



Final Report

Addressing concentrations of disadvantage: policy, practice and literature review

authored by

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Review purpose and scope

Through a review of the relevant academic and policy literature, this report aims to critically revisit both the conceptual thinking and the research evidence that have shaped academic and policy interest in the drivers, outcomes and potential means of addressing concentrations of social disadvantage. Specifically, the paper discusses the evolution of academic and policy perspectives on:

1. The processes that lead to concentrations of disadvantage, particularly the roles played by housing market processes and by government policy or programs ('causes').
2. The processes that contribute to spatial disadvantage—that is, the negative consequences for residents of living in an area of concentrated disadvantage ('consequences').
3. Urban policy responses to concentrations of disadvantage ('responses').

Since the 'causes' and 'consequences' of spatial disadvantage are in practice difficult to disentangle, points 1 and 2 could be seen as somewhat overlapping. Hence, our approach situates consideration of 'outcomes' in the discussion of processes leading to spatial disadvantage (point 2). This discussion is developed through a review of Australian and international research thinking and evidence on the above issues.

The report forms an element within a larger study being undertaken by the authors in collaboration with colleagues at the University of New South Wales, Swinburne University of Technology and the University of Queensland. Within this larger study the review is intended to help inform the way that concentrations of disadvantage are conceptualised and analysed.

Internationally, there is an extremely wide-ranging body of academic and other published work potentially relevant to this agenda. Our review gives precedence to literature specific to Australia, taking as its main starting point, Kendig's seminal 1979 text, *New life for old suburbs*, and revisiting the vigorous 1990s debates on the spatial concentration of disadvantage, as well as exploring more recent perspectives. In its broad scope, the review aims to build on existing AHURI research into related themes as diverse as social mix, social inclusion, and locational disadvantage.

Internationally, the review taps into post-2000 literature originating in North America and the UK. Of necessity, however, this body of work is covered in a much less comprehensive and in-depth fashion. Reflecting the relatively limited Australian literature on this aspect, it features more prominently in the chapter on policy responses to spatially concentrated disadvantage (Chapter 5).

1.2 Review methodology and structure

The review proceeded on two parallel tracks. For track 1 the first step involved assembling lists of potentially relevant sources from the policy and academic literature. Classifying these (on the basis of title) in terms of their geographical focus/origin, the review identified over 100 pertinent articles books, book chapters and reports of interest originating from Australia with a similar number from North America, with a further 50 from the UK and a few from continental Europe.

Selecting from these 250 texts—and giving preference to Australian sources—key empirical findings and/or conceptual/theoretical arguments were distilled into one-page summaries from which this paper has largely been collated.

Track 2 of the review process has involved more narrowly targeted critical analysis of certain key concepts and themes relevant to the broader research project. Developed through three 'critical perspectives' papers, this work focuses on:

- Conceptualising socio-spatial disadvantage.
- The role of housing markets in driving the spatial concentration of disadvantage.
- Concentrations of disadvantage: What makes Australia different?

Over and above this more wide ranging review, these papers are intended to form a more focused set of outputs from this stage of the research, with versions planned for publication as AHURI papers and journal articles.

Also relevant to acknowledge within this introductory section is the inherent challenge in analysing the causes and consequences of urban problems, as well as the effectiveness of policy responses. As in any social research, establishing causality is often very challenging—particularly within the budgets usually available for these kinds of studies. For example, very few of the policy evaluations cited in Chapter 5 were sufficiently well-resourced to incorporate 'comparator areas' as a 'counterfactual scenario' against which to test changes over time in 'project' localities. However, given the scale and breadth of this research, we have necessarily focused mainly on existing research studies in terms of their hypotheses and findings rather than incorporating detailed critiques of their methodology.

In accordance with the process described above, this paper is structured as follows. First, in the final sections of this introduction and as a backdrop to the main body of the review, we summarise the incidence of poverty and income inequality in Australia (Section 1.3) within the context of international comparisons. Chapter 2 then discusses the conceptualisation of socio-spatial disadvantage (Section 2.2) and reviews the changing geography of urban poverty in Australia.

Next, in Chapter 3, we review academic and policy-maker perspectives on the housing market processes that concentrate disadvantage, and the economic and other drivers which underlie the changing social status of localities. As a backdrop to this, we briefly review the extent of poverty and income inequality in Australia and recent trends in relevant indices.

Chapter 4 focuses on research into the consequences of spatial disadvantage—the experience of living in deprived areas and the ways that this may compound the problems of individual households. This includes the factors that disadvantage areas (and which could, alternatively, be construed as among the 'causes' of spatial disadvantage).

In Chapter 5 we turn to the policy responses to spatial concentrations of disadvantage, both those that have adopted an explicitly spatial approach to targeting ('area-based interventions'—ABIs) and those that have aimed to redress spatially concentrated poverty through more broadly targeted initiatives.

1.3 The incidence of poverty, inequality and social exclusion in Australia

This study focuses primarily on spatial disadvantage—the extent to which disadvantaged people are concentrated in specific localities, and the ways that the features of certain localities can disadvantage residents—see Section 4.2. Arguably, the spatial concentration of disadvantage can compound the problems of households resident in such areas (see Chapter 4). However, as emphasised by Badcock (1984), among others, the main causes of poverty and inequality are structural and the

existence of ‘poverty neighbourhoods’ is simply a manifestation of these wider realities. Thus, before examining the processes which concentrate disadvantage, it is relevant to look briefly at the extent of poverty and inequality in Australia; for the time being, setting aside the spatial dimension of the issue. The following paragraphs draw mainly on the Social Inclusion Board’s Compendium of Social Inclusion Indicators (Australian Social Inclusion Board 2009).

In contextualising our own research, this section also makes brief reference to the extent of poverty and inequality in Australia by comparison with international benchmarks. The extent to which Australia’s social, historic and policy context creates a distinctive context for the manifestation of socio-spatial disadvantage is further discussed in a companion paper being drafted for separate publication.

In terms of the main internationally recognised definition of income poverty, Australia’s score is somewhat inferior to those of European comparator countries. In 2005–06, 20 per cent of Australians lived in households with incomes below 60 per cent of the national median income, as compared with 16 per cent across the EU and 18 per cent in the UK. Strictly speaking, those households falling below this threshold are defined in EU parlance as being ‘vulnerable to poverty’. In Australia, persons aged over 65 are ‘vulnerable to poverty’ at 2.3 times the whole population rate. This differential is much higher than in the EU or the UK and reflects the relatively low state pension levels in Australia based on the assumption that widespread outright home ownership among older people will tend to result in minimal housing costs (Castles 1997; Yates & Bradbury 2010). However, while owner occupation is indeed high within this sector of the population, the precise figure depends on whether people living in residential care are included.

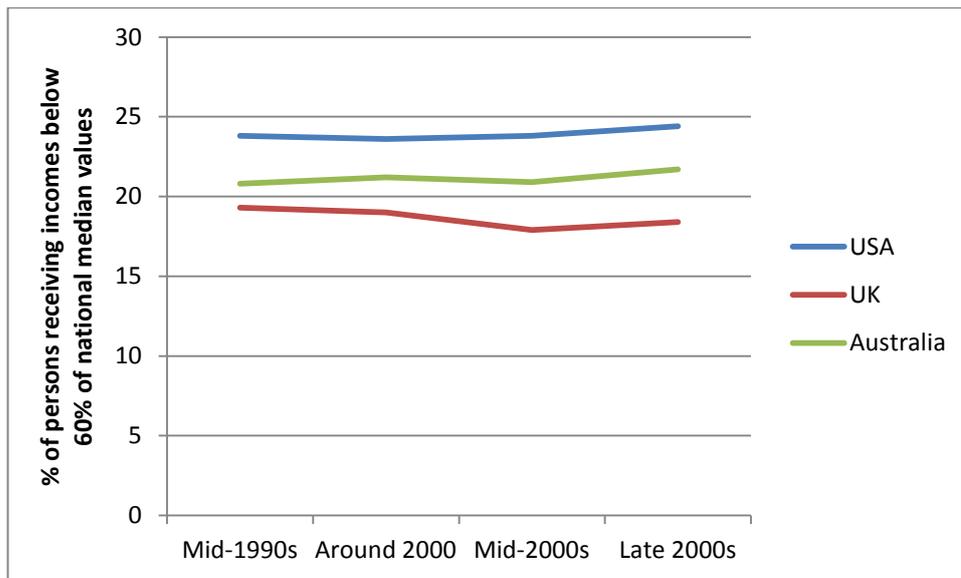
Table 1: Incidence of income poverty in Australia—Change over time

<i>Poverty threshold</i>	<i>Poverty rate (% of people) after taxes and transfers</i>			
	<i>Mid-1990s</i>	<i>Around 2000</i>	<i>Mid-2000s</i>	<i>Late 2000s</i>
Forty per cent of the current median income	5.0	5.9	4.9	7.4
Fifty per cent of the current median income	11.4	12.2	13.2	14.6
Sixty per cent of the current median income	20.8	21.2	20.9	21.7

Source: OECD website: <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=INEQUALITY>

As shown in Figure 1 below, Australia’s recent experience has paralleled that of key comparator countries in terms of income inequality trends over time.

Figure 1: Incidence of income poverty—International trend over time comparison

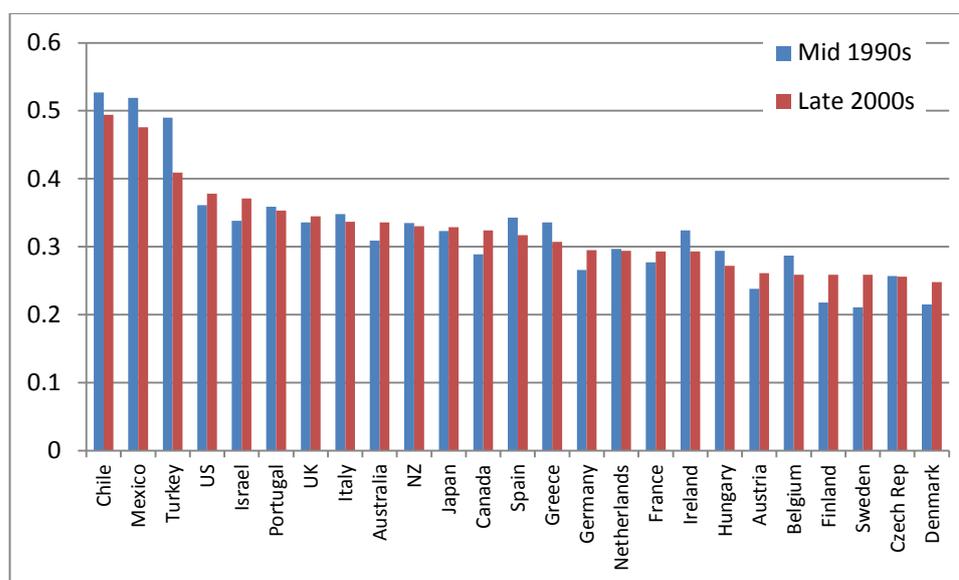


Source: OECD website: <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=INEQUALITY>.

Table 1 above illustrates that, as defined above, the incidence of ‘vulnerability to poverty’ has remained fairly constant over the past 15 years or so. The percentage of households receiving incomes below 60 per cent of the median level increased only marginally over this period from 20.8 per cent to 21.7 per cent. Especially in proportionate terms, however, the incidence of ‘extreme poverty’ increased more substantially—the percentage of households receiving incomes below 40 per cent of the median value jumped in the most recent period from 4.9 per cent to 7.4 per cent.

It is also important to recognise that relative poverty is not necessarily an enduring status. Looking at the period 2001–05 and again using the threshold of 60 per cent of median household income, HILDA survey data shows that while 38 per cent of Australians experienced poverty in at least one of the five years, 13 per cent experienced poverty in one year only, 8 per cent in two years and 7 per cent experienced poverty in all five years. Again, the households most vulnerable to persistent relative income poverty include the elderly, but also people with disabilities, single mothers, non-aged singles and people of non-English speaking backgrounds (Australian Social Inclusion Board 2009). Statistics on relative poverty based only on incomes are, of course, subject to limitations in that the people at the bottom of the distribution may be better off in a material sense if all incomes have risen and their costs have not risen disproportionately.

