality,
> mixed use, environmentally sustainable, diverse and adaptable.

Pettitt suggested NPQ was inappropriate and 'overblown'. On 19 September the *Fremantle Herald* reported, in 'FCC to oppose NPQ' on page 2 that municipal planning committee had 'voted for the council to formally reject the NPQ plan' at its next meeting: 'Key concerns included the environmental impact of filling in a huge tract of ocean, the effect on port operations and traffic generated by an influx of

20,000'. In the same edition in 'Local powers outrage' on page 1 and in 'Outrage over premier's power grab' on page 3, the *Herald* reported that:

> OUTRAGE has greeted the Barnett government's plans to strip elected councils of planning powers and hand them to minister-appointed "experts"….
>
> WA planning minister John Day's proposal is the latest in a chain of moves that have long diluted local planning authority.
>
> Already, most decisions by elected councils are subject to being overturned at the whim of the powerful, unelected State Administrative Tribunal.
>
> Mr Day now wants to introduce another layer of panels - each consisting of three unelected experts and two local councillors - over the top of councils.
>
> Council staff will still do the legwork, but decisions on projects worth $2m or more will rest with the panels. Developers will still be able to appeal to the SAT if they are unhappy with a panel decision and Mr Day intends giving himself more power to intervene on matters he regards as significant.
>
> The mooted changes are part of a package cooked up in Canberra between public service mandarins, politicians and the development industry. Similar models have already been rolled out in NSW and SA but Victoria's upper house has stymied changes there.
>
> The reforms are specifically aimed at streamlining decision-making so major projects are approved more quickly. Opponents say that is code for stopping locals from putting political pressure on councillors about projects they don't want in their community.

Above the 'Outrage over' headline on page 3 there were images of three people from The Greens party who would have been widely known to have campaigned against major coastal property developments: mayoral candidate Michael Martin, The Greens MP Adele Carles and mayoral candidate Brad Pettitt. The article reported their comments against the proposed change to planning governance. It also reported statements against the proposal by retiring Fremantle mayor Tagliaferri and mayoral candidate Jon Strachan. The article included a blow-up text that related this reduction in local council authority to recent decisions on controversial projects by Fremantle council:

> 'if the changes had been in place in recent years both the North Port Quay and the Three Harbours Project might conceivably have been approved while the campaign to reserve 17 hectares of parkland at Leighton Beach would never have got off the ground'

The article was surrounded by advertisements for candidates in the municipal election, the largest was for Brad Pettitt, entitled 'FREMANTLE: an engaged community'. A cartoon on page 4 parodied six types of people 'NOT RUNNING FOR MAYOR IN THE FREO' including 'ARKIE TWEEK' whose positive attributes were listed as 'Strong leader good teeth' and negative attributes as 'Scary Pro NPQ & high rise'. An opinion piece on the facing page 5, entitled 'A process of elimination', by Roy Lewisson endorsed Brad Pettitt as the best of six candidates for mayor because he had been an excellent councillor, a successful Dean of Sustainability at Murdoch University and these were linked to environmental successes in Fremantle:

> Fremantle is now a national leader in sustainability and in addressing this century's biggest challenge – climate change. Brad has strongly represented the community by opposing issues such as NPQ and the new High Street that obliterate the golf course. But he can work equally well with the business sector to make sure Fremantle remains a city that still has decent shops and jobs.

A small campaign advertisement for Jon Strachan appeared on the same page in which Strachan pledges to revive community engagement, Fremantle's cultural and built heritage and its regional status. Below was a half-page campaign advertisement for Michael Martin as a 'Mayor who respects our city's history when promoting its future'. On page 7 a full-page advertisement by councillor Les Lauder endorsed Michael Martin for mayor because his 'successful leadership of the Save Freo Beaches Alliance inspired thousands in the community and brought change to Fremantle politics'. The advertisement lamented Brad Pettitt's performance as Fremantle councillor on several fronts including an implied ambivalence about NPQ:

> John Dowson moved to reject the concept but Crs Pettitt and Strachan strangely voted to get the city's planners to do a report on it. Such a report can have no meaning. Cr Pettitt said there were good elements in NPQ.

This text suggested a belief that failure to be seen strongly opposing NPQ meant political suicide in Fremantle at that time. This belief was also indicated on page 11, in 'Meet the mayor' in relation to comments on a pending mayoral debate by

political lecturer Martin Drum, who argued that by-election issues still remained potent in the mayoral election:

> "North Port Quay and lead will keep bubbling away and the markets will hang around like a bad smell for existing councillors."

Below this text was an article, 'Pettitt tops poll' reporting on a *vox populi* survey by the *Herald* in which images of eight people were shown to represent popular opinion on the mayoral candidates. Brad Pettitt was endorsed for his environmental credentials and having a better vision for Fremantle. On the evening of 22 September, 'The Great 2009 Freo Mayoral Debate' was held in the Fremantle Town Hall. During the introductory statements of the six candidates, only Jon Strachan expressly stated that he was against NPQ and any building over the sea. However, when the question of NPQ was put to candidates five were against the proposal while one was ambivalent: Pettitt said he was opposed from the outset even though it had some good elements – imagine Fremantle's East End as a carbon neutral development – but it was wrong because it should be onshore; Michael Martin said of course he was opposed to it along with any reclamation of the seabed; Shirley Mackay said it was an absolute no no; Sandro Brignoli said it was a beautiful project but nonsensical due to rising sea levels; and, Phil Douglas said he reserved the right to make a decision until a motion was before council. Two days later, on 24 September, the Fremantle Council moved to support the Fremantle Planning Committee's report on the NPQ proposal. The council also moved to reject the NPQ proposal on the following grounds:

1. the City of Fremantle express its strong opposition to the North Port Quay concept as it is incompatible with working port operations of the inner harbour;
2. the City of Fremantle rejects the concept of reclaiming the ocean off Rous Head by North Port Quay for housing development due to environmental and transport concerns; and
3. the City of Fremantle writes to the North Port Quay proponents and relevant government Ministers advising of the City's position.

The motion was carried nine to three with mayor Tagliaferri, Georgie Adeane, John Dowson, Donna Haney, Les Lauder, Shirley Mackay, Pettitt, Strachan and Doug Thomson for the rejection of NPQ while Robert Fittock, John Alberti and Bill

Massie voted against it. The background statement for this motion indicated that the council should align itself with the Fremantle Port Authority's position on NPQ:

> … Fremantle Ports have clearly stated its opposition to any proposal that seeks to develop in the immediate area offshore from the inner harbour, especially where such a development would incorporate some form of residential living. Their reasons are the incompatibility of such a development with port operations.

> On this basis alone, the City of Fremantle should be in a position to support Fremantle Ports position on the North Port Quay concept, sending a clear message to the proponents that this development would not be supported in any form. Such a statement from the City would be consistent with the City's strategic position of supporting a working port.

The Planning Committee's report, read and supported by council before the above motion, acknowledged that land reclamation had taken place in the area as recently as the Rous Head reclamation works carried out in 1989 and that more seabed at the proposed NPQ site would soon be reclaimed by the Port Authority. This level of reclamation and associated environmental damage was deemed acceptable because it was 'much smaller' than the level proposed by NPQ:

> The current Inner Harbour Deepening Project referred to above also involves the deposition of dredged material from deepening the Inner Harbour behind a new seawall directly adjacent to Rous Head to create a further 27ha of reclaimed land. The environmental assessment for the Inner Harbour Deepening Project identifies potential impacts of the works upon marine habitats, fauna and water and sediment quality, and proposes management strategies to mitigate these impacts. However, the scale of both these reclamation projects is much smaller than the NPQ proposal.

The report noted that most of its information on the proposal came from an informal presentation by NPQ's proponents to the City in 2008 and that the proponents had failed to respond to a request for more information from planning officers. The report described the likely impact of the development in terms of marine environment and coastal processes due to seabed reclamation; transport; implications for Fremantle Port; economic impact upon Fremantle; visual impact; and sustainability considerations. The report advised council that NPQ would 'likely have an adverse impact upon the safe and efficient operation' of the port's Inner Harbour; that it was

premature to support the proposal due to the lack of a comprehensive environmental impact assessment; that NPQ would cause significant traffic congestion; and that it would likely draw investment and activity away from Fremantle's CBD and thereby undermine its vitality and economic viability. The report said it would be 'premature' to evaluate the visual impact of NPQ although it did indicate that this would have to be evaluated in terms of experience of natural environment and protection of key coastal viewing locations for tourists. On sustainability considerations, the report found that NPQ displayed 'a number of generally accepted attributes of sustainable urban development – in particular residential accommodation in a higher density built form, a range of land uses offering opportunities for living, working and recreation in close proximity to one another, and an emphasis on movement networks which encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport rather than reliance on private motor vehicles'. On the proponents' intention to be carbon neutral, the report found that this appeared to be based on the planned energy consumption of the completed development and did not take account of 'greenhouse gas emissions and embodied energy associated with construction of the islands, breakwater and buildings'. The report indicated that the main environmental problem associated with NPQ was its inherent vulnerability to 'the long term impact of sea level rise as a consequence of climate change' and how this violated 'current best practice thinking', which was privileged as emanating from Europe:

> This would create a long term financial and management liability for whoever is responsible for the maintenance of the flood defence structures, and would not necessarily be consistent with current best practice thinking on coastal risk management (for example research studies commissioned by the European Union) which suggest a move away from reliance on 'hard engineering' risk mitigation towards an approach of working with natural coastal processes.

On 29 September the *Fremantle Gazette* reported, in 'Quay plan rejected', that the council had 'formally rejected plans for North Port Quay' primarily because it was incompatible with Inner Harbour port operations, and also because of environmental and transport concerns. Councillor Bill Massie was reported as saying that NPQ should be supported while Deputy Mayor John Dowson said the council should focus on other priorities 'rather than a development that was not formally proposed yet'. A campaign advertisement, 'VOTE: Brad Pettitt for Mayor', in the *Fremantle Herald*

on 3 October 2009 represented opposition to 'North Port Quay and high rise development' as one of Pettitt's five key attributes in the mayoral race. Indeed, 'Policy - North Port Quay' was one of five items on the main menu bar across the top of Pettitt's campaign website (www.bradpettitt.com). The other items being 'Videos', 'Press', 'Contact and 'Home'; indicating that Pettitt saw NPQ as a key issue for voters during the campaign. The web page on NPQ included the sun setting over a beautiful deserted beach and ocean at the Rous Head site of the proposed project. The image was captioned with the words 'Potential NPQ site' On the page, Pettitt argued against the project in terms of protecting sea grass and marine life at the site, protecting Port Beach from sand erosion, NPQ's potential traffic congestion, its potential industrial hazards for residents from nearby port operations, its unsupported claims to carbon neutrality which apparently ignored carbon emissions from construction, and that it could displace a wind farm that the Fremantle council had already approved for Rous Head. The views expressed about potential hazards from NPQ's encroachment on the port and its potential for contributing to traffic congestion around Rous Head that was expressed in the Fremantle Planning Committee's report and in Pettitt's website echoed the views expressed by Fremantle Ports Chief Executive Officer Kerry Sanderson in June 2008, in 'Comment on North Port Quay proposal', on page 2 of the Fremantle Ports Community Newsletter.

On 17 October 2009 an opinion piece, taking up most of page 32 of *The West Australian,* suggested that Fremantle was falling behind in a contest of Perth's metropolitan urban centres and that Brad Pettitt was the mayoral candidate most likely to be able to do something about it. An image above the opinion piece showed Pettitt cycling past graffiti on a wall of the Woolstores building. The caption suggested that Pettitt believed change was needed to do something about sites like 'the Woolstores in Fremantle, unused except by graffiti artists and skateboarders'. Pettitt is the mayoral candidate who is 'pushing for change' so that Fremantle would become 'a real lively centre where you would work, live and shop. The opinion piece said that, although the NPQ issue had drifted into the background, mayoral candidate Michael Martin thought that whatever happened to the waterfront would have a massive bearing on Fremantle. It then quoted Martin's take on the promotion of NPQ being untenable greenwash:

> "North Port Quay is a classic example of where the term 'sustainable development' has been usurped by people who are using it as a form of gloss, intending to make us feel good," he says. "There were people spruiking its merits about how it was going to be carbon neutral and that's great but you have to start with the big idea and the big idea was taking many thousands of tons of fill and filling in the seabed. The carbon cost of doing that is huge."

