

**GOVERNANCE, SPORT AND THE CITY:  
REALISING MEGA SPORTING EVENTS IN  
LONDON**

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## Abstract

Mega sports events have become important tools for cities seeking to enhance their global position, undertake regeneration and promote tourism and there is intense competition to win the rights to host events, particularly the Olympics, World Athletics Championships and FIFA World Cup. Using the case of the abandoned Lee Valley National Athletics Centre (LVNAC) project and the loss of the rights to stage the 2005 World Athletics Championships in London as a case study, this thesis sets out to explore the inter-relationships between governance, sport and the city, with a particular focus on mega sports events. A qualitative approach was adopted to enable processes to be explored and to tease out linkages between different aspects of governance, levels of governance, sport and governance and the various interested parties. This thesis is multi-disciplinary in its approach, using concepts from a variety of disciplines including social policy, geography, urban studies and politics. It is underpinned by an integrative theoretical framework drawing elements primarily from urban regime theory, theories of policy networks and multi-level governance.

This thesis is based on the premise that the key to understanding the failure of the LVNAC project as well as the development of other mega sporting projects lies in understanding the prevailing governance arrangements. A working hypothesis was developed to guide the thesis, which is that the relative failure of the UK to bid for, and stage mega-sports events in the recent past is rooted within aspects of the network style of governance that evolved in London and other UK cities. In order to explore this proposition and to more fully understand the failure of the LVNAC project this thesis compares how other nations and cities (both within the UK and abroad) approach mega-sports events and their experiences of staging mega sports events. Drawing on documentary sources and semi-structured interviews with key players involved with the LVNAC project, the 'story' of the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre is told. The analysis of the LVNAC project locates the project within the evolving governance arrangements for London- the re-instatement of city-wide government and election of the Mayor in 2001. Comparison is made with the subsequent successful London bid for the 2012 Olympics.

This thesis demonstrates the importance of governance issues throughout the whole mega sports events process and at all levels of governance. In particular this thesis has shown that three elements of governance -leadership, vision and strategy -play a critical role in securing and delivering successful mega sports events. The failure of the LVNAC project was the result of failures on all these fronts whilst the success of the London Olympic bid was largely because these elements were in place. This thesis highlights the critical role played by cities but also the continuing importance of central government in the mega sporting events process. Furthermore, this thesis has demonstrated the value of studying an apparent failure. So often the emphasis within policy and political arenas is on learning from success and consequently failures are often overlooked as a source of positive knowledge.

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## List of abbreviations

- ASA: Amateur Swimming Association  
BAA: British Airport Authority  
BOA: British Olympic Association  
CMF: Capital Modernisation Fund  
CCPR: Central Council of Physical Recreation  
CSP: County Sports Partnerships  
DCMS: Department of Culture, Media and Sport  
DoE: Department of Environment  
DETR: Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions  
DNH: Department of National Heritage  
DoH: Department of Health  
EDS: Economic Development Strategy  
EHAC: Enfield and Haringey Athletics Club  
EOA: Event Organising Agreement  
ERDF: European Regional Development Fund  
EU: European Union  
FA: The Football Association  
FIFA: *Fédération Internationale de Football Association*  
GLA: Greater London Authority  
GLC: Greater London Council  
GOL: Government Office for London  
GOR: Government Office in the Region  
IAAF: International Association of Athletics Federation  
IOC: International Olympic Committee  
LA: Los Angeles  
LBE: London Borough of Enfield  
LCC: London County Council  
LDA: London Development Agency  
LFEPA: London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority  
LIS: London International Sport  
LOCOG: London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games  
LVNAC: Lee Valley National Athletics Centre  
LVAC: Lee Valley Athletics Centre



LVRPA: Lee Valley Regional Park Authority  
MCC: Manchester City Council  
MCG : Manchester Commonwealth Games  
MPA: Metropolitan Police Authority  
NACJVC: National Athletics Centre Joint Venture Consortium  
NDPB: Non-Departmental Public body  
NELSN: North and East London Sport Network  
NLSA: North London Strategic Alliance  
NGB: National Governing Body  
NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation  
NOC: National Olympic Committee  
NSF: National Sports Foundation.  
NSW: New South Wales  
OCA: Olympic Co-ordination Authority  
OCOG: Organising Committee of the Olympic Games  
ODA: Olympic Delivery Authority  
ORTA: Olympic Roads and Transport Authority  
RCC: Regional Cultural Consortia  
RDA: Regional Development Agency  
RSB: Regional Sports Board  
SdF: Stade de France  
SDS: Spatial Development Plan  
SEU: Social Exclusion Unit  
SRA: Strategic-Relational Approach  
SRB: Single Regeneration Budget  
SU: Strategy Unit  
TfL: Transport for London  
WARME: West Anglian Route Modernisation and Enhancement Programme  
WAC: World Athletics Championships  
WNS: Wembley National Stadium  
WNSL: Wembley National Stadium Limited  
WSG: World Student Games  
UEFA: Union of European Football Associations  
ULV: Upper Lee Valley  
URC: Urban Regeneration Company

USA: United States of America

UK: United Kingdom

UKA: UK Athletics

## Preface

This thesis began quite simply as a study of the community impacts of the development of a large stadium – namely the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre (LVNAC) in Enfield, north London. However, events soon took over, altering the course of the LVNAC and consequently the thesis. The ‘story’ of mega sports events in the UK and London in the past five years or so has as many twists and turns as a soap opera and probably as many characters. Here I would like to set the scene to the thesis by giving a ‘flavour’ of what happened: the complexities and inter-connections, the dynamic nature of policy and politics and the way in which global events impinge on all aspects of policy.

The ‘story’ begins in December 1999 with the decision of the then Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Chris Smith, to remove athletics from the English National Stadium development at Wembley and the proposal to build a National Athletics Centre. From the outset doubts were raised as to whether the LVNAC would ever see the light of day: the UK and London more specifically did not have a good track record on mega sports projects. The site of the National Athletic Centre was chosen at the end of March 2000 and less than two weeks later the International Association Athletic Federations (IAAF) awarded the rights to stage the 2005 World Athletic Championships to London: the first UK city to secure this prestigious event. The plan was to hold them at the yet to be built LVNAC. A few weeks later in May 2000 Londoners elected their first mayor – Ken Livingstone former leader of the Greater London Council – and the Greater London Authority. Livingstone was elected as an independent having been stopped from becoming the Labour candidate and he had been expelled from the Labour party. Thus, within the space of a few weeks London gained the World Athletics

Championships, a mayor and a unitary authority (after an absence of more than a decade).

Despite these doubts by the time the thesis began (May 2001) a great deal of work had been done: the design had been launched, the outline planning application submitted, and electoral pledges made to deliver a world class event. However, a capital gap remained and there were other outstanding issues e.g. transport. In June 2001 New Labour were re-elected for a second term and the ensuing cabinet reshuffle saw a new team at the Department of Media, Culture and Sport (DCMS): out went Chris Smith, Secretary of State and 'architect' of the LVNAC and also Kate Hoey as Sports Minister and in came Tessa Jowell as Secretary of State and Richard Caborn as Sports Minister. Both the newcomers were seen by commentators as lacking in sports credentials. One of the first announcements made by Tessa Jowell was a review of the LVNAC project to be conducted by Patrick Carter which was to run along side his investigation of the troubled Wembley National Stadium development. For many this review was a clear signal that the 'writing was on the wall' for the LVNAC.

Elsewhere Manchester had run into difficulties with their preparations for the 2002 Commonwealth Games and there were concerns that the UK would not be able to deliver a high quality event. Meanwhile members of the LVNAC project team were in Edmonton, Canada learning at first hand about staging the World Athletics Championships. However, the LVNAC team were unaware that the DCMS was already in negotiation with Sheffield as alternative venue for the 2005 World Athletic Championships. At the end of August 2001 Carter delivered his report to the DCMS and Sport England but it was not until October that the results were revealed: the LVNAC project was cancelled. At a now famous meeting at Heathrow airport central

government acting against the advice of sporting bodies informed the IAAF of the situation and suggested Sheffield as an alternative. As predicted the IAAF rejected this plan and reopened the bidding. It was the first time in the modern sporting era that a major economic power had reneged on a promise to hold a mega sports event. This incident was seen as highly damaging for the UK's reputation within international sport and a blow to future ambitions to host other events, in particular the Olympics.

However, events elsewhere had overtaken the world and the news of the demise of the LVNAC project was relegated to the depths of the broad sheets (page 30 of *The Guardian*) by the coverage of the impact of the terrorist attacks on the USA of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001. The events of "9/11" led directly to a €1 billion security bill for the organisers of the 2004 Athens Olympics (BBC, 2004a) as well as many alarmist headlines in the months preceding the Games.

The decision of October 2001 to abandon the LVNAC project left me with a problem - no stadium to study. Although I could have found another stadium development (the plans to relocate Arsenal football club were in the pipeline), the fact that the UK and London had yet again run into trouble with a mega-project opened so many questions that I decided to investigate why, using the LVNAC as a case study. Moreover, whilst the LVNAC was collapsing the WNS development was stalled and questions remained as to whether Manchester could 'pull off' the Commonwealth Games in 2002 and this all begged the question- quite why did this keep happening? I thus set about restructuring my thesis and started down a very different road to the one I had set out on - studying the failure of the LVNAC project.

After the initial furore died down it appeared as though the LVNAC project would be consigned to history along with the UK ambitions to stage mega events in the near

future. Indeed questions were raised as to whether the UK would ever be capable of delivering a 'big project'. However a number of events – the success of Manchester Commonwealth Games, the DCMS/SU review of mega sport events (DCMS/SU, 2002), a strong pro- London Olympic bid lobby - combined to mean that mega sports events remained on the agenda and made the process of writing this thesis both interesting and challenging: hardly a week went by without a new development particularly as the time to submit a bid for the 2012 Olympics drew nearer. Although the cost-benefit study (Arup, 2002) commissioned by the key stakeholders (government, Mayor of London and British Olympic Association (BOA)) was generally well received perhaps not surprisingly many including central government were wary of going down the mega-event road. A great debate ensued with the pro and anti camps being given numerous opportunities to voice their opinions in the media. Objectors often raised the spectres of the LVNAC project and the WNS and also voiced concerns about the potential high costs of hosting the Olympics. A vocal champion of a London Olympic bid was the Mayor of London who wanted to use the Games as a vehicle for regeneration and to consolidate London's position as a global city which was very much against the grain of the DCMS/SU report (2002). Central government remained guarded talking about how they need to take into account "winnability", "affordability" and "deliverability" and the BOA made it clear that without the total 'buy in' (i.e. solid financial and political support) of central government there would be no bid.

Although over time government support seemed to be increasing it was a difficult one to 'call' and the debate continued throughout the autumn and early winter and an announcement was eagerly awaited from the Cabinet in January 2003. However, once again world events were to push sport off the agenda. The growing crisis in Iraq and the increasing likelihood of war meant the Olympic decision was postponed. The war with

Iraq meant that the decision was further delayed and it was not until May 2003 that the government announced its intention to support a bid. The name of London was put forward as an applicant city by the BOA in July 2003 and although the government stated its support of the bid the general perception was that this support was at best 'lukewarm'. In May 2004 London was selected as a candidate city along with Paris, New York, Madrid and Moscow. Livingstone also secured a second term in office, this time within the Labour fold, stating that he would work with government to bring the Olympics to London. However, the London bid was criticised on a number of fronts, particularly transport, and Lord Sebastian Coe was brought in as Chair— a former Olympic gold medallist, ex-MP, member of the IAAF committee he was thus well linked into both international sporting and UK political networks.

Coe made a number of changes to the team bringing in the likes of Jim Sloman chief operating officer for Sydney 2000 Olympics. The bid was also reworked prior to submitting the candidate file in November 2005 and the bid took on a new momentum. From the start Paris were the favourites and remained so throughout the process, although London's position was seen to strengthen over time as support from politicians and public grew. In the months preceding the decision Coe along with others including Tessa Jowell, Ken Livingstone and also the Prime Minister, Tony Blair and his wife Cherie Blair lobbied hard on behalf of the London bid. The PM's decision to attend the IOC session on the eve of hosting a G8 summit in Scotland was taken as a sign of his commitment – it seemed that the PM really was 'on board'. On July 6<sup>th</sup> 2005 Jacques Rogge, IOC President announced that London would host the 2012 Summer Olympics. The jubilation was to be short lived as the next day London found itself under attack from terrorists and within weeks another attempt (fortunately unsuccessful) was made to

bomb the transport system. Once again the world was given a stark remainder of the vulnerability of cities to acts of terrorism.

When the LVNAC project was abandoned and the rights to host the World Athletics Championships were lost I think few would have predicted that within four years the same government would be celebrating securing the ‘big prize’ – the Summer Olympics. In part this thesis is about what has happened – at national and city level - to take us from the failure of the LVNAC to the success of London Olympic bid. It is also about how we learn in both research and policy terms from failure, not just from the LVNAC but also from other cities and nations that have embarked on the risky business of staging mega sports events.

I was able to work full time on this research (2001 – 2004) as a PhD student thanks to a studentship from Middlesex University.



## Chapter One

### Introduction

This thesis is about the inter-relationships between governance, sport and the city, with a particular focus on mega-sporting events. More specifically this thesis is about the failure of a particular project – the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre project and the loss of the rights to stage the 2005 World Athletics Championships in London -but more importantly it is also about how we can learn from failure. This chapter will describe the background to the study, introduce the key concepts that will be developed throughout the thesis and outline how each chapter contributes to the overall thesis. In addition, the term ‘mega-event’ will be defined and the evolution of mega-events briefly discussed.

#### BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

##### Winning and losing the World Athletics Championships

In Spring 2000 the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) awarded the prestigious 2005 World Championships in Athletics (generally known as the World Athletics Championships) to London. It was the first time that a UK city had secured the rights to host the World Athletics Championships (WAC). Staging the Championships involved the construction of a new National Athletics Centre on the site of the existing Lee Valley Leisure Centre at Picketts Lock, Enfield, north London- the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre (LVNAC)<sup>1</sup>. However, in October 2001 the Government announced that the development would not be proceeding. The main reasons given were that problems with transport infrastructure, athletes’ accommodation and financing

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<sup>1</sup> The Lee Valley National Athletics Centre was often referred to as Picketts Lock in the media and by politicians but in this thesis its ‘official’ title will be used.

meant that it was unlikely that the project could be delivered to standard within time. The IAAF withdrew the games from London and refused to allow the Championships to be transferred to another UK city. The bidding process re-opened and although the UK was invited to submit a new bid, they declined to do so and the 2005 World Athletics Championships were subsequently awarded to Helsinki, Finland.

The abandonment of the LVNAC project was the first time in the modern sporting era that a major economic power had failed to meet a promise to host a mega-sports event (BBC, 2001a). However, for London it was the latest in the line of large-scale sporting and cultural projects to encounter difficulties. For example, both the Millennium Dome and English National Stadium at Wembley (commonly known as Wembley National Stadium) had been dogged with problems over financing, cost-overruns, delays in construction and uncertainties over their legacy function.

### Why is this unfortunate episode of interest?

#### *A) Shifts in the relationship between sport and the city*

Urban sports policy in Britain and other advanced economies has altered considerably in the last two decades. There has been a shift of focus from the delivery of sport for all and sporting welfare provision to the use of sport as a tool of economic development and an emphasis on sport and urban entrepreneurialism (Henry and Gratton, 2001; Henry, 2001). Sport is increasingly seen as a central strategy for large cities to promote their image and global position, undertake regeneration and tackle problems of social exclusion. Mega-sporting events in particular are seen as a key means of city marketing and large-scale regeneration although the processes and outcomes have proved to be deeply controversial. Burbank *et al* (2001) have termed this pursuit of a high profile event to act as a stimulus to, and rationale for, local development, the mega-event

strategy. They argue that this potentially high risk strategy for stimulating local economic growth has arisen from a combination of factors, in particular increased global economic competition and reduced government financial support to cities which results in strong competition for jobs and capital (Burbank *et al*, 2001). Furthermore, the huge media coverage of these events means that the attention of the world is focused on the host city and thus staging an event provides a supreme opportunity for the host city to 'sell' itself globally. Competition between cities to host mega sporting events is fierce (Whitelegg, 2000; Burbank *et al*, 2001), in particular for the 'big three' that is the Olympic Games, the World Athletics Championships and the FIFA (*Fédération Internationale de Football Association*) World Cup.

London as a global city is well placed to bid for and secure such events but in fact UK and London do not have a strong track record. The award of the 2012 Olympics to London may have changed this but at the time of the failure of the LVNAC project the situation was very different. In simple terms the UK had never won a competitive bid for the Olympics<sup>2</sup> (although Birmingham and Manchester had both submitted bids in recent years), England failed in its bid to host the 2006 FIFA World Cup and had never staged the World Athletics Championships. Although preparations were underway for Manchester to host the Commonwealth Games in 2002 the most recent and significant events hosted in the UK were the 1996 UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) Championships (commonly known as Euro'96) and the FIFA World Cup in 1966. Moreover, the LVNAC episode was regarded as damaging to the UK and London's reputation and standing generally and more specifically to its chances of securing a mega-sporting event: in 2001 even a bid for the 2012 Olympics appeared to

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<sup>2</sup> This has of course changed with the award of the 2012 Games. The Olympics were last staged in post-war London in 1948 and were dubbed the 'austerity games'.

be a remote possibility<sup>3</sup>. All this raised questions. Firstly, why had the UK generally and London in particular experienced so many difficulties in securing and realising mega-sporting events? Secondly, what was required to enable the UK and London to secure and deliver such projects? Finally, for some there was a fundamental doubt that the UK and London could ever stage a successful mega-sports event. Over the course of this thesis as the plans to bring the Olympics to London in 2012 began to take shape and as the bid gathered momentum these questions became even more pertinent.

### *b) Changes in urban governance*

At the same time as there have been changes in the ways in which cities use sport, there have also been changes in the way cities are governed. There has been a general shift from 'government' to 'governance', with a broader range of actors being involved in the process of governing. These shifts in governance have raised fundamental conceptual questions relating to democracy, accountability and the exercise of power, and the changing role of the state.

What has emerged in cities is a particular form of governance, based on intense interaction between large numbers of partners including statutory, voluntary and private organisations – this has been termed 'network mode' of governance. Kleinman, Gordon and Hall (2002) argue that although network governance has become increasingly common throughout the UK it took on a particular form in London for several reasons. Firstly, between 1986-2000 London lacked a unitary authority and networking was a practical response to the absence of an overall strategic body. Secondly, the economic and political importance of London as the capital and the history of relations between

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<sup>3</sup> For example, Tony Banks, former Sports Minister said in an interview following the collapse of the LVNAC project "...we probably won't be able to mount a bid for the 2012 Olympic Games" (BBC, 2001b).

central government and London over the centuries shaped its form. The absence of a unitary authority made London one of the few major cities in the world without metropolitan government (Travers *et al*, 1991). What emerged was a complex system, but one with little democratic accountability or strategic co-ordination (Newman and Thornley, 1997; Hebbert, 1998; Tomaney, 2001).

All this raises several interrelated questions. Firstly, why has sport and city regeneration and promotion become so entwined? Secondly, what is the role of governance arrangements in the realisation of mega sporting events? And more specifically why the UK and London have been so ineffective in realising mega sporting projects?

Using the LVNAC project as a case study, this thesis sets out to explore the relationships between governance, sport and the city, with the aim of furthering understanding of these relationships, particularly in relation to the hosting of mega-sporting events. Although governance changes at national, regional and city level have been well described, our understanding of what these changes mean is less well developed. This thesis by focusing on these governance changes will help us better understand and conceptualise them and to identify significant elements of these governance changes. Furthermore, it is only by understanding the nature of urban and sport governance that we will be able to identify the potentialities and constraints on bidding for and staging mega-sporting events in the UK generally, and in London specifically.

At this point it would probably be useful to clarify what is meant by the term mega-event and how it will be used within this thesis. In the next section, the various definitions and meanings ascribed to this term will be discussed and the development of

mega-events over time sketched out. Following on from this, the research questions will be set out and an outline of how each chapter contributes to the overall thesis will be given.

## MEGA-EVENTS: TERMINOLOGY, DEFINITION AND EVOLUTION

“Mega-events’ are large cultural (including commercial and sporting) events, which have dramatic character, mass popular appeal and international significance” (Roche, 2000, p.1). A number of terms are used, often interchangeably, to describe large-scale cultural events. For example, the Olympic Games have been referred to as a ‘hallmark event’ (e.g. Waitt, 1999; Owen, 2002), as a ‘mega-event’ (e.g. Burbank *et al*, 2001; Hiller, 2000; Roche, 2000) and as a ‘large-scale’ event (e.g. French and Disher, 1997). There are further inconsistencies in the use of terminology, for example, for Roche (2000) mega-events and hallmark events are not one and the same, but different in scale and targeted at different markets (see Figure 1.1).

**Figure 1.1 Public events: types and dimensions according to Roche 2000**

<i>Type of event</i>	<i>Example of event</i>	<i>Target attendance/market</i>	<i>Type of media interest</i>
<i>Mega Event</i>	Expos Olympics FIFA World Cup (Soccer)	Global	Global TV
<i>Special Event</i>	Grand Prix (Formula 1) World Regional Sport (e.g. Pan-Am Games)	World Regional/ National	International/ National TV
<i>Hallmark Event</i>	National sport event (e.g. Australia Games) Big City Sport/Festival	Regional	Local TV
<i>Community Event</i>	Rural Town Event Local Community Event	Regional/ Local Local	Local TV/Press Local

Source: Roche (2000), p.4.

In a review of UK sports policy the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Strategy Unit (SU) drew a distinction between mega and major events (see Figure 1.2). It is this classification and terminology that will be used within this thesis. For the DCMS/SU (2002) the key features of mega sporting events appear to be the high level of infrastructure investment required and what they term the “winnability” i.e. the chances of winning the bid to host in the face of competition from other cities and nations (p.150). Both Roche (2000) and DCMS/SU (2002) highlight the global nature of mega events.

**Figure 1. 2: Defining features and categories of mega and major events**

**Mega events-** these consist of the Summer Olympics, FIFA World Cup, UEFA European Championships, IAAF World Athletics championships and the Commonwealth Games. These events are awarded after competitive bidding to an International Federation. Most tend to involve significant infrastructure investment.

**Major events (all others)** can be split into the following three categories:

- **Calendar events** – events that are a regular part of the international calendar for that sport, e.g. The Wimbledon Tennis Championships, the British Formula 1 Grand Prix, Test Series in Cricket. There is no bidding for these events – they are an established part of the circuit. They are generally considered to be commercially successful.
- **One off-events-** events that attract substantial interest in the UK and international TV rights e.g. the Rugby Union and Cricket World Cups. Bidding for these events is usually competitive.
- **Showcase events-** bidding for these events can be competitive and include events that: have the potential to boost the development of sport in the UK; provide the UK with a good chance of winning medals; and can improve the image and influence of UK sport overseas and/or involve regions of the UK e.g. the World Judo Championships, the World Disability Athletics Championships, and the European Show Jumping Championships.

Source: DCMS/SU (2002), p. 149.

Although there are slight variations in what is classed as a mega-event, the elite events are generally regarded as the Olympics, FIFA World Cup and World Athletics Championships (WAC). However, although these three tend to be grouped together there are significant differences between them. Firstly, the Olympics and WAC are city located events and awarded to *cities*, whilst the World Cup is staged in multi-urban

centres and awarded to *nations*. Secondly, although the Olympics carry instant global recognition, the WAC are not so effective, as Henry and Gratton (2001) observe: “Most sports fans could cite the location of the last six or eight summer Olympic games, while many would have difficulty in identifying the last four locations for the World Athletics Championships” (pp.4-5). Indeed, given the high profile media coverage of not just the Olympics themselves but also of the bidding process, it is likely that even people with little interest in sport would be able to name prospective Olympic cities as well as recent hosts. The FIFA World Cup is not city based and although it does provide income and recognition for host cities it is not of the same magnitude as the Olympics. Thirdly, in terms of television viewing the FIFA World Cup is the number one event. The 2002 FIFA World Cup Korea/Japan was broadcast to 213 countries, with over 41,100 hours of dedicated programming and cumulative audience of 28.8 billion viewers (FIFA, No. date). Although television coverage and viewing numbers for the WAC are increasing (IAAF, 2005, p.5) they still pale into insignificance when compared to those for either the Olympics or the FIFA World Cup<sup>4</sup>. Vast amounts of money are made from the sale of broadcasting rights for mega-sports events, indeed for the past three decades it has been the greatest source of revenue for the Olympic movement (IOC, 2005, p. 2).

This all perhaps begs the question as to why the WAC consistently features in the ‘top three? The answer to this probably lies in the powerful position that the IAAF holds within the International Olympic Committee (IOC). The IAAF is the richest and most powerful of the federations (Hill, 1993) and represents a sport that is a central plank of the Summer Olympics. Thus, the WAC is a highly prestigious event and is perhaps viewed by some cities as a stepping stone to the ‘big prize’ – the Olympics. The

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<sup>4</sup> The 2004 Athens Olympics was broadcast to 220 countries and watched by approximately 4.2 billion people (IOC, 2005, p.2). The 2005 World Athletics Championships held in Helsinki was watched by a cumulative audience of 57 million viewers which represented a 50% increase on Paris 2003 (IAAF, 2005, p.5).



Olympics (primarily the Summer Games) dominates the literature. This is a reflection of the long history of the Olympics which means there is ample material but also the potential of the Olympics to transform a city, either physically, its image or its position within the global urban hierarchy.

It is important to note that the 'top three' or even the top spot are not fixed; rather mega-events are a dynamic phenomenon. Shoval has traced the development of mega events from "Expo genre to Olympic genre" (Shoval, 2002, p.587) and the key phases and developments are presented in Figure 1.3. The first mega event, the 'Great Exhibition'<sup>5</sup> was held in London in 1851. It was the first World Fair or Exposition and it involved the construction of a venue (Crystal Palace). Its success led to a long series of World Exhibitions in leading cities of Europe and North America. Their main objective was to showcase the industrial achievements and political strength of the different world powers (Roche, 2000). The Olympics began as a 'side show' to World Exhibitions and it was not until the advent of mass media, which enabled live broadcasts to be relayed around the world, that sporting events began to establish themselves. As television increased the fortunes of sporting events (quite literally through lucrative broadcast and sponsorship deals) it reduced the international status and impact of 'Expos' (Roche, 2000), and cities turned to the Olympics to fulfil their aspirations. As will be discussed in Chapters Two and Seven, smaller 'second tier' cities, such as Los Angeles and Barcelona have used the Olympics as a vehicle for place marketing and economic development.

Shoval (2002) identifies a recent shift, with top tier cities entering the race to host the Olympics and other mega sports events and this was reflected in the candidate list for

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<sup>5</sup> Its full title was 'The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations'.

the 2012 Summer Olympics, with London, New York and Paris all in the running. In addition, Paris hosted the 2003 World Athletics Championships, bid for the 2008 Olympics Games and France was host to the 1998 FIFA World Cup. Thus, once again the leading cities are using mega-events (albeit a different event) to consolidate and reassert their positions in the global urban hierarchy.

**Figure 1.3: Shoal's four phases of mega-event development 1851 -present day**

Phase	Time period	Premier Event	Developments	Hosts
1 Heyday of 'Expos'	1851-1939	World Fairs and Exhibitions	Showcase for leading industrial politic powers	Top tier European and North American cities
2 Decline of 'Expos'	1948-1984	World Fairs and Exhibitions	Radio/TV gave a cheaper means of presenting technological achievements	Smaller, 2 <sup>nd</sup> tier cities from around the world
3 Rise of the Olympics	1984-2000	Olympics	Commercial success of Los Angeles Olympics spurred cities to bid	2nd tier cities trying to improve their national/ international positions
4 Pre-eminence of the Olympics	2000 & the future	Olympics	Bids from top tier cities trying to reassert their positions	Up to 2008 2 <sup>nd</sup> tier cities but 2012 likely to be a top tier city

Source: Compiled by author using and adapting Shoal (2002)

It is also important to note that other sporting events have also grown in scale and stature over time. For example, the size and scope of the Commonwealth Games has increased. Recent events including the end of apartheid in South Africa and conclusion of the Cold War have increased the political and economic significance of the Commonwealth Games (House of Commons, 1999). The 2002 Manchester Commonwealth Games (MCG) were the largest ever staged (CPC, 2002). This was largely in response to the 1998 Commonwealth Games hosted by Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia which were seen to raise the 'benchmark' and as a consequence Manchester revised its original plans. The impact of this scaling up of the MCG will be considered in detail in Chapter Seven.

So having clarified what a mega-event is and described the evolution of mega-events, let us now turn our attention to the questions that this thesis seeks to address.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This thesis is based on the premise that the key to understanding the failure of the LVNAC, as well as the development and delivery of other mega sporting projects lies in understanding the prevailing governance arrangements. From this premise a working hypothesis was developed to underpin and guide the study, which is that the relative failure of the UK to bid for, and stage mega-sporting events in the recent past is rooted within aspects of the style of network governance that has evolved in London and other UK cities. There are three main research questions and a number of sub-questions:

- 1) Is there a particular style(s) of governance associated with securing and delivering successful mega-sports events?

*What are the features of governance systems that promote the ability to secure and deliver successful mega-sports events? In relation to mega sports events what counts as 'successful' and what counts as 'failure'? What are the features of governance systems that limit the ability to secure and deliver successful mega- sports events?*

- 2) What are the relative strengths and weaknesses of the network style of governance in relation to bidding for and delivering mega-sports events?

*What are the key features of urban governance? What are the key features of sports governance?*

3) In the specific case of London, how do the arrangements for urban and sports governance influence how events are bid for and delivered?

*How have urban and sports governance arrangements changed in London over recent years? What are the similarities and differences with governance arrangements in other UK and global cities? What is particular about the case of London?*

The next section outlines the structure of the thesis. The structure of the thesis reflects the steps taken during the research process, from its origins laid out in this chapter through its theoretical underpinnings, research design and methodology to the findings and conclusions.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

In order to further understanding of the relationships between governance, sport and the city we need to capture the different dimension, scales and inter-connections, complexities and the dynamic nature of governance and urban politics. Consequently, the theoretical framework and the research design and methods used within this thesis were adopted in order to capture these sport, governance and city relations. The decision making process involved in the choice of both the theoretical framework and the methodological approach will form part of the discussion in the relevant chapters.

The purpose of Chapter Two – ‘Governance, urban politics and sport’ – is to explain the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis. Firstly, changes in city governance are outlined, followed by a discussion of theories that have the potential to help us understand the

connections between governance, urban politics and sport. Three alternative theoretical perspectives are sketched out and their strengths and weaknesses identified. These are urban regime theory, policy networks, multi-level governance. Secondly, the inter-relationships between governance, urban politics and sport are briefly examined in order to identify the nature of these relationships and also the key issues that the theoretical framework needs to be able to address. Having considered alternative theoretical explanations and identified the key elements that the theoretical framework needs to take account of, the chapter concludes by setting out an integrative theoretical framework that guides the research. The integrative theoretical framework combines elements from the different theoretical perspectives considered as a way of ensuring that all the key issues are covered.

The purpose of Chapter Three – Methods – is to set out the research design and the methods adopted and explain the rationale behind these choices. This chapter explains how the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter Two was operationalised and it also presents a reflexive account of conducting the research, issues that were anticipated and also those that arose during the course of the research and how they were addressed.

The objective of Chapter Four – ‘Case study: the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre’ - is to set the scene to the case study and the findings. First, the governance of London since 1963 will be briefly described in order to locate the LVNAC project within the wider London context. Second, background information about the Upper Lee Valley and Enfield, including its location, socio-economic profile and the main issues facing the area is provided. Finally, the ‘story’ of the LVNAC project, from its origins to its demise is told. The key issues that faced the project are highlighted along with the major players, critical events and decisions.

Chapter Five – ‘The Lee Valley National Athletics Centre: findings from the case study’ - presents the research findings from the case study. This chapter draws upon both the interview data and documentary sources, and builds upon the themes and issues identified from the wider literature. For the purposes of clarity Chapter Five is divided into two broad sections, with the first section focusing on governance issues and the second section concentrating on sports issues. There are of course points of convergence and overlap. The final section draws together the twelve explanations given for the failure of the LVNAC project in readiness for the next step in analysis. These twelve explanations fall into three categories and for the purpose of the next stage of analysis were grouped together: central government and governance; London and city governance; and sports governance.

The next stage of analysis entailed revisiting the wider literature on mega sports events and considering the explanations for the failure of the LVNAC project in the light of the experiences of other nations, cities and events in order to assess what are the key elements for success in mega-sporting projects and to gain insights into the relationship between the success or failure of mega sporting projects and governance issues. This analysis is presented in the subsequent two chapters –Six and Seven.

In Chapter Six – ‘The nation state and sport’ – the focus is on national and cultural issues in relation to sports governance in general and mega-sporting events in particular. Specifically this chapter examines first, the role and approach of central government to mega-sports events in different nations. Second, it examines how the particularities of sports governance relate to national and international contexts. Finally, this chapter will consider the ‘value’ of sport within national and political cultures.

In Chapter Seven- 'Cities and mega-sports events' – the spotlight shifts from the level of the nation state to the city and the role played by cities in bidding for and hosting mega-sports events. This chapter picks up and develops the governance issues highlighted in Chapter Two. Firstly, consideration will be given to the role and approach of city-level government to mega-sports events, how this varies and impacts on the form of the event and its legacy and also how this has evolved over time. Secondly, two cases – Sydney Olympics 2000 and Manchester Commonwealth Games 2002 – will be examined in more detail. These comparators were chosen because they were both major precursors to the LVNAC project and actively informed thinking on mega events at the time. Finally, the specifics of London will be examined. The focus will be on the changing relationship between sport and governance from the pre-Mayor period (1986-2000), through the establishment of the Mayor (2000-2003) to the maturing Mayoralty (2003 onwards) and its significance for mega-sports events, in particular the LVNAC project and the London Olympic bid.

The purpose of Chapter Eight – 'Discussion: Conclusions and way forward' - is to draw together the findings of the study, set out what has been learnt and also suggest possible ways of taking this knowledge forward in both the research and policy arenas. Firstly, a brief summary of the thesis is provided and the research questions are re-visited. The rest of the chapter is divided into three main sections focusing in turn on methodology, governance and sport. For each area in turn the conclusions are set out, along with policy implications and ideas for further research.

## Chapter Two

### Governance, urban politics and sport

#### INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the interrelationships between governance, urban politics and sport, consider alternative theoretical perspectives and set out the theoretical framework that will guide this thesis. Firstly, changes in city governance will be outlined, followed by a discussion of theories that have the potential to help us understand the interconnections between governance, urban politics and sport. The discussion will focus on three bodies of work – urban regime theory, policy networks and multi-level-governance – and for each theoretical approach the main components will be set out and strengths and weaknesses identified.

Secondly, the various interrelationships between governance and sport will be considered. At a city wide level sport is used as a tool for economic development and place marketing, primarily through pursuing a mega-event strategy. At a neighbourhood level sport has been used as a tool to promote social inclusion as well as to provide opportunities for residents to participate in sport and physical exercise. Both at the city level and neighbourhood level developments are shaped by and conducted within a multiplicity of national policy frameworks concerned with neighbourhood renewal, economic development and sports development. Furthermore, in relation to mega-events it is international sporting bodies (e.g. IOC, FIFA) that set the terms and make the key decisions (i.e. award the rights to host an event). This all adds up to a highly complex, multi-levelled system with numerous points of articulation and potential for overlap, tension and conflict as players with differing interests and priorities try to



forward their plans. What is both important and interesting is how these issues are approached, defined and resolved (or not as the case may be) as it reveals much about what drives cities and the priorities of those who make the key decisions and shape the city. Finally, drawing together the theories and the issues raised in the discussion about the interrelationships, the theoretical framework will be set out.

## GOVERNANCE

Governing contemporary Britain is a complex and challenging task. Over time there has been a shift in the pattern of governance, so that: 'Twenty years ago political institutions and political leaders were more self reliant and it was assumed – for good reasons - that the state governed Britain' (Pierre and Stoker, 2000, p.29), whilst today, although the state retains a key role, governance now involves the interaction of a broad and complex network of actors. These changes have occurred at national, regional and city level, and are reflected in the increasing use of the term 'governance' rather than 'government'.

The traditional use of governance and its dictionary entry define it as a synonym for government, but in the growing work on governance there is re-direction in its use and import: "A change in the meaning of government, referring to a process of governing; or a changed condition of ordered rule; or the new method by which society is governed" (Rhodes, 1997, p. 48).

Governance is essentially about process rather than institutional structures (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992; Leach and Percy-Smith, 2001). Furthermore, the role of government is changing. It increasingly involves what Osborne and Gaebler (1992) term 'steering' rather than 'rowing', or to use the terms commonly used by British politicians it is about 'enabling' rather than 'providing'. In practical terms this means that the

government role is to facilitate and control rather than always be direct providers of services. However, as Leach and Percy-Smith (2001) observe although governance implies a different approach to the business of government it does not necessarily involve less government. Table 2.1 encapsulates the key changes in the shift from government to governance.

**Figure 2.1: From government to governance: the shifting focus**

<i>Old government</i>	<i>New governance</i>
The state	The state and civil society
The public sector	Public, private and voluntary (or “third” sectors)
Institutions	Processes
Organisational structures	Policies, outputs, outcomes
‘Rowing’, providing	‘Steering’, enabling
Commanding, controlling, directing	Leading, facilitating, collaborating, bargaining
Hierarchy and authority	Networks and partnerships

Source: Leach and Percy-Smith (2001), p.5.

Theoretical work on governance reflects the interest of social scientists in the shifting pattern in styles of governing (Stoker, 1998). However, as Pierre and Stoker (2000) comment governance remains a ‘slippery’ concept and reviews of the literature conclude that the term is used in number of ways and has a variety of meanings (Rhodes, 1997; Pierre and Peters, 2000). A key issue is the distinction between government and governance. Rosenau (1992, pp. 3-6) argues that government refers to “activities backed by formal government”, whereas governance relates to “activities backed by shared goals”. Thus, governance is a more “encompassing phenomenon” as it includes not only governmental organisations but also “informal, non-governmental organisations”. In this way, you get governance without government when there are “regulatory mechanisms in a sphere of activity which function

effectively even though they are not endowed with formal authority". Although government and governance both consist of rule systems and steering mechanisms through which authority is exercised there are crucial differences between these systems and mechanisms. Rosenau (2004) argues that the rule systems of governments are formal structures, institutions that deal with a wide range of issues that are pertinent to the people that are being governed. Whilst governance is a broader concept, referring to "any collectivity –private or public-that employs informal as well as formal steering mechanisms to make demands, frame goals, issue directives, pursue policies and generate compliance" (Rosenau, 2004, p.31).

'Governance', whilst primarily about processes rather than institutions and structures, also reflects the growing complexity and fragmentation of government, which is now increasingly multi-levelled. For example, supranational organisations such as the European Union now play a key role in the governance of the UK, and devolution means that Scotland and Wales now have a UK and national level of government, whilst there have also been attempts to develop regional and city governance. Modern government is also increasingly fragmented and segmented within and across levels. Governance involves a broad range of organisations including central government departments, local government, quasi-public bodies, voluntary sector and the private sector. This governance is both multi-agency and multi-level and within this more complex system there is rarely a clear chain of command or hierarchy of authority. Public policies and services now require a great deal of co-operation between organisations and this takes several forms, such as multi-agency working, formal partnerships and less formal policy networks. Table 2.2 summarises the shift from what was dubbed the 'Westminster model' with a single, homogeneous UK government responsible to a sovereign Parliament, to the new system of governance.

**Figure 2.2: The Westminster model and the new British governance**

<i>The Westminster model</i>	<i>The new British governance</i>
The unitary state	The 'differentiated polity'
Parliamentary sovereignty	The devolution of power
Ministerial responsibility	Delegation of authority
Central-local relations	Multi-level governance
Homogeneity, uniformity	Diversity, fragmentation
Hierarchical authority	Partnerships, networks, 'joined up' government.

Source: Leach and Percy-Smith, 2001, p. 7.

However, as Newman (2001) notes in relation to New Labour's approach to policy making, these changes are underpinned by contradictory forces. So whilst there have been moves to decentralise power and develop consensual models of working, at the same time measures have been taken to centralise powers and to have tight control over processes and outcome. Thus there is fundamental tension between decentralisation and centralisation running through the New Labour project with the government pulling in both directions (Newman, 2001).

#### Governing the new urban political environment: directly elected mayors

One aspect of this shift which is of particular relevance to this thesis is the growing interest in the UK in directly elected mayors. Although a feature of cities in the USA and European nations (e.g. France, Germany) they have not been part of the political landscape of UK cities. Debates about the merits or otherwise of elected mayors developed during the 1990s<sup>1</sup>, with those in favour arguing that they represent a new

<sup>1</sup> Michael Heseltine, Conservative Secretary of State for the Environment in John Major's government was a strong advocate of elected mayors. He first proposed the idea in a consultation paper (DoE, 1991), although the Major government did not follow-up the idea. In 1995 the Commission for Local Democracy also recommended the adoption of the elected Mayoral model as part of a package of reforms aimed at invigorating local democracy (Commission for Local Democracy, 1995).

form of urban leadership, offer greater accountability, visibility and electoral competition (Tomaney, 2001). The promotion of elected mayors can be viewed as reflective of the shift from 'government to governance' and the requirements of a new political environment (Stoker, 2000). Stoker argues that:

Mayors deliver a leadership capacity suited to the new tasks and challenges that face local politics and governance...Local politicians need to be champions for service improvement, facilitating the expression of voices in diverse communities and reconciling differences, developing partnerships to ensure their achievement. Leadership in these new circumstances is not about seizing control of the state machine: it is about building coalitions, developing networks and steering in a complex environment. (Stoker, 2000).

Proponents of elected mayors pointed to examples to support their case, in particular Giuliani in New York and Riordan in Los Angeles both of whom forged successful partnerships with private sector actors in order to forward urban regeneration programmes. Pimlott and Rao (2002) argue that the American experience has been most influential in shaping British thinking about mayors, although of course there remain questions of transferability from one political culture to another and the influence and importance of local tradition and circumstances.

Several typologies of mayoral leadership have been developed, perhaps most notably by Yates (1977) who started with the premise that mayors differed along two dimensions: first, the amount of political and financial resources they have at their disposal to tackle the problems they face; and second, their style. Yates (1977) identified four ideal types that corresponded with patterns of mayoral leadership in large cities in the USA that

still have resonance in contemporary America and Europe (Pimlott and Rao, 2002). The four ideal types are as follows: the 'crusader' with high activism and low resources; the 'boss' with high resources and low activism; the 'broker' with low resources and passive style and the 'entrepreneur' with high resources and activist posture. Although for many the 'boss' system is seen to typify the American city, Pimlott and Rao (2002) argue that its heyday is long gone. Boss regimes were opaque, closed to influence, working through a political party, upheld by the spoils system and a feature of American cities when they were strongholds of heavy industry and ethnic politics, with the 'boss' being reliant on block support from the blue-collar work force<sup>2</sup>. Pimlott and Rao (2002) argue that the 'boss' tended to have great power but little vision about how to use for the benefit of the city<sup>3</sup>.

Pimlott and Rao (2002) suggest that in fact the 'broker' with neither resources or ambitions is more typical of the American experience with many mayors doing little more than ratifying agreements reached by competing interest groups. The third category the 'crusader' represents a distinct type of leadership in which visionary ambition is unimpeded by the lack of power required to achieve it. The 'crusader' mayor is generally represented as charismatic, a populist and a reformer. 'Crusaders' were a feature of the response to the urban crisis of the 1960s. However, as Pimlott and Rao (2002) note over time 'crusader' mayors often find their attempts at reform frustrated and realise that survival has to take precedence over reform<sup>4</sup>. The fourth category the 'entrepreneur' represents the idealised image of a successful mayor but the

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<sup>2</sup> Social changes in the structure of the city, for the example, the emergence of a number of highly differentiated interest groups and also desire for more accountability and transparency contributed to an end of the 'boss' system (Pimlott and Rao, 2002).

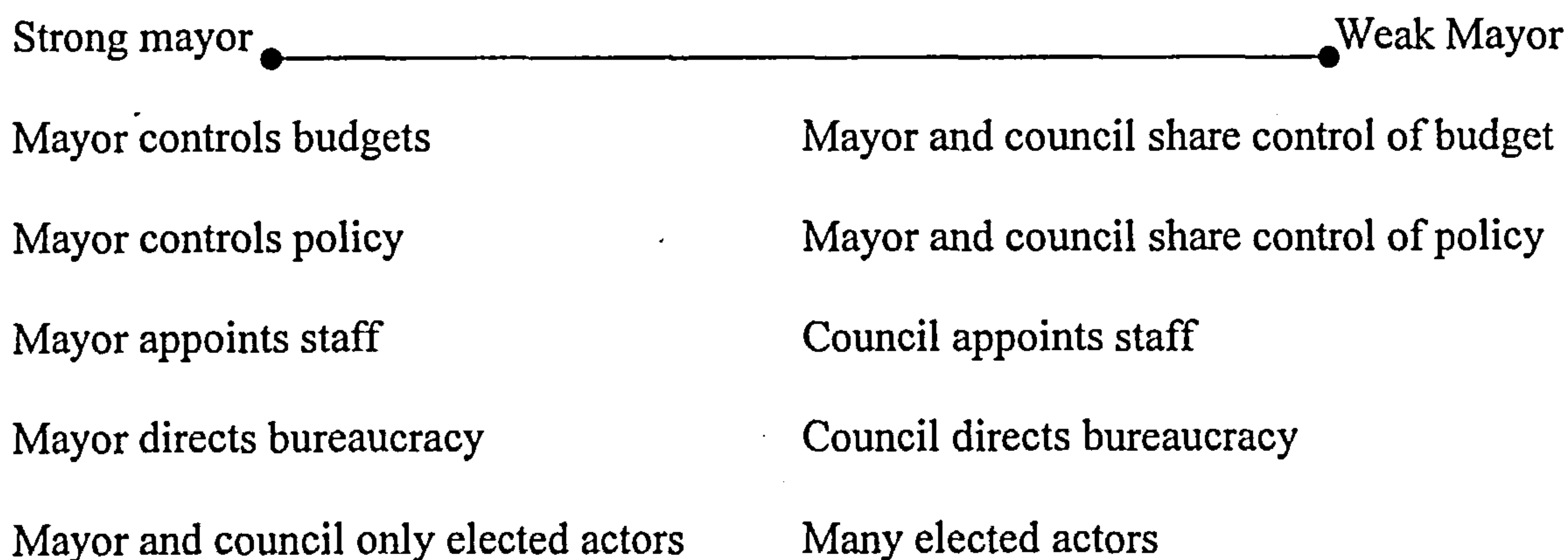
<sup>3</sup> The 'boss' was personified by the first Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago.

<sup>4</sup> For example, Mayor John Lindsay in New York cut through bureaucracy concentrating power into the hands of a few close aides and tried to introduce strong 'scientific' management. However, they found their ambitions for change thwarted and their challenges to the existing bureaucracy inadequate. Furthermore their rhetorical commitment to the poor and apparent contempt of the white middle class led to political polarization and a loss of popularity in the city (Pimlott and Rao, 2002),

necessary combination of political resources and political activism is rare (Pimlott and Rao, 2002). Pimlott and Rao (2002) give the example of Herbert Morrison, Labour leader of the Greater London Council (GLC) from 1934-1940<sup>5</sup>. However, they also note that this model was highly personal and although his successors had his formal powers they lacked his authority and were not able to build upon his successes (Pimlott and Rao, 2002).

Another way in which mayors have been conceptualised is as 'strong' and 'weak' particularly in relation to the council (e.g. Svara, 1990, Judd and Swanstrom, 1994). There are five features that can be used to form a continuum between strong and weak mayors (Svara, 1990; Judd and Swanstrom, 1994): control over budgets; control over policy; powers of appointment of senior staff; direction of lines of authority and accountability; and existence of other elected officials. Although the strong/weak continuum (see Figure 2.3) is a useful way of categorising the strength of mayors in relation to their councils and allows for comparison, a number of shortcomings have been identified.

**Figure 2. 3: The strong-mayor/weak mayor-continuum**



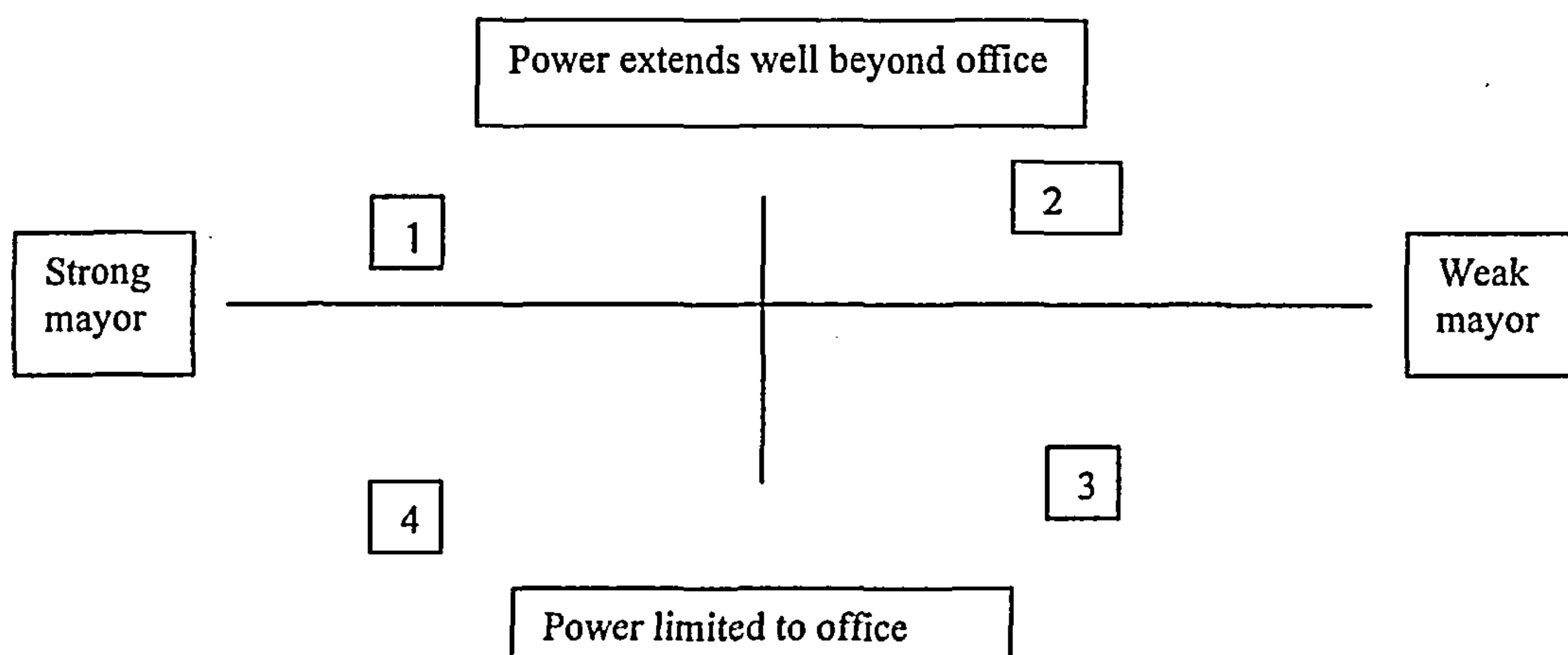
Source: Sweeting, 2003, p.468.

