CHAPTER TWO
METHODOLOGY

This dissertation is an empirically based study in planning theory. The methodology employed in the dissertation facilitates an interaction between theory and practice of planning. The research tasks of the dissertation are threefold: analytical; theoretical; and an interactive research between empirical analysis and theory.

In terms of the analytical aspects, the methodology has focused on case study research techniques. The presentation of the case study material has leaned heavily on practice writing and on the use of narrative. The empirical data that is the basis of this analysis is drawn from three professionally conducted evaluations of the Kathorus Special Integrated Presidential Project (KSiPP). It is therefore important to reflect briefly on the use of evaluation in planning even though this dissertation does not purport to present an evaluation, but rather an analysis of a planning case through a theoretical lens.

In terms of the theoretical aspects of the dissertation the research methodology has been in-depth literature review research into theoretical concepts in planning and the philosophical roots of these concepts. This work has enabled the development of an appropriate conceptual framework for analysis. The theoretical-empirical interplay has been achieved through the application of the theoretical conceptual framework in analysing the case study. This has in turn generated further interaction between the theoretical findings and the empirical findings of the case.

The dissertation is structured as follows: The first section outlines the use of empirical studies and the role of the practice movement in planning theory. The second section briefly addresses contemporary debates around evaluation in planning. The research strategy (of practice writing through a case study) that is employed in this dissertation is then detailed. This section is followed by an elaboration of the research methods employed within the case study strategy. An explanation of how empirical data was obtained is then provided. The nature of the interviewing process is then clarified, and is

followed by a section on positioning myself as researcher. The final section discusses the interpretation of data in the thesis.

Empirical Studies in Planning Theory and the Practice Movement

The KSiPP case study, the basis of this dissertation, is a mediated account of planning practice. The case provides an account of what planners did in a particular project, mediated through the lenses of a critical pragmatic analytical framework. This type of practice writing, in which learning is derived from narrative accounts of practical planning action, is forging a prominent place in contemporary planning theory. Briefly, the work in this arena constitutes empirically based studies in planning theory, where studies of actual planning practice are undertaken in order to address theoretical concepts and concerns. Such empirical study in planning theory is a response to the call to address the gap between planning theory and practice (Lauria and Wagner, 2006). The response has seen a quadrupling of the number of empirical studies in planning in the 1990s and it is believed that this number will increase by 50 per cent again by 2010 (Lauria and Wagner, 2006).

The use of narrative in planning derives partly from an interest in the application of this method in social science and in policy-making more broadly. The traditional conceptual divide between theory and practice that is associated with the modernist project – in which policy analysis has been intended to "bring the unstable, ideologically-driven and conflict ridden world of politics under the rule of rational, scientifically derived knowledge" (Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003:139) – has proven inadequate. The claims to rationality of traditional approaches of collecting and analysing 'facts' have been challenged and in their place approaches that uphold a less linear and more relational view of how planning is applied and functions in society have emerged. Contemporary schools of planning mirrored social sciences in questioning comprehensive planning approaches that had led to disenfranchisement and to physical, economic and social stresses that equalled those that planning sought to address (Allmendinger and Tewdwr-Jones, 2002). In moving beyond a linear rationality, "(a)ttention both in the social

sciences and planning began to turn to context, practices and histories to explain what counts as knowledge…" (Hesse, 1980:vii).   One focus to emerge from such questioning is a concern with the place of planning practice within the theoretical or intellectual endeavour.

The "fine grained analysis of planning practice as the basis for reconstruction of planning theory" (Lauria and Wagner, 2006:364) has proliferated over the decade since Innes recognised this new type of planning theorising as an emerging paradigm (Innes, 1995). Lauria and Wagner have conducted an in-depth analysis of empirical studies in planning theory in order to establish how such research has informed or failed to inform planning theory. They define such studies as "concrete observations (direct and indirect) of planning practice gained from planning activities" (2006:365), and empirical studies in planning theory imply that such research about planning practice has been used to construct or evaluate theoretical propositions. Such work has been undertaken both by planning theorists analysing planning practice and by practitioners writing of their own work. Lauria and Wagner find that the methodologies employed in empirical studies in planning theory are: inductive studies where observations and analyses of actual practice or outcomes lead authors to make conclusions for theory; retroductive approaches where rational abstractions are drawn from theory and these are used as lenses to evaluate and modify empirical measures or concepts; and deductive research in which theoretical frames are established to direct the research methodology and to explain the findings of the research. In this framing, the KSiPP study in this dissertation constitutes a retroductive research approach, in which there is an interaction between theory and data (Lauria and Wagner, 2006).

Practice writing is a form of grounded theory. Grounded theory provides a method for generating theory from lived exercises. It rejects grand systems theories in favour of theoretical research that is centred in empirical reality. The methods that support such theory-making are in-depth interviews, focused on extracting rich detail from a few interviewees rather than large numbers of interviews using closed-ended questions (Cuadraz and Uttal, 1999).

Narrative, or storytelling, has become 'commonplace' in the humanities and is increasingly popular, although still somewhat radical in the social sciences (Simpson, 1995:25). The focus on narrative in empirical studies holds that planning is performed through story (Sandercock, 2003), that planners are "storytellers of practice" (Hoch, 1996:43), that an understanding of planning practice is critical to understanding planning as experienced by "actors" rather than "spectators" (Forester, 2002), and that the practice of planning leads to policy-making (Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003). The 'practice movement' (Ligget, 1996 in Watson, 2001) is occupied by several notable writers who have taken practice as "the raw material of their inquiry" (Innes, 1995:183). In this process they have extracted a range of normative or analytical findings and, although they have seldom tried to produce generalised truths or theories from their practice stories, they have seen these as making a contribution to theory and as bridging a theory-practice gap (Watson, 2000b). Forester, for example, notes "Practice can lead theory, and in planning, the practice of astute, sensitive and skilful planners can sometimes lead the more abstract theories of planning academics" (1997:1).