On 19 October, Pettitt was declared winner and Martin second in the Fremantle mayoral election. On 20 October, the *Fremantle Herald* published a cartoon reflecting on Peter Tagliaferri's history in Fremantle and his political ascent to the position of mayor and then decline, due to not openly preventing the NPQ proposal or the management firm raising stall prices at Fremantle Markets:

> And then he stood for the seat of Freo & did not win maybe cos he sat on the fence on NPQ and becos the Murdochs put up the rents and folks were not happy. But hey, do you get everythin' right. Ah knows I don't. He gotta lotta things right.

> And we got through Peter Tagliaferri's watch without too high rise or nasty beach developments and he did his best on LEAD. He gotta lotta things right.

The cartoon then featured a close up photograph of Brad Pettitt alongside the text:

> And now we have another young enthusiastic mayor of 37 coming in. May he do as well.

The change in mayor marked the end of public discussion of NPQ and it marks the end of this close reading of the corpus by chronological phase. Analysis of the 180 texts in the corpus indicated how representations of ecological threats mixed with other discursive resources in negotiations of green built environment around NPQ. More than 100,000 words of text as well as images were analysed from a variety of media as well as from transcriptions of public events. Approximately half, 52,307 words, of this corpus was derived from texts published by the *Fremantle Herald*, indicating that this newspaper – with its significant local circulation – had substantial potential for policing boundaries of the NPQ discursive field for Fremantle audiences. The discourse analysis described above was undertaken in chronological order covering four broad phases: the launch of North Port Quay; contesting North Port Quay and the state election; green wash and the ACCC; North Port Quay in the

Fremantle by-election; and, North Port Quay in the Fremantle mayoral election. Key insights of this analysis by broad discursive phase will be synthesised in the next chapter in relation to theories of discourse, described in Chapter 2, and the case's discursive context, described in Chapter 3. The synthesis of insights will be presented in four sections, each describing a reason why proponents' attempts to associate green built environment with NPQ failed in popular reading.

5   Ecological threats in operation: North Port Quay

> North Port Quay will sit North of Fremantle behind a 3.5km seawall designed to withstand global warming and storm surges and include homes for 20,000 people, 100,000sqm of office space, Venice-style canals and bridges…

> *The West Australian*, 29 May 2008, page 3

> "They can't even make a sustainable sign," another observed…

> *Fremantle Herald*, 4 July 2009, page 27

This chapter brings together insights into the operation of ecological threats in negotiations of green built environment gained from analysis of the corpus of texts described in Chapter 4. These insights are described here in relation to theories of discourse described in Chapter 2 as well as the discursive context described in Chapter 3. The insights are presented in four sections, each describing a reason why proponents' attempts to associate green built environment with NPQ failed in popular reading. Firstly, proponents' representations of the project lacked a mutually functionalizing discursive mechanism (Hajer, 1995, p. 273) that could stabilize its signification of green built environment in Fremantle community. Images of NPQ signified particular ecological threats to this audience without signifying solutions to these threats. This disrupted proponents' intended reading of NPQ as green built environment. Secondly, proponents' representations of the project as a solution to distant future ecological threats were undermined by other speakers' representations of NPQ as a local present threat to their environment. This successful resistance to NPQ relied on a shifting of space and time proximity in discourse from proponents' proposed journey towards a sustainability utopia to environmental struggles of the local present, where threats to subject aesthetics were powerfully evocative. Thirdly, the local present ecological threats inscribed in NPQ stimulated the construction of a discursive frontier behind which a variety of demands aggregated around a local popular defence of 'our beaches'. Speakers in this local popular movement, which carried several members of The Greens Party to elected office, claimed NPQ was a threat to the environment of the people. Fourthly, the radical imposition of NPQ threatening readers' emotional investments in objects of the environment stimulated a conservative response, supporting seemingly radical politics, to restore these

objects. This dynamic demonstrated a reification of, or contamination between, what was generally known to be conservative and radical. The process of popular reading and local populist representation made NPQ an untenable green built environment within Fremantle community and a broader Western Australian community.

5.1 North Port Quay represented ecological threats without solutions

The corpus indicated that proponents' representations of North Port Quay as a green built environment defied an internal logic typically found in green building discourses at the institutional level (Kerr, 2008). The discursive logic of *mutual functionalization* normally involved a supporter of a green building representing a particular ecological threat and the green building's long-term operational performance as being capable of mitigating the threat. In this way, a green building may suggest an ecological threat and its solution as well as the moral position of its developer in taking action to mitigate that particular ecological threat. This discursive logic has supported the establishment of a World Green Building Council and at least 80 national building councils (2011) and certification systems. In recent years, discourses of green building institutions have focused on representing green built environments as solutions to the problem of climate change (2010): typically a green building mitigates climate change through its expected superior operational performance, leading to lower carbon emissions over the building lifecycle. In Chapter 4, we saw the argument that NPQ would not receive certification from the Green Building Council of Australia because the site of its physical construction would be reclaimed land. The place of the proposed site, at sea by the beach off Fremantle, was powerful agency for problematizing NPQ as a green built environment, and a factor constraining proponents' representations. Newman attempted to argue that the aspirational operational performance of NPQ in terms of reduced carbon emissions made it a green building project. Attempts to make NPQ represent a solution to climate change came apart because the project meant wall-defended islands at sea and climate change meant rising sea levels to many discursive subjects in the corpus. Rather than a green built environment representing climate change and its solution, NPQ and its seawall in particular were inscribed with the threat of rising sea levels without offering any solution to those outside the development. Newman's letter in the *Fremantle Herald* on 30 August 2008

responded to the disjunction marker (Hajer, 1995, p. 269) of this threat inscription: '… NPQ will be better prepared than Applecross as it will have a 5-metre sea wall.' If ever NPQ was built, the seawall could perhaps be read by its own residents as a solution to rising sea levels and thereby serve to satisfy, within its localized community, the discursive mechanism of mutual functionalization through the representation of the sea-level threat and its solution. However, the corpus indicated that NPQ and its seawall reminded Fremantle community of the rising seas threat without offering them any solution. This *lack of mutual functionalization* was integral to the illegitimacy of NPQ. Broadly speaking Fremantle community did not read an ecological threat solution in NPQ, despite the ecological threats inscribed in it. Fremantle community therefore had no interest in supporting NPQ. The project connoted ecological threat of rising sea levels for discursive subjects partly because of their knowledge formed by physical and mediated experience of space in and around Fremantle. The effect of space, place and media on subjects' knowledge is indicated in the event on 29 June 2009 in which a storm and waves smashed fences, eroded beaches and caused other damage around Fremantle. This storm event was associated with NPQ in the *Fremantle Herald* on 4 July:

> MANY locals have disputed claims a proposed four-island development off Rous Head is "Fremantle's future" but now nature's getting in on the act too.
>   Monday's high winds ripped North Port Quay's billboard from its moorings along the Phillimore Street tracks, bent it in half and tossed it onto the footpath.
>   "Shows what the wind thinks of NPQ," a local inspecting the damage quipped.
>   "They can't even make a sustainable sign," another observed…

Encountering the torn down image of NPQ on the near-deserted wet street could solicit, in an immediate and powerful way, the suggestion that the project had no place in Fremantle. The *Fremantle Herald* proposed that such a response was not unusual in subjects walking down Phillimore Street after the storm. NPQ's advertisement of 'Fremantle's future… It just makes sense' was read in this instance as a future without NPQ. The consortium could not have foreseen this reading of its storm-damaged advertisement, but perhaps it could have better anticipated the readings indicated in subject responses to NPQ images.

The corpus indicated that proponents of NPQ were inspired and lead by Greg Poland of Strzelecki Group, which had undertaken and owned large marina property developments on the coast to the north and the south of Fremantle. In a video on the Vision page of the NPQ website, Poland is represented as explaining why the project was based on environmental sustainability:

> *Greg Poland*: … probably the driving force is this is not a building that's going to be pulled down in 50 years. This is going to be around for decades, generations, hundreds of years, thousands of years hopefully. I don't want my children, definitely don't want my grandchildren, great grandchildren to look at me and say he was a vandal. I want them to say he was visionary. He left something, some heritage, something something back to the people of Western Australia. And did not under any circumstances do anything wrong environmentally. I don't think you can afford to do it emotionally, financially and historically you have got to do the right thing. Especially when it comes to your family.

Poland depicted NPQ as an enduring project that would produce future heritage rather than vandalize local heritage, plausibly the currently recognized heritage of Fremantle. It suggested that he viewed contemporary property development as unsatisfactory, unenduring and possibly as acts of vandalism on the environment. Whereas, NPQ would be appropriate and monumental, providing Poland an enduring positive legacy. The moral position supporting this fantastic legacy attempt was constructed around doing the right thing environmentally because you could not afford not to 'emotionally, financially and historically'. Earlier in the video, Poland had confessed that this was not always his vision but that he had become smarter and more educated with age. It also indicated that he and other people had conceived the project before introducing Peter Newman to help make NPQ environmentally friendly:

> When we started doing this project I wanted it to be environmentally friendly and carbon free. I wasn't quite sure how to do that so I brought on some good expertise and told them my instructions are it's got to be right it's got to be good.

The interests of Poland and Newman coincide with NPQ in their stated dissatisfaction with contemporary urban development in metropolitan Perth and their desire to try something new. They also had interests in the project proceeding:

property sales income for Strzelecki Group and research funding for the newly established Curtin University Sustainability Policy unit, which Newman headed. If Poland developed this vision in Cottesloe – the suburb from which he authorized NPQ advertisements – from where a person could have gazed down over an expanse of vacant sea to Rous Head, without Newman – a long-time resident of Fremantle – it is not surprising that NPQ was initially advertised in terms of its significance to Western Australian community rather than to Fremantle community. The NPQ advertisements indicate how the consortium attempted to position the project and then reposition the project in response to popular readings of NPQ images. The consortium preferred that NPQ be read as the 'World's First Carbon-Free Development', which is the first bullet point in its initial series of advertisements published between 31 May and 7 June 2008. The project in this advertisement, which first appeared in *The West Australian*, was endorsed by 'AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE BOATING FRATERNITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA'. An appeal was made to the wider community in the letter of this narrow interest group: 'We applaud the developers for designing North Port Quay to attract the wider community, appealing equally to the owner of a 44m luxury cruiser or a 4m dinghy'. However, the images in the advertisement and promise of a five-star hotel suggested carbon-free would be the latest luxury in coastal property development. This advertisement was published in subsequent editions of the *Fremantle Herald* and *Fremantle Gazette* probably because of the awareness expressed by Project Director Chris Carman of the importance of persuading Fremantle community to accept the construction of this 'world-class icon' through a program of up to nine months of public consultation. A reading of this first advertisement expressed by Nick Birmingham of Forest Street, Fremantle, in a letter to the *Fremantle Herald* on 21 June 2008:

> I wasn't consulted. I might be solidly behind the proposal if all but the most environmentally-friendly motorboats are banned. How does the boating sorority feel about it?

Another letter on the same page, by Tony Harrison of Albany, indicated that marina developments meant wealthy consumers in the minds of readers.

> This proposal is only for the rich. Who else will be able to afford to pay $600,000-plus price tags for houses or land. Also the cost of pen fees and fuel to run their water-craft.

This utterance also indicates that readers may have encountered a disjunction marker in the consortium's attempt to mix a carbon-free solution not with an ecological threat but with an economic threat expressed by the boating fraternity in the form of 'a critical risk to the multi-million dollar industry that sells and services large craft in Western Australia'. The advertising strategy failed partly because the needy community of Western Australia was represented as the people associated with luxury recreational boating and partly because of the rising-sea-level ecological threat inscribed in images of NPQ. The ecological threats of global warming and rising sea-levels were elided in most of the positive representations of NPQ in favour of it representing a 'carbon-free' solution, a 'sustainable development' solution and much later as 'an investment in our environment' solution. However, NPQ's own video simulation – broadcast on its website, on television news and appearing as newspaper images – was an agent for problematizing representation of the project. The seawall was inscribed with the rising-sea/global warming/climate change threat and along it the travelling vehicles suggested the threat of carbon emissions. Although NPQ emerged magically from the sea in the simulation with no sign of the physical construction process, NPQ meant the threat of a long, disruptive, construction process with vast carbon emissions to some subjects. Conceivably this reading by subjects came from knowledge gained through direct exposure to disruptive construction projects. The NPQ simulation included broad boulevards with cars and canals with motorboats throughout an urban complex in which there were no discernible ecological modernization technologies, no bicycles and few sailing boats. These images did not signify a carbon free NPQ.