<sup>5</sup> According to Pimlott and Rao (2002) Morrison is often mistakenly seen as an archetypical 'boss'.

The model focuses on the formal powers and structures of municipal government. Thus it fails to take into account the informal powers of mayors<sup>6</sup>, the important part played by actors from outside the formal structures or the relationships with these outside agencies (Sweeting, 2003). The model also ignores the relationships between central and local government which in the UK context is a crucial omission (Sweeting, 2003).

Sweeting (2003) proposes an extension of the model (see Figure 2.4) arguing that any assessment of the 'strength' of mayors needs to take into account both the internal structures of the local authority within which the mayor acts and the ability and capacity of the mayor to extend their power to act beyond the formal boundaries of office.

**Figure 2.4: Two dimensions of mayoral strength**



Source: Sweeting (2003, p.471).

Using these two dimensions Sweeting (2003) identifies four types of mayor. Type 1 mayors are strong in relation to their council, their power extends well beyond the confines of their office and they operate in an autonomous environment. Type 2 mayors are weak in the sense they share control over the council bureaucracy with other elected

<sup>6</sup> According to this model Chicago is formally a weak mayor city but as already noted Mayor Daley the 'boss' Mayor was able to amass and wield a great deal of power.



officials. Nevertheless they are very influential beyond their office and their authorities have autonomy from other levels of government. Type 3 mayors are strong inside their council but have limited influence in local governance and do not operate in an autonomous environment. Finally type 4 mayors are weak in terms of their relationship with their councils but also have little influence beyond the council and limited local autonomy.

The LVNAC project coincided with UK's first experiment with a directly elected mayor - the Mayor of London - and these typologies provide frameworks in which to consider the mayoral system. They point to the critical role of political and financial resources, the value of informal as well as formal powers, the importance of relationships with other levels of governance (e.g. central government) and actors outside the administration (e.g. private sector) and the degree of influence the mayor has outside office. Furthermore, they highlight the importance of the style and personality of the incumbent mayor. Indeed, Pimlott and Rao (2002) argued the success or failure of the London experiment will be largely due to the first few mayoral incumbents and particularly the first –Ken Livingstone:

... The formal political resources at his disposal are limited while his own political style is interventionist, flamboyant, even charismatic. Time will show whether Livingstone turns out to be a 'crusader' or is forced to retreat to a 'brokers' role. (Pimlott and Rao, 2002, p. 20).

The role and structure of the Mayor and GLA will be described in Chapter Four, whilst findings of early research into the new governance arrangements will be examined in Chapter Seven.

## THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

There are a number of competing and overlapping bodies of theoretical work which seek to explain these changes, some in general terms and others specifically at the urban level. The following examination does not attempt to be exhaustive rather it focuses on theoretical perspectives that seem to be particularly useful for this thesis. It should be noted that the literature drawn upon is English language, US influenced social science material. The first body work of work to be considered, urban regime theory, as its name implies, focuses on city governance. Of the three bodies of work considered here, it is perhaps the most coherent, it has been extensively applied and is of particular interest as it has been used as a framework to analyse mega-event strategies (e.g. Burbank *et al*, 2001). However, it has a number of limitations, which will be discussed along with the suggestions that have been made to improve its explanatory power. The other two bodies of work – on multi-level governance and policy networks- have proved to have excellent descriptive powers of the changes in governance outlined above, but there are debates as to whether they constitute theories or are best described as models or conceptual frameworks. A number of suggestions have been made about how to strengthen their explanatory power. One of the main criticisms of these theories is that they under theorise the role of the nation state and brief consideration will be given to the literature on theories of the state.

### What are the central tenets of urban regime theory?

Urban regime theory originated in the United States and is most closely associated with the work of Clarence Stone on Atlanta (Stone, 1989). Within the literature there appears to be no agreement as to what constitute the central tenets of urban regime theory.

However, by means of an extensive literature review Mossberger and Stoker (2001)

sought to clarify the core components of regime theory. Mossberger and Stoker (2001, p.829) concluded that “urban regimes are coalitions based on informal networks as well as formal relationships, and they have the following core properties:

- partners drawn from government and non-governmental sources, requiring, but not limited to business participation;
- collaboration based on social production- the need to bring together fragmented resources for the power to accomplish tasks;
- identifiable policy agendas that can be related to the composition of the participants in the coalition;
- a longstanding pattern of cooperation rather than a temporary coalition”.

According to regime theory there is a division of labour between state and market in which ownership of productive assets lies primarily in the hands of the private sector, while the machinery of government is subject to popular control (Stone, 1989). Stone is interested in the interface between the public and private sectors and he describes the regime as the ‘organism’ which mediates the relationship between popular control of the political process and private control of the economy (Stone, 1993). It should be noted that this division of labour applies primarily to developed capitalist societies with democratic political systems and is thus not universal.

Regime theory assumes that the effectiveness of local government depends greatly on the co-operation of non-governmental actors and on the combination of state capacity with non-governmental resources (Stone, 1993). Stone defines a regime as “an informal yet relatively stable group *with access to institutional resources* that enable it to have a sustained role in making governing decisions” (Stone, 1989, p.4, original emphasis).

Collaboration is achieved not only through formal channels, but also through informal

networks. The emphasis is on the management of interests, and there is a recognition that not all members have the same 'wants' of the regime but that they co-operate together to achieve a set of policies. This "civic co-operation" (Stone, 1989, p.5) can be understood using Stone's social production model of power. Stone (1989, p.229) described the political power sought by regimes as the "power to" or the capacity to act, rather than "power over" others or social control. This, Ward comments "is clearly distinguishable from the community power paradigm's social control model, where the emphasis is on exerting control over the public" (1996, p.429).

Several typologies of urban regimes have been developed (e.g. Stone, 1993; Stoker and Mossberger, 1994). Stoker and Mossberger (1994) formulated a threefold typology of urban regimes: organic regimes that strive to protect the status quo, instrumental regimes that tend to be short term and to form around a concern to forward a specific project, and symbolic regimes, that occur in cities trying to change direction (see Figure 2.5). Instrumental regimes predominate in the American literature and perhaps are best typified by Stone's (1989) description of Atlanta. Organic regimes characterise cities with a tightly knit social fabric, high degree of consensus and less need for change, primarily small towns and suburbs and are thus not very relevant to analysing large complex cities. Symbolic regimes "attempt to change fundamentally a city's ideology or image. Their purpose is transition" (Stoker and Mossberger, 1994, p.201). They may be 'progressive' cities striving to change the ideology of local governance, or cities trying to 'revitalise' their fortunes with a change of image. Henry and Paramio-Salcines (1999) used this concept of 'symbolic regime' to examine Sheffield's transformation from 'City of Steel' to 'City of Sport' (see below for discussion).

**Figure 2. 5: A typology of urban regimes**

Defining characteristics	Regime types:		
	Organic	Instrumental	Symbolic
Purpose	Maintenance of status quo	Project realization	Redirection of ideology or image
Main motivation of participants	Local dependency	Tangible results	Expressive politics
Basis for sense of common purpose	Tradition and social cohesion	Selective incentives	Strategic use of symbols
Quality of coalition (congruence of interests)	Political communion	Political partnership	Competitive agreement
Relationship with environment:			
Local	Exclusive orientation	Exclusive orientation	Inclusive orientation
Nonlocal	Independent	Dependent	Dependent

Source: Stoker and Mossberger (1994, p.199).

### Contributions of regime theory

Mossberger and Stoker (2001) argue that the key contribution of urban regime theory in the United States was to break the impasse created by the stalemate between the pluralists and elitists, whilst in Britain, urban regime theory helped to move urban politics away from its narrow focus on the formal institutions of government (Harding, 1994). So whatever the shortcomings of regime theory it provided a framework to analyse urban politics beyond the confines of formal government institutions. British research using the regime theory approach may not necessarily find urban regimes that equate with Stone's findings in Atlanta (Stone, 1989), but it has uncovered broad informal coalitions, helped map out the key players in local urban politics and examined the relationships between the various actors (e.g. DiGaetano, 1997; John and Cole, 1998; Strange, 1997).

In more general terms, the social production model of power has led to a new understanding of the way in which power operates in urban settings. Stone's (1989) social production model of power provided a way in which to understand how groups with diverse and sometimes conflicting interests can come together and work towards a

common goal – for example, a mega sporting event. One of the reasons for the interest in urban regime theory within Britain was the increasing requirement for local authorities to work in partnerships with business, with non-governmental organisations and community groups. Urban regime theory provided a conceptual framework to examine these burgeoning partnerships.

Central to urban regime theory is the pivotal role of business: this again, reflects its American roots but as noted above until recently British political science has not considered the possibility that business ‘mattered’ or was interested in local economic development and urban politics. Whilst acknowledging the weaker position of British business compared to their American counterparts, Harding (1994) asserts that it is unreasonable: “to argue that local authorities and business interests in the United Kingdom are, or ever have been, completely unconcerned with the relative economic vitality of their localities” (p. 366). In Britain from the 1980s onwards there were moves on the part of central government to draw business into the heart of local economic development through initiatives such as Urban Development Corporations (UDCs). These initiatives involve local authorities working in ‘partnership’ with business and are a prominent feature of contemporary urban governance. Studies of sport and urban regimes (e.g. Cochrane *et al*, 1996; Henry and Paramio-Salacines, 1999; Burbank *et al*, 2001) (see below for more detail) highlight that private sector actors are often integral to a bid and so any analysis must take their role into account

### Critiques and limitations of urban regime theory

Although regime theory has been a dominant paradigm in the field of urban politics, it has not escaped criticism. Even those who embrace regime theory acknowledge that it has limitations. Regime theory has been described as ‘soft’ (Bailey, 1999) and this in

part explains its wide appeal but this softness can also create difficulties (Mossberger and Stoker, 2001). Regime theory has been subject to wide interpretation and a number of authors argue, that at times, it has been ‘misapplied’ (e.g. Davies, 2001; John and Cole, 1998; Mossberger and Stoker, 2001; Stoker, 1995). Mossberger and Stoker (2001) argue that the core criteria (see above) need to be observed in the application of the urban regime concept. However, it could be argued that the ‘misapplication’ of urban regime theory reflects a lack of conceptual clarity, in other words, regime theory is at ‘fault’ rather than those who have used it.

Urban regime theory has been criticised for being ethnocentric. The question of whether regime theory can be transported from the USA and applied in Europe, and the UK in particular, is a recurrent theme, with some authors arguing that it can be (e.g. John and Cole, 1998; Dowding *et al*, 1999; DiGaetano and Lawless, 1999), whilst others (e.g. Ward 1996) that it can not. The argument centres on the different policy environments that exist across the two sides of the Atlantic. On the one hand, when Stone, one of the key proponents of regime theory constructed a typology of regimes he limited its application to America, drawing on the work of Keating to argue: “I have not crafted the typology to cross national experience because differences in central government, structure, national policy, and party system can mean that locality-to-locality comparisons across nations are extremely complicated” (Stone, 1993). On the other hand, John and Cole (1998) in their study of Leeds (UK) and Lille (France) argue that “rather than weakening regime theory, comparative analysis illuminates its central theoretical insights” (p.382). John and Cole (1998) suggest that researchers can not simply dismiss regime theory by claiming that North America is a unique and by emphasising the dominance of European state structures.

For Ward (1996) a key theoretical weakness of urban regime theory is that it is localist and that by focusing on local economic development, regime theory has ignored structural factors and over-simplified the problem of scale in either regime formation or regime sustenance. Ward (1996) argues that regime theory needs to move away from focusing on 'local' players and include higher-level authorities who participate in 'local' economic development and to consider the role of the nation state and supra-national state in formation of regimes. In similar vein regime theory has been criticised for neglecting "the ways in which external or nonlocal forces shape the processes and structures of urban governance" ( Di Gaetano, 1997, p.865 ) and thus fails to examine the role of the state in setting and controlling the parameters for regime formation (MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999). In relation to local development Burbank *et al* (2001) in their study of three American Olympic cities highlighted that it was external actors (e.g. IOC, non-local multinational corporations, state and federal government) rather than local regime actors that determined its form and outcome. Sites (1997) concluded from his study of New York City that regime theory focuses on political leadership, coalition building and local-state initiatives, at the expense of broader social, economic and political forces, including market and community pressures, national-state retrenchment and economic restructuring.

Regime theory has been developed inductively through case studies. Explanation has been sought through empirical observations and Ward (1996) argues this has limited explanatory power even within the context of American regime formation. Others (e.g. Mossberger and Stoker, 2001) argue that the accumulation of and comparison of case studies expands explanatory power. For example, within the literature there appears to be a general agreement that regime change was not well theorised in Stone's (1989) original exposition (e.g. DiGaetano, 1997; Stoker, 1995; Mossberger and Stoker, 2001).



Indeed, it was this limited ability to explain or predict regime formation, maintenance or transition that led Dowding *et al* (1999) to describe regime theory as more a concept or model. Mossberger and Stoker (2001) assert that cross-case analysis has shown that regime formation and transition is related to demographic changes (DeLeon, 1992; DiGaetano and Klemanski, 1993; Orr and Stoker, 1994; Whelan *et al*, 1994), economic restructuring (DeLeon, 1992; DiGaetano and Klemanski, 1999; Orr and Stoker, 1994), federal grant policies (DiGaetano and Klemanski, 1999; Orr and Stoker, 1994; Whelan *et al*, 1994), and political mobilization, particularly in progressive or social reform coalitions (DeLeon, 1992; DiGaetano and Klemanski, 1999). However, Mossberger and Stoker (2001) do concede that cross-case comparison can be difficult because of the varied usage of the concept. This in turn is related to the 'softness' of the concept that leaves it open to interpretation.

The majority of theorizing has been in the form of typologies (e.g. Stone, 1993; Stoker and Mossberger, 1994), which have their limitations (Ward, 1996). Ward (1996) argues that while typologies can further understanding of the possible policy, they do not add to the knowledge of the processes that underpin regime formation, e.g. at what level do these processes operate? Several authors (e.g. Lauria, 1997; Ward, 1996) have advocated theorising regime theory alongside other, more abstract theories, such as regulation theory in order to enhance its explanatory power. Others (e.g. Pierre, 1999) have used the concept of urban governance as a means of drawing together regime theory, theories of the local state, and urban political economy into a wider analytical framework. However, others (e.g. Goodwin and Painter, 1997, Painter, 1997) caution against trying to simply fasten regime theory onto regulation theory.

So what would regulation theory add to our understanding that urban regime theory does not? A key criticism of urban regime theory is its failure to adequately analyse the role of the central state, whereas regulation and regulation inspired theories, such as Jessop's (e.g. 1990; 1997; 2001) strategic-relational approach (SRA) emphasises the roles played by the state in the mediation of political and economic life (Goodwin *et al* 2002). SRA was developed as means of analysing the complexities of economic and political re-structuring in Western Europe in the last two decades. As a starting point Jessop (1997) takes Gramsci's notion of an 'integral state' and argues that the economy is embedded in the state and conversely state strategy is embedded in economic activity. For Jessop (1990) the state is a multi-sited and multi-scaled set of social relations and thus the state can only be viewed as a series of social relations. Therefore, the state:

... has no power- it is merely the institutional ensemble: it only has a set of institutional capacities and liabilities which mediate that power, the power of the state is the power of the forces acting in and through the state. These forces include state managers as well as class forces, gender groups as well as regional interest, and so forth (Jessop, 1990, p. 269-270).

Thus, the state should be seen as a 'peopled organisation' (Peck, 2001) rather than something governed by abstract institutional logic. Furthermore, state personnel are not passive agents rather they can shape, revise or resist broader political projects (Jessop, 2001; Jones *et al*, 2004).

SRA suggests three interrelated processes, denationalisation, de-statisation and internationalisation of policy regimes, are undermining the nation state's dominance. The denationalisation of the state is reflected in the 'hollowing out' of the nation state,

which is the result Jessop (1994) argues of two contradictory trends. Although the nation state remains politically significant and retains much of its national sovereignty, its capacities to project its own power even within its own national border are weakened by firstly, the shift towards internationalised, flexible (but also regionalised) production systems and secondly, by the increasing challenge posed by risks arising from the global environment. This loss of autonomy creates both the need for supra-national co-ordination and also the space for sub-national resurgence. The result is that “powers of nation states are being limited through a complex displacement of powers upward, downward and outward” (Jessop, 1994, p.24). In some instances, state capacities are being transferred to one of an increasing number of pan-regional; pluri-national or international bodies with a widening range of powers. Other capacities are devolved to restructured local or regional levels of governance within the nation state, whilst others are being usurped by horizontal networks of power –local and regional – which by pass central states and connect localities or regions in several nations (Jessop, 1994, pp.24-25). It should be stressed that Jessop does not imply that the ‘hollowing out’ of the nation state will lead to the ‘death’ of the nation state.

For Jessop the de-statisation of the political system is reflected in the shift from government to governance which is associated with a relative decline in the central state’s direct management and funding of economic and social projects, and the concomitant engagement of quasi-state and non-state actors in public-private partnerships. Internationalisation of policy regimes relates to the increasingly important role played by international policy communities and networks and also the strategic significance of the international and global contexts in which state actors now operate and the processes of international policy transfer. SRA has been employed to analyse amongst others, the shifting contours of London’s governance in the late 1990s

(MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999) and the impact of devolution on the institutions and strategies of economic governance in the UK (Goodwin *et al*, 2002).

### Sport and urban regimes

Although the role of sport in the construction of urban regimes and the role of regimes in the development of sport strategies has not received a great deal of attention, there are a few key studies that are worth examining. Schimmel (2001) conducted a study of the sport led growth strategy of Indianapolis, USA. Indianapolis suffered as the backbone of its economy – heavy manufacturing – declined and used sport to transform both its image and its fortunes. What emerged, Schimmel (2001) argues, is “one of the most intensive and successful growth coalitions in the US” (p.264) which led to the extensive construction of sports facilities and the hosting of sporting events. Although the strategy was ‘sold’ as one where the city as a whole would benefit uniformly, Schimmel (2001) highlighted the uneven distribution of benefits, with those groups (e.g. African-Americans) whose interests and concerns were not those of the urban elite being excluded from the planning process.

Pelissero *et al*'s (1991) study of regime activities and stadium construction in Chicago concluded that the way in which stadium issues were incorporated into the urban agenda reflected more general ideas about the urban regime as a mediator of development policy. Whilst acknowledging that the political decisions made about professional sport franchises were not unique to sport, they argued that its high visibility and popularity meant that sport presented specific problems for the urban regime. In particular, politicians did not want to have to answer to fans (and potential voters) for losing a franchise to another city (Pelisserio, *et al*, 1991).

Henry and Paramio-Salcines (1999) used an urban regime theory approach, specifically Stoker and Mossberger's (1994) concept of a symbolic regime (see Figure 2. 5), to evaluate the role of sport in the construction of a symbolic regime in 1980s Sheffield, UK. In 1991 Sheffield hosted the Sixteenth World Student Games (WSG)<sup>7</sup>. The bid was a result of a fledgling public-private partnership and the Games formed the spearhead of a campaign to re-invent Sheffield using a major sporting event as the vehicle. The WSG produced the first significant partnerships between local government and business groups, and despite the financial difficulties associated with the WSG (the city council was left with considerable debts<sup>8</sup>), the partnership survived albeit in a new form (Henry and Paramio-Salcines, 1999). Henry and Paramio-Salcines (1999) concluded that it was hard to deny the importance of symbolic politics in Sheffield since the mid-1980s and also that Sheffield appears to fit closely with Stoker and Mossberger's conception of a 'symbolic regime' in terms of mode and functioning.

Sheffield's experience with the WSG highlights that the presence of business players does not necessarily mean that private sector finance will be forthcoming and the burden of funding the WSG fell primarily onto the city council. It may be that the private sector lacked confidence in a new partnership that had no track record at all, let alone in delivering an international sporting event. Central government did not provide direct financial assistance with the hosting of the WSG. However Sheffield was able to continue with the somewhat lukewarm support it received from some arms of the central government (i.e. Sports Council) (Henry and Paramio-Salcines, 1999).

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<sup>7</sup> The first World Student games were held in 1923 in Paris, and since then (apart from the war years) they have been held biennially (Foley, 1991) and like the Olympics they have grown dramatically over the years. The Universiade (as it is more formally known) is a festival of sport and culture and the host city is left to develop the culture side of the festival (Foley, 1991).

Burbank *et al* (2001) used regime theory as a theoretical framework in which to examine the impact of hosting the Olympic Games on local politics in three American cities: Los Angeles (LA), Atlanta and Salt Lake City. Burbank *et al* (2001) concluded that the existence of a growth regime was vital to an Olympic bid, because without an established business-government network in place to provide the necessary funding, an Olympic bid just would not happen. They argue that although the initiation of a mega-event strategy is a by-product of regime politics, the existence of a growth regime is not enough to set a city down the mega-event path, another vital ingredient is required and that: “is a desire among growth elites to establish or modify the city’s image” (Burbank *et al*, 2001, pp.169-170).

Whilst Burbank *et al* (2001) acknowledge that the roots of the mega-event strategy lie in regime politics they argue that the nature of mega-event development is not fully captured by the view of urban politics given by regime theory. In particular, Burbank *et al* (2001) argue that whilst regime theory maintains that local development policy is primarily determined by local actors, this perspective does not equate with the experience of the case study cities. In fact once a mega-event had been secured, its success depends less on regime players and more on external actors. This means that the ability of regime players to deliver benefits to the city becomes dependent on the action of regime outsiders. Burbank *et al* (2001) conclude that in theoretical terms, there is a need to broaden the spatial scale and develop the understanding of linkages between political actors, in order to produce a more comprehensive explanation of urban politics as cities increasingly compete for consumption oriented business (i.e. leisure, entertainment, tourism and sports) in the global economy. They argue: “The variety of

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<sup>8</sup> In 2001 it was reported to the House of Commons Select Committee that the city has a continuing annual debt burden of £22 million from the cost of providing facilities for that event (HC 286-I, 2001, p. ix).

intergovernmental and intersectoral relations that are built into the structure of the mega-event strategy highlights the need for regime theory to integrate the complexity of interdependence into analyses of the political arrangements of cities” (Burbank *et al*, 2001, p.170). As Burbank *et al* (2001) highlight, one of the shortcomings of regime theory is that, whilst it highlights the existence of coalitions of diverse actors, it does not, adequately theorise the connections and relations between actors. Attention will now turn to the concept of policy networks as a means of examining these connections and relationships.

### Policy Networks

Within political science the concept of policy networks has been used to analyse public policy in Britain, Europe and the USA and it focuses on the relationships between organisations. There are, of course, differences in the approach to networks within the literature. Rhodes argues that the “system of local government was transformed into a system of local governance involving complex sets of organisations drawn from public and private sectors” (1991, 1992 quoted in 1997 and emphasis added, p.51). Inter-organisational linkages are the defining characteristic of service delivery and Rhodes uses the term ‘network’ to describe the several interdependent actors involved in delivering services. Networks have become increasingly prominent and important among British governing structures as the government has created agencies, bypassed local government, encouraged public-private partnerships and used special-bodies to deliver services. For Rhodes (1997) governance is about managing networks and network management is not confined to the public sector. The network form of governance highlights “reputation, trust, reciprocity and mutual interdependence” (Larson, 1992). Networks are thus “an alternative to, not a hybrid of, markets and hierarchies and they span the boundaries of the public, private and voluntary sectors”

(Rhodes, 1997, p. 52). Crucially this use of governance suggests that networks are self-organising - that they are autonomous and self-governing. Rhodes (1990) distinguishes five types of network, ranging from highly integrated policy communities characterised by stable relationships, restrictive membership, vertical independence and relative insularity, to more loosely integrated issue networks, which are distinguished by a large number of participants and limited interdependence.

### The contribution of policy networks

Policy network analysis is meso-level concept and it has been suggest that the meso-level is the most productive level for analysing policy making in Britain (Rhodes, 1997). Two main arguments are advanced to support this claim. Firstly, that macro-level theories are often abstract and are applied without sufficient attention being paid to mediating processes. Secondly, that micro-level theories often ignore the impact of broader structural factors on micro-level decision making settings. So that operating at the meso-level, it is argued, ensures that policy scientists address macro- and micro-level questions. Evans (2001) suggests that the use of meso-level analysis: "is a de facto recognition that much contemporary policy making takes places within multi-layered, self-organizing networks" (p.542). For MacLeod and Goodwin (1999) a key strength of the policy network approach is the recognition that the government is "not an undifferentiated whole" (Rhodes and Marsh, 1992, p.196), and that individual departments pursue their own autonomy, although within government constraints.

Policy networks focus on relationships between organisations and the implication is that much policy is the result of bargaining between organisations and mutual influence rather than because of decision making by an individual office holder or single institution. Although not a new concept, Leach and Percy-Smith (2001) argue that



policy networks is particularly useful in a system characterised by extensive institutional fragmentation in which co-operation between organisations is vital to get anything done.

### Critiques and limitations of policy networks

The concept of policy networks has been criticised for being descriptive rather than explanatory, with Dowding (1995; 2001) arguing that the notion of a policy network is a simply a metaphor. An important criticism is that it does not tell us anything about the distribution of power and influence within networks. However, Rhodes (1997), a key proponent of the concept, argues that networks should be examined in terms of the type and distribution of resources between participants and links analysis with his power-dependence model of central-local or intergovernmental relations. For Rhodes networks “are rooted in resource exchange” (1997, p.37), with each organisation possessing resources which can be used in bargaining with each other, and each being dependent on the resources of the others to achieve policy objectives.

Another important question is the role of government in policy networks. Rhodes links his analysis of the role of policy networks to the ‘hollowing out of the state’, in which the powers of nation states are being limited through a complex displacement of powers upwards (e.g. the supra-national bodies like the EU), downward (e.g. to regional government) and outward (e.g. horizontal networks which bypass central states and connect localities or regions in several nations) (Jessop, 1994). In suggesting that networks are ‘self organising’ and referring to ‘governance without government’, Leach and Percy-Smith (2001) argue that Rhodes is implying that communities can often tackle their own problems and meet their own needs without government involvement. From this perspective governance means the marginalisation of the state and the formal

institutions of government at all levels (Leach and Percy-Smith, 2001). However, other authors maintain that the state plays a leading role, for example by setting priorities and defining objectives (Pierre and Peters, 2000). Taylor (2000) has criticised the 'hollowing out' thesis and the assumption that policy networks mean a reduction in the role of the state. Taylor (2000) argues that governments can dominate networks, for example by setting their parameters and objectives and also impose their value preferences through control of financial resources, legislation and political legitimacy (p.51). Taylor concludes that some high profile cross –agency taskforces (e.g. Social Exclusion Unit) involve 'filling in' rather than 'hollowing out' and give the government a more 'hands on' directive role. Goodwin *et al* (2002) in a study of economic governance post-devolution concluded that "hollowing out is not unidimensional: as one element of the state is being hollowed out, other elements are being '*filled in*'" (pp.28-29, original emphasis), so that rather than reducing its power the state is simply relocating it.

Proponents (e.g. Bassett, 1996) acknowledge that the concept cannot account for the emergence of new interests and the longer term dynamics of network change. MacLeod and Goodwin (1999, p.512) argue that within the policy network approach there is little "conceptual space" to examine the political struggles which are inherent in the production of networks and that it tells us little of the broader socioeconomic context within which policy networks operate. These limitations have been recognised by proponents, for example, Evans (2001) cautions against using meso-level analysis in isolation from other levels of analysis, arguing that the approach is limited in the variables it can examine and the causal pathways it can establish. Moreover, some proponents, have proposed integrating micro-theories of individual/group behaviour and macro-level analysis with meso-level policy networks (e.g. Marsh and Stoker, 1995;

Evans, 2001). However, MacLeod and Goodwin (1999) caution against assuming that macro theories of the state and political economy (e.g. regulation theory) can be bolted on to the policy networks approach, arguing that this fails to acknowledge the “potential ontological, epistemological and methodological incompatibilities inherent with this venture” (p.512).

### Multi-level governance

The concept of multi-level governance (MLG) is the “new kid on the political science theoretical bloc” (Goodwin *et al*, 2002, p.21). It emerged from analysis of the European Union (EU) with Gary Marks (1992) first using the term to capture developments in EU structural policy after its reform in 1988. In developing the multi-governance approach Marks drew on studies of both domestic politics and international politics, rather than just international relations as earlier work on the EU had. Since the early 1990s increasing attention has been paid within political science to the role of sub-national actors in the European political system (e.g. Keating and Hooghe, 1994).

Hooghe and Marks (2001, p.3-4) set out the three central tenets of the multi-level governance model in relation to the EU. First, that while nation states continue to be central actors in policy making, decision-making competencies are shared and contested by actors organised at different territorial levels rather than monopolised by national governments. Second, collective decision making among states in the EU involves a significant loss of control for individual national governments. Third, political arenas are interconnected, both formally and informally, rather than nested. Subnational actors operate in both national and supranational arenas, creating transnational networks in the process.

Pierre and Stoker (2000) starting from a “baseline definition of multi-level governance is that it refers to negotiated exchanges between systems of government at different institutional levels” (p.30), expand, suggesting that multi-level governance:

- Is a co-ordinating instrument in institutional systems where hierarchical command and control mechanisms have been relaxed or abolished;
- Draws on bargaining rather than submission;
- Draws on public-private mobilisation rather than public sector specificity;

In addition multi-level governance makes no pre-judgements about the hierarchical order of institutions – e.g. local or regional coalitions of actors can by-pass the nation state level and pursue their interests in international arenas. (Pierre and Stoker, 2000, p.30)

Multi-level governance originated as a description of the EU structures, but devolution and institutional reform at the regional tier of government has led to it being widely applied. For example, the concept of multi-level governance has been applied at the city level as a means of capturing the complex, overlapping, intersecting nature of governance in contemporary cities (e.g. Syrett and Baldock, 2001 on London). Whilst Bache and Flinders (2004a) use multi-level governance as an organising perspective to study changes in British government and politics and Welch and Kennedy-Pipe (2004) applied the concept to the study of international relations.

Multi-level governance views state power and authority as ‘dispersed’ rather than ‘concentrated’ and political action occurs “at and between levels of governance” (Jones and Clark, 2001, p.206). Although multi-level governance emphasises the role of the subnational tier in the EU, multi-level governance does not suggest that the regions are replacing nation states rather:

Subnational empowerment is one dynamic of power dispersion in the European Union, in which political control has spun away to strengthen European institutions, *and* in which national state institutions have retained significant control over resources (Hooghe, 1996, p.18).

In relation to British governance Bache and Flinders (2004a) concluded- paraphrasing Hooghe and Marks (2001: 3-4)- that whilst “the British State remains the central actor in policy making, decision making competencies in Britain are increasingly shared and contested by actors organized at different territorial levels rather than monopolized by national governments” (Bache and Flinders, 2004a, p.106).

#### Contribution of multi-level governance

Whether multi-level governance constitutes a theory or not is a matter of great debate. Some writers such as George (2004) argue that it provides a theory of what sort of organisation the EU is: “It is hypothesized to be an organisation in which the central executives of states do not do all the governing but share and contest responsibility and authority with other actors, both supranational and subnational” (p.125). Whilst others (e.g. Jessop, 2004; Fairbrass and Jordan, 2004) maintain that multi-level governance is not a fully-fledged theory.

Pierre and Stoker (2000) concede that the contribution of multi-level governance may not be at the level of causal analysis or a new normative theory, but for them the value lies in its capacity to provide a framework for understanding changing processes of governing. They draw on Judge *et al* (1995) who suggest that conceptual frameworks:

.....provide a language and frame of reference through which reality can be examined and lead theorists to ask questions that might not otherwise occur. The result, if successful, is new and fresh insights that other frameworks or perspectives might not have yielded. Conceptual frameworks can constitute an attempt to establish a paradigm shift (Judge *et al*, 1995, p.3).

Similarly, Bache and Flinders (2004a) argue “that multi-level governance provides an increasingly suitable organizing perspective for the study of British governance” (p.94). However, they caution that as an organizing perspective is explicitly not a theory, multi-level governance can not be expected to provide a comprehensive explanation of British governance (Bache and Flinders, 2004a, p. 94). What multi-level governance can do is help our understanding of dynamic processes and identify key variables (Bache and Flinders, 2004a).

Thus, the multi-level governance perspective ‘works’ if it helps us to identify important questions as well as come up with ‘answers’. Multi-level governance challenges the assumptions of traditional studies of governance and gets us to look at the way in which we are governed through a different lens (Pierre and Stoker, 2000). It raises questions about the role of non-state actors and also highlights the variation in patterns and influence in different cases that state-centric approaches may disregard (Bache and Flinders, 2004b). In this way, theories of multi-level governance can help in understanding the new structures of governance, for example as the result of devolution in the UK, by emphasising the importance of the new scales of government and the linkages between the scales (Goodwin *et al*, 2002).

### Critiques and limitations of multi-level governance

Quite what the use (usefulness) of multi-level governance as a concept seems to be is contested. Used at a high level of generality Smith (1997) accepts that multi-level governance helps us to get started in a world where nobody appears to be 'in charge'. However, once you get to the level of specific cases Smith argues that you are left wondering "*what it helps you study and what it actually aims to explain?*" (Smith, 1997, p. 712, original emphasis). From his studies of the impact of EU Structural Funds within three regions in France, Smith (1997) concluded that whilst multi-level governance provided a useful framework its explanatory power was somewhat limited. Smith (1997) identified a number of problems with the concept. Firstly, Smith (1997) argues, studies by authors such as Marks tend to be more about inter-governmentalism than multi-level governance, and this has skewed empirical research with the consequence that little work has been done on the form that subnational politics takes within the multi-level system. Furthermore, it appears that little research has been conducted within regions. Rhodes (1997, p.140) advances similar criticisms, accusing Marks (1996) of avoiding the "theory laden notion of policy networks" and although multi-level governance has been used to describe changes in EU government structure it has not been used to explain variations in structure or why it has changed. Secondly, Smith concludes that current approaches to the study of multi-level governance paradoxically focus on government rather than governance. This means too much attention is paid to the emergence of formal mechanisms for policy making at the subnational level, and too little to the informal networks, forums and alliances that emerge. This 'empirical blind spot' means that opportunities to develop theory are missed.

Peters and Pierre (2004) raise a number of concerns about the lack of conceptual clarity and the use and in their view the misuse of the term multi-level governance. They argue that most analytical models of multi-level governance have replaced a state-centric and

constitutional perspective with one in which institutions are rendered irrelevant. They argue that “the institutional ‘grip’ on political processes within the state and between domestic and supra-national actors, although recently relaxed, remains strong and can be further strengthened by the state if and when considered necessary” (Peters and Pierre, 2004, p. 75). According to Goodwin *et al* (2002) multi-level governance assumes that the state has power of its own and not in relation to forces acting in and through its apparatus. Also that multi-level governance tends to ignore horizontal relationships, or interstate issues, between scales and is thus unable to account for uneven development within scales.

Jessop (2004) writing from a SRA perspective has three main criticisms of the multi-governance approach. Firstly, that it tends to be at the “pre-theoretical stage of critique” so that it is “clearer what the notion of governance is against than what it is for” (p.61). Secondly, that because governance theories are often connected with problem solving and crisis management they tend to overlook the problems of governance failure. Thirdly, Jessop (2004) suggests that the shift in governance is being countered by the increased role of governments in what he terms meta-steering and meta-governance-that is shaping and regulating governance and setting the ‘ground rules’ - and that empirical studies have paid little attention to meta-governance.

### Summary

From this examination of the changing nature of governance and various explanatory frameworks, it is evident that modern governance is a highly complex process. It is also clear that a broad range of actors are involved, that these actors operate at various spatial scales, both informal and formal mechanisms are important and that governance involves bargaining and co-operation. Although there is debate about the exact role of



the state, it is evident that the state still plays a central role. All these frameworks have their strengths and weaknesses, for example, both the concepts of policy networks and multi-level governance provided us with useful descriptions and given the complexity of modern governance this is no mean feat. However, their explanatory powers are perhaps somewhat limited. Regime theory's focus on local actors and local context at the expense of external actors and the broader context weakens its descriptive and theoretical power. However, these frameworks do provide signposts, can help identify different styles of governance and enable us, within this study, to examine the various interrelationships between governance and sport. How these different theoretical perspectives can be used to advance this thesis will be considered at the end of this chapter, but first attention will turn to the various ways in which cities use sport.

## CITIES AND SPORT

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview and highlight the key issues and debates in readiness for further discussion later in the thesis. Cities and sport have been long interconnected primarily through city-based teams (e.g. football, baseball), but recent decades have seen sport in general and mega-sports events in particular playing an increasingly high profile and wider role within cities. So why are cities interested in sport and more specifically mega-sports events? From the literature it is possible to identify three main reasons:

- Global competition
- Regeneration and economic development
- Promoting healthy communities

What is evident from the literature is that there are tensions between these objectives and also that assumptions have been made about how 'good' mega-sports events are at delivering these different objectives. In order to better understand why mega-sports

events have become so important to cities and the tensions that have arisen it is necessary to locate these developments within the broader context of globalisation. Globalisation<sup>9</sup> has been described as the “widening, deepening and speeding up of world interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary life” (Held *et al*, 1999, p.2) and it is a much debated and contested concept. As Short (2001) notes the existence, extent, meaning and measurement of economic, cultural and political globalisation is central to much recent social theorising. However, there is widespread agreement that over recent decades the world has become increasingly economically interconnected with markets transcending both the borders and interests of nation states. At the same time the capacity for individual nations to regulate their internal economies and shape the way in which they interact with external structures has decreased. Kantor (1987) suggested that cities had become ‘captives’ of a highly competitive economic environment in which the traditional factors (e.g. geography) that once influenced the location of business in a specific place matter much less. The capacity of capital to switch locations means that cities are increasingly interchangeable units that can be played off against each other and made to compete for capital investment (Kantor, 1987). In this competitive environment cities have to create the urban conditions that will attract and retain businesses. Lever (2001) argues that the central state alone can not co-ordinate the specific local conditions required by mobile capital so that the city government’s ability to negotiate with supraregional and supranational capital and to shape local conditions are crucial to a city’s development prospects. Cox (1993) has termed this new relationship between local government, the economic development of cities and economic globalisation the new urban politics (Cox, 1993).

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<sup>9</sup> Globalisation has been defined in a number of ways and this reflects the breadth of the globalisation literature which spans a number of social science disciplines including political science, economics and sociology.

Furthermore, Castells argues that rapid advances in computer technology and telecommunications mean that networks have been able to “reconfigure themselves in real-time, on a global-local scale, and permeate all domains of social life” (Castells, 2004, p.221) so that we now live in a “network society, not an information society or a knowledge society” (Castells, 2004, p.5). Although network society is organised on a global scale not all countries or people are connected, however all countries are influenced and subject to the logic, interests and conflicts of this network society (Castells, 2004).

### Global competition –cities and mega-sports events

Within a globalising economy cities have to offer incentives to business, either by trying to make the city more economically attractive (e.g. tax inducements, transport facilities) and /or improvements in soft infrastructure (e.g. cultural and leisure facilities) and enhancement of the city’s image by improving the landscape (Boyle and Rogerson, 2001). This leaves cities engaged in process of open competition and mega events are a key means by which they compete with each other on the global stage and although mega-sports events have a long history<sup>10</sup> they have increased in size, scope, profile and importance for cities within the context of globalisation (Short, 2003). Indeed, Short (2003) considers the Olympic Games as a “concrete example of globalization” (p.1) arguing that the Games “not only actualise some of the forces and many of the paradoxes of globalization, they also exemplify the complex intersections of cultural and political, as well as the more commonly studied, economic globalization” (pp.1-2). Furthermore, Short (2003) argues that the Olympics are a prime example of what has been termed glocalisation – that is the connections between the local and global –“as the global spectacle is centered in a specific city, while the hosting of the event tends to

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<sup>10</sup> For example the first Olympic Games of the modern era were held in Athens in 1896.

reconnect the city into global space of flows” (p.17). Beriatos and Gospodini (2004) suggest that when hosting mega-events cities combine and promote built heritage and innovative design of space to produce a new “glocalised” urban landscape dominated by two extremes -that of tradition with local spatial references and innovation with global spatial references. Beriatos and Gospodini (2004) examined the preparations for the 2004 Olympics hosted by Athens, and found unlike most other mega-event cities (e.g. Barcelona) Athens had not clustered its competitive landscape transformations in one of two sites but had scattered them across the city. The impact of this different approach will of course only be apparent with time.

Sport and particularly mega-events are favourite tools of civic boosters, as they can place a city on the map, boost its image and increase its status, especially on the international stage, promote tourism, generate considerable global publicity and create new infrastructures (Andranovich *et al*, 2001; Whitelegg, 2000; Cochrane *et al*, 1996; Thornley, 2002; Essex and Chalkley, 2004; Newman and Thornley, 2004). Mega sports events are favoured by civic boosters who advocate pro-growth strategies for long term economic development and job creation, Los Angeles (LA), host to the 1932 and 1984 Olympic Games, has been described as a “boosters paradise” (Burbank *et al*, 2001), and a place where political power has always been linked with the creation and promotion of the city’s image. The 1984 LA Games are illustrative of the use of a mega-event to ‘boost’ a city. The efforts to bring the Olympics to LA were the product of a business-led growth coalition that worked for many years to bring the Games to LA.

The Games were attractive for three reasons. Firstly, the Games were an opportunity to for LA to display its attractions on a global stage. Secondly, the Games were a means of bringing in new visitors and increasing revenues. Thirdly, they were a way of enhancing

the city's position in history and contemporary society (Andranovich *et al*, 2001). For the Mayor the Olympics represented an opportunity for LA to become a world class city and moreover the organisers offered to bring them to the city at no cost to the LA taxpayers (Andranovich *et al*, 2001). The LA Games will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven, but here it is important to note they were private sector led, and a huge commercial success and this was crucial in renewing the interest of potential hosts in staging the Olympics.

However, this strategy is a high risk one and the 'returns' are by no means guaranteed. The literature is littered with examples of cities that have suffered financially or had their image tarnished rather than enhanced. The cities of Montreal and Sheffield were both left with debts that they were still paying at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (House of Commons, 2001a, p. ix; Preuss, 2003, p.254). Not only did hosting the 1976 Olympics leave Montreal in dire financial straits but it also made other cities reluctant to host the Olympics and as a result Los Angeles was the only candidate city. The 1996 Atlanta Olympics, like those held in LA were the product of a growth-led coalition that regarded the Olympics as an opportunity to improve the image of Atlanta, an economically thriving city that lacked status, not only on the international stage, but even within America because of its lack of cultural attractions (Whitelegg, 2000, p.803). Instead Atlanta suffered the ignominy of not being declared the 'best Games ever' (Whitelegg, 2000). The shape and form of the Atlanta Games reflected its 'booster' origins, with the emphasis being on facilities likely to make the city more attractive to visitors (tourists and conventioners) and their needs were given priority over those of residents (Burbank *et al*, 2001). The organisational structure for the Atlanta Games was complex and the fragmented organisational structure led to a lack-of co-ordination and these organisational difficulties were reflected in the operation of the Games

themselves, e.g. athletes taken to the wrong venue, security breaches (Chalkley and Essex, 1999).

### Regeneration and economic development

Many cities including Manchester, Sheffield and Barcelona have adopted mega-event strategies as a means of stimulating local economic development (Peck and Tickell, 1995; Cochrane *et al*, 1996; Henry, 2001; Marshall, 1996; Van den Berg *et al*, 2002). This has involved major investment in sport infrastructure<sup>11</sup> with the aim of attracting tourists, drawing in inward investment and changing the image of a city, rather than encouraging the local community to participate in sport (Gratton *et al*, 2005). For both Manchester and Sheffield there was a desire to re-brand the city, to banish the images of a grimy, industrial city in decline and to be seen as vibrant, a place to invest and also to push them up the urban hierarchy (Peck and Tickell, 1995; Cochrane *et al*, 1996; Henry and Paramio-Salcines, 1999; Henry, 2001). Manchester unsuccessfully pursued the Olympic dream three times<sup>12</sup> but went on to host the Commonwealth Games in 2002 (MCG 2002) using the Games as a vehicle for a major regeneration programme (see discussion in Chapter Seven). Barcelona, a city in economic crisis suffering from the effects of large scale industrial closures and high levels of unemployment (Marshall, 1996, p.149) used the 1992 Olympic Games as a catalyst for urban regeneration and economic development. Interestingly, it was not the first time the city has used an international event as a vehicle for urban renewal<sup>13</sup>. Unlike LA and Atlanta where the private sector led the organisation of the Games and strongly influenced the shape and outcomes of the Games, in Barcelona, the public sector was the main driver and the

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<sup>11</sup> For example, Sheffield invested £147 million in sporting facilities to host the World Student Games in 1991.

<sup>12</sup> Manchester missed out to Birmingham as Britain's bid city for the 1992 Olympics and then as British candidate city for the 1996 and 2000 Games to Atlanta and Sydney respectively.

<sup>13</sup> The Universal Exhibitions of 1888 and 1929 were used as platforms for urban redevelopment.

programme of urban renewal was seen as having social as well as economic gains (Marshall, 1996). Thus governance arrangements can be important in both driving bids through and subsequently delivering events, and in also setting the 'tone' of the project.

Mega-events are now regarded as a key tool of economic development for cities.

Although strong claims have been made for the economic and social benefits of hosting mega-events it is evident that translating these claims into reality is not a straightforward process, as the DCMS/Strategy Unit report noted: "The benefits of hosting mega sporting events, whether economic, social or cultural are difficult to measure and the available evidence is limited" (DCMS/SU, 2002, p.43). Furthermore, although the benefits for the city as a whole are trumpeted by organisers, it is evident from the literature that the benefits of hosting mega-events are often unequally distributed and in some cases they serve to further marginalise the most disadvantaged residents of a city. For example, Atlanta was criticised for prioritising the needs of business over local communities, with the result that the promised neighbourhood renewal did not materialise (French and Disher, 1997; Whitelegg, 2000). Moreover, Olympic developments meant that many homeless people were displaced and the shelters set up to help them shut down (Whitelegg, 2000; Burbank *et al*, 2001). In other cases (e.g. Sydney, LA) residents from poorer areas who opposed mega-event developments met with little success, whilst resistance from middle class areas met with more success (e.g. re-location of venue or modification of plans) (Owen, 2002; Lenskyi, 2000; Burbank *et al*, 2000).

Barcelona is often upheld as a shining example of how to harness a mega-event to the benefit of a city and its inhabitants: "The Barcelona Olympics provide a model of how a sporting event can play a pivotal role in urban renewal and regeneration, transforming

a dilapidated industrial area into a vibrant community and spreading economic benefits across society” (House of Commons, 1999, p. xiv). However, critics’ point out that the development associated with the Games did little to address the city’s housing problem, despite the Mayor’s promise that a large proportion of the housing in the Olympic Village would be social housing (this idea was abandoned because it clashed with the private development of the housing areas) (Marshall, 1996, p.151). On balance, Marshall (1996) concludes that a majority of residents did benefit from the developments (e.g. better transport infrastructure, upgraded telephone system) although some projects (e.g. housing) benefited richer residents.

### Sport and the promotion of healthy communities

Having considered how sport can be harnessed to deliver city-wide benefits, attention will now be paid to the use of sport to benefit particular neighbourhoods and groups of people. Sport is increasingly seen as a key tool for promoting social inclusion and cohesion and also in tackling the adverse health effects of physical inactivity. Although mega-sports events are often presented as a means of increasing sports participation there is to date little evidence to support these claims (Coalter, 2004).

### *Sport and social inclusion*

Although the focus of the following section will be on contemporary Britain, the growing interest amongst policy makers in Britain is not unique, for example, in France sport has been used as a means of promoting social inclusion and national solidarity, particularly amongst alienated young men of Northern African origin (Dine, 2000; Dine, 2003).



In 1997 New Labour was elected to power and high on its agenda was tackling social exclusion, which was described by the new Social Exclusion Unit as:

a shorthand label for what can happen when individuals or an area suffer a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, bad health and family breakdown  
(Cabinet Office, 2000)

The government recognised that the causes of social exclusion were multiple and cut across the functionally based responsibilities of government departments and thus what was required was a 'joined up' approach (Houlihan and White, 2002). Sport has been identified as a tool for promoting social inclusion and improving social cohesion by both central government (DCMS, 1999; SEU, 2001; DCMS/SU, 2002) and local government (Long and Sanderson, 2001) and is a component of many of the initiatives aimed at promoting social inclusion and neighbourhood renewal (e.g. New Deal for Communities, Sports Action Zones, Health Action Zones). The claimed benefits of sport are wide ranging and far reaching, and a review of the community sport literature by Long and Sanderson (2001) produced a long list including reduction in crime, vandalism and 'delinquency' and improving employment prospects, which they drew together, suggesting that: "... the major aim of community development (is) the enhancement of skills and confidences of groups of people such as they are empowered to take control of their lives and act collectively to address social and economic deprivation" (p. 189). In other words it is more about life skills than sport – sport is merely the vehicle.

The evidence to support these claims is sparse, in part because there has been little research or evaluation of such schemes (Collins *et al*, 1999) and also because some of the benefits are intangible and difficult to demonstrate (DCMS/SU, 2002). Although some schemes appear to have short term benefits (DCMS, 1999), it is too soon to know whether these benefits will be significant or sustained (Collins, 2003). Furthermore, many projects are short-term (this is often linked to funding sources) and as Collins (2003) argues the usual “three years duration is nowhere near long enough to yield outcomes of significant social change” (p.82). Although more effort has been put into studying the schemes specifically aimed at youth crime reduction and there is case study evidence that such schemes can have an impact, there are number of challenges to demonstrating the benefits. In particular, the difficulties of establishing a causal relationship when the intervention is one of a range being used and the lack of on-going monitoring and evaluation (DCMS/SU, 2002). The DCMS/SU (2002) highlight that “locally provided ongoing sports programmes with credible leadership seem to have the best chance of reducing crime on a permanent basis” (p.60). They also point out that there is a lack of skilled leaders and that there are questions over the suitability of programmes for other groups (e.g. girls).