The presentation of the case study in this dissertation relies heavily on the technique of narrative. Narrative – the telling of practice stories and in turn the informing of theory by practice – has become an established planning approach since its emergence in the 1990s in the work of Fischer and Forester (1993) and thereafter in studies by authors including Forester (1997; 1999a; 1999b), Flyvbjerg (1998b), Sandercock (1995), Throgmorton (1996) and Watson (2002). These authors have argued that stories shape who we are individually and collectively. Writers focused on practice have shown the value of narrative in planning. Different writers have applied practice approaches differently. Some (such as Forester, 1997) have focused on the experience of planners in a direct and personalised way by interviewing planners and highlighting their voices. Others (Throgmorton, 1996; Flyvbjerg, 1998b) have developed fully-fledged case studies which contextualise the planning stories historically, socially and spatially. For Flyvbjerg (1998b) the value of this contextualised writing that deals with the "minutia" of planning stories is that readers are able to draw their own and additional conclusions to that

extracted by the author. The South African writer Watson (2000a; 200b) argues for such contextualised practice writing.

As discussed under the heading of 'Generalisation' below, it is not the individual stories, but the collective building of 'mental repertoires' of narrative that provides a basis for planning expertise and judgement derived from the practice approach. The analytic roots of the practice movement lie in critical policy analysis, interpretive analysis, the analysis of policy discourse, analysis of planners' stories and description populated planning and policy.

Forester (2002), Sandercock (2003) and Watson (2000a; 2000b) have examined the practical, pedagogical and intellectual role of stories. Sandercock (2003) raises the value of the practice story in her stating that planning is performed through story. She observes that stories expand the practical tools of planners, by sharpening their critical judgment and by expanding democratic discourse. Stories have both an epistemological and a methodological role to play in planning theory. Sandercock unpacks the many ways in which planning is performed through story and surrounded by stories being played out in conflict resolution, community participation, policy and data analysis and in fact all aspects of the exercise of planning. Yet she is not uncritical of or romantic about the role of stories. Sandercock highlights the importance of questioning whether (our own and others') stories are true and in recognising how power shapes which stories are told or left untold. She finds a range of roles for stories in planning, both in terms of planners' experience and of communities engaged in telling or reworking their own stories whether of identity and history or of actual neighbourhood struggles for change. Here stories are empowering and can be inspiration for change (stories of one neighbourhood's successes can inspire others).

Forester similarly finds that in illuminating the fluidity and uncertainty of particular contexts, stories demonstrate the need for planners to engage in the complexity of actual situations or to risk being simplistic or idealistic. Stories illuminate the emotive aspect of interaction, including prejudice, stereotype, conflict and sensitivity. They also reveal

planners' practical judgment and what sensitivity is required to make such judgment as well as planners' continual improvisation as standard 'rules' don't fit with real contexts, but have to be adapted and invented in the rich texture of practice. The interaction between theory and practice becomes vital to avoid theory being too vague and removed from the messiness of practice (Forester, 2003a). Forester (2001) motivates the planning narrative as a necessary practical and political task of planning, for the stories of planning practice "do particular kinds of work". This work is descriptive (telling of stories), moral (constructing of characters of self and others), political (identifying power, support, opposition and selecting information to share or withhold), and deliberative (considering means and ends, and formulating what is possible and doable).

Importantly, Sandercock cautions planners to develop skills in both telling stories and listening to stories. Elsewhere she has illuminated 'official' and 'unofficial' stories. She has shown that stories are key methodological as well as epistemological tools in planning in contexts of multiculturalism (Sandercock, 1998a). These, as well as more subtle underlying stories, require that planners be skilled in the telling of stories but also in being critical of the stories they have to listen to (Sandercock, 2003).

The 'practice movement' is not uncontested. Although there is a growing awareness of the importance of practice to policy discourse, the concept of practice has meant different things to different authors: either general strategies for solving public problems, or distinct techniques or organisational routines, or practical judgment and deliberation. In reflecting on these different perspectives on practice Hajer and Wagenaar (Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003) acknowledge the elusiveness of defining practice, but argue that , rather than being the executive arm of rational knowledge, practice is a way of engaging in the world in its own right – a way that is more attuned to the pluralistic and changeable reality of the world. In this practice has its own logic (pragmatic, purposeful), its means of engaging with the world (interactive, moral, and emotional), its ways of knowing (interpretive, holistic), and its image of society (as a constellation of interdependent communities). Practice has these attributes because it is not undirected random activity. Rather, Hajer and Wagenaar show that practice embodies "action, community,

situatedness, criteria, standards, warrants, knowing, dialectic, discourse, emotions and values" (Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003:149). Lauria and Wagner (2006) emphasise the contribution of practice writing, but maintain that there are limitations in the contribution to knowledge of some practice writing. Purely inductive studies in planning practice that do not interact with theory are particularly limited. While the authors find that a case study research strategy is well suited to situations that are complex and difficult to define, they also caution against the use of the case study in a purely deductive mode of analysis. Their research also shows that much deductive case study research is confirmatory. It tends to provide evidence that supports the theoretical predispositions of the researchers. This is not an outright damnation of the practice movement, for the authors concede that the whole enterprise of writing a case study or examining the interaction between theory and practice is far more complex than whether or not the work confirms a theoretical position (Lauria and Wagner, 2006). But they caution that this point alerts researchers to be rigorous in their research. There is a possibility of practice writing being a critical exercise, where it provides well contextualised, comparative or theoretically grounded work. In terms of theoretically grounded research, the authors argue that researchers need to provide multiple sources and to thoroughly examine the theoretical literature in which their empirical data is being applied. Mainstream case study methodology equally requires that validity of data be shown. This validity is provided through triangulation of the research where multiple sources of data are used to confirm the validity of data (Yin, 1984).

The particular theoretical concept in planning that this study engages with is critical pragmatism in which the themes of planning outcomes, situatedness (context), values (ethics) and power (incorporating elements of discourse, communication and rationality) are the vehicles for analysing the planning exercise. Critical pragmatism is grounded in a practice-led epistemology where an analysis of planning stories highlights how planning action is itself a theorising activity, but it also draws on particular intellectual and philosophical traditions. Planners, in a sense, make theory through their choices, deliberations and interventions.