The consortium quickly replaced the boating fraternity advertisement with the 'MYTH VERSUS FACT' advertisement published between 7 and 10 June 2008. The myths in this advertisement indicate how NPQ was being read by many in the days after its very public launch. The first four myths are particularly insightful:

> **MYTH: It will be overwhelmed if there is a tsunami or a rise in sea levels due to global warming.**

FACT: North Port Quay has been planned, and would be developed, taking into account the effects of climate change and global warming. The concept plans accommodate anticipated sea level changes with one in 100-year events. Residents of North Port Quay would be more protected than those in most other suburbs on the coastal plain.

MYTH: Venice is sinking. This will also sink over time.

FACT: Venice was built more than 900 years ago on wooden piles. Engineering and construction processes have come a long way in that time. North Port Quay would be in line with world best practice.

MYTH: The scale of it is "over the top."

FACT: It is the very scale of the concept that allows North Port Quay to be a world-leading example of sustainable development. You cannot do much innovation with only a few dwellings. Perth has an opportunity to become a g1obal leader due to this visionary concept. See the details at the Web site: www.northportquay.com.au

MYTH: It will become a gated community and an enclave for the rich.

FACT: The North Port Quay concept offers open public access and a wide range of community benefits, including an allocation for affordable housing and three new public beaches. It sets a new benchmark for master-planned estates. The concept area covers 345ha of seabed; but less than 75ha of land is proposed for housing.

More than half of the concept is devoted to public open space or public amenities, including parks, beaches, waterways, cultural facilities and schools. People with 'tinnies' will be as welcome as people 'trimarans'.

The next advertising series from 14 to 28 June 2008 – headed 'Why can't Western Australia lead the world in sustainable development' – envisaged the project possibly becoming the 'world's first carbon-free development'. Proponents tried to represent NPQ as world-best practice in 'sustainable development', framing sustainable development within a competitive system. An advertisement on 2 February 2010, headed 'North Port Quay can lead the world in sustainable development' focused on world best practice in ecological modernization being incorporated in the project. However, sustainability tended to be read as something opposite of gluttony, which was inscribed in NPQ's image. Sustainability could also be read as something closely associated with sovereignty (Perera, 2010, p. 7). NPQ did not measure-up to other representations of sustainable development indicated in Fremantle's media.

Newman, who was on the back-foot in the discursive contest from the outset because of this lack, also had to contend with the NPQ simulation including perhaps hundreds of power boats and many moving motor cars while excluding pedestrians and bicycles; associated with green urbanism or sustainable development in several of the texts. Newman's opinion piece in the *Fremantle Herald* on 16 August 2008 indicated a popular reading of sustainability: 'There is often an implication that it is somehow impure to support "developers" and that sustainability cannot be facilitated by such wealthy projects'. In the same piece, Newman described past cases of sustainable development occurring at 'a communal level' in Fremantle, providing 'models to others on how to live more sustainably within their own suburbs'. An opinion piece (*Fremantle Herald*, 28 June 2008) by Norman Erickson, a 'disability pensioner' completing 'a masters degree in sustainable housing', suggested NPQ was being read as an 'elitist' non-antidote to 'the very unsustainable form of development which is creating both environmental and social (affordability) issues'. Erickson advocated a 'bottom-up' approach to sustainability via small clusters of state-supported community dwellings with their own renewable power generation and food production capacity; the literature in Chapter 2 indicated that sustainable development may invoke threats of overpopulation and resource shortages. However, in attempting to represent NPQ as a sustainable development, its proponents created a disjunction marker because media descriptions of the project – such as 'Housing for 20,000' – invoked the threat of overpopulation and resource shortages particularly in terms of existing infrastructure capacity. The project threatened to almost double the population of Fremantle, and this point was not missed by Fremantle mayor Peter Tagliaferri when he was reported in the *Fremantle Herald* on 31 May 2008 as saying 'he had concerns about the impact on roads with the proposal more than doubling Fremantle's population'. The disjunction markers within NPQ representations were not missed by local politicians such as Les Lauder (in his advertisement on 19 September 2009):

> The bizarre idea of reclaiming the sea bed to house 20,000 people was overwhelmingly rejected at the Fremantle by-election. The run-away winner, Adele Carles, campaigned strongly against it… NPQ uses slogans like sustainability, carbon neutrality etc. but if these were really the objectives NPQ would be built on dry land.

Opponents argued that NPQ would require large amounts of carbon-emitting resources to be built at sea – not just the substantial financial resources and ecological modernizing technologies emphasized by proponents. The immediate threat of noise, air, water and visual pollution from NPQ's construction as well as the loss of beach environments to erosion and to property developers and the new residents of NPQ were apparently more powerful threats in the minds of locals than the lack of a 'carbon-free' sustainable development associated with NPQ. The 'sustainable development' advertisements were replaced with a series of advertisements, headed 'Fremantle's future' or a variation on this theme published between 18 April and 6 May 2009, which conveyed the more ambiguous solution of 'an investment in our environment' with an image of Port Beach. The images in this series included a few people enjoying Port Beach with port facilities, the non-indicated sea site of NPQ in the background and the slogan: an 'investment in our environment, jobs and way of life'. These advertisements suggested a common experience of the beach with readers and the importance of preserving the coastal way of life while introducing the issue of job creation and a new motto beneath 'North Port Quay': 'It just makes sense'.

Meanwhile, allegations emerged in the media that NPQ had contributed to independent candidates standing in the Fremantle by-election. Carles articulated these allegations and ran a campaign with advertisements, headed 'Adele Carles cares about the people of Fremantle', reproaching those with links to powerful corporate lobbyists and utilizing a maternal image: 'As a mother I understand that family security is a big issue for us all.' NPQ's next series of advertisements followed Carles' utilization of the semiotics of maternal care. It ran a series of two advertisements featuring maternal images representing NPQ primarily as the provider of thousands of jobs and secondarily as an environmental improvement. These advertisements, published between 12 and 16 May 2009, indicated a final attempt by NPQ's advertising team to appropriate images that had worked for Carles during her campaigns to win the state parliamentary seat of Fremantle, which she achieved in the by-election held on 16 May 2009. This electoral win closed a year-long campaign by proponents of NPQ to legitimize their project through representation of a popular reading of it as an acceptable form of green built environment by Fremantle community. This intended popular reading was not

realized because representations of NPQ *lacked a mutually functionalizing discursive mechanism* that could work to stabilize its signification of green built environment. Images of NPQ signified particular ecological threats to members of Fremantle audiences without signifying solutions to these threats. This lack of solutions to these particular ecological threats disrupted the proponents' intended reading. The discursive dynamics of the NPQ case therefore involve an ecology of particular threat meanings rather than a definable set of objective ecological threats. The productive relations of threat meanings in the NPQ case are analysed in the following sections of this chapter.

5.2   Local immediate threats more evocative than distant future threats

The corpus of texts indicated that representations of environmental destruction or threats of destruction were most commonly associated with local places such as Cottesloe, South Beach, Port Beach, Rous Head, Fremantle Port and Leighton Beach. Images of environmental destruction or threats of such destruction were less commonly represented in association with the metropolitan city of Perth or with Western Australia and were only rarely associated with Australia or the world. The city, state, national and global levels were more commonly associated with sustainable development. Whereas representations of carbon control were almost always made in association with the global level. NPQ was positioned by its proponents in association with carbon control and sustainable development at a world level and, in various instances, at the state and city level. In the NPQ simulation, Fremantle, Leighton and Cottesloe were blurred background. Newman attempted to position NPQ as the world's first carbon-free development in terms of its envisaged operational performance in future. However, opponents of NPQ typically positioned it in its proposed geographic site with a beach in the foreground and empty sea in the background in association with the threat of environmental disruption at this site. This positioning of NPQ in its immediate spatial context was essential to the construction of an emerging controversy around the project in the ABC1 news report on the day of the project launch. Project place and controversy were linked in the anchor's first sentence introducing the news piece: 'A controversial plan to build a six billion dollar man-made island village off the coast

of Fremantle is already drawing fierce opposition.' Later the news piece cut to a shot of the beach with Collin Barnett voicing his opposition:

> Cut to scene on Port Beach with Colin Barnett talking to the reporter in the foreground and the port facility and the proposed site of North Port Quay in the background.
>
> *Voiceover*: The local MP has accused the developers of arrogance
>
> Cut to another perspective from behind Colin Barnett talking to reporter with an otherwise empty beach and uninterrupted ocean horizon in the background.
>
> *Voiceover*: for eyeing off an area owned by the state.
>
> Cut to close up on Collin Barnet speaking with beach and the port's sea wall and proposed North Port Quay site in the background. The text 'Collin Barnett COTTESLOE MP' appears in lower left of screen.
>
> *Collin Barnett*: I am totally opposed to reclaiming seabed for housing.

Opposition representations didn't just attempt to move readings of NPQ's spatial proximity back from the global level to the local level, they also attempted to move temporal proximity back to the present from the future, which is where proponents of NPQ had attempted to locate it. Newman wrote in the *Fremantle Herald* on 7 June 2008: 'North Port Quay is an innovative concept in urban development which requires some significantly-different thinking as we approach a carbon-constrained future.' The promotional videos and renderings made available to the media and the public portrayed NPQ through simulated video footage as though it were shot from a passing helicopter:

> As the camera pans left many high-rise and low-rise buildings are shown along with bridges, roads with a couple more cars, trees and greenery, boats on another canal.

The start of the simulation had NPQ rise swiftly and colourfully out of a flat grey site of (apparently previously reclaimed) islands and seawall. These aerial distant perspectives of the simulation were incorporated into NPQ's newspaper advertisements in 2008 along with photographs and the suggestion that readers imagine these ideal images in the NPQ future of 'clean beaches, energy from the sun,

the waves and the wind and an electric cart in every home' at 'the world's first carbon-free development'. In the distant future, NPQ is mostly associated with immaculate urbanism. There is no construction in sight or industrial production. In the simulation, NPQ is made up of buildings, canals, beaches, parks, bridges, boats and cars on mostly-empty boulevards within a moat and seawall; along which cars travel. No one walks or loiters on the streets of NPQ. Stout lines on beaches in the distance may have depicted people, but they were not as close to the viewer or in any way discernible, unlike the seagulls flying across the camera simulation. This was world leadership in sustainable development. The global ecological threats of climate change and carbon-emission limits were being dealt with through unseen ecological modernization technologies that reduce carbon emissions. The representation of North Port Quay worked at a distance – at presentations in the USA, across Australia and at a sustainability conference in Canada, according to Newman (letter by Newman on page 6 of the *Fremantle Herald*, 27 June 2009) – even when it clearly no longer worked up close. However, it should be noted that this representation may not have been contested because NPQ was on only one of the 151 slides in Newman's Resilient Cities presentation, and this slide was prejudiced with a superimposed text over a NPQ image saying 'a carbon free development based on renewables, Smart Grid and electric vehicles'. Locally, however, disruption of North Port Quay's intended meaning occurred in relation to readers' knowledge of the contested environmental space. NPQ's initial series of advertisements positioned the environmental issue at the spatial scale of the planet and the state: 'Why can't Western Australia lead the world in sustainable development?' Initially, NPQ was positioned by *Fremantle Herald* in its front page news as 'the first carbon-neutral development in Australia' ('Green City an Oz first', 31 May 2008). However, the tenability of positioning NPQ as a future solution to ecological threats by reference to state, national or world space quickly deteriorated as other authorized voices in the media positioned NPQ as an immediate threat to local space. The repositioning of NPQ as an ecological threat occurred through representation of its immediate spatial and temporal relations with nearby beaches in particular. In other words, this shift from the representation of an acceptable NPQ to the representation of a rejectable NPQ involved temporal and spatial transformations from the distant future towards local immediacy. These opposition representations did not always rely on both the local and immediate, but they would use a closer spatial or temporal proximity than

proponent's representations. For example, the project was problematized in the local distant future by Kerry Sanderson: 'the traffic chaos that would ensue from the additional 40,000 vehicle movements each day on the north Fremantle peninsula' and 'NPQ's mooted water taxis from Rous Head to Fremantle would have small craft clashing with the giant cargo ships entering and exiting the harbour'. NPQ was also problematized in the more immediate future at the world and national level due to the carbon-emissions from its site reclamation and construction. In the 'Carbon clash' article (*Fremantle Herald,* 14 June 2008), 'Adam McHugh, a Murdoch University sustainability expert,' challenged NPQ's 'carbon-free assertion' by arguing that 'carbon-neutral claims needed to be tested against energy used to create the massive... development, not just the energy to run the completed project'. Representations against NPQ tended to rely on threats in close spatial and temporal proximity. The main features of letters on page 4 of the *Fremantle Herald* on 21 June 2008 included environmental threats to beaches and existing buildings from waterside property development in Fremantle and a call for the protection of local public resources. The last paragraph on the page, from a letter by Tony Harrison, demonstrated how these themes were constructed together with nature and culture comprising people's environment: 'If this development is allowed to go ahead, you will lose your beaches, surf clubs and restaurants due to coastal erosion by filling in more of your coastline.' An article across two pages of the subsequent edition carried the headline 'NPQ to block views of Rotto' over the top of a photograph of the view to Rottnest Island from Port Beach. The image had been altered in an attempt to show how NPQ's seawall, low-rise buildings and skyscrapers would block views of the island. The article below this is headlined: 'The end of our beach, warns Cottesloe mayor'. It envisaged NPQ damaging three aspects of the local environment, and positioned beach erosion firmly in the present. The article also suggested that environmental expertise was subjective, unreliable and deployable for political games:

> The development's "intrusion" over the ocean bed and loss of vistas was an issue, but beach erosion was a bigger one, Mr Morgan told the *Herald*.
> "We already have concerns about the groynes to the south of us."
> NPQ proponents had used the development's sustainable pedigree loud and long, backed by Curtin University expert Peter

Newman, but no experts had been heard from on the impact on beaches, Mr Morgan said.

"I don't think that anyone could give an iron-clad guarantee."
And in the game of "expert poker" widely differing views could be put on the table, he said.

"[The developers] could up an expert, then I could raise them an expert and double it."

The article envisaged Western Australia's coastal activist groups 'galvanising in the face of massive developments in the pipeline', which immediately threatened to damage beaches: 'People who value those beaches ought to be concerned'. These threats to local beach environments were not read just in terms of ecological threats to nature. They also related to subjects' pre-existing sense of beach culture and their aesthetic relations with beaches. Collins' letter in the same edition condemned calling people against NPQ 'the chardonnay set'; and then described relations between working people, beaches and their horizons of freedom all threatened by NPQ: 'We, the working Western Australians cannot live by the beach in expensive suburbs but have always had the free beaches and the free horizon to go to escape suburbia'. The letter depicted NPQ destroying this 'free horizon' for all those who could not afford to sail out past the elite development to encounter it again. In the state election campaign, Carles suggested this was a popular reading of the NPQ threat:

'Fremantle is under siege. We could lose what is so special about [it]. Social, heritage and community are all up for grabs… We are against seabed being privatized – it's an insult to the Australian way of life. We love our views of Rottnest.'

A letter by Blair in the *Fremantle Herald* on 5 July 2008 focused on the extent of sand dune erosion caused by the nearby Port Coogee development and then focused on the noise pollution and other environmental disruptions in the proposed reclamation process for NPQ:

Who wants to spend time on a beach watching and listening to barges trundling along. How many are needed? How many a day for how long? And where is the material coming from?

The environmental effects included disturbances to nature (where is the material coming from) and to culture (who wants to spend time on a beach watching and

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listening to barges trundling along). This merging of culture and nature was a key feature of ecological threats articulated in the texts published against NPQ. Local ecological threats were seen from particular personal positions. Threats from the environment were often articulated as threats to cultural objects such as buildings, a car park or a veggie patch. Threats to the environment were articulated as threats to particular environmental experiences or aesthetics. The threat of NPQ disrupting the vista from Port Beach, for instance, was a threat to the relations between people and what they could sense in the immediate environment; particularly the sensation of seeing as indicated in the letter (*Fremantle Herald*, 7 June 2008) by Garden and the editor's response:

> I SAW a whale the other day at Port Beach, North Fremantle. It was about two kilometres from the shore, close enough to point out to my 3-year-old twin boys.
>   They saw its fin and tail splash out of the water and I thought how lucky we were.
>   Then I looked towards Rous Head and tried to imagine high-rise buildings, boat stacks, boat pens, an artificial reef, housing, convention centres ... blah, blah, etc etc. I couldn't picture it - it was all too ugly and destroying the moment I was having with the whale.
>   I turned back to focus on the beautiful creatures, just in time to see her squirt water into the air, as if to say hello.
>   I hope she doesn't know what the crazy humans are planning next. I know she wouldn't be hanging around if she did.
>   Please, please sweetly developers, experiences like this are sacred. I want my children to have them. I want others to have them too.
>   Money cannot buy them – remember this when making your plans. Thank You
>
> **Tani Garden**
> **View Tce, Bicton**
>
> *Editor says: Don't worry, Tani, some others will get to experience these moments as well – imagine the view from the penthouse of a 20-storey apartment block.*

The representation of threats to the environment in terms of threats to people's aesthetics characterized local *vox populi* resistance to changes being imposed on the local environment by NPQ in the name of a future ecological-threat solution framed in relation to a state, national or world community. Representations of resistance in the corpus relied on a *shifting inwards of spatial and temporal proximity* from Newman's proposed journey towards a sustainability utopia back to the

environmental struggles of the local present. These shifts in the discursive proximity of ecological threats disrupted proponents' attempts to make NPQ mean green built environment, and they enabled the tenable representation of NPQ meaning environmental threat in Fremantle community. The evocative power of local immediate threats to the environment of subjects was exploited by Carles and other of The Greens' candidates in their campaigns to win institutional political contests in Fremantle. This production of popular support for electoral candidates campaigning against NPQ will be examined in the following section.

5.3 The mobilizing power of North Port Quay threatening 'our beaches'

The first section of this chapter described how NPQ's promotional narratives *lacked mutually functionalizing* threats and solutions in popular readings by Fremantle audiences. Then the above section showed that the future distant ecological threats that NPQ was promoted as solving were less motivating than the *spatially and temporally immediate threats* inscribed in NPQ. The local immediate threat of North Port Quay to the bodily experienced environment of readers in Fremantle audiences stimulated the construction of a discursive frontier against NPQ behind which a variety of demands aggregated around a popular defence of 'our beaches'. Standing for our beaches and against NPQ was a major feature of The Greens' campaign for the Western Australia parliamentary elections in September 2008 in which MacLaren won an upper house seat and Carles recorded a substantial swing against Labor's McGinty in the lower house. Carles went on to win the lower-house Fremantle seat through by-election in May 2009, realizing an historic electoral victory for The Greens and ending 85 years of continuous Labor Party representation in that seat. Standing against NPQ in favour of the people also featured in Pettitt's – of The Greens – campaign to win the Fremantle mayoral election in October 2009. By then it was tenable to represent broad community opposition to NPQ and majority – albeit contingent – community support for inclusive forms of green urbanism advocated by The Greens politicians. This section examines the discursive dynamics that stabilized this movement for 'our beaches' against the threats of NPQ. Gaining insight into how discursive dynamics contingently stabilized this social movement supports the thesis objective of analysing practices of public conversation through which green built environment is negotiated in liberal democracy.

The reproduction of colonial practice through a hyper-modern settlement of NPQ antagonized many local subjects. The project's master planner, Mike Day, was aware of the reproduction of colonial practice but apparently unaware of its potential to antagonise locals through exclusion – see Cox (2010, pp. 3-14) for contemporary practices that exclude indigenous people from Fremantle. Mike Day was quoted in *The West Australian* on 29 May 2008 in relation to NPQ:

> "We're trying to practise the kind of community building our forebears practised in the 1800s. Generations of people will live, work, play and be educated in these new urban settlements."

The threat of colonization supported a variety of demands from subjects to protect aspects of Fremantle from encroachment by NPQ, and these demands constituted a unity that was most apparent during the by-election phase of the corpus. Carles and members of the audience represented this unity during the By-election Candidates Debate:

> *22:15 Adele Carles*: … Political donations from property developers. The big parties accept them. We don't it's that simple.
>
> *22:41 Applause and cheers.*
>
> *22:43 Adele Carles*: If elected I'll be pressing for strict restrictions on politic on political donations. North Port Quay the developer has no more right to the seabed than you or I. This is public seabed. Their proposal is no different from us asking the government for a free block of land in Kings Park. We would be laughed out of town if we tried it. If this Dubai-style development goes ahead, it will be the kiss of death for our working port of Fremantle.

The intertwining of varied demands against NPQ were indicated in the debate with positions against NPQ articulated in response to questions about candidates' policies, the future of Fremantle's port, the export of lead carbonate through Fremantle as well as the main difference between Labor and The Greens. In questions not specifically about NPQ, Wainwright rejected the project because its 'yacht and yuppy lobby' would want to close down Fremantle's port to create; what Carles called, a 'theme park for the wealthy'. If the duration of audience applause at the debate was a reliable indicator, utterances of opposition to NPQ produced meanings that

contingently unified many people in that time and place at least to the level of representation – the applause. The by-election debate and electoral campaigns generally reproduced demands for local participation in policy making and for the people's participation in democratic governance. Although Poland and Day's monumental vision had been elided in the 'Fremantle's future' advertisements for NPQ published during the by-election campaign phase, the corpus indicated that NPQ was still inscribed with meanings that evoked powerful negative responses in members of Fremantle community at a time when they were frequently presented with representations about local participation in policy making. Poland's letter to the *Fremantle Herald* published a week before the by-election suggested a personal attempt to limit the discursive damage to NPQ from its involvement in the by-election campaign, and an attempt to destabilize the discursive frontier by constituting a unity with The Greens around the object of ecological modernization:

> Greens' advertising in recent weeks has called for investment in renewable energy. The Greens want to reduce WA's greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainable communities, where low-emission forms of transport, such as public transport, cycling and walking are the norm.
> I want all of these things as well and with the support of world-renowned sustainability expert Peter Newman, I have committed my time and effort to achieving this.
> North Port Quay requires no government money. It will be privately funded by Western Australians and will create more than 2000 jobs in construction and 2500 permanent jobs when built.
> I would hope to work closely with the Greens and all Western Australians who share the common goal of sustainable development based on renewable energy.

Poland also spoke out in the *Fremantle Gazette* about what he considered misinformation in the media and among politicians during the by-election. Poland suggested people had rejected NPQ wrongly because they thought it would destroy Port Beach. Corpus-supported analysis confirmed Poland's reading of a populist discourse aggregating around the protection of beaches: the most common word appearing after the word 'our' in the corpus was 'beaches' as in 'our beaches'. Eighteen incidences of 'our beaches' were found in the corpus (Table 8), followed by eight incidences of 'our city' then seven of 'our children' and seven of 'our state'

(Table 9); appendices 182 and183 contain a complete word tree and a list of multiple 'our <word>' incidences respectively.

the end of Fremantle and **our beaches** as we know them!
Protect **our beaches** and coastal foreshores
This includes **our beaches**, the Swan River and Fremantle
would strongly argue that **our beaches** are infinitely more important
written saying we must protect **our beaches** from NPQ.
so great for development on **our beaches** and foreshore.
*can you trust to protect **our beaches**?*
Make your vote count for **our beaches** on September 6th
public campaigns to defend **our beaches** from environmental and social vandalism
For **our beaches**, our community, our democracy, our
developers continue their assault on **our beaches**, with the mother of all
passionate campaigns to save **our beaches** and to prevent lead contamination
North Port Quay - don't privatise **our beaches**
now they want to privatize **our beaches** as well.
that's why I think **our beaches** need protecting for future generations
"The future of **our beaches** is not being assisted by
but mention the Save **Our Beaches** campaign and the penny drops
for peace, nuclear disarmament, **our beaches** and the Burrup

Table 8: Incidents of 'our beaches' with narrow context in the corpus

'our <word>' term	Frequency
our beaches	18
our city	8
our children	7
our state	7
our environment	6
our future	6
our streets	6
our coast	5
our community	4
our local	4
our own	4
our port	4

Table 9: List of at least 4 'our <word>' incidences found in the corpus

The word combination 'our beaches' was first expressed in the corpus on 26 July 2008 in an opinion piece in the *Fremantle Herald* by Spearwood resident Mary Jenkins in the context of the Cockburn Coastal Plan. Jenkins wrote that NPQ seemed like the end of Fremantle and our beaches. The next articulation of 'our beaches'

occurred in *Fremantle Herald* on 16 August 2008 in The Greens state-election-campaign advertisement, 'Take Action Green Action' (Figure 42). In this advertisement, 'our beaches' was expressed literally – 'Protect our beaches' – and figuratively, by Carles and MacLaren standing on Port Beach in the advertisement appealing for readers to join them in green social action: standing defiantly on 'our beaches' against housing over the seabed, the 3 Harbours expansion and lead exports. Standing for 'our beaches' represented a range of heterogeneous demands while constructing a frontier dividing society into two camps: the people standing for our beaches and those against.