Sports projects are usually one strand of a wide-ranging scheme that involves a myriad of partners, many of which “would not usually recognise each other on the street” (Loney, 2003, p.23) let alone have experience of working together. For example, the Football Association are working with New Deal for Communities in Manchester (Loney, 2003). As Collins (2003) argues these partnerships or networks are often not between equals and sport is often a minor partner, for example in regeneration schemes, and partnerships can be fragile. Such partnerships can be unwieldy. Collins (2003) cites an example of a Sport England project that has 39 partners “satisfying so many can be a

managerial nightmare, if not an impossibility” (p.82). It is, thus, inevitable that compromises will have to be made. What is of course interesting is in what areas they are made and by whom.

### *Sport and healthier lifestyles*

There has been a flurry of reports from the medical profession and government (Donaldson, 2003; Donaldson, 2004; Royal College of Physicians, 2004; Wanless, 2002; Wanless, 2004; House of Commons, 2004) highlighting increases in rates of obesity and the associated adverse effects on health (e.g. heart disease, type-2 diabetes). Both diet and low levels of physical activity have been identified as major contributors to the rise in obesity in both adults and children. These reports highlight the complex nature of the problem and how individual behaviour, government policy and the actions of the food industry have combined to create an increasingly “obesogenic environment” (House of Commons, 2004). For example, transport and planning policies at all levels of government have created urban environments that are not conducive to walking or cycling.

Although a great deal of attention has been focused on the role of diet, in particular calls for manufacturers to reduce the fat, sugar and salt content of their products, as well for individuals to alter their diet, another key message is the need for adults and children to be more physically active (Donaldson, 2004; Royal College of Physicians, 2004; Wanless, 2002; Wanless, 2004; House of Commons, 2004). A broad definition of physical exercise has been adopted encompassing walking, dancing as well as more ‘formal’ sports such as football and swimming (e.g. Donaldson, 2004). There is strong evidence to support the claims for the health benefits of physical activity on both an individual and population level (DCMS/SU, 2002). These recent reports are highly

critical of the simplistic view of obesity taken by Ministers including Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and the lack of government co-ordination on this complex issue. A strong message from these reports is that what is required is a 'joined up' approach, because the 'solutions' cut across departments and involve issues of urban and transport planning, public health, education, food policy as well as health and sport provision.

Organisers have made great claims that mega-sporting events 'inspire' the general population to participate in sport. However, the little data there is on the impact of mega-sports events on participation does not support these claims. Veal (2003) in an analysis of sports participation in Australia (1995-2002) found that in the year following the Sydney Olympics, although seven Olympic sports experienced a small increase, nine experienced a decline and the pattern for non-Olympic sports was similar. Coalter (2004) argues that survey data<sup>14</sup> from Manchester indicates that hosting the 2002 Commonwealth Games had no measurable impact on mass participation (Coalter, 2004). Hindson, Gidlow and Peebles (1994) investigated the impact of the Olympic Games on sports clubs membership by surveying 35 sports clubs in New Zealand in the period following the Summer Olympics held in Barcelona and the Winter Games held in Albertville. The impact was limited with only three clubs experiencing an increase in competitive membership and two for social (recreational) sport and Hindson, *et al* (1994) concluded that the 'trickle down' effect was not automatic. Moreover, they identified a number of supply side failures, with clubs relying on a 'trickle down' effect and very few clubs taking active steps to use the Olympics as a tool to lever more people in. Hindson *et al* (1994) also question the assumption that elite level athletes can act as role models and inspire people to take up sport. Indeed they argue that sporting

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<sup>14</sup> Research conducted by MORI in 2004.

excellence can act to reduce non-participants' feelings of self efficacy leading them to feel that they do not have the skills required to take part in sport. The DCMS/SU review of sport policy concluded that "it would seem that hosting an event is not an effective, value for money method of achieving ... a sustained increase in mass participation" (DCMS/SU, 2002, p.75). Coalter (2004) suggests that unless mega-sporting events are embedded into a broader strategy for sport development they are unlikely to have any general impact and at best a limited sports-specific impact.

In summary, the literature suggests that sport can play a part in improving health, promoting social inclusion and tackling social problems (e.g. youth crime). The evidence for the health benefits is strong, but in relation to social inclusion the evidence is not so robust, but this is not to argue that benefits do not exist but rather that the evidence is not available. This is in part because data have not been collected systematically, and many of the projects are small-scale and local in nature, run on tight budgets that do not include the type of comprehensive evaluation required to tease out the intangible benefits of such projects. Obesity and physical inactivity are currently the subject of intense debate, and featured strongly in the Public Health White Paper – *Choosing Health: Making Healthier Choices Easier* (DoH, 2004 and subsequent Action Plans, for example, *Choosing Activity* (DoH, 2005). The White Paper contains a plethora of proposals aimed at promoting physical activity and improving dietary intake in both adults and children. Given the complexity of the problem, the 'solutions' require action by a myriad of inter-connecting actors including all levels of government, public, voluntary and private sectors and whether they will be able to deliver them remains to be seen. Evidence to date questions the assumption that sporting benefits will 'trickle down' from mega-sports events and the indications are that hosting mega-sporting

events can only contribute to a meaningful increase in mass participation if there are part of a wider, pro-active long term strategy.

These debates have led Coalter (2004) to argue that there are a number of increasingly unconnected 'worlds of sport':

- "Sporting events/spectacle (driven by economic and political imperatives).
  - Sporting excellence (driven by talent identification and specialist sports science support and, in some cases banned drugs).
  - Recreational sport and clubs (driven by competition, enjoyment of sport, sociability and local authority investment in facilities).
  - Social inclusion, government-driven policies which attempt to use sport for instrumental purposes (e.g. crime reduction; health improvement) that are more likely to be provided by youth workers or health professionals than coaches"
- (p.100).

However, there appears to be a tendency to put these 'worlds of sport' together under the one umbrella of 'sport' and not recognise the differences. This leads to unrealistic claims being about what can be achieved by hosting a mega sports-event in relation to global competition, regeneration and economic development and also promoting healthy communities. As we have seen from the literature there are tensions between these different objectives and mega-sports events can not do all of this, all of the time. Generally mega sports events are good at promoting cities within the context of global inter-city competition. Although mega-sports events have proved to be a successful engine for economic development and regeneration the process is not unproblematic and the benefits are neither guaranteed nor necessarily evenly distributed. In terms of delivering social and health goals mega-sports events have a poor record. Tensions over the pursuit of sporting mega events reflect policy and governance tensions more widely

between the quest for economic development and position in a global economy on the one hand and the interests of communities, the promotion of socially cohesive neighbourhoods and quality of life issues on the other.

### National and international governance of sport

Whether a city regards sport as primarily a matter of providing facilities for the city's residents, a tool for improving social cohesion and preventing social ills or as a way to reinvigorate the city, it has to work within the same national framework for sports governance. Just as governance of a nation or a city varies from place to place, so does the governance of sport. Furthermore, the arrangements made for the governance of sport often reflect more general governance arrangements.

Within industrial countries, including Australia, New Zealand and those in North America and the European Union, five overlapping types of arrangement can be identified (Houlihan, 1997). First, there are countries where a central government department plays a major role in the execution of sport policy. Examples include France and Greece, both of which have strong ministries responsible for sport. Second, there are countries where the administration of public policy is more fragmented and the policy developments are initiated at least in part at the sub-national level. This category consists primarily of countries with federal governance systems such as Canada where the provincial/state governments have a great deal of autonomy in relation to sport and recreation. Despite this autonomy, the influence of central policy objectives is evident, in particular in the pursuit of policies that are eligible for central funds.

The third category comprises countries where considerable authority for sport is delegated to a quango (a quasi-autonomous national governmental organisation) or

similar semi-independent organisation. For example, in Spain sport is delegated to the highly autonomous Higher Sports Council, which is accountable to the Ministry of Culture. The UK also falls into this category with Sport Councils operating at 'arm's length' from central government but, as in Spain, being accountable to a central government department. The fourth category comprises countries where the responsibility for sport is shared between a non-governmental organisation (NGO) and government. Examples of this category are Germany and the Netherlands, where NGOs both command significant financial resources independent of government, usually from the subscriptions obtained from a large and successful network of sports clubs or through commercial sponsorship. However, in addition the government provides generous funding to support the sports development work of the NGO. There are also countries, for example, Sweden and Norway, where the NGOs have the primary responsibility for sport and operate largely independent of government.

The fifth category comprises those countries where there is minimal government involvement. Houlihan (1997) identifies USA and Italy as the prime examples of this category. In the USA there are two key organisations responsible for sport, the US Olympic Committee which is responsible for elite-level athletes in Olympic sport and the National Collegiate Athletic Association which controls college-level competition which is the main breeding ground for top-class athletes. In Italy, the National Olympic Committee is independent of government and in conjunction with the main sports federations is responsible for co-ordinating both elite and mass participation sport.

Explaining the variation is difficult but Houlihan (1997) identifies a number of factors, including salience of sport to the government and main political parties, wealth, tradition of voluntary organisation, and political, geographic and demographic



characteristics. Houlihan (1997) concludes that in general, those countries where sport is politically salient establish quangos, whilst those which are geographically compact or have small populations tend to rely on a centralised authority and those where the level of disposable income is high rely on NGOs. However, there are important exceptions, for example, the high level of central control in France and the absence of a centralised authority in Italy. As Houlihan (1997) argues: "As a result it is important to explore the particular mix of factors that have produced the distinctive pattern of policy making and administration of sport" (p.68). In Chapter Six the governance of sport in the UK will be considered in more detail.

Individual sports have national governing bodies that oversee rules and competitions and deliver funds, with the emphasis being on coaches, officials and administrators. Examples from the UK include the Football Association and UK Athletics which are the NGBs for their respective sports. In addition to having national governing bodies, sports also have world governing bodies and the governance of sport goes well beyond the boundaries of nation states. The world governing bodies make the decisions as to which cities will host the 'big three' – the Olympics, the FIFA World Cup and World Athletics Championships. Although many have quite modest origins they are now large and powerful institutions. For example, the world governing authority of athletics, the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) began in 1912 in response to a perceived need for a body to oversee an athletics programme, standardise technical equipment and world records (IAAF, 2005b). It began with 17 members but now has over 211, headquarters in Monaco and no longer relies on membership fees, as it now receives considerable income from sponsorship and the sale of broadcasting rights for the extensive competition programme it runs (IAAF, 2005b). The IAAF began as the International Amateur Athletics Federation (the name was changed in 2001) but during

the last quarter of the twentieth century athletics became increasingly professionalised and the concept of amateurism was abandoned in the 1980s- athletes can now earn considerable prize money.

Mega sports events illustrate the importance of 'multi-level' governance - with key power at the international level - but critically, power is not vested in the nation state rather in powerful associations. 'State' centric readings of governance thus need to be sensitive to the power of multi-national corporations and other powerful institutions (including the IAAF, FIFA, IOC). Further consideration will be given to the role of international governing bodies in Chapter Six.

#### UTILISING THEORY: TOWARDS AN INTEGRATIVE FRAMEWORK

It is clear that if we are going to further our understanding of the relationships between governance, sport and the city, particularly in relation to hosting mega sports events we need to be able to capture different dimensions, scales and inter-connections. The theoretical framework needs to be able to deal with broader changes in national governance arrangements and the increasingly high profile of major cities within a globalised world. It also needs to be able to manage the peculiarities of sport which is both a major global industry and something that is important to people's everyday lives and their quality of life. Each of the theoretical approaches outlined earlier in the chapter have their strengths and weaknesses but none of them alone can 'do' the job. For example, adopting an urban theory approach could lead to inadequate theorising about the connections between local actors and the wider institutional context. However, by drawing on the strengths it should be possible to formulate a framework that enables the key questions to be addressed and a 'rounded' analysis to emerge.

Having considered the shift from 'government' to 'governance', the increasing use of sport by cities as a tool of economic development and examples of city-based mega-events, it possible to identify five factors which are of particular importance for this thesis:

- The role of central government;
- The local context and local actors in the political process;
- The role of networks of individuals and institutions;
- The importance of scale and governance operating both at different levels and also between scales;
- The nature of sectoral relationships i.e. between private, public and voluntary sectors.

In order to inform and advance this study, any theoretical framework needs to take account of these factors. The integrative theoretical framework that underpins the research and analysis is set out in Figure 2.6. The next section will revisit the various theoretical approaches and outline how they contribute to this thesis.

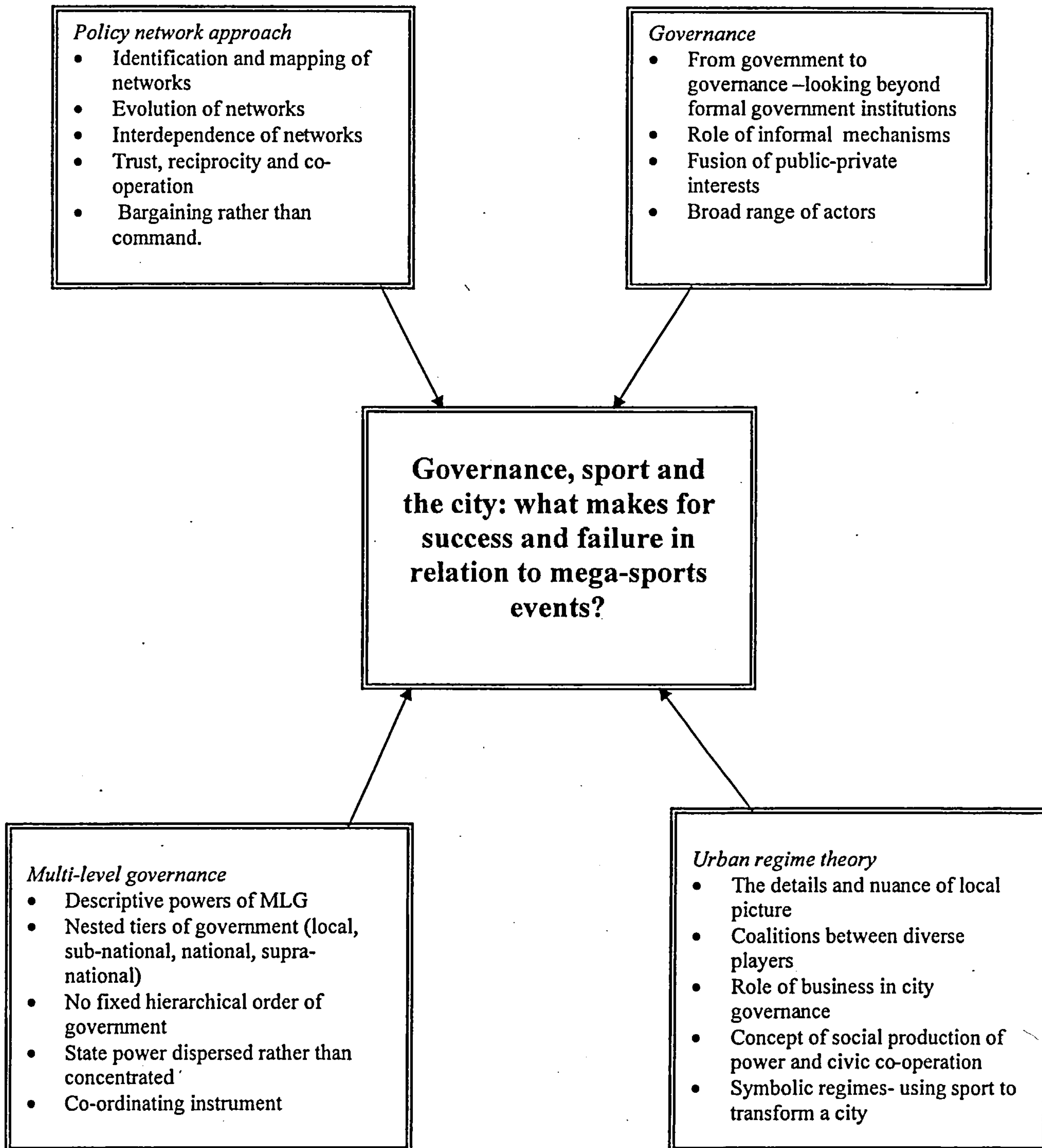
Mega-events are primarily city based events and as urban regime theory is concerned with how cities are governed it provides a useful point of departure which other authors have used to examine such events (e.g. Burbank *et al*, 2001). Urban regime theory looks beyond formal government structures to show that city governance involves much more than these formal structures. Regime theory draws attention to the importance of alliances between players with diverse interests (e.g. business, local government, non-governmental organisations) and how they can work together (or not as the case may be), through formal and informal channels, to accomplish tasks e.g. staging a mega-sporting event. Whilst acknowledging that the role of business in urban governance differs between nations, all the examples given above clearly demonstrate that business

is integral to staging mega sports events. Indeed business actors are often involved in the initiation of a bid and even in cases (e.g. Barcelona) where the public sector took the lead, private sector funding was crucial. Having identified that the private sector is a key player, it then leads us onto a number of questions about the relationship between business actors and government, the influence of the private sector on the shape of an event, associated developments and its legacies.

Regime theory emphasises the need for long term co-operation between actors, rather than a temporary coalition. In relation to mega-events actors are often gathered together to pursue a bid, some of whom know each other but others are unknown. From the examples above, e.g. LA, it does appear that it is rare for a new partnership to succeed first time, with cities often bidding repeatedly before securing an event. Interestingly, Sheffield's fledgling private-public partnership secured an event early on, but ran into difficulties when it came to securing private finance, and it appeared that there was little confidence in the partnership. Once again this leads us onto thinking about not just the length of time of alliances but how they evolve (i.e. what shapes them, how does the membership alter) and where the power lies.

However, urban regime theory does have its drawbacks, in particular in downplaying the influence of external factors on urban governance. Cities do not operate in isolation, they work within frameworks set down by sub-national government, national government, supra-national government, operate within a global economy and are in competition with each other for resources and investment. As Burbank *et al* (2001) demonstrated mega sporting events are external to the city and so every step of the way cities are dependent on external forces, from the international sporting body that awards the event and sets out the terms, through to the multinational corporations that provide

**Figure 2.6: Constructing an integrative theoretical framework: the contributions of theories of governance and urban politics to studying governance, sport and the city.**



sponsorship. Also, with very rare exceptions (e.g. LA), cities staging mega sporting events are dependent upon the support and assistance of sub-national and national government. Burbank *et al* (2001) concluded there is a need to broaden the spatial scale and develop the understanding of linkages between players in order to deliver a more rounded explanation of urban politics.

Work on governance, policy networks and also on multi-level governance can help address the limitations of regime theory by providing conceptual frameworks for understanding the connections and relations between players (as individuals and as organisations), the interdependent nature of these relationships, and the changing nature of governance. In the first instance, these approaches allow the networks and multi-level governance structures to be described, which given their complexity is an important starting point. Both of these approaches operate at the meso-level which makes them particularly relevant for this study as they include an appreciation of broader structural factors, so often overlooked by micro-theories whilst at the same time acknowledging the role of mediating processes which macro-level theories often ignore. It is essential that this study can locate both the specific case of LVNAC and London's record on sporting events more generally, within the broader context whilst still retaining the local detail. Multi-level governance draws attention not only to the multi-level nature of governance but also that the role, power and place of institutions are not fixed rather they are fluid and involve bargaining and negotiation.

All the theoretical positions considered have at some stage been criticised for not possessing sufficient explanatory power. Although some authors have suggested combining one theory with another, e.g. multi-level governance with theories of the state, many warn against trying to simply bolt different theories together, arguing that

what is required is the development and refinement of existing theories, taking into account the insights offered by alternative approaches (Goodwin and Painter, 1997; MacLeod and Goodwin, 1999). However, policy networks, multi-level governance and regime theory all provide ways of thinking about questions, can alert you to questions that otherwise you may have not considered and help map out the complexities of contemporary urban governance which is exactly what is needed in this thesis. By integrating elements from the different approaches, the theoretical framework provides a lens through which to look at specifics of the LVNAC project, London and also to situate both within the broader context.

Another important 'quality' of a theoretical framework is that it should enable the researcher to learn, facilitate the advancement of theoretical understanding and thus contribute to knowledge. In this study an integrative approach has been adopted to avoid giving a partial account and to help capture the complexities and dynamic nature of governance and urban politics. So although the LVNAC project can be seen as piece of recent 'history' and perhaps the product of a certain set of circumstances, the issues are still 'alive' as is evident in the debates about the UK and London's attempts to secure and stage mega sporting events. For example, there was a great deal of activity in relation to the 2012 London Olympic bid (i.e. reports from various actors, government statements), but also in terms of broader sporting issues (e.g. review by the DCMS/SU, 2002) and reform of sporting bodies (e.g. Sport England). In this way, this study should help us to understand the past better, identify the factors that helped secure the 2012 Olympic, suggest ways in which this success can be built upon in order to strengthen the ability of the UK generally and London, specifically to bid for and deliver mega sporting events.

## Chapter Three

### Methodology

#### INTRODUCTION

This chapter will outline the research design and methods used, explain why they were adopted, and also present a reflexive account of conducting the research. Firstly, the research questions and the working hypothesis that underpins the study will be set out. Secondly, the research design and methods used will be described. This will be followed by an account of the process of carrying out the research, including the problems encountered and the steps taken to overcome or ameliorate them. Research evolves, from the first idea through to the completed study and this is especially true of studies of contemporary policy and events. However, one has to balance the need to respond and adapt to shifts in policy and politics with the need to retain the focus of the research.

#### WORKING HYPOTHESIS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

##### Working hypothesis

Following on from the theoretical foundations set out in the previous chapter (2) and background reading, investigation and thought a working hypothesis was developed to underpin and guide the thesis:

The relative failure of the UK to bid for, and stage mega-sporting events in the recent past is rooted within aspects of the style of network governance that has evolved in London and other UK cities.



## Research questions

The working hypothesis gave rise to three main questions and a number of sub-questions:

- 1) Is there a particular style(s) of governance associated with securing and delivering successful mega-sports events?  
*What are the features of governance systems that promote the ability to secure and deliver successful mega-sports events? In relation to mega sports events what counts as 'successful' and what counts as 'failure'? What are the features of governance systems that limit the ability to secure and deliver successful mega- sports events?*
  
- 2) What are the relative strengths and weaknesses of the network style of governance in relation to bidding for and delivering mega-sports events?  
*What are the key features of urban governance? What are the key features of sports governance?*
  
- 3) In the specific case of London, how do the arrangements for urban and sports governance influence how events are bid for and delivered?  
*How have urban and sports governance arrangements changed in London over recent years? What are the similarities and differences with governance arrangements in other UK and global cities? What is particular about the case of London?*

## RESEARCH DESIGN

As noted in Chapter Two, although there is growing interest in sport, governance and the city, work to date is limited (Cochrane *et al*, 1996; Dulac and Henry, 2001). At the time this study began (2001) there was no work on London. However since then, work has started to emerge as a result of London's bid for the 2012 Olympics (e.g. Vigor *et al*, 2004). A qualitative approach is well suited to questions that require exploration, where there is a need for a detailed, close up view and for studying phenomena in their natural setting (Creswell, 1998). Therefore, a qualitative approach was adopted to enable processes to be explored and to tease out the linkages between different aspects of governance, levels of governance, sport and governance and the various interested parties. For this study a qualitative case study design was used. Yin has described the research design as "the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of a study" (Yin, 1994, p.18) and argues that every empirical study has an implicit, if not explicit, research design. The primary purpose of a research design is to ensure that the evidence addresses the initial questions (Yin, 1994).

### Case study research

Like many terms 'case study' has been used in a variety of ways, although it is usually used to identify a specific form of inquiry, one that contrasts with the other two main types of social research: the experiment and the social survey (Hammersley and Gomm, 2000). Case study methodology involves the investigation of a small number of naturally occurring social situations or 'cases' and the collection and analysis of a large amount of detailed information about each case (Hammersley and Gomm, 2000), and has been described as "the social research equivalent of the spotlight or the microscope"

(Hakim, 2000, p.59). The case(s) are bound by time and activity and data collection occurs over a sustained period of time (Stake, 1995) and case studies are often described as an exploration of a 'bounded system' (e.g. Creswell, 1998). Although for this study a qualitative approach was adopted, case studies can use a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods (Yin, 1994). Stake (1995) argues that there are many ways to do case studies and he emphasises the 'arbitrariness' of methods and urges the researcher to use those methods that fit their circumstances and style of operation (p.xii).

The case study is a common research strategy in a number of different disciplines, including political science, sociology, economics and planning, and "in all of these situations, the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena" (Yin, 1994, p. 3). A case study is a particularly useful strategy "when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (Yin, 1994, p.1). In this study the 'case' was of a recent attempt to bring a mega-sporting event to London – the 2005 World Athletics Championships (WAC) to the new Lee Valley National Athletics Centre (LVNAC). Yin (1994) argues that there has been a misconception that case studies are only appropriate for the descriptive phase of an investigation and that other research strategies (i.e. surveys, experiments) are required in order to produce descriptions or explanations. Yin (1994) suggests that some of the best case studies have been both descriptive (e.g. Whyte's (1943/55) *Street Corner Society*) and explanatory (e.g. Allison's (1971) *Essence of decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*).

### Designing a case study

Yin (1994) identifies five elements of the research design. Firstly, the *study questions*, as noted above case studies are particularly appropriate to ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions. The starting point for research was the seemingly simple questions of why has London not been able to secure and stage mega-sporting events? This question gave rise to a number of other questions (posed above). The research questions set out at the start of this chapter also contain the second element – *the proposition* – in this case that the failure to stage major sporting events is rooted in some aspects of the network style of governance. The third element, the *unit of analysis*, is linked to definition of what the ‘case’ is. A case may be an individual, an organisation, a process or as in this study a specific event or project – to develop a National Athletics Stadium and stage the World Athletics Championships. Boundaries have to be set around the case, for example time boundaries to define the beginning and end of the case and who (organisations and individuals) to include and exclude. The fourth and fifth elements – *linking data to propositions and criteria for interpreting the findings* – have been the least well developed in case studies and “represent the data analysis steps in case study research, and a research design should lay foundation for this analysis” (Yin, 1994. p. 25).

Creswell (1998) poses the question “to what extent do qualitative researchers use a social science theory to guide their studies or frame questions?” (p.84). Creswell conceptualises different approaches (e.g. ethnography, case study) on a continuum based on whether they are used before the study (i.e. before asking questions and gathering data) or after the study (i.e. after data collection). Creswell (1998) places case studies on the mid-point of the continuum, because qualitative case studies have employed theory in different ways. So that, theory might be absent from the study, with a focus on a description of a case and its issues (e.g. Stake, 1995), used to guide the

study in an explanatory way (e.g. Yin, 1994) or used toward the end of a study (e.g. Asmussen and Creswell, 1995). In this study, prior to data collection, time was spent reviewing the literature, thinking about and discussing the competing theories that could inform the case study and constructing the integrative theoretical framework set out in Chapter Two.

### Selecting the 'case'

There are different reasons for focusing on a particular case, for example, it may be because of its uniqueness that it requires study – an intrinsic case study, or as in this study, the case is used instrumentally to illustrate the issues – an instrumental case study (Stake, 1995). In selecting cases Stake (1995) argues that the first criterion should be to maximise what we can learn and choose cases that are likely to lead to understandings, to assertions and perhaps to modifying generalisations. There are also practical considerations in relation to resources (time, money, researchers), access and how receptive the potential respondents are (Stake, 1995). The case can be single case or multiple (sometimes referred to as collective). The decision as to whether to do a single or multiple cases depends partly on the issue of interest and each type has its advantages and disadvantages. One key consideration is depth over breadth, Creswell (1998) notes: “I am reminded how the study of more than one case dilutes the overall analysis; the more cases an individual studies, the greater the lack of depth in any single case” (p.63). However, the evidence from multiple cases is often regarded as more convincing and thus the overall study might be thought to be more robust (Herriott and Firestone, 1983). There are also practical considerations, multiple cases studies usually require extensive resources and time and thus may be impractical for a single student or a sole researcher (Yin, 1994, p.45).

Not all cases work out well. It is sometimes necessary to choose another case or modify the original plan (Stake, 1995). I set out thinking that I would study two projects – that of the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre and Wembley National Stadium. However, from the outset I did have doubts over the practicalities of studying WNS given its scale and the controversy surrounding it. My initial interest had been in the LVNAC project and over time I had gathered information and made informal contacts, so that when it came to developing the study and conducting interviews Lee Valley seemed to be the natural starting point. Furthermore, I felt it encapsulated the issues of interest and it was a clearly bounded case: a line had been drawn under the LVNAC project, a decision had been made not to proceed and people have had time to reflect on the process. I also thought that doing the Lee Valley would allow me to assess both the feasibility and the value of studying WNS. As the fieldwork progressed I became increasingly unsure of both the feasibility and the value of an in-depth study of WNS. Access was an important factor. Although for the LVNAC project I had been able to access many of the key players particularly at the local level, I was experiencing problems accessing some organisations and politicians most of whom had played a key role in both the LVNAC and WNS projects. In relation to the WNS, given the on-going controversy and uncertainty surrounding this highly politicised project I thought it was unlikely that I would be granted access to the necessary organisations and individuals. These suspicions were confirmed by the comments of respondents in interviews and in informal conversations. I dreaded being left with half a case study. I therefore decided not to proceed with an in-depth case study of the WNS project, although it still formed an integral part of the case study because of its close links with the LVNAC project. The WNS development has been the subject of a number of Select Committee enquiries (House of Commons, 1999; House of Commons, 2000; House of Commons, 2001a; House of Commons, 2001b; House of Commons, 2002a), the Carter Report (HC 479,

2001) (although 'commercially sensitive' material was not published) and extensive media coverage which provides context and comparison to the LVNAC project.

### Context

It is important in a case study to set out the context of the case clearly, to give the reader a sense of "being there" (Stake, 1995, p. 63). This involves situating the case within its setting, which may be its physical setting or the social, historical and/or economic setting for the case (Creswell, 1998). For the LVNAC project this involves setting out the history of the project and its links with other projects (such as WNS), describing the proposed stadium development and the surrounding area, a brief socio-economic profile of the Upper Lee Valley and the changes in the governance of London (see Chapter Four). Case studies involve extensive data collection from multiple sources such as interviews, observations, archival records and documents (Yin, 1994, Creswell, 1998). It is thus important to pick a case where sufficient material can be amassed – hence my concern that I would not be able to do this with WNS development, not because it is not there, but because I would not be able to access it.

### Analysis

Analysis in case study research can be holistic, that is of the entire case study or an embedded analysis of a specific aspect(s) of the case (Yin, 1994). Through the data collection a detailed description of the case emerges, as do an analysis of themes or issues and interpretation or assertions about the case (Stake, 1995). In this study, the analysis reflects the multi-levelled nature of governance and considers the national and sub-national frameworks and how they articulate (or do not as the case may be). The aim was to produce what Geertz (1973) termed a 'thick description', that is one that provides the information necessary for a reader to understand the findings. Geertz

(1973) also emphasised the importance of considering the context in which actors operate. Thick descriptions are viewed as essential if informed comparisons are to be made about different cases (Lincoln and Guba, 1979). This approach enables the complexities of the cases to be captured and facilitates the examination of the interactions, conflicts and contradictions.

### Validity

Throughout the process of research, steps have to be taken to check the accuracy and credibility of the findings – that they are valid (Creswell, 2003). Or put simply: “Do we have it right?” (Stake, 1995, p.107). There are a number of strategies that can be used to validate qualitative research, Creswell (2003) identifies eight primary strategies (that vary in frequency of use and ease of implementation) and recommends adopting one or more in the ‘real world’. In this case study the following strategies were employed, firstly, triangulation, which involves examining data from different sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes. Second, producing a rich, thick description of the findings in order to ‘transport’ the reader to the setting and give the discussion an element of shared experiences. Thirdly, presenting negative or discrepant information that runs counter to themes. In the real world there are always different views and discussing contrary information can add to the credibility of the account.

## METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION

As noted above case studies involve extensive data collection.



### Literature review

A broad review of the literature was conducted. Firstly, the merits and shortcomings of various theories of governance and urban politics were considered in order to construct a theoretical framework for the study. Following on from this, the key changes and debates in national governance; sub-national governance; governance in sport and sport and regeneration were mapped out. Reviewing the literature is not only about establishing what is known about a topic but it is also an important part of formulating the research questions (Yin, 1994). Previous research was used to help to clarify and develop the research questions. An important component of this thesis was the re-examination of the literature on mega sports events in the light of the case study findings. This was done to enable the explanations identified in the case study as contributing to the failure of the LVNAC project to be explored and developed in a comparative context. As well as revisiting the literature as the study progressed, further literature was examined.

### Using documentary sources (literature and policy documents)

In order to set out the broader context and allow for comparisons to be made over time, and between countries, published literature and documents were used to do the following. Firstly, in relation to bidding for and staging major sporting events a brief comparison was made of the UK, and London in particular, with other countries and cities e.g. USA, Barcelona (Spain), Sydney (Australia), Manchester (UK). The aim was assess the claims for and legacies of mega-sporting events and the relationship between governance arrangements and the realisation of such events. Further comparisons with other countries e.g. France, Australia and USA and with other cities in the UK e.g. Manchester helped tease out the governance issues and clarified to what extent the issues are specific to contemporary London. The vast majority of the published

literature is concerned with the staging of the Olympics (e.g. Andranovich *et al*, 2001; Whitelegg, 2000; Chalkley and Essex, 1999). There is also a considerable North American literature on the development of sport stadiums, with concerns being raised about the public subsidy of these privately owned stadiums and the role of city government (e.g. Baade and Dye, 1988; Keating, 1997; Pelissero *et al*, 1991). Secondly, the evolution of UK governance in general, and London's governance in particular, was traced over the past 15-20 years and landmark events (i.e. legislation, establishment/abolition of structures and organisations) were identified. Thirdly, an examination was made of the sport policy and sports governance literature.

### Documentary evidence

Documentary evidence from a variety of sources was collected and examined. For example, policy documents, reports and statements produced by local, regional and national government, House of Commons Select Committee reports, government reviews, websites, press releases from bodies such as Sport England, UK Athletics, Football Association, and the national and local press. In the first instance this allowed:

- *Mapping out* the key stages of the project (e.g. securing funding), critical decisions (e.g. commissioning of reviews) and any barriers and delays to the process (e.g. problems with financing, delays with planning).
- *Identification of the key players* (organisations, individuals and their affiliations), how and when they became involved in the project, any changes in who are the key players (e.g. changes of personnel) and the circumstances that led to the changes (e.g. dismissal, resignation, reshuffling).
- *Preliminary mapping of networks* concerned with the project, the overlaps and interconnections (organisations and individuals).
- *Development of an interview schedule* and identification of potential respondents.

The documentary analysis and interviewing were interconnected – the first reading of documents helped identify what issue to explore and the documents were revisited following the interviews and further analysis of the documents conducted as part of the case study analysis.

### Comparison

An important element of this thesis is comparison; with other nations, other cities and other mega-sporting events and projects. Sugden and Tomlinson (1999) argue that comparison allows researchers “to learn more about the ‘other’ both horizontally across space and vertically through time” (p.387). In this way it was possible to make links between the specific case of the LVNAC project and other mega sporting projects in the UK and other nations, including the London Olympic bid as it unfolded. What is also interesting is that constant comparison is a key feature of the mega-sports event process and is related to the highly competitive nature of the process. Bid nations and cities make comparisons across time, examining what others have done before them and across space, considering what their rivals are planning to do. In this way nations and cities are hoping to learn from the experiences of others and also to ensure that they are submitting a competitive bid. This process was evident in the bid for the 2012 Olympic and is continuing as London prepares to host the 2012 Games.

The comparison undertaken within this thesis took on several forms and was not a linear process, rather it involved going back and forth between the data and literature as concepts emerged and were refined. First, brief comparisons were made between cases to produce an overview. For example, ten mega-events were compared on a range of key elements identified from the findings of the case study and the literature. This overview (set out in Figure 6.1) highlighted differences and similarities between various

nations and cities and acted as a 'stepping stone' to further analysis, including the development of a typology of national government approaches to mega-sports events. The comparative overview provided important direction for the research as it helped identify key areas for further examination. Secondly, more general comparisons were made between nations, for example in relation to sports governance and sports policy (see Chapters Two and Six) and this not only highlighted the variety of approaches taken by different nations but also helped understand the specifics of the UK's approaches to sport. The third form of comparison was more detailed and focused in nature and undertaken to further understanding of specific questions. For example, to gain a better insight into the role of city level governance in the mega-sports event process selected case studies were considered in more depth. Two cases were examined— Sydney Olympics and Manchester Commonwealth Games- they were chosen because as well as demonstrating important differences in city governance, they were both major precursors to the LVNAC project and actively informed thinking on mega events at the time (see Chapter Seven for details). The emergence of the London Olympic bid enabled a further strand of comparison to be developed between the LVNAC project and the London Olympic bid which proved to be very constructive. By comparing the LVNAC and the London Olympic bid it was possible to consider what if any lessons had been learnt from the LVNAC project and to compare the role of central government in the two projects. In relation to securing and hosting mega sports events the case study had highlighted the difficulties caused by the lack of a unitary authority for London and the London Olympic bid provided an opportunity to explore the London governance issues more fully and assess whether the Mayor and GLA could make a 'difference'.

## Interviews

In-depth, semi-structured interviews have been conducted with key players, some of which by virtue of the senior position they occupied, because they held public office or the resources they controlled, could be termed 'elite'. Semi-structured interviews were chosen for several reasons. Semi-structured interviews enable the respondent to bring up issues which they feel are important, whilst at the same time ensuring that the researchers 'core' questions are covered (Fielding and Thomas, 2001; Duke, 2002) and can also save time when it is at a premium (Duke, 2002). Furthermore, semi-structured interviews are thought to be more effective than highly structured or unstructured ones when interviewing elites as they allow the researcher to retain control (Ostrander, 1995; Hirsch, 1995).

The interview schedule was drawn up after the review of the literature, the examination of documents relating to the project and informal discussion with knowledgeable parties. The schedule was piloted and revised accordingly (see Appendix 1). The questions asked were aimed at eliciting information about who the key players were, the networks involved, the role played by different players including central government, regional and local government and the relationships and interactions between players (individuals and institutions). Respondents were asked to give their account of the project - their involvement, what they saw as the key issues, the key players, their hopes and aspirations, how and where decisions were made, critical events, the reasons for the cancellation and the consequences of the decision.

The interview sample was selected by a combination of identification of people involved in the projects and snowballing. Snowball or network sampling involves asking a member of the population to be studied to nominate other respondents (Arber,

2001; Burgess, 1984). The nominated respondents are approached for interview, and also asked to identify further potential respondents; this continues until no further respondents are nominated. Snowball sampling can only be used when the target population are involved in some kind of network with others who share the characteristic of interest, in this case all were involved in the LVNAC project. As Arber (2001) notes, this is both a strength and a potential weakness of the approach. One advantage is that it reveals a network of contacts that can itself be studied. Within this study what was interesting was who respondents nominated but also who they did not (there were some noteworthy omissions). The possible reasons for these omissions (e.g. the 'value' assigned to another individual's opinion or role) became more apparent as the study progressed and the nature of the relationships between actors revealed. A potential drawback is that it only includes those within a connected network of individuals. As snowballing involves personal recommendations that vouch for the legitimacy of the researcher, it is an approach frequently used when trying to find a sample of people engaged in illegal or stigmatised behaviour e.g. drug users, sex workers (Lee, 1993). In this study it was used to help open doors that otherwise may have remained shut – the case under scrutiny was recent and politically sensitive – because individuals vouched for my credibility as a 'proper' researcher as opposed for instance, to a journalist seeking a sensationalist story.

It was important to include people who were involved from the outset and were aware of the 'history' of the project. Furthermore, it was essential to include people from the different 'layers' of organisations, for example, senior people with strategic responsibilities and with an overview of the process, as well as those who are responsible for day-to-day delivery. Duke (2002) in her research on the development of prison drug policy found not only did junior members of staff have more specific and

intricate knowledge of policy than 'key' policy players, but they were also more willing to 'talk'. From the outset it was envisaged that the majority of respondents would be interviewed once. All respondents were asked if they could be contacted by e-mail or telephone if any points needed clarification.

The first step in identifying potential respondents was to examine information about the Lee Valley National Athletic Centre project. This included the local and national press, websites and Newsletters produced by a variety of sources such as UK Athletics (UKA), the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (LVRPA) and central government.

Another important source of 'names' were the reports of the House of Commons Select Committee, into staging major international sporting events (House of Commons 1999; House of Commons, 2001a), the development of the Wembley National Stadium (House of Commons, 2000) and the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre and the staging of the 2005 World Athletics Championships (House of Commons, 2001b).

These reports included the proceedings of the Committee, the minutes of the oral evidence received and the written evidence submitted (in the form of memoranda and letters).

In this way an initial list was generated but even at first glance it was apparent that it was dominated by senior figures (e.g. Chief Executives) and politicians, that is the 'elites'. What was missing were those with a more day to day involvement in the project. Not only did I think it was important to include people from different layers of organisations with varying responsibilities but also for several reasons I did not want to start with the elite. Firstly, I thought I would be more able to secure an interview with an elite if I had already conducted others interviews, partly as I would have been 'vetted' and 'approved' by others and also because of the knowledge I would have

gained from earlier interviews. Secondly, I thought I would go into the interview with more confidence and clarity, I was aware that I would only get one chance and I wanted to be able to make the optimum use of it. In this way I hoped to avoid the dangers of being too deferential, being drawn in by their articulateness and allowing elites to 'just talk' and thus control the interview (Thomas, 1995; Hirsch, 1995; Ostrander, 1995).

So having produced an initial list I needed to broaden that list. I went about this by using local contacts I had made in the early stages of the development of the research proposal. In April 2001 I had attended one of the public consultations held about the proposed development of the LVNAC where I had picked up written information and also had a long conversation with a member of staff from the LVRPA. I explained my interest in the project and the staff member had given me his card and said I was welcome to contact him at a later date. When contacted not only did he agree to be interviewed but he also suggested several of his colleagues who had been intricately involved in the project and were able to give me detailed accounts. In the summer of 2001 I found a piece about the North London Strategic Alliance (NLSA) on the London Development Agency (LDA) website. The NLSA is a sub-regional organisation set up to raise the profile of North London and develop the potential of the sub-region. One of its stated priorities was "To support the development of key sites including the National Athletics Stadium at Picketts Lock" (LDA, 2001a) and contact details were given for the NLSA. Again initial contact was encouraging and in the autumn of 2002 I re-contacted the co-ordinator of NLSA who was based at Enfield council – who I knew had not been directly involved but given their role and local knowledge I hoped would be able to give me some pointers. I was supplied with a list of five people along with brief information about their area of expertise and only one of the names suggested was on my initial list.



## Into the field

The people suggested by my local contacts formed the first wave of interviews.

Potential respondents were initially sent a letter outlining the research and requesting an interview (see Appendix Two). An information sheet was attached (see Appendix Three). The letter was followed up by either/or phone calls and e-mails. All seven people approached agreed to be interviewed and several contacted me to arrange the interview. Interviews were conducted at a time and place that was convenient to the respondent (see below for further details and discussion).

At the end of the interview respondents were asked to provide names of people who they felt would be important for me to interview and in this way the sample 'snowballed'. Asking people to make suggestions widened the sample to include people I probably would not have considered (e.g. representative of a local athletics club).

Also, it soon became apparent that a lot of work had gone behind the scenes, and that the names of these "back room boys", as one person described them, did not appear in documents or press releases. There were other 'spin offs'. For example, despite extensive document and internet searches, I had been unable to locate London International Sport, whose name I had come across (e.g. House of Commons Select Committee reports, GLA documents). However one of the respondents was able to give me a contact name and number. In addition some respondents gave me documents, such as minutes of meetings and internal reports that I would not otherwise have had access to.

I asked if I could name the person making the suggestion when I made the initial contact. This strategy proved both useful and interesting. Personal recommendation did seem to help to open doors, and respondents would often make remarks about the

person who had suggested them. In some cases, people said it was probably 'not worth' mentioning them in the letter, for example several people were unsure if they would be remembered by senior people or whether their name would have any influence. The vast majority of the time people were happy to be mentioned. Occasionally, I was specifically asked not mention them by name, in a couple of cases this was because of strained relations between the individuals and in others it was because of differences between organisations. As Duke (2002) has noted asking for suggestions not only generates the sample but it is also a means of generating data about networks – who knows whom, who values whom and perceptions of where and how an individual fits into the network.

Initially the names suggested tended to be other local players, (this was not surprising given that I had begun at the local level), a mixture of people with very specific expertise (e.g. transport, planning), the comment often being 'you really need to talk to X about that' and people with a broader overview (e.g. local councillors). Although the 'elites' of my original list were mentioned, it was often accompanied by an acknowledgement that they might prove to be difficult to access. As the data collection proceeded, fewer new names were being suggested – I had already interviewed or contacted many of the people who were suggested to me.

Information was obtained from 26 respondents (24 men and 2 women). In the interests of anonymity it is not possible to provide details of those interviewed, but the sample did include national, London and local politicians, Chief Executives and other senior management figures from sporting bodies and the local authority as well as middle managers from these organisations. Twenty five people were interviewed and one person supplied written responses to the interview questions. Of the interviews, 22 were

conducted face-to-face and three were conducted over the telephone. Three people declined to be interviewed, the reasons given included not having anything to add that was not already in the public domain and not wishing to comment on confidential matters. Other respondents were sought but despite follow up calls and letters I was unable to secure an answer or speak to the potential respondent as I was unable to get past the 'gatekeepers': all these individuals were located within local or national government (politicians and civil servants).

Three telephone interviews were conducted and in two cases it appeared to be my only means of gaining information from these sources. In one case given the multiple demands on the time of the individual I was pleased to have been given any opportunity to ask questions. In the other case, it soon became apparent that what began as a simple follow up telephone call (to an interview request) was turning into an interview and moreover, it was going to be my only 'shot' at that individual. In a third case, a focused discussion was conducted over the telephone which both clarified a specific issue and made it apparent that a full face-to-face interview was not required. I was aware from the outset that I needed to take a pragmatic approach to data collection and be willing to compromise in order to obtain data of some description (e.g. telephone interview, written response).

Although I stated in my letter that I would contact people, I did supply my contact details and several people contacted me agreeing to see me and either suggesting or requesting dates— this was a pleasant surprise. Those interviewed included individuals from the local authority, sporting bodies, the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, higher education and councillors (see Figure 3.1).

**Figure 3.1: Sample according to the primary function of the organisation the respondent represents and scale at which the organisation operates.**

Scale/Function	Sport/leisure*	Government	Business	Higher ed.	Total
Local	2	7	0	0	9
Sub-regional	5	0	1	1	7
Regional**	1	2	0	0	3
National	4	2	0	0	6
International	1	0	0	0	1
Total	13	11	1	1	26

Source: Compiled by author

Notes:

\* Includes voluntary sector, public sector and NDPBs.

\*\* Regions refers to organisations with a London wide remit.

Respondents are classified according to the primary role of the organisation they represent, so that the local authority sport and leisure officer is included in 'local government'.

Organisations are classified according to their main level of operation i.e. local authority classified as 'local government'

Interviews lasted between 40 minutes to an hour and half, although most were just under an hour. The vast majority of interviews were conducted at the respondent's place of work. Others venues included the respondents home (a few worked from home), and a hotel coffee shop. With permission the interviews were tape-recorded and detailed notes were then made from these recordings. Immediately after the interview field notes were made. There were also opportunities for more informal conversations, for instance while being accompanied out of a building, which acted as an important adjunct to the formal interviews.

Talking to elites: questions of access and power.

Ostrander (1995) argues that social scientists rarely "study up" (p. 133) and that this gap in our knowledge acts to obscure and thus maintain the position of elites within society.

Researching the 'powerful' presents different challenges – methodological and ethical – to studying 'down' (Cormode and Hughes, 1999). The characteristics of those under

study, the power relations between them and the researcher and the politics of the research process differ between elite and non-elite research (Moyser and Wagstaffe, 1987; Hertz and Imber, 1995). One of the challenges is gaining access. Elites are often well 'guarded' by personal assistants and the like, and it is often necessary to use 'levers' such as personal contacts and institutional affiliation to gain entry (e.g. McDowell, 1998). Obviously without access there can be no research so that 'the first acceptance already feels like success – a small victory' (Cochrane, 1998, p.2124). I recognise that feeling of elation as a request translated into an interview, particularly at the start of my fieldwork when I was slightly concerned that no one would agree to speak to me and later on when I secured interviews with more senior people (e.g. Chief Executives). However, this 'victory' Cochrane argues, highlights the weakness of the researcher in the process 'as dependent on the researched, who by definition, are used to running things' (Cochrane, 1998, p. 2124). When studying elites the researcher is often in the position of supplicant, "requesting time and expertise from the powerful with little to offer in return" (McDowell, 1992, p.213) – this is perhaps particularly true of the lone PhD student. My inability to get past some gatekeepers, despite my persistence was a stark reminder of my dependent position.

Researchers must be able to demonstrate a good deal of prior knowledge of the field (Hakim, 2000) as gaining entry will probably involved being 'checked out' by the respondent (e.g. Ostrander, 1995; Duke, 2002). This 'checking out' took a number of forms. Some respondents enquired as to whether I had read certain documents, others offered me copies of documents, whilst others would make comments such as "You've probably already read...." or "Have you looked at....?". Several of my respondents remarked that I seemed to 'know my stuff', although in earlier interviews I made it clear that my knowledge had been gained from reading reports and documents and that I was

there to elicit their particular expertise and their 'take' on events. As the interviews proceeded my knowledge and confidence increased and that was one of the reasons that I deliberately kept the most senior people until later. There were also occasions where I was quite 'up front' about the limitations of my knowledge, for example, the complexities of transportation planning.

In order to gain and maintain access, researchers often have to put on a 'different skin' (Cochrane, 1998, p.2124), for example, through their dress, and demeanour researchers create an air of 'respectability understood by the researched' (Cochrane, 1998, p.2124). I certainly took care in how I presented myself (e.g. wearing smart clothes), I wanted to appear 'professional', someone to be taken seriously. McDowell (1998) in her study of City of London bank workers described the different persona she adopted depending upon whom she was interviewing. For example, with older, fierce senior women she would be 'brusquely efficient' and with younger men she was 'superfast, well-informed and definitely not to be patronised' (McDowell, 1998, p.2138). For Cochrane (1998) there is a worry that the critical researcher might surrender themselves too much to the researched and that taking on that 'different skin' can shape the way the research agenda is pursued.