Figure 2: Gini Coefficient values—International comparison of distribution of individual incomes



Source: OECD website: <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?QueryId=26068>.

Note: The Gini Coefficient is a yardstick of statistical dispersion which measures the inequality of a distribution, where a value of 0 expresses perfect equality and a value of 1 expresses maximal inequality (where only one person has all the income).

However, while the incidence of poverty appears to be somewhat higher than that in the UK and EU, what evidence exists for the view that, by international standards, Australia is more generally an unequal society and becoming more so? One study focused on the changing distribution of *household* incomes in Melbourne over the period 1986–96 and identified a ‘widening ‘gap’ resulting mainly from the disproportionate increase in the numbers of low income households during the period (Reynolds & Wulff 2005). However, at a national level, analysis of *individual* (rather than household) incomes shows that the ratio between the share of national household income received by the top quintile to bottom quintile incomes is similar in Australia to the EU average and that this changed little in the decade to 2005–06 (Australian Social Inclusion Board 2009). Similarly, as shown in Figure 2 above, Australia’s Gini Coefficient score is fairly close to the middle of the international distribution and increased (worsened) only slightly in the 15-year period covered here (see Figure 2 note for definition). Modestly higher values for the UK and US indicate that these countries have somewhat more polarised income distributions as measured in this way.

As shown in Table 2 below, the decade to 2007–08 saw a modest increase in the proportion of total income received by the highest income earners (top 20% of the distribution) and corresponding slight reductions in the shares of national income going to both middle and low income cohorts. The slight increase in the Gini Coefficient here is consistent with that shown in Figure 2 above. However, these figures relate to people, not households. Relevant here is the evidence that ‘positive assortative partnering’ has increased in Australia since 1980, with the result that people are increasingly likely to partner with people of similar socio-economic status (Dockery et al. 2008).

Trends over time in income distributions are also influenced by demographic developments. This reflects the fact that different types of households have different propensities for poverty. For example, ongoing population change in Australia has

resulted in proportionate increases in single parent families and in older people living alone—both groups with an above average vulnerability to poverty (Beer & Faulkner 2009). This vulnerability is reflected in the demographic profile of social housing in Australia, with single person and single parent households accounting for approximately 75 per cent of all tenants (AIHW 2011, p.5).

Table 2: Selected measures of equivalised disposable household income and distribution in Australia

Indicator	Unit	Year		Change 1997–98— 2007–08	
		1997–98	2007–08	Absolute	%
Share of total income received by people with:					
Low incomes	%	10.8	10.1	-0.7	-6.5
Middle incomes	%	17.7	17.0	-0.7	-4.0
High incomes	%	37.9	40.5	2.6	6.9
Gini coefficient	no.	0.303	0.331	0.028	9.2

Source: ABS, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/2f762f95845417aeca25706c00834efa/27ced12db6ca9111ca25779e001c4843!OpenDocument>—data from ABS *Survey of Income and Housing*

Going beyond income poverty, Australian researchers have attempted to operationalise the concept of social exclusion (as further discussed in Section 2.2) such that the incidence of exclusion can be measured and tracked over time. Thus, Saunders et al. (2007) identified 27 measures encompassing *disengagement*, *service exclusion* and *economic exclusion*—each argued as distinct elements of social exclusion. More recently, using a multi-variate model comprising 29 separate indicators of poverty and disadvantage, Horn et al. (2011) estimate that 25 per cent of the entire national population was experiencing some form of social exclusion in 2001, with 7.5 per cent experiencing ‘deep exclusion’. Whether mainly due to economic growth or policy initiatives, by 2008 these proportions had fallen to 20 per cent and 5 per cent, respectively. As noted by the authors, it is perhaps significant that these gains were achieved against a backdrop of fairly static levels of simple income poverty (see Table 1 and Figure 1). However, they offer no possible explanations for this inconsistency.

2 CONCEPTUALISING AND MAPPING SOCIO-SPATIAL DISADVANTAGE IN AUSTRALIA

2.1 Chapter scope

Partly by way of a backdrop to the main body of the review, this short chapter opens with a short resume of the urban and social policy research literature on concepts relevant to analysis of spatially concentrated disadvantage. It should, however, be noted that since the relevant debates are covered in detail in a separate paper, this account is limited to a brief introductory discussion only. We then go on to summarise the changing geography of disadvantage in Australia's cities since the 1970s.

2.2 Conceptualising socio-spatial disadvantage

In identifying and measuring socio-spatial disadvantage in Australia, there has been a consistent focus on income poverty and the spatial concentration of low income households. Hence, Kendig's concern that, despite the then recent onset of gentrification, low income families remained heavily over-represented in the inner cities of Melbourne and Sydney in the 1970s (Kendig 1979). Likewise, the social and economic stresses on the poorest households formed the main focus of Peel's account of life in three 'poverty neighbourhoods' in the early 1990s (Peel 2003). Similarly, in their influential analyses of socio-spatial polarisation in Australian cities in the 1980s and 1990s, Bob Gregory and Boyd Hunter concentrated specifically on income poverty (Gregory & Hunter 1995, 1996; Hunter 2003).

Nevertheless, also in common with later contributors, both Kendig and Peel embraced a more multi-faceted conception of social disadvantage, as reflected in Kendig's observation that Sydney's inner suburbs were characterised by relatively high rates of mental illness, juvenile delinquency and family breakdown (Kendig 1979).

Some contributions alluding to the concept of 'locational disadvantage' have focused less on the characteristics of a population than on the attributes of localities. As defined by Maher (1992), locational disadvantage was 'one element of a more general notion of social disadvantage'. In Maher's view, such a condition resulted from '... an inability to access or to use effectively the whole range of facilities and resources which not only improve well-being but better position households to take advantage of resources available to improve their longer-term life chances ...' (p.10). Similarly, authors such as Badcock (1984, 1994) took their cue from David Harvey's observation that '... place specific urban resources such as employment opportunities, changes in property value and the availability and price of other resources are "fringe benefits" that contribute to the real income of households' (Harvey 1973, p.8). Translated to an Australian context, this generated a concern around the pressures seen as coercing low income home purchasers to locate in relatively remote outer suburban locations. This is part of a wider debate about the problematic attributes of certain localities which disadvantage those living there, as distinct from 'poor places' conceptualised simply as concentrations of people with low income or affected by other forms of deprivation. These issues are further discussed in Section 4.2.

Subsequent inputs to related debates have emphasised the travel time and associated costs imposed on workers resident in suburbs remote from centres of employment, and the vulnerability of such households to disproportionate increases in living costs due to expected future fuel price inflation (Gleeson & Randolph 2002; Dodson & Sipe 2008).

Over the past decade, the focus of Australian social and urban policy literature on socio-spatial disadvantage has shifted towards conceptualising the problem in terms of social exclusion (see Section 1.3). Seen by its advocates as a broader and more sophisticated concept than poverty, social exclusion has been viewed sceptically by some as a more politically acceptable construct. Nonetheless, Australian housing researchers have argued that social exclusion is potentially useful in focusing attention on ‘the relational processes that contribute to inequality, such as impoverished social networks that lead to material and cultural poverty’ (Arthurson & Jacobs 2003, p.24).

Although often applied in relation to individuals, social exclusion has also been deployed as a place-based descriptor denoting ‘... the concentration in one place of people experiencing multiple disadvantages and the consequent risk that this exacerbates disadvantage over time’ (Hulse et al. 2010, p.3). Interpreted in this way, social exclusion has been operationalised in recent empirical research on spatial disadvantage in Australia’s cities (Baum & Gleeson 2010; Randolph et al. 2010).

Another approach to the conceptualisation of socio-spatial disadvantage which seeks to transcend income-based measures of social exclusion is the focus on indicators of ‘social pathology’ seen as causes of intergenerational poverty. Hence, while low incomes were included as one of its measures, Vinson’s (2007) mapping study of factors that ‘cause or demonstrate disadvantage’ also included rates of computer and internet access, early school leaving, physical and mental disabilities, long-term unemployment, prison admissions and recorded child maltreatment. While such problems were shown to be spatially highly concentrated, a disadvantage of analysing the issue in this way is that, unlike census data, such statistics are generally available only at relatively coarse geographies (suburbs or postcodes).

Approaches of the kind described above reflect a recognition that income poverty is not a universal measure of social disadvantage and that there are other potentially important dimensions to be borne in mind. As shown by Randolph et al. (2010), consideration of a spectrum of different indicators can reveal significant distinctions between ‘shallow’ and ‘deep’ exclusion—see Section 4.3.

In researching social disadvantage in a spatial context, crucial questions arise in relation to the scale of analysis. When we speak of ‘concentrations of disadvantage’ are we referring to a street, an estate, a neighbourhood or a suburb—and to what extent is the answer to this question dictated by data availability considerations rather than ‘social reality’? The importance of this question arises in relation to, for example, assertions about ‘tipping points’ beyond which ‘an area’ may become subject to a vicious circle of decline (Power & Mumford 1999). Similarly, while many of the contributions to the ‘neighbourhood effects’ literature reviewed by Galster (2012a) refer to thresholds for the local concentration of disadvantaged people above which problematic consequences ensue, the scale at which such processes are said to operate is a key issue not discussed directly in the Galster review. These issues are further explored in a companion paper which focuses on the conceptualisation of socio-spatial disadvantage.

2.3 The changing geography of disadvantage in Australia’s cities

As in many European and North American cities of the time, urban poverty in Australia was until the 1970s largely concentrated in inner cities. Based on the 1975 Poverty Enquiry Income Survey, Manning (1976) found that the incidence of poverty was greater in the inner areas of Australia’s main cities than in the outer suburbs. As noted by Stimson (1982), the distribution of housing costs will have tended to compound this

distribution. Similarly, Kendig's pathbreaking 1979 analysis focused on the inner areas of Melbourne and Sydney where, partly due to the availability of cheap, albeit often rundown, housing, poor and socially disadvantaged households were relatively numerous. However, as noted by Kendig, gentrification was already affecting these areas such that rising property prices could be expected to progressively price out poorer families other than those insulated by residence in public housing.

As in UK cities such as London (Hamnett & Randolph 1988), particularly important in the gentrification process was the sale of private rented dwellings into home ownership. Where it remained, private rented housing in such areas saw rents rising well ahead of city-wide trends. In inner Melbourne, for example, median rents rose from 22 per cent of average earnings in 1971 to 27 per cent in 1996 whereas rents across Melbourne as a whole fell from 25 per cent to 21 per cent of earnings (Burke 1998).

Even at the time of Kendig's work, however, and certainly by the early 1980s, it was already recognised that public housing estates in outer suburbs were becoming sites of concentrated disadvantage. Badcock (1984) reported that public housing was increasingly concentrating single-parent families and the non-working poor and that the problems of such households were compounded in many such locations by their remoteness from employment and services.

By the early 1990s, concerns about spatial concentrations of disadvantaged ethnic minorities in outer suburban areas were coming to the fore. It had been argued that newly arriving ethnic groups such as the Vietnamese were simply replicating the earlier unproblematic experience of Southern European minorities, where spatial concentrations were 'zones of transition', not long-term residential concentrations or 'ghettos' (Jupp 1990). However, based on a census analysis of Fairfield, Sydney, Birrell (1993) argued that the concentration of Vietnamese in this locality was becoming entrenched, a claim subsequently contested (Jupp 1993, Burnley 1999).

The perceived significance of concerns about socio-spatial polarisation was enhanced during the mid-1990s by the emergence of clear-cut empirical evidence demonstrating growing geographic income differentials in Australian cities in the 15 years to 1991. This can be linked with the shift to neo-liberal, market-led economic and social policies and, within the housing area, the switch from capital subsidies to income support via Commonwealth Rental Allowance (CRA). Gregory & Hunter (1995) found that median income fell most in the poorest census tracts (or 'collector districts' CDs) and rose most in the richest CDs. In the bottom 70 per cent of CDs average household income fell in absolute terms between 1976 and 1991, while in the top 5 per cent CDs income increased by 23 per cent. Hence, the income gap between the top and bottom 5 per cent almost doubled over the period. However, while Stimson (2001) predicted that the trend towards greater spatial inequality would continue, this has yet to be demonstrated in published research.