The approach applied here does not theorise out of the practice story. Rather, it employs an iterative relationship between theory and practice. The practice of the KSiPP is reflected through the lenses of critical pragmatism and the formative notions of critical pragmatism are in turn interpreted and extended through the application to practice. This iterative relationship between knowledge and action is central to analysing a practice story. For the practice movement, knowing is inherently improvisational. Knowledge cannot be a template for action and does not tend towards uniformity or standardisation. Rather, there is a relationship – a dialogue – between problems and solutions. Practitioners make assessments of situations or problems based on earlier experience or learned experience. As the practitioner intervenes in a situation based on the assessment he/she makes, he/she makes a further assessment of the success or failure of the intervention and so contributes to the "knowledge" (Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003). For the pragmatist at least, different forms of reasoning and action thus combine and interact (Harrison, 2002a).

Theorising Evaluation in Planning

The empirical base of this study is a series of evaluations conducted on the KSiPP. The research strategy and methods employed in those evaluations and in this thesis are detailed below. They describe multiple evaluations and a pluralistic approach to the gathering and analysis of information. However, it is informative to contextualise this discussion theoretically by briefly examining the position and debates surrounding evaluation in contemporary planning theory.

The value of evaluative work in planning is noted by Alexander and Faludi (1989), who assert that the very credibility of planning as a discipline or profession, depends on the ability of evaluation criteria to enable a real judgment of planning effectiveness. Such criteria must be able to distinguish good planning from bad. But within this broad notion of evaluation being useful to planning, the question of how success or failure in planning is defined is wide open.

There are several interpretations of what evaluation is. For the purposes of 'plan evaluation', Waldner (2004) identifies five types of evaluation: plan assessment (concerned with whether the plan meets its criteria); plan testing (evaluating alternative means to achieve the plan's goals); plan critique (a subjective review of the plan by other planners); comparative research and professional evaluation (which entails comparison between various plans); and post hoc evaluation of plan outcomes. Overall, Waldner finds that planners rarely conduct post hoc evaluations of their work and that while several evaluation methods exist, these are mostly ill-defined and difficult to implement.

Perhaps the most common form of evaluation in planning is the evaluation of the outcomes of a plan against the goals set at the beginning of the planning process. This goal-directed evaluation has been critiqued for ignoring the unintended consequences of the plan and for not being objective in judging the valid reasons that may exist for departing from the plan (Waldner, 2004). By contrast, impact evaluation focuses on the effectiveness of a plan. Indicators may be used to measure how the plan led to improvements in livelihoods or community life etc. This approach has also been criticised. It is based on an assumption that the plan was implemented as recorded and it does not allow for the fact that reasons other than the plan may have led to the improvements that are being measured (Waldner, 2004).

Yet other approaches do not focus on outcomes or effectiveness of the plan but on the planning process. Communicative planning evaluations, in particular, have been found to have this focus (Waldner, 2004). For Innes and Booher (2002) planning process is paramount. They recommend a framework for evaluating consensus building efforts in planning processes. The issues arising from this form of evaluation are discussed below.

The role of urban planning can be defined as a means of mediating between competing interests in land or space (Roweis, 1983; Dabinett and Richardson, 1999). It is not concerned only with spatial dimensions however, but with other policy dimensions and with the processes whereby such competing interests are arbitrated. Technicist approaches to planning provide little guidance for understanding the policy and process

dimensions and these concerns have occupied debates in planning theory since the heyday of rational planning. Debates around planning analysis and evaluation have mirrored the schism in planning between scientific technical approaches and approaches, associated with collaborative and critical schools of planning, which are attuned to the limits of power, knowledge and the resolvability of ethical dilemmas. The planning concerns with the interplay of outcome and process as well as with the wide range of outcomes, beyond the spatial products of plans, influence the choice of method for evaluating plans.

Dabinnet and Richardson (1999) note that evaluation has fitted with the tradition of rationality in planning. In a positivist model of rationality, evaluation focused largely on what is quantifiable in an assumed fixed, linear and well-defined programme being implemented by a bureaucracy of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Inevitably the goal-directed evaluation that emerged in this model highlighted what goals were not achieved (Innes and Booher, 2002).

The goal-directed, rationalist evaluation techniques have been criticised not only for their technocratic application, but also for their inability to address unintended consequences, their bias towards the status quo and their inability to incorporate participation and equity issues (see Dabinnet and Richardson, 1999; and Waldner, 2004). They do not focus on the other outcomes of the plan or on the process issues and outcomes that derive from the planning process. Thus the critiques of scientific rationalism in planning were mirrored by critiques of the methodologies that employed such rationality and relied on quantitative evaluation methods, which did not accommodate the politics of development. There was a call for stakeholder inclusion in mainstream evaluation and this was echoed in planning. Dabinnet and Richardson (1999) draw parallels between this call and the communicative position that argued that evaluation should be guided by issues and concerns raised by stakeholders. Innes and Booher (2002), who focus on evaluating process, note that the rationalist techniques are ill-equipped to assess collaborative, evolving planning efforts.

Innes and Booher (2002) maintain that collaborative planning is not located in linear systems but in systems that are complex, unstable and unpredictable in design and outcome. The authors believe that evaluation methodologies are useful if they build the capacity of society and of governance systems to be "self-organising, intelligent and sustainable" (Innes and Booher, 2002). These insights are relevant to a project such as the KSiPP, which was more a 'programme' than a plan and which attempted to deliver a wide range of services and products through a coordinated, integrated process. It is a model that correlates with the complexity described by Innes and Booher. The KSiPP in fact is more closely aligned with integrated development planning than with an area-wide spatial plan. The evaluation issues relevant to the IDP process and outcomes are this also informative in considering evaluation of the KSiPP. Harrison (2006) addresses these issues in his recent writing on evaluation of Integrated Development Plan (IDP) processes and outcomes. Harrison finds that the assessment of the IDP raises considerable methodological challenges, both in terms of the complexity of the programme and in terms of the data needs of assessment. Like Innes and Booher, Harrison indicates that "A simple analysis of predefined intensions against actual outcomes is not possible as integrated development planning is a complex, ongoing, interactional process in which capacities for decision-making, joint action and coordinated implementation are built over time, and in which there are multiple intervening variables" (Harrison, Forthcoming).