The effect of the gender of the interviewer is uncertain and subject to discussion, but may be significant. Cochrane (1998) describes how in one study he was involved in interviewing senior local government officer and local business, it was apparent that the response depend upon who was doing the interviewing. Cochrane, a man of "roughly the same age and wearing the regulation suit and tie" (Cochrane, 1998, p.2126) elicited formal responses, whilst when his younger female colleague interviewed the same people they talked more freely and gave more thorough explanations. Schoenberger

(1992) suspects that it is easier for her as a woman to gain access to corporate elites than for a male colleague “because as a woman I am less threatening, more intriguing, or presumed to be a better audience for the recounting of exploits. On the other hand, once in, my male colleague probably does not have to deal with paternalism, flirting, or scepticism about his ability to grasp technical subjects” (p.217). It is difficult, McDowell (1998) observes, as a lone researcher to assess whether gender has any effect, either in gaining access or the responses one elicits. The overwhelming majority of people I interviewed were men (24 men and 1 woman<sup>1</sup>), with three of the men being interviewed over the telephone and the other 21 face-to-face and the one woman face-to-face. Although I am unsure as to whether being a woman made any difference to getting an interview, there was certainly some curiosity as to why I was interested in the LVNAC project and staging of major sporting events in London. At the time I did not give much thought to these enquiries, but on reflection perhaps given that sport, urban governance and politics tend to be male domains maybe it seemed to be a strange choice for a woman.

The choice of venue for the interview was very much left to the respondent. This was primarily to facilitate access and in most cases the interviews were conducted in their work place either in the respondent’s office or a meeting room. Fitz and Halpin (1994) suggest that when interviews take place in the respondent’s social space, their position of power is reinforced, but in practical terms it can be difficult to arrange interviews in ‘neutral’ venues. Indeed some neutral venues can have other draw backs, for example, I found the hotel coffee shop an awkward place to conduct an interview – it was noisy and busy with a lot of background activity. As Duke (2002) notes, there are ways of using the physical space so that the researcher and respondent are in more ‘equal’ and

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<sup>1</sup> Information was obtained from 26 people – 24 men and 2 women but one of the women supplied written information.

'neutral' positions. Like Duke (2002) I was able on most occasions to avoid the 'behind-the-desk' scenario and conduct the interview in another part of the office either around a table or on comfortable chairs.

Some researchers (McDowell, 1998; Duke, 2002) have reported that interviews with elites were constantly interrupted by phone calls, letters to sign and enquiries from other staff. I was struck by the fact that on the whole I was given the undivided attention of the respondent. There were, of course interruptions, mostly phone calls (many let answer machines pick them up) but generally they were dealt with swiftly, often with a "I'm in a meeting I'll call you back" and others had personal assistants who dealt with calls. Although I had requested 30-45 minutes of a respondents time I often got longer, despite on occasion pointing out that I was taking up more time than I had anticipated and even reminding people they had another meeting to attend. When arranging the interview some respondents clearly stated that they would give me an hour and 'booked' me in for an hour. The importance of time was apparent in arranging the interview, perhaps as Duke (2002) reflects it is because elites are used to everything being 'urgent' and done in short time frame. Some respondents were anxious to fit me into their diaries within a week or two of my initial contact and many would ask what my deadline was. In contrast, it took me months to even get a 'yes' or 'no' from others, which may have been a reflection of their workload or their perception of the value of the research. In a couple of cases, people agreed to talk to me but at a later date once their work commitments allowed them. In one case the promised interview never took place, with arrangements being undone (all contact was via a gatekeeper) and eventually I decided given the interviews I had done in the intervening period that little would be gained from another attempt.



I took a number of steps in order to maximise my chances of being granted access. Prior to approaching elites I spent time reading around the area and identifying key players and events. I then interviewed people who had been involved on a day-to-day basis in order to increase my understanding and credibility and I used the names of other respondents (with their permission) and wrote on university headed notepaper. To an extent this strategy worked - I was able to interview senior people from the local authority, local business and two of the key organisations involved in the project (Lee Valley Park Authority and UK Athletics). However, my success was mostly in interviewing what has been referred to as the 'local elite' (i.e. senior officers in the local authority, Councillors, local business people). Indeed, in many ways I experienced fewer problems than I envisaged and on the whole, people were enthusiastic, accommodating and generous with their time. However, I faced difficulties and closed doors when I tried to speak to others with either a higher personal profile or from organisations with a higher public profile.

In relation to one sports organisation, I initially approached a middle manager who had been suggested to me, although the respondent who made the suggestion was unsure whether the manager would agree to speak to me. He declined, saying that the organisation "do not get involved in such projects" and that he "would not tell me anything that was not in the public domain"<sup>2</sup>. I was directed to the Select Committee reports which I explained I had already read, and the most I could secure was the promise to clarify any factual queries I had by e-mail or telephone. As the interviews proceeded I hoped that a 'way in' would present itself but it did not; no one I spoke to was either able or willing to help open the door. I then wrote to a member of the senior management team, who I knew through official sources (e.g. Select Committee reports),

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<sup>2</sup> Telephone conversation with middle manager of sports organisation, November 2002.

and the grapevine, could give me an insight into the organisations' role in the LVNAC project and into the staging of mega and major sports events in the UK. I received an interesting reply from the senior manager– the organisation would be happy to help, the middle manager (the one had originally approached) would contact me shortly to arrange to see me, which he duly did. In this case going to the 'top' had paid off and it was a strategy that I used with other organisations including the DCMS. However, in the case of the DCMS it did not work – the senior person had moved to another section and did not want to comment, another politely declined stating that the Government/ DCMS perspective was well documented in public reports and statements and that “there is nothing that I could add to what is already on public record”<sup>3</sup>. This can be interpreted in a number of ways. First, the policy of 'open government' means that there really is nothing to add as the full account is in the public domain, although from the accounts given by other players this seems unlikely. Indeed the 'value' of conducting interviews as opposed to just relying on the House of Commons investigations was soon apparent as respondents were often very candid, offered opinions not just 'straight accounts and also had had time to reflect on events. Second, civil servants do not want to be quizzed about an embarrassing incident and can use the existence of Select Committee reports to justify this stance. It may be that even had I secured interviews they may not have been very enlightening. Ball (1994) in his study of education policy found that serving politicians and civil servants were more reticent than those who were retired or “out of office”. I interviewed several people that were either about to leave their posts or had already left. These interviews were rich, with respondents being frank and open about events. Civil servants are also bound by civil service rules and the Official Secrets Act and can not answer all questions, although this does not preclude the researcher from asking them (Ball, 1994).

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<sup>3</sup> E-mail response from a civil servant working in the DCMS to my request for an interview, May 2003.

### Changing and challenging times: researching contemporary policy and politics

Researching contemporary policy and politics proved to be stimulating and productive but at times challenging. The dynamic nature of policy-making and politics means that over the course of the study there have been many changes at national, city and local level. Much of what and who were in place in 2000-2001 are no longer there. Indeed even at the time of the fieldwork (late 2002/early 2003) people had moved or were in the process of moving on and policies and structures had changed. However, many of the issues have remained 'live' – as evident in the bid for the London Olympics and now as preparations are made to stage the 2012 Games - and this has both complicated and strengthened this thesis. In terms of this thesis it was important to locate and analyse the LVNAC project in its contemporary context, whilst at the same time considering what has changed and what these changes may mean for future projects.

A number of difficulties were encountered as a result of external events and two examples will be used to illustrate the issues. Firstly, I had been disappointed but not surprised by the initial refusal from the middle manager of the sports organisation. I was aware from media reports, official documents and from the interviews I had conducted, that the organisation was troubled and divided and was going through a period of intense change so perhaps would not be receptive to an outsider questioning them about a 'failed' project. Secondly, the fieldwork was undertaken (November 2002 onwards) during a time when the UK (along with other countries) were on the verge of war with Iraq. I was very aware of this when I was trying to contact politicians – particularly when the time came to follow up my initial letter with e-mails or calls– my request for an interview about staging major sporting events in London felt so trivial that I was embarrassed to make contact. In one case I did send an e-mail, in which I emphasised that I was hoping that the person would agree to speak to me 'some time in the future' (I got no reply). In another case I postponed making contact as it seemed inappropriate

and unlikely to generate a positive response. I also put off making initial contact with other politicians. It was also at this time that the possibility of London bidding for 2012 Olympics was being debated and the Cabinet were expected to discuss the bid at the end of January 2003 and make a decision, but this has been postponed indefinitely because of the Iraqi crisis (Wintour and MacKay, 2003)<sup>4</sup>. The BOA and other sporting bodies understood and supported the Government's position (BOA, 2003a). In both the instances cited – the organisation undergoing restructuring and the government facing war- outside events had overtaken and made it more difficult to negotiate access but this is very much part of researching in the 'real' world.

#### Maintaining anonymity in a named case study

Prior to the interview issues relating to anonymity and confidentiality were discussed with each respondent. I informed respondents that although they would not be identified the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre project would be, as it would be impossible to place it within the broader context if it was not identified, and all the respondents agreed with this. Full accounts of evidence given to the House of Commons Select Committees are publicly available (some commercially sensitive information was not published) but some respondents were still reticent and indeed one person declined to be interviewed citing "matters of confidentiality" that he felt "unable to comment on"<sup>5</sup>. Although some respondents said that they did not mind being identified or their comments being attributed, others welcomed anonymity and stressed how important this was. Although guarantees can be made that statements and quotes will not be attributed, names will not be used and generic titles adopted (e.g. senior manager) it still may be possible for individuals to be identified particularly by colleagues, as one person put it "There is

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<sup>4</sup> The decision to proceed within a London bid for the 2012 Olympics was made in May 2003.

<sup>5</sup> E-mail received from a senior manager of a sports organisation, February 2003.

only one of me”<sup>6</sup>. This is not an uncommon problem, for example McDowell (1998) expresses concern that the respondents in her study of the “relatively small and close-knit world of banking” would be recognised by their colleagues “where my attempts at anonymity may be insufficient to disguise them” (McDowell, 1998, p. 2144). As the study progressed I came to realise that I probably would not be able to use many direct quotes, rather I would have to embed the views of individuals into the text. I was aware that even the phrases that an individual uses can reveal their identity and I was anxious not to break the promise I had made. I was also told things ‘off the record’ or specifically asked not to use some material other than as background and I will be true to my word. As Palmer (2000) notes the critical researcher can be left in an ‘ethical bind’. During her fieldwork about the Tour de France bicycle race, Palmer (2000) witnessed events and was given first hand accounts of drug taking, which left in her no doubt as to the widespread abuse of drugs in professional cycling. However, the conversations were ‘off the record’ and Palmer (2000) did not use the material in her thesis. However, several years later the story ‘broke’ and the cyclists whose confidences she had been keeping, started talking to the worlds press about their own drug taking and so Palmer (2000) decided that she could now write a critical anthropological account.

Respondents were informed that the main outcome of the research will be a doctoral thesis and that findings will be presented at conferences and publication sought in peer reviewed journals. There are various strategies in addition to those outlined above that can be employed to protect respondents, but at the same time ensure that the research enters the public domain. For example, papers can be sent to respondents prior to publication, although it is important for the integrity of the research that it is made clear

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<sup>6</sup> Interview with a senior manager, local authority, March 2003.

that this 'checking' is to ensure that a respondent is not compromised (e.g. by inadvertently revealing their identity) and not an opportunity for them to edit or alter the interpretation or conclusions (Ostrander, 1995). I have offered to send papers to respondents. Again some felt this was unnecessary whilst others requested it before I even had a chance to offer.

As noted above, it is essential that respondents understand that being sent papers is not an opportunity for them to 'censor' the research findings prior to publication. I always emphasised that I was engaged in an academic piece of work and that I was not out to 'expose' or compromise anyone. This however, does not mean that I will refrain from being critical or not report the shortcomings of organisations, but any criticisms will be the product of thorough analysis of the data and underpinned by theory. Palmer (2000) and Sugden and Tomlinson (1999) highlight the importance of maintaining the integrity of the researcher— in Palmer's case on *La Société du Tour de France* that oversees the Tour de France bicycle race and Sugden and Tomlinson's (1999) work on FIFA, the governing body of world football. For Sugden and Tomlinson (1999) a healthy scepticism is essential when gathering the views of individuals or organisations and they stress the importance of relating different accounts to each other and of interpreting them. In both cases, the researchers emphasise the need to construct the 'bigger picture' and they regard this as the key difference between journalism and investigative social science (Palmer, 2000; Sugden and Tomlinson, 1999).

#### Management and analysis of data

With the permission of respondents the interviews were recorded (no one refused), and in the case of the telephone interview detailed notes were taken at the time. General observations and 'off the record' remarks were noted down as soon as practical after the

interview. Each tape was listened to and detailed notes were made. I also amassed a variety of documentary sources including minutes of meetings, unpublished internal reports<sup>7</sup> that I added to my collection of official published material (e.g. House of Commons Select Committee reports) and this material was examined in tandem with the interview data.

While listening to the recording of the interview and making notes I was looking for themes, similarities and differences in the accounts, 'odd cases' and new leads. The process of analysis began with the first interview and quite soon into the fieldwork, themes began to emerge. This was followed by a period of concentrated data analysis in late summer and autumn 2003. A word processor was used to assist in the organisation and management of the data but I decided against using a qualitative data analysis computer package<sup>8</sup> (I considered using NU\*DIST) as I concluded that the analysis would not be enhanced by using NU\*DIST. Stanley and Temple (1995) compared the word processing package Word for Windows with five specialist programmes, including NU\*DIST and should consider using a good word processing package (e.g. Word for Windows) as their basic analytical aid, and that only if they want to do something that this package cannot do should they consider using a dedicated package.

I used Miles and Huberman's (1994) framework as it has been found to be particularly useful for case studies (Robson, 2002). Miles and Huberman (1994) regard data analysis as comprising of three concurrent 'flows of activity': data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification. Analysis involved coding the data and writing memos

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<sup>7</sup> The majority of this material was supplied to me by respondents, although I was able to obtain some from other sources e.g. the English Sports Council minutes are available via their website ([www.sportengland.org.uk](http://www.sportengland.org.uk)).

<sup>8</sup> As part of my research training I took a module on advanced computer software techniques. I was trained in the use of NU\*DIST and SPSS, and completed two assignments using each of the packages.

in order to reduce the data and then displaying the data. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest a number of ways of displaying data, for example, matrices (i.e. tables with rows and columns) and networks (i.e. a set of boxes or 'nodes' with links between them) which I adopted in order to 'plot out' the data and this helped me 'make sense' of the data. Conclusions were drawn from the data, using a number of tactics to generate meaning, for example, noting themes, patterns and trends. These three flows of activity along with the process of data collection formed a continuous iterative process. The products of analysis form Chapter Five of the thesis.

The literature was then revisited in the light of the analysis of the interview data and documentary sources and more detailed and focused comparisons made with other cases in order to further develop the concepts and themes that emerged from the analysis. The processes of reviewing literature, analysing data and making comparisons were tightly interwoven and involved going back and forth between the literature, data and comparative material to take the analysis forward.

### Reporting the findings

When it came to reporting the findings, the nature of this research – a named case study of a contemporary event – presented a number of challenges. The key issue was the need to find a way of capturing and conveying the different voices and perspectives without compromising anonymity and confidentiality. Given the networked nature of the LVNAC project – as clearly illustrated in Figure 6. 1 in Chapter Six – individuals, their opinions and how they present them are often well known to other members of the network either through personal contact, documents, the media or the 'grapevine'.

Although the LVNAC project may now be consigned to history, many of the organisations and individuals have ongoing relationships and care needs to be taken not



to jeopardise these. As already noted, the specificity of many of their roles makes it difficult to 'hide' individuals behind generic job titles and organisational affiliation. It is for these reasons that although the interview data is very rich, in presenting the findings in Chapter Seven, although quotations have been used much of what was reported has been embedded in the text. For the most part quotations do not bear any information about their origins<sup>9</sup>. Although it could be argued that this approach means that some of the richness of the data is lost, it reflects the practicalities of conducting 'real world' research and the obligations and responsibilities that this entails (i.e. taking steps to preserve anonymity).

## SUMMARY

This chapter has set out the research design and methods used and explained why they were adopted and also presented a reflexive account of conducting the research. The methods used were employed to as they allowed issues of multi-level governance, policy networks and urban regime theory to be examined. Many, although not all, potential problems can be anticipated and other peoples accounts of conducting research can be invaluable in helping to decide the most appropriate strategies to adopt. For example, earlier work on researching elites proved to be useful and gave me important 'tips' and 'pointers'. Not all issues or difficulties can be anticipated and the researcher has to respond and adapt the research if necessary whilst still trying to retain the focus of the research. For example, at the outset of my research I could not have known that there was going to be a war just at the time I was seeking to interview MPs or that a key organisation would undergo major re-structuring. The process of conducting the Lee Valley case study also led me to conclude that it would be neither wise nor productive

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<sup>9</sup> This includes gender as only 2 of 26 respondents were women.

to conduct a case study of the WNS project. In some instances, it may be that you can not 'do' anything about the issue but just be aware, for instance one can not change ones gender but you can be aware that it may have an effect.

## Chapter Four

### Case Study - The Lee Valley National Athletics Centre project

#### INTRODUCTION

This chapter tells the 'story' of the LVNAC project; one that begins in December 1999 with the decision to remove athletics from Wembley National Stadium (WNS) and concludes in October 2001 with the demise of the LVNAC project. In order to set the context to the project the governance of London is described. London has undergone a number of changes over time and the LVNAC occurred at the time of a significant, historically-specific governance transition. Examining the history of London governance will further understanding of shifts in governance forms, networks and 'urban regimes'. Then background information about the Upper Lee Valley and Enfield set out to in order to 'paint' a picture of the locality, its characteristics and the issues facing it. The evolution of the project is described, starting with the selection process and moving on to consider the key issues that faced the project, the players (organisations and individuals), critical events and decisions. This Chapter draws on a variety of sources including official documents, press releases, unpublished papers and minutes of meetings, and the accounts given by respondents.

#### BACKGROUND: THE WIDER LONDON CONTEXT

London is a vast, sprawling metropolis and as such governing it has always presented a number of challenges and a variety of 'solutions' have been tried<sup>1</sup>. Part of the problem is the sheer size of London so that any arrangements are likely to be complex. Related

to this is the persistence of local interests – it has proved difficult to marry the needs of London as a whole with those of local authorities. Furthermore, as Rao (2003) argues central government regards the governance of London as too important to be left to Londoners and that it is unlikely Ministers will give up their powers.

One of the experiments in governing London was the Greater London Council (GLC). Created in 1963 and abolished in 1986, it was intended to be a new type of authority focusing on strategic planning and metropolitan infrastructure. The GLC had area wide responsibilities<sup>2</sup> whilst the local authorities were responsible for providing local services including housing and local planning and in addition, some powers were shared between the GLC and local authorities<sup>3</sup>. The key characteristic of the GLC was meant to be its ability to distance itself from traditional local authority practice and to function as a truly regional body (Pimlott and Rao, 2002, pp.28-29). Although the GLC described itself as a 'regional authority', in terms of its constitution and its internal organisation, the GLC was "essentially a local authority writ large" (Pimlott and Rao, 2002, p. 29). The continuities with the London County Council (LCC), which it replaced were striking<sup>4</sup> and some authors, (e.g. Rhodes and Hastings, 1972) argue that the difficulties encountered by the GLC were rooted in these continuities and its conventional organisation, whilst Hall (1963) argued that it was suited to conditions that had existed 25 years earlier. Within ten years Conservative borough leaders were calling for its abolition, but the GLC survived until 1986 when it was finally abolished by the Conservative government<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> See Pimlott, B. and Rao, N. (2002) *Governing London*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, for an historical overview of the governance arrangements for London from the 1830s onwards.

<sup>2</sup> The area wide responsibilities covered planning policy, fire and ambulance services, main roads and traffic, refuse disposal (Pimlott and Rao, 2002, p.28).

<sup>3</sup> These shared powers included parks and open spaces, main sewerage and land drainage and aspects of housing and environmental health (Pimlott and Rao, 2002, p.28).

<sup>4</sup> For example the committee structure was hardly changed and 11 of the 14 chairmanships were taken by former LCC councillors (Rhodes and Hastings, 1972).

<sup>5</sup> See Pimlott and Rao (2002, pp. 31-43) for a detailed account of the events leading up to abolition.

### Governing London without an unitary authority

Following the abolition of the GLC in 1986, London was left without an overall strategic body, which made it one of the few major cities in the world without metropolitan government (Travers *et al*, 1991, pp.64-66). London governance was left in the hands of government ministers, the London boroughs, and an array of joint arrangements. The result was that decision making became very fragmented and power shifted to Whitehall (Newman and Thornley, 1997; Pimlott and Rao, 2002). At metropolitan level, abolition of the GLC created a power vacuum and over time the private sector moved into to fill this vacuum, promoting 'partnership' between business and government (Pimlott and Rao, 2002, p.45). Pimlott and Rao (2002, p.45) argue that although 'partnership' was promoted as a "panacea for London's ills", by the mid-1990s "the limits of partnership served only to highlight the gaps in the overall management of the metropolis".

What had emerged in the absence of a unitary authority was a particular form of governance based on intense interaction between large numbers of partners including statutory, voluntary and private organisations. Coalition building, interagency working and the forging of partnerships became the order of the day, but this system was not only very complex, there was also little democratic accountability or strategic co-ordination (Newman and Thornley, 1997; Hebbert, 1998; Tomaney, 2001; Pimlott and Rao, 2002). This 'network mode' of governance as it has been termed, was not unique to London, indeed it has become increasingly common throughout the UK (Kleinman *et al*, 2002). However, in London it had taken on particular form, partly as a result of the economic and political importance of the capital and also the history of relations between central government and London over the centuries (Hebbert, 1998).

In London, networking was also a practical response to the absence of an overall strategic body (Kleinman *et al*, 2002). Newman and Thornley (1997) identified two distinctive features of London governance during this period. Firstly, the key role played by central government in fostering and supporting these new governance networks and in particular in drawing in business. Secondly, the overlapping nature of the new governance networks, with many individuals and organisations being members of more than one network that created vertical and horizontal linkages.

### A new unitary authority for London

The possibility of the re-establishment of a London wide strategic authority was high on the agenda of the in-coming New Labour government in 1997<sup>6</sup>. In May 1998, following the publication of a White Paper<sup>7</sup> a referendum on the proposals was held. Although the turn out was low (34.6%), 72% of Londoners voted in favour of a Mayor and Assembly (Pimlott and Rao, 2002, p. 70).

In May 2000, following a turbulent campaign, elections were held for the Mayor and Assembly members and the GLA headed by Mayor Ken Livingstone came into operation in July 2000. Ken Livingstone had been the last leader of the GLC and stood as an independent following his failure to become Labour candidate<sup>8</sup>. He won convincingly, but on another low turn out of 33.65 per cent (Pimlott and Rao, 2002, p. 94). Throughout the campaign it had been apparent that Ken Livingstone had the

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<sup>6</sup> New Labour were elected in May 1997 and in July 1997 a consultative document setting out proposals for the creation of a Greater London Authority (GLA) with an elected Mayor were published (DETR, 1997).

<sup>7</sup> A Mayor and Assembly for London (DTER, 1998).

<sup>8</sup> See D'Arcy, M. and Maclean, R. (2000) Nightmare! The Race to Become London's Mayor, for a full account of the strategies employed by New Labour to prevent Ken Livingstone becoming Labour candidate, his expulsion from the Labour party following his decision to run as an independent and eventual victory.

support of Londoners of all political persuasions and that people were prepared to set aside their usual political allegiances to vote for him (Pimlott and Rao, 2002, p.91).

The GLA<sup>9</sup> covers the thirty two London boroughs and the Corporation of London and is a new kind of local authority designed to provide city wide strategic government for London. It is unlike any previous local or regional government in Britain (Travers, 2002). Firstly, the Mayor is elected for a single constituency of 'Greater London', an area with a population of 7.3 million and over 5 million electors. Furthermore, within British politics the Mayor is in a unique position combining representative and executive functions. The Mayor determines policies, sets the GLA budget and makes board appointments. The 25 member Assembly scrutinizes the activities of the Mayor. The GLA's main areas of responsibility are transport, policing, economic development and fire and emergency planning and four 'functional bodies'<sup>10</sup> funded by the GLA are responsible for these key areas. Other functions include culture, media and sport, the environment, public health and inward investment. The GLA does not have any responsibility for key local services: education, housing, social care or infrastructure. Mayoral duties include making appointments to the functional bodies (although he does not appoint all board members) and producing strategies for London on key issues including spatial development (known as the London Plan), transport, culture and economic development. These new arrangements came on stream shortly after the World Athletics Championships had been awarded to London for 2005 and the LVNAC project unfolded during this period of transition. There will be further discussion of London governance in Chapter Seven.

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<sup>9</sup> The key responsibilities for the Mayor and Assembly were set out in the GLA Act (1999) see Pimlott and Rao (2002) for a detailed discussion of the provisions of the Act and the passage of the Act through Parliament.

## BACKGROUND: THE UPPER LEE VALLEY AND ENFIELD

The site of the proposed national athletics stadium was situated in the heart of the Upper Lee Valley an area that runs from the M25 motorway in the north, to Leyton in the south, taking in a 13km corridor of mostly industrial and commercial uses, bordering on the Lee Valley Regional Park and its large reservoirs (LDA, 2003). The Upper Lee Valley cuts across three London boroughs - Enfield, Haringey and Waltham Forest and has been identified within national, regional and local policy frameworks as an area of deprivation. The area has received funds from several sources including the European Regional Development Fund (EDRF) (the Upper Lee Valley has Objective 2 status), the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and has been identified as one of five priority regeneration areas by the London Development Agency<sup>11</sup> and as a key regeneration corridor by the Mayor of London in the Spatial Development Strategy<sup>12</sup> (SDS) (known as the London Plan) (GLA, 2004). Enfield, Haringey and Waltham Forest are all eligible for Neighbourhood Renewal Funds based on Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2000 measures (SEU, 2001).

The Upper Lee Valley Objective 2 area covers 22 wards in the London Boroughs of Enfield, Haringey and Waltham Forest and a population of 152, 500 (GOL, 2000, p.102). The award of Objective 2 status means that an area is able to benefit from financial assistance provided under European Union Structural Funds<sup>13</sup>. Historically, the

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<sup>10</sup> These are Transport for London (TfL); the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA); the London Development Agency (LDA) and the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (LFEPA).

<sup>11</sup> The other areas are the *Lower Lee Valley* (including Stratford, Leaside through to the royal docks and Hackney Wick); *City Fringe* (parts of Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Islington and Camden); *Royal/Wembley* and *London Riverside* (including Barking and Dagenham and Havering Riverside) (LDA, undated).

<sup>12</sup> The Upper Lee Valley was first identified in the initial proposals published by the Mayor in 2001 (GLA, 2001).

<sup>13</sup> Two types of funding are available the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is used to finance improvements in infrastructure, productive investment, local development and the environment. The European Social Fund (ESF) is used to finance training activities and human resource development.



Upper Lee Valley was a major centre of manufacturing in London, producing a variety of products including textiles, electrical and mechanical products, food processing and household items. However, since the recession of the late 1980s the area has witnessed a decline in manufacturing industry and with it the most significant local employment sector. New employment has been limited and what has occurred has been mostly in the retail, leisure and other service activities. Other than manufacturing, the key employment sectors are distribution and hotel and catering, (accounts for about 28% of local employment) and public services (18%) whilst there are relatively low levels of employment in the business and financial services sectors (GOL, 2000, p. 102). The average unemployment rate (9.8%) was more than twice the London average (4.4%) and with some wards in Haringey experiencing much higher levels<sup>14</sup> (GOL, 2000, p103). There is a large ethnic minority population and one in three people from this group is officially unemployed (GOL, 2000, p. 109).

The area's ability to attract new business investment is hindered by several factors (see Figure 4.1 for a summary), including the poor public transport system that does not link up the areas of employment with the areas of high unemployment and a lack of the skills required by inward investors. However, the GOL in its Objective 2 Single Programming Document for London 2000-2006, points to positive developments within the area. Firstly, there has been according to GOL a "relatively benign economic period", with slight growth in employment (1% for the period 1991-1997 and 3% growth in the period 1996-1998) (p.102). Secondly, there is evidence that some of the manufacturing decline has been arrested and key companies (e.g. Merck Sharpe and Dome) have remained in the area rather than relocate as planned. Thirdly, developments

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<sup>14</sup> All the objective 2 wards in Haringey have unemployment rates over 10%, whilst in Coleraine it is 16.5% and Park it is 18.5% (source, Objective 2 Single Programming Document for London 2000-2006, GOL 2000, p. 103.)

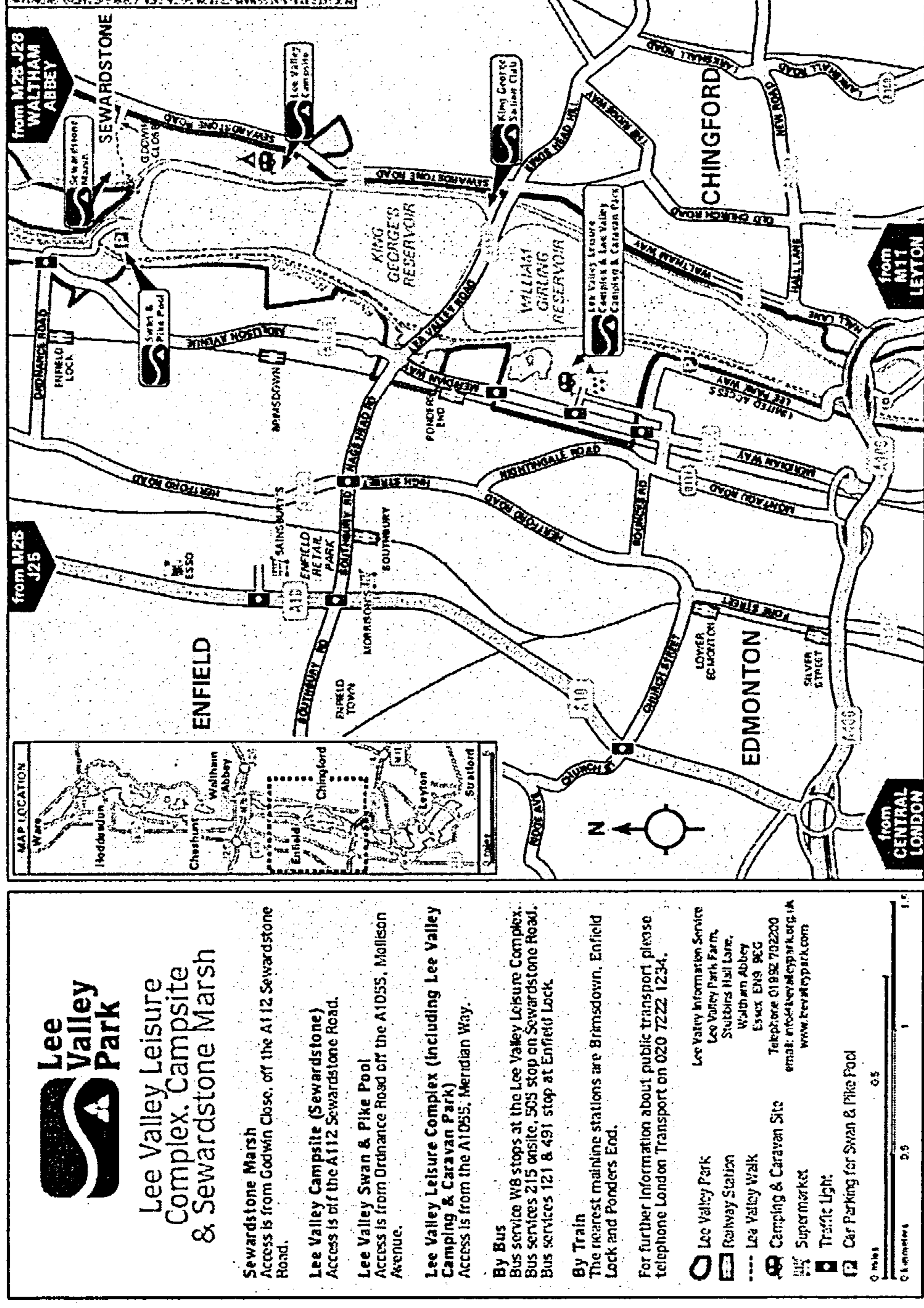
under the previous Objective 2 programme such as the Innova Science Park, Lee Valley Technopark and London Lee Valley Business innovation Centre provide foundations for further work.

**Figure 4.1: Summary of the Upper Lee Valley Objective 2 area**

AREA	UPPER LEE VALLEY
Borough coverage	Enfield, Haringey and Waltham Forest. 22 wards
Population	152,500: 50% of population from an ethnic minority
Employment	<p>Total employment of 56,8000</p> <p>Major sectors: manufacturing and textile and food processing</p> <p>Potential in food industry and hotel catering</p> <p>Average unemployment rate of 9.85 (more than twice the London average) rises to 18.5% in Haringey</p> <p>1 in 3 of the ethnic minority population is unemployed</p>
Transport and infrastructure	<p>Poor physical environment</p> <p>Lack of suitable sites and premises</p> <p>High concentration of derelict buildings</p> <p>Poor transport links</p>

Source: Objective 2 Single Programming Document for London 2000-2006 (GOL, 2000), p.109.

Figure 4.2: Map to show the location of the proposed Lee Valley National Athletics Centre on the site of the Lee Valley Leisure Complex



Source: Lee Valley Regional Park Authority downloaded from [www.leevalleypark.org.uk](http://www.leevalleypark.org.uk) (accessed 16<sup>th</sup> Feb 2006)

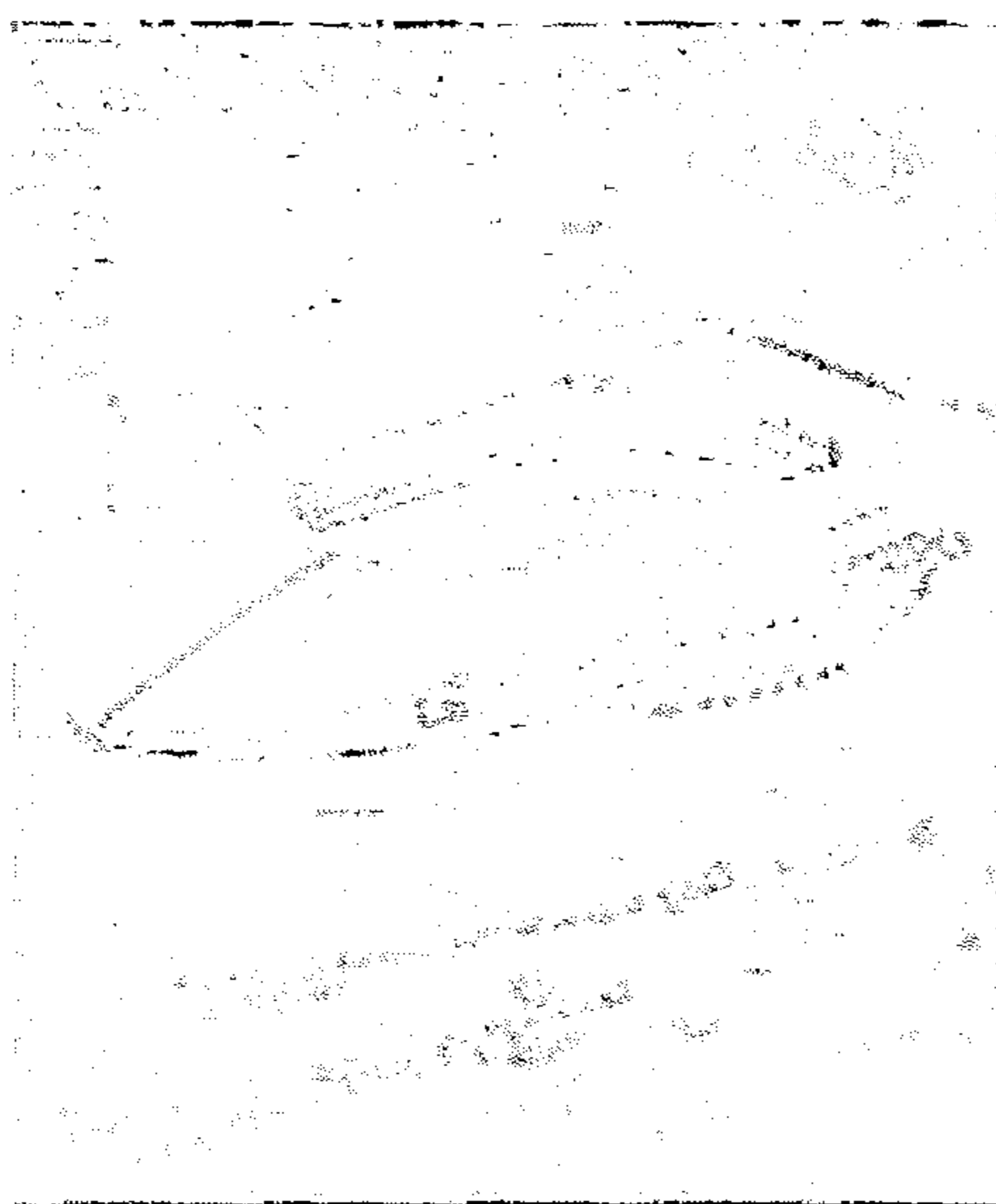
### Picketts Lock: the proposed site of the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre

The proposed site – Picketts Lock - is located in the London borough of Enfield which combines areas of deprivation, particularly in the East of the borough, with more affluent areas. The site is adjacent to some of Enfield's most disadvantaged communities. Both Ponders End and Edmonton are located within the Upper Lee Valley ERDF Objective Two area and are also included in the LDA's 68 Priority Community Regeneration Areas. Pickett's Lock forms part of the Lee Valley Regional Park and is owned by the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority (LVRPA) and is designated Green Belt (as is all of the Regional Park). The location of the proposed National Athletics Centre on the site of the existing Lee Valley Leisure Complex and Camping and Caravan Park is shown on the map (Figure 4.2) and Figure 4.3 reproduces a computer generated image of stadium *in situ*. Although the majority of the site has an open landscape there are also built facilities including a Multiplex cinema, multi-sport leisure centre (Lee Valley Leisure Complex), bars and restaurants and an 1100 space car park. The site is bordered by a main road (A1055 Meridan Way) to the west, industrial estates to the north, the River Lee Navigation Canal to the east and sewage works to the south. The area surrounding Pickets Lock is built up to the north, south and west and includes light and heavy industrial estates and the Edmonton Incinerator plant. The Lee Valley Railway line runs to the west and beyond the railway line is a residential area. However, to the east, beyond the canal are two reservoirs (William Girling and King George's) that form part of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (LBE and LVRPA, 2000).

The site is currently not well served by public transport and most visitors to the leisure centre and cinema arrived by car. The nearest station is about 1km north of the site at Ponders End, with trains running to London Liverpool Street to the south and Stansted Airport to the north. However the capacity of the line is somewhat limited. The nearest

interchange with the London Underground (Victoria Line) is at Tottenham Hale which is three stops to the south of Ponders End. The site is served by buses which provide links to Edmonton Green (2km) and Enfield Town (9km) both of which have stations and are served by a number of bus routes (LBE and LVRPA, 2000).

**Figure 4.3: Computer generated image of the proposed Lee Valley National Athletics Centre**



Source: BBC (2002a) 'Helsinki replaces London', 14<sup>th</sup> April 2002. BBC Sport. Available from:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/athletics/1929418.stm>. [Accessed via Google images 10 October 2005].

The Lee Valley Leisure Complex was constructed in the 1970s and was owned and managed by the LVRPA, but by 2000 had become very expensive to maintain and was approaching the end of its useable life. The LVRPA were seeking to redevelop the site but other leisure developments locally meant that it was not appropriate to replace like with like, and so LVRPA were seeking alternatives. As part of the process of finding a new use for the site LVRPA had approached Sport England about possible development

opportunities. Thus, when the search for a site for a High Performance Centre for Athletics and the National Athletics Stadium began, Sport England informed LVRPA.

### The troubled origins of the National Athletics Centre project: Wembley National Stadium

In 1994 plans were put forward to construct a tri-sport –football, rugby, athletics-national stadium similar to the Stade de France in Paris and it was hoped that the stadium would help attract major and mega sporting events to the UK. After a competitive bid process Wembley was chosen as the site of the English National Stadium in 1996. The existing football stadium was nearing the end of its life and for the Football Association (FA) it represented a way of off setting some of the considerable costs of redevelopment (Houlihan, 2003). However, the Wembley National Stadium<sup>15</sup> (WNS) project has been dogged<sup>16</sup> by problems which the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee concluded were a result of a mixture of: “self-inflicted injuries, ambiguous Government support and poor supervision by Sport England” (House of Commons, 2002, p.5). The main problems have been related to escalating costs, problems securing private finance and design issues, particularly in balancing the differing needs of football and athletics.

There was an array of parties who had an interest in the WNS development (see Figure 4.4). However, their agendas differed and there were a number of points of contention. The governing bodies of the sports (the FA, UK Athletics and Rugby Football League) that would be played at the stadium all had an interest, but the FA had both the biggest stake and the greatest influence, a situation which reflects the predominance of football

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<sup>15</sup> It is commonly referred to as Wembley National Stadium rather than the English National Stadium.

<sup>16</sup> The original completion date was November 2002 but in fact demolition work did not begin until October 2002 (Burton, 2002) and it was recently announced that the 2006 FA Cup final will not be held there as planned in May but at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff (BBC, 2006).

within sport in the UK<sup>17</sup>. Neither UK Athletics nor the Rugby Football League was in a financial position to contribute to the cost of the stadium. Furthermore, football was going to be providing the majority of events and UK Athletics made it clear that only the World Athletic Championships or the Olympic Games would fill the proposed 80-90,000 capacity stadium.

**Figure 4.4: WNS - key players at a glance**

- Football Association
- UK Athletics
- Rugby Football League
- DCMS
- UK Sport
- Sport England
- WNSL (subsidiary of FA)
- British Olympic Association
- London Borough of Brent
- Possible commercial lenders

Source: compiled from various House of Commons Culture Media and Sport Select Committee reports.

Although the National Stadium project had not set out to select an Olympic venue, the British Olympic Association (BOA) took an interest and became involved in questions of design and capacity. However, the BOA did not commit itself to focusing any future Olympic bid on Wembley and made no financial contribution to WNS. The House of Commons Select Committee was critical of the role played by BOA, arguing that the BOA exercised undue influence on a project that it was equivocal about (House of Commons, 2000, p.xi).

UK Sport and Sport England as the two NDPBs responsible for sporting matters were important in the process. UK Sport was responsible for attracting major events to the UK but did not have access to funds for capital projects whilst Sport England granted

<sup>17</sup> Ownership of WNS lies with English National Stadium Trust and another trust Wembley National Stadium Limited (WNSL) was created to raise the finance and take the project forward, it is a wholly owned subsidiary of the FA.

£120m in lottery funding which was the largest ever grant for a sporting project.

However, it does appear that Sport England having handed the money<sup>18</sup> over lost any power or direction it had over the FA.

Central government of course had a stake in a 'national' stadium but seemed to be unclear as what its role should be and this was reflected in a series of uncertain interventions which did little to clarify issues or forward the decision making process (Houlihan, 2003). The development of WNS was central to plans to regenerate the Wembley area and this meant that the local authority – Brent – had a strong interest in the project and was keen to build upon the opportunity<sup>19</sup>. Thus, from the outset there were a number of players involved with varying motivations, commitment, resources and influence. However, what was absent was a unitary body to forward London's interests or locate the development within broader plans for London.

The designers proposed that the stadium be configured for football/rugby and converted to athletics mode through the construction of a temporary platform or deck in the event of England securing a major athletics event (e.g. World Athletics Championships) that would require such a large capacity stadium. The platform solution was seen as a way of avoiding the sightline problems of the alternatives<sup>20</sup> and it also meant that football/rugby fans would be close to the action. Initially, the platform solution was welcomed but in December 1999 the then Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Chris Smith) announced that having considered a consultant's report on the design he had decided that it did not represent a 'solution' and athletics would no longer be held at WNS but that a separate athletics stadium would be established. This

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<sup>18</sup> Most of the money was spent on buying the site (see later for discussion).

<sup>19</sup> The local authority argued that the stadium represented "the best chance of reversing over two decades of economic decline in the Wembley area" (House of Commons 2000, Appendix 10, para. 1.2).

<sup>20</sup> The alternatives were to have a permanent running track surrounding the pitch or a track housed under retractable seating (as in the Stade de France).



announcement led to a proposal to build the LVNAC as an alternative venue to present with the bid for the 2005 World Athletics Championships. However, this was not to be the end of the problems for WNS<sup>21</sup> and the project has been subject to considerable scrutiny<sup>22</sup> and was to provide a troubled backdrop for the LVNAC project.

### Selecting the site for the National Athletics Centre

The decision to remove athletics from the WNS set in train a series of events. Given that the Government and UK Athletics were committed to hosting the 2005 WAC in London, a working party<sup>23</sup> was formed to find a new venue as soon as possible. Time was of the essence as UK Athletics, having already been granted an extension, had to submit an outline bid to the IAAF by the end of January 2000 and a full bid by early April 2000. The site selection process was facilitated by Sport England, DCMS and UK Athletics but because of its role as lottery funder, Sport England was not involved in the final decision. However, Sport England did provide a written evaluation of each site considered<sup>24</sup>. Discussions were held with landowners and local authorities and by mid-March Hackney Wick, Picketts Lock and Hillingdon House Farm were the “front runners” and Crystal Palace and Twickenham the “reserve options” (House of Commons 2001b, p.126). The ‘front runners’ all involved building new stadiums and whilst both Crystal Palace and Twickenham already had existing stadiums and the cost

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<sup>21</sup> WNSL was unable to secure the necessary private finance to fund the development and in Spring 2001 turned to central government for financial assistance. The government ordered a review conducted by Patrick Carter. He recommended that four ‘tests’ should be met before the project proceed. Three of the tests – value for money of the procurement contract, exposure of relevant papers to the National Audit office for scrutiny, improved corporate governance were quickly resolved, but the fourth – securing private finance- was a sticking point and it was not until autumn 2002 that a deal was struck with a German bank.

<sup>22</sup> The House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee has considered WNS five times (House of Commons, 1999; House of Commons, 2000; House of Commons, 2001a; House of Commons, 2001b; House of Commons, 2001b), the National Stadium Review led by Carter (Carter, 2002b) and also several ‘sub’ studies (see House of Commons, 2002a for details).

<sup>23</sup> The working party comprised of the DCMS, UKA, Sport England, UK Sport, Government Office for London and the British Olympic Association.

<sup>24</sup> These were Hackney Wick, Picketts Lock, Crystal Palace, Southall, the Linford Christie Stadium, RAF Northolt, Cricklewood, Hillingdon House Farm and Twickenham.

of refurbishment would be lower than a new build, both sites presented problems around accessibility, transport and planning (House of Commons, 2001b, pp.129-130). Picketts Lock was chosen by UK Athletics as the 'best' but by no means 'perfect' site. Indeed as with all the sites a number of issues were flagged up from the outset. Sport England in a pre-selection paper identified the 'risks' at Picketts Lock to be Green Belt planning issues, transport infrastructure, athletes accommodation and the potential costs of decontamination of the site (House of Commons, 2001b, p. 129). At all the sites questions were raised about accessibility and transport, but perhaps this is not surprising given the inadequacies of London's transport infrastructure as well as the availability and cost of suitable land. The outline costs were estimated at between £90-120m.

So what did Picketts Lock have in its favour? The site was large enough to accommodate the development and available for free from the owners – the LVRPA. It should be noted that site acquisition cost the WNS project dearly in both time and money. Negotiations to acquire the land were protracted, delaying the start of the project and the site cost £106m, thus swallowing up most of the £120m lottery award. Furthermore, the LVRPA were also prepared to make capital and revenue contributions and to manage the project and it was at this point that they emerged as a key player. As the area was one that had been defined within European, national and local frameworks as one with significant deprivation this opened up possible funding streams. In addition, the London borough of Enfield (LBE) was supportive primarily as they wanted to harness the regeneration potential of the development. This support contrasted to the situation at Crystal Palace, where relations with Bromley council had been strained for sometime. At Hillingdon House Farm, Hillingdon council could at best be described as "passive"<sup>25</sup> and one respondent argued that local councillors had

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<sup>25</sup> By Sport England in a pre-selection paper (House of Commons, 2001b, evidence, p. 129).

effectively “scuppered” the project with their narrow view of the council’s roles and responsibilities. Another factor that may have attracted UK Athletics is that North London is a strong athletics area, home to successful clubs including Enfield and Haringey Athletics Club and Barnet Shaftesbury, and as such was an appropriate place for a national athletics centre.

## THE LEE VALLEY NATIONAL ATHLETICS CENTRE AND THE WORLD ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS

### Bidding for the World Athletics Championships

For some time, a number of organisations and individuals, including UK Sport, the governing body of athletics<sup>26</sup>, and Len Hatton (Chair of WAC bid) had been working to try to bring the World Athletics Championships (WAC) to Britain but had lacked a suitable venue. It was well known that the IAAF was keen to see London stage the WAC in line with their desire for capital cities to play host. It should be noted that the Championships are awarded to a *city* not to a country. Since 1997 the plan to bid and stage the WAC have been closely linked with the development of WNS and the original intention was to bid for the 2003 WAC but this was predicated on the WNS being completed and with the athletics platform in place. Although the bid was prepared, as the deadline neared, it became apparent that Wembley would not be ready so the decision was made to bid for 2005. The decision to remove athletics from the WNS development meant an alternative venue was required for the bid. An outline bid was submitted to the IAAF in January 2000 by UK Athletics based on an unnamed and unchosen London venue (House of Commons, 2001b, p. xi). The bid was primarily funded by UK Sport.

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<sup>26</sup> Initially the British Athletics Federation (BAF) which went into liquidation in 1998 and was then succeeded by UK Athletics in 1999.

In April 2000 a delegation<sup>27</sup> led by the Secretary of State Chris Smith travelled to Paris and submitted two bids to the IAAF – for the 2003 World Indoor Athletics Championships based in Birmingham and the 2005 World Athletics Championships based at the new Lee Valley National Athletics Centre, London. Many respondents drew attention to the presence of a letter from the Prime Minister, Tony Blair pledging his personal commitment and that of the government to deliver the 2005 WAC and also Chris Smith's robust announcements: "the government will do all it can to help UK Athletics to stage the most successful World Championships ever"<sup>28</sup>. Such public statements of support by senior government figures gave those involved in the project confidence. London was awarded the 2005 Championships, to be staged at the proposed Lee Valley National Athletics Centre and Birmingham the 2003 World Indoor Athletics Championships to be held at the existing Indoor Arena. It was the first time that the UK had secured the rights to host the World Athletics Championships.