Importantly, as emphasised in a later paper, the Gregory and Hunter analysis also showed a substantial increase in the proportion of all low income people resident in low status areas; that is, poor people were increasingly likely to live with other poor people (Hunter & Gregory 1996). Albeit probably to a lesser extent, this parallels research evidence demonstrating a substantial increase in the geographical concentration of poverty in the USA during the 1980s (again linked with the 'marketisation' of urban policy). Over that decade, people living in urban neighbourhoods of high poverty (places with a 'poverty rate' of over 40 per cent) increased by 54 per cent (Katz 2009). Residualisation of public housing was a large part of the story here, with extremely poor tenants (those with incomes below 10% of the local median value) increasing almost tenfold from 2.5 per cent to 20 per cent of

all those in public housing. And, while concentrated poverty fell back during the 1990s, it increased once again in the 2000s (Galster 2012b).

Of a similar ilk is the census-based research evidence illustrating growing socio-spatial polarisation in Britain in the decades to 2001, especially relating to unemployment and worklessness, though not to ethnicity (Dorling & Rees 2003). Investigating whether the general trend towards the concentration of poverty in Australia has continued since the mid-1990s would seem a relevant and worthwhile objective for the forthcoming research.

The argument that inner city gentrification was pushing lower income households towards the city outskirts (Yates & Vipond 1990) was much to the fore at this time. However, while this would have impacted on marginal renters and buyers, the extent to which the latter were affected was hotly debated. Citing government survey evidence from the early 1990s, it was argued that, since first home buyers accounted for only a small proportion of families purchasing homes in the urban fringes of Melbourne and Sydney, claims about gentrification pressures had been overstated (Maher et al. 1992; Wulff et al. 1993). Challenging this 'revisionist' thesis, Badcock (1994) noted that it had been seized upon by the media who interpreted it as disproving the negative impacts of gentrification in forcing lower income households out of inner cities. It was also welcome to Federal Government policy-makers because it 'served to legitimise complacency towards conditions in those regions that are now under severe stress in our cities' (p.196).

According to Badcock, the 'revisionist' thesis was based on flawed survey data resulting from the use of an 'inappropriate' spatial scale of analysis whereby a coarse geographical framework tended to average out intra-area differences in income. His view was that this 'obscur[ed] the localisation of poverty and service deprivation, especially on the outskirts of Australian cities' (Badcock 1994, p.196). However, there was at this stage a growing realisation that Australia's geography of disadvantage was becoming more complex. Hence, the comment relating to the 1992 Housing and Location Choices Survey that: 'The discovery that not all residents of outer suburban areas are poor, and that not all poor households are found on the fringe, appears to have taken the researchers and those who commissioned the research by surprise' (Beer 1994, p.181).

Nevertheless, it was becoming clear that ongoing urban evolution was taking Australia along a path somewhat divergent with international experience. 'Unlike US and British cities where unemployment, poverty and urban decay is overwhelmingly concentrated in the inner city, the spatial distribution of the poor in our big cities is [becoming] much more ambiguous' (Badcock 1997, p.246)—a view strongly echoed on the basis of Sydney-focused research by Gleeson & Randolph (2002). As early as the mid-1990s, Raskall had used Taxation Commission data to demonstrate the beginnings of the suburbanisation of poverty in Australia's cities. In all major capital cities it was found that the lowest income suburbs in 1992–93 were further from the metropolitan core than in 1978–79 (Raskall 1995, cited in Fincher & Wulff 1998).

The concerns of many 1990s critics as regards pressured moves to the periphery were focused more on lower income working households struggling to enter home ownership rather than on families necessarily confined to rented housing through very low incomes. Even in the early 1990s, private rented housing in Australia's major cities remained predominantly located in relatively central and well-serviced locations (Wulff et al. 1993). Since the mid-1990s there has been a major change with the expansion of private rented housing beyond the inner suburbs which has created the conditions for the ongoing suburbanisation of poverty identified in later contributions to these debates (Randolph & Holloway 2005a, 2007; Baum & Gleeson 2010; Reynolds

& Wulff 2005). Similar housing market processes appear to have been in train in England where the rapid growth of private renting post-1991 has been generally strongest in less prosperous areas where this form of housing has tended to be historically underrepresented (Houston & Sissons 2011). Whether the drivers of private rental expansion in Australia are similar to those in the UK is, of course, not something that can be casually assumed.

By 2001, the Sydney census tracts with most severe disadvantage were 'overwhelmingly concentrated in the middle and, to a lesser extent, outer suburbs' (Randolph & Holloway 2005b, p.57). Similar trends towards the 'suburbanisation of poverty' have recently been identified elsewhere internationally, for example in London (Lupton 2011) and Toronto (Hulchanski 2010). In Sydney, as noted by Randolph & Holloway, the most extensive areas of disadvantage now contain little public housing. This observation is also true for Melbourne (Randolph & Holloway 2007). At the same time, public housing estates—many of them located in relatively remote locations—undoubtedly continue to account for a significant proportion of disadvantaged localities in Australia's main cities. Nevertheless, the larger point emerging from this story is that the geography of poverty in Australia's cities is increasingly driven and sustained by housing market processes and not by the politico-administrative decisions that shape access to and management of public housing.

3 CAUSES OF SPATIAL DISADVANTAGE

3.1 Chapter scope and structure

The term 'disadvantaged area' could be interpreted as referring to a place that, due to its location and/or characteristics, disadvantages its residents. Conceptually, this is suggesting that place has some independent effect on those people who live there. Hence, the relevant factors contributing to the formation of such places could be described as 'causes of spatial disadvantage'. However, the current chapter is focused mainly on the structural causes of spatial disadvantage, whereas the following Chapter 4 discusses the *experience* of living in such an area for the residents concerned—including the features of a place negatively impacting on the life chances of those living there. This chapter therefore focuses mainly on the housing market and economic processes that lead to disadvantaged people being concentrated in specific areas and that contribute to the changing geography of such areas in Australia and comparable countries.

3.2 Overview

The factors that create, perpetuate and re-shape the spatial differentiation of income and wealth across cities have been extensively analysed both in Australia and elsewhere (see below). Related to this are debates on the economic and social processes that lead to the concentration of disadvantaged people in specific locations.

Three key themes stand out within this literature. First, the most extensive is work emphasising the importance of labour market processes and the changing spatial distribution of employment. Second, there are the accounts which highlight housing system factors that lead to the spatial concentration of disadvantaged people and/or influence the changing status of localities within the urban hierarchy. And third, there are also claims that social inequality results from economic structures and policy choices, that housing system drivers are relatively unimportant and that conceptualisation of the problem in spatial terms is too narrow.

Many of the contributors to these debates have aimed to explain the changing rates and geography of disadvantaged households across Australia's cities. Seminal here was the paper by Gregory and Hunter (1995) whose detailed census analysis demonstrated increased spatial polarisation of incomes in the period 1976–91 across all Australia's metropolitan regions (see Section 1.5). Subsequently, in an international comparison covering the same timeframe, Hunter (2003) showed that while such trends were common to the USA and Canada, as well as Australia, the extent of inter area inequalities remained more modest in the latter.

3.3 Labour market drivers

Observing the disproportionate increase in unemployment in inner Sydney during the 1970s, Kendig (1979) noted that, as in Melbourne's central areas, manufacturing employment contracted disproportionately in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Looking to the future, Kendig considered it possible that 'structural change in the economy will continue to keep unemployment rates high even if the economy generally improves'. Hence 'a permanent class of unemployable people could emerge in the inner suburbs' (p.151). With blue collar workers still forming 'an unusually high proportion of the resident labour force in inner Sydney and Melbourne' (p.151) these areas were seen as highly vulnerable to such a fate, with the obvious potential to compound their status as concentrations of disadvantage. While Kendig's forecast of continued unemployment among previously blue collar workers has been affirmed in subsequent studies (Beer & Forster 2002), his assumption that they will remain concentrated in

the inner-city was later challenged in studies of gentrification and the suburbanisation of disadvantage (Randolph & Holloway 2005a).

In common with most other developed countries, subsequent decades have indeed seen a continuing major restructuring of Australia's urban economy away from manufacturing and towards services and very substantial increases in labour force participation among women. More recently, this has been attributed to the aspect of 'globalisation' which has seen manufacturing jobs in higher income countries effectively exported to less affluent countries with lower wage costs (Beer & Forster 2002).

Importantly, as argued by Beer and Forster, the net expansion in service employment in the 1980s and 1990s did not necessarily benefit former blue collar workers who 'often found they did not possess the skills to find new jobs in the service economy, even if new services jobs were within travelling distance' of their place of residence (Beer & Forster 2002, p.13).

Geographically, in the CBD and inner areas of Australia's largest cities, the 1980s and 1990s saw the loss of transformative jobs (manufacturing, utilities and construction), and their replacement by service employment (finance, business and research). In overall terms, areas outside CBDs saw proportionately larger growth of employment during the period 1981–2001. However, in this new economy, inner metropolitan jobs are '21st century employment' while outer suburban employment tends to involve 'routine production' jobs (Dodson 2005). Not only are such jobs of lower labour market status, they are also most vulnerable to adverse economic shifts (Baum et al. 1999).

Moreover, the overall decentralising dynamic in employment has been uneven, with the 1980s and 1990s seeing major net job losses in many inner and middle suburbs previously reliant on manufacturing employment such as western Sydney, western and northern Melbourne and northern and western Adelaide (Beer & Forster 2002). In these terms, Baum and Mitchell (2009) identify as 'red alert suburbs' areas where existing disadvantage has been compounded by the post-Fordist economy which has rendered the local economic base obsolete.

Conversely, the concentration of 'new economy' jobs in northern Sydney in the latter part of the 20th century 'only served to intensify the relative advantage' of suburbs in this area (Randolph & Holloway 2005b, p.55). Hence, in the 30 years to 2001 the concentration of unemployment moved from the inner city to the middle suburbs. The spatial pattern of income distribution underwent a similar shift. Beyond this simple statement, however, it is recognised that the links between labour market change and the geography of disadvantage are complex and cannot be reduced to a simple formula.

However, although local labour market restructuring involving plant closures may initially lead to spatial concentrations of unemployment soon after the economic catastrophe occurs, the persistence of such a pattern will depend partly on the housing circumstances of those involved. While outright homeowners and public housing tenants may be somewhat insulated from the effects of a substantial loss of income, those buying with a mortgage or renting privately may face the need to move to cheaper homes and, hence, to move away from their former homes. This implies that, while 'de-industrialisation' may create more poverty and inequality, it may not be a strong contributory factor in the explanation of spatially concentrated disadvantage.

3.4 Housing system drivers

Among Australian policy-makers and some academics there has been a tendency to see problems around concentrations of disadvantage as solely linked with large public

housing estates. This is consistent with the linkage between social exclusion and social housing estates often made in the UK (Arthurson & Jacobs 2003). Given that it was specifically built to house industrial workers, Australia's public housing bore much of the brunt of contracting manufacturing employment. Its disproportionate exposure to associated job losses contributed to the rise in worklessness among those living on public housing estates.

Equally, as public housing has contracted both proportionately and absolutely over the past 20 years due to a retrenchment of investment by governments, public housing authorities have come under increasing pressure to target lettings to the most disadvantaged (Jacobs et al. 2011). The associated filtering process has compounded the impact of economic change as described above, with the inflow of new tenants becoming increasingly dominated by workless and/or high needs households. There has also been a redefinition of the 'problem' since the mid-1990s away from 'unemployment' and towards 'worklessness'. Public housing is characterised by a high percentage of working age people who are not in the labour force (i.e. neither employed nor actively looking for work), associated with a second wave welfare reform (Hulse et al. 2011).

An extra turn of this screw was provided by the Commonwealth Government's increased priority on tackling homelessness from 2007, one knock-on effect of which was a strengthened injunction on state housing authorities to accommodate formerly homeless people (disproportionately subject to social disadvantage). Also, as noted in Chapter 4, the problems of large public housing estates are compounded when—as in Sydney—they tend to be located in places remote from jobs and services, partly because in better serviced locations a higher proportion of public housing units were sold to tenants (Badcock 1984, p.223). Hence, housing system processes have reinforced labour market transformations in turning public renting into an extremely residualised tenure, characterised by concentrated poverty and worklessness.