Harrison (Forthcoming) points to some of the successes and shortcomings of the IDP process and outcomes, even though he identifies weaknesses in data availability and notes there is little comparative data that would enable assessments of outcomes in different municipalities across the country.

Evaluation methodologies in the 1990s and beyond have been influenced by the 'new public management' emphasis on performance targets, indicators and output objectives (Dabinett and Richardson, 1999). The concerns of new public management with its strong concern with policy coherence and integrated governance have influenced South African planning to the extent that Harrison (Forthcoming) notes that this is the dominant

perspective in South Africa's key agencies of government. The case study in this dissertation makes reference to how such measures were put in place for the KSiPP.

In evaluating collaborative processes Innes and Booher (2002) proposed that multiple research methods that include documentation review, interviews, surveys and collation of data be employed; and that both objective, outside perspectives and the perspectives of individuals within programmes or organisations be incorporated in the research. Their assumption is that while collaborative effort may not produce tangible outcomes, they contributed to capacity building and that an adaptive complex model must be applied to assess the impact of collaborative efforts on such capacity building.

Innes and Booher (2002) would see evaluation as part of learning and capacity development. They do remain focused on a consensual model of dialogue as evidenced by the claim made by Yankelovitch (1999) and echoed by Booher and Innes (2002) that "Collaborations with capacity share information and engage in constructive dialogue rather than debate and argument" (2002:16). A more Foucauldian perspective would similarly view evaluation as a form of knowledge creation, but would focus on the relationships of power that are involved in evaluation as in all forms of knowledge creation (Rebien, 1996). Dabinett and Richardson (2006) add that all evaluation is also subject to power and manipulation. Wolf (1996) notes that questions of who funds the research, how the research agenda is established, and what topics become the focuses for the research, present dilemmas in undertaking research. This understanding of evaluation has also led to calls for a pluralistic approach, wherein multiple methods of evaluation are used (Innes and Booher, 2002; Harrison, 2006, Forthcoming) and where the views of different stakeholders can be included in the evaluative process. The incorporation of a critical component in evaluation, mindful of power dynamics and the potential manipulation of knowledge, would require that evaluation would probe state actions and improve state accountability. Such a mode would also illuminate the foundations on which the judgments of various participants in the evaluation are based. In this role the evaluator provokes input through insightful questioning. While participation is encouraged in a dialogical mode of evaluation, the power relations and imbalance of

resources of participants remain problematic in this mode of evaluation (Dabinett and Richardson, 1999).

Harrison (Forthcoming) addresses this debate in examining that complex and interactional South African IDP process and outcomes against the two perspectives on outcome. One focuses on the empowerment of local actors as a key outcome of local governance. The other is a focus on the integrational aspects of local governance and the effective workings of government departments in an interdependent model. Both delivery and participation are key concerns of the IDP and of developmental local government in South Africa, as elaborated in Chapter Six. Harrison (Forthcoming) examines the IDP and the critiques of governance and of the IDP process in the light of these perspectives. A contemporary evaluation methodology that is applied to large scale planning projects is the logical framework. This framework was applied to an evaluation of the KSiPP that was conducted in 2002. This represents the second of the professional evaluations that is the basis of the KSiPP case study (as discussed below). The logical framework is an internationally recognised framework for project evaluation that is applied to several European Commission funded programmes. It is a framework that distinguishes between inputs or resources, activities or process, and outputs or products of projects. This framework requires that projects be assessed according to their original goals. They are also assessed according to relevance of the project to its context, the internal logic of project design, the efficiency of process management and delivery, the effectiveness of achieving project objectives and targets, the lasting impacts projects left in the community and the sustainability and replicability of the projects.

Napier (2001) outlines the advantages of the logical framework. He notes that the logical framework can be applied at different projects' stages, it can be scaled at the level of broad projects and detailed interventions, and it has the potential to order and structure a wide range of information and to provide a shared set of definitions of terms such as relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and impact. However, any evaluation tool is only as good as its application in practice. The log-frame can be applied variously depending on the indicators developed by the user or user group. In Cape Town, a log-frame approach

was shown to have been ineffective in measuring the social objectives of the housing programme, because the indicators applied to performance measurement were mostly administrative measures dealing with delivery and maintenance of housing. These did not relate to the objectives that housing should fulfil social and economic goals (Chipkin, 2002). The weaknesses of the approach as applied to the KSiPP included the fact that the approach was applied retrospectively, but had not been applied in project design or in the monitoring of project inputs over time. Data was thus not readily available in terms of the headings provided by the logical framework. The logical framework did not assist in the measurement or monitoring of unintended consequences – often an important component of planning evaluations. Finally, the rigid set of themes limited the evaluation somewhat and did not allow for an assessment of all the institutional and process issues that faced the KSiPP.

The debate around power and potential manipulation of evaluations is instructive in reflecting broadly on the evaluations undertaken of the KSiPP. This debate highlights the importance of considerations of: who evaluates projects and for which client; what the knowledge base and limitations to knowledge are in the evaluation; who the participants to that process are; what the values are that underpin the evaluation and the inputs of participants; and who is included and excluded from the evaluation. Similarly, the concerns raised by Harrison (Forthcoming), of evaluating outcomes either in terms of their 'success' in empowering local actors or in terms of their value for integrative governance, is useful. His work emphasises the real complexity of assessing complex programmes, which need to fulfil the democratic, as well as the efficiency requirements, of local government. These twin concerns loomed large for the KSiPP.

The following sections describe the research strategies and the gathering of empirical data for the research conducted in this dissertation. They show how the approaches above have been applied in my research.

Generalisation in Practice Writing

The extent and limitations of generalising from one case study to other contexts is pertinent in the context of practice writing.