#### Taking the National Athletics Centre project forward Part I: the players

Having being awarded the Championships it was time to take the project forward to deliver the stadium for the WAC in August 2005 and this involved a large number of players from a variety of organisations working together (see Figure 4.4; Figure 4.5; 'Who's Who' in Appendix Four). It is important to note that at the 'core' of the project were UK Athletics, LVRPA and LB Enfield, who had no history of collaboration and had 'come together' for the purposes of this project.

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<sup>27</sup> Other members of the delegation included DCMS civil servants, UK Athletics, UK Sport, London 2005; LVRPA; officers and councillors from the London Borough of Enfield (House of Commons, 2001a).

<sup>28</sup> Quoted by LVRPA in written evidence to the Culture, Media and Sport Committee (House of Commons, 2001b, p.87).

**Figure 4.5: The Lee Valley National Athletics project – key players according to the primary scale of operation within a multi-level governance system**

International	National	Regional	Sub-regional	Local
IAAF	Cabinet	Mayor/GLA	LVRPA	Enfield council
	DCMS	LDA	Middlesex Uni.	Stakeholders Grp.
	Sport England	LIS	NELSN	Local community
	UK Sport	TfL		
	UK Athletics			
London 2005	the organising	Committee for the	WAC worked	across the system.

Source: Compiled by author.

**Legend:**

DCMS- Department of Culture, Media and Sport Authority

GLA: Greater London Authority Network

IAAF – International Association of Athletics Federations

LDA- London Development Agency

LIS- London International Sport

LVRPA: Lee Valley Regional Park

NELSN- North and East London Sports

TfL: Transport for London

WAC- World Athletics Championships

*The 'core' team*

The LVRPA is an independent statutory authority established under the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966. The LVRPA came into being in January 1967, although the idea of reviving the neglected and largely derelict valley, which runs through Hertfordshire, Essex, North and East London to create a 'green wedge' to act as a 'playground' for Londoners pre-dates the Second World War (LVRPA, No date). The 1960s saw a re-interest in the idea, particularly amongst local authorities led by the then Mayor of Hackney. The LVRPA's remit under the Act is broad, encompassing all aspects of leisure, sport and recreation, including nature conservation, provision of informal recreational activities and more formal sport facilities. Its prime purpose is to serve the regional population rather than the local population. The LVRPA is funded from the council tax base of Hertfordshire, Essex and Greater London through an annual

levy and also receives income from its facilities and services.<sup>29</sup> The board of LVRPA comprises of councillors from Hertfordshire and Essex as well as twelve London Boroughs including Enfield, Haringey and Waltham Forest<sup>30</sup> who have either been elected or appointed by their home authority to serve the Park Authority. The business of the LVRPA is conducted through a series of committees, steering groups and panels, whilst the professional management of the LVRPA's business activities is carried out by a small team of senior staff led by the Chief Executive. Up to the time of the LVNAC project the LVRPA had generally been associated with small and medium scale projects within its recreational and sport remit and had not been involved with broader regeneration activities.

The LB of Enfield is situated in the very north of London. It has a population according to the 2001 Census of 273, 559 (ONS, 2003) and at the time of LVNAC project it was Labour controlled. The then leader of the Council, Doug Taylor took an active role in the project, as did the lead member for regeneration (Del Goddard) and his opposite number in the Conservatives (John Jackson), who was also the Enfield member of the LVRPA board. Councillors Goddard and Jackson were both very experienced councillors and John Jackson had served on the LVRPA board for many years. A number of council officers were involved in the project from a variety of departments – leisure, regeneration, planning and transportation. For Enfield council, their primary motivation in supporting the LVNAC project was its regenerative potential.

UK Athletics is the national governing body of athletics, and it is UK Athletics that makes the submission to the IAAF for major events with the support of other bodies,

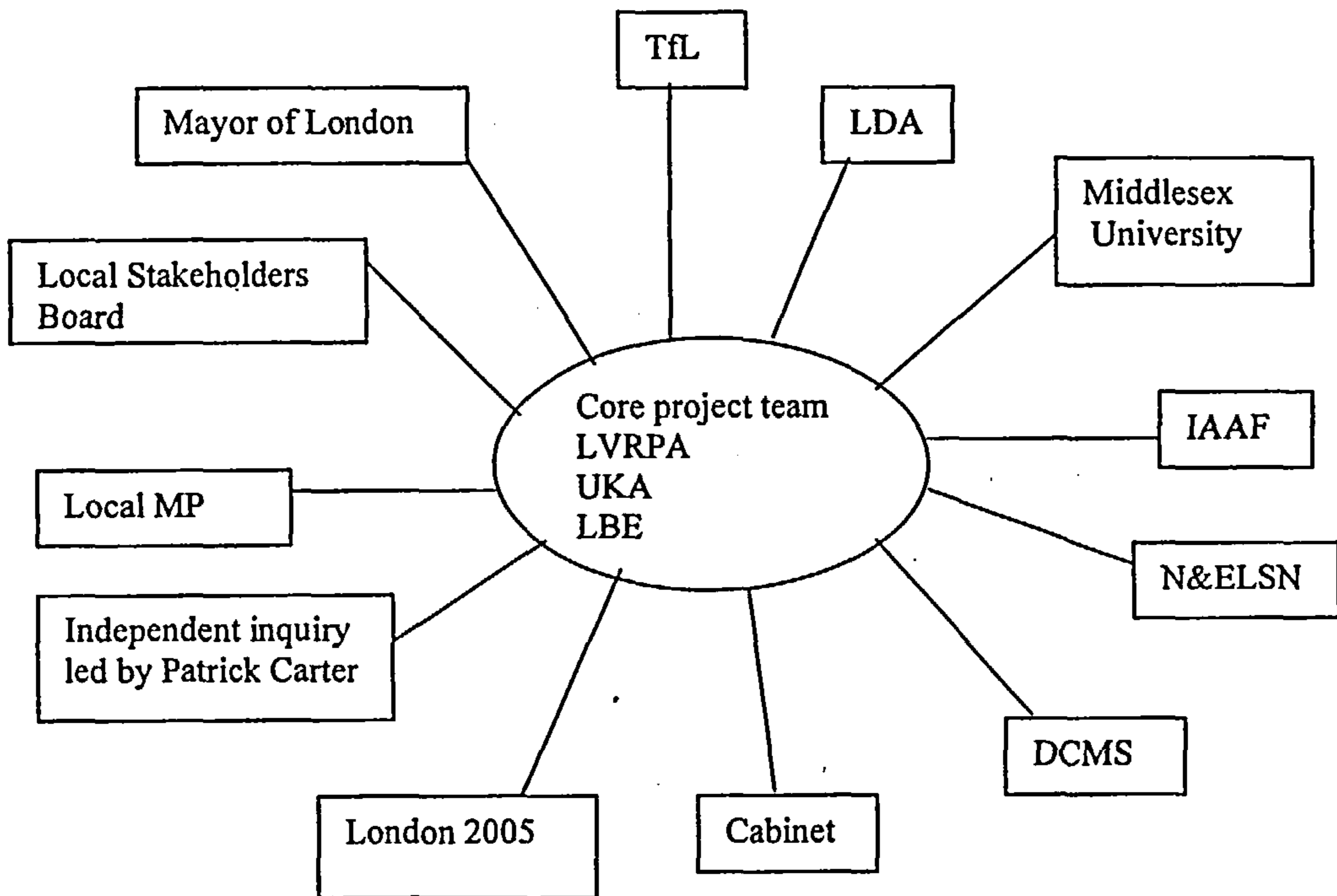
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<sup>29</sup> The annual levy was £10.1m for 2003/2004 and £4.6m was received from its facilities and services in 2002/2003 (LVRPA, No date).

<sup>30</sup> The others are Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Newham, Barking and Dagenham, Camden, Redbridge, Harrow, Westminster and the City of London. In total there are 28 members of the LVRPA board.

e.g. UK Sport. UK Athletics has limited resources and is heavily dependent upon public funding through UK Sport and Sport England.

**Fig. 4.6: Lee Valley National Athletics Centre project: map of key players**



**Legend:**

DCMS: Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
 LDA: London Development Agency  
 NELSN: North and East London Sport Network  
 IAAF: International Association of Athletics Federations  
 London 2005: Bid/organising committee for WAC2005  
 TfL: Transport for London  
 LBE: London Borough of Enfield  
 LVRPA: Lee Valley Regional Park Authority  
 UKA: UK Athletics

Source: Compiled by author.

*Beyond the 'core' team: other players involved with the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre project.*

Beyond the 'core' were a number of other organisations and individuals that had a part to play. Some such as Sport England played a central role, whilst others had a more peripheral role such as the LDA and the North and East London Sports Network (NELSN). Also, for some players the level of involvement varied according to the stage of the project, for example UK Sport played a central role in securing the WAC 2005 but took more of a backstage role in relation to the specifics of the LVNAC. What is not clear is to what extent the different roles taken by players were the product of the natural evolution of a project or the result of outmanoeuvring by other players or a reflection of context and circumstances. For example, the low key role of the LDA may have reflected the fact that it was a new organisation. Other peripheral players were important because of the networks they linked the LVNAC project into, for example London International Sport (LIS). London International Sport was formed in 1994 in response to London's failure to become the nominated city for British bids for the 2000 Olympics and 2002 Commonwealth Games (in both cases it was Manchester). One of the key reasons for this failure was thought to be the absence of a strategic authority for London, so as a 'second best' approach a small organisation made up of pan-London bodies<sup>31</sup> with an interest in sport was formed. Its main objectives were to attract major international events to London and to ensure that events were used to benefit the development of sport. Through its work LIS has accumulated, knowledge, understanding and connections, for example, the Chair of LIS became the Chair of London 2005 bid committee. Other players had very specific roles, for example, Middlesex University in providing athletes accommodation through the development of a new campus at Tottenham Hale.

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<sup>31</sup> Members of London International Sport included the Association of London Government, London Chamber of Commerce, London First, sports bodies and the London Tourist Board.



Although the GLA and Mayor were just around the corner, they did not exist when several key decisions were made, including choosing the site for the National Athletics Centre and the awarding of the 2005 WAC to London. The election of Ken Livingstone and the London Assembly in May 2000 changed the face of London governance and had profound implications for the LVNAC project. In planning terms a development of that scale had to be referred to the Mayor for consideration and he could direct refusal if he felt it was in conflict with his adopted policies and proposals. The entire site is designated Green Belt and there are strict controls on developments in the Green Belt at a national, strategic and local level. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Although the site had already been developed (i.e. leisure centre), the footprint of the proposed LVNAC was much bigger than the leisure centre it would replace and so any departure from planning guidance had to be justified and a strong case presented. Some respondents suggested that the site was only 'technically' Green Belt, given that it was located between an incinerator and a sewage works and only Green Belt because all of the Lee Valley Regional Park is. There was also the issue of how the proposal fitted, or not as the case may be, into the Mayor's overall strategic spatial development plans for London.

Another key issue for the project was transport, which is one of the Mayor's main areas of responsibility through the functional body Transport for London (TfL). What is unclear is exactly where the Mayor stood on the question of whether the proposed new station and the planned upgrades to the Lee Valley Railway line<sup>32</sup> were 'desirable' or 'essential' and whether the Mayor would have only supported the planning application if the plans for a new station were progressed in parallel. There was certainly a desire on the part of both the LB Enfield and TfL to have the majority (ideally 80 per cent) of

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<sup>32</sup> The West Anglian Route Modernisation Enhancement (WARME) programme was already in place but scheduled for many years into the future (see later for discussion).

people travelling to the site by public transport. As with the LDA there is the question of how much TfL being in its infancy influenced the process and whether it would have been different with a more mature organisation.

#### Taking the National Athletics Centre project forward Part II: meetings and forums

As for any major project, a number of forums and meetings were held, which ranged from small 'head to head' meetings of key personnel through large ministerial led forums to public consultation meetings (see Figure 4.7). Weekly progress meetings were held at the LVRPA. They were attended by representatives of UK Athletics, Sport England, LB Enfield and occasionally the DCMS. There were also fortnightly "technical" meetings, where issues such as design were considered. These involved in addition to the above organisations, external consultants engaged on the project. There were also 'break out meetings' that dealt with specific issues and were sometimes required to deal with difficulties or differences of opinion between players. A minister-led forum was established, the Lee Valley Stadium Forum. Its members included national, regional and local bodies and its terms of reference were "information exchange between interested parties and identification of difficulties" (House of Commons, 2001b, p.88). According to respondents, these meetings were large, often with 30-40 people present. The high attendance was thought to reflect the presence of a Minister and a desire to be seen and heard by the Minister. The Forum was generally referred to as a 'talking shop', where civil servants 'talked at' the people attending the meeting and very little progress was made. The first meeting was held in June 2000 but it is not clear how many were held (estimates ranging from 4-6<sup>33</sup>).

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<sup>33</sup> For example, Sport England in its evidence to the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee stated: "Approximately four meetings took place" (House of Commons, 2001b, p.52).

**Figure 4.7: The Lee Valley National Athletics Centre project: meetings and forums**

TYPE	PROGRESS	TECHNICAL	FORUM	STAKEHOLDERS	CONSULTATION	'BREAK OUT'
Purpose	Update and action	Design/construction	Information exchange	Regeneration	Public consultation	Problem solving
Frequency	Weekly	Fortnightly	4-6 times in 18 mths	Monthly (from March 2001)	Exhibitions and meetings March-April 2001	Ad-hoc
Membership	LVRPA UKA LBE Sport England DCMS	LVRPA UKA LBE Sport England DCMS External Consultants	LVRPA UKA LBE Sport England DCMS GLA GOL TfL UK Sport London 2005 BOA	LVRPA UKA LB Enfield Sport England DCMS GLA GOL TfL UK Sport London 2005 Middlesex Uni. London First Andy Love, local MP London Tourist Board London BIC Thames Water BAA LB Haringey LDA	Attended by local people. Staffed by LVRPA staff and external consultants	Various

Source: Compiled by author from various documentary sources and oral and written information supplied by respondents.

A local National Athletics Centre Stakeholder Board was set up by the regeneration team at LBE. It was chaired by Peter Lyne, a local business man who also chaired the North London Learning and Skills Council. The purpose of the Stakeholder Board was to try to ensure that the regeneration potential of the LVNAC was realised. Its membership was broader than the Lee Valley Forum and in addition to the 'usual suspects' included representatives from business, amongst them, London First, the London Tourist Board and British Airport Authorities (BAA) from Stansted Airport. The BAA were keen to secure, as were others, the early implementation of the planned upgrade of the Lee Valley Railway line which would allow both airport passengers and employees easier access. Stansted experiences difficulty in filling vacancies as locally unemployment is low and although there is a pool of potential labour in the Upper Lee Valley, the existing rail service means that it is difficult for people to take up those jobs. The rail improvements would not only improve access up to Stansted but also down to the City of London, another major employment centre. The GOL identifies the poor transport linkages between areas of employment and areas of unemployment as a barrier to new business investment (GOL, 2000). Although the West Anglian Route Modernisation Enhancement (WARME) programme was already planned by 2000, it was for some years hence, and what Enfield council and others (e.g. business) wanted was to use the Championships as a way of fast tracking the WARME programme. Indeed the regenerative potential of the LVNAC stadium was the primary rationale for LB Enfield's involvement in the project and they wanted to use it to drive through a range of developments, the most significant being the transport upgrade. However, not everyone shared LB Enfield's belief in the regenerative potential of the project, in particular LVRPA and it was to prove a contentious issue, which at times led to impasse – it is theme that will be discussed in the next chapter (Five).

Public consultation was carried out in March and April 2000. This consisted of a series of staffed exhibitions at a variety of venues within the borough and meetings with local residents and users of the existing leisure facilities. In addition, information was made available through a variety of means such as newsletters, websites and local libraries.

The exhibitions included models, pictures and plans for the proposed stadium, information on the likely environmental impact of the stadium, transport issues and community benefits. Members of LVRPA, UK Athletics staff and consultants were on hand to answer questions and visitors were asked to complete a questionnaire about the proposals e.g. their thoughts on the proposed new station.

In addition to these formal meetings, the LVNAC project was the subject of much informal ongoing discussion between players. These discussions were conducted in person, over the phone and by e-mail. Also as well as project specific networks, the LVNAC project tapped into other established networks such as the North and East London Sport Network (NELSN) and the sub-regional transport group for advice, comment and support. These networks undertook work on behalf of the project, for example, the NELSN lobbied the GLA and LDA on behalf of the project.

As is evident from Figure 4.7, there was a considerable degree of overlap with the same organisations meeting around the different tables, or perhaps the same table but on a different day. Although it did not seem to be to be difficult to get representatives around the table, respondents reported that it was much harder to collect together those in a position to make decisions.

### Feasibility reports and questions of funding

A series of studies were commissioned. In the first instance an initial feasibility study was conducted funded by Sport England and LVRPA. The study began in June 2000 and reported in October 2000 and assessed a number of issues including viability, design and transport (see Figure 4.9 on next page). Sport England and LVRPA assessed the findings and felt that it had been demonstrated that the project was feasible, although there were a number of challenges including a gap in capital funding and the long-term viability of the stadium. The LVRPA then applied to Sport England for funding to support in depth studies into the technical and financial viability of the project. Sport England entered into a funding agreement with the LVRPA and set it eleven development tasks which related to issues such as planning, costs report, and signing up an event profile with UK Athletics. None of the core team was in a position to underwrite the stadium development and thus in May 2001, UK Athletics, LVRPA and LB Enfield made a joint application, as the newly created National Athletic Centre Joint Venture Consortium (NACJVC), to Sport England for funding to build the National Athletics Centre. The NACJVC applied for £65.43m (£67m budget allocation minus the feasibility costs) and set out in detail what they hoped to achieve and what facilities would be available at the LVNAC (see Figures 4.8 and 4.10).

**Figure 4.8: The objectives of the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre as set out by NACJVC**

- To provide a venue for the 2005 World Athletics Championships;
- To provide a permanent National Athletics Centre for Athletics, both in terms of defined competition and world class needs;
- To provide a High Performance Centre for the training of elite athletes;
- To provide the basis for the local athletics club and community development programmes;
- To contribute towards the local health and fitness strategies, the alleviation of social exclusion, and regeneration of the area.

Source: Evidence given by Sport England to the CMS Select Committee about the application for Lottery Funds received from NACJVC in May 2001 (House of Commons, 2001b, p.53).

### Figure 4.9: Feasibility, viability and funding: a chronology

#### *June 2000-October 2000 : Stage 1 Feasibility study*

Funded: Sport England £240,000; LVRPA £165,000

Considered: Viability; design; cost; planning; business plan; transport and environmental issues

Outputs: Project brief, business plan and technical reports e.g. transport, landscape and ecology

Verdict: Project feasible but identified a number of challenges e.g. capital funding gap, long term viability.

#### *November 2000- May 2001: Stage 2 Viability study*

Funded: Sport England £1.33 million; LVRPA £340,000

As part of the Lottery Funding Agreement Sport England set LVRPA 11 development tasks to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2001

Considered: Detailed work on design; cost; business plan; event profile; planning application and associated transport, environmental and socio-economic impact studies

#### *May 2001: Lottery Funding Application*

Application by National Athletics Centre Joint Venture Consortium (NACJVC) - LVRPA, UK Athletics and LB Enfield, to Sport England for £65.43 million (the allocated £67m minus feasibility costs).

#### *June 2001: Meetings of Sport England's Council (4<sup>th</sup>) and Lottery Panel (18<sup>th</sup>)*

Decision not to approve NACJVC application at joint meeting in July 2001 because of concerns:

- Capital costs (funding gap and underwriting)
- Planning (transport, green belt, section 106, planning risk);
- Legal eligibility (project vehicle);
- Long term legacy (revenue income; and
- Sporting legacy (impact on regional athletics facilities)
- Lack of a signatory for the EOA

LVRPA, UK Athletics and LB Enfield that the decision about the lottery application has been deferred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> July joint meeting.

Trevor Brooking, then Chair of Sport England meet with the new Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport Tessa Jowell to explain why the application had not been approved and decision made to launch a review led by Patrick Carter.

#### *July 2001: Carter Review commences*

2<sup>nd</sup> July: Joint meeting of Sport England's Council and the Lottery Panel approved approach.

2<sup>nd</sup> July: Tessa Jowell announced that Patrick Carter will conduct a review

Sport England defer lottery application decision until conclusion of Carter review

All work on the project ceases as there is no funding in place.

#### *August 2001: Carter Review completed*

31<sup>st</sup> August: Carter review delivered to Sport England and DCMS but not to LVRPA, UK Athletics or LB Enfield despite requests to do so.

#### *October 2001: Carter Review conclusions announced*

4<sup>th</sup> October: At a meeting at DCMS Tessa Jowell informs LVRPA and London Borough of Enfield (and UKA in a separate meeting) that project will not proceed. The reasons given were transport, accommodation and total cost of 2005 WAC event as reported by Patrick Carter.

Source: Compiled by author from evidence given by LVRPA and Sport England to CMS Select Committee (House of Commons, 2001b)

Sport England assessed the application on the basis of the eleven development tasks that had been set in November 2000 and as well as the standard criteria applied to all lottery applications<sup>34</sup>. Sport England's members identified a number of areas of concern including capital funding, legal eligibility and long term legacy (see Figure 4.9). The concerns about capital funding centred on the gap between the allocated funding<sup>35</sup> and the estimated cost of the stadium – the gap stood at approximately £10-15m- and how that gap was going to be plugged. A major concern of Sport England was the legal eligibility of the applicant – any applicant for lottery funding has to be able to repay lottery funds if the project is not completed. None of the partners of the NACJVC felt able to underwrite the costs of the NAC project on their own and stressed that it was a *national project*.

**Figure 4.10: The proposed facilities at the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre**

- In 2005 Championship mode 43,000 seats would be provided, with 13,00 being temporary and uncovered
  - Post 2005, in legacy mode 20, 000 seats would be provided (13,000 temporary seats would be removed and a further 10, 000 screened off)
  - A legacy High Performance Centre incorporating:
    - 6 lane indoor 200m track;
    - 6 lane 60m sprint track located within the 2000m track;
    - indoor throws area;
    - outdoor throws area;
    - and outdoor 400m training/warm up track; and
    - provision for sports science and medicine facilities
- At a cost of circa £100m

Source: Evidence given by Sport England to the CMS Select Committee about the application for Lottery Funds received from NACJVC in May 2001 (House of Commons, 2001b, p.53).

Although LVRPA, UK Athletics and LB Enfield stated their intent to create a project delivery vehicle (the NACJVC was the first step in the process) which would share the risks, Sport England did not appear to be convinced, stating in their evidence to the

<sup>34</sup> The standard criteria for Lottery funding applications are viability (financial and otherwise), technical feasibility, value for money, eligibility/project delivery, express demand and legacy for sport (evidence to House of Commons, 2001b, p.53).

<sup>35</sup> A potential £67m from Sport England, £5m from LVRPA, £8m from Capital Modernisation Fund, £4m LDA, £2m Objective 2 status – grand total of £86m, NACJVC had estimated that a further £3m would be available for stadium naming rights.



Select Committee that they: “still needed to seek legal clarity should a default occur in respect of a future lottery agreement that the project consortium will be collectively and individually responsible for the repayment of grant” (House of Commons, 2001b, p. 55). Sport England raised two issues about the legacy. Firstly, in relation to revenue income they questioned both the sums and the arrangements, arguing that the projections were overly optimistic and that arrangements were not secure enough (both charges were refuted by members of NACJVC). Secondly, there were concerns that either the LVNAC would displace events from established regional stadiums or that if events continued to be held across the regions that there would be insufficient events to justify the existence of the LVNAC.

The LVRPA reported that they had been told that the funding decision had been deferred to the joint meeting of the Lottery Panel and the Sport England Council in July (House of Commons, 2001b, p. 91). However, it appears from the evidence presented by Sport England to the Select Committee (2001b, p.57) that in essence the decision not to approve the application was made at the June meeting of the Lottery Panel and that this approach was reaffirmed at the joint meeting in July following a meeting between the then Chair of Sport England, Trevor Brooking, and the newly appointed Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Tessa Jowell. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2001, the same day as the joint Council- Lottery Panel meeting, Tessa Jowell announced an inquiry into the LVNAC to be led by Patrick Carter who was already conducting an investigation of WNS.

By 2000 Sport England were firmly embedded in the process of developing WNS and had already spent £120m of lottery funds. Subsequent Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee reports (House of Commons, 2001a; House of Commons, 2002a) have been critical of Sport England, arguing that it had failed to meet the standards expected of a

public body and that its performance had been “deficient to the point of dereliction” (House of Commons, 2002a, p.8). In relation to the lottery grant to Wembley National Stadium Ltd (WNSL), the Select Committee concluded that the money had been handed over prematurely before the viability of the project had been demonstrated and this amounted to a “cavalier and egregious use of public funds” (House of Commons, 2001b, p. vii). Furthermore, that Sport England were “slack, slovenly and supine” (House of Commons, 2002a, p.8) in monitoring the progress of the project. For example, although WNSL breached the Lottery Funding Agreement, Sport England did not enforce any sanctions. Given this background and the belief within Sport England that there was no justification for a stand alone athletics venue of this size (House of Commons, 2001b, p.59) it is perhaps not surprising that Sport England appeared to be a reluctant partner in the process.

#### Design and the planning application

The Secretary of State (Chris Smith) launched the stadium design in March 2001 and reiterated government support, stating: “The stadium is the best thing to happen to athletics in the UK for a generation. All of us, from all political parties and from all parts of the world of athletics must now step up our efforts to ensure that this new stadium becomes a reality”.<sup>36</sup> The design was well received (see Figure 4.3 above for image) and following a series of assessments on issues including environmental impact and transport, the planning application was submitted to London Borough of Enfield in May 2001. Although LB Enfield had an interest in the regenerative potential of the project, it also had to discharge its responsibilities as the Planning Authority and steps were taken to ensure that these roles were kept separate. The timetable for the development was tight and there were concerns that the Mayor would ‘call in’ the

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<sup>36</sup> Quoted by LVRPA in their evidence to the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee (2001b, p.90).

development and thus slow the process down. In order to lessen this possibility, the planners worked in conjunction with the GLA. In September 2001 the LVNAC development received outline planning consent from the LB Enfield.

#### Changes in governance at London and national level

The summer of 2001 saw significant changes to the face of London governance as outlined earlier in the Chapter. It was not clear what the arrival of the Mayor and the GLA would mean for the LVNAC project. There were concerns that the Mayor would create difficulties in relation to planning but also hopes that the Mayor would underwrite the WAC. The Mayor appeared to be equivocal, neither coming out strongly in favour or against the project, which was in strong contrast to his vocal support of Wembley Stadium. Nicky Gavron (the then Deputy Mayor and local Assembly Member) appeared to play a more active role in supporting the LVNAC.

In June 2000 a general election was held and New Labour, under the leadership of Tony Blair was returned for a second term. The New Labour manifesto included a commitment to develop a first class athletics stadium to stage the 2005 WAC (House of Commons, 2001b). In the ensuing cabinet reshuffle, both Chris Smith (Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport) and Kate Hoey (Minister for Sport and Tourism) were replaced, with the PM arguing that he needed to bring in 'new blood' and this meant that "the likes of Chris Smith and Ann Taylor, both of whom had a very distinguished record in Government...had left the Government" (PMOS, 2001, a). Chris Smith had made the decision to remove athletics from WNS and was a strong advocate of the LVNAC. Tessa Jowell became the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. When journalists raised questions about her qualifications for the DCMS post, the PMOS replied that she had "impressed" the PM in her roles at Department for

Education and Employment and Department of Health, and that at the DCMS “there were some difficult and challenging issues that were sitting in her in-tray” (PMOS, 2001, a). Richard Caborn arrived from the Department of Trade and Industry to be Minister for Sport and Tourism. The Sports Minister post was upgraded to Minister of State level, which was said to be a reflection of the role that the PM thought sport can play in tackling social issues such as drug misuse, crime and social exclusion (PMOS, 2001b).

### The Carter Review

Shortly after her appointment, Tessa Jowell took action on one of the ‘challenges’ in her in-tray by announcing that a review would be conducted of the LVNAC project by Patrick Carter<sup>37</sup>. Carter, who had previously investigated Manchester Commonwealth Games, had already been tasked with a review of WNS and the two reviews were done concurrently. The terms of reference were as follows:

- “In the light of the Government’s manifesto commitment to ensure that a first class athletics stadium is available for the World Athletics Championships in 2005, determine whether the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre can be funded and managed in its current format.
- Determine what alternatives might be feasible” (Carter, 2001, p.2).

The Review team consulted many, but by no means all, of the players involved in the LVNAC and bringing the WAC to London. Part of the process involved attending the 2001 WAC held in Edmonton, Canada<sup>38</sup>. The Review team delivered its report to DCMS and Sport England on 31st August 2001. Other key players, such as LVRPA, UK

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<sup>37</sup> He has since been made Lord Carter of Coles.

<sup>38</sup> Members of staff from LVRPA, LB Enfield and UK Athletics also attended the Edmonton games as a means of learning at first hand the issues involved in delivering the WAC.

Athletics and LB Enfield did not receive copies nor were they informed of the findings until the day in October when they were told that the project had been cancelled.

Carter (2001) raised a number of concerns in relation to the financing of the project, transport links and the provision of athletes' accommodation. Carter calculated that the capital cost of the project was £112.2m, with the capital cost of the stadium coming in at £97.3m (see Figure 4.11 for details) which was in line with even very early estimates and a capital gap of £26m which again was within the 'ballpark' of figures from the LVNAC team<sup>39</sup>. However, a key difference was the way in which Carter regarded the Lottery Funding from Sport England. From early on there appears to have been an assumption that a total of £67m<sup>40</sup> would be available from Sport England but this is not how the sum was treated by Carter – it was treated as uncommitted funding - which indeed it was, but by presenting it in this way the capital gap became £97.5m.

Carter also questioned the costs involved in staging the WAC, arguing that as the IAAF retains the right to the bulk of the commercial income from the WAC and imposes a financially onerous contract on host city, the WAC could cost the public sector over £35m (Carter, 2001, p.12). Sport England had already earmarked up to £15m towards the revenue costs of staging the WAC (House of Commons, 2001b, p.121). Although long term revenue funding had been identified, it still left an annual deficit of £270m and Carter claimed that the deficit was likely to be greater than this and questioned the long term security of the revenue funding. Again the argument was that the public sector would be left to shoulder the costs.

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<sup>39</sup> In the spring of 2001 the LVNAC project team had identified a capital funding gap of £15 -£23m (House of Commons, 2001b, p.90)

<sup>40</sup> £60m from the Lottery Fund (including the famous £20m to be returned by the Football association from WNS) and £7m towards the English Institute of Sport high performance centre.

**Figure 4.11: Costs of the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre according to Patrick Carter**

	Costs £m	Funding	Committed £m	Gap £m	Total £m
Capital cost of stadium	97.3	Lottery funding (Sport England)	1.7		
Potential cost overrun <sup>1</sup>	4.9	LVRPA funding committed	5.0		
Review team contingency	10.0	CMF* committed & announced	8.0		
		Committed capital funding	14.7		14.7
		LDA funding**		5.0	5.0
		Objective 2 European Funding <sup>^</sup>		0.5	0.5
		Lottery funding applied for		65.3	65.3
		Capital funding with no identified source		26.7	26.7
Capital cost of project	112.2	Potential cost to public sector	14.7	97.5	112.2

Source: Adapted from Carter (2001, p.9)

Legend:

- \* Capital Modernisation Fund (Government funding)
- \*\* LDA funds would have been towards transport infrastructure and landfill tax
- <sup>^</sup> Objective 2 funds would have been for site preparation, enabling works and post WCA fit out)
- <sup>1</sup> Assessed by cost consultants

Carter argued that since the commitment was made to host the 2005 WAC there had been significant increases in the cost of building the venue and running the event and moreover, that it was highly likely that the provision of the athletes accommodation and transport infrastructure would require substantial expenditure. He concluded that there was a significant risk that the WAC would be a costly, sub-standard event and the LVNAC project represented poor value for money. These conclusions were accepted by central government and Sport England, who had already raised doubts about the project. However, Carters conclusions were challenged by other players. For example, in relation to both transport and accommodation, Carter questioned the strategies proposed by the LVNAC team. They in turn questioned the Carter Report. Bill Glad from London 2005 argued that the Review Team “seemed determined not to develop an

understanding of these particular issues (transport and accommodation) and they overly discounted the available information to produce simplistic and incorrect conclusions” (House of Commons, 2001b, p.116). A number of other players (e.g. LVRPA, UK Sport) were critical of the Carter Report and the manner in which it had been conducted, and they used the Select Committee inquiry as a means of expressing these reservations either verbally or in written memoranda (House of Commons, 2001b).

Carter considered alternative venues and concluded that that there was no suitable site in London, arguing that the other sites posed as great or even greater challenges than Picketts Lock and he suggested that a non-London venue be sought. A range of alternatives including Manchester and Sheffield were assessed. Carter also raised the possibility of withdrawing from the event if the IAAF would not agree to a non-London venue.

#### Cancelling the LVNAC project and losing the World Athletics Championships.

Sport England and DCMS received the Carter Report at the end of August 2001 and meetings were held between the two parties. At a meeting between the Secretary of State and the Chair of Sport England, it was agreed that the LVNAC project should not proceed and that an alternative venue would be found (House of Commons, 2001b, p.65). Officials from DCMS and Sport England held discussions with Manchester and Sheffield City Councils, but the cost of delaying the refit of the Manchester stadium for Manchester City FC was prohibitively expensive, so Sheffield was chosen. The proposal was to refurbish the existing Don Valley Stadium that had been developed for the 1991 World Student Games.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> October 2001, following further discussions with Sport England, Tessa Jowell informed UK Athletics and in a separate meeting, LVRPA and LB Enfield that the LVNAC project would not be proceeding. These parties received a briefing on the Carter report prior to meeting the Secretary of State. For all of them it was their first glimpse of the report and this was an issue raised by all the core players in their evidence to Select Committee (House of Commons, 2001b). For example, LB Enfield commented: "Therefore the report could not be challenged for its factual content, basis and validity of assumption or its conclusion. It is difficult to see how ministers can make a balanced judgement in this way" (House of Commons, 2001b, p.101).

On the same day, in discussions with UK Athletics, Tessa Jowell raised the possibility of offering Sheffield as an alternative. Although UK Athletics agreed, they reiterated the doubts they had already expressed to Patrick Carter and the DCMS about the acceptability of a non-London venue to the IAAF and also expressed their disappointment in not being included in the discussions earlier. The IAAF was contacted and a meeting arranged for the next day at Heathrow Airport<sup>41</sup>. Tessa Jowell, Richard Caborn, together with UK Athletics, Sport England and Patrick Carter, met with the President, Lamine Diack and General Secretary, Istvan Gyulai, of the IAAF. At this meeting the IAAF was informed of the outcome of the Carter review and was offered Sheffield as an alternative venue for the 2005 WAC. In addition, the government suggested that the IAAF bi-annual conference that coincides with the WAC be staged in London and raised the possibility of the government and the IAAF developing a bursary programme for athletes in developing countries. The IAAF President thought that the Council would be unlikely to agree to the proposed move and would rather re-open the bidding process. His prediction proved to be correct. At the

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<sup>41</sup> Members of the IAAF were en route to the World Half Marathon Championships in Bristol.



next meeting in November the IAAF council decided to re-open the bidding process, and although the UK were welcome to put in a new bid based on Sheffield they chose not to and the 2005 WAC were awarded to Helsinki, Finland.

#### Picking up the pieces after the cancellation of the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre

In the wake of the collapse of the London 2005 WAC, the government made a series of announcements. Firstly, that a review of sport policy would be conducted by the then Policy Innovation Unit (now the Strategy Unit) and this would include a review of major events policy: the *Game Plan* was published in 2002 (DCMS/SU, 2002).

Secondly, that athletics would receive a substantial investment. Thirdly, that the £4m from the CMF had been earmarked to part fund a legacy sports facility in the Lee Valley Regional park. In March 2005 plans for a high performance athletics centre – the Lee Valley Athletics Centre (LVAC) - were unveiled. The LVAC is due to open in 2006 and it will provide training and indoor competition facilities (UK Athletics, 2005b). The facilities are very similar to those proposed for the LVNAC but the key difference is the provision of seating – a thousand permanent seats as compared to 20,000 in legacy mode (see Appendix Five for more details of the LVAC). The £16 million funding package comprises £4 million as promised from the CMF, £7 million from Sport England (via the Lottery) and £5 million from LVRPA (UK Athletics, 2005b).

However, the announcement was not without controversy, with some commentators arguing that the facilities would be better located in the proposed Olympic Park in Stratford and that the LVAC was only going ahead as central government felt it had to compensate the LVRPA and LBE for the disappointment of the LVNAC not going ahead (Goodbody, 2005).

The House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Committee had first announced its intent to consider the LVNAC project in July 2001 but issued new terms of reference in the aftermath of the cancellation. The Committee had already considered the progress towards staging the 2005 World Athletics Championships as part of wider studies (House of Commons, 1999; House of Commons, 2000; House of Commons, 2001a).

The Committee under the Chairmanship of Gerald Kaufman, Labour MP for Manchester Gorton, took oral evidence from invited witnesses and received written submissions from a variety of bodies, including key players such as LVRPA, LB Enfield as well as other interested parties and individuals such as BOA and Greenpeace. In March 2001, the Committee had raised doubts (House of Commons, 2001a) about the LVNAC project. There were a number of concerns related to the capital gap, the absence of an underwriter for the event, the quality of the stadium, transport and infrastructure issues, the tight timetable, the long term viability of the stadium and the impact of its existence on existing athletics venues. The Committee considered that the Carter report vindicated their earlier pronouncements and also noted that the core players had worked diligently, had made progress and had repeatedly sought clarification from the government about key issues such as the funding gap, but to no avail (House of Commons, 2001b).

The Committee argued that the government should decide whether or not it wants to host major sporting events in the future and welcomed the Strategy Unit review (see above). For the third time they called for a Minister for Events, whilst others such as UK Sport, UK Athletics and Carter called for a single agency who would be involved from the outset, would have access to funds and have the ability to sign contracts on behalf of the government (House of Commons, 2001b).

## SUMMARY

This Chapter has set out the background to the LVNAC project, described how the project evolved from early 2000 until its demise eighteen months later in October 2001. The origins of the LVNAC in the difficulties of another mega-sports project were not portentous and central government displayed a high degree of ambivalence. Although central government made public statements of support there was always a feeling of a lack of commitment to the LVNAC project. The project unfolded during a period of significant changes in the governance of London with new structures and personnel. Furthermore, support for the LVNAC was not forthcoming from the new Mayor of London. This lack of Mayoral backing was perhaps more significant given his championing role in relation to Wembley Stadium and also that he had announced his intention to pursue a London Olympic bid. In addition, the sub-regional actors were weak and this meant that there was no strong north London lobby working on behalf of the project. Finally, the various sport bodies did not have a shared vision of the LVNAC and this had the potential to undermine the project.

**Fig. 4.12: London and the 2005 World Athletics Championships: a brief chronology**

<b>Dec 1999:</b>	Plans to include athletics at WNS dropped. Proposal to build a national athletics centre.
<b>Jan-March 2000:</b>	Search for site. Lee Valley chosen (stadium, High Performance Centre).
<b>April 2000:</b>	2005 WAC awarded to London.
<b>June 2001:</b>	Labour government elected for second term. Tessa Jowell replaced Chris Smith as Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Richard Caborn replaced Kate Hoey as Sports Minister.
<b>July 2001:</b>	Government announced review of LVNAC project (Carter Report).
<b>August 2001:</b>	DCMS and Sport England receive Carter Report at end of August.
<b>Oct 2001:</b>	Government announced LVNAC project would not be going ahead. IAAF rejected Sheffield as an alternative. UK lost rights to stage WAC.

Source: Compiled (and updated) from evidence given by LVRPA to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee (House of Commons, 2001b, pp.87-91).

During the lifespan of the LVNAC project (see Figure 4.12) a great deal of work was done, particularly on the part of the core LVNAC team and London 2005 to forward the project and much was achieved. However, despite all their efforts, it was the 'risks' flagged up at the outset which were to prove to be the projects undoing. The next chapter (Five) will set out the findings of the analysis of the case study material within the framework provided by this chapter (Four) and thus take the next step in trying to explain why the LVNAC project failed.

## Chapter Five

### The Lee Valley National Athletics Centre project: findings from the case study

#### INTRODUCTION

Having 'set the scene' in Chapter Four, this chapter will report the key research findings. It draws upon both the interview data and documentary sources, such as House of Commons Select Committee reports, and builds upon the themes and issues identified from the wider literature. For the purposes of clarity, this chapter is divided into two broad sections, with the first section, focusing on governance issues and the second section, concentrating on sport issues. There are of course points of convergence and overlap.

The final section groups together the twelve explanations given for the failure of the LVNAC project in readiness for the next step in analysis. The explanations fall into three broad categories. First, explanations related to central government and governance. Second, explanations linked to city governance generally and London governance specifically. Third, explanations connected to sport governance. In the subsequent two chapters these explanations will be considered in the light of the experiences of other nations, cities and events in order to develop a better understanding of the relationships between the success or failure of mega sporting projects and governance issues.

## GOVERNANCE

Modern governance is a highly complex process and the case study of LVNAC project encapsulated many of these complexities along with the dynamic nature of governance. Chapter Four mapped out the broad range of actors involved in LVNAC project and also the various spatial scales that they operated in. The formal meetings and forums were outlined along with the design, planning and development process (e.g. feasibility studies) and key events were listed. Thus, Chapter Four gave us the background in which to consider the issues highlighted by the interview and documentary data. The next section is an examination of governance 'in action': the roles played by different actors, the relationships between actors, the evolution of governance arrangements and the interaction of these factors in the case of the LVNAC project.

### Central government and the LVNAC project: a tale of promises, prevarication and political 'cold feet'.

Both the interviews and documentary sources (i.e. House of Commons Select Committee reports, Carter Report) highlighted the pivotal role played by central government in the LVNAC project.

The Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee (the Select Committee from now on) had considered specific projects (e.g. WNS, LVNAC) and also the approach taken to staging major and mega sporting events more generally. In its reports the Select Committee repeatedly criticised central government for not having a clear mega-event strategy and for not taking the strategic lead in such projects (House of Commons, 1999; House of Commons, 2000; House of Commons 2001a; House of Commons, 2001b; House of Commons, 2002a). The Select Committee argued that because mega

events are dealt with in an *ad hoc* rather than integrated manner this had led to the difficulties (e.g. delays, funding shortfalls) experienced by major sporting and cultural projects (House of Commons, 1999; House of Commons, 2000; House of Commons, 2001a; House of Commons, 2001b). The Select Committee maintains that this lack of clarity about the role of central government has caused confusion about the roles and responsibilities of the various actors (e.g. governing bodies, private sector) and led to a series of uncertain interventions by central government in relation to major projects.

From the outset the Select Committee expressed doubts about the LVNAC project in relation to underwriting, cost control, timetable guarantees and legacy function<sup>1</sup> (House of Commons, 2001a, p. xxxix) and agreed with the decision not to proceed with the project (House of Commons, 2001b, p.xv). However, they were critical of central government's role in the process, stating that its report on the LVNAC project:

threads its way through the sorry and convoluted way in which a national athletics centre at Picketts Lock was plucked out of the air by the Government and then abruptly dropped. It is a saga of how Government involved itself beyond its scope and powers in conjuring up a project that this Committee judged as unviable from the start. (House of Commons, 2001b, p.v).

In relation to the LVNAC project there was an initial wave of enthusiasm, with the government making promises to the IAAF and also a manifesto commitment to deliver the 2005 WAC. However, as both the Select Committee (House of Commons, 2001, p.xv) and respondents noted the government failed to follow these words through with

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<sup>1</sup> The Select Committee noted the concerns raised by Carter in his review had been repeatedly brought to the attention of central government not only by themselves but by all the actors involved in the project (e.g. LVRPA, Sport England) (House of Commons, 2001b, p. xv).

action and that on the contrary, the government displayed a high degree of ambiguity about its role in relation to the LVNAC and staging of the WAC 2005. One respondent reported: “the government were hugely keen to stage the World Athletics Championships but were completely unprepared to lend a hand to make it happen.” The government did not spell out its vision, take the lead, underwrite the project, nor did they designate, empower or create a body to lead the delivery of the project. The impact of this approach was a reoccurring theme within the interviews and also the Select Committee report (House of Commons, 2001b). This last point is interesting because on the one hand, the Select Committee thought that LVNAC project was a ‘non-starter’, whilst on the other, most respondents in this study thought that it ‘could have been done’, but they both identified the ambiguous role of central government as a major factor in the failure of the project.

So although the Select Committee felt that central government had eventually made the ‘right’ decision in calling a halt to the project it placed the responsibility for the problems encountered firmly at its feet. The Select Committee argued that poor decision-making (particularly in relation to the lottery funding<sup>2</sup>), lack of leadership and direction over the WNS project had led to the difficulties it found itself in relation to the LVNAC: the inference being that if the WNS project had been properly managed then the LVNAC project would never have seen the light of day (House of Commons, 2001a; House of Commons, 2001b). Whilst most respondents in this study thought that the concerns (e.g. athletes accommodation, transport) could have been overcome they argued that the equivocal role played by government compounded problems

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<sup>2</sup> Sport England was criticised for paying a lottery grant of £120m to the FA ‘upfront’ rather than in stages or with conditions. Once athletics was removed from the WNS development, Chris Smith announced that the FA would repay £20 million of the grant. The whole episode was shrouded in mystery as to quite who had made this suggestion, who had agreed to it, how the sum of £20 million had been arrived at or how and when the money would be paid. The FA was not forthcoming with the money and the controversy rumbled on. See House of Commons, 2001b; House of Commons, 2002a for full details.



Central government appears not to have thought through the full implications of the development of the LVNAC or staging the 2005 WAC. The Select Committee criticised the initial decision to remove athletics from the WNS development that led to the LVNAC project (House of Commons, 2001b, p.x). They argued that the then Secretary of State, Chris Smith acted “beyond his proper responsibilities” and that the decision “was taken in a hurry and on flimsy and subjective grounds” (House of Commons, 2001b, p.x). In his review of the LVNAC project, Patrick Carter concluded that central government had committed itself to host the World Athletics Championships before the full implications were known, in particular the measures required to provide the accommodation and transport required for the event (Carter, 2001, p.5). Several respondents argued that this was characteristic of their general approach to mega-events. It was apparent in both the WNS and LVNAC projects that insufficient attention had been paid to the issue of how they fitted in with other developments. For example, it was unclear what role WNS would play in any future Olympic bid<sup>3</sup> and the place of the LVNAC in relation to existing regional athletics stadia (e.g. Gateshead) was uncertain (House of Commons, 2001a, p.xxxviii).

Central government having realised the potential cost, extent of infrastructural improvements required and the challenge of creating a viable stadium faced a choice. Central government could have backed the project, committed resources and the majority of respondents maintained that with political will “it could have been done”. Alternatively, central government could have quickly called a halt to the project, but instead they let the project, as one respondent remarked “stumble along a lot of different stages” until a crisis point was reached in the summer of 2001. This pattern of indecision, delay and problems, particularly with funding was a repeat of other mega-

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<sup>3</sup> See House of Commons (2000) for an extended discussion.

projects (e.g. WNS, Millennium Dome). The repetitive nature of these problems was highlighted by Carter (2001) and also by the Select Committee who opened their report on the LVNAC project by borrowing Oliver Hardy's<sup>4</sup> stock phrase, "This is another fine mess..."(House of Commons, 2001b, p.v).

Central government did not take the lead instead this was left to a tri-partite group consisting of a Regional Park Authority (LVRPA), a local authority (LBE) and the governing body of athletics (UKA). They all had slightly different agendas and little power, authority or resources to forward the project. Although the LVRPA as landowners were seen to be in the 'driving seat' in reality there was no authoritative leader who could make decisions, command resources and direct other actors, nor a clear chain of command or hierarchy. The core team made substantial progress on issues such as stadium design and on planning, but when it came to the 'big' issues such as transportation they faced considerable barriers. The core team recognised that even collectively they did not have the power, authority or resources to 'make' the Strategic Rail Authority upgrade the railway: that lay in the hands of central government. The key actors were therefore left to find alternative solutions to these problems e.g. transport. These solutions necessarily involved compromise and so were open to criticism. The key actors were in a 'no win' situation. The diffuse nature of network governance seems to have allowed the government to distance itself from the whole project and forgo any responsibility for the difficulties. In addition, central government appeared to be reluctant to accept that the solutions often required action on their part and without it, little progress could be made.

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<sup>4</sup> One half of the comic duo (Stan) Laurel and (Oliver) Hardy.

The majority of respondents believed that the government never displayed the necessary level of commitment to the project and that such backing is a pre-requisite of a successful mega-sporting event, in the succinct words of one respondent: "... if it isn't underwritten and supported by the government then it won't happen". In its report on the LVNAC project the Select Committee reiterated the need for central government to accept that it had a pivotal role to play in hosting large-scale sports events and once again<sup>5</sup> recommended the appointment of a Minister for Events (House of Commons, 2001b, p. xxvii). Amongst respondents opinion was divided as to whether central government should have taken a 'hands on' role or an 'in the wings' approach to staging major and mega events<sup>6</sup>. However, there was agreement that the uncertain and uneven approach taken was a key factor in the demise of the project. For example, the government was seen to "dither" over whether to back the project or not and this left key actors working in an environment of uncertainty.

Respondents felt that this uncertainty and lack of confidence created or compounded a multitude of problems. For example, the unwillingness of central government to underwrite the WAC or to make guarantees to bridge the funding gap was thought to send out negative messages to potential sponsors, funders and users of the stadium. In relation to the legacy function of the stadium, attempts to find an anchor tenant were hampered by the uncertainty over the whole project – no rugby or football club was going to commit themselves to a stadium until there were cast iron guarantees that it would be built. There was, as one respondent explained a "whole nervousness about the project". In terms of securing private sector sponsorship, several respondents felt the government 'shot itself in the foot' by its indecisiveness, as one remarked:

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<sup>5</sup> This was the fourth time that the Select Committee had called for a Minister in the Cabinet office to be designated as Minister for Events since 1999 (House of Commons, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> The concepts of 'hands on' and 'in the wings' will be discussed in the next Chapter (6) in relation to how different governments approach major and mega sports events.

...it (was) quite clear that the private sector sponsorship would be no problem provided there was a certainty that the government would underwrite and if the government said it would underwrite publicly then it would not have needed to underwrite because the private sector would have come on board.