Nonetheless, while larger public housing estates undoubtedly continue to feature strongly on Australia's map of social disadvantage there has been a growing realisation that there is another side to this picture. As noted in Section 2.3, the geography of urban poverty and exclusion increasingly features middle ring suburbs where private rental housing predominates (Randolph & Holloway 2005b, p.57). In a study focusing on the period 1991–2001, it was found that in both Adelaide and Sydney (although not in Melbourne) there had been a general tendency for concentrations of low income private renters to move outwards from inner city areas during this time. At postcode level, concentrations of (private renter) households in receipt of Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA) were most prominent in Sydney although also apparent in both Adelaide and Melbourne (Randolph & Holloway 2007). It is not, however, suggested that the private rental sector is exclusively associated with low income housing: rather, what appears to be happening here is a bifurcation of the sector with higher income childless professionals accommodated in inner urban neighbourhoods while lower income families with children are pushed outwards into middle ring or outer suburban locations. Especially crucial here is the spatial pattern of the cheapest rental stock which will inevitably attract low income households. A critical question, therefore, is why the stock is spatially segregated by rent range: does this, for example, reflect historical patterns in building design or property types or are factors such as the blighting effect of polluting industrial facilities or major transport routes more important?

As seen by Randolph and Holloway (2007), important in shaping Sydney's increasingly suburban, private rent-associated pattern of disadvantage is the location and built form of the city's middle suburbs, areas primarily built in the three decades to

1970. While inner areas have undergone gentrification and most outer suburbs have enhanced their socio-economic status, these areas have experienced the problems of a cheaply built and deteriorating housing stock which, because of its relatively low value, has proved attractive to poorer households excluded from both inner and outer suburban areas.

A somewhat contrary view advanced by Arthurson and Jacobs (2003, p.17) was that, in identifying the causes of social exclusion, there has sometimes been an excessive focus on housing market processes which has risked overstating their role in creating the problems associated with poor estates. Notwithstanding this perspective, in a companion paper to this review we seek to explore in greater detail the links between housing market processes and the spatial pattern of disadvantage in Australia's cities.

3.5 Policy drivers

Chapter 5 of this report discusses official policy responses to concentrations of disadvantage in Australia and elsewhere; that is, programs or expenditures initiated by governments to disperse or ameliorate concentrated poverty. However, a number of academic commentators have observed that, far from improving the situation, some policy directions have contributed to or compounded housing market processes resulting in today's largely suburban concentrations of poor or excluded households.

Relevant here are the analyses which point to the active role of government in contributing to the gentrification of inner city areas traditionally accommodating substantial low income populations. Adopting the concept of distinct waves of gentrification (Hackworth & Smith 2001), Shaw, for example, argues that urban policy played a significant role in the first two pulses of activity as these affected Australia's major cities. Hence, 'first wave gentrification' in Melbourne in the late 1960s was in part stimulated by 'government strategies such as restoration grants and easing access to home ownership' (Shaw 2012, p.133). Similarly, in common with commentators on public housing estate regeneration undertaken since the 1990s in other countries (e.g. Glynn 2012), Shaw sees policy-makers as having contributed to 'third wave gentrification'. This thesis is discussed in more detail in Section 5.3.

As noted in previous sections, the concentration of poor people on public housing estates has resulted, in part, from increasingly needs-based housing allocation rules which have aimed to target provision towards those most disadvantaged in securing accommodation through the market. A key milestone in this process was the introduction of 'segmented waiting lists' to prioritise the most vulnerable households, as adopted by Victoria in 1997 (Shaw 2012).

Quite apart from the negative consequences of living in a 'poverty neighbourhood', the social exclusion of public housing tenants is compounded for many by the inaccessible location of their home. Yet the geographical distribution of public housing is clearly the result of historic policies. Implicated here is the historic state government preference for siting estates in outer suburban locations. This has been attributed to '... an insistence on assembling parcels of land large enough to return scale economies in estate development ... [resulting in] the creation of forsaken suburban wastelands on the far periphery of metropolitan settlement' (Mendelsohn 1979, p.273). Similarly, the geographically inappropriate location of much post-war public housing development has been attributed to both inadequate funding (Atkinson & Jacobs 2010) and incoherent strategic planning (Troy 1999).

It also needs to be recognised that the current spatial distribution of public housing is a residual pattern which also results from the historic disposal of state-owned properties, predominantly in the better positioned estates, hence contributing to an

over-concentration of rental accommodation on the fringe: 'it is fair to claim that in this respect the public housing bodies defaulted on their tenants by passing on to them the costs of access to jobs and services' (Badcock 1984, p.223).

More broadly, as observed by Badcock in the 1980s, 'Urban investment undertaken by the states have always favoured the core of metropolitan primates at the expense of proliferating suburbs' (Badcock 1984, pp.251–2). An associated critique of policy thinking in the 1980s and 1990s is that Australian officialdom was at this time overly influenced by a mistaken belief that Australia was at risk of developing inner city ghettos of the kind familiar in North America. Hence, little or no thought was given to addressing suburban poverty.

Also potentially relevant to the theme of policies exacerbating the spatial polarisation of disadvantage is the greatly increased 'place marketing' emphasis of metropolitan governance in Australia and elsewhere in the post-1990 era of 'urban boosterism' (Newman & Thornley 1995). Notwithstanding the instance of Sydney's Olympic Park, this approach tends to focus investment in facilities and amenities in inner urban locations.

4 CONSEQUENCES OF SPATIAL CONCENTRATIONS OF DISADVANTAGE

4.1 Chapter scope and structure

This chapter looks at the impacts of spatially concentrated disadvantage. It includes consideration of 'neighbourhood effects' arising from the concentration of poverty itself and which can mean that residence in a poor area compounds individual disadvantage. First, however, the chapter discusses what are sometimes termed 'correlated neighbourhood effects' in the form of physical factors that can disadvantage areas but which, by the same token, can be considered as consequences of spatial disadvantage for local residents. This refers to the housing stock and the local environment, as well as an area's location relative to employment and services. Also, ahead of the main neighbourhood effects discussion, we review the albeit limited Australian evidence on the experience of living in a disadvantaged area.

4.2 Physical factors disadvantaging areas and their residents

4.2.1 Substandard housing

Widespread substandard housing in numerous inner city neighbourhoods was a key factor highlighted in Kendig's analysis as disadvantaging many of Australia's inner city residents in the 1970s. The Chicago school analysis (Park et al. 1925; Burgess 1929) would have interpreted poor condition homes in neighbourhoods located closest to city centres as a consequence of proximity to an expanding central business district (CBD) where the effects of re-development pressures created by rising land values could blight existing dwellings. Similarly, in Sydney and Melbourne, a 1940s/1950s phase of residential rent control was seen by Kendig as having discouraged private landlord investment.

As in many early 20th century North American and European cities, a factor disadvantaging many inner areas of Australia's main cities was the predominance of housing stock inherited from the 19th century era of urban expansion (especially that constructed prior to the enforcement of building codes) when the bulk of houses were cheaply constructed to low space standards. Exemplifying such problems were the 'minute, single-floored, stone hovels with frontages of two and a half metres, in the back alleyways of Woolloomooloo (Sydney's first 'outer' suburb away from the city centre)' (Kendig 1979, p.39).

On the other hand, Kendig saw the relatively low cost of housing available in rundown inner suburbs as a positive attraction for recent migrants and other newly formed households implicitly outweighing associated poor property condition. As an immigrant society such considerations are potentially particularly relevant in Australia. Likewise, more recent research has argued that deteriorating and partially obsolete housing stock in many middle ring suburbs disadvantages residents yet at the same time proves attractive to lower income households seeking affordable accommodation in a pressured housing market (Randolph & Holloway 2005a). To the extent that such stock is spatially concentrated in defined localities it may create added disadvantage for residents through stigmatisation of the place, with concomitant penalties exacted in terms of job prospects, public service delivery, etc.

For those living in public housing, the financially unsustainable arrangements of the past 20 years (Hall & Berry 2004, 2007) have inevitably led to gradual physical deterioration. This disadvantages any area where such properties are significantly represented and compounds the filtering effects of residential mobility whereby more able tenants are incentivised to exit the sector, almost certainly to be replaced by new entrants more disadvantaged than their predecessors.

4.2.2 Environmental pollution

A residential area and its inhabitants may be disadvantaged by the proximity to environmental pollution. Historically, as in the inner Sydney of the 1970s, this could include industrial effluent or noxious fumes (Kendig 1979). With economic and spatial restructuring and the associated relocation of polluting industries, such problems may now affect local areas other than the inner city. More importantly, subsequent economic change almost certainly means that noise pollution—especially resulting from heavy traffic—will have become more important as a local ‘blighting factor’.

4.2.3 Locational disadvantage

As noted in Section 2.2, this concept refers to the attributes of an area which disadvantage people who live there. This may include places where local services such as schools or environmental management are ‘below standard’ or where good quality services, facilities, retail outlets or employment opportunities are distant or otherwise physically inaccessible.

In the literature, particular attention has been focused on the costs of remoteness from employment and/or services (note that, as used here, the term ‘remote’ does not refer to communities in regional Australia distant from major centres). Even as far back as the mid-1970s it was recognised that lack of access to services in some outer metropolitan suburbs compounded the problems of certain groups of residents (Commission of Inquiry into Poverty 1975). More recently, researchers have highlighted the extent to which residents of locationally disadvantaged areas may be deprived of adequate access to health services (Klein 2004).

The ‘exclusionary’ consequences of gentrification in Australia’s major cities have been widely seen as problematic in terms of the implication that less affluent households have been increasingly pushed towards the urban margins (Yates & Vipond 1990). Here, they are remote from centrally located jobs and services, and must absorb high travel costs in order to access employment and facilities. Indeed, validating the arguments advanced by Maher and others (see Section 2.2) ‘transport poverty’ has been found to be widespread in western Sydney (Gleeson & Randolph 2002). This condition relates to households forced to incur more travel costs than they can reasonably afford.

As emphasised by Dodson and Sipe (2008), because they are more car dependent and need to travel longer distances, residents of outer suburban and urban fringe locations will experience disproportionate increases in transport poverty due to projected future increases in fossil fuel costs. This follows from the observation that whereas residents of inner eastern Sydney in 2003 travelled an average of 10 kilometres per day and used their cars for 49 per cent of all journeys, the comparable figures for outer western Sydney were 33 kilometres and 79 per cent.

Nevertheless, locational disadvantage is far from a universal problem for residents of outer suburbs. As stressed by Maher (1994), many of those living in such areas have the capacity to overcome any problems potentially posed by remoteness or may have made a positive choice to accept such limitations as a trade-off for entry to home ownership or the ability to live in a larger home. Further, as noted by Fincher and

Iveson (2008), to measure disadvantage simply by looking at one's place of residence 'is clearly an inadequate view of people's relations to place, and is a reason to think about people's mobility as a source of opportunity, rather than just to focus on an area as a static provider of opportunity to those located within it' (Fincher & Iveson 2008, p.34; emphasis in source; see also Hulse et al. 2010)).

4.3 The experience of living in a 'disadvantaged area'

As demonstrated in this review, there is a substantial body of literature on spatial concentrations of disadvantage in Australia's cities including numerous quantitative analyses drawing on secondary sources, especially census data (e.g. Gregory & Hunter 1995; Burnley 1999; Randolph & Holloway 2005a, 2006). Among the relatively scant research on the experience of living in disadvantaged areas, a notable early example was Peel's 1990s study of three low status neighbourhoods in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. Resident testimony emphasised labour market disadvantage stemming from ill-health and lack of marketable skills, as well as respondents' feelings of powerlessness, hopelessness and despair aggravated by dependence on welfare benefits (Peel 2003).