Watson notes that the motivation for practice writing is based on the notion that learning takes place on the basis of experience and that experience can yield a more useful process of learning than learning from rules or theory can (Watson, 2000b). In 1994 Schon and Rein argued that collaboration between academics and practitioners benefits both, by helping practitioners generate usable knowledge and by ensuring that academics have insight into practice (in Watson 2000b). Whether they are concerned with reforming planning from within (Yiftachel, 1999) or with analysing planning stories in order to unpack the underlying power relations and so develop strategies that may counter the negative consequences of those power relations (Flyvbjerg, 1998b), practice theorists are focused on reflecting on actual cases. The understanding of power relations actually at work in planning practice has been shown by Flyvbjerg to be a critical starting point for developing responses and strategies to counter the negative exercise of power (Watson, 2002). Reflection on actual cases is intended not to draw out generalisations for grand theory, but to provide a repertoire of real life cases that will enable planners to draw on these when similar situations arise, in a process of "reflective transfer" (Watson, 2000a). The learning-from-experience model suggests that expertise is built up through the exposure to many real life situations and the ability to adapt the application of features or aspects of one case to others accordingly. Flyvbjerg suggests that the expert exercises judgement on the basis of intuition built up in this cumulative way, rather than through the application of well learnt rules (Watson, 2000a). Importantly, a 'learning from practice' model cast in the narrative, the telling of planners' stories, illuminates the complexity, ambiguity and fluidity of the world in which planning operates.

The focus of the present study is on exploring the detail of planning process and outcome in a richly contextualised and richly textured single case. This means that the value of the case lies in the particular rather than in generalisations. While reference is made to other urban renewal efforts in South Africa this case does not purport to offer generalised

solutions for the South African context. The value of the case for other planning cases will lie in the similarities and resonances that the case or parts thereof have for practitioners and students in their own work.

It is in the interplay between practice and theory that is made in this dissertation that the potential for generalising to other contexts is wider. The dissertation develops the concept of critical pragmatism and suggests a framework for applying this concept to the analysis of a planning case. It is possible to suggest wider application of these theoretical concepts that have been tested, albeit in one case, in this dissertation.

Research Strategy: Practice Writing through a Case Study

This dissertation focuses on a single case study. The case study mode of enquiry has been selected because it enables "an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence" (Robson, 1993:5).The case study method suits this research as it suits multi-perspectival analyses (Tellis, 1997). In this study data is derived from the voices of many interviewees representing a range of institutions and individuals, from public documentation and project reports, and from academic literature. Both a practice-based and a theoretical analysis are applied in the study.

Case studies are determined to be "naturalistic enquiries" (Robson, 1993) because the research takes place in a natural setting or context. The case study is recommended where the phenomenon is not readily distinguishable from its context (Yin, 2003). In the case study, people are the data gathering instruments. The case study is inductive, involving a deep exploration of the material and an analysis of these to draw findings for theory (Bryman, 2001).This research strategy has been highly relevant for the KSiPP where the understanding of the outcome and processes attendant on the project are intertwined with the project context. The strategy has also enabled me to ground the theoretical work in the empirical information and data. It is furthermore a strategy that facilitated an iterative

process between theory and praxis, which has been necessary for achieving a critical examination of the project.

Research Methods

The case study is based on three professional evaluations of the KSiPP and my own theoretically informed interrogation of the project. All of these processes have relied on qualitative methodologies, since this study primarily seeks to understand a phenomenon, rather than to enumerate it. These methodologies include textual analysis and interviews. Textual analyses of secondary sources including books and journals and of primary sources such as project business plans, annual reports and progress reports have been undertaken. The textual review also includes a review of government policy documents and information relating to urban renewal intentions and practice in South Africa.

While the desktop analysis of documentation for this study is extensive, large amounts of the planning practice, which this study explores are not recorded in business reports, progress reports or texts. It has been important to supplement textual analysis with verbal interviews. These interviews were crucial to my understanding of how systems worked and the reasons for actions. They also provided information on what planners and other stakeholders in the KSiPP actually did in the project.

The focus of the qualitative research in this study is on understanding planning processes and choices made, as well as on social and political dynamics at an institutional level. The scope does not extend to an assessment of the dynamics or their impact on individuals affected by the project. The focus is not on obtaining oral histories or individual perspectives. Because I take this broader perspective of the role of agencies rather than of individuals, I have elected to focus my in-depth interviews on the managerial level of the project and of institutions actively involved in project design and execution. Interviews conducted at community level are conducted with organisational representatives rather than individuals. Participant observation, while it would have been

useful in an exploratory exercise, was not possible or appropriate to this study, which was a post facto enquiry into the project.

As I show below, in the KSiPP case study methodology the use of a range of sources builds the empirical component. For Yin, validation is also achieved through investigator triangulation, where multiple researchers examine the same phenomenon (Yin, 1984). The KSiPP study is based on several evaluations, which benefited from the professional work of different researchers and from combined workshopping and debating of the data and evaluation findings amongst several professionals. In addition these reports have been presented to and accepted by clients and their audiences. This contributes an internal validity to the research. The narrative method adopted in this study requires a logical processing and connection between evidence and conclusions to be made (Watson, 2001). External validity is derived from the theoretical relationships that are made with the empirical work (Yin, 1994). Such relationship building is the main task of the current thesis, which provides a dialogue between the practical findings and theoretical study through an analytical framework.

In many instances, multiple interviews were held, several researchers were involved in the research process and in most cases I was accompanied to interviews by fellow researchers. The interpretation and extraction of information or quotes from the interviews was produced in the evaluation reports, which were verified by the whole research team. The key informants for the professional evaluations – officials, consultants and organised community organisations who had been stakeholders in the KSiPP meetings were invited to a presentation of the findings of the research. All were made aware of the use of their inputs in interviews. The evaluation documentation was available. The two primary informants with whom multiple interviews were conducted were shown chapters of the thesis and were re-interviewed several times both to provide additional information and to be given opportunities to correct my interpretation of their information and insights.