However, Carter (2001) drawing on studies commissioned by the LVNAC team (by Ernst Young and PMP Consultancy) concluded that income from sponsorship/naming rights was unlikely to be significant. Furthermore, a number of factors including planning issues, competition and an “unattractive location” meant that commercial potential of the LVNAC site was limited (Carter, 2001, pp.17-18). In other words, Carter (2001) argued the private sector were absent because the LVNAC project was commercially unattractive rather than because of government action or inaction as many respondents maintained. Certainly the private sector was less involved in the LVNAC project than one might expect. We have already identified two possible reasons – uncertainty over the whole project and a perception that the project had limited commercial potential but there may be other factors at play. Firstly, the LVNAC project was rather ‘out of the blue’, as one respondent remarked: “there was no real context for the World Championships in Enfield”. There had been no long running local campaign to develop the stadium or host a major sporting event for its sporting or regeneration potential. Thus, in terms of building up interest and securing support from all sectors, developing and mobilising networks, exploring the commercial potential and tapping into funding streams the LVNAC project had a lot of work to do. A second linked point is that the LVNAC project was not integrated into broader plans (sporting or socio-economic) at national, city or local level and this gave rise to questions about the stadium’s legacy function. The Select Committee (House of Commons, 2001a), Carter

(2001) and Sport England (House of Commons, 2001b, pp.53-56) all expressed great reservations about the viability of LVNAC project.

This disconnection from other areas of policy probably reflected the lack of a strategic approach and also the prevailing governance system, which despite the calls for 'joined up' government still tends to operate in departmental 'silos'. All the respondents emphasised the complexities of delivering a mega-sporting event and the need to get all the pieces of the 'jigsaw' to fit together, as one explained in relation to the LVNAC:

There were solutions there, if the will was there, and again this comes back to political will to make something happen and actually advance projects that are in the pipeline to achieve a broader goal. This is the problem with our system we still work very much in silos, you know advance this particular part of the transport delivery, advance this bit of the education sector delivery, advance this bit of high performance sport delivery, advance this bit of event staging delivery, bring them together and that all just got too difficult.

In its report on the LVNAC project the Select Committee argued that before embarking on any more major or mega sports projects central government needed to decide and state categorically whether or not it wanted the UK to host such events (House of Commons, 2001b, xxvi). Furthermore, if the answer was 'yes' to staging major sporting events then it needs to be clear *why* the UK is doing this, i.e. to promote the nation, as part of a broader policy to promote sport. (House of Commons, 2001b, xxvi). In relation to the larger events the Select Committee maintained that the government needed to decide whether it was prepared to fund such ventures to a "realistic" level. It was clear that the approach taken to the LVNAC and similar projects - of making "fanfare

commitment to host events” with the “presumption that private sector support will bridge the gap” - had not worked (House of Commons, 2001b, p.xxvi). The implication of both the Select Committee report (2001b) and Carter review (2001) was that it would be better for the UK not to bid for sporting events than to do so badly.

The question remained as to why having giving assurances to the IAAF, central government then got ‘cold feet’? For most respondents the answer lay in ‘the Dome’<sup>7</sup>:

I think there was a very specific reason and that, of course, was the Dome which was such a disaster and the government had taken such a central role, in fact in many ways it was only the government that was keen on it.

If you try and rank what killed Picketts, numbers 1 to 10 are Dome, Dome, Dome, Wembley, Wembley, Wembley, Commonwealth Games, so the climate in government –‘we cannot handle big budgets, we can not afford with an election coming up in 2005 another one of these, can we get away with cutting our losses’?

Another respondent linked the legacy of the Dome with London’s governance arrangements:

...but the problem was always going to be with the lack of strategic authority in London and even with the GLA now, it couldn’t do it effectively, who is going

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<sup>7</sup> The costs spiralled (it cost £628m in grants from government, National Lottery and Millennium Commission), it failed to attract visitors (5.5 million of the 12 million target) and was dogged by problems around the content and purpose of the Dome, construction delays, legacy function. The Dome received lots of negative publicity. See Gray (2003) for an account of the Dome and the way it was managed by government.

to underwrite a bid, particularly in the case of the WAC, the stadium, the only body that can effectively do it is the government but the government don't like underwriting to a level that they don't know precisely and that is of course one of the legacies from the Dome where costs mounted and they were very concerned about what actually happened.

Thus, context and timing played a key role in making central government risk averse. The spectre of the Dome was seen to dominate the thinking of the government, not just in relation to the LVNAC project but throughout its approach to 'big' projects and the Select Committee had repeatedly reported on these 'failures' and made recommendations to rectify or prevent further problems (e.g. House of Commons, 2000a; House of Commons, 2000b; House of Commons, 2001a). The ongoing nature of the Dome 'problem' was thought to be another important factor in the governments' hesitant approach and that without some form of 'closure' that government would continue to find it difficult to 'move on'. At the time of the interviews (early 2003), the debate about whether London would bid for the 2012 Olympics provided a clear example of the wariness of the current government to take on another 'big' project. As one respondent observed: "Well the fact is that we are having this debate –will they, won't they –it's hardly a good start. If you don't start like a sprinter starts, forget it, because every other city is doing it, what message is that for a start." In fact that the government did 'go for it' and announced in May 2003, after a number of delays<sup>8</sup> its support for a London bid for the 2012 Olympics. The 'story' of the bid for the London Olympics and the role played by central government is very different from what has been just been set out in relation to the LVNAC project and it will be considered in Chapter Seven.

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<sup>8</sup> These delays were at least in part a result of British government's involvement in the growing crisis in Iraq and the war in Spring of 2003.

In summary it is possible to identify explanations about why the LVNAC project failed which are rooted in national level governance:

- The LVNAC project suffered from a lack of leadership at national level.
- Central government did not display total commitment to the LVNAC project.
- The LVNAC project was not embedded into broader strategic plans at national level.
- Central government was 'risk averse' following the recent and on-going difficulties with large-scale sporting and cultural projects (i.e. Dome, WNS).

#### London governance in transition

The WAC were awarded to London in April 2000 and a month later – after an absence of fourteen years- London once more had a unitary authority and also elected its first Mayor. The Mayor and GLA took up office in July 2000 so the LVNAC project evolved during a period of transition. However, its roots are firmly in the pre-GLA arrangements. The Mayor had no input into either the decision to bid for the WAC or the site for the NAC. These decisions were made in a vacuum, as although the Mayor/GLA was around the corner, the new governance arrangements were not in place and the identity of the Mayor a matter of speculation. For those concerned with the LVNAC the arrival of the Mayor brought with it both hopes and concerns. There was a hope that the Mayor would publicly support the project, use his powers to assist the development and underwrite the WAC. There were also concerns, primarily on the planning side, as the Mayor has the power to refuse planning permission to large-scale projects if they are in conflict with his adopted policies and proposals and a particular issue for the LVNAC was its location within the Green Belt.



The plans for a London WAC pre-date the restoration of a pan-London authority by many years and the lack of city government had always presented a challenge, as the awarding body the IAAF requires the host city to sign an Event Organising Agreement (EOA) and thereby underwrite the event. Other British cities have underwritten sporting events, for example, Manchester City Council underwrote the 2002 Commonwealth Games. From the evidence presented to the Select Committee (House of Commons, 2001a) there appears to have been an assumption on the part of those trying to bring the WAC to London that central government, in the absence of city government would take on this role. The creation of the GLA meant that there was now a 'city' to sign the EOA, and hopes were pinned on the Mayor, and although he was approached, he refused to sign it, arguing that he did not have the financial resources to take on such a risk (House of Commons, 2001a, p. xxxiii). Amongst respondents there was some understanding of the Mayor's position, with many arguing that Mayor's limited access to resources reflected his limited power:

There is no mechanism to allow it, I took it (EOA) to the GLA and asked the legal people to look at it and see what could be done but the view at that stage was no, it is just not part and parcel of what the Mayor can do, but that is changing, but I think it is partly to do with the bizarre set up of the GLA where the Mayor has in some respects less power than manager of a local authority.

And something that is very difficult to explain to the international sporting community, is that a city like London, that the Mayor of London doesn't have that amount of money in his pocket and while the GLC would have done, the GLA doesn't which is a significant shift which actually makes London arguably the worst place in Britain to bring a major event.

In his evidence to the Select Committee on staging major events in March 2001, Chris Smith, the then Secretary of State acknowledged that given the limited resources at his disposal, the Mayor was not in a position to act as guarantor (House of Commons, 2001a, p.xxxiii). So although London once again had city-wide government, its limited powers and financial resources meant that for the purposes of the EOA for the World Athletics Championships nothing had changed and there was still a gap.

The inability of the Mayor to underwrite the WAC meant that the organisers turned to the government, and in March 2001 UK Athletics expressed confidence to the Select Committee (House of Commons, 2001a, p.xxxiv) that the government would take the lead role in resolving the issue. However, the government was reluctant to underwrite the project themselves, arguing to the Select Committee (House of Commons, 2001a, p.xxxiv) that “in most cases, it is primarily for the bidding city and relevant governing body to....ensure that any risk....is underwritten”. Central government approached other bodies but none felt they were in position to underwrite the event. Both Sport England and UK Sport argued that their statutory frameworks prevented them from underwriting sporting events, the UKA did not have the financial resources, whilst for the LBE or the LVRPA to underwrite an event of this nature, would as one respondent put it “be madness”. So all eyes were back on the government, but they maintained their position, arguing that it would set a precedent and that other cities had underwritten events. The Select Committee adopted a similar stance arguing that the government would have to justify what amounted to a change in policy (House of Commons, 2001a, p.xxxiv). The veracity of this argument was questioned by respondents, who in turn argued that events like World Indoor Athletics Championships underwritten by Birmingham and the Commonwealth Games underwritten by Manchester were much smaller events and thus the risk was much less than for the WAC. Also as large metropolitan authorities they

could accept those risks. Some respondents maintained that it was the role of central government to underwrite mega-sporting events which they argued should be treated as national events and thus not the responsibility of the host city.

It should be noted that whilst central government argued that bodies such as the GLA, Sport England or UK Sport should underwrite the WAC, it was government that had imposed the limits on the power and resources of these bodies. On the one hand, it could be argued that the GLA's inability to sign the EOA is an example of the 'success' of this approach as it clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of the financial shackles placed upon it. On the other hand, it also illustrates the drawbacks, as one respondent commented: "its (government) hands are tied by the legislation it itself has enacted to empower these bodies". So although the government found itself in difficulties over the EOA they were to a large extent of their own making and the question as to who could be signatory was never resolved.

The inability of the Mayor to underwrite the WAC is illustrative of what one respondent described as the "emasculated mayoral system" established in London. Although there is evidence from his first term that Livingstone has actively sought to increase his powers and resources, he does not enjoy the powers that Mayors in other cities do (e.g. New York, Paris). The governance of London is highly complex and there is a plethora of actors, as one respondent explained:

...you are dealing with so many parties in London, the governance of London in terms of 32 London boroughs and the GLA is complicated enough, particularly when the site abuts more than one London borough it gets even more complicated, but on top of that in terms of some of the service deliverers you've

got TfL, Strategic Rail Authority, London Underground, the LDA – the LDA had a role to play, suddenly all these parties, where as in city like Paris, the Mayor controls just about everything and he just says ‘do it’ and it happens and that is the difference, we haven’t got the governance of London sorted.

So although with the arrival of the Mayor/GLA London had an overall strategic body, it still lacked in the words of one respondent “a big overarching authority with resources and clout”. Certainly early analysis of the governance changes concluded that the GLA “despite having a Mayor who is strong within the system as it operates, is a weak authority in terms of its service powers and financial capacity” (Travers, 2002, p.787) and that many of its powers are circumscribed. For some respondents this lack of a strong Mayor and city authority was crucial, because, they argued, strong, unequivocal political leadership at the city level is an essential ingredient of success for mega and major sporting projects, citing Paris and Manchester as examples.

In the absence of a unitary authority central government has played a major role in the governance of London and the re-instatement of a unitary authority and election of a Mayor could be viewed as an example of the ‘hollowing out’ of the state, with powers being displaced downwards. However, as others have argued (e.g. Taylor, 2000; Goodwin *et al*, 2002) when new institutions are created state power is often simply re-located, so that as one part of the state is ‘hollowed out’ another is ‘filled in’. The GLA and Mayor are products of central government thinking and although powers and responsibilities have been vested in the new institutions and offices, central government has retained control over many key areas and thus ensured its continued importance in the governance of London. As we have seen in relation to the EOA such an approach can paradoxically bestow roles and responsibilities on central government that they

would rather not have: central government wanted the GLA/Mayor to underwrite the WAC but the system the government had established simply would not allow it. In a similar way, neither UK Sport nor Sport England could take on this role because of the limits placed on them by the government.

### Standing on the sidelines: the role of the Mayor and GLA

As already noted central government did not provide consistent leadership or champion the LVNAC project. Respondents hoped that the Mayor would come out fully and publicly behind the LVNAC project. Some respondents regarded him as the natural champion of the project, as one local authority officer explained:

I don't think we ever identified a champion for the project, I don't know to what extent you need to if you have the Mayor on board – he would automatically become your champion wouldn't he? It had to be branded the London Games it wasn't going to be the Enfield games, if it happened at all, as far as the IAAF were concerned this is international, it's the London Games.

In fact the Mayor remained very much on the sidelines he was, in the words of one respondent "remarkably mute on the subject". This silence was regarded as significant at the time, particularly given his vocal support of WNS which lay in his former constituency of Brent. The word that was used repeatedly to describe the Mayor was equivocal, for some respondents this was an unfortunate product of timing, whilst for others it was a calculated political decision on the part of the Mayor.

Respondents pointed to the fact that the Mayor was "finding his feet" and the GLA and the functional bodies were young institutions, with personnel settling in to their new

roles and that there was general uncertainty about what they were meant to be doing and how they should go about it<sup>9</sup>. For example:

The LDA always seemed to be hesitant about what their role was and how they could link with sport, and at the time they said to me this is our role, this, this and this, which isn't sport, but sport does fit into all of their key objectives, but just not in an obvious way, but at the time I don't think there was anybody there to talk to about how sport could play a role.

This was contrasted with the situation at the time of fieldwork (end of 2002/start 2003):

Whereas now the LDA has just funded through the Lee Valley (Park Authority) a £40,000 project to assess the regenerative potential of sport in the Upper Lee Valley. So if they had done something like that around this project it could have been really helpful because again it could then pull in other people.

Respondents supported their argument by drawing a comparison to the very different approach taken by the Mayor to the London bid for the 2012 Olympics:

Well the Mayor has come out in support of the Olympics and is talking about London tax payers making a contribution to the Olympics, so I think now, yes, I think it would have made a difference, but it was too early then...it was timing, it was too early.

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<sup>9</sup> Travers (2002) in an early analysis of the impact of the governance changes noted that a great deal of time was spent during 2000 and 2001 simply putting in place new officer structures and making new appointments. Although most senior posts were filled by summer of 2001 many lower level posts were still being filled early in 2002. Furthermore, many staff were inherited from predecessor bodies e.g. London Ecology Centre and they did not necessarily have the skills and background to run the country's first Mayoral government.

...for most of the time they weren't that engaged with it, Ken (Livingstone) backed it officially spoke in support of it, Nicky (Gavron) did work on it ... but generally it was relatively low key, certainly in comparison to the Olympics very, very much low key and I think part of that is a new organisation with a very strange structure which is what the GLA has and just needing to bed down, it's taken three years to bed and its probably still bedding down.

However, other respondents argued that this equivocation was the result of political manoeuvring. Although a variety of 'theories' were forwarded by respondents, they shared a perception that Ken Livingstone and central government were involved in some behind the scenes 'horse trading':

I don't think it had anything to do with them being a new body, also with the GLA it's the LDA. I think they wanted to sit on the fence, at no point did the Mayor make a positive statement... And I actually think what happened was that the government presented him with a deal, saying you can have Wembley or Pickets Lock but not both.

...what I believed happened here, one hears on the grapevine that the GLA and of course Enfield were keen to see those transport improvements, the question is did the GLA put a gun to the government's head and say right we will give planning permission for the stadium if you give the green light for the WARME (West Anglia Route Modernisation Enhancement) programme.

What is interesting in these two examples is that in one, central government are seen to be the ones wielding power over the GLA and in the other it is the GLA exerting power over central government. Although it is very difficult to establish the 'truth' of these claims, they do illustrate several points. Firstly, respondents recognised that many key decisions are neither made in, nor communicated through, formal arenas (e.g. Lee Valley Stadium Forum). Moreover, key actors within the LVNAC project felt that there were times when either themselves or other key actors had been excluded from the strategic decision making process. At this point it should be noted that many respondents felt that the 'reasons' given for the cancellation of the project were "excuses" and that the 'real' reasons were never articulated publicly. Secondly, there was an understanding that the relationship between the Mayor and central government is not clear cut and far from being fixed it is constantly being negotiated. This is perhaps a reflection of the complex, dynamic and evolving nature of modern governance in general and more specifically of the arrangements for London. In addition, at the time of the LVNAC project relations between the Mayor and central government were strained following the expulsion of Ken Livingstone from the Labour Party. By the time of the Olympic bid relations had improved and the Mayor was readmitted to the Labour Party in 2004.

Several respondents argued that in relation to the LVNAC project the Mayor played his hand carefully, weighing up what was in it for London and also for him as a politician with an eye on a second term in office and waited to see how the 'big' issues (i.e. transport) evolved:

I think the fact that he had just arrived had nothing to do with it because he could have seen it as an opportunity to have a big project on his hands and he



didn't, he never did. So he either sensed, his political nose told him that central government would never support it or he knew that he wouldn't want to divert resources, which he could have done.

The project unfolded during the early days of the Mayor/GLA and one of the first tasks of the Mayor was to produce a set of strategic plans<sup>10</sup> for London, including a spatial plan but these were not complete at the time of the LVNAC project and thus there was no overall strategic plan in which to locate it. Furthermore, although earlier strategic documents did identify the Upper Lee Valley (ULV) as an important regional corridor, it was as respondents noted no secret that North London and the ULV did not top the Mayor's list of priorities. The Mayor's interest lies in East London, central London and the Thames Gateway and this was reflected in early documents such as the *Towards the London Plan*<sup>11</sup> (GLA, 2001) and announcements that any Olympic bid would be focused on the regeneration of East London and the Lower Lee Valley. By the time of the Olympic bid the strategies were broadly in place and it was clear that the Olympics had an integral place in these plans for London.

Within the interviews the role of the Mayor and GLA were strong themes. However it should be noted that the Mayor and GLA were largely absent from the official reports. The Select Committee's consideration of the role of the Mayor was limited to the issue of underwriting the WAC (House of Commons, 2001a, pp. xxxiii-xxxiv). In fact the main report on the LVNAC project – *Unpicking the Lock: the World Athletic Championships in the UK* (House of Commons, 2001b) - did not discuss the role of the Mayor and GLA. Similarly, the Carter review (2001) made no reference to the Mayor

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<sup>10</sup> The Mayor has to produce eight strategies on biodiversity; spatial development, economic development; transport; culture; air quality and waste and noise.

<sup>11</sup> This was a precursor to the spatial development plan which was renamed the London Plan.

and the GLA were mentioned only in passing. This contrast in emphasis between the respondents, many of whom were intimately involved in the LVNAC project and the ‘official’ reports is interesting and it highlights of the value conducting interviews looking beyond the ‘official’ reports. Although in part it is a reflection of the focus and function of the Select Committee<sup>12</sup> and the remit of the Carter review<sup>13</sup>, it perhaps hints at how the Mayor and GLA were perceived at the time – of limited ‘help’ in resolving problems and driving the project forward and that the ‘solutions’ lay firmly in the hands of the central government. Whether the limitations on the Mayor and GLA were thought to be because the arrangements were still ‘bedding in’ or inherent and immutable is not apparent. However, as the Olympics have shown the Mayor and GLA can play a key role in large-scale sports projects. In the LVNAC case they played a key role by inaction.

In summary it possible to identify explanations about why the LVNAC project failed that are rooted in London level governance:

- The governance of London was in transition and the new arrangements were in the process of ‘bedding down’.
- The Mayor of London did not have the power, authority or resources to forward the LVNAC project, or to underwrite the WAC
- The Mayor of London was equivocal about the LVNAC project which had been designed before he came into office.
- The LVNAC project suffered from lack of leadership at city level.
- The LVNAC project was not embedded into broader strategic plans at city level.

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<sup>12</sup> “The Culture, Media and Sport Committee is appointed to examine on behalf of the House of Commons the expenditure, administration and policy of the DCMS and its associated public bodies”. This statement appears at the beginning of all reports e.g. House of Commons, 2001a, p.ii.

<sup>13</sup> The terms of reference were: 1) In the light of the government’s manifesto commitment to ensure that a first class athletics stadium is available for the WAC in 2005, determine whether the LVNAC project can be funded and managed in its current format. 2) Determine what alternatives might be feasible.

### Institutions and individuals: roles and relationships

It has been established that the LVNAC project suffered from a lack of consistent leadership, with central government and the Mayor apparently unwilling to take up the mantle and none of the core team (LVRPA, UKA, LBE) being in a position to. In addition there was no strong sub-regional partnership to lobby for north London. From the literature we know that successful mega sporting events are frequently the product of long-standing partnerships that have worked towards hosting an event for many years. This process often involves repeated bids for events, the refining of ideas, shifts in organisations and personnel. Whilst for the LVNAC project the core team was a new, untested partnership working to a deadline on a project that had had little 'lead in' time. Each actor brought identifiable resources to the partnership. The UKA brought the WAC, the LVRPA the land, capital and revenue funding, LBE local support structures and revenue funding and all brought networks that could be drawn upon. For example for the LBE this included connections with local and sub-regional business players, sub-regional transport groups and adjacent local authorities. The UKA was well connected into athletics and sports networks nationally and most importantly internationally with the IAAF. The core team was inter-dependent and because even collectively their resources were somewhat limited they were heavily dependent on external players including Sport England and central government. Similarly, in a study of three American Olympic cities<sup>14</sup>, Burbank *et al* (2001) found that these cities were reliant on external actors to forward their Olympic plans.

Sport England controlled the bulk of the funding available for the project. This placed it in a powerful position *vis à vis* the core team. Many respondents were critical of the approach taken by Sport England, arguing that from early on it was evident, as one

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<sup>14</sup> Los Angeles, Atlanta and Salt Lake City.

respondent commented that “they were not particularly keen on this project and that made it difficult” and they acted in ways that slowed down and even stalled the project. Sport England set the core team eleven tasks which the core team had to achieve before 31<sup>st</sup> May 2001 in order to secure the lottery funding of £67m<sup>15</sup> and relations between the core team and Sport England were often strained with both ‘sides’ feeling that the other was not being fully co-operative. A key issue was that in the eyes of Sport England none of the core team was a suitable applicant for a lottery grant of up to £67 million. An applicant had to take on the responsibility for any cost overruns and underwrite the construction of the stadium. None of the three core players were as one respondent (from the core team) commented: “in a position or had a desire to stand up and say we will fund a £100m project – at the last resort we are there.” This last point was one highlighted by the Select Committee in its first inquiry into the LVNAC project (House of Commons, 2001a, p. xxxvi) and also by Carter (2001, p. 7). As one respondent explained this:

...gave opportunities for Sport England to say ‘there you are you don’t really want the project’ and so on and so on, and there would be this oscillation, well actually it’s government’s project they should be standing behind it and they would say ‘Well we don’t, look at Manchester the local authority is standing behind’ and ‘We’d say we are not really the local authority it’s the GLA’, and it just went on and on.

One of the eleven tasks was to “negotiate a consortium agreement” (Carter, 2001, p.15) which would have distributed the risk and responsibilities appropriately between the three parties. The core team expended a great deal of time, money and energy on

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<sup>15</sup> See Carter, 2001 pp.14-16 for full details of the eleven tasks and the extent of progress made on each.

attempting to draw up a Joint Venture Agreement but it was never finalised<sup>16</sup>. Most respondents argued that the government should have acted as guarantor rather than shifting the risks onto small organisations, but the failure to come to an agreement also reflected the nature of the relationships, particularly between LVRPA and LBE.

The relationship between the LVRPA and LBE was strained, co-operation was limited and both drew criticism from other organisations. A number of respondents (from LBE and beyond) argued that the LVRPA regarded the LVNAC project as 'theirs' and made every effort to retain control, tending to work in isolation rather than in partnership. The LBE attracted criticism (from LVRPA and beyond) for "wanting something for nothing" – the fact that Enfield did not make a capital contribution was raised repeatedly in the interviews and also in the local press<sup>17</sup>. This episode illustrates some of the difficulties of partnership working, especially under pressure of time. The LBE and LVRPA were ostensibly partners but much of the time were locked in dispute and although their agendas were described by respondents as "overlapping" or even "complementary" it was the differences rather than the similarities that mattered.

Another area of contention was the revenue funding which was estimated at a million pounds a year, although Carter suggested that "realistically, it could be £1.5 million per annum" (Carter, 2001, p. 8). The core team argued that the revenue funding had been secured, with commitments from LVRPA, LBE, UKA and the London Marathon Trust. Carter (2001) contested this claim arguing that there was a gap of around £270,000 per annum and moreover that as none of the core team were in a position to underwrite the project, there was no guaranteed source to meet any revenue deficit (Carter, 2001, p.8).

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<sup>16</sup> Six of the eleven tasks were not completed to the satisfaction of Sport England (Carter, 2001, p. 12).

<sup>17</sup> The Leader of the Council wrote a letter to the local paper in response to the comments arguing that "The council was not the bidder or sponsor of the stadium but was a supporter of the bid" (*Enfield and Haringey Independent*, 2001).

Sport England was also not convinced, arguing that the revenue funding was never “committed”, as a member of the core team explained:

Sport England needed more than confidence, a kind of guarantee that revenue funding would be in place and we gave that guarantee...but that somehow wasn't enough, it was sort of we want to see hard evidence that a leading professional rugby club would use the stadium or that ‘where is the hard evidence that there will be three major athletics events in it’ and you weren't in position to give that because it was ‘I'm not going to sign up to that until I know it will be built’, I mean it was all of that dreadful vicious circle, that you couldn't break into.

The core team understood some of Sport England's reservations, particularly in relation to underwriting the project but felt that the government should have stepped in and acted as guarantor. Respondents were aware that Sport England had got its “fingers burnt” over WNS<sup>18</sup> and understood why, as one respondent commented “had to take a fairly firm and consistent line, does not mean to say I agreed with this, but I did have sympathy for the position they were in”. There was a feeling that that they were working in the “shadow” of WNS which continued to “rumble on”. Moreover, respondents believed that Sport England was firmly committed to WNS and that they were working under government duress. Some respondents suggested that Sport England deliberately employed delaying tactics to undermine the project, whilst others felt as one remarked that Sport England “were just sitting on the fence, really what they were doing was hoping it (LVNAC project) was collapsing whilst WNS would rise

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<sup>18</sup> The Select Committee severely criticised Sport England for the “premature” grant of the £120m lottery funds to the FA before the WNS project was shown to be clearly viable (House of Commons, 2001b, p. vii).

again". Sport England maintained that they were just doing their job working within the legal framework set out in the Lottery Act and was aware that at times this made them "unpopular".

Sport England had consistently argued against a stand alone athletics stadium, but as a NDPB Sport England they were left in an invidious position because they could not refuse to work on the LVNAC project. However, they did not have to do more than their 'job' and Sport England's approach can be seen as a form of resistance to government power. Furthermore, several respondents reported that Sport England used its extensive network to work against the project (e.g. lobby politicians about the potential negative impact of the LVNAC on regional stadia or grassroots sport). Respondents felt this 'behind the scenes' activity was important in fuelling opposition to the LVNAC within political circles and this finding lends support to Castells (2004) proposition that power lies within networks not institutions. In relation to the core LVNAC team (LVRPA, UKA, LBE) Sport England was in powerful position as the 'gatekeeper' to the main source of funds –the lottery funds – this power, although specific was nonetheless important, as without the lottery funds the project could not proceed. Sport England also had the 'ear' of government and was able to pass on its concerns about the project<sup>19</sup> directly to the Secretary of State whilst the core team had less direct access to Ministers.

It was evident throughout this research, from both documentary sources and the interviews that although organisations were important, so were the people that inhabited them. The case study approach seemed to illuminate the micro-politics of the project, and it was soon apparent that any analysis of the LVNAC project had to take into

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<sup>19</sup> These were capital costs, funding gap and underwriting issues; planning and transport issues; long term legacy and revenue funding; the sport legacy and impact on other UK venues which had been identified in November 2000 and which Sport England believed had not been tackled by LVRPA by June 2001 when they applied for the balance of the £67 million (House of Commons, 2001b, p.xiii).

account the people – their motivations, ambitions and actions- that had tried to shape the project, take it forward, rein it in or even put a halt to it. As one respondent argued:

Remember all these things are done by individuals they are not really about organisations, life is not about organisations but individuals within organisations or individuals using organisations... Institutional structures don't of themselves carry anything, they never actually drive anything, they administer things yes, but they can take it backwards as well as forwards, it's to do with key individuals that actually make the difference.

The importance of individuals was apparent at all levels of the project. At national level Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport up to June 2001, forwarded the project within central government circles and his departure from office removed a key ally. His successor, Tessa Jowell, was equally important but she took a very different approach to the project – so although they held the same post within the same government they followed very different paths<sup>20</sup>. As far as the Select Committee were concerned all that had changed between March 2001 when the government expressed 'confidence' in the LVNAC project and June 2001 when they expressed 'alarm' was the Secretary of State: the challenges facing the project were those that had faced it from the outset (House of Commons, 2001b, pp. xvi-xvii). The Select Committee concluded: "As far as we can see the shift in policy arose when a Secretary of State who was inexplicably wedded to the project was replaced by one who was not". (House of Commons, 2001b, p. xvii). Some respondents believed that Tessa Jowell was brought in to 'kill off' the LVNAC project and that the Carter review was simply a

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<sup>20</sup> This dis-juncture between the agendas and actions of the two ministers, links with the concern voiced by respondents that the low 'value' given to sporting matters within British policy and political circles allows individual ministers to pursue their own beliefs.



device and that the decision to abandon the LVNAC had already been made. They pointed to out that key actors e.g. UK Sport were excluded from the review, proposals put together in response to the concerns raised by Carter were “completely ignored” in the report and the core team were not given an opportunity to comment on the report prior to publication. This suggests that central government did take a (belated) leadership role and decided to cancel the project.

At city level as has been noted the Mayor, Ken Livingstone, was conspicuous by his absence and the low-key nature of the role he played has been accentuated by his high profile role in relation to London’s Olympic bid. There were high hopes of what the Mayor could do, and that his support could have made a ‘difference’. In fact his silence and inaction were probably as important and although he argued that he was not in a position to give, for example, financial support, in relation to the Olympics he has been able to find ways around these institutional barriers (i.e. Olympic precept).

There were also individuals that were important in overcoming day-to-day problems and thus helped to keep the LVNAC project ‘on track’. For example, as will be discussed later, the LVRPA and LBE held very different opinions about the regenerative potential of the project and this was a constant source of tension. Although both ‘camps’ were critical of each other, and there were a number of sticking points, they never reached an impasse. This was in part due to the efforts of several individuals who managed to keep the channels of communication open. For instance, one person with a foot in both camps acted as a go-between. He was trusted and respected by all and was able to ‘smooth’ the way, often through informal means and also by facilitating small meetings. Although a ‘small cog’, this individual played a significant role in the overall project because their actions prevented small problems escalating into big ones.

Peck (2001) argues that the state is a 'peopled' organisation rather than an "insulated domain of anonymous 'policy makers' and authorless policy conventions" (p. 451).

Although there was much evidence to support this claim, what was also interesting within this study was that there were state organisations that appeared to be almost people less. For example, apart from the Ministers, the staff of the DCMS remained nameless and faceless: they were referred to as 'civil servants' or simply the DCMS. This is not to say that the civil servants were not influential, indeed respondents felt that they exerted a great deal of (negative) influence but that they were invisible and anonymous. This may have reflected a lack of enthusiasm for the LVNAC project in particular and/or simply reflect the workings of the DCMS. Within this study respondents generally portrayed civil servants as being good at prevaricating and for finding reasons not to say 'yes'. In other organisations, staff were more visible (e.g. LVRPA, UKA) and respondents spoke about both individuals and the organisations they were associated with.

From the literature it is clear that a champion from politics, sport or business can play an important role in the promotion and delivery of sporting bids. For example, the prominent role played by Manchester entrepreneur Sir Bob Scott in promoting Manchester's Olympic (Cochrane *et al*, 1996). In contrast, the LVNAC project never had a consistent 'champion'. Whilst some respondents saw Chris Smith as a champion of sport and specifically of the LVNAC, his vision, understanding and desire to promote sport was not thought to be shared by others within government or the civil service.

Although respondents believed that Chris Smith had partly won the argument he was not able to totally "knock out" the opposing forces. So once Chris Smith had been removed from office there was no one at a senior level to take the project forward.

However, others felt the project never had a 'champion' from government or athletics.

Interestingly, several respondents recall discussions with Chris Smith about bringing an ‘outsider’ in to champion the project, but no one could remember his name, background, or whether he had ever been offered the ‘job’ or whether he had turned it down.

Whatever the case, this champion did not materialise. Several respondents within sport felt that more could have been done to bring an athlete on board earlier<sup>21</sup> and they pointed to the high profile campaign by the likes of Olympic gold medallist Sir Steve Redgrave on behalf of the 2012 London Olympic bid. This lack of a champion may have been rooted in the project’s short and peculiar gestation, arising as it did from the decision to remove athletics from WNS and a need to quickly find an alternative. So that unlike other projects such as the Olympics or MCG it did not evolve in an organic way with plenty of time to build up and tap into networks and for a ‘natural’ champion to emerge.

In summary it is possible to identify explanations about why the LVNAC project failed that are rooted in relationships between organisations and individuals:

- The LVNAC project did not have a consistent champion from politics, athletics or business.
- The LVNAC project arose from problems with the WNS project and there was little time for the plans, partnerships and relationships to evolve and mature.

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<sup>21</sup> By the summer of 2001 several athletes had lent their support to the project. For example, the planning application for the LVNAC was delivered to LBE by the athlete Dwain Chambers accompanied by local junior athletes. Given that Dwain Chambers tested positive in 2003 for a prohibited substance and was subsequently banned from competition for two years (BBC, 2004b) it may be that this support would have been of little value.

## SPORT AND THE LEE VALLEY NATIONAL ATHLETICS CENTRE

The overwhelming majority of respondents in this study, both those familiar with the workings of sport and the 'newcomers', argued that their experiences had led them to conclude that the governance of sport in Britain is fundamentally flawed<sup>22</sup> and that sport is generally undervalued by politicians and policy makers. Respondents identified 'faults' at all points and levels of the system and compared the UK with other nations to illustrate their points and respondents described how these issues 'played out' and impacted on the LVNAC project. The Select Committee has called for major reform of the governance of sport arguing that within the current system there are too many bodies with overlapping responsibilities and no clear lines of accountability (House of Commons, 1999; House of Commons, 2000: House Of Commons, 2001a, House of Commons, 2001b).

### Sport or regeneration?: Competing visions of the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre

The LVNAC project has its roots in the troubled Wembley National Stadium (WNS) project and it arose from a ministerial decision not to proceed with the athletics platform at WNS. These rather strange origins were reflected in the lack of a clear vision. The LVNAC project was hampered by a multiplicity of visions forwarded by the different players. There was a great deal of shared enthusiasm, and on the surface there appeared to be much to unite them. However, delving below the surface revealed crucial differences that were played out during the course of the project<sup>23</sup>. There were two broad visions and a number of subtle variations. For some respondents the LVNAC

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<sup>22</sup> This was also the conclusion of an independent review – *Raising the Bar* – conducted by two former sports ministers, Kate Hoey and Chris Monaghan (2005), and they called for fundamental reform (see Chapter Six).

<sup>23</sup> A strength of in-depth interviewing is that gives opportunities for issues to be teased out and the nuances to be explored.

project was primarily a sporting project and their hopes and ambitions were sporting - hosting the prestigious World Athletics Championships (WAC), creating a legacy for athletics, providing facilities for the development of elite athletes and also providing opportunities for community participation. So although the ambitions were wide ranging encompassing different spatial levels (national, regional, sub-regional and local) and also varying levels of athletic ability (novice to elite) they were all firmly within the arena of sport.

The second vision, whilst embracing these sporting aims, emphasised the regenerative potential of the LVNAC. For respondents in the regeneration 'camp', sport *per se* was not as important as what sport could 'do' for the Upper Lee Valley, as expressed by one respondent:

...of course great excitement – partly from the point of view of putting us all on the international sporting map, but more importantly the thought of how this could attract lots and lots of people to the area, to this part of north London and the regenerative impact that might have, plus a legacy sports facility of the first order, all combined to make it a really exciting project.

The hopes and aspirations of these respondents were centred on improving transport links, creating employment and business opportunities and putting Lee Valley on the map. Although these visions had much in common, the differences were to prove to be fundamental and created on-going tensions between two members of the core team - the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority and London Borough of Enfield (LBE).

The LVRPA regarded the project as primarily a sports project commensurate with their role as sub-regional body:

(The LVNAC) fitted in perfectly with our sports development remit and policy because it did give access to athletes at all levels and all kinds of abilities but it was particularly aimed at the performance and excellence level –training the champions of the future which is where we sit in this continuum from grassroots to world performance level.

Whilst for the LBE it was about regeneration:

...there was no other sensible reason for the council going into this if it isn't the regeneration benefits, why would you sign up underwrite part of the revenue deficit for years to come, there is no justification at all from the council point of view other than regeneration.

Respondents from the LVRPA argued, firstly, that regeneration was not within its remit<sup>24</sup> (a point challenged by others) and secondly, they did not accept that the LVNAC had regenerative potential. This stance was consistent with the conservative nature of the organisation. Furthermore, the LVRPA saw the regeneration agenda as a dangerous distraction from the task in hand, namely building a national athletics centre and hosting the World Athletics Championships (WAC). The LVRPA respondents thought that the project was less likely to proceed if the regeneration agenda was pursued, whilst those from LBE and others (all had an interest in the Upper Lee Valley), believed that it was more likely to proceed if the other benefits were delivered (i.e. jobs,

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<sup>24</sup> Subsequent to the LVNAC project the LVRPA has taken on a regeneration role, for example they now have a Regeneration Department (LVRPA, No date).

transport upgrades). The other actors in the 'regeneration' camp included, local politicians, local business players and local institutions such as the Learning Skills Council and Middlesex University, all of whom shared an interest in revitalising the Upper Lee Valley. Thus, there were fundamental differences in scale and complexity of the project as envisioned by the two camps, a perception on the part of some respondents that these visions were mutually exclusive and all of this was compounded by the strength of feeling that each camp had its own vision. Interestingly, the success of the London Olympic bid was rooted in the ability to marry the 'sporting' vision with the 'regeneration' vision which had eluded the LVNAC project.

Both 'camps' tried to shape the project, for example, LBE set up the Stakeholders Board, chaired by a prominent local businessman to consider broader issues, as a way to counter what they saw as the narrow focus of the LVRPA. These moves were resisted by the LVRPA who did not recognise the Stakeholders Board as a "legitimate" group and as one neutral observer pointed out "they (LVRPA) picked and chose what they listened to." Within interviews, respondents from both camps set out their case with conviction and in a well-rehearsed manner: it was not the first time they had argued 'the point'. They marshalled evidence to support their argument and also to challenge the counter-argument. Respondents expressed frustration at the stance taken by the other camp and their intransigence in the face of the 'evidence' and it was evident that these feelings were mutual. Interestingly, the other member of the core team the UK Athletics (UKA) appeared to keep out of this dispute- it was very much LVRPA and LBE (supported by others in the Upper Lee Valley) – it seemed to be rooted in local politics with each organisation (and individuals within those organisations) trying to control the direction of the project. Both sides argued that their differences would not have really "mattered" if there had been clear vision and leadership from central government.

However, having done a *volte face* on athletics and WNS, central government failed to spell out its vision for the LVNAC and this provided 'space' for different visions to emerge. Although respondents from LBE and LVRPA felt that ultimately the dispute over regenerative potential did not affect the outcome, it probably did little to instil confidence in them or the project.

Sport England did not advance a clear vision of the LVNAC which given their stance on the concept of a stand alone athletics stadiums was perhaps not surprising. Neither did the Mayor and GLA and once again this is not that remarkable given that they came in to being after the LVNAC project had been set in train and it was unclear as to how or even if, the LVNAC would fit into the Mayor's plans for London. As already noted it soon became apparent that the LVNAC did not have a central place in the Mayor's vision for London.

Thus, the LVNAC was dogged by the absence of a unified vision, which allowed competing visions to emerge and meant that the project was pulled in different directions and was open to criticism on all fronts. This lack of clarity about what the project was for and what it was trying to achieve was probably rooted in the approach taken to mega-sporting projects and events by central government – reactive and *ad hoc* rather than planned and strategic with little direction and leadership. The LVNAC was very much a product of this *ad hoc* approach. It was a reaction to difficulties encountered with WNS and also the need to provide a venue for the WAC and its long-term role was neither clear nor secure (House of Commons, 2001a). There was little lead-time for differences between the various actors to be 'thrashed out', for the partnerships to mature and roles be negotiated (perhaps for some actors to step to one side or even be 'dropped' and replaced). Also, without an overarching authority for



London in the initial phase of the project there was no strategic framework to locate the LVNAC in or properly assess the ‘pros’ and ‘cons’ of the project for London.

### The value of sport

Many respondents believed the approach taken by the government to the LVNAC project specifically and also to other major sporting projects (Wembley National Stadium, Manchester Commonwealth Games) reflected the value placed on sport and the place of sport within British politics. It was a strong theme running through the interviews and comparisons were often made with other nations to illustrate the perceived drawbacks of the British approach. Respondents argued that if governments framed these events in purely economic terms then no events would ever be staged or venues built, and that this argument applies equally to other cultural amenities:

...if you look at it cold economic point of view there is no justification for having Picketts Lock, there is no justification really for having Wembley, there is no justification for a Royal Opera House, no justification for having museums or art galleries, just for money in and money out but what a society has to do is to decide that...these are monuments.

As one respondent explained, “society has to make a choice, this is worth doing” – in other words recognise that arts and sport have value beyond money. Respondents felt that in general British governments had difficulties embracing this concept for sport, and contrasted this with other countries, for example, France, arguing that they have a different value system where sport has an equal standing with the arts. For example, one respondent recalled discussions with French officials about the subsidy of the Stade de France (SdF) by the government and whether this was a political problem:

(The French official replied) ‘Why should it be, this is the cost of us being France, this is the national stadium, we are proud of our facilities, we are proud of who we are, we are proud to do well in sport, this is not a political issue, why should it be? – we support culture, we support literature, we support sport’.

Respondents argued that this de-valuing of sport by successive British governments means that although central government is prepared to subsidise the arts (i.e. galleries, theatre, ballet, opera) they are not prepared to do the same for sport. Several respondents pointed out that central government provides a £25 million annual subsidy to the Royal Opera House (via the Arts Council) which appeals to a very small proportion of the population, but are not willing to provide similar amounts to sporting projects that appeal to a larger proportion of the population and provide global exposure to the host city and nation. Respondents recognised that some sports, in particular elite level football, generate large income streams and in these instances there is little justification for government subsidy. However, as they pointed out many less high profile and minority sports, including athletics have limited resources and argue that in these cases central government subsidy is justified.

Respondents argued that successive British governments have failed to grasp the *intrinsic* value of sport and that this is evident in the approach to sport. Respondents pointed out that for many years sport was left in a policy wilderness and although in recent years there has been much more activity on the policy front, respondents argued that: “sport is not on the political agenda, it’s a nonsense to suggest it is.” Any credence that sport has gained within political circles in recent years was seen to be because of perceptions about what sport can *do* – in terms of regeneration, social inclusion and

health gains. So if sport has a value in the minds of politicians and policy makers it is *instrumental* rather than intrinsic. As one respondent observed in relation to Ken Livingstone: "...he is not the slightly bit interested in sport – it is what it can do" and his strong advocacy for WNS and the 2012 London Olympic bid is rooted in his belief in their potential social and regenerative impacts. Many respondents argued that although there had been a great deal of political rhetoric about the value of sport in terms of issues such as promoting social inclusion and reducing youth crime, there had been little by the way of action.

Respondents also suggested that many in the political and policy arena remain sceptical about what sport can do. For example, the Policy Innovation Unit (PIU now the Strategy Unit) suggested in its review of sport policy (DCMS/SU, 2002) that there was no evidence to support the claim that major sports events led to increased participation, as one respondent explained:

I mean you could look at it the other way round – ‘We think it happens but we aren’t sure - their attitude as economists was ‘we just don’t believe it happens’. I think anybody who is involved in sport knows that when you get - the sort of Steve Redgrave fifth gold medal he got in Sydney, what actually happened the following day was that people were queuing up to join rowing clubs. An increase in participation in sport that can happen in the short term ...but you have to work at it, it doesn’t happen automatically, you have to work at it to sustain it and that has been what has been missing. And probably what should have been in the report is that you can establish a linkage but you have to work at that linkage.

Central government was criticised by respondents for repeatedly making judgements about the 'value' of sport based on narrow economic criteria and doing little to facilitate the delivery of sustained sporting and social benefits. One of the key criticisms of the Carter Report was that Patrick Carter, appointed by the government to conduct reviews of LVNAC and other projects (WNS and MCG) had a limited view of the 'value' of sport. As one respondent commented:

...his (Carter's) modus operandi is to employ hard nosed accountants because its KPMG (accountancy firm) that do it basically under his direction, who are very good at knowing the cost of everything but haven't got the concept of the value of anything.

Carter also attracted criticism from the Select Committee for his limited knowledge of sport policy particularly in relation to hosting mega and major events<sup>25</sup> and for excluding key actors including UK Sport the agency that leads on such events from the review<sup>26</sup> (House of Commons, 2001b, p.xiv).

In a similar vein, within policy and political circles, there appears to be very strongly held opinions, but little constructive debate about the merits (or otherwise) of supporting grassroots sport or elite level sports or whether you need to promote and support both. Within this study respondents argued that "you can and should have both" and that it is a false argument to separate the two. However, respondents recognised that there is a vocal camp that believes that hosting international events is a waste of money and the money should be spent on grassroots sport. Several respondents pointed out that

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<sup>25</sup> He also attracted criticism from respondents for his apparent lack of knowledge of government transport policy when he complained that there was insufficient provision for car parking at the proposed LVNAC.

<sup>26</sup> Not only were UK Sport not consulted but they were not sent a copy of the report and were left to print a summary off the web (House of Commons, 2001b, p.xiv).

such views had been expressed by senior members of government, including Tessa Jowell (Secretary of State since June 2001): "...she said in Select Committee that there is no reason to have these things and that it is not even good from the point of view of the sports people because they don't care, that is what she said."

In relation to the LVNAC project one respondent argued:

The trouble with that camp was that they could not appreciate that the notions of pride, focal point, not just physical focal point but the actual event itself would carry young people into recognising what high quality sport actually was about and although it was athletics I don't think it matters that much it would still have a washout effect.

Equally there are others within the sporting world that feel that resources should be put into developing elite athletes by providing dedicated facilities and financial support rather than focusing on community facilities. Respondents argued that the LVNAC project was about providing both:

That was the argument all the way along you can't separate the two, you can't have grass roots athletics without stadia facilities for people to use and why do our elite athletes have to use such crummy facilities, the New River (local athletics facility) is a case in point, why do they have to use these facilities and you can not separate the two...unless you fund both angles you are going to lose out and you obviously can't have one without the other but there is a much stronger link but the government keeps separating them.

The elite-grassroots debate has been a reoccurring theme in the considerations of the Select Committee on staging major events (House of Commons, 1999; House of Commons, 2001a; House of Commons, 2001b). Although the debate was not at the forefront of the LVNAC project it was thought to be an important undercurrent with the grassroots camp working behind the scenes and lobbying government against the LVNAC.

### Sport institutions

A broad spectrum of sports organisations were involved in the LVNAC project. They varied in size, remit and the spatial level at which they operated (see Figure 5.1). The IAAF, as the international governing body for athletics awarded the WAC to London for 2005, set the terms and conditions that had to be met and was the ultimate arbiter about the location of the 2005 WAC. Acting against the advice of both UK Sport and UK Athletics central government 'offered' the IAAF Sheffield as an alternative location for the 2005 WAC. Many respondents felt that in making this decision central government displayed a profound lack of understanding of the workings of international sport bodies. As one respondent commented: "They are very powerful bodies and they see themselves as political organisations and most of their top members are politicians or at least connected to politics". Several respondents pointed out that the IAAF has more member nations than the United Nations and is very powerful within the Olympic movement and as such is not an organisation to "let down". Indeed the decision by the IAAF to re-open bidding rather than accept the British government's offer of a non-London venue was a clear demonstration of their power.

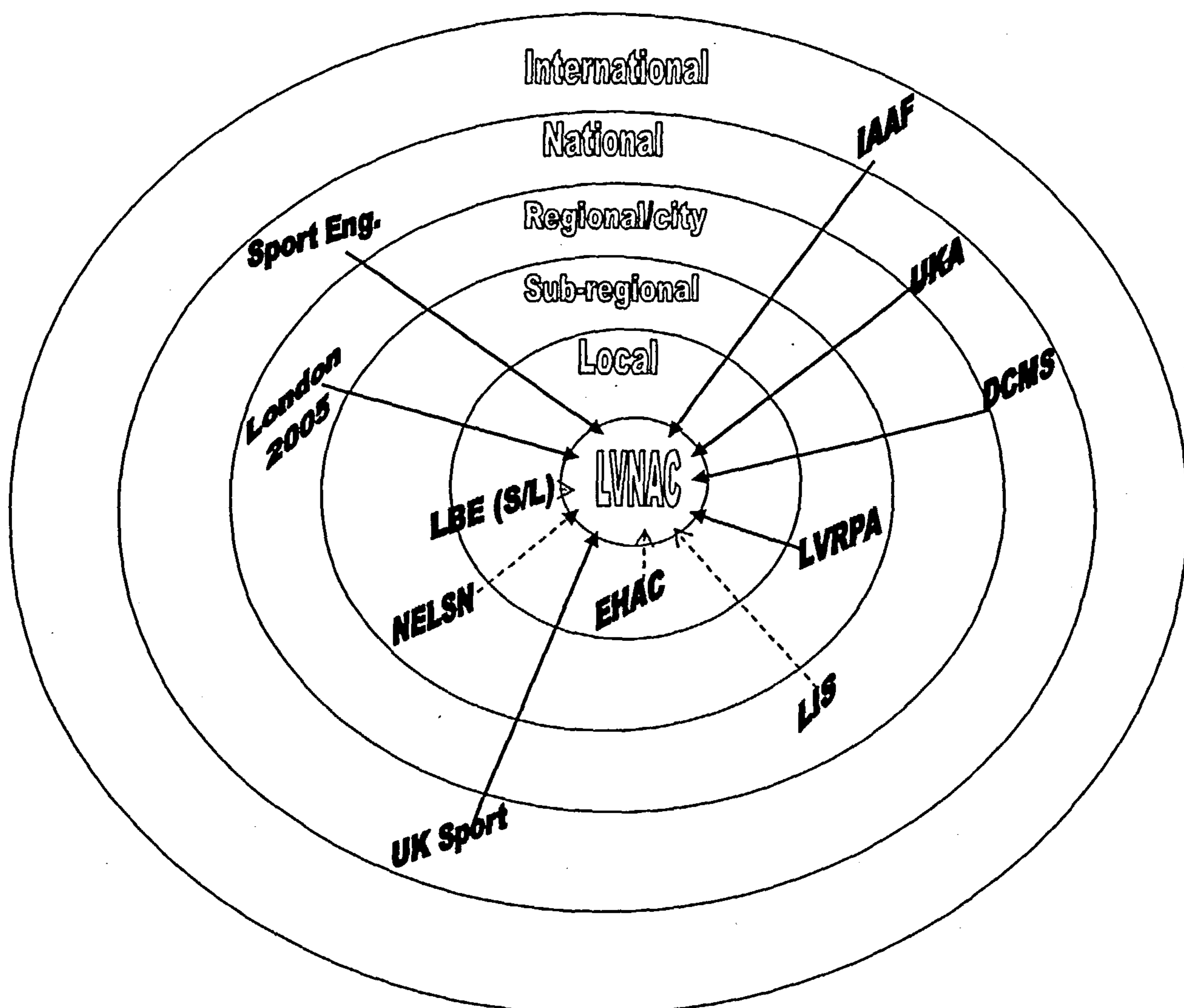
Amongst respondents there was a general feeling that the government had underestimated the damage to Britain's reputation and the political importance of sport.