Unfortunately, it is not immediately clear whether the negative impacts of individuals' poverty as described above were exacerbated by living in a 'poor area' (whether defined as a place where poor people live, or as a place which 'disadvantages' its residents). Thus, we cannot be sure whether they can be accurately portrayed as a 'consequence' of the spatial concentration of disadvantage. Nevertheless, on the other side of the ledger, Peel's account highlighted some benefits of solidarity resulting from living in a 'working class' community. These 'stories of hope' included community engagement and capacity building, the sharing of problems and harmonious multiculturalism, women's activism, friendship and volunteering.

An echo of this side of life in (these particular) disadvantaged neighbourhoods comes from more recent research on a large New South Wales public housing estate redevelopment project involving a degree of population displacement. In the 'Leaving Minto' study, Stubbs (2005) found former Minto tenants dispersed to other areas emphasised the strong community, friendships and networks they had enjoyed in their old neighbourhood. While they acknowledged the negative aspects of life on the estate, such as problem neighbours, drugs and thefts, for many residents the positive features of the place far outweighed such problems. Similar findings had emerged from research on the contemporary Kensington Estate redevelopment in Melbourne (Hulse et al. 2004).

Nevertheless, recent survey evidence demonstrates that not all of those living in Australia's disadvantaged suburbs are socially engaged. Applying the concept of social exclusion to research in four disadvantaged communities in Sydney, Randolph et al. (2010) found that 45 per cent of residents were socially excluded as regards 'social and civic engagement'. This finding was drawn from a household survey to assess the incidence of such exclusion in terms of six distinct dimensions of the phenomenon—the other five dimensions were 'neighbourhood', 'access (to services)', 'crime and security', 'community identity' and 'economic'. Across the four areas, some 42 per cent of residents were judged as excluded in relation to two or more of the six dimensions while 16 per cent were classed as subject to multiple exclusion, since they were deprived in relation to three or more dimensions. However, while confirming that social exclusion was prevalent among private tenants as well as residents of state housing, the research found that multiple exclusion was considerably less prevalent among the former (12% of those surveyed) than the latter (21%). Accessibility and

economic exclusion were found to be ‘the key tipping factors’ accentuating the disadvantage of public housing tenants here.

Crucial here is the point that not all deprived areas are exclusionary. Through the current research, the authors aspire to improve understanding of the role (positive as well as negative) that such areas play in enabling households to access independent housing and to facilitate subsequent residential mobility.

4.4 Neighbourhood effects deriving from spatially concentrated poverty

As yet largely absent from Australian research has been any explicit attempt to detect or measure the extent to which ‘neighbourhood effects’ (NE) compound the poverty and disadvantage which affect people as individuals or households when they happen to live among other poor or otherwise disadvantaged people. The NE hypothesis refers to the notion that living in a ‘poor neighbourhood’ can compound the impact of poverty and disadvantage affecting an individual. In other words, ‘deprived people who live in deprived areas may have their life chances reduced compared to their counterparts in more socially mixed neighbourhoods ... living in a neighbourhood which is predominantly poor is itself a source of disadvantage’ (Atkinson & Kintrea 2001, pp.3–4).

While contested debates on these issues continue, one recent review concluded that research evidence from the US and Europe amounts to a ‘convincing’ case that ‘disadvantaged individuals are significantly harmed by the presence of sizeable disadvantaged groups in their neighbourhood, likely due to negative peer/role modelling, weak social norms/control, limited resource-networks, and stigmatisation mechanisms’ (Galster 2009, p.25). Especially given that there is as yet little Australian evidence on this subject, empirical research in the Australian context is clearly desirable.

Nevertheless, demonstrating official recognition of the NE thesis within the Australian Federal Government, a recent officially sponsored report commented: ‘It has been found that when social disadvantage becomes entrenched within a limited number of localities a disabling social climate can develop that is more than the sum of individual and household disadvantages and the prospect is of increased disadvantage being passed from one generation to the next’ (Vinson 2009a, p.2). Another contemporary official publication refers to ‘the social climate of an area’ which, it is argued, can be negatively affected by the long-term persistence of poverty (Vinson 2009b, p.7). These interpretations of the NE concept pay tribute to a ‘neo liberal’ theme in the American NE literature which emphasises the importance of a ‘culture of poverty’ or ‘urban underclass’ (Wilson 1987; Murray 1990).

At least until now, specifically Australian contributions to debates on neighbourhood effects have been quite limited. Therefore, given the importance of the concept as an underpinning principle of urban policy, the following paragraphs recount key themes embedded in the extensive American and European literature on this subject. However, rather than reviewing individual contributions to this debate, reliance is placed largely on the meta review conducted by Galster (2012a). Illustrating the multi-faceted nature of the concept, Galster identified 15 mechanisms of neighbourhood effects (which can be positive or negative) and splits them into four broad groups (see Table 3).

Table 3: Mechanisms of neighbourhood effects

<i>Broad rubrics</i>	<i>Specific mechanisms</i>
Social-interactive mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Social contagion → Collective socialisation → Social networks → Social cohesion and control → Competition (for resources/opportunities) → Relative deprivation → Parental mediation
Environmental mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Exposure to violence → Physical surroundings → Toxic exposure
Geographical mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Spatial mismatch/accessibility → Public services
Institutional mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Stigmatisation → Local institutional resources → Local market actors

Derived from Galster 2012a.

Based on his review of the quantitative and qualitative research findings on each of the 15 mechanisms, Galster summarised his findings as follows:

1. In the US and Europe, high concentrations of socially disadvantaged households (often containing high ethnic minorities—Hispanic or black in the US, immigrant in Europe—populations) are consistently linked to weaker cohesion and structures of informal social controls. This produces consequences such as neighbourhood delinquency, criminality and mental stress.
2. Poverty rates in the US appear related to outcomes in a non-linear (threshold) fashion suggesting that social contagion (peers) and/or collective socialisation (role models, norms) forms of causal links are operating. European evidence on this is inconclusive.
3. In the US, the presence of affluent neighbours can provide positive externalities to their less well-off neighbours, but not where the social distance between them is excessive. Most US and European evidence suggests the (positive) influence on vulnerable groups of advantaged neighbours is less than the (negative) influence of disadvantaged neighbours. However, this might not be about behaviour change but simply that more affluent and educated people are better at negotiation for better child care, schools, etc.
4. In the US, there is little evidence that competition for resources or relative deprivation mechanisms are operating, but European research suggests that social mixing (to counter NE) results in few benefits and some possible harm for disadvantaged groups.
5. In the US, there is little evidence of interaction between different socio-economic groups within the same neighbourhood.
6. Local environmental differences are substantial and likely to produce differentials in mental and physical health. Exposure to pollutants and violence produces negative health consequences.

7. Differential accessibility to work is more severe in the US than Europe and can explain labour force and education outcomes.
8. Institutional processes involving 'place-based stigmatisation' are likely to exist but there is insufficient evidence to generalise on this.
9. There is probably a substantial, albeit indirect, effect on children and youth that transpires through neighbourhood effects as these impact on the parents of young people living in areas of concentrated poverty.

As noted earlier, while Galster's analysis frequently refers to 'neighbourhoods' the precise scale at which NE processes operate is not discussed in detail.

Among Galster's group (d) NE mechanisms is stigmatisation. This is one aspect of the NE thesis which has been recently considered specifically with respect to Australian experience. Drawing on earlier work in the UK (Hastings & Dean 2003), a 2011 AHURI study argued that social housing neighbourhoods in Australia tend to be 'subject to popular vilification' and that, apart from its consequences for tenants' self-esteem, such stigmatisation can have substantive negative consequences in terms of "postcode" discrimination in the job market' (Jacobs et al. 2011, p.19).

Partly because of their built form, many larger public housing estates are highly visible instances of concentrated deprivation and, hence, particularly liable to being singled out in this way. Especially, as in Sydney, when many such estates are situated at or near the urban fringe, stigmatisation only compounds the locational disadvantages of living in such places. Where, as contrastingly seen in Melbourne, many such estates are in inner urban locations now surrounded by affluent areas, this could also compound stigmatisation.

The importance of stigmatisation as a factor disadvantaging those living in certain places was earlier highlighted by Powell (1993) who argued that this was general to poor places in Australia's suburbs. 'Whereas rural poverty is portrayed as an 'heroic' struggle in the Australian media, suburban poverty—particularly that of Western Sydney—is portrayed as being the fault of the suburban poor themselves' (p.11). While, within the Sydney context, this was not targeted exclusively on public housing, it was seen as partly inspired by the relocation of inner city slum dwellers to such estates in the western extremities of the city.

5 POLICY RESPONSES TO SPATIALLY CONCENTRATED DISADVANTAGE

5.1 Chapter scope

This chapter reviews academic literature on official policy responses to concentrations of disadvantage in Australia. For the most part, these have been motivated directly by a concern about concentrations of poor housing which, through the operation of market or administrative processes, have tended to be occupied by low income households. However, to a greater extent than in Chapters 3 and 4, the following account also encompasses international perspectives. In part, this reflects the fact that Australia has until recently seen relatively few federal or state initiatives or spending programs to address spatially-concentrated disadvantage and even fewer which have been evaluated in any systematic way. Especially in terms of its coverage of the international literature, the chapter also explores the concepts underpinning the design of area-based interventions (e.g. the thinking underlying the swing towards community participation and poverty deconcentration).

Before proceeding further it should be acknowledged that, while many of those cited below have argued that urban policy in Australia (and elsewhere) needs to recover a spatial dimension, the principle of area-based intervention to counter poverty and disadvantage is not universally acclaimed. Hence, critics saw the UK government's late 1990s policy emphasis on 'the worst estates' was interpreted as meaning that '... social and spatial inequalities in [the] rest of the country disappear from view' (Watt & Jacobs 2000, p.18). This was considered politically convenient in enabling the government to 'demonstrate its concern to address "social exclusion"' while avoiding the need for 'societal-wide wealth and income redistribution' (Watt & Jacobs 2000, p.25). Similarly, it was argued that ABIs tend to 'deflect our attention from ... the causes of ... problems and their potential solutions as lying outside the deprived areas' (Oatley 2000).

A broader and less polemical critique of ABIs emphasises their perceived 'marginality ... in addressing the most severe manifestations of poverty and disadvantage' (Stewart 2001, p.3). Invoking an idea coined in the UK Government's 1977 Inner Cities white paper, this perspective instead advocates an emphasis on 'bending main programs' to the benefit of poor areas (Rhodes 1988). The remainder of this chapter is structured as follows. First, to provide a historical backdrop to the main discussion and, since these could be regarded as the antecedents of recent initiatives and programs to tackle spatially-concentrated disadvantage, we review slum clearance programs. This is followed by a brief account of the policy debate on addressing locational disadvantage which followed on from the termination of slum clearance activity in Australia. The main body of the chapter is then divided between sections on public housing estate renewal and other place-based initiatives to address spatial concentrations of disadvantage. Finally, we summarise the findings of two recent Australian studies which have sought to distil the key conditions for policy effectiveness in this area.

5.2 Historic antecedents

5.2.1 Slum clearance

In Australia, as in other countries covered in our review, area-based interventions (ABIs) of the past 20 years have, by and large, focused on rundown public housing estates. Explicitly housing-led programs of this kind are discussed in Section 5.3. However, some of the estates subject to such action were, themselves, the product of

an earlier phase of place-based interventions—namely, the clearance of privately owned slum housing earlier in the twentieth century. As reported by Kendig (1979), the 1950s and especially the 1960s saw fairly substantial slum removal activity in Sydney and Melbourne.

The clearance programs administered by the housing commissions of New South Wales and Victoria were aimed at eliminating the legacy of poorly constructed and otherwise obsolete property remaining in occupation in the inner areas of both cities. Privately initiated and funded renewal had already made very substantial inroads into the extensive areas pinpointed as ripe for clearance in the immediate post-war period. Hence, as reported by Kendig, 'few if any' areas of inner Sydney were still slums by the 1960s and the actual area cleared by 1970 totalled 'less than 1 per cent of the area that had been designated for clearance in 1948 by the Cumberland County Plan' (p.138). Where it did take place, action was focused on areas where it was judged that there was least potential for the market-led renovation.