Obtaining Empirical Data

I am a planning practitioner. My academic research interest in the KSiPP followed my participation in an evaluation of the project in 1999. My active academic pursuit of the case began in 2001. There were thus close parallels in my academic and professional involvement with the case, and the conceptual framing of the research and analysis only emerged late in the research process. This iterative process between theory and practice is not uncommon (Watson, 2001). For me the starting point was in practice and my theoretical searches and learnings followed from my involvement and fascination with the actual case. This does mean that I have reframed the findings and conclusions of the professional evaluations following the development of a conceptual framework. In an ideal research process, perhaps, the theoretical framing could have come first. But the process of reframing the material is in itself an important intellectual exercise – one that illustrates the emergent iterative relationship between theory and practice.

Professional Evaluations of the KSiPP

The findings of three key evaluations into the KSiPP have informed this study. These evaluations were conducted in 1999, 2002 and 2003. I was the project manager and a key researcher for the first evaluation and the key researcher of the two later studies. I took major responsibility for editing the inputs of the research team and the overall report compilation for each of the evaluation exercises. I was the only researcher common to both the 1999 and 2002 evaluations. These evaluations thus benefited from both the consistency of my involvement and the insight of multiple professionals. My academic research was initiated in 2002 and coincided with and extended beyond the second and third assessments referred to below. In the latter phase of the professional evaluations there was thus some degree of iteration between theoretical insights and evaluation method and approach.

KSiPP Evaluation: 1999

The KSiPP was completed in 1999. A first evaluation was conducted to coincide with the completion of the project. The KSiPP itself commissioned this study, as a reflection on

the project at the time of its closure. The study was funded from KSiPP project funds. The client was thus not independent of the project. The possibility of a biased approach or of researchers being constrained in providing an objective and even critical view was a concern for the research team. It was agreed that findings would only be presented to the client at the end of the research process and the client stipulated that the independence of the research was of paramount importance. No restrictions were placed on data sources or on the range of interviewees in the research. Nevertheless, a great deal of the material used in the evaluation was obtained from the client, the client assisted researchers in obtaining access to several of the officials and organisations interviewed. Even with the precautions and independence noted in the briefing of the evaluating team, the client would, consciously or unconsciously, thus have had some influence on the research process.

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the extent to which the KSiPP had met its objectives. The evaluation set out to assess the nature and scale of impact that individual and aggregated projects had had on the violence torn and damaged area; to assess the processes that had been adopted in various projects and how these influenced outcomes; to determine the outstanding issues that required additional attention; and to highlight lessons that might be derived for other projects (GPG1999a).

It was agreed that both (minimal) quantitative and qualitative evaluations would be undertaken. Quantitative assessments would focus on the project finances, the number and scale of facilities provided, the scale of infrastructure provided and measurements of impact against a baseline of facilities, services etc. that were in place at the start of the project. However, the baseline survey could not be undertaken as there was insufficient information available to construct a basis against which to measure the deliverables of the project (GPG, 1999a). While the KSiPP was well documented in terms of business plans and cost flows, the limited quantitative information available from government institutions on the Kathorus area in general constrained quantitative analysis. This limitation was anticipated as the Kathorus area was not a jurisdictional area and its administrative components had been through a transitional period of amalgamation

during the life of the KSiPP. There was little consistent information gathering and analysis was across the area or its component parts. The amount of information available for different sectors varied and the extent of qualitative vs. quantitative input and assessment also varied with financial, engineering and security functional areas providing considerably more qualitative information than social services, housing, sport and recreation or business and economic development. The latter functional areas were evaluated through more qualitative means.

Overall, an emphasis was placed on qualitative methods. These were required because of the limited information. They were also necessary because the investigation into project outcomes was at once political, social and economic and not measurable. Quantitative methods were unlikely to yield the insights into processes and project impacts that the evaluation required.

The evaluation set out to offer a wide range of views in order to avoid bias in the interpretation of outcomes as far as possible. The research drew on a wide range of material and interviews. The references for the evaluation report records that sixty-five interviews were held with individuals, eleven focus groups were conducted and seventy-nine documents were reviewed over the course of the evaluation. The range of persons interviewed included national government officials, provincial government officials from various departments, local government officials from various departments, local level politicians, researchers, representatives of financial institutions, representatives of building contractors, representatives of NGOs, representatives of residents' forums, representatives of business forums, project administrators, project consultants and project coordinators. Focus groups were conducted with resident groups, business forums, community policing forums, building contractors, building inspectors, engineering officials, and displacees committees. The documentation reviewed included KSiPP overall business plans, KSiPP annual business plans, monthly reports, project business plans, progress reports, minutes of meetings, academic and policy research reports, unpublished papers documenting projects, and national policy documentation. The

project information was made available to consultants and later to me for my research with no complications or limitations on the use of data.

A Second Evaluation: 2002

In 2002 the national Department of Housing commissioned an evaluation into five of the larger Special Integrated Presidential Project (SiPPs), including the KSiPP. I was responsible for the KSiPP component of the evaluation. The aim of this evaluation was to extract urban renewal and institutional lessons. More specifically, it aimed to assess whether the SiPPs programme as an urban investment had reached its stated objectives and had led to broader developmental gains. This evaluation followed the state's declaration in 2001 of a new urban renewal programme. The mechanisms of the new programme had not been fully articulated and the evaluation was in part used in an attempt to influence the new programme through a demonstration of the experience of the SiPPs.

This evaluation was based on a logical framework methodology. The methodology was proposed by the research team under the leadership of the Council for Scientific Research (CSIR). The strengths and shortcomings of this approach are noted earlier in this chapter.

Information was collected from existing documents, from the previous evaluation (GPG, 1999a) conducted, from internal reviews of the KSiPP and from a limited number of fresh interviews. The log-frame provided a rigorous set of measures against which the information that had been gathered in the previous evaluation, and new information, was re-interpreted. The rigour of this evaluation provided a more concise and more holistic view of the KSiPP. As opposed to the previous evaluation, which concentrated on assessing the various functional areas in detail, this evaluation provided the basis for a thematic assessment of the project components from design to implementation and impact. It also benefited from the fact that some time had passed since the completion of the project and interviewees could reflect on this.