Those from within the sporting world in particular, felt that the incident would linger long in the memory of the international sporting world: it should be remembered that there are strong connections between organisations and a great deal of overlap of membership of bodies such as the IOC, FIFA and IAAF. This obviously begs the question as to why the government would risk its international reputation. It may be that the domestic 'fall out' in post-Dome Britain of supporting another major project was thought to be potentially more damaging or that the government, because it neither values nor understands sport or misread the situation.

The fragmented and complex nature of the governance of British sport has been the subject of critical debate by the Select Committee (e.g. House of Commons, 1999; House of Commons, 2001a; House of Commons 2001b). They have repeatedly stated that it requires streamlining, particularly in relation to bidding for and hosting major and mega sports events (House of Commons, 1999; House of Commons, 2001a; House of Commons 2001b). Following their inquiry into the LVNAC project the Select Committee stated that "the question remains as to who should be responsible for delivering these projects (House of Commons, 2001b, p.xxvii). The problem as they saw it was that nobody in the present "muddle of local agencies, sports and governing bodies and funding Councils" has the power and authority to drive major projects forward (House of Commons, 2001b, p. xxvii).

At national level the DCMS, UK Sport and Sport England all played important roles, although they were working to what at best could be described as overlapping agenda and at other times different agendas. UK Sport had strategic responsibility for bringing major and mega-sports events to the UK and along with the UKA had been instrumental in securing the 2005 WAC. Although UK Sport through the lottery can support the costs

**Figure 5.1: The Lee Valley National Athletics Centre: the sports organisations involved and their primary level of operation**



**Legend**

Key input



Lesser input



DCMS

Department of Culture, Media and Sport

EHAC

Enfield and Haringey Athletics Club

IAAF

International Association of Athletics Federations

LBE (S/L)

London Borough of Enfield (sport and leisure)

LIS

London International Sport

London 2005

Organising Committee for the London 2005 World Athletics Championships

LVRPA

Lee Valley Regional Park Authority

NELSN

North and East London Sports Network

Sport Eng.

Sport England

UKA

UK Athletics

UK Sport

UK Sport

Source: Compiled by author



of delivering events, the responsibility for funding the development of facilities lies with Sport England, again via lottery funds. Sport England was not convinced of the merits of a stand alone athletics stadium and remained strongly committed to the tri-sport WNS project, but given its status as an NDPB working at 'arms length' from the government, it found itself in the position of key actor in the project. The DCMS did not give a clear lead, and was perceived by others to be ambiguous about the project. UK Athletics as national governing body for athletics took a lead but its small size, recent history of bankruptcy and reliance on public funding placed it in a position of dependency. Although UKA brought with it the WAC – which in itself was a big 'prize' - it was not able to make a capital contribution or underwrite the project.

At city level, London International Sport (LIS) was a pan-London organisation, formed in the absence of a strategic authority for London, with the aim of attracting international sporting events to London and ensuring such events were used to benefit the development of sport. Although small, it was a well connected organisation with links with sporting bodies, public and private sector, and had been working with the BOA on a potential London Olympic bid since 1997. LIS supported the LVNAC project and acted as broker, working behind the scenes, LIS drew together people, organisations and knowledge and came up with 'solutions' to the three main issues raised by Carter. However, LIS lacked authority and there was no discussion of these proposals by Carter in his final report. The LVNAC project evolved during the early days of the GLA but under the new arrangements there was no designated body leading on sporting matters nor was it clear quite how sport fitted into the remit of the new bodies.

At sub-regional level LVRPA was the key player as they owned the land on which the LVNAC was to be built and although experienced in developing sub-regional facilities,

they had never been involved in a project of this size or complexity. The LVRPA is unusual in London in being a sub-regional body with a sport and leisure remit and this coupled with LBE's willingness - in contrast to many other local authorities - to support sporting facilities that have more than a local role were important factors in the decision to site the proposed National Athletics Centre at the Picketts Lock site (there was another potential Lee Valley site in Hackney). Indeed several respondents highlighted the problems encountered in establishing sub-regional facilities in London. As one explained: "I think there is a huge problem that we recognise in the area that any facility has to be based in a local authority yet that local authority does not have a sub-regional remit they are worried about their local voters and council tax payers". Local authorities in London appear to find it difficult to tie into sub-regional facilities and there seems to have been a gap, with no obvious organisation either able or willing to take on the role of funding and supporting sub-regional facilities. This situation is perhaps not surprising given the governance arrangements for London which lacked strong sub-regional structures and several respondents expressed a hope that the GLA would address this issue.

The NELSN operates at the sub-regional level and is concerned with large-scale events, new facilities in the sub-region and their role in regeneration so that the LVNAC project was a central concern. However, there was a feeling amongst respondents that the NELSN contacts e.g. with athletes who could have backed the project, were not fully utilised by the LVNAC project team. At local level, the Enfield and Haringey Athletes Club (EHAC) whilst very successful on the track and field, like other athletes clubs operates on a 'shoe string' budget, highly dependent on volunteers to run it and in constant negotiations with local authorities over facilities (Enfield and Haringey). Club subscriptions and fees are kept low in order to promote accessibility and the club is

financially reliant on the tea bar and bar takings. For the EHAC the LVNAC project offered excellent training facilities. However there were some concerns about accessibility by public transport and guarantees were being sought in regards club house facilities and pre and post event arrangements (i.e. access to facilities). Like other local authorities, Enfield is a key provider of community based sport facilities but as was noted above its primary interest in the LVNAC project was regeneration not sporting. Although officers from the leisure department were instrumental in preparing and promoting the 'case' for Picketts Lock, once the site had been chosen they took on a more back seat role and it was the regeneration, planning and transportation teams that came to the fore.

#### Sport institutions and scalar relations

In summary, the LVNAC project involved a multitude of organisations with a sporting remit operating at and across different levels of governance. At international level the role of the IAAF was clear, but at other levels of governance there was less clarity about the roles and responsibilities of the various bodies. This probably reflects the complexity of the governance arrangements for sport in the UK, the nature of governance more generally and more specifically London's governance arrangements. Figure 5.2 presents a summary of the 'value' and 'place' of sport at different spatial levels with a particular focus on London and the LVNAC project. At national level the ambiguous position of sport on the political agenda and uncertainty over its 'value' has contributed to a lack of strategic thinking about mega-sporting events that was evident in the LVNAC project. The LVNAC project was not part of an integrated government strategy rather it was the 'by-product' of difficulties encountered with another major sports project.

**Figure 5.2: A summary of the 'value' and 'place' of sport at different spatial levels in the UK with particular reference to London**

<b>National</b>
<p><i>On the political agenda?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport has tended to be on the periphery of policy and politics. Long periods of neglect punctuated by periods of activity and interest. Little appreciation of the <i>intrinsic</i> value of sport but increased interest in the <i>instrumental</i> value of sport, that what it <i>can do</i> e.g. tackle social exclusion, urban regeneration, health gains.</li> <li>• DCMS relatively new and weak within government, but sports minister recently upgraded.</li> <li>• Lack of central government strategy e.g. for bidding for and hosting mega-sporting events</li> <li>• Fractured and complex governance system – two NDPS (UK Sport and Sport England), plethora of NGBS.</li> </ul>
<b>Regional/City</b>
<p><i>Sport as part of the competitiveness of city-regions</i></p> <p>Some second tier cities e.g. Manchester, Sheffield have used sport strategically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placed great emphasis on the <i>instrumental</i> value of sport, in particular used sport as a tool for place marketing, and urban regeneration.</li> <li>• Pursued a <i>mega-event strategy</i>, i.e. they have bid for large-scale, high profile sporting events, with the intention of using them as a centre piece for urban development. For example, the primary rationale behind Manchester's pursuit of the Olympics (unsuccessful) and Commonwealth Games (successful) was regeneration.</li> </ul> <p>Large metropolitan authorities e.g. Manchester, Birmingham can underwrite events and provide funding.</p> <p><i>The arrival of the Mayor/GLA: a new dawn for London?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor record on bidding/hosting mega events</li> <li>• Lack of world class sports facilities</li> <li>• But with no overall city government 1986-2000, there was no 'host city' to underwrite events, co-ordinate or provide a strategic lead on sport in general or on mega and major events.</li> </ul> <p>Overall city government reinstated in 2000:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayor/GLA pursuing a <i>mega-event strategy</i>, LOB 2012 focuses on the regeneration of East London.</li> <li>• New Aquatics centre built as part of the bidding process</li> <li>• LDA is trying to build a London 'brand'</li> <li>• Sport on the agenda, features in Mayoral strategies e.g. EDS, reports and proposals.</li> </ul>
<b>Sub-regional</b>
<p><i>'No man's land'</i></p> <p>In London difficult to get sub-regional facilities (e.g. 50m pools, High Performance Centres) established. Although capital costs often met by Sport England with lottery money, LAs reluctant to take on running costs of SR facility and neighbouring LAs do not want to support a facility that is not within their boundary. LAs tend to regard SR facilities as a drain rather than an asset.</p> <p>LVRPA- a sub-regional body and the athletics High Performance Centre fits its remit perfectly.</p> <p>Lack of a body to co-ordinate and oversee sub-regional facilities, so it is left to individual LAs</p>
<b>Local</b>
<p><i>Everyday face of sport</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local authorities:</li> <li>• Key providers of community facilities e.g. leisure pools, indoor sports halls</li> <li>• Coaching especially for children and young people</li> <li>• Work in partnership with voluntary organisations (i.e. clubs) and private sector to provide facilities, development opportunities.</li> <li>• Most sports activity continues to be delivered by voluntary organisations with clubs relying on volunteers (e.g. coaching, administration, fund raising).</li> </ul> <p>The place of sport varies from one LA to another, e.g. sport may or may not have a designated department. Sport is not high on the agenda and vulnerable to budgetary cuts in the face of financial pressures. LAs are reluctant to take on sub-regional facilities as they are wary of the on-going costs.</p>

Source: Compiled by author.

Respondents highlighted how the lack of a unitary authority for London, left the city in a weak position in relation to both bidding for and delivering major sports projects (see Figure 5.2). There had been a long term under investment in world class sports facilities and an absence of strategy and co-ordination on sporting matters. The LVNAC project straddled the pre-GLA and GLA eras, but was rooted in the pre-GLA arrangements and although there were great hopes about what the GLA and Mayor could do they were to remain unfulfilled in relation to the LVNAC project. However, since then sport has become central to the Mayor's plans for London with the 2012 Olympics. At city level sport has been identified as a tool for regeneration and a means of promoting London as a 'brand', whilst at a community level it has been identified as a way of improving social cohesion and promoting social inclusion (LDA, 2001b; Sport England, 2004a; GLA, 2003b; GLA 2003c).

At sub-regional level the LVNAC project brought into strong relief the difficulties experienced in London in establishing and sustaining sub-regional sports facilities such as the High Performance athletics centre planned for Lee Valley. With no overall body in London to co-ordinate and oversee sub-regional facilities it has been left to individual local authorities who have proved to be reluctant to provide a 'home' for facilities that they generally regard as a drain rather than an asset. The support of the local authority (Enfield) was an important factor in favour of the Picketts Lock site, along with the fact that the site was owned by one of the few sub-regional bodies with a sport remit (LVRPA). New sub-regional facilities— a velodrome, an aquatics centre and hockey centre— are being built as part of the Olympic bid<sup>27</sup>, as well the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre<sup>28</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> These facilities would have been built whether or not London had been awarded the 2012 Games

<sup>28</sup> See Appendix Five for details of the development.

On a local level the majority of sporting opportunities are provided either by the local authority or through clubs run by volunteers. Although facilities may be council owned (e.g. running track, swimming pool, sports hall), the sports clubs are primarily run by volunteers from the local community. For example, the Enfield and Haringey Athletics Club is dependent on volunteers to run the club and provide coaching. Another important provider is the private sector, in some cases the private sector provides both the facilities and coaching (e.g. private gym and fitness centres) and in other cases they utilise council facilities (e.g. private swimming lessons in a council pool). A key concern in relation to the LVNAC project was how the facilities were going to be accessed by the local community.

In summary it possible to identify three explanations about why the LVNAC project failed that are rooted in the governance of sport:

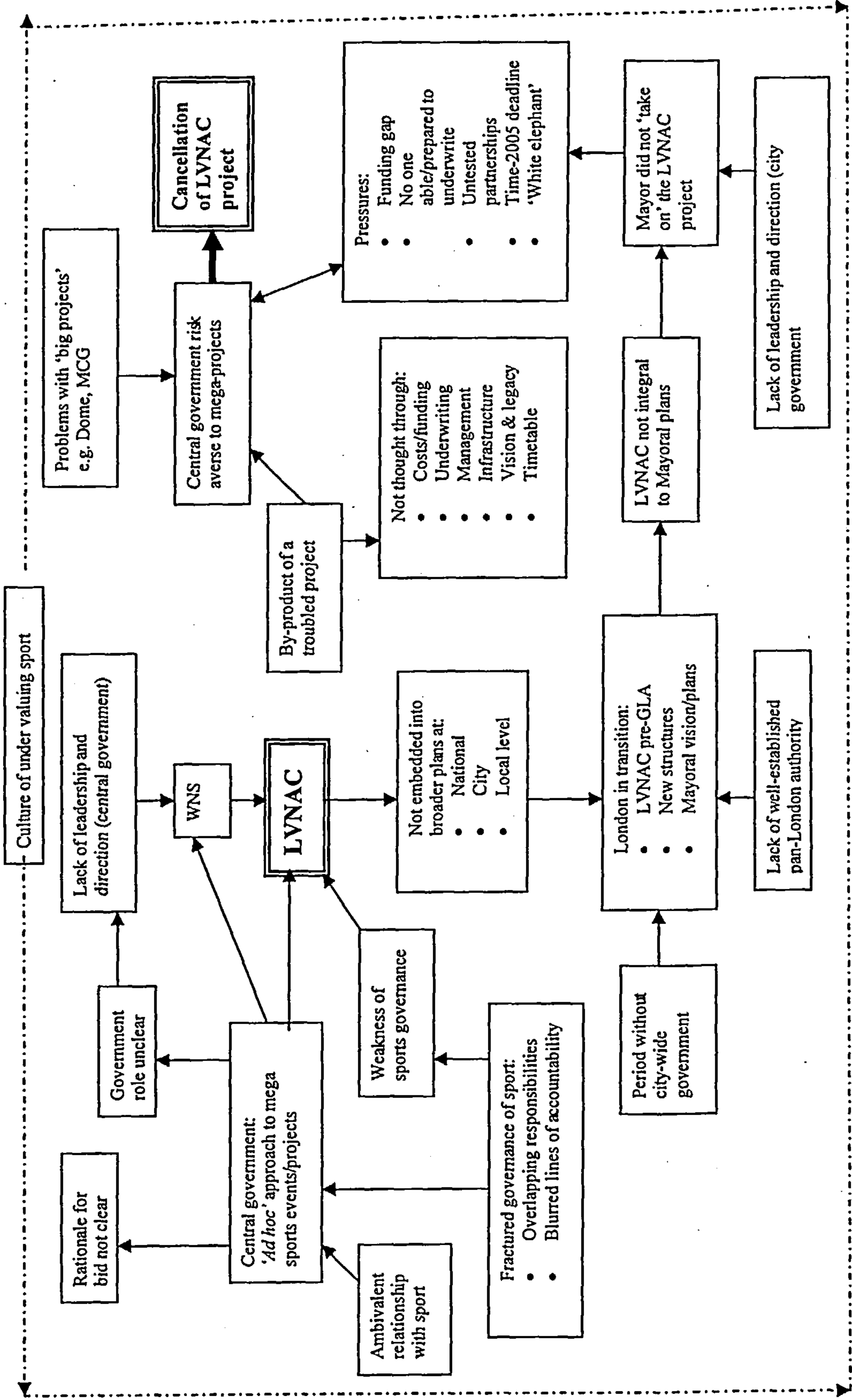
- The British political system tends to under value sport and it is not integral to policy.
- The governance of sport in the UK is weak and flawed.
- There was no strong consistent champion from sport.

## SUMMARY

Figure 5.3 draws together the reasons given for the failure of the LVNAC project and maps out how these factors inter-reacted. The LVNAC project was played out against the background of a culture within UK politics that has traditionally under valued sport. This context is important as it informed so many of the decisions taken in relation to the LVNAC project. Central government has had an ambivalent relationship with sport and its place on the policy agenda has been insecure. The governance of sport is complex

and fractured with numerous bodies with overlapping responsibilities and fuzzy lines of accountability. Given this culture it is perhaps not surprising that central government has not adopted a strategic approach to mega-sporting projects but rather approached them in *ad hoc* manner. It has not always been clear why the UK has bid for events, what they hoped to achieve in hosting particular events, how they fitted into either the broader sport landscape or regeneration agenda and problems have been encountered in delivering projects (e.g. WNS, MCG 2002). All these issues were evident in the LVNAC project. Furthermore, the LVNAC unfolded during a period of transition for London, not only was there not a well-established pan-London authority but it soon became evident that the LVNAC project did not fit into the Mayoral plans for London. Central governments negative experiences with other 'big projects' meant they were risk averse to such projects. In the case of the LVNAC its roots in the problematic WNS project probably compounded the 'sense' of risk.

Figure 5.3: Diagram to illustrate the inter-related factors that led to the failure of the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre project.





## CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has reported the key research findings, drawing upon both the interview data and documentary sources. In reflecting upon the failure of the LVNAC project, respondents spoke not only what about they thought went 'wrong' but also what they believed was required to deliver success. From their accounts and also from documents (e.g. Select Committee reports, minutes of meetings), it has been possible to identify twelve explanations as to why the LVNAC project failed. This chapter represents the first step in analysis and for the purposes of clarity the explanations were separated. However, the explanations fall into three categories and for the next stage of analysis the explanations will be grouped as follows:

### Central government and governance

1. Central government did not display total commitment to the LVNAC project.
2. The LVNAC project did not have a strong consistent champion from politics.
3. The LVNAC project was not embedded into broader strategic plans at national level.
4. Central government was 'risk averse' following the recent and on-going difficulties with large-scale sporting and cultural projects (i.e. Dome WNS).
5. The LVNAC project arose from problems with the WNS project and there was little time for the plans, partnerships and relationships to evolve and mature.

### London and city governance

6. The governance of London was in transition and the new arrangements were in the process of 'bedding down'.

7. The Mayor of London did not have the power, authority or resources to forward the LVNAC project, or to underwrite the WAC.
8. The Mayor of London was equivocal about the LVNAC project which had been designed before him came into office.
9. The LVNAC project was not embedded into broader strategic plans at city level.

### Sports governance

10. The British political system tends to undervalue sport and sport is not integral to policy.
11. The governance of sport in the UK is weak and flawed.
12. There was no strong consistent champion from sport.

Together these explanations meant that there was:

1. Lack of leaderships at national, city and local level.
2. Lack of a clear, coherent vision.

More generally, the LVNAC project was operating within a political culture of 'undervaluing' sport and a lack of clarity about what sport is for (e.g. promotion of nations, health and fitness).

The rest of this thesis will examine these elements within a wider context. By placing these findings from the case study within wider literature on mega sports events (and also the recent London Olympic bid) it will be possible to explore and develop these explanations in a comparative context to gain insights into the relationship between the success or failure of mega sporting projects and governance issues. The next chapter (Six) will focus on national and cultural issues in relation to sports governance in general and mega-sporting events in particular. Whilst Chapter Seven will examine city

level issues including the specifics of London and the London Olympic bid. Some of the explanations cut across different spatial levels, areas of policy and politics e.g. leadership and such cross cutting issues will be examined in both chapters.

## Chapter Six

### The nation state and sport

#### INTRODUCTION

The findings of the case study demonstrated the critical role of central government in the LVNAC project. More specifically it was the failure of central government in key respects – the ambivalence of their leadership, commitment and strategy - that was fundamental to the failure of the LVNAC project. In addition, the LVNAC project occurred at a specific historical moment when central government was highly sensitive and ‘risk’ averse to involvement in mega projects *per se*. The case study also established that alongside the role of central government two other factors were important. Firstly, the complex governance of sport made it difficult to provide the necessary leadership, strategy and unified vision. Secondly, the project took place within an environment and national political context where sport is ‘undervalued’.

This chapter seeks to explore these factors in more detail. Firstly, comparisons will be made with other nations. Secondly, consideration will be given to the importance of these factors more generally to the staging of successful mega sports events.

Specifically this chapter will examine:

- How the role and approach of central government to mega sports events varies and how this translates in relation to key factors; commitment, strategy, leadership, vision and resources.
- How the particularities of sports governance relate to national and international contexts.
- The value of sport within national and political cultures.

## THE ROLE OF THE CENTRAL STATE

The national state's motivation for involvement in the hosting of mega sports events reflects a variety of factors related to prestige, sense of nation and promotion of the nation on a global stage. The manner of state involvement necessarily reflects the particularities of the operation of national state systems as well as attitudes towards sport and large-scale projects more generally.

### An overview of selected major and mega-sports events

As a starting point in this examination of nation states and mega sports events Figure 6.1. presents an overview of the organisation, funding, main legacies and the 'verdict' (i.e. general perception) of ten mega and major sports events held in various nations between 1976-2004. The examples were chosen because they illustrate the diversity of approaches taken by both nations and cities, highlights the risks as well as the benefits of hosting such events and also the varied roles played by all levels of government.

Even at a glance the different roles played by national governments are evident. For example, the US federal (national) government had no input organisationally or financially into 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, whilst the French national government was a key player in the organisation and funding of the FIFA World Cup held in 1998. Interestingly both events were hailed as successes and illustrate the point that there is no

Event	National government role	Sub-national government role	City government role	Funding	Regeneration	Main legacies	Profit/debt	Organisation	Verdict
Montreal Olympics, Canada, 1976	Sanctioned Olympic lottery	Underwriter	Main player 'Grand Project'	Public £2,436m <sup>1</sup>	Yes	Debt 'White elephants'	Debt	Good	Financial disaster
Los Angeles Olympics, USA, 1984	No input	No input	No input	Private £567m <sup>1</sup>	No	Upgraded sports facilities	Profit	Good	Commercial success
Barcelona Olympics, Spain, 1992	£ and organisation	£ and organisation	Main player	Mixed (38% public <sup>2</sup> ) but public control £8,057m <sup>1</sup>	Yes	Regeneration Tourism Under utilised sports facilities	Unclear	Good	Regeneration success
Atlanta Olympics, USA, 1996	No input	No input	Sidelined	Private (15% public <sup>2</sup> ) £1,481m <sup>1</sup>	Minor	Sports facilities	Profit	Poor	'Not the best games ever'
Sydney Olympics, Australia, 2000	£ and organisation	£ and organisation Main player	Little input	Mixed (30% public <sup>1</sup> )	Yes	Under utilised facilities	Unclear	Good	Success but legacy problems
Sheffield World Student Games, UK, 1991	No input	N/A	Main player	Mostly public	Yes	Debt Sports facilities	Debt	Unclear	Financial disaster
FIFA World Football Cup, France 1998	Main player	Sub-national stadiums	Main player	Mixed	Yes	National Stadium Stade de France Upgraded sub-national stadiums	Profit	Good	Success Boost to France as a nation
Rugby World Cup 1999, Millennium Stadium, Cardiff	£ via lottery	Limited	Main player	Mixed £130m <sup>3</sup> 40% public <sup>4</sup>	No	National stadium Well utilised	RWC'99 profit but construction debt to be paid	Good	Success
Manchester Commonwealth Games, UK, 2002	£ via lottery and organisation	Unclear	Main player	Public	Yes	Sport facilities Regeneration	Profit	Good	Success - showed that GB can deliver
Athens Olympics 2004, Greece	Main player	Unclear	Unclear	Public £6.3 billion <sup>5</sup>	Yes	Under used sports facilities Debt	Debt (costs double the original estimate)	Good	Games a success but left with debt and white elephants.

Figure 6.1: Overview of organisation, funding, and outcomes of mega and major sporting events  
 Compiled by author Notes: <sup>1</sup> 2002 prices, House of Commons (2003), p.8; <sup>2</sup> DCMS/SU (2002) p.67; <sup>3</sup> Jones (2002a), p.823; <sup>4</sup> Jones (2002b), p.163; <sup>5</sup> BBC (2004a)

one route to success. In certain cases, sub-national government is important (e.g. state level for the Sydney Olympics). In some instances e.g. Barcelona, Manchester, city government played a central role in driving the whole process (bid to delivery), investing money and other resources (e.g. personnel), whilst in others e.g. Atlanta, LA, Sydney, city government had a limited role. The sources of funding and cost of mega events also varies, with some events being funded from the public purse (e.g. Montreal), occasionally from private sources (e.g. LA) and more commonly from both private and public sources (e.g. Sydney Olympics, Rugby World Cup in Cardiff). The costs range enormously and reflect the different approaches taken, with in some cases (e.g. Barcelona, Manchester) heavy investment in infrastructure (e.g. public transport), whilst in others the focus was on sport venues (e.g. Atlanta). The high costs of Athens were to a large extent due to delays in construction which mean there was a costly 'push' (e.g. 24 hour working) to get the venues completed on time (BBC 2004b; Laurence, 2004) and also the increased security costs post '9/11'. It is also evident from the table that 'success' comes in a variety of forms and whether an event is perceived as 'successful' or not depends partly on the time frame. For example, immediate success may be tempered by legacy problems with cities being left with underused or even empty facilities, for example, Sydney and Athens. Also highlighted are the 'risks' of hosting large-scale sports events, with Montreal and Sheffield both being left with considerable debts and Atlanta being remembered primarily for its organisational problems (e.g. transport chaos) rather than events on the field. Having taken a brief overview of mega-sport events and nations states, the next section will explore ideas that emerged from the case study data about the different approaches taken by national governments to mega events.

A typology of national government approaches to mega-sports events

In the case study there was agreement that national government backing was a prerequisite of a successful major or mega sporting event, with examples being given to support this view (e.g. French government support of the 1998 FIFA World Cup). However, a diverse range of opinions was expressed as to what exactly the role of government should be and once again examples were given to back the various arguments. From the case study data and literature it is possible to identify three approaches (see Figure 6.2) along a continuum with at one end a 'hands on' approach and at the other end a 'hands off' approach. It is important to note, firstly, that these are ideal types and are being used as a heuristic device – in reality the approach taken by national governments is far 'messier' and less clear cut. Secondly, these categories are not fixed and as discussed below there is evidence that national governments shift between these positions over time.

**Figure 6.2: National government and the delivery of mega and major sporting events: a typology of approaches**

	<i>'Hands on'</i>	<i>'In the wings'</i>	<i>'Hands off'</i>
<i>Leadership</i>	Central government	City government or; private sector or; NGO	Private sector
<i>Primary scale</i>	National	City	Unclear
<i>Underwritten by central government</i>	Yes	Yes	No
<i>Contribution to funding</i>	Yes	Yes	No
<i>Strategy</i>	Yes	Yes	Maybe
<i>Cross-departmental support</i>	Yes	Yes	No

Compiled by author



The 'hands on' approach is perhaps best exemplified by France and Australia<sup>1</sup>, where national government has taken the view that mega sports events are of national importance and as such they should take the lead. As one respondent argued:

In my view and if you look at international experience this is definitely the case, these projects can only work if the government takes the lead and actually becomes the lead partner in developing the project...if you look at Sydney Olympic Games or the French World Cup in all those instances the government is taking a very leading role in ensuring that this is delivered on time.

A strong lead by central government usually means that there is a focus on national gains, such as pride and prestige rather than the benefits to the host city or region *per se*. Events are seen through a 'national' lens i.e. what will the economic benefit be to the nation, rather than the regeneration benefits to a city or part of a city.

The 'in the wings' approach was advocated by respondents who were wary of allowing central government to get too close, believing that there are good reasons for maintaining distance and suggested that rather than increasing the level of government intervention, central government should stand back. As one respondent argued:

Total commitment and will from the government and then get the hell out of the way for delivery. You know get a champion, get appropriately skilled people,

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that although the New South Wales state government was primarily responsible for the bid for the Sydney Olympics and the delivery of the games Jobling (2000) argues it would have remained a dream without the support of the federal government, who not only committed resources but also granted permission to NSW to borrow substantial funds to enable construction to begin early and boost the bid's chances of success.

never mind niceties and democratic accountabilities – sod them, get a team of people who can deliver it and then leave them alone and stop tampering – say I will underwrite, no problem with the money, this is what you said it will cost, bring it in.

Some respondents believed that the decision to bid for major and mega events should be city based and the staging of the event led by the city with central government backing rather than led by central government. Others thought that as long as there was total commitment from the government (i.e. underwriting, funding) and robust project management structures had been put in place then a variety of different organisations could take up the mantle. For one respondent:

I would say... get absolute government guarantees to support the bid...and putting in the right project management to make sure it is delivered- that has to be the key for a major national, international event or facility... that can be done in different ways, either the government can take the lead, or if it doesn't want to directly take a lead then it, and perhaps the GLA doesn't want to take a lead then perhaps they put in the people and resources to make sure that who ever are the delivery agents can do it and that has to be the main lesson.

The Barcelona Olympics are an example of the 'in the wings' approach. The Games were very much a product of city government – it was the Mayor of the city council who proposed the idea as a means of urban regeneration. Although the city leaders led the bid and subsequent delivery of the Olympics, it was with the support of both regional (Catalonia) and national governments. For example, although the infrastructure

changes are usually credited to the city council in fact the national government made a substantial financial contribution to the Games and associated developments<sup>2</sup> (Varley, 1992). Short (2003) argues that the success of the Barcelona Games was in part because the three scales of nation, region and city all benefited in some way. Spain enhanced its reputation as an efficient democracy, Catalonia got a economic boost and strengthened its identity and Barcelona improvements to its infrastructure and image. In this case the ‘in the wings’ approach probably reflects the regionalised nature of governance in Spain.

The ‘hands on’ approach and the ‘in the wings’ approach are both underpinned by a coherent, co-ordinated strategy. There is a key difference in scale, as noted above the ‘hands on’ approach tends to focus on national priorities. For the ‘in the wings’ approach the focus of activity is the city/region, rather than the nation. This is not to say that national considerations are not important, rather that they are secondary to those of the city and this reflects the city led nature of the approach.

The third approach in the typology, - the ‘hands off’ approach - does not arise from the LVNAC data and although it represents an extrapolation from *this* data, examples of the ‘hands off’ approach can be found within the literature. The approach taken to the staging of the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles was very much ‘hands off’ – it was private sector led and funded without the financial support of federal, state or city governments. The success of LA Games runs counter to the argument forwarded in the case study that the support of national government was essential. However, within this

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<sup>2</sup> Marshall (1992) argues that one of the main aims of Barcelona’s Mayor was to use the Olympics as a tool to lever money from national government to augment the modest sums usually available to Spanish city councils.

approach the private sector needs to be confident that they will be able 'to get on with the job' without interference from national, regional and city governments. Government at all levels have to provide the frameworks (i.e. through policies, legislation) for the private sector to operate in. This approach probably reflects the governance arrangements of American cities and the leading role played by business in shaping cities and also the fact that there is no federal support for sport (Houlihan, 1997; Carter, 2005a). The roots of the bid lay in a desire to promote and enhance the image of the city of LA, but the organisers did not seek to change the infrastructure of the city or leave it with numerous new sports facilities. In the case of the LA Games sport was harnessed for its commercial potential and with great success as the games generated a handsome profit. However, it should be noted that it is rare for mega-sporting events not to involve the input of national government and within the case study the total commitment of central government was viewed as essential to the delivery of a successful mega event.

The LVNAC project provides a clear example of UK government's approach to staging major and mega sporting events in recent years. It is an approach characterised by ambiguity, muddle, uncertain interventions and lack of a co-ordinated strategy as central government shifts between the different positions outlined above. Within the LVNAC project central government did not take a clear lead on the project - they were not 'hands on' – but neither did they designate, empower or create a body to lead the delivery of the LVNAC nor did they underwrite the project or WAC– they were not 'in the wings'. Central government did not leave it to the private sector to work unimpeded– they were not 'hands off'. Moreover, central government shifted between these positions during the LVNAC project, as it has with other large scale projects (e.g.

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WNS, MCG). The result was ambiguity and lack of clarity about the role and responsibilities of the various players including central government, governmental departments, regional and sub-regional government and sport bodies.

Although there are advocates of a 'hands on' approach within the British political system<sup>3</sup>, there exists a traditional 'lukewarm' attitude towards 'grand projects' that has been exacerbated in recent years by problems with 'grand projects' such as the Dome. As already noted within the case study there were no calls for central government to take a 'hands off' approach, indeed the emphasis was on central government as a key player in the process. In shifting from one position to another central government seemed to be attempting to find a new position between a strong central state and a liberalised free market, a 'middle way' where central government acts as an enabler and stands 'in the wings'. This reflects wider debates both within New Labour and internationally about the changing role of the state and its relationship with private and 'third' sectors. However, as has been very evident with the problems encountered with 'grand projects' finding this balance is not a straightforward process, rather it is one that involves constant renegotiation and rethinking. The review of mega and major events as part of a broader review of sports policy (DCMS/SU, 2002), following the abandonment of the LVNAC project was part of this process and the Olympic bid provided an opportunity to put into place what had been learnt from both the review and experience.

What is interesting is that the subsequent London Olympic bid shows signs of finding this balance and displays characteristics of the 'in the wings' approach. However, given that there were points along the trajectory bid where central government support did not

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<sup>3</sup> For example, since 1999 the House of Commons Select Committee on Sport, Media and Culture has repeatedly called for a Minister for Events (House of Commons, 1999; House of Commons, 2000; House

seem to be forthcoming<sup>4</sup>, it was really only in the latter stages of the competition that this 'label' could be assigned<sup>5</sup>. Unlike in earlier bids, the decision by central government to support a bid for the 2012 Olympic was informed and considered<sup>6</sup>. Central government provided high level cross-departmental support and approved a public funding package<sup>7</sup> jointly with the Mayor<sup>8</sup>. The Mayor acted as a constant champion for the 2012 bid, with the Olympics being central to his vision for London and the vehicle for the regeneration of East London<sup>9</sup>. As the bid progressed, particularly following the replacement of the initial Chair (Barbara Cassani) with Seb Coe and the changes he made to strengthen the team<sup>10</sup>, the bid team appeared to gain the confidence of central government and conversely the bid team seemed to grow in confidence: there was a synergistic relationship. What remains to be seen is whether this relationship can be sustained and the actual Games delivered alongside the infrastructural improvements in 2012. (There will be further discussion of the Olympic bid in the next chapter (7)).

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of Commons, 2001a; House of Commons 2001b), to assume "direct responsibility for a Government strategy on major events of international status" (House of Commons, 1999, p. xxxii).

<sup>4</sup> For example, there was much deliberation about whether the government would back the bid or not. This was variously interpreted by respondents and the media alike as necessary caution or not giving the 'right' impression.

<sup>5</sup> MacKay (2005) argues that "In less than two years the Prime Minister has gone from being a sceptic to a supporter, prepared to travel 6000 miles on the eve of a G8 summit he is hosting to lobby IOC members" (p.3) and that this was largely due to the efforts of Seb Coe.

<sup>6</sup> For example a feasibility study was commissioned (Arup, 2002), the proposals were scrutinised by the Select Committee (House of Commons, 2003), a funding package agreed with the Mayor and a cabinet level committee considered the bid and made the decision to proceed.

<sup>7</sup> The funding package is worth up to £2.375 billion, including £1.5 billion from a special Olympic lottery (Kelso, 2005, p. 30).

<sup>8</sup> The Mayor found a way round his limited resources via an Olympic precept that will cost the average household living a council tax band D property) £20 a year starting from the financial year 2006-2007 (GLA, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> The Olympics will act as the engine for a £7 billion regeneration of London's infrastructure and £800 million redevelopment of the Lower Lea Valley (McRae, 2005).

<sup>10</sup> For example, he strengthened the role of the Chief Executive (Keith Mills) and brought in MI Associates headed by Jim Sloman who was Chief Operating Officer for Sydney 2000 to work on the technical side of the bid (BBC 2004c).

This shift in approach is not unique to the UK. In the case of France, the approach to staging major sporting and cultural events has traditionally been interventionist and reflective of a 'strong' state and a long term commitment to 'grand projects'. However, there is evidence that this is changing, Newman and Tual (2002) argued that radical changes in the governance of urban renewal means that the construction of the Stade de France (SdF) and the hosting of the 1998 World Cup were probably some of the last expressions of French centralism. Although the decisions on location, design and management of the SdF were made by the President and Prime Minister, the impacts of the SdF on the development of the area have been managed through complex arrangements of inter-communal and inter-governmental co-operation. Moreover, Newman and Tual concluded that: "This inter-communal and multi-level process has come to represent the French style more than the wave of the Presidential hand" (2002, p. 832). In both examples national government are adapting to broader changes in governance and the evolving role of the nation state.

### Summary

What is evident from the case study data and supported by the literature is that there are a variety of approaches to staging major events and they reflect the prevailing governance arrangements. For example, the leading role taken by the French government in developing sporting facilities and hosting major events has reflected the centralised nature of the French state. These different approaches all have their advantages and disadvantages: there is no 'right way'. For example, a highly centralised system may get the project delivered swiftly but a lack of engagement can often lead to legacy problems and alienate certain groups<sup>11</sup> The difficulties encountered by the UK

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<sup>11</sup> This was the case in Sydney and will be discussed in the next chapter (Seven).

with mega-sports projects have arisen from a tendency to shift between the three positions and thus there has been lack of clarity of approach. What is also clear is that the relationship between governance and mega-events is dynamic and interactive, developing as a result of bidding for and hosting events (e.g. Manchester) and also as governance arrangements change (e.g. in France). The LVNAC project seems to have been a step in the process of learning how the nation and London more specifically should approach mega-events and the London Olympic bid allowed the nation and London to put this new knowledge into practice.

## THE GOVERNANCE OF SPORT

The case of the LVNAC demonstrated the complex and fragmented nature of sports governance in the UK and how this limited its ability to act effectively. This is linked into a political culture that undervalues or is ambivalent towards the value of sport. The aim of this section is to explore how particular this situation is to the UK. From Chapter Two we know that nations organise the governance of sport very differently, that the arrangements for the governance of sport often reflect more general governance arrangements and the value placed upon sport varies from nation to nation. For example, in France there is a system with clear divisions of responsibility radiating from a central government department and this reflects a governance system where the State has traditionally played a central role. In fact 'sports governance' is unique worldwide because of the very powerful position of international bodies which will be explored before turning attention to the governance of sport within the UK.



### International governance of sport

So far the discussion has focused on the governance of sport within the borders of nation states. However as was noted in Chapter Two the governance of sport goes well beyond the boundaries of nation states. It is the world governing bodies, such as IOC, FIFA, and IAAF that award the mega events to nations and cities and this in itself means that they wield a great deal of power. Research<sup>12</sup> has shown that the world governing bodies are some of the most powerful and undemocratic institutions in the world (e.g. Jennings 1996; Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998; Palmer, 2000; Short 2003). Sugden and Tomlinson (1998) argue that “organisations like the IOC, IAAF and *Fédération Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA) are part of the apex of a multibillion dollar global sports economy. As such, these bodies have much to show off, but even more to hide” (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). They are International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) with global remits but they are not accountable to any particular national government or governments. Sugden and Tomlinson (1998) have argued they are important because they outflank nation states and threaten borders and often regard themselves as above the jurisdiction of nation states. They certainly are not beholden to nation states, for example, the IAAF displayed no hesitation in informing the British government that they could not switch the 2005 WAC from London to Sheffield and the bidding process would be re-opened. Similarly, FIFA has attempted to override decisions made the European Court<sup>13</sup> and British courts<sup>14</sup> (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). Sugden and Tomlinson (1998) suggest that FIFA is also an Off-

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<sup>12</sup> These organisations are challenging to research, see Sugden and Tomlinson (1998; 1999) and Palmer for discussion on the methods they employed to get beyond official accounts.

<sup>13</sup> For example, the ‘Bosman’ ruling on the transfer of players (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998).

<sup>14</sup> For example, about Welsh teams playing in England (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998).

Shore Financial Centre (OFC) that is a centre that hosts financial activities that are separated from major regulating units (i.e. states) by geography and/or by legislation.

International sporting bodies are not representative bodies. They are the preserve of rich, well connected men<sup>15</sup> in which personal and business connections intertwine with business (e.g. Jennings, 1996; Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998). As Short (2003) points out, a quick glance at the biographies of the IOC members reveals a membership dominated by rich business people: corporate lawyers, presidents of business groups and company directors figure prominently. World governing bodies are often headed up by very powerful individuals whose influence extends well beyond the specific organisation and sport<sup>16</sup>. Sugden and Tomlinson's (1998) research on the structures, values and ideologies of FIFA and Palmer's (2000) work on the *La Societe du Tour de France* (they oversee the *Tour de France* bike race) revealed how their strength came through their networks and alliances. From their research it is evident that many of the connections, networks and alliances are only made visible at launch parties and other similar events to which access is carefully controlled (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998; Palmer, 2000).

Events in relation to the London Olympic bid support these earlier findings. In replacing Barbara Cassani, an American business woman, new to the world of international sport, with Lord Sebastian Coe, as Chair of the London 2012 Olympic bid, the Organising Committee highlighted the immense value of Coe's personal and professional

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<sup>15</sup> For example, in 2002 seven of the 123 members of the IOC were women (Short, 2003, p. 5).

<sup>16</sup> For instance, Dr Joao Havelange, President of FIFA for over twenty years, was to be found on a number of influential boards and committees and was a member of the IOC (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998).

connections. Coe is as a former Olympic champion<sup>17</sup>, personal friend of IOC members, and member of the IAAF committee, and as such is well known within international sporting circles (Goodbody, 2004a; Mackay, 2004) and it also means that Coe knows the 'rules of the game'.<sup>18</sup> In addition, Coe as a former Member of Parliament has connections within the British political establishment and again knows the 'rules of the game'. Cassani was chosen for her business acumen, but she did not possess these vital sporting and political networks and having an American heading up a British bid may have struck some IOC members as odd. These factors probably combined to make her, with hindsight, an unlikely and unwise choice to lead the London bid.

Over the years large scale corruption within the IOC has been uncovered<sup>19</sup> and following the corruption scandal surrounding the 2002 Winter Olympics held in Salt Lake City<sup>20</sup> the rules have been tightened. For example, IOC members are no longer permitted to visit the bid cities or receive gifts of any kind (Mackay, 2003). Short (2003) argues these reforms were minor and that the IOC, along with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organisation (WTO) and World Bank remains "an important, undemocratic, unaccountable globalising organisation" (p.5). The shortcomings of these institutions seemed to be 'glossed over' by national and city governments in the pursuit of mega events. National and city governments go to great lengths to secure events, making ambitious promises and major development decisions on the basis that they are bidding for an event – London 2012 is a clear example of this.

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<sup>17</sup> Seb Coe won four Olympic medals in total, two gold medals for the 1500m (1980 and 1984) and two silver medals for the 800m (1980 and 1984).

<sup>18</sup> One 'rule' that is often reported in the British press is that at IOC meetings and gatherings the bid team should stay in the bar until the last IOC member has left. This was one of the 'rules' that Cassani found difficult to follow (Kelso, 2003).

<sup>19</sup> See Simson and Jennings (1992) and Jennings (1996) for accounts of corruption within the Olympic movement.

The wisdom of this approach has been called into question<sup>21</sup> the argument being that national and city governments should be making such decisions independently on based national and city needs, not leaving them to a group of external actors with their own agenda.

## SPORTS GOVERNANCE IN ENGLAND

Having considered sports governance in comparative context in Chapter Two it is clear that arrangements are highly diverse and reflect the particularities of state systems, the role of voluntary bodies and wider attitudes towards sport. What is also evident from this comparison and from the case study is the UK system's:

- lacks of a strong central government department;
- lack of a stronger and well resourced voluntary organisation;
- lack of strong sub-national state bodies to take a leadership role;
- lack of strong autonomous local bodies (such as colleges).

The following discussion focuses on the arrangements and policy in place at time of the LVNAC project (1999-2001). However, since then there has been a lot of activity on the sport policy front, many changes have either taken place or are in train and the key reports and developments will be highlighted.

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<sup>20</sup> The leaders of Salt Lake City, Utah, USA spent \$1m (£560,00) in cash and favours on IOC delegates and their families in order to secure the right to host the 2002 Winter Games (Mackay, 2003).

<sup>21</sup> For example, in relation to the LOB Kate Hoey, Sports Minister 1999-2001, argued in an interview for the BBC that: "If we want to regenerate London, regenerate London, but don't wait for 123 IOC members to decide we are going to regenerate it" (BBC/Hoey, 2004).

A multitude of organisations have responsibility for sport in the UK. Some organisations have a UK remit, others a national one, whilst others are concerned with one sector of sport (e.g. athletics) and in the key ones at the turn of the twenty-first century are set out in Figure 6.3. They have evolved ad-hoc over time and the result is a complex, fragmented and overlapping system (Roche, 1993; Henry 2001; Houlihan and White, 2002; Oakley and Green, 2001; DCMS/SU, 2002).

**Figure 6.3: Key organisations involved in sport in England**

National (Government)	National (Non Government)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCMS</li> <li>• Other Government departments e.g. DfES, ODPM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK Sport</li> <li>• UK Sports Institute</li> <li>• Sport England</li> <li>• English Institute of Sport</li> <li>• National Governing Bodies (NGBs)</li> <li>• National Sports Organisations (NSOs) inc. Youth Sports Trust, CCPR &amp; Sportscoach UK</li> <li>• British Olympic Organisation (BOA)</li> </ul>
Regional	Local
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport England Regional Offices</li> <li>• Regional Cultural Consortia</li> <li>• Regional Sports Boards</li> <li>• Government Offices</li> <li>• Regional Federations of Sport and Recreation</li> <li>• County Partnerships</li> <li>• NGB regional and county level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Authorities</li> <li>• NGB local level</li> <li>• Local Sports Councils</li> <li>• Local Sports Clubs and Associations</li> <li>• Private Health and Fitness Clubs</li> <li>• Further and Higher Education Institutions</li> <li>• Schools (private and state)</li> </ul>

Source: adapted by author from DCMS/SU (2002), p.38.

Within government structure sport falls under the remit of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The two main governing bodies, English Sport Council (commonly known as Sport England), and UK Sports Council (commonly known as UK Sport) are Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs), that is they have a role in the processes of national government but are not government departments or part of one and thus operate at arm's length from Ministers. UK Sport and Sport England began operating under a Royal Charter in 1997 and are accountable to Parliament through the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Their work is scrutinised by the House of Commons through the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee and the Public Accounts Committee. Members of the Councils are appointed by the Secretary of State. Prior to 1997 the development of sport rested with the GB Sports Council, which also had an UK wide remit on issues such as international affairs (Sport England, No date).<sup>22</sup>

This streamlining of the organisational structure in 1997 was the result of debates going back a decade and presented in the government policy paper *Sport: Raising the Game* (DNH, 1995). Oakley and Green (2001) argue that the origins of the restructuring lie in the 1980s Conservative government's desire to reduce state intervention in all areas of social and economic policy. Under the revised structure the GB Council was abolished, and was replaced by Sport England, and UK Sport was established to focus on high performance sport at the UK level and to take a lead among the four home countries Sport Councils in the areas of strategic planning, co-ordination and representation. One area of responsibility for UK Sport was attracting and running major events.

Sport England was given two main roles. Firstly, to develop and maintain the infrastructure of sport in England. Secondly, to distribute the National Lottery funds to

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<sup>22</sup> Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland already had their own Sports Councils (Sport England, No date).

grass root and major sporting projects. Sport England is funded jointly by the government (via the Exchequer) and through the National Lottery: the exchequer funding is primarily used to maintain sports infrastructure whilst the national lottery funds are used for the development of sport (Sport England, No date). The new structure inherited a number of problems, as Tony Banks, then Minister for Sport pointed out: “We have 112 recognised sports in Britain. We also have 397 governing bodies, five Sports Councils and four ministers. It’s nonsense.” (Banks, quoted in Miller, 1998).

Oakley and Green (2001) argue that the underlying tensions and conflicts in this revised structure revolved around two issues. First, there was the background of increasing devolution and deference to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Second, originally UK Sport was conceived as a pan-British authority that would have a strong role throughout sport, but it ended up with very limited funding and as a consequence had little power to achieve its aims. As Roche (1993) argues: “Authority may or may not follow money, but power certainly does” (p. 80). UK Sport was not given any Lottery distribution rights. In contrast, Sport England was endowed with over 80 per cent of the UK’s lottery fund. Certainly within the LVNAC project Sport England’s control over lottery funding meant that they wielded considerable power<sup>23</sup>. In 1998 an attempt was made to return both power and authority to UK Sport when it was announced that UK Sport was to become a Lottery distributor and that it would “work alongside a Sports Cabinet” chaired by the DCMS minister (DCMS, 1998 cited in Oakley and Green, 2001, p. 83). The weaknesses in the structure are evident in relation to major events, with UK Sport being responsible for attracting major sporting projects and Sport England responsible for funding them. The Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee

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<sup>23</sup> In addition, the exchequer grants allocated to the central UK Sport were limited compared to those given to the home country Sport Councils.