Although relatively small in scale by comparison with countries such as the Netherlands, the UK or the USA, the overall extent of slum clearance was much greater in Melbourne than in Sydney, although it did occur in both cities. By 1970, the Victorian Housing Commission (VHC) had demolished two-and-a-half times as many houses and built two-and-a-half times as many replacement flats as its New South Wales counterpart (Jones 1972). Even more remarkable is the assertion that replacement housing constructed in clearance areas accounted for 70 per cent of Victoria's entire public housing stock in 1970—as compared with just 9 per cent in New South Wales (Jones 1972). Hence, somewhat in contrast with many slum clearance programs in Britain, the extent to which such activity resulted in the dispersal of former slum dwellers to suburban public housing estates (or, indeed, new towns) may have been relatively modest in Melbourne.

Even in Melbourne, however, clearance activity was relatively small in scale by comparison with such action in the UK. Kendig estimates that, in total, 'more than 10 000 people' were displaced by VHC programs. This compares with more than 1.3 million properties cleared by local authorities in Britain between the late 1930s and the mid-1970s (Lowe 2011).

Another interesting contrast relates to the tenure of demolished housing. According to Jones (1972) at the height of the VHC program in the late 1960s, as many as two-thirds of those displaced by demolitions were owner occupiers. In the UK, an estimated 80 per cent of demolished dwellings had been privately rented (Lowe 2011). In part, this probably reflects the fact that much clearance activity in the UK took place before 1960 when private renting continued to form the majority housing tenure at the national scale. In Australia, by contrast, home ownership was already dominant by this time. For the most part, however, there was similarity in that replacement state-constructed accommodation consisted mainly of flats, often high rise estates sometimes built at very high densities. Kendig reports that New South Wales Housing Commission slum clearance schemes in the late 1960s were developed at twice the density of the homes demolished. This is consistent with the general rule that slum clearance in Sydney and Melbourne did not routinely involve mass displacement of populations to outlying locations. Although off site rehousing was involved in some schemes, the programs were not inspired by any aspiration to 'deconcentrate poverty'. Rather, it has been argued that electoral considerations motivated the containment of affected working class populations within their neighbourhoods of origin (Troy 2012).

While not incorporating 'slum clearance', aspects of urban policy under the Whitlam Government in the 1970s could perhaps be seen as leading on from the 1960s

demolition programs seen in Melbourne and Sydney. Likewise targeting areas of relatively low value inner city housing, policy aimed to counter pressures resulting from 'gentrification and commercial and industrial intrusion' into working class neighbourhoods (Badcock 1984, p.300). This involved state purchase of large inner city residential estates being traded by large institutional landlords in Glebe (Sydney) and Emerald Hill (Melbourne) and by government, itself, in Woolloomooloo (Sydney). Such action could be seen as paralleling the local authority 'municipalisation' of privately rented housing in inner London and other English cities during the 1970s where rundown homes were acquired for refurbishment and reletting as council housing. However, with the change of government in Canberra in 1975, Australian acquisition activity of this kind was wound down, with the Keating Government's 'Building Better Cities' initiative only a partial successor program (see below).

5.2.2 Addressing locational disadvantage?

Perhaps influenced by the upsurge of interest in the issue as seen in contemporary academic debates (see Section 4.2), the early 1990s saw indications that, in moving away from a focus on the worst housing stock, Australian urban policy would attempt to incorporate measures to redress 'locational disadvantage' not specifically related to property condition in a locality. This referred to a 1990 stated Prime Ministerial acknowledgement that the concept of locational disadvantage needed to be incorporated within the government's social justice strategy (Fincher 1991). As Fincher saw it, this was as an encouraging official recognition of 'the spatial basis of social inequality' within the context of 'broader government debates about urban form and the infrastructure costs incurred by continuing urban sprawl' (Fincher 1991, pp.132–33).

Subsequently, however, the Keating Government's 'Building Better Cities' (BBC) program was seen as having progressively downplayed social justice concerns in favour of 'a striving for the kinds of systemic and operational efficiencies that make for more "productive cities"' (Badcock 1994, p.195). In Badcock's view, the federal administration had ignored the findings of the Taskforce on Regional Development in the mistaken belief that a rising tide raises all boats. Citing evidence produced by Gregory and Hunter that disadvantaged areas do not necessarily benefit from economic recovery, Badcock criticised policy-maker assumptions on the grounds that 'wrecked boats don't float' (p.195).

Official recognition of locational disadvantage as a policy-relevant issue was recently re-emphasised in a request from the current Prime Minister for the Social Inclusion Board to advise on the matter (Australian Social Inclusion Board, 2011) and this line of thinking is reflected in the SIB's recent work on governance models for place-based interventions (Australian Social Inclusion Board, 2011).

5.3 Housing-led regeneration

5.3.1 Post-1990 regeneration of Australia's public housing estates

As noted above, for the past 20–25 years ABI activity relevant to urban poverty has largely focused on the upgrading and/or redevelopment of problematic public housing schemes. This has been true in Australia just as in the USA and the UK. In Australia, by the mid-1990s, the need for reinvestment programs targeted on public housing estates had been recognised by most state governments (Arthurson 1998; Randolph & Judd 2000). During the early part of this period, such projects were often part-funded by the commonwealth government through the BBC program—a development seen by Badcock (1995) as 'ironic' given its coincidence with drastic commonwealth-imposed limitations on states' access to mainstream housing investment.

ABIs of this kind stem from a conceptualisation of the problem as centred on rundown housing in need of renewal. However, although justified largely in terms of upgrading poor quality homes, state government housing schemes identified for regeneration have been, inherently, areas of concentrated disadvantage. According to Arthurson (1998), it was unclear whether the extent of deprivation or the actual severity of housing defects were prime factors in estate selection for renewal investment in the 1990s. As confirmed by subsequent practice, the potential scale of redevelopment opportunities has, in fact, often been a critical consideration. In part, this reflects the realities of the policy context in which state housing authorities have been operating in recent decades—in particular their chronically underfunded circumstances and the consequent pressure for regeneration projects to be self-financing.

Typically, as reported by Randolph & Judd (2000), Australia's 1990s estate renewal initiatives encompassed asset improvement, stock demolition or disposal, community development, 'management-based strategies' (including stock transfer to community housing providers), and whole of government approaches (e.g. 'place management'). In the terms popularised in debates on ABIs in the UK, projects of this kind could be characterised as 'housing-led regeneration' (Kintrea 2007; Pinnegar 2009). Beyond this, according to Arthurson (1998), such schemes had in common the stated claim to incorporate a range of components over and above physical renewal of housing stock. Rather, their proponents stated adherence to a 'comprehensive' regeneration model incorporating social and economic renewal and as promoted by the BBC Program (Department of Housing and Regional Development 1995).

Early approaches to public housing estate renewal schemes included schemes such as the New South Wales' 'Neighbourhood Improvement Program' which emphasised the improved provision of services (e.g. transport) to disadvantaged estates and incorporated local employment conditions in contract clauses. In South Australia, by contrast, Arthurson (1998) reported an emphasis on de-concentrating poverty via tenure diversification and the displacement of some former estate residents.

The following sections explore aspects of housing-led regeneration policies incorporated to a greater or lesser extent within recent estate renewal programs in Australia and in other countries covered in this review.

5.3.2 De-concentrating poverty

Critics saw Australian public housing renewal projects of the 1990s as typically 'approached from economic and urban policy perspectives, with social objectives couched in terms of improving social justice through economic benefits and housing options provided' (Stevens 1995, p.86). According to a more recent contributor, 'the 'problems' of poor households living in public housing have been reconstructed as problems of place in order to support a policy intervention [redevelopment] which is closely linked with dominant neo-liberal ideology and economic prescriptions' (Darcy 2010, p.11). More recently, drawing attention to estate renewal plans incorporating reduced on-site numbers of public housing units, it has been argued that the dispersal of disadvantaged populations has become a key focus of urban policy in New South Wales (Rogers forthcoming, 2012). In support of this contention, attention is drawn to a number of recent and ongoing Housing New South Wales estate renewal projects incorporating the planned reduction of on-site public housing provision.

Thus, it has been contended, such schemes have not necessarily been aimed primarily at benefiting the existing community. Rather, changing the resident population has often been a central objective and not simply an unfortunate side effect to be minimised. Moreover, 'poverty de-concentration' as a concept can be portrayed as somewhat controversial in its association with 'conceptions of urban poverty that

blame inner-city problems on the alleged social pathology of the poor' (Crump 2002, p.581). On this basis, neighbourhood problems can be 'solved' by removing some of the local populace. As seen by some critics, such policies are concerning partly because of their effect in undermining community voice where established spokespersons for a locality are rehoused elsewhere (August & Walks 2012; Rogers, forthcoming, 2012). However, the arguably larger question of the social and housing quality outcomes of off-site displacement has yet to be researched in the Australian context.

Nevertheless, as noted above, the concept of 'de-concentrating poverty' was reportedly being invoked as an intentional and desirable component of some estate regeneration projects in Australia as early as the 1990s. This takes inspiration from one of the key themes of public housing estate redevelopment in the USA. Here, the ground-breaking 1992 HOPE VI program was initiated partly in response to the marked increase in the spatial concentration of poverty during the 1980s—see Section 2.3 (Katz 2009). HOPE VI redevelopment schemes included help for displaced tenants to access private rented housing in less disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In part, the need for such action was dictated by the HOPE VI focus on public housing demolition and the redevelopment of cleared sites with mixed tenure housing, typically at lower densities (Schwartz 2010). Consequently, while over 150 000 homes had been demolished under HOPE VI by 2007, only about a quarter of displaced tenants have been rehoused on-site (Schwartz 2010).

According to Popkin et al. (2009), the main beneficiaries of HOPE VI have been those helped to move off welfare, into mixed neighbourhoods or into the private market (via vouchers). In general, these groups have benefited from improved safety and reduced fear of crime, as well as—in many instances—higher quality housing.

In making a virtue of assisted mobility for displaced tenants, HOPE VI was influenced by the earlier Gatreux program of ethnic de-concentration which appeared to show that minority ethnic public housing tenants assisted to move out of racially segregated public housing 'fared better than non-movers on measures of employment and children's educational attainment' (Katz 2009, p.23). Such approaches also chimed with right wing enthusiasm for vouchers. Similarly, the 1993 'Moving to Opportunity' (MTO) scheme was 'a social experiment to test the effect of residential mobility on former residents of public housing' (Schwartz 2010, p.197). MTO participants were recruited from public housing or high poverty private housing neighbourhoods and given vouchers to be used only in census tracts with less than 10 per cent poverty rates. While in some respects similar to the Gatreux scheme, MTO focused on income rather than race—that is the aim was to move people to higher income areas not to move black people to non-black areas. In any event, the principles of MTO were not subsequently incorporated within standard estate renewal practice.

As reported by Schwartz (2010), evaluations of MTO and Gatreux have demonstrated that providing counselling and landlord recruitment significantly enhances the extent to which minority, middle income families move into middle income areas although such voucher programs have not necessarily succeeded in promoting racial integration. However, in his comprehensive review of US public housing renewal programs, Galster concludes that their overall impact in de-concentrating poverty has been only slight (Galster 2011).

In an Australian context, there were early concerns that tenant relocation in the context of estate renewal would result in problematic disruption for both families and communities (Stevens 1995; Arthurson 1998). And, as argued by Darcy (2010), it remains in question whether people displaced from redeveloped Australian public

housing estates in fact continue to experience disadvantage just as in their former location, but now—thanks to dispersal—in a less ‘politically visible’ way.

At least in the Australian context, it seems likely that any ‘de-concentration of poverty’ achieved through the mixed tenure redevelopment of demolished public housing estates will, in any case have been to an extent negated by the ever more restrictive targeting of allocations policies in favour of the most disadvantaged households (see Section 3.5).

5.3.3 *Community participation*

Internationally, the 1980s and 1990s saw a growing belief that meaningful community participation was a critical and essential element in local housing regeneration projects involving concentrations of disadvantage. This could be seen as an aspect of the wider consensus viewing ‘partnership working’ as a vital component of success in this realm (DETR 2000), though not necessarily a principle simply applicable (Carley et al. 2000). Like ‘poverty de-concentration’ the ABI emphasis on community participation was partly founded on a critique of earlier ‘housing led regeneration’ models seen as having failed to deliver sustainable improvement (Fordham 2002).