A Third Evaluation: 2003

A more flexible approach was adopted in the 2003 assessment of the KSiPP, which was specifically designed as a research project to extract lessons for future urban renewal projects. The client for this research study was the Gauteng Provincial Government (GPG), which was launching several urban renewal projects across the province. The emphasis was thus on eliciting information on the passage, success and weakness of the KSiPP and framing these in terms of learning points for urban managers and project implementers. An additional emphasis was placed on assessing the extent to which interventions were sustainable. This research project was also led by the CSIR. Different researchers took responsibility for assessing the various functional areas. These inputs were collated and were recoded and reflected in terms of a series of themes reflecting the positive aspects of the KSiPP and the negative aspects. Within twelve key lessons, detailed aspects of the projects were narrated in terms of their design, implementation processes and impacts, and more detailed lessons were extracted. My role was as key researcher and the co-author of the final document.

This project reviewed the previous research and included additional material from the records of the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council, the South African Police Services (SAPS), and provincial social services departments. It found that there were still limitations in terms of monitoring and data availability as no post-settlement studies had been conducted in Kathorus. Qualitative approaches were thus employed to elicit the views of a range of respondents on conditions on the area and the impact, successes and failures of the KSiPP. Nine focus groups and twenty-three interviews were held with residents, hostel residents, councillors, members of community policing forums, provincial and local officials, consultants who had worked on the KSiPP and representatives of NGOs. While this type of evaluation provides in-depth insight into a project, 'lessons learnt' evaluation approaches have been critiqued for their tendency to "have a non-controversial ring to them, in part because they contain no operational guidance" (Wildavsky 1973:134-135).

In summary, the professional evaluations conducted exhibited mixed methods and a multilayered approach. The material was gleaned from a range of sources and was both qualitative and quantitative. The various assessments required the application of different lenses to be applied to the material and the material was thus reflected and recoded in several ways. Quantitative methods of mapping, quantifying and determining costs were applied to supplement the qualitative methods, but were not a key focus of the methodology. Rather the research relied on the scanning and interpretation of documentation and on the use of semi structured and unstructured interviews and focus groups and the interpretation of the field notes and interview notes from these methods. The range of researchers involved as well as the vast array of sources used form both within projects and external to the projects (including policy documentation and academic literature) provided a strong measure of triangulation of data.

A Note on Interviewing

In spite of the fact that the emphasis in this study was not on oral history, the interview methodologies that I employed drew from the lessons of listening that are common in feminist oral history studies. Those methodologies emphasise close listening: "Realising the possibilities of the oral history interview demands a shift in methodology from information gathering, where the focus is on the right questions, to interaction, where the focus is on process, on the dynamic unfolding of the subject's viewpoint" (Anderson and Jack, 1991:23).

I was concerned with hearing the views of the interviewees and with extracting their sense of the outcomes and processes of the KSiPP planning exercise. I found increasingly that the unstructured interview, which relied only on core themes rather than rigorous questions, was most helpful. It was the open-ended questions around broad issues such as power relations that yielded the most interesting answers and often the most interesting stories and details. Although I steered the interviews either in terms of the issues that had been selected for the evaluations I was undertaking or (later) in terms of the themes emerging from my research into critical pragmatism, I was conscious of listening and of

asking probing questions. The combination of close listening, of my tenacity in questioning and, where necessary, of conducting multiple interviews generated a rich base of narrative material for the study. It is pertinent, however, to position myself in relation to the project and to interviewees to gain a fuller picture of my role in the interviews and of dynamics that are set up by that role, for "(t)here can, of course, be no apolitical scholarship" (Mohanty, 1991:53).

Positioning the Researcher

Haraway's 'politics and epistemology of location' hold that partiality, and not universality is the basis for all knowledge claims. Our knowledge need to be situated as they are always marked by our position. The various categories of race, gender, class and nationality of the researcher reflect the locationality (historical, national and generational) and the positionality (class, race, gender, sexuality, nationality). Acknowledging these serves to acknowledge that where we are always affects our standpoint in relation to information and knowledge (Haraway in Wolf, 1996). Because they are not independent of the research they conduct, but rather need to be conscious of their partiality, it is necessary for researchers to locate themselves in the research process (Mies, 1993). There are also risks in situating oneself. Patai notes that attempts to situate oneself often leads to tropes that sound like apologies. These in turn are worn as 'badges'; but they do not in themselves change the reality if unequal relations or transform power relations. Patai challenges researchers not to place themselves at centre stage but to centre those being researched (Patai in Wolf 1996). Wolf counters this argument with the reminder that in spite of these difficulties, positionality is critical, if only to ensure that researchers consciously self-examine their role in a global arena or their self appointed 'do-gooder' roles (Wolf, 1996).

Much of my professional work over the last six years has been dedicated to the evaluation of the KSiPP. I have participated in three formal evaluations aimed at assessing the process and outcome of the KSiPP as well as its potential lessons for similar planning exercises in South Africa. The project has fascinated me. I have been intrigued by

elements of the project such as actions that defy traditional planning roles, the distance between intentions and outcomes and, notwithstanding this, the benefits of outcome, the astounding scale of delivery in compromised circumstances, the intersection of institutional, political, historical circumstance and concerted planning action in achieving planning outcome, and the tensions between the political and the technical.

I bring to the professional analysis and to the current study of the KSiPP my own perspectives as a white middle class professional planning consultant. My history in planning has focused primarily on research, policy development and project work that has centred on the promotion of improved conditions for disadvantaged groups. In implementation terms this has included the provision of technical assistance to residents of informal settlements opposing relocation, employment by the state as social development advisor on new housing subsidy projects, and the coordination of projects addressing special housing needs in major urban renewal schemes. At a research and policy level my focus has included policy work on informal settlements upgrading, housing policy, inner city urban renewal policy development, research of international practices in sustainable housing and in urban development, and the evaluation of and extraction of lessons learnt from large scale urban renewal projects.