Figure 42: Advertisement on page 3 of *Fremantle Herald* on 16 August 2008

The 'our beaches' combination was next expressed in *Fremantle Herald* on 23 August in an opinion piece by 'Freo' local Bryn Davis. A large extract from Davis' piece is reproduced below to show how construction of our beaches was related to 'our waterfronts' as known from childhood memory and integral to local popular identity. The piece indicated a radical emotional investment was being made in 'our beaches' – making this object more than itself (Copjec, 2004, pp. 41-42) – enabling it to embody the mythical fullness of an empty signifier essential to populist discourse (Laclau, 2005, pp. 129-131):

> **Our waterfronts.**
> This includes our beaches, the Swan River and Fremantle Harbour.
> When I was a child I could walk all the way from South Beach to
> Cicerellos, following the beach or seawall. With my friends I could

explore or fish almost anywhere along the harbour. We would also go swimming at Ampol Beach, now replaced by Rous Head, or down at the river at Harvey Beach, now occupied by the water police.

We have been physically cut off from much or our access to the beach and we are now being visually cut off from the water, for example by the boat stacking on Mews Road or by the proposed offshore development such as the Three Harbours project or the Six Islands proposal (North Port Quay).

We only have to look at the Six Islands development as a case study which brings up quite a number of unanswered problems. For example, the effects of climate change and rising sea levels, the erosion of beaches north of the developments the massive traffic problems that would arise when a population of 15,000 to 20,000 new residents are installed, and associated parking problems from this massive increase of traffic, the huge disruption throughout the whole development stage (up to 10 years), the blocking of the views of the ocean, etc. Also what happened to the ruling that there should be a 100 metre setback from the coast for any development?

This and other texts indicate the constitution of a populist discourse (Laclau, 2005, pp. 76-115) in which our beaches linked a plurality of demands, consolidated the people and their frontier against those who would harm 'our beaches'. The letter by Dortch (*Fremantle Herald*, 23 August 2008) also indicated this constitution:

Confronted with NPQ and other developmental threats to the sea coast, most of us in the Perth region would strongly argue that our beaches are infinitely more important to the future of WA coastlines than the narrowly-focussed, though massive-scale investment interests of the international and WA yachting/recreational boating lobby.

This ongoing confrontation on our coast is yet another case of a crucially important resource being exposed through human machination and commercial greed.

Professor Peter Newman consistently fails to grasp this, despite his repeated usage (in innumerable contexts) of the buzz word 'sustainability', so favoured these days by politicians, bureaucrats, developers and their academic hirelings.

Newman (*Fremantle Herald*, 30 August 2008) attempted to breach the discursive frontier being constructed around the people of 'our beaches':

Many people including Charles Dortch and Jim McGinty (in his newsletter) have written saying we must protect our beaches from NPQ. NPQ will not harm beaches. It has been redesigned after public consultation to now enable Sand Tracks to be part of the protected beach system (it is presently in the port area), Port and Leighton will be

improved by expanding their sand base, and three new beaches will be created. How can I be so sure? Because the coastal engineering concepts in the Hillarys Marina and Mandurah Marina were done by the same people and these have worked to protect and create new beaches.

A week later two advertisements were published in the *Fremantle Herald* (Figure 43), in relation to the state election to be held a week later. The left advertisement by the 'Save Freo Beaches Alliance' asked, 'Who can you trust to protect our beaches?' The right-hand advertisement for Carles and Sullivan's Greens campaign offered a populist answer: 'WE WILL FIGHT THEM ON THE BEACHES!' The advertisement ended with a call for social action in terms of votes for 'our beaches, our community, our democracy, our future'.
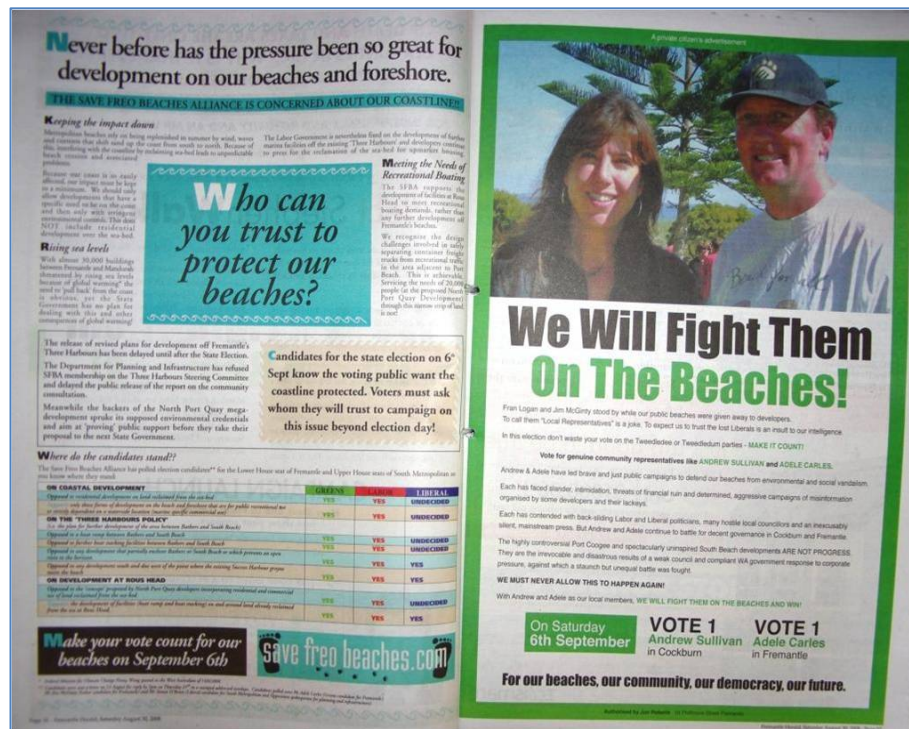

Figure 43: Pages 16 & 17 of *Fremantle Herald* on 30 August 2008

The corpus indicated that the *Fremantle Herald* enabled, or at least reproduced, the populist discourse of 'our beaches'. On 27 December 2008, it represented the developers 'assault on our beaches' as a major news event of the year:

IT'S D-Day as developers continue their assault on our beaches, with the mother of all developments, the $10 billion North Port Quay, announced for Rous Head. NPQ's six manmade islands will house 20,000 people and have shops, schools, hotels and boat marinas on 345 hectares of

seabed, all surrounded by a 3.5 kilometre seawall to hold back rising sea levels.

The texts indicate that NPQ's proponents realized the power of populist discourse that had been aggregating around 'our beaches' in the second half of 2008. They entered the by-election discourse quickly and covertly with a new advertisement that attempted to appropriate 'our beaches' to its cause, at least figuratively (Figure 44), and dissolve the constructed political frontier between it and the people through the suggestion that NPQ was with the people of 'our beaches'.

Figure 44: Pages 6 & 7 of *Fremantle Gazette* on 18 April 2009

Efforts to stabilize the discursive frontier against NPQ relied on representations of the true defenders of 'our beaches'. The Carles campaign advertisement (*Fremantle Gazette*, 5 May 2009) depicted this true defender image: 'She is known for her passionate campaigns to save our beaches'. On 9 May 2009, Sam Wainwright's advertisement in the *Fremantle Herald* constituted the people of 'our beaches' by suggesting who they weren't:

> **No North Port Quay - don't privatise our beaches**
> Reject developers' greed gone mad!

The texts indicate that NPQ's attempt to appropriate the socially unifying power of 'our beaches' throughout the by-election campaign failed, but not for want of trying. One week before the by-election, NPQ's two-page advertisement in *The West Australian* displayed a well-known former Australian cricketer, Geoff Marsh, playing cricket with young people on the beach. Marsh was quoted as saying:

> Western Australians love going to the beach. It's a great place to have fun with the family and that's why I think our beaches need protecting for future generations to enjoy.

This advertisement indicated a more overt attempt at appropriating the equivalential 'our beaches' to disrupt the discursive frontier constructed between the people of 'our beaches' and coastal property developers. The texts indicate that this attempt failed due to the resilience of the frontier constituted out of many subjects' prior knowledge of coastal development scandals, spatial ownership and prior knowledge of beaches from both discursive and sensual encounters. We know from Chapter 3 that sedimentary layers of knowledge had developed over time to make beaches integral symbolic borders of Australian identity and that the current dominant discourse of spatial relations came to the space of Fremantle through colonization by British subjects bearing a well-developed knowledge of private property as well as commons outside of property enclosure. Populist and institutional discourse coincided with the election of Carles to parliament. This electoral success relied on Carles being a known defender of the 'our beaches' in the face of the threat of environmental destruction by NPQ. After the election Deputy Mayor of Fremantle, Dowson, put a motion before Fremantle council to 'reject the North Port Quay proposals' on the basis that it was 'incompatible with working port operations of the inner harbour' and because of 'environmental and transport concerns' about reclamation off Rous Head. Dowson appealed for councillors to support the formal rejection based on popular common sense in the community because even 'a five-year-old' could see NPQ 'wouldn't work on environmental grounds'. However, Strachan moved that Dowson's motion be deferred until a planning committee had written a report on the project so that the rejection would be robust and withstand any modifications to the proposal or its name. This created a heated debate in the council with Lauder supporting Dowson's rejection motion on the grounds that Fremantle council had to take a stand against NPQ given that 'the public has told us very

clearly that the public don't want this that the public doesn't want this'. However, inside the council chamber without an obvious discursive frontier, reproduction of the defending 'our beaches' populist discourse faltered. Fittock argued that councillors were not in a position to represent the views of the people of Fremantle. Strachan argued that the council was not in a position to decide the NPQ issue without a planning committee report providing evidence to support that decision. Strachan's statement indicated that the power to determine the fate of NPQ rested in bureaucratic expert hands rather than in the hands of people's elected representatives, or at least in a relation between them. To gain closure on the issue at a meeting on 24 June 2009, the council voted to defer the rejection motion while the planning committee prepared a report on the NPQ proposal. The committee's report was approved at a council meeting on 23 September and the council voted to formally reject NPQ on the basis that it was 'incompatible with working port operations of the inner harbour' and because of 'environmental and transport concerns' about reclamation off Rous Head. Although formal rejection by Fremantle council was not expressed in terms of saving 'our beaches', the texts indicate that the motion was initiated and eventually passed in response to a popular demand within the equivalential chain of 'our beaches' that was a powerful resource in the electoral discourse through which representatives of The Greens party were elected to seats previously held by Labor members.

The basis of the successful 'our beaches' campaign against NPQ rested upon the project meaning a threat to an object of the environment of local readers. The texts indicate that a radical investment had been made in 'our beaches' – psychoanalysis describes this as an object being more than itself to its subject. In other words, it was not just defence of a beach but readers' *desire to restore sensual experience* of a beach that produced the mythical fullness of an empty signifier essential to the contingent unification of a popular movement in defence of 'our beaches'. Signification of NPQ as a threat to an object of the environment was consolidated through public conversation, particularly during election-campaign periods. After this consolidation, North Port Quay was no longer represented as a form of green built environment in media reports.