As noted by Atkinson & Kintrea (2001, p.27), ‘All area regeneration programs now have a faith that involving “the community” will give rise to more effective and sustainable ... solutions, help local people exert control over social problems, assist the improvement of mainstream services, as well as contribute to democratic renewal’. In part, such faith is based on the belief that only where local residents ‘take ownership’ of regeneration plans, can these result in ‘regeneration which lasts’ (Taylor 1995). Nevertheless, a pre-condition for effective local participation may be the up-front investment of resources in ‘community capacity building’. The extent to which this understanding has been incorporated within Australian estate renewal projects is not known.

However, within the context of the ‘neighbourhood effects’ debate (see Section 4.4), there is another possible critique of resident involvement in area regeneration. Arguably, from this perspective deprived communities may ‘embody an inward-looking set of values which play a key role in socialising residents in ways which reinforce their social exclusion’ (Atkinson & Kintrea 2001, p.28). Hence, without broadening the base of such communities, ‘attempts to strengthen the[ir] voice ... [are] not going to be helpful for the social inclusion of their members’ (Atkinson & Kintrea 2001, p.28).

According to another view of community participation, what is now often termed ‘resident involvement’, in fact amounts to ‘responsibilisation’ as a technology of governance (McKee & Cooper 2008). In this Foucauldian perspective, engaging local people in regeneration should be recognised as a mode of exercising power although it brings with it both regulatory and liberatory possibilities for those involved. An alternative critique identifying the notion of ‘community’ embedded in UK neighbourhood renewal policy as flawed sees this as being ‘not ... because NL [New Labour] sought to regulate the conduct of citizens through a technique of ‘community’ but because it failed to understand the complexities and nuances of local neighbourhoods and offered ‘empowerment’ and regeneration without any real theory of how ‘communities’ (dys)function’ (Wallace 2010, p.816).

Turning to Australian state government practice in this area, while estate overhaul programs of the 1990s typically claimed to incorporate community consultation (Judd & Coates 2008; Arthurson 1998), some saw this as primarily a ‘top down’ attempt to legitimise official plans rather than a genuine attempt to facilitate ‘participation by communities in defining goals and planning’ (Stevens 1995, p.86).

By the early 2000s, a national research study on area renewal commented that ‘A fundamental tenet of [the] new [Australian] consensus is that renewal work is unsustainable unless the community becomes actively engaged in ongoing arrangements’ (Wood 2002, p.v).

As recently as 2005, however, a well-informed critique argued that public housing renewal *practice* (at least in New South Wales) remained typically deficient in terms of tenant involvement as well as on the participation of third party service providers and other local stakeholders (Stubbs 2005). Essentially, the process was still too ‘top down’, with consultation and involvement restricted to its later stages such that ‘communities are presented with a range of narrow options from which to ‘choose’ well after key decisions about their area have been made, or are ‘consulted’ with little real impact upon the outcomes’ (Stubbs 2005, p.6). Moreover, commenting on the Minto Estate renewal project under way at that time, Stubbs saw the references in official language to ‘renewal’ and ‘partnerships’ as having obscured the reality that what was being enacted was extensive demolition ‘with little or no room for negotiation’. This ambiguity ‘led to much confusion, uncertainty and suffering for residents in the early stages of redevelopment’ (Stubbs 2005, p.11).

Nevertheless, at least in New South Wales more recent evidence suggests that important lessons may have been learned from the experience of Minto and other projects implemented along similar lines. This has been observed within the context of the ongoing Bonnyrigg regeneration initiative in which the state housing authority is claimed to have ‘adopted a strong commitment to community participation’, albeit in the recognition that considerable capacity building investment would be required to enact this (Judd & Coates 2008, pp.4–5).

5.3.4 *Mixed tenure redevelopment*

Taking a cue from the neighbourhood effects literature (see Section 4.4), another key consensus belief underlying policy-maker perspectives on public housing estate renewal over the past 20 years or so has been the perceived virtue of redeveloping former mono-tenure neighbourhoods as mixed-tenure areas. Arguably, this is an aspect of the de-concentrating poverty ethic outlined above. However, it rests on a more positive case for ‘socially balanced communities’ underpinned by the belief that importation of better-off households via home ownership promotion will boost local purchasing power, offset area stigmatisation, provide positive role models and reinforce (desirable) social control.

In practice, however, the research evidence validating such hypotheses remains tantalisingly sparse. In particular, as emphasised by Galster (2009), studies have demonstrated the often limited extent to which social contact takes place at the neighbourhood level (Atkinson & Kintrea 2000; Arthurson 2012). Galster’s review nevertheless found ‘convincing, broad-based evidence that disadvantaged individuals *may* be helped by the presence of more advantaged groups in their neighbourhood, likely due to positive role modeling, stronger social norms/control and elimination of geographic stigma. However, mixing with those of much higher income appears to produce inferior outcomes for the disadvantaged relative to mixing with middle-income groups, likely through relative deprivation and competition effects’ (p.25—italics in original).

In any event, it cannot be assumed that neighbourhood ‘re-engineering’ with the intention of drawing in middle class owner occupiers will necessarily turn out as such. Instead, as discussed by Hulse et al. (2004), homes sold on the open market may prove more attractive to non-resident investors. The resulting re-modeled estate would therefore remain a community of renters—albeit split between those acquiring

their homes through an administrative filtering process and those accessing tenancies via the market. Given the typically high rates of tenancy turnover in the private rented sector, this will hardly contribute to the sense of community stability and responsibility to which mixed tenure redevelopment projects often aspire. Moreover, newly fragmented landlordship may prove practically problematic for estate management.

The past few years have seen the emergence of a more critical perspective on 'mixed tenure redevelopment' of former public housing estates in which such initiatives are portrayed as 'state sponsored gentrification'. For advocates of this position, "social mix" is little more than rhetoric that cloaks a gentrification strategy whereby the middle classes are invited into social and economically challenged neighbourhoods to 'save' them from permanent decline through consumption practices that boost the local tax base' (Lees et al. 2012, p.7). In her recent analysis of public housing 'regeneration' at Kensington, Melbourne, Shaw argues that the project will contribute to gentrification, locally. In her view, however, this was not government's primary aim in the privatisation of public land which formed a centerpiece for the project. Rather, the discourse of social mix was being used 'as a rationalisation for minimal government outlay on public works'. This 'political' interpretation rests on the argument that Victoria's ruling Labor Party administration saw the project as an opportunity to demonstrate the financially conservative credentials it saw as crucial to continuing electoral success (Shaw 2012).

5.3.5 Reshaping social housing governance

As noted above, the ownership transfer of public housing to community housing providers has commonly formed a component of state housing renewal in Australia. This echoes extensive UK experience involving community-based housing associations set up as a vehicle for reshaping rundown council estates or where estate regeneration projects have been incorporated within wider stock transfer initiatives (Pawson & Mullins 2010). Such changes in housing governance have also connected with the community participation and tenure diversification ethics discussed above.

To a lesser extent, Australian experience in this respect reflects that of America's HOPE VI program seen as having triggered a partial 'transformation of the public housing system from a rule-bound realm controlled by federal bureaucrats to an investment in the nation's future managed by market-savvy local leaders' (Katz 2009, p.15). This latter change was in tune with the 'reinventing government' thinking of the early 1990s which advocated delegation of decision-making, public-private partnerships and market-like thinking. Hence, according to Schwartz (2010), in stark contrast to the centralised control traditional in public housing, (post) HOPE VI estates are typically managed on a decentralised basis, often via management outsourced by public housing authorities to private companies.

5.4 Other place-based initiatives to address social exclusion

5.4.1 Place-focused initiatives for 'private housing' poverty suburbs

As noted in Section 2.3, there is widespread recognition of the 'suburbanisation of poverty' in Australia's cities over the past 20 years. Nevertheless, while first observed by Gleeson and Randolph in 2002, it arguably remains true that excepting those containing large concentrations of problematic public housing, disadvantaged areas in middle and outer-suburban communities have continued to be largely ignored in Australian urban renewal policy and practice. As seen by Gleeson and Randolph, this is problematic, because as 'mature suburbs', some areas of this kind are subject to 'haphazard' market-led redevelopment which 'will shape and possibly constrain what

form of planning-led renewal will be possible in these areas for many years to come' (Gleeson & Randolph 2002, p.103).

However, this is not to say that what Randolph terms 'place-focused initiatives' (PFIs) impacting on suburban poverty (both within and outside public housing) have been entirely non-existent. Indeed, Randolph's 2004 review of PFIs in Western Sydney revealed 36 such programs, initiatives or projects—that is, government-funded schemes which intentionally or otherwise, have 'place outcomes' of some kind. These were being run through at least 13 federal and state government departments and a host of other regional government agencies (especially health), local government, and non-government agencies and were classed as follows:

1. Targeted programs.
2. Place integration or coordination programs.
3. Place management.
4. Place entrepreneurship.

Nevertheless, as seen at the time, since the 1996 demise of the 'Building Better Cities' program, policies with an explicitly locational focus had been 'conspicuous by their absence' (Randolph 2004). While state governments had initiated PFIs aimed at addressing social exclusion, most such programs were targeted at communities of interest within the population—they were operating 'in places for people'. Hence, they targeted the problems facing groups concentrated within certain areas, 'rather than the problems associated with living in these areas per se'.

If better local policy coordination is required, how should this be administered? In keeping with the rhetoric of 'localism', the UK Government argued that its new 'total place' approach to managing place-based public spending should be 'led by local authorities with their unique local democratic mandate' (HM Treasury 2010, p.5). More controversially, given their more subsidiary status in Australia, Gleeson and Randolph had earlier argued that municipalities needed to become much more involved in area renewal. This would involve a shift 'away from the Triple R (roads, rates and rubbish) approach towards a dynamic and strategic community development and enabling role' (Gleeson & Randolph 2002, p.105). However, as the authors acknowledged, the effectiveness of this 'local stewardship' governance model might depend on state agencies devolving certain functions to councils. To make this happen, it was advocated that municipalities responsible for areas including distinct concentrations of disadvantage be 'required to produce Local Renewal Strategies ...' (Gleeson & Randolph 2002, pp.105–06).

At the metropolitan level in Sydney, Gleeson and Randolph (2002) argued that both equity and efficiency arguments could be made for the decentralisation of 'social and cultural investment' by state and federal governments. This was part of a bigger argument about the city's highly monocentric form which, as contended by the authors, exacerbates economic inequality—an issue linked with the hypothesised consequences of the place-marketing emphasis of modern metropolitan governance already noted in Section 3.5. Hence, the state should play a more active role in promoting the decentralisation of economic development, possibly via a redefined role for Landcom as a 'positive planning agency' with the skills and capacity to advance this agenda.

5.4.2 Program coordination at the local level

In Randolph's view, the lack of geographical specificity in contemporary PFIs was an important defect because it resulted in a lack of policy coherence and a failure to

capitalise on the potential for added value or synergies from programs working together. Thus the (albeit oft-recited) argument that better PFI coordination could 'make government expenditure go further and achieve better value-for-money outcomes for those households and areas that are most in need of assistance' (Randolph 2004).

Arguments of this kind were echoed in the 'total place' concept under development by the UK Government at the tail end of the New Labour era. This envisaged substantial improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of locally applied public spending through better intra-government coordination. The overarching idea here was to re-think public services on the basis of themes rather than organisations. Applying approaches initially trialled some ten years earlier (Bramley et al. 1998), a government pilot scheme involving some 63 local authorities, 34 Primary Care Trusts, 12 fire authorities and 13 police authorities had mapped the totality of public spending in each pilot area. Participating agencies had also been tasked with developing new, more coordinated, ways of working. This was seen as demonstrating the scope for 'real service improvements and savings to be made in all places' (HM Treasury and Communities and Local Government Department 2010, p.5).