My positionality in this research exercise is relevant as Wolf (1996) reminds that positionality impacts upon power and that the power dimension is threaded throughout fieldwork. Three dimensions of power are discerned: power stemming from the different personalities and positions of the researcher and researched (race, class, etc.); power exerted during the research exercise, such as defining the research relationship and unequal exchange; and power exerted in the post-fieldwork phase, in writing and representing. The researcher tends to maintain control over the 'knowledge creation' in research. The research tends then to benefit the researcher more than the researched.

In terms of interviews conducted with the managerial level in the KSiPP or with officials or professionals who worked in the project, the power that I exerted in the exercise was largely that of defining the research relationship (me as interviewer, they as respondents)

and setting the research questions. The dimensions of race, class and gender would have impacted on the openness with which people offered answers and insights to my questioning. I made the purpose and process of the research as transparent as possible, beginning each interview with an explanation of the research purpose and the intentions in conducting the interview. Particularly pertinent in terms of race and class were the interviews I conducted with community organisations and residents groups. In these the language and education barriers and differentials were pronounced and I was aware of my power in a research field that is dominated by residents 'being researched' for the benefit of outsiders. I took care to explain the purpose of the interviews, to allow people to introduce themselves in relation to the projects and to ensure that a combination of closed and open-ended questions was asked. I was careful to allow time for answers and to provide skilled translation services in these interactions. However, despite all precautions, nuances, detail and contextual understandings will always be lost in translation.

Interpreting the Data

Interpretation of research data is subject to partiality. The researcher reduces interviewees' utterances to text and translates the expressions of the researched through continual selection and monitoring (Skeggs, 1997). I use an academic framework to explain the experiences and actions of planners. This framework is the discourse presently available to me. In situating the framework of understanding within the field of practice writing it is instructive to note that internationally Flyvbjerg (1998c) and Throgmorton (1996) employ the narrative approach in case study research. Within South Africa Watson (2002) has used the technique to describe and analyse the metropolitan planning process in Cape Town from 1989 to 2000. Watson applies a Foucauldian approach in her focus on the exercise of "power exerted consciously or unconsciously by individuals (singly or jointly) and which impacted on the planning process" (Watson, 2002:5).

My theoretical research began with a search for theoretical concepts and positions that would resonate with the rich story of practice that the KSiPP offered. The professional

evaluations undertaken on the KSiPP project had revealed a complex tale with few linear relationships between plan and outcome, with nevertheless a strong focus on outcome, with a messy dynamic of power and politics within the planning process and with highly complex collaborative and competing networks at play to give effect to the project. The methodological approaches or frames I had available at the time failed to illuminate these dimensions of process and outcome. With this growing awareness, I was drawn to searching for appropriate planning theory in the critical, the pragmatic and the collaborative planning schools. My theoretical discovery paralleled and interacted with my further research into the empirical case and so the third evaluation, for example, took quite a different form from the first two evaluations.

The theoretical journey into collaborative planning yielded Forester's concept of critical pragmatism. The concept and its brief description in Forester's work was appealing in that it captured much of the combined complexity of the concrete substantive outcome based issues evident in that the KSiPP project while addressing the deeper and at least equally complex issues of process. However, Forester has not elaborated widely on the components of the concept. The absence of a fully developed theoretical position on critical pragmatism as a pure concept led me to search for a means of probing and fleshing out this concept into a potentially useable framework for analysing the empirical study. This search required an understanding of the fundamental philosophical bases of critical pragmatism and for this an overview of the philosophical concepts surrounding critical theory and pragmatism and critical pragmatism as briefly addressed in philosophy was necessary. A literature review, comparative assessment and interpretation of the philosophical material yielded concepts that broadly constituted a combined critical and pragmatic position: context, outcomes, rationality, power and ethics. These became the building blocks for examining planning theory and for describing critical pragmatism for planning analysis.

The next theoretical task was to examine critical pragmatism and the concepts that had emerged from the philosophical underpinnings within the existing planning literature. This required an examination of the critical traditions as well as the pragmatic traditions

within planning thought. The literature review conducted for this aspect of the study revealed the ways in which the philosophical traditions had impacted on a number of planning schools. They also highlighted the 'ethical gap' in which neither critical theory nor pragmatism had given adequate attention to the role of values and choice in planning. This step in the theoretical study refined my search in planning to the critical, collaborative and pragmatic schools. In order to take the research into the next level of conceptual analysis it was necessary to interrogate how the concepts that critical pragmatism suggested had been applied in planning theory. This interpretive theoretical research was conducted through a literature review against the five lenses of context, outcome, rationality, power and ethics and I reviewed how these concepts had been explicitly or implicitly addressed in a range of literature in the main contemporary planning schools.

The interpretation of the concepts of critical pragmatism through planning theory allowed for development of the conceptual framework. Each of the five lenses had been fleshed out in terms of the ways in which they were interpreted in contemporary planning theory. A return to the bases of critical pragmatism was necessary to refine the description of these concepts as particularly 'critically pragmatic'. I undertook this interpretation through an analysis of the concepts as applied in planning theory and as rooted in philosophical writings.

I used the enriched five lenses in interpreting the empirical data that had come out of the evaluative studies. In this work I describe the findings first in terms of a narrative. Thereafter the study was re-examined and interpreted against each of the five lenses. The main findings of this work relate to the analysis of the project through these lenses. The findings reveal a more in-depth and richer analysis of the KSiPP than conventional evaluation has allowed. In an interaction between theory and data, I then reflected on the findings in terms of the value of applying this framework and in terms of the limitations that the framework yielded. I fully acknowledge the 'messy', partially out of sync, relationship between the development of the conceptual framework and the empirical investigations. This is a possible limitation, although, as I have argued, it also illuminates

the iterative relationship between ideas and practice in the theory-making process to which contemporary planning theorists have drawn our attention. The further limitations of methodology are outlined in the conclusion to this dissertation.