So far, this chapter has described how threat meaning was inscribed on NPQ through popular – but presumably unintended – readings of its promotional narratives and images, which *lacked mutually functionalizing* threats and solutions. Also, the future distant ecological threats that NPQ was promoted as solving were not as motivating for social action as the *spatially and temporally immediate threats* inscribed in NPQ. Then it was shown how many readers' heterogeneous claims aggregated – in a discursive frontier against the imposition of NPQ – around their *desire to restore sensual experience* of 'our beaches', which provided the richness of an empty signifier required for contingent unification of a local popular movement. Relations around this desire to restore sensual experience of an object of the environment will be examined further in the next, and final, section of this chapter to provide a more comprehensive critical understanding of the discursive operations of threats in practices of publicly negotiating a green built environment in contemporary liberal democracy.

5.4 Conservative response to radical push for North Port Quay

The North Port Quay contest in public discourse was initiated by the project's property development consortium, whose members were interested in a return on investment from marketing a large, autonomous, green built environment off Rous Head. For this marketing program to be realized, the consortium required authorization for the project under the planning regulations of Western Australia which delegated planning approval processes to local municipalities. Within the planning regulations, local municipalities functioned as democratic institutions to deal with collective antagonisms (Dahlgren, 2009, p. 59) in relation to local land use. The City of Fremantle performed this function in relation to NPQ formally between 24 June and 23 September 2009 despite the absence of a planning application from the NPQ consortium. A year earlier the project's lead environmental consultant, Peter Newman, was reported on the front page of the *Fremantle Herald* (6 September 2008) as saying that property owners were 'slitting their throats quietly in the background' because they could not gain approval for their projects because of 'certain councillors'. Newman reportedly said the problem would be solved by the establishment of a redevelopment authority for approving projects away from the Fremantle council chamber:

> "In Fremantle it's too difficult - developers get shunted off, a development authority would deal with them and get common goal outcomes," he later told the *Herald*.
>
> The Curtin University sustainability head - who has been planning advisor to governments in WA and the east - has written to planning minister Alannah MacTiernan urging her to appoint an authority, and was waiting on a response.
>
> "It will be on the agenda when parliament starts again [after the election]," he told the *Herald*, adding a redevelopment authority would work closely with local council.

Newman reportedly wanted the redevelopment authority to deal with planning applications to 'get common goal outcomes' away from local politics; a shift in decision making away from local interests in favour of regional interests and away from democratic process in favour of technocratic process. The Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority Bill 2011 has since been passed by the Western Australian parliament; despite the risk of an outbreak of 'anarchy and chaos' from diminishing local political representation in planning processes, according to MacLaren (Hansard, 2011, p. 1).

This legislative change may have diminished the problem of planning approval for developers of projects such as NPQ, but as MacLaren pointed out they may not have diminished popular resolve against such projects. We have seen how the popular resolve against NPQ aggregated in a representationally powerful way around 'our beaches' with subjects mobilizing to defend this object of pleasure, threatened by radical change through the imposition of NPQ. The contingent popular movement against the radical imposition of NPQ was not just about conserving Port Beach, it was about conserving its members' relations with objects; the pleasure of these relations. The emergence of a local popular movement against NPQ was envisaged on Page 1 (Figure 45) of the *Fremantle Herald* on 5 July 2008 with its image of two women united in defiance on a beach. Below the image the caption read: 'Adele Carles and Lynn MacLaren want to put a protective green blanket over Freo's beaches and its views of Rottnest'. The article to the left was about NPQ blocking views of Rottnest Island while the article below was about the likelihood of a local electoral swing to The Greens party as its members articulated a struggle to conserve what was special about Fremantle, under siege by developers seeking radical change

such as privatization of the seabed. Carles called this act of privatization 'an insult to the Australian way of life'.

Figure 45: Top half of page 1 of *Fremantle Herald* on 5 July 2008

Making the image of protest in defence of the beach may have seemed a radical action, but it supported a conservative movement to conserve beach aesthetics; or, more precisely, it supported the motivation of subjects through their drives for contentment in 'simulacra of the lost (maternal) object' (Copjec, 2004, p. 34). Although these drives to recover a forgotten past occur at a subconscious level, Carles also made overt, conscious appeals for generally understood conservative policies. The first three points of her campaign advertisement on page 9 in the *Fremantle Gazette* on 12 May 2009 called for more resources for crime prevention and policing as well as support for small business. The advertisement (Figure 46) on page 7 of the *Fremantle Gazette* on 5 May contained a conservative image of Carles walking along a street performing the role of mother by holding a daughter in each hand. The first sentence of the advertisement's text about Carles positioned her as a capable mother of Fremantle: 'Adele, who has degrees in law and commerce, lives in Fremantle with her husband and three daughters'.

Figure 46: Page 7 of *Fremantle Herald* on 5 May 2009

The advertisement included The Greens symbol over the campaign slogan 'CHANGE BEGINS HERE'. But what change? The advertisement suggested Carles would re-energise Fremantle through actions such 'as protecting Fremantle tenancies, keeping our working port, and opposing off-shore housing'. If these were changes, they were changes against change. Carles was conservative and NPQ was the impending threat of radical change to subjects' aesthetics. In psychoanalytical terms, NPQ was agency for the powerful force of idealizing dissatisfaction with the unobtainable lost object (Copjec, 2004, p. 45). Supporting NPQ in 2008 and 2009 was an act of representational suicide at the local level so why did it occur? Why did the consortium invest so much advertising a doomed concept? Harvey (2000, p. 177) has provided several clues as to why this could have occurred. First, places are continually disrupted by the coming to ground of free-market utopianism. The consortium proposed leasing and eventually buying the seabed off Rous Head in order to market a green built environment upon it. This was a new form of capitalist technology that caused antagonism for subjects used to previous forms of capitalist technologies. This entrenched relation – that Harvey called 'spatial utopia' – was indicated by Carles in her maiden speech to parliament:

> I am lucky to own a home in Fremantle, because Fremantle is a very special place, as anyone who is fortunate enough to live there will tell you. I live at the south end in an old renovated cottage amongst neighbours who are like family. We all know each other in this part of town. People walk and cycle; children roam in and out of our homes. People rarely sell their houses here. They are not interested in bigger houses, the latest appliances or new cars. There are no lock-down garages or security gates to keep people out. We have our doors open so that people can come in. It is almost old-fashioned, and I would not trade that for the world. It is this sense of connection and desire to preserve what is special that sees Fremantle people being active citizens and politically engaged.

Second, the holders of accumulated capital disrupted place in order to create a space within which the accumulation of capital could continue. There was a general affirmation of this point by both supporters and opponents of NPQ, and that marketing coastal, metropolitan, built environments yielded higher prices per square metre than inland, metropolitan, built environments. From the outset, the consortium attempted to garner support for NPQ by articulating the project's broader economic effects in terms of job creation, income opportunities for associated industries as well as higher municipal rates and state tax revenues from stamp duties on property sales. This attempt failed partly because it was reinscribed as 'being completely insane and unbridled greed' (Sam Blight quoted on page 3 of the *Fremantle Herald* on 31 May 2008) and because money could not buy sacred experiences with nature off Rous Head (Tani Garden's letter on page 6 of the *Fremantle Herald* on 7 June 2008). Third, ecological modernization discourse enabled big industry, big government and big science to tighten their grip on the world's resources (Harvey, 1996, pp. 382-383). Through NPQ an attempt was made by big property developers to tighten their grip on coastal land and water resources in metropolitan Perth, and this was supported by science through representations by Peter Newman, who headed the Curtin University Sustainability Policy (CUSP) Institute. However, it was opposed by others who had no interest in the project proceeding such as Brad Pettitt, who headed Murdoch University's sustainability department and Adam McHugh who worked in this department. The ecological modernization discourse was articulated by Newman (in an opinion piece on pages 6 and 7 of the *Fremantle Herald* on 16 August 2008) to support the idea of big government with the caveat that business would lead the shift in governance:

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> If companies can demonstrate how to be carbon-free, especially oil-free, then markets will take over and drag governments with them. Bold sustainability needs to be demonstrated by business before governments can be bold. The technology is already here - we just need to be brave enough to try it on a large scale.

> North Port Quay is one example of this. It is big and bold enough to influence far beyond the local. I don't for a moment believe its developers are working for purely idealistic beliefs, just as I know governments aren't. The development is motivated by the needs of people similar to those who came for the Cup. They want a small city for boat-oriented people. They also want a legacy of building alternative technologies into the city. They chose a site that hasn't been pristine ocean for 100 years, after C.Y. O'Connor's great engineering carved out the harbour. The project is not pure and perfect, but it is a great opportunity for significant demonstration of the carbon-constrained future.

Newman made a clear statement that the NPQ consortium wanted a small city for boat-oriented people, built with alternative technologies, demonstrating the carbon-constrained future. Apparently, Newman understood the contradictory relations of urban development but did not anticipate the magnitude of antagonisms produced locally in response to the simulated future utopian city of NPQ. The spatial radicalism of this simulated, walled city off the coast of Fremantle triggered a local conservative reaction operating through subjects' drives to recover lost objects that coincided with interests in defending existing spatial relations.

Within the four sections of this chapter, key insights from textual analysis of the North Port Quay case (Chapter 4) were synthesised and re-examined against theory (Chapter 2) in order to clarify the discursive mechanisms that disrupted signification of NPQ as a green built environment in its popular readings. The first section described how NPQ's promotional narratives *lacked mutually functionalizing* threats and solutions in popular readings by Fremantle audiences. The second section demonstrated that the future distant ecological threats that NPQ was promoted as solving were not nearly as motivating for social action as the *spatially and temporally immediate* threats inscribed in NPQ. Then it was shown in the third section how many readers' heterogeneous claims aggregated – in a discursive frontier against the imposition of NPQ – around their *desire to restore sensual experience* of 'our beaches', the empty signifier required for contingent unification

of a local popular movement. The fourth section demonstrated how the operation of NPQ's *radical imposition stimulating conservative response* could be understood through relations of space and capital accumulation. These findings will be synthesized in the concluding chapter to provide a precise answer to the question of how ecological threat representation affects meanings of green built environment and the practices producing these meanings. Implications of this answer will be explored in the concluding chapter in terms of the production of antagonism in social contests around green built environments and in terms of the legitimization of governance in late modernity. From this exploration, recommendations will be made for further research and for the development of an ethics of ecological threat representation.

6   Conclusion: Towards an ethics of ecological threat representation

This concluding chapter synthesizes the research findings to develop a precise answer to the thesis question of how representation of ecological threats affects the meaning of green built environment and the practices through which this meaning is produced. This precise answer is approached by way of chapter summary and then a synthesis of the four key findings presented last chapter. The answer is then considered in terms of how it could inform relations of imposing and resisting green zones of capital accumulation; and, what it could tell us about separating analysis from action in liberal democracy. Out of this consideration of implications, recommendations are made for further research. Finally, it is suggested that working towards an ethics of ecological threat representation may provide a way out of global ecological crisis. Such an ethics, towards an impossible horizon of environmental justice, would involve recognition of others' affective investments in objects of the environment and the antagonism produced when these investments are felt threatened.

Chapter 1 introduced the context of the thesis by describing the prevalence of human-induced ecological threats in contemporary society articulated in and around recent waves of environmental discourse. It outlined research on the discursive production of ecological threats in policy-making institutions and pointed to a gap in previous research on how the threats are reproduced by engaged citizens attempting to influence policy making. Research on contests over green built environments was introduced as an appropriate way to close this gap because of the variety of subjects and texts involved in such contests. From this context came the research question: How does representation of ecological threats affect the meaning of green built environment and the practices through which this meaning is produced? To answer this question, a research methodology was developed that involved applying discourse analysis techniques to a textual corpus drawn from an archive of various text types gathered in relation to a contested green built environment project, North Port Quay, in Fremantle, Western Australia.