In an Australian context, the 'total place' thinking cited above had been partially pre-figured by the contention that: 'It is not that services [to problematic areas] are entirely lacking, but rather that they do not operate in accordance with the daily lives of local residents, or in synchrony with the operations of other services ... [hence] measures to redress social inequities in places are best implanted within all government policies and programs at their very core' (Fincher 1991, p.134). This also alludes to the argument that in redressing the inferior quality of life often experienced by residents of disadvantaged areas there is a need to correct the inferiority of 'mainstream public services' made available in such areas.

5.4.3 Place-based programs aiming to 'close the gap' with national norms

In a UK context, an expert view has been that: 'The failure of public service delivery in disadvantaged neighbourhoods represents one of the major challenges to public policy' (Stewart 2001, p.11). Problematic correlations have been observed between area affluence and the quality or extent of services as diverse as GP provision and the quality of street cleaning (Social Exclusion Unit 2001; Hastings et al. 2009). Accordingly, in the New Labour programs to tackle spatially concentrated disadvantage the emphasis shifted away from housing investment and management enhancements and towards 'mainstream service improvement' to 'close the gap' between deprived areas and national norms (Kintrea 2007). Conceptually, this approach also drew on a critique of 'housing led regeneration' seen as often having failed to deliver sustainable improvements in physical and social conditions.

The UK Government's 2001 National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (NSNR) for England was therefore focused on improving outcomes in disadvantaged neighbourhoods on employment, crime, health, education and housing and the physical environment (Social Exclusion Unit 2001). All of these issues were considered 'central to the 'liveability' of neighbourhoods and the prospects for those who live there' (Wallace 2001, p.2164). Key to 'closing the gap' for the selected areas was the specification of a suite of 'floor targets' (minimum standards) for each of the above policy areas, with these benchmarks 'underpinned by new resources and new policy ideas' (Wallace 2001, p.2164).

To the extent that it focused on the 88 most deprived local authority districts in England, the NSNR was a spatially targeted program. More clearly fitting the description 'Area Based Intervention' was its sister initiative, the somewhat 'narrower

but deeper' 'New Deal for Communities' (NDC). Initiated in 1998, the NDC encompassed 39 areas, each with a target size of 4000 households. Including elected community representatives, each NDC partnership board controlled expenditure of (on average) £50 million over a 10-year period and aimed on projects to improve local conditions and reduce the gap between quality of life indicators in the locality and national norms. However, while the NDC (like the NSNR) was not primarily a housing program, just over a quarter of all NDC funds were invested in housing and environmental improvements (Beatty et al. 2010).

As argued by the appraisal program manager, NDC evaluation findings are unique in their credible demonstration of the sound basis underpinning contemporary official thinking in that '[positive regeneration] outcomes are more likely to be achieved within longer-term, holistic ABIs, which engage with other regeneration initiatives and which ensure an appropriate input from local residents' (Lawless et al. 2010, p.271).

A wide-ranging analysis of changing levels of service provision in England revealed a general tendency towards disproportionate enhancement of services in more deprived wards in the five years to 2000–01 (Bramley et al. 2005). This seemed to vindicate early New Labour 'closing the gap' policy measures. Similarly, the later NSNR evaluation reported that while England had seen growing socio-spatial polarisation over the 30 years to 2001, there were '... indications that this trend was stemmed and, to a degree reversed, at least during the first six years of NSNR. However, it also appears that the extent of "gap narrowing" slowed as economic conditions began to deteriorate' (Amion Consulting 2010, p.22).

Drawing inspiration from the NSNR, but more explicitly focused on public housing estates, the state of Victoria initiated its 'Neighbourhood Renewal Victoria' (NRV) program in 2002. The overall goal was '*to narrow the gap between disadvantaged communities with concentrations of public housing, and the rest of the state*' (NRU 2008, p.1). Other aspects of the NRV model which sought to emulate recent UK regeneration practice included its emphasis on coordination of formerly disparate government programs and integrating resident involvement within neighbourhood governance (Hulse et al. 2011).

5.5 Key determinants of policy effectiveness

Reviewing recent place-based approaches to tackling social exclusion in Australia and the UK, Hulse et al. (2011) noted commonality as regards new forms of governance, in particular: (a) a 'whole of government' approach targeted on disadvantaged areas, modifying their services as required, and (b) an emphasis on local partnerships and community-based boards. In practice, however, resident involvement was found to have been problematic in all the programs examined. Generalising across these, the review's key findings were that:

- 'The most effective programs are those that have a dual focus: on people, but also on the wider systemic processes that maintain inequality' (p.83).
- 'Area-based interventions alone are incapable of addressing the wider systemic problems that arise from fiscal policies that sustain economic inequality' (pp.83–84).
- Growing recognition that policy interventions need to be targeted on specific demographic groups living within disadvantaged areas—for example families with children or older people.
- Positive impacts of area-based interventions may be dissipated through residential mobility.

- Partly on 'cost effectiveness' grounds, interventions have moved away from public investment in rundown homes and neighbourhoods, and towards individually-focused interventions.

The above findings are not dissimilar from the conclusions of AHURI's own more wide-ranging international review of programs to tackle locational disadvantage (Ware et al. 2010). This found that successful interventions were characterised by incorporation of the following 'best practice principles':

1. Both people- and place-based mechanisms.
2. Macro- and micro-level interventions.
3. Interventions aligned across separate tiers of government.
4. Effective community empowerment.
5. Partnership between public, private and community sectors.
6. Long-term, well-resourced programs.

Approaches to be avoided were identified as including:

1. Tokenism in forming partnerships and building community involvement.
2. Short-term 'quick fixes'.
3. Discourses which entrench the problem by overly identifying an area as dysfunctional.
4. Investing too quickly, beyond the capacity of the community to fully participate.
5. Interventions that merely displace the problem.

6 IMPLICATIONS OF THE POLICY AND LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE RESEARCH

6.1 Overview

The purpose of this report was to revisit the issues that have shaped academic and policy interest in socio-spatial disadvantage both in Australia and overseas to inform the theoretical and methodological framework for the AHURI Multi-Year Project on Addressing Concentrations of Social Disadvantage. It is clear from the review that spatial concentrations of social disadvantage have been the subject of considerable research in Australia over the past thirty years, but also that there remains significant debate on their main causes and consequences, the ways they should be measured and conceptualised, and the best courses of action for governments as they seek to address the problems of such localities. Also apparent are some gaps in the existing literature and weaknesses in the methodologies that have been applied, as well as areas of older work that need to be refreshed. In this final section of the report, we reflect on the implications of this policy and literature review for the forthcoming research.

6.2 Conceptualising and mapping socio-spatial disadvantage

Early work on socio-spatial disadvantage in Australia focused predominantly on the problems of the inner-cities (Kendig 1979), before authors such as Maher et al. (1992), Badcock (1994) and Yates & Vipond (1990) considered the extent to which inner-city gentrification was forcing lower income groups to the outer-suburbs in search of affordable property. More recent research has shown that while small pockets of disadvantage in the inner city remain, poverty is becoming increasingly concentrated in the middle-ring suburbs of our major cities (Randolph & Holloway 2005a; 2007), and that people living in the outer suburbs are increasingly vulnerable to 'transport poverty' (Dodson & Sipe 2008).

While the existing body of work on conceptualising and mapping disadvantage has been important in charting the shifting geographies of disadvantage in Australian cities, there is a need for further and more nuanced work on the topic. Largely absent from the existing literature has been any clear sense of the appropriate scale at which to analyse place-based disadvantage in Australia—this is an issue that will need to be addressed in the forthcoming research (Is the appropriate scale for our study the street, postcode, estate, suburb or something else?). Past work in Australia has also typically (although not exclusively) classified areas as disadvantaged according to the demographics of their populations, without equal consideration given to the ways in which a place may disadvantage its residents because it lacks urban resources such as employment opportunities, shops and community facilities. The forthcoming research will need to consider how both people-based and place-based measures can be used to identify 'disadvantaged areas' for study.

From the review, it is also evident that—other than the distinction between public housing estates and areas of privately owned housing—there has been little attempt to differentiate between different types of disadvantaged locality in Australia. Inspired partly by a typology relating to residential mobility within and between disadvantaged areas as developed in the UK (Robson et al. 2009), the research will engage with questions concerning the differences between disadvantaged localities in both functional and experiential terms, unlike any other Australian study to date. As briefly discussed in the main body of this report, we also believe that there is scope for further investigation of the extent to which the increased concentration of

disadvantage in the middle-ring suburbs of our cities is tied to the recent expansion of the private rental market into these areas.

6.3 Causes and consequences of socio-spatial disadvantage

As discussed in Chapter 3, existing studies on the factors that create, perpetuate and re-shape the spatial differentiation of income and wealth can be broadly split into three key themes; those stressing the importance of employment restructuring, those emphasising housing systems factors contributing to the concentration of disadvantaged people, and those highlighting the role of economic structures and policy choices in generating social inequality. In relation to housing-related factors, there have been many studies of the ways in which the contraction of public housing in Australia over the past 20 years has led it to become a residualised tenure form characterised by the heavy concentration of deeply disadvantaged people (see Jacobs et al. 2011). However, far less empirical attention has so far been paid to the role of private rental markets and planning systems in shaping patterns of disadvantage—this despite Randolph and Holloway (2005a, 2007) demonstrating that disadvantage is increasingly concentrated in areas where public housing is sparse or absent.

These observations vindicate the plan for the forthcoming research to consider the housing systems and other urban factors that act to create or sustain concentrations of disadvantage in areas dominated by housing tenures other than public housing, as well as on public housing estates. It will also need to look beyond housing to consider the role of urban planning—as far as we are aware, there has been no work in Australia on the impact that urban planning processes can have in shaping concentrations of disadvantage through specific policy directions, planning codes and zoning; this is potentially a rich field of inquiry for the team. Another relevant task could be to revisit and update analysis of poverty levels before and after housing costs, highlighting the effects of housing in exacerbating or alleviating poverty in different locations (Burke 1998).

Much of the literature discussed in the review has sought to describe, map and/or identify socio-spatial disadvantage in Australian cities. There has been comparatively little work on the lived experience of disadvantage, and very few attempts to examine the extent to which the negative effects of being a disadvantaged person (in terms of income, e.g. health and education) are compounded by living in a disadvantaged place or an area where the majority of other people are also disadvantaged; these will be key areas of interest for the research. The Australian literature on the lived experience of disadvantage has also focused, to date, on life in public housing estates, and there is a need to expand this to include life in areas of disadvantage where private rental is the dominant tenure form, and to consider the direct and indirect consequences of both individual and place-based disadvantage for the people affected.

In some of the theoretical debates reviewed, the notion of place-based disadvantage was challenged by the idea that individuals who are sufficiently mobile can avoid many of the negative outcomes associated with living in a disadvantaged place (Fincher & Iveson 2008, p.34). It is therefore important, when measuring place-based disadvantage, to also recognise and measure various forms of mobility that are available to individuals as balancing factors.

Related to the foregoing, the research could seek to test the neighbourhood effects thesis in the Australian context. While there is an extensive literature on neighbourhood effects in the USA, UK and Europe, as well as an implicit acceptance in some Federal Government policy documents that neighbourhood effects also exist

in Australia, we are unaware of any empirical studies to measure this. Finally, the forthcoming research presents an opportunity to explore the relationship between disadvantage at the level of individuals/households, and disadvantage at the level of places: Do these two reflect one another or not?

6.4 Policy responses to spatially concentrated disadvantage

Australia has so far seen few place-based initiatives aimed at addressing social disadvantage. However, the overseas literature suggests certain directions that the research could take, particularly through case study work. Some of the planned case-studies will involve places in which various interventions to address disadvantage have already been rolled out. Through analysis of these interventions and their impacts it is hoped to provide new insights into regeneration policy effectiveness. Here, the research could focus on the extent to which interventions succeeded in maximising local policy coordination, on how far resources were used effectively, on what factors could help address the negative consequences of locational disadvantage for disadvantaged people, and on which demographic groups could and should be targeted for programs and interventions. Also vitally important, given the policy zeitgeist around public participation, will be to delve into the extent to which disadvantaged communities have been actively involved in shaping interventions. The existing literature also points to another area that is under-researched in Australia and could be at least considered through the research: What gap is there (if any) in the level of public service provision between disadvantaged places and their wealthier neighbours?

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