(House of Commons, 2002a, p.24) concluded that this division of responsibilities contributed to the problems of both the Wembley National Stadium development and the aborted LVNAC.

The beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been a time of uncertainty and instability for Sport England, with changes in the senior management team<sup>24</sup> and a drop in lottery income of around £100m in the past four years (Chaudhary, 2002a). In 2003 following the recommendations of the *Game Plan*<sup>25</sup> Sport England was restructured<sup>26</sup> and has shifted away from being a service provider to focus on strategic development, with the 75 stand alone Sport England programmes being replaced by two strategic funding platforms (DCMS, 2004, p.14). The National Governing Bodies Investment Platform will provide funding for modernisation of governing bodies with funding being concentrated on 20 priority sports. The other platform – Community Investment – will deliver Lottery funding via the nine Regional Sports Board. These reforms have been implemented by a new Chief Executive (Roger Draper) and new Chair (Lord Patrick Carter). Some concerns were raised that the appointment of Carter was a political move by the government to oversee the reform of Sport England and help attract private investment for projects (Chaudhary, 2002a).

The reform process did not end there. Following the award of the 2012 Olympics to London, central government announced reforms to streamline the way sport is organised

<sup>24</sup> David Moffet was appointed as Chief Executive in January 2002 following a period with a ‘caretaker’ CE, in October 2002 he announced his decision to leave in March 2003 – he actually left shortly after the announcement and once again there was an Acting CE – Roger Draper – who had arrived at Sport England in September 2002, he was appointed CE in March 2003 and announced his departure in February 2006. Trevor Brooking stepped down as Chair in October 2002 and Patrick Carter was appointed in November 2002.

<sup>25</sup> The *Game Plan* was the report of the review of sports policy announced following the abandonment of the LVNAC project and loss of the 2005 WAC. See later in this chapter for further discussion.



and to clarify the responsibilities of UK Sport and Sport England (DCMS, 2005a). In particular there is going to a clearer organisational distinction between elite and community sport (DCMS, 2005a). In the future UK Sport will have full responsibility for the funding and development of elite sport: this involves the transfer of some responsibilities from Sport England to UK Sport<sup>27</sup>. The aim is to create an integrated 'one stop' system that takes the athlete from talent identification through to winning medals (DCMS, 2005a). Sport England will focus on encouraging greater participation and development of grassroots sport through its regional sports boards (DCMS, 2005a). A key aim of these changes is to boost Britain's medal tally at the 2012 Games, and it represents a continuation of a process that began following the poor performance of British athletes at the 1996 Atlanta Games that led to a programme of investment in elite athletes that has paid off with improved performances at subsequent Games.<sup>28</sup> It also mirrors the actions of other nations, notably Australia, who having secured the Olympics wanted to ensure plenty of medals for home athletes<sup>29</sup>.

### National governing bodies

Within the UK each sport has at least one national governing body (NGB) which oversees rules and competitions and delivers funds, with the emphasis being on coaches,

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<sup>26</sup> This has involved halving the number of staff and in doing so reducing staffing costs by £12 million (DCMS, 2004, p.14).

<sup>27</sup> From April 2006 the responsibility for the World Class Potential Programme for Olympic and Para Olympic Sports, the Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS), London 2012 Scholarships and the funding and directing of the English Institute of Sport (EIS) will transfer from Sport England to UK Sport England (UK Sport, 2005).

<sup>28</sup> In Atlanta (1996) Britain got 15 medals, following an investment of almost \$1.5 billion (Short, 2003) in Sydney (2000) Britain got 28 medals and in Athens (2004) 30 medals were won following an investment of £68 million in athletes (Burgess, 2004).

<sup>29</sup> The Australian Sports Commission implemented a six year elite development programme aimed at winning 60 medals. One of the programmes, the Olympic Athlete Programme received over A\$400m from combined federal and state funding (Magdalinski, 2003). The medal tally of 58 medals was a record.

officials and administrators. Examples include UK Athletics and the Football Association which are the NGBs for their respective sports. There are over 300 governing bodies for the 112 recognised sports in the UK (DCMS/SU, 2002, p.39), and there is no one umbrella organisation<sup>30</sup>. This large number is in part because there are subsets of some sports (e.g. representing women). There is also some Home Country representation. But it means that for most sports there are rival organisations competing for resources. Sports Councils give the NGBs money to deliver programmes, e.g. in 1999-2000 Sport England gave the English NGBs £12m (DCMS/SU, 2002, p.39). In contrast in France there is one national governing body per sport and they all belong to one umbrella organisation<sup>31</sup>.

It has been recognised that the tradition of amateurism in British sport has left many NGBs ill equipped for the modern world. For example, the Carter (2005b) sport review highlighted that NGBs often lack the necessary resources and skills to attract commercial sponsorship at the grassroots level<sup>32</sup> and many NGBs are heavily reliant on funding from bodies such as Sporting England and UK Sport. In recent years the emphasis has been on modernisation, with UK Sport running a government funded Modernisation Programme and as noted above a major part of Sport England's work is now focused on modernising governing bodies and providing funds for modernised bodies to deliver on a number of objectives including coaching development and

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<sup>30</sup> In fact the umbrella organisation the Central Council Physical Recreation represents 270 of them (CCPR, 2005).

<sup>31</sup> All sporting federations belong to the umbrella organisation *Comité National Olympique et Sportif Français* (Dine, 1998).

<sup>32</sup> Sponsorship at grassroots levels is estimated to be 15 per cent of the total according to a survey conducted by Mintel in 2002 and used as supporting evidence by Carter (2005a, p.22 )

volunteering. Furthermore many NGBs have recently been or are currently subject to review and reform, including UK Athletics<sup>33</sup> and the FA<sup>34</sup>.

Another important national body is the British Olympic Association (BOA)<sup>35</sup>. It is one of two hundred National Olympic Committees, (NOCs) recognised by International Olympic Committee (IOC) and is one of only six NOCs that do not receive government or public finance: funds are raised by commercial income (sponsorship and licensing) and through a nationwide appeal. There are 35 governing bodies of Olympic sports and these provide an elected representative to form the NOC which is responsible for decision and policy making (BOA, 2000). The NOC has exclusive authority to designate the city that can apply to organise the games in its country. Although the Olympic Games were held in London 1908 and 1948, the 2012 Games are the first to be secured via a competitive bid. Following unsuccessful bids by Birmingham and Manchester, the BOA decided that the only British city that stood any chance of hosting the Olympic was London and that any future bid would centre on London. In May 2003 the Government announced that it would support a London bid for the 2012 Olympics and provided funding for the bid<sup>36</sup>. In May 2003 London was short-listed and along with Paris, Madrid, New York and Moscow became a candidate city and in July 2005

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<sup>33</sup> Since 2002 UK Athletics have been working with UK Sport on a modernisation project. Following the recommendations of the Foster Review (2004) UK Athletics will be leaner and have a more strategic role, whilst a new body Athletics England (replacing the Amateur Athletics Association of England) will have operational responsibility for delivering all aspects of athletics except the management of elite athletes and anti-doping work primarily through nine regions or 'hubs'. The new structure is due to be rolled out in April 2006.

<sup>34</sup> A structural review of the FA conducted by Lord Burns reported in August 2005. Burns (2005) concluded that changes in football (e.g. increased TV revenues, sponsorship) means that the FA is in need of reform to enable it to function effectively. His proposals include a restructuring of the FA Board, a more representative FA Council, a Regulation and Compliance Unit and a Community Football Alliance.

<sup>35</sup> It was formed in 1905 as the National Olympic Committee (NOC) for Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

<sup>36</sup> Central government and the LDA both provided £10 million for the bid and London 2012 raised a further £9 million of private funding (DCMS, 2005b). In fact London 2012 was left with a budget surplus of £1.4 million pounds that will be returned to the DCMS and LDA (London 2012, 2005).

London was awarded the 2012 Olympics. The BOA now has a key role to play in the delivery of the 2012 Games and has a strong presence on the Organising Committee<sup>37</sup>.

### Regional Bodies

There are a number of regional bodies with a direct interest in sport and in the time since the LVNAC project the role of regional bodies has been and continues to be developed. For example, the functions of Sport England have been increasingly devolved to regions and regional bodies are seen as integral to improving the local delivery of sport (Carter, 2005a). These developments reflect the wider New Labour agenda of seeking to strengthen the regional tier of governance.

There are nine Regional Sports Boards (RSBs) which were established to draw together key regional sport stakeholders (e.g. regional agencies, local authorities, voluntary and private sectors) and provide 'one voice' for each region (DCMS/SU, 2002, p.40). The members RSBs have no executive function and work in partnership with RDAs, Regional Assemblies and Sport England's nine regional offices and are leveraging in almost £2 for every pound spent (Carter, 2005a, p.29). Some RSBs have overseen the formation of County Sport Partnerships (CSPs) to deliver Sport England programmes in partnership with local authorities and other sub-regional stakeholders, such as the county level arms of NGBs (DCMS/SU, 2002, p.40). The development of CSPs has been accelerated<sup>38</sup> so that they can be a key 'building block' in a 'single system' for sport in the community (Carter, 2005a).

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<sup>37</sup> The 16 strong LCOCG board includes the new BOA Chair Chris Moynihan (elected October 2005), the BOA Chief Executive (Simon Clegg) and three IOC members (HRH Princess Anne, Phil Craven and Craig Reddie (until recently Chair of BOA)). (BBC Sport, 2005).

<sup>38</sup> There are 45 CSPs, 20 were 'fit for purpose' by September 2005 and the remaining 25 will be by March 2006 (Carter, 2005a).

Each Government Office in the Region (GOR) has a DCMS representative who is responsible for all DCMS policies. In addition, Regional Cultural Consortia (RCC) bring together the activities of the DCMS in the regions and they are responsible for drawing up a culture strategy in the region. Finally, Regional Federations of Sport and Recreation bring together representatives of Governing bodies at the Regional County level, as well as the regional arms of the National Sports Organisations. Some individual NGBs have regional and county structures, but there is a lot of variation in structure, and boundaries overlap (DCMS/SU, 2002, p.40). The “defining feature” of the new structure for UKA is its nine regions or ‘hubs’ with key decision making powers being devolved as far as possible to the regional level and a streamlined central office (Foster, 2004, p. 3).

Although local authorities do not have statutory duties in relation to sport and leisure, in reality they are the biggest provider of sport facilities and also provide opportunities via sports development teams and officers, who work with the voluntary sector, schools and community (DCMS/SU, 2002). However, sport has often found itself down the list of priorities and since the 1980s there has been a considerable re-direction of funds towards education and social services (Carter, 2005a). One of the results is that local authorities have been left with ageing facilities that are costly to maintain and unattractive to users who have had their expectations raised by private sector investment (e.g. private gyms and fitness centres) (Carter, 2005a). Local authorities also work in partnership with the private and voluntary sectors to provide sport and recreation facilities. In recent years, local authorities sport policies have highlighted the role of sport as a lever for community development (DCMS/SU, 2002; Sport England, 204b). On a local level, a large amount of grassroots sport is provided through professionally or voluntarily run clubs, many of which are affiliated to NGBs. There are about 110,000

sports clubs in the UK mostly run by volunteers – there are an estimated 1.5 million volunteers working in these clubs which is about three times the number of people employed in the sports sector (DCMS/SU, 2002, p.40).

### Complexity and fragmentation

The governance of sport in the UK is highly complex and fragmented. Even a brief examination reveals that in England a myriad of organisations are involved in the governance of sport. The system is fractured and complex, leaving organisations with overlapping responsibilities, no clear lines of accountability and there is duplication of effort. This complexity and fragmentation were clearly evident in the LVNAC project and a major factor leading to its failure.

This situation is in part due to broader changes (e.g. increasing professionalisation and commercialisation of sport) that mean that structures have become ‘out of step’ with modern sport. This is perhaps particularly true of NGBs with their roots in amateur sport. Furthermore, although sport is currently the focus of much policy activity, this has not always been the case and sport has often languished on the margins of policy and politics and thus has been left behind.

The international dimension of sport governance is an important one particularly in relation to mega events as the decisions lie in the hands of world governing bodies. Central government requires a thorough understanding of how each world governing body operates and needs to invest time and energy into establishing good working relationships. However, the prevailing system of sports governance and the undervaluing of sport within the British political system have meant that both the level of understanding and the quality of relationships has often been poor. This was apparent

in the LVNAC project when central government offered a non-London venue to the IAAF who had made no secret of their desire for the World Athletics Championships to be staged in London. World governing bodies exert considerable power but are neither democratic nor accountable, and this situation goes largely unchallenged by nation states. Although this is somewhat surprising, it perhaps reflects the value placed on hosting mega sports events within the current globally competitive climate.

In the case of the Olympic bid the UK were able to overcome the problems of the sports governance system. In this respect a number of contributory factors can be identified.

Firstly, central government appeared to deal with the IOC in a better manner and a great deal of effort was put in to establishing links and forging relationships<sup>39</sup>. Secondly, the strong lead taken by the Mayor and central government seemed to instil confidence in the bid on the part of the IOC. Thirdly, the various sporting bodies, central government and the Mayor appeared to focus on the task in hand and this is probably a reflection of the size and nature of the 'prize'. Fourthly, unlike many NGBs the BOA is not dependent upon central government for funding and this gives it a greater degree of independence and strength that enables it to take a 'firm line' with the government<sup>40</sup>.

The problems have been recognised by both central government and the sports world and currently steps are being taken to simplify structures, clarify responsibilities and improve the flow of funds to elite and community sport. The DCMS/SU review (2002) considered the current governance arrangements for sport and concluded that the current

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<sup>39</sup> In the months leading up to the decision key figures including the Secretary of State (Tessa Jowell), Ken Livingstone (Mayor) lobbied on part of the London bid intensively travelling the world to do so. The lobbying efforts of PM Tony Blair and his wife Cherie were regarded as crucial in 'selling' the bid. In particular the three days in Singapore before the bid in which the PM attended a number of private meetings with IOC members, private IOC party where the Blairs and Coe "worked the room impressively" so that when they left they had seen over 70 IOC members (Mackay, 2005).

system was too complex, there was duplication of function and that the lack of a clear 'cascade' of strategy leads to confusion. A number of changes to the way sport is organised and funded were recommended. In particular, Sport England (as noted above) and UK Sport have become smaller bodies, with more decisions being taken at the regional level and they are acting as investors rather than deliverers of services and programmes. Other measures include creating clear frameworks of accountability, performance indicators, and less duplication of function. Furthermore, further government investment in sport is predicated on the delivery of organisational reform by the sport bodies (DCMS/SU, 2002) – the message to sport bodies appears to be 'deliver the reforms or no more money'. This was certainly the message conveyed by the Minister of Sport, Richard Caborn, when he addressed the 2003 CCPR annual conference. He stressed that sport bodies (from Sport England through to local clubs) in receipt of public funds had to produce evidence of their effectiveness, meet government set outcomes and milestones, and failure to do so would lead to the withdrawal of public funding (DCMS/Caborn, 2003). Whilst acknowledging that there are organisations that have been over reliant on public funds, and in some cases they could be more entrepreneurial, many within the sports world argue that that the government should be the primary funder of sport, particularly for young people (Goodbody, 2003).

However, the reforms to date do not alter the fundamental structure of sports governance and some commentators argue that they are insufficient. For example, in an independent review – *Raising the Bar* - two former Sports Ministers Kate Hoey and Chris Moynihan (2005) maintain that without radical overhaul the situation will not significantly improve for elite or community sport. Amongst other things, they call for the abolition of UK Sport and Sport England and the creation of one body (Sports

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<sup>40</sup> The BOA was adamant that it would only submit a bid based on London and without total commitment



Foundation) to oversee the management of sport, but given that the government had commissioned its own review (Carter, 2005b) and made a pre-emptive announcement<sup>41</sup> about the streamlining of support and funding of elite sport it seems unlikely, at least in the short term, that the government will act on its recommendations<sup>42</sup>.

## THE VALUE OF SPORT: CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TO AND RELATIONSHIP WITH SPORT

A constant refrain from the LVNAC case study was the 'lack of value' assigned to sport within the British political system. From the literature it appears that within the UK the attitude of central government to sport has varied over time and has often reflected the personal attitude of the incumbent Prime Minister. For example, Margaret Thatcher was not interested in sport and whilst she was at the helm the Conservative governments of 1979-1990 largely ignored sport (Houlihan and White, 2002). Her successor, John Major, was a sport enthusiast, an enthusiasm shared by several senior colleagues, notably David Mellor and Kenneth Clarke and sport secured a place on the political and policy agenda (see Figure 6.4). In 1995 the newly formed Department of National Heritage published a strategy document – *Sport: Raising the Game*<sup>43</sup> (DNH, 1995) – this was the first central government policy document on sport for twenty years (Houlihan and White, 2002, p.66). This in contrast to other nations, for example, France where sport has been at the heart of French government since the mid-twentieth century and

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from central government it would not proceed with the bid.

<sup>41</sup> The announcement about elite sport being transferred to UK sport was made on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2005 and *Raising the Bar* was published on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2005. Perhaps not surprisingly UK Sport did not lend its support to the proposals, with the Chair, Sue Campbell arguing that "the last thing that is needed now is more change" (BBC/Farquhar, 2005).

<sup>42</sup> Although the appointment of Chris Moynihan, co-author of *Raising the Bar*, as Chair of the BOA may mean these proposals get a better hearing than they might otherwise have done.

the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Education are responsible for most physical and sporting activities in France (Dine, 1998).

The current New Labour government (1997 onwards) has produced a number of policy documents and made changes in the way sport is governed and funded (see Figure 6.4). However, Sport England and UK Sport continue to work at 'arm's length' from the government. Oakley and Green (2001) suggest that the arm's length principle is ideologically supported by the amateurism principle of sport being above politics and money and therefore, some, argue government should have little to do with sport (Oakley and Green, 2001). Quangos, such as Sport England are sometimes justified on the grounds that they offer independence and continuity in policy. However, there may be other reasons that government does not want to be directly involved in policy formation. Coalter (1990) argues that governments seek to 'depoliticize' policy areas where there is a little political capital and great political danger from government involvement. An example of political sporting conflict linked with government/sport relationship is the development of a national stadium at Wembley (Houlihan, 2003). Oakley and Green (2001) argue that a quango helps deflect criticism of government when things go wrong but this does not prevent them taking the credit when things go well.

Following a review of British sports policy and governance structures in the period 1995-2000, Oakley and Green (2001) concluded that it had been a period of 'selective re-investment' with subtle changes in emphasis since New Labour came into office and the 1998 National Lottery Act. Oakley and Green (2001) suggest that government

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<sup>43</sup> It focused on school sport and excellence and many of the proposals could be funded from the new National Lottery (Houlihan and White, 2002).

influence and intervention is increasing despite the rhetoric that the 'arm's length' principle is being maintained (DCMS, 1998 cited in Oakely and Green, 2001, p.83): the appointment of a close government ally –Patrick Carter- to the Chair of Sport England is perhaps an indication that the government is keen to influence the direction the organisation takes.

**Figure 6.4: Selected key sporting developments and events in the UK 1992-2005**

1992	Department of National Heritage formed
1993	National Lottery Act passed
1995	<i>Raising the Game</i> (DNH), first government policy document for 20 years. First National Lottery Grants distributed.
1996	Euro'96 successfully staged. Poor results at Olympic Games, Atlanta, USA
1997	Re-organisation of Sports Councils, abolition of GB Sport Council, formation of Sport England and UK Sport. General election, New Labour elected, DNH renamed Department of Culture, Media and Sport.
1998	New National Lottery Act. UK Sport given limited lottery distribution powers
1999	<i>Policy Action Team 10: Arts and Sport</i> (DCMS) report on the potential role of arts and the sport in promoting social inclusion
2000	<i>A Sporting Future for All</i> (DCMS) set out government priorities (increasing participation, access and equality, excellence). World Athletics Championships (2005) awarded to London. England failed in its bid to host 2006 FIFA World Football Cup. Improved performance at Olympic Games, Sydney, Australia.
2001	<i>A Sporting Future for All: The Government's Game Plan for Sport</i> (DCMS), an action plan with set targets for key players i.e. Sports Councils, NGBS, local authorities. UK lost staging rights to 2005 WAC. £100m 'rescue package' (government/Sport England/Manchester City Council) for Manchester Commonwealth Games.
2002	Manchester Commonwealth Games a success. <i>Game Plan: a strategy for delivering government's sport and physical activity objectives</i> published (DCMS/SU).
2003	Birmingham hosts 9 <sup>th</sup> Indoor World Athletics Championship to great acclaim. BOA supported by central government and London Mayor submit an outline bid for London to host 2012 Summer Olympics. Sport England restructured and streamlined.
2004	London becomes a candidate city for 2012 Olympics.
2005	London awarded the 2012 Olympics in July. <i>Review of national sport effort and resources</i> (Carter). National Sports Foundation created.

Source: Compiled by author.

Houlihan (1997) and Henry (2001) suggest that the formation of a ministry with a clearer sport remit<sup>44</sup> in 1992 – the Department of National Heritage (DNH) - was part of a general trend towards centralised control that had begun in the Thatcher years. Also, in linking sport and arts with tourism the formation of the DNH recognised the economic potential of sport, particularly in city and national promotion. There is evidence that government has increased its control over sport policy since the formation of the DNH. In a study of the governance of the then new DNH, Taylor (1997, p.464) identified four power sources at its disposal: ministerial activism; systematic scrutiny; legislation, policy guidance and review, and finance. Taylor (1997) argues that the DNH exerted a great deal of control over its policy network by conditioning the networks operations. However, the DCMS, as it is now is, may not have as much control over policy as it would wish. For example, DCMS/policy community relations were put under the microscope in relation to the redevelopment of a national stadium at Wembley using Sport England lottery funds. The plan was for a multi-sport stadium, but concerns were raised as to whether the proposed design would be able to meet the differing needs of football, athletics and also be a potential Olympic stadium. Initially Sport England was criticised for putting the needs of football before those of athletics and an Olympic bid; very much in the way that Coalter (1990) describes the depoliticization role of quangos in being blamed for policy failure (Oakley and Green, 2001, p.84). However, a DCMS Select Committee report argued the case: “for stronger Government leadership, to impose strategic coherence, to engage all Government Departments concerned with events and to provide the focal point for decision making on matters of national importance” (House of Commons, 2000, p. xiv) and called again for the formation of a

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<sup>44</sup> The Department of National Heritage was established in 1992, it combined responsibilities for arts, sport and tourism. It is now the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

Minister of Events<sup>45</sup>. Oakley and Green (2001) argue that the Select Committee's statement provides evidence of the ambiguous power relationship between the DCMS and the wider sport policy community. Moreover, Oakley and Green (2001) suggest that the statement could be seen as justifying increased government intervention in "a (terminally) fragmented, but increasingly symbolic, policy area" (p.85) and thus add weight to the argument that there is trend towards centralisation. More recently, a joint DCMS/Strategy Unit review of sport policy recommended the formation of a mega events and projects centre within the DCMS reporting to Ministers there and in the Treasury: "Central government will consequently be actively involved from the beginning of any proposed mega event project" (DCMS/SU, 2002, p.17) and in 2003 the DCMS Olympic Games Unit was established as a 'Centre of Expertise' (DCMS, 2004). A new post of Director of Sport in the DCMS was created in October 2002 to oversee the implementation of the review's recommendations.

Although New Labour came into power in May 1997 it was not until April 2000<sup>46</sup> that the government set out its strategy for sport in *Sporting Future for All* (DCMS, 2000a). The priorities were increasing participation, access and equality, excellence and four core policy areas were identified: sport in education; sport in the community; sporting excellence and modernisation. What made *Sporting Future for All* (DCMS, 2000a) distinctive, particularly in comparison to *Raising the Game* (DNH, 1995) was the emphasis on implementation and working groups were set up to take the strategy forward (Houlihan, and White, 2002). The resulting *Action Plan* (DCMS, 2000b) set targets and identified which organisation should take the lead for each of ten areas and this document formed the basis of *The Government's Plan for Sport* (DCMS, 2001).

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<sup>45</sup> They had first made this proposal in 1999 in a report *Staging International Sporting Events* (House of Commons, 1999).

Houilhan and White (2002) comment that many in the sports world, who for many years had complained about the lack of government interest in sport, were rather taken aback by the prescriptive nature of the *Action Plan* (DCMS, 2000b) and *The Government's Plan for Sport* (DCMS, 2001).

Following on from the abandonment of the LVNAC project and loss of the 2005 WAC central government announced a review of sport policy. It was conducted by the DCMS and Strategy Unit with the aim of clarifying the current state of sport and refining the government's objectives (DCMS/SU, 2002). In relation to sport, the government's key objectives are to, firstly, increase participation in sport because of the health benefits of being physically active and the concerns about the low level of participation compared with other countries<sup>47</sup> (DCMS/SU, 2002). Secondly, to increase international success because of the 'feel good' factor that success in the sporting arena generates for the whole nation. Although the perception is that the UK fares badly on the international sporting stage, the review suggested that this is not entirely the case. For example, across sixty sports the UK is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the world<sup>48</sup> (after USA and Australia), but the UK have not done well in the sports that are of most interest to the general public e.g. football, cricket<sup>49</sup>, tennis. When a world ranking is built on the UK's ten most popular sports then the UK's ranking falls to 10<sup>th</sup> (DCMS/SU, 2002, p. 29).

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<sup>46</sup> Sport had been considered earlier in relation to social inclusion and neighbourhood renewal (DCMS, 1999).

<sup>47</sup> England's participation rate in sport and physical activity (at least 3 times/week) is 21%. This compares unfavourably to other European nations such as France (24%) and Germany (27%), and a long way behind the world leaders Canada (39%), Australia (46%) and Finland (52%) (Carter, 2005b, p14).

<sup>48</sup> The World Sport Index awards points for success based on each country's share of medal success or top 3 placings (male and female) in 60 sports across 200 countries. The index was devised by UK Sport (DCMS/SU, 2002, p. 29).

<sup>49</sup> The success of England's cricket team against Australia in the 2005 Ashes Series should have a positive impact on the ranking.

In relation to staging mega sporting events, the review concluded that the economic, social and cultural benefits of hosting such events, are difficult to measure and the evidence to date is limited. The review noted that whilst the UK successfully hosts major sporting events each year (e.g. Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Championships, the London Marathon), with little government involvement, difficulties have been encountered with the 'mega events' (i.e. Olympics, FIFA World Cup etc) when there is need for substantial infrastructure investment (DCMS/SU, 2002). They went on to argue that in the past there has been poor investment appraisal, management and co-ordination for some of these events and that in the future, if major new facilities are required, the economic and regeneration benefits should be carefully balanced against all costs, including opportunity costs (DCMS/SU, 2002, p.13). The DCMS/SU Review advised central government: "To adopt a different approach to hosting sporting mega events. They should be seen as an occasional celebration of success rather than as a means to achieving other government objectives" (DCMS/SU, 2002, p.15). This report was published during the period in which a decision was being made about a potential London Olympic bid and there was much speculation as to what the outcome of this process would be, with most commentators – voicing their opinions primarily in the media – suggesting that the government would not support a bid. In fact, central government lent its support to the London Olympic bid, on the basis that it would drive through the regeneration of East London, provide employment and boost tourism throughout the UK, in other words, contrary to the advice of the DCMS/SU, although government had certainly taken a more measured approach.

As noted above this process of review and reform has continued. For example, Lord Carter was asked to examine how to achieve better co-ordination of effort and resources

and also to consider the proposal to involve the public and private sectors together in a new National Sports Foundation (NSF) (Carter, 200b). Interestingly, the request for the review came from both the Chancellor and the Secretary of State, which is perhaps an indication of the increasing importance attached to sport. Certainly within the case study there was a belief that without 'buy in' from the Treasury sporting projects would continue to struggle. In addition, it is doubtless that the Chancellor wants to get 'best value' from government expenditure on sport and the NSF<sup>50</sup> – which was announced in the 2005 budget (HM Treasury/Chancellor of the Exchequer, 2005, p.146)- fits in with other government funding initiatives that involve public-private partnership. The NSF represents a continuation of the government's partnership approach to both the provision and funding of sport that extends across the board from community through to elite facilities.

From this examination it is clear that central government has not been a constant champion of sport, with long periods of neglect being punctuated with periods of interest and activity and this has led to a lack of strategic thinking on sports matters.

Indeed it is hard to think of another area of government policy that could be ignored for so long. In other nations sport appears to be more integral to policy and politics, although the emphasis may vary, for example, the focus in Finland in on participation<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> At the time of writing (October 2005) there is little information available about the NSF, although it is known that the DCMS will provide funding of £27.5 million over the period to 2007-2008 as match funding i.e. it must be matched by additional sport sponsorship/investment from the private sector (HM Treasury/Chancellor of the Exchequer, 2005, p.146). The Lawn Tennis association was an early recipient of NSF funds with the Chancellor announcing in May that the NSF would invest £5.25m into British tennis over two years (LTA, 2005).

<sup>51</sup> Finland has high participation rates, adult participation is 52% and although there is a decline in the 20-40 years age group after that there is a steady increase with 60% of 60 year olds participating frequently. Since 1991 there have been three national campaigns aimed at improving adult participation (Carter, 2005a, p.8).



whilst in Australia it has been on elite sport<sup>52</sup> (DCMS/SU, 2002; Carter, 2005a).

Compared with other nations public investment in sports infrastructure in England is low, with France and Finland having the highest spending<sup>53</sup> (Carter, 2005a, p.16).

Interestingly, Germany spends less<sup>54</sup> but seems to benefit from the spending power of a thriving club base<sup>55</sup> and significant levels of 'social sponsorship' of club sport programmes and competitions (Carter, 2005a, p.16).

Within England amateur organisations play a central role in delivering sporting opportunities particularly through community sports clubs<sup>56</sup>. In England club assets are either owned by the local authority or privately purchased and are run on amateur/voluntary basis and are mostly single sport. As we saw in the LVNAC project clubs have to rely on bar takings and membership fees (although these are often relatively low<sup>57</sup>). In France substantial state investment means that there a large number of clubs<sup>58</sup>, they are owned and financially supported by local government (communes) but the day-to-day running is transferred to federations (Carter, 2005b, p.15). In England club membership falls off dramatically after school-leaving age and is consistently below that of Germany and France across all ages (Carter, 2005b, p. 15).

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<sup>52</sup> In 1999-2000 elite sport consumed 78% of the sports budget (Hogan and Norton, 2000, p.210). However, Australia also has high consistently participation rates from aged 16-65 years at around 46 % (Cater, 2005b, p. 14).

<sup>53</sup> England spends £36 per capita whilst France spends £110, Finland £84 (Carter, 2005b, p.16).

<sup>54</sup> Only £30 per capita.

<sup>55</sup> Germany has fewer clubs than England but their average membership base is four times greater. Club assets are both municipal and privately owned, they are privately run and affiliated to regional bodies of sport. Only half of clubs have their own facilities but they and others use municipal facilities (Carter, 2005b, p.15).

<sup>56</sup> There are over 106,000 community sports clubs in England (Carter, 2005a, p. 30).

<sup>57</sup> In 2000 the average participant paid £146 (for membership and/or facility hire) or £12 per month. This compares to £43 in the private sector or around £40 for a BSkyB sports subscription (Carter, 2005a, p.31).

<sup>58</sup> 60 per cent more than England, revenue subsidies sustain a low average membership base of 60 people. Two thirds are single sport clubs and third are multi-sport clubs (Carter, 2005b, p.15).

It is clear that within the British political system there is confusion and conflict over what the 'value of sport' is. Although there are individuals within the political system who place a great deal of value on sport *per se*, in general sport is valued for what it can do. First, some value sport for its health benefits and see it as key in tackling the health problems associated with physical inactivity. Second, for others the value of sport lies in the national glory and feel good factor that is generated by the success of elite athletes particularly on the international stage. Third, sport is viewed as a valuable tool of social regeneration, particularly at the neighbourhood level and also a source of employment within the burgeoning sport and leisure sector. Fourth, sport is valued as a tool of physical regeneration, for example, the building of large stadia and associated infrastructure. There is evidence from the literature that sport can do all of these things but what is also clear is that, firstly, not all sport projects can deliver on all fronts and at times there have been unreal expectations. Secondly, these benefits are not conferred automatically and active mechanisms are required to maximise benefits to individuals and communities.

These debates are not unique to the UK but other countries deal with these tensions differently. For example, the French emphasise the mythic and heroic nature of sporting endeavour and regard success of the international sporting stage as 'good for the spirit'. Although sport has risen up the British political and policy agenda in recent years, New Labour has been unable to decide on either the priorities or importance of sport, as was evident in the initial lack of enthusiasm for the London Olympics. Consequently there has been a lack of direction. Although the London Olympics will provide direction it also reopens the elite - participation debate and the social- physical regeneration debate. The London Olympics presents an opportunity to take sport forward at elite and community

level, although there is a lot catching up to do, particularly in terms of facilities and provision for community sport.

## CONCLUSIONS

Having made comparisons with other nations it is clear that national governments adopt a variety of approaches to mega sports events. At national level, the extent of involvement varies across nations, cities and events and reflects wider political systems and cultural attitudes.

It is evident that there is no simple governance system that is 'best' for delivering large-scale sports events. Firstly, different governance systems have different advantages and disadvantages. For example, centralised systems can get things done quickly, but this is frequently at the expense of engagement and legacy considerations. This can result in legacy problems and lead some groups to feel excluded. Secondly, the relationship between governance and events is dynamic and interactive and develops as a result of both bidding for and hosting events.

Whilst there is no one best system, there do appear to be two elements essential for success in mega-sporting events. Firstly, national governments need to be explicit about what their role is and the limits of that role. Secondly, politicians and policy makers have to demonstrate commitment to and confidence in the project. This can be done in a variety of ways, including underwriting projects, providing resources and legislative powers.

The governance of sport is unique in its diversity of bodies and their varying levels of professionalisation and power. At one end of the scale, the international governing bodies of sport, in particular the IOC, FIFA and IAAF who award the rights to the mega-sporting events are some of the most powerful and most undemocratic institutions in the world and to which national governments are often beholden. Whilst at the other end, there are sporting organisations with few resources, little power and which are heavily dependent on volunteers to function.

At national level, within the UK, sport has not had a firm place on the political and policy agenda and this has been reflected in the way sport has been governed and also in the shifting positions towards mega events. In the UK at national level the governance of sport has been dogged, firstly, by the sheer numbers of organisations in existence and secondly, by the tradition of amateurism. Many of the organisations have overlapping responsibilities and this has led to a highly complex and fragmented system of governance, clearly evident in the LVNAC project and a factor in its failure. The amateur roots of organisations have left many of them ill equipped to face the challenges arising from the increased professionalisation and commercialisation of sport. Although much work has been done to rectify these shortcomings, the project to modernise the governance of sport is on going and not without controversy as there will be 'winners' and 'losers' with some organisations taking on new responsibilities, whilst others lose them and some organisations cease to exist altogether. Furthermore, the reforms to date do not fundamentally alter the existing structure and there are questions as to whether they are sufficient to deliver change.

The LVNAC project does appear to have been the 'last straw' triggering a train of events, which previous troubled projects- despite the numerous reviews, reports and recommendations – had failed to do. The key difference with the LVNAC was that at national level, central government finally stopped and took stock, for example, ordering a review of sport policy (DCMS/SU, 2002). Moreover, there is evidence that central government has learnt some lessons. For example, it took a much more measured approach to the London Olympic bid. However, for a long period central government has displayed contradictory attitudes to sport and although New Labour has shown a renewed interest in sporting matters, as we have seen these contradictions persist and even the early stages of preparing for the London Olympics saw the renewal of these debates. This contradictory attitude reflect broader issues about the role of central government, the extent to which power should be devolved regionally and locally and the role of the voluntary and community sectors.

This chapter primarily focused on national governments, whilst the next chapter will turn its attention to cities and once again will take a comparative approach.

## Chapter Seven

### Cities and mega sports events

#### INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the focus will shift from the nation state to the city and the role played by cities in the bidding for and hosting of mega sport events. From Chapter Two we know that cities use sport in a variety of ways and that mega sports events have become an important instrument for the economic development of cities. The inter-city competition to host mega sports events is fierce and this competitiveness is reflective of a broader process of global inter-city competition. Cities are engaged in a constant process of competition with each other in an attempt to attract and retain both human and economic capital, to promote the city on a global stage and improve its status (Newman and Thornley, 2004). This competition is both cross national and within nation, so that London, for example, competes with both Tokyo and Manchester.

The LVNAC case study demonstrated the crucial role of city governance and how its failure in important respects contributed to the failure of the project. The LVNAC project suffered initially because of a lack of commitment, leadership and vision at city level and latterly because of scepticism from new city leadership about its value. As a result the LVNAC did not fit into the wider sporting landscape nor have a place in broader plans for London. The LVNAC project unfolded during a unique period in the history of London as it moved from being without city-wide government to once again having a unitary authority. The case study cast a spotlight on London's governance arrangements during this period of transition and highlighted the inherent weaknesses of the new arrangements and the part played by central government in shaping the new institutions and the powers and resources at their disposal. The LVNAC case study

raised issues not only about the specifics of London governance but also about city governance and mega sports events more generally that warrant further investigation.

This chapter seeks to explore these issues in more detail, through comparison with other cities that have bid for and hosted mega sports events. In particular, it will consider how the role and approach of city level government to mega sports events varies and how this translates in relation to key factors - commitment, strategy, leadership, vision and resources. In addition, it will examine the relationship between city level government and other levels of government (national and sub-national) in relation to mega sports events and how this influences both the success of the event and its legacy. Finally, the specifics of London will be examined in more detail including the Olympic bid.

## CITIES IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE PART I: AN OVERVIEW

Mega sports events have become a key tool for city leaders striving to reinvigorate or re-imagine cities. As we have seen from the overview of ten mega and major sports events set out in Figure 6.1 in the preceding chapter, the role played by city government varies considerably. The approaches taken differ due to factors such as city characteristics, national state structures but also reflect 'evolution' over time. This evolution is in part a result of cities learning from past experiences – from those of other cities as well as from their own experiences – but also changed contexts.

The context in which mega-events are planned and executed has not only changed over time, for example the increased role of the media (see below), but also has varied over

time. For example, some events have been the subject of boycotts<sup>1</sup> as a result of international political events. Indeed an important element of post-war Olympics has been boycotts<sup>2</sup> and threats of boycott<sup>3</sup>, but in recent years this threat has declined as the end of the Cold War and apartheid in South Africa have reduced the main points of friction (Short, 2003). This does not mean that boycotts have gone for good, the nature of international politics means that the potential for conflict is never far away, but they are not a current feature of mega-sports events.

The media has played a significant role in the globalization of mega-sports events and also transformed the economics of events. Short (2003) argues that the growth of the Olympics and their increasing globalisation was closely linked to television coverage that could transmit images worldwide. Coverage has increased steadily. In 1960 twenty one countries saw coverage of the Rome Olympics Games<sup>4</sup> (Short, 2003), whilst 220 countries watched the 2004 Athens Olympics<sup>5</sup> (IOC, 2005). The story is similar for the FIFA World Cup<sup>6</sup> and although the World Athletics Championships do not command the same audiences they are, as was noted in Chapter One growing<sup>7</sup>. It is not only the global audience that has increased exponentially but the revenues obtained from

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<sup>1</sup> For example, the USA boycotted the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games in protest at the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the boycott included West Germany, China, Japan and Canada. In retaliation the USSR and Eastern bloc countries boycotted the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games.

<sup>2</sup> The 1956, 1976, 1980 and 1984 Summer Olympics were all subject to boycotts (Short, 2003).

<sup>3</sup> The threat of boycott by African and Eastern European countries in 1968 forced the expulsion of South Africa from the Olympic movement because of the policy of apartheid (Short, 2003, p.11).

<sup>4</sup> The US television company CBS paid \$660,000 for the right to fly film from Rome to New York, while Eurovision transmitted the first live coverage of the Games (Short, 2003, p.7).

<sup>5</sup> There was 3,800 hours of live Olympic coverage during the Athens Games (IOC, 2005).

<sup>6</sup> The 2002 FIFA Football World Cup held in Korea and Japan attracted audiences of 28.8 billion in 213 countries compared to 13.5 billion in 166 countries in Mexico in 1986 (FIFA, No date). This number dwarfs the number of actual spectators, according to the FIFA website 2.7 million people attended the 64 matches (<http://www.fifa.com> accessed 9 December 2005).

<sup>7</sup> Preliminary data indicated that there was 16% more dedicated programmes than for the 2003 WAC in Paris. Eurosport coverage (broadcaster in Europe) generated a cumulative audience of 57 million which was a 50% increase on Paris. In addition for the first time there was live web-cast of 70 hours of action in the USA which was available on subscription basis (IOC, 2005, p.5).



broadcasting rights<sup>8</sup> and the associated sponsorships deals. Mega sports events are now totally corporatized, providing a large global audience of consumers and an opportunity to sell goods and services worldwide (Short, 2003). In addition, the way in which broadcast deals are negotiated has changed so that the rights are sold as a 'set'. For example, the rights for the Summer and Winter Olympic Games from 2000 to 2008 were sold in one package<sup>9</sup> with the IOC retaining a percentage<sup>10</sup> and the rest being distributed to the host Olympic committee. This means that Olympic cities have greater financial security and are able to plan their budget earlier<sup>11</sup> which makes the Olympics a more attractive proposition (Shoval, 2002; Preuss, 2003).

Over time the experiences of cities have become iconic and stylised. So we have the 'failure' of the 1976 Montreal Olympics, the 'capitalist' 1984 Los Angeles Games, the 'regeneration' Games in Barcelona 1992 and the 'spectacle' of Sydney 2000 embedded into history and frequently re-run in the media, official reports and enquiries. These readings reflect as much the 'readings' that the media, politicians and spin doctors wish to place on such events as they do any 'objective' evaluation. These readings are selective and partial and represent a very simplified account of the events which by their very nature are highly complex. Difficulties encountered whilst not necessarily denied are certainly not given the consideration they warrant, for example, the Sydney Games are generally perceived and presented in a positive light despite the significant legacy problems. Similarly early problems with ticketing at the 1998 FIFA World Cup in France were soon forgiven and forgotten once the competition got underway (Dauncey

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<sup>8</sup> For example, the total broadcast revenue from the 1960 Rome Olympic Games was US\$1 million by 2004 for the Athens Games it was US\$1,476.9 million. In fact the 1964 (Tokyo) and 1968 (Mexico City) Games did not generate substantial broadcast revenue, US\$900,000 and US\$50,000 respectively but from 1972 (Munich) onwards the amount has increased Games on Games from US\$17.8 million in 1972.

<sup>9</sup> The European Broadcasting Union paid US\$1.44 billion for this package and NBC US\$3.57 million for the North American broadcasting rights (Roche, 2000).

<sup>10</sup> From 1998-2002 the IOC share was 40 per cent, from 2004 it rose to 51 per cent but increases in total revenue means that cities are receiving larger amounts to host the Games (Shoval, 2002, p.585).

<sup>11</sup> Both Athens (2004) and Beijing host for 2008 knew well in advance that income from these sources would generate revenues of approximately two billion dollars (Shoval, 2002, p.586).

and Hare, 1999), whilst the organisational problems experienced<sup>12</sup> at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta were brought to the attention of the world by the media<sup>13</sup>. These examples illustrate firstly, the intense focus on the event itself and the importance of the media attention in producing the 'image' of the event and secondly, the tendency for the media to pay little attention to impact and legacy of events.

The initial plans for the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games were modest and self financing. However the Mayor decided to capitalise on the Olympics and they became a 'grand project' for the redevelopment of the city<sup>14</sup>. Federal (national) government did not give the City of Montreal a financial guarantee, so the Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (OCOG) had to stage the Games relying solely on financial support from the city<sup>15</sup> (Preuss, 2003). The award of Games coincided with an economic downturn and a period of global inflation, factors that added to the financial burden of staging the Games. In addition, there was considerable local opposition to staging the Games, labour disputes and technical and construction problems resulted in major cost over runs (Chalkley and Essex, 1999). The result was massive debt for the city<sup>16</sup>. Furthermore

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<sup>12</sup> These included transport problems moving the athletes to events, with some being delivered late for events or delivered to the wrong venues (many drivers did not know the way) and the severity of the traffic congestion called into question the decision not to invest in new roads or the public transport system (Chalkley and Essex, 1999, p.338). The Atlanta OCOG were so confident of their state of the art media system that they did not do a 'dummy run' (Miller, 1996). The IBM results system quickly collapsed, the statistical data was often inaccurate, there were delays in compiling results and world records went unreported (Letts, 1996). The European Broadcast Union, a consortium of overseas stations, threatened to seek the return of some of the US\$250 million they had paid for the media system (Brodie, 1996).

<sup>13</sup> Whitelegg (2000) and Chalkley and Essex (1999) point out that the media took a dim view of the Atlanta Games and relations between the media (especially the foreign press) and the organisers were strained and the organisers reacted badly to the criticisms. Whitelegg (2000) notes that "The IOC, some top competitors and veteran sports writers united in their claim that the Atlanta Olympics were the worst organised in living memory" (2000, p. 811).

<sup>14</sup> Extensive sporting facilities, an Olympic Park and Olympic Village were built and improvements made to the infrastructure including constructing a new airport, new roads and extending the subway system (Chalkley and Essex, 1999).

<sup>15</sup> At the end of the Games private revenues generated by the OCOG amounted to 5% of the funds required, the remaining 95% was provided by the public sector and special financing means (Olympic Committee Montreal, 1976, p. 59 cited in Preuss 2003, p. 254).

<sup>16</sup> Montreal at the close of the twentieth century the predicted cost of CAN\$250 million stood as a yet to be paid off CAN\$2.4 billion (Whitelegg, 2000, p. 801). Montreal's taxpayers are paying off the debt via a special local tobacco tax and it is due to be paid off by 2005/06 (Preuss, 2003, p.254).

Montreal's experience made other cities risk averse and as a result there was only one candidate for the 1984 Olympics<sup>17</sup> – Los Angeles.

The LA Games were a highly commercial affair, initiated by business players and led by an entrepreneur (Peter Uberroth) with minimal input from government –city, state or federal. The city of LA<sup>18</sup> was keen to avoid the debts of Montreal and it forced the IOC to waive its rule that the host city had to assume financial liability for the Games<sup>19</sup> (Burbank *et al*, 2001). The local organising committee along with the US Olympic Committee assumed financial liability for the Games and set out to stage the Games in a way<sup>20</sup> that meant that the costs could be covered by commercial sponsorship. In effect the city of LA handed the Games over to the organisers and there was little public control or oversight of Olympic activities (Burbank *et al*, 2001). The LA Games had little impact on the urban landscape but it achieved the desired boost to the image of LA as a good place to do business in and also to visit. Corporate and media sponsorship were key sources of income, there were record television audiences<sup>21</sup> and the Games generated a profit of US\$225 million<sup>22</sup> (Burbank *et al*, 2001) and this led to them being dubbed the 'capitalist' Games. The commercial success of the LA Games was key in renewing interest amongst cities in hosting the Olympics and Burbank *et al* (2001) argue that the LA Games created "a new paradigm for hosting mega events" (p.53). For

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<sup>17</sup> The 1980 Olympic Games had already been awarded to Moscow.

<sup>18</sup> There was considerable local opposition on the grounds of costs, potential environmental damage and disruption to everyday life and city officials were divided on whether to support a bid. The Mayor promised to deliver the Games without costs to the taxpayers (Chalkley and Essex, 1999; Burbank *et al*, 2001). See Burbank *et al* (2001) for an extended discussion on the politics of the LA bid and Games.

<sup>19</sup> Given that LA was the only candidate city the IOC probably did not have much choice in the matter.

<sup>20</sup> This was done by using existing sporting facilities and accommodation over a wide geographical area and no major infrastructure work was undertaken (Essex and Chalkley, 1998).

<sup>21</sup> For example, over 180 million Americans watched the LA Games (The Economist, 2000, p.33).

<sup>22</sup> The US\$225 million profit was shared between the USOC, national sports federations and the Amateur Athletic Federation of Los Angeles but not the City of LA (Burbank *et al*, 2001, p. 166). The USOC set up a non-profit organisation - US Olympic Foundation- to benefit sport in the US with its 40% share of the profits from the Games and also its share of the commemorative Olympic coins sold by the US Government. The aim was to maintain in perpetuity the original funding (US\$111m) and to distribute the investment income to the USOC and twenty years on the US Olympic Foundation continues to be a key source of funds for US sport (Carter, 2005a, p. 9).

Preuss (2003) the LA Games marked the transition from Games that were largely dependent on public money to Games that were increasingly reliant on private finance.

Barcelona used the 1992 Olympics to place itself on the map, assert its independence from Spain and as a tool for economic development and regeneration. The fact that it is cities, not regions or nations that bid to host the Olympics was important (Marshall, 1996), and as noted earlier it was not the first time that the city had used an international event as a catalyst for urban renewal. In economic terms Barcelona was facing a crisis with large scale industrial closures and high levels of unemployment. However, the programmes<sup>23</sup> that were put forward as necessary to stage the Games were viewed as having social purposes within the city's strategy (Marshall, 1996). Unlike the LA Games where the private sector had led the organisation of the Games and strongly influenced their shape and outcome, in Barcelona, the public sector was the main driver.<sup>24</sup> As noted above Barcelona has taken on iconic status and over twenty years later cities continue to draw inspiration from its achievements in transforming not only the urban landscape<sup>25</sup> but also the image of Barcelona<sup>26</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> Marshall (1996) argues that "The ring roads, the new drainage system, the new telecommunications infrastructure, the residential districts, the transformed old port – all were seen as having both social gains and contributing to economic regeneration" (p.149).

<sup>24</sup> For example, although total private investment arising directly or indirectly from the Games was twice the public expenditure (Varley, 1992, p.22), in the majority of projects, funding and control remained public, via companies controlled in various proportions by the public administration (Marshall, 1996, p.151).

<sup>25</sup> Probably the greatest transformation was the site of the Olympic Village was on land that was occupied by declining industries and was separated from the rest of the city by and from the coast by two railway lines. The redevelopment included restructuring the rail network, constructing a coastal ring road, building the Olympic Village, a new marina, restructuring of the sewage system and regeneration of the coastline. The development created a continuation of the Eixample district and connected the city to 5 km of coastline – the new beaches and waterfront facilities provide leisure opportunities for the city's inhabitants and visitors (Chalkley and Essex, 1999. pp. 386-387).

<sup>26</sup> One area in which this change of image has impacted positively is in tourism with Barcelona now being a leading city-break destination.

## CITIES IN COMPARISON PART II: SELECTED CASES STUDIES

In terms of unpacking the relationships between competences and structures of city governance and their relations to the national state and how this impacted upon the realisation of mega-sports events, there is a need to consider selected