Chapter 2 reviewed literature that provided deeper context for the research question and informed the methodology conducive for producing a reliable answer. It described literature on the threat of human-induced ecological crisis at the heart of risk society and related this, through contemporary cultural logic, to critical studies of urban built environments. The literature indicated that contemporary cosmopolitan society had a chronic awareness of risks of global ecological crises and of subjectivities of scientific knowledge, and this awareness provided agency for affective investment in objects around which local popular movements could take discursive formation. Narratives of ecological threats in literature were reviewed chronologically; and it was established that many such narratives, at least since the turn of the 19th century, were combined with calls for governmental reform. This was illustrated by a theme that ran through ecological threat representations from Malthus' writing to discourses of sustainable development, ecological modernization and carbon control: the theme of limits to Earth's capacity for supporting population growth and industrialization. The chapter then reviewed contemporary studies on the representation of ecological threats and regulatory responses in terms of truth production through discursive contests in institutional policy networks. The chapter then focused on the production of policies for green built environment and examined the idea of altering society through spatial reform, tracing this to Ebenezer Howard's Garden City at the turn of the 19th century. It was then shown how contemporary scholarship proscribing reforms in spatial governance to mitigate ecological threats had promoted policy decision making by bureaucratic elites guided by constructed publics and driven by capital accumulation priorities. Literature on contemporary practices of policy production and legitimization through citizens' mediated engagement with democratic institutions was then reviewed. This literature indicated that civil agency may be constrained by limiting spatial governance – in the face of ecological threats – to appointed experts guided by futuristic vision statements. Literature on discourse and its analysis was then reviewed and insights drawn for inclusion in the methodology for understanding how representation of ecological threats could influence the meaning of green built environment and the practices through which this meaning was produced. Truth production in ecological-threat cases was described, particularly in relation to how systems of meaning were constructed and stabilized through discourses. The institutional dimensions of these cases were described in terms of the positioning of actors producing environmental

policies. Literature was then reviewed that provided insights on media and spatial practices in discourse that could be included in a methodology for examining truth production not only by institutionally positioned members of policy networks but also by other citizens. These insights related to the open negotiation of meaning by subjects, the temporary stabilization of meaning systems in hegemonic projects, the production of social antagonism when systems of meaning were disrupted, the elements of sensory experience beyond signification that disrupted meaning, the drives that motivated subjects, and the emotional responses of subjects that stabilized systems of meaning and produced community ideals. These insights informed an analytical approach to the thesis question that considered relations of popular and institutional truth production in negotiating meanings of green built environment.

Chapter 3 introduced the NPQ case and described significant elements of its discursive context that enabled competent interpretation of texts from the case, a critical analysis of key findings and their synthesis in subsequent chapters. Firstly, local knowledge of property had to be deconstructed in order to understand the discursive field through which the consortium launched NPQ and to understand relations of its resistance. The discursive construction of land-entitlement was described through time in space around the proposed project site of NPQ in Fremantle, Western Australia. This description focused on the construction of beliefs about land ownership and public versus private occupation rights to land in Fremantle, which were integral to public debate around NPQ. Secondly, notions of community were deconstructed to understand relations of identity and place articulated in the NPQ texts. This deconstruction focussed on how Fremantle community was imagined, and was illustrated by a case study of how Fremantle community identity was reproduced and reworked in the 1990s by the Fremantle Football club. Understanding the dynamics of place, identity and community in the NPQ context was integral to critically analysing the positioning, antagonism, social movement formation, mediated representation of community beliefs and social action and their discursive relations through policy-making institutions of liberal democracy. Thirdly, because NPQ was an impending spatial imposition it was important to identify what constituted architectural appropriateness and transgressiveness for Fremantle audiences. This identification was made through a comparative reading of Fremantle's High Street and the passage through Sukuh

Temple in Central Java. The comparative reading, which introduced senses of architectural transgression, demonstrated the significance of temple iconography in Fremantle's streetscape produced in the first century of European settlement and its more recent preservation and reproduction at the hands of local and national heritage movements. This reading provided insights into the production of local, national and global identities and the silent stabilization of semiotics through the spatial representation and representations of place in place that dominated official Fremantle. The heritage movement's drive to reproduce these representations provided contextual evidence supporting theory on the operation of conservative responses to restore sensual experience of an object of the environment. To understand the discursive implications of this psychoanalytical drive to restore sensual experience of an object, the operation of pleasure was explored in relation to beaches near the proposed NPQ site. Beaches were described in terms of their agency for pleasure, but also in terms of their symbolic function as Australia's borderland. Cultural transgression of beach experience was then discussed briefly in relation to recent public contests over coastal, property-development projects. The work done in this chapter provided a reliable foundation for critical analysis of the NPQ texts in order to answer the research question through a synthesis of findings from this analysis.

Chapter 4 described the method of assembling an archive of texts on the NPQ case and the criteria for selecting texts from this archive for discourse analysis by close reading, which was then described in broad chronological phases. The first phase dealt with the public relations launch of the NPQ project in May 2008 and its immediate mediation through constructed controversies. Despite a public relations attempt to position NPQ as 'a world class model of sustainable development', the immediate media response problematized environmental claims and suggested the project threatened public beaches. This suggested that ecological threats in the NPQ narrative were not complemented by solutions read in the narrative. Representations of NPQ *lacked mutually functionalizing* discursive mechanisms to stabilize signification of the project meaning green built environment because it signified heterogeneous threats to Fremantle audiences without signifying solutions to these particular threats. This important insight was analysed further in the subsequent chapter. The second phase dealt with local community responses to NPQ and its

positioning as an important issue for candidates in the state election in September 2008. While the media suggested a political storm was raging around NPQ, a sustainability expert's representations of the potentially low carbon emissions of operating NPQ post construction were disrupted by other credible voices in the media describing the potential carbon emissions and other environmental costs of its physical construction. Texts during this phase indicated an intensive struggle over the scales of spatial, temporal and social frameworks in which the costs and benefits of NPQ could be argued. Representations of NPQ as a solution to distant future ecological threats were undermined by representations of it as an immediate threat to the local environment. This successful resistance to NPQ relied on a shifting of space and time proximity in discourse from proponents' proposed journey towards a sustainability utopia back to local immediate environmental struggles, where threats to subject aesthetics were powerfully evocative. The media reported large swings in the state election to The Greens candidates, whose campaign position included defending public beaches from encroachment by NPQ. The texts indicated that *spatially and temporally immediate threats* were more powerful than distant threats in discursive contests – further analysis of this important dynamic would be undertaken in the subsequent chapter. The third phase dealt with the stabilization of NPQ meaning green wash in media representations. This stabilization was supported by an investigation into the project's advertising by the ACCC which was not effectively countered by suggestions that critics were unaware of advances in ecological modernization, or by a new advertisement claiming NPQ could 'lead the world in sustainable development'. The stabilization also relied on the voices of apparently disinterested expert citizens and organizations carrying more authority in local mediated representation than NPQ's appointed environmental expert. This indicated a grounding of institutional authority in local popular responses to an environmental issue. The fourth phase dealt with representations of NPQ and ecological threats in the by-election for the seat of Fremantle in state parliament. At the start of this phase, a new series of advertisements for NPQ – associating the project with a common sense of beach environments – were published after Labor's Jim McGinty announced he would resign as the state parliamentary member for Fremantle. NPQ was a major issue articulated in candidates' campaign materials as well as in live and mediated campaign debates. The Labor party fielded the Fremantle mayor, Peter Tagliaferri, as its candidate defending the seat against a

popular challenge by Adele Carles of The Greens. While Carles stood against NPQ in defence of public beaches, Tagliaferri said he would remain open to it. Several independent candidates announced they supported the project before media reports claimed that at least one of them had financial interests in supporting NPQ. The media also associated financial interests with a university expert's endorsement of the project's misleading environmental credentials. Carles was positioned as a competent mother, protecting Port Beach and Fremantle's port facilities from intrusion by NPQ. The NPQ consortium responded with images of the beach and its spokeswoman in new advertisements published during the final days of the campaign. Carles won the Fremantle by-election in May 2009, representing this local popular victory as halting encroachment on Fremantle by coastal property developers. The texts indicated how the local immediate threats inscribed in NPQ stimulated the construction of a discursive frontier behind which a variety of demands could aggregate around a local popular defence of 'our beaches' threatened by NPQ. The power of this local popular movement was derived from it being a conservative response to radical change being imposed through NPQ. The formation of this popular local movement defending 'our beaches' was analysed further in Chapter 5 to understand how action is motivated through *desire to restore sensual experience* of an object of the environment. The fifth phase analysed texts about NPQ remaining a controversial issue within municipal politics until contingent closure of the project as a transgression was realized. The closure was constructed discursively through representation of popular and expert opposition to NPQ in and around a Fremantle Council resolution rejecting the project, and closure was stabilized by the election of a credible critic of NPQ as Fremantle Mayor in October 2009. The threat of NPQ's spatial radicalism had triggered a conservative reaction, obscured by its association with the apparently radical electoral candidates of The Greens party. These successful candidates supported conserving existing places and place relations against the threat of radical changes driven by new relations of capital accumulation that were operating through NPQ. The holistic operation of NPQ's spatially *radical imposition stimulating conservative response* in local audiences, that worked its way through institutions of local democracy into policy, was examined further in Chapter 5 as a key insight in answering the thesis question.

Chapter 5 synthesised how ecological threats – rather, an ecology of threats – operated as discursive mechanisms in relation to meanings of green built environment in and between the texts described in Chapter 4. This synthesis, which included a re-examination of key insights against theories reviewed in Chapter 2, was presented as four key research findings. The first finding described how NPQ's promotional narratives *lacked mutually functionalizing* threats and solutions in popular readings by Fremantle audiences. The second finding demonstrated that the future distant ecological threats that NPQ was promoted as solving were not nearly as motivating for social action as the *spatially and temporally immediate* threats inscribed in NPQ. The third finding clarified how many readers' heterogeneous claims aggregated – in a discursive frontier against the imposition of NPQ – around their *desire to restore sensual experience* of 'our beaches', which provided the mythical fullness of an empty signifier required for contingent unification of a local popular movement. The fourth finding demonstrated how the operation of NPQ's *radical imposition stimulating conservative response* could be understood through relations of space and capital accumulation. These findings about relations working through the dialogic of discourse emerging into public spheres can be drawn together to form a precise answer to the thesis question, as demonstrated in the following paragraph.

Cohesive articulation of the complex relations, examined in Chapter 5, provides a precise answer to the thesis question of how representation of ecological threats affects the meaning of *green built environment* and the practices through which this meaning is produced. This is a difficult articulation because it involves describing complex relations operating as processes at and between what are generally understood to be discursive and psychoanalytical levels. The analysis found that representation of an apparently universal global ecological threat could be read in heterogeneous ways. That is, an ecological threat like 'climate change' performed more like an ecology of threats to sensually experienced objects of the environment in representation associated with the space of an intended green built environment. Analysis also indicated that the production of meaning of green built environment in a person's mind depended upon the person reading solutions into the narrative of the intended green built environment that mutually functionalized with any significant ecological threats that this person read into the narrative. Third, the analysis

indicated that spatially and temporally immediate threats were more meaningful and motivating than distant, future threats. For example, 'climate change' was represented more powerfully as immediate or recurring threats to sensually experienced objects of the local environment than as a scientifically-demonstrable phenomenon threatening the whole world at some point in the future. This power was derived from a beach, building, streetscape or a person being sensed in a more intimate, subliminal way than the global dimension of environment, experienced through mediated representation. The analysis also indicated that people responded conservatively when they felt that sensually experienced objects faced immediate threat; that is, people were driven by desire to restore sensual experience of an object. These important relations, identified through critical analysis, can be articulated cohesively in the precise form of a single-sentence answer to the thesis question. That is: *Producing meaning of green built environment is dependent on an intended green built environment's multiplicity of readings mutually functionalizing with conservative responses to a contextually associated ecology of threats; where conservative response is motivated by the sensation of a spatially and temporally immediate threat to the desired restoration of sensual experience of an object of the environment.*

Important implications of this answer will be considered in the next two sections: First, how could the answer inform understandings of relations of imposing and resisting green zones of capital accumulation? Second, what could it tell us about the separation of analysis from action in liberal democracy?

6.1 Imposing and resisting green zones of capital accumulation

This section considers the implications of imposing large green built environments on places, where the imposition may trigger conservative reactions, antagonism and even a local popular movement. This is what happened in the NPQ case, which can be understood in terms of Harvey's (2000, p. 177) process of a globalized free-market utopianism colliding with a localized spatial utopianism. Representatives of a property development consortium declared they would mobilize billions of dollars to develop NPQ as a radically different built environment; as a sustainable development model for carbon-constrained, urban, coastal living that would create a new space

through which capital could accumulate. They chose a seabed site next to the Fremantle port at the southern head of Port Beach as a development site perhaps anticipating high returns from valuable coastal properties within commuter distance of Perth's central business district and perhaps anticipating that a 345-hectare, urban, coastal site at sea could be acquired more cheaply and easily than an equivalent site on coastal land containing other people's homes or built environments. However, the environment of this seabed site problematized the discursive construction of NPQ as a green built environment solution to ecological threats, and the project threatened objects of people's drives represented by the empty signifier of 'our beaches'. Heterogeneous claims aggregated around this empty signifier, enabling the formation of a local popular movement that carried several of The Greens candidates to electoral office and enabled the contingent closure of NPQ, as a rejected proposal of built environment transgression, reinforced by resolution of Fremantle council. Within the texts it was suggested that a forthcoming shift in policy making for large property development projects – away from municipal councils to specialist regional planning agencies, authorized by the state of Western Australia – would support the realization of a project like NPQ. The texts also suggested that this shift in planning, occurring in several Australian states, was considered undemocratic by local politicians and would diminish local voices in planning decision making. There are political ramifications of shifting planning decision making away from municipal councils – with closer spatial connections to citizens likely to be most affected by any substantial change in built environment – to expert panels authorized by state parliament with its more-diluted, distant connections to these citizens. Perhaps a project like NPQ would have been approved for development by an expert regional panel, as endorsed by the project's principle sustainability consultant. However, it is also likely that the antagonism and local populist movement produced in response to the NPQ proposal would not have been resolved by the decision-making process of the regional panel if its decision-making process lacked democratic legitimacy in the local public sphere. If this legitimacy, integral to the governance though hegemony operating in most contemporary societies, is lacking then alternative methods for making people obey must take its place. According to Dahlgren (2009, p. 59) as well as Hall, Chritcher, Jefferson, Clarke and Roberts (1978, p. 319), there are broadly two ways of facilitating governance of contemporary society: the generally preferred method being the legitimacy of democratic institutions responding to engaged

publics and the secondary method being state coercion of citizens. The case of NPQ suggests that local citizens may respond to a radical green built environment proposal in unforeseen ways. This is due to the complexity of meaning making that incorporates subliminal drives about subjects' relations with an object of their environment. This object may be sensed as threatened by the imposition of the radical built environment; thereby producing antagonism. Representation of threatened relations to such an object can contingently unite people in a local popular movement until the threat is resolved; such as through processes of democratic institutions or through the emergence of a greater threat such as state violence. Given the dominance of capital relations in our globalized contemporary society, it is reasonable to assume that more radical, large, green built environments will be envisaged by small yet powerful groups of people for imposition in urban areas around the world in the name of helping to solve global or regional ecological threats. This thesis suggests that localized antagonisms and popular social movements, produced in response to these impositions, can and should be handled through locally legitimate democratic institutional processes because of the open meaning of ecological threats and the agency of affective investment in objects of the environment. There is a risk that a more regionalized institutional handling of localized antagonisms may lack local democratic legitimacy, leaving little opportunity for non-violent technologies to dissolve antagonisms produced in response to proposed new green zones of capital accumulation.

6.2   Separating analysis from action in liberal democracy

This section describes implications for policy production of varying spatial and temporal frames of reference in ecological threat representation and how these variations enable gaps to emerge between analysis and action in liberal democracy. The NPQ case indicated how a global mediated discourse of an ecological threat such as climate change was reproduced at an individual, municipal and provincial level; and, to a much lesser extent, indicated how these localized versions of the discourse were reproduced for more global audiences. The threat of climate change was not denied in the corpus, rather climate change was inscribed with particular meanings relating to the geography of its readings or, more accurately, relating to readers' worldly experience. Representation of ecological threats and the proposed

solution by NPQ was not read in clinical isolation but in complex relation to each reader's sensual experiences of environments and their identities, as well as in relation to the complex interweaving of discourses within and without the reader. We saw some of these individual readings reproduced in the public sphere of Fremantle by individuals interested in NPQ proceeding and those interested in blocking it or moving it to other sites. These readings were represented in the Fremantle public sphere by voices made credible by their positioning as local residents, as people with special knowledge of Fremantle places, as local political candidates, as local politicians, as local and national sustainability experts, as local heritage or cultural experts, as analysts of local politics, as people with an interest in NPQ, etc. Readings were also represented in the Western Australian public sphere by voices made credible by similar positioning, albeit tilted towards state governmental politics away from municipal politics and towards members of the Perth metropolitan and state population. The terms of argument in these respective public spheres shifted from what was appropriate for Fremantle towards what was appropriate for metropolitan Perth or what type of Fremantle was appropriate for metropolitan Perth rather than just what type of built environment was appropriate for Fremantle. The consortium behind NPQ and its principal sustainability consultant tried to position ecological threats within global contexts and the project's legitimacy in a Western Australian context as well as within the context of a dominant, hyper-competitive neoliberal world within which institutions and individuals had no choice but to compete – by negotiating within the boundaries of capital accumulation processes – for increasingly scarce carbon resources amid the ecological threats of peak oil and climate change. NPQ would ease this carbon-resource-scarcity problem for its future 20,000 residents while meeting economic demand for coastal urban residences and providing a model of green built environment for application in other places of the cosmopolitan world. This representation was reproduced in international conferences on sustainable development by the project's principle sustainability consultant – who was in a position of academic authority on sustainable development policy, and a member of transportation and urban planning policy networks of Western Australia, Australia and the United Nations (Ratcliff, 2010). Although publicly representing NPQ as a green built environment had become untenable by mid 2009 at the municipal level, the texts indicate that it had not become untenable by this time at the global level. This temporal difference in tenability has important implications for the

spatial relations between citizens and their environmental governance: a built environment can be represented tenably as green in public thousands of kilometres from the building site while it is no longer tenable to do so within more local public spheres. Technological changes and the wearing down of state barriers to movements of capital, commodity and labour by politicians responding to the lobbying and discursive efforts of multinational capital have produced opportunities for global governance. However, the legitimacy of global governance rests on tenable representation of it solving global problems or making the world better in a way in which governance through nations, states and municipalities cannot. Its legitimacy, therefore, rests on the represented spatial dimensions of problems to be solved and solutions to be implemented. However, despite representing this legitimacy through analysis of problems at the global scale, social action remains grounded in local places. In the NPQ case, proponents of the project tended to represent ecological threats and their solution in global, future frames of reference while its opponents articulated local, immediate frames. Most of the opponent and proponent speakers in the case apparently had a residential or institutional connection to Fremantle or metropolitan Perth. However, their representations differed broadly in that opponents spoke of their intimacy with places in relation to the legitimacy of maintaining current legal divisions of space with respect to public and private places. Proponents, on the other hand, spoke of their competent knowledge of ecological modernizing property development in relation to there being no legitimate barrier to altering the spatiality of private and public places or legitimate barrier, outside of financial capital, to acquiring environmental resources for property development. The case suggests that subjects with significant capacity for mobilizing financial capital are more likely to seek changes in spatial relations than those without such capacity. In mitigating hegemonic crisis arising from such a structural relation, the social legitimacy of spatial changes were negotiated – through discourse in public spheres and determined by the policy decisions of democratic institutions – in relation to the broadness and narrowness of temporal and spatial frames of reference and community imagining in the case. This suggests that the spatial and temporal construction of democratic institutions' policy focus is likely to shape the analysis of these institutions and influence the regulatory outcome in spatial-change contests. The broader the geographic construction of the institution and the more it is constructed to solve future rather than immediate problems, the more the institutional

analysis and politics of spatial contests shifts in favour of supporters of radical spatial change. The framing of governmental initiatives in terms of developing policies to solve future, global, ecological threats and the heterogeneous readings of these threats in relation to affective investments in objects of local environments are agency for separating dominant institutional analysis from localized popular action in liberal democracy. The emergence of this gap between analysis and action can be identified when a green built environment proposed to solve future, global, ecological threats is resisted by citizens desiring restoration of immediately threatened objects of their environment.

6.3   Recommendations for further research

In conceiving a built environment solution to a particular ecological threat it is important to consider just how threatening the ecological threat is in relation to other threats seen by citizens identifying with places that may be affected by this built environment. It should not be presumed that just because an ecological threat can be constructed as objectively real in representation that it will be sensed subjectively as a real threat and therefore have powerful agency in legitimizing the proposed green built environment. As we have seen in the NPQ case, complex threats may be inscribed on a proposed built environment through the unique sensory perceptions of subjects. This thesis suggests that understanding citizens' affective investments in places of a proposed built environment should be an initial step in developing an appropriate green built environment. If a built environment threatens to transgress the subjectively sensed and remembered environments of their imagined communities, its imposition is likely to produce antagonisms, that can – as demonstrated in the NPQ case – be resolved through the interaction of locally engaged publics and their corresponding democratic institutions of spatial regulation. It is possible that current transformation in the institutional handling of spatial planning approvals in Australia from interaction with engaged publics at the municipal level to interaction with the vision statements of constructed publics at the state level may create opportunities for developing understandings of systems of threat relations. However, it is also possible that the facilitators – responsible for constructing publics to create vision statements of ideal built environments – would be insensitive to affective investments made by citizens in places threatened by a

proposed built environment. Even if the facilitators were adequately sensitive, such affective investments may not become apparent until citizens' relations with objects of their environment are threatened. The strength of this thesis' research method was its focus on public representation and policy making over time: on the representation of campaigns and counter-campaigns; on the production and disruption of positions of discursive authority; on the legitimization and de-legitimization of institutions; and on the relations of affect, capital, popular media, institutional democracy and policy making. This thesis suggests that democratic institutions of spatial regulation should remain open to interaction with engaged publics so that proposed built environments – no matter how green they are claimed to be – may be passed, amended or prevented through discursive negotiation of the antagonisms produced in the act of imposing these new built environments. This is important given that spatial governance in contemporary society has relied on state institutions dealing democratically, rather than violently, with the conservatively driven antagonism that tends to arise in response to a radical change of environment imposed on the heterotopias of many citizens at the direction of a few capitalists hoping to realize a more evolved, ideal space for capital accumulation to continue. It is suggested that more research by academia is required into the institutional handling of antagonisms produced in the attempted realization of highly transformative green built environments. Such research should adopt discourse analysis methods that are particularly sensitive to the operation of mutually functionalizing discursive mechanisms in ecological threat representation, spatial and temporal scales in threat positioning and affective investment in objects of local environments. Such a research practice should, eventually, permeate urban planning processes at state and, perhaps, municipal levels. Incorporation of such a research practice could also be considered by national green building councils for their processes of accrediting proposed transformative green built environments. Finally, property developers could consider incorporating the research practice into their master planning and design processes for mitigating localized antagonistic responses to projects.

By contributing to understandings of the complex relations of citizens' affective investments and interests in their environments, this thesis can be seen as a modest step towards a practical ethics of ecological threat representation. Such an ethics is understood here in the sense of Joanna Zylinska's (2005, p. 29) description of the

originating ethical commitment of cultural studies towards opposing instrumental reduction of a person, and her reminder (p. 109) about knowledge being internalized through the performance of representation. Reductionist efforts directed at closing the meaning of an ecological threat – despite being positioned as the efficient way to resolve the threat – are likely to constrain possibilities of solving ecological crises; as suggested by this thesis. The reduction of an ecological threat, such as climate change, to a solvable Cartesian problem – through the elision of messy threat aesthetics – may support the mediated representation of global governance but attempts to ground and maintain a reduced version of the irreducible ecological threat are likely to be met with the resistance and antagonism of local citizens. Attempts to reduce complex environmental challenges to a universal ecological threat should be seen as political acts to be met by political acts of resistance to such reductionism. This is the task of an ethics of ecological threat representation. This thesis suggests that tackling environmental problems at local sites through the negotiation of local knowledge, interests and affective investments may lead to a less toxic world than a reliance on the handling of discursively reduced ecological threats by big science, big government and big business. Given that the agency of ecological threats may be constrained through reductionist representation, working towards an ethics of ecological representation in the negotiation of environmental issues involves citizen encounters with alterity; beginning with recognition of the legitimacy of other ways of knowing. This ethics would focus on an awareness of practical reason not being free of affective investment. This ethical position would not seek a way out of ecological crisis through an attempted sterilization of the aesthetics of environmental problems but, rather, through acknowledgement of the operation of affect in discourse. Such an ethics – working towards an impossible horizon of environmental justice – would recognize affective investments in environmental objects, and antagonisms produced when these investments are threatened. The ethical contribution of this thesis suggests that recognizing aesthetic proximity in practices of democracy is a means to pollution reduction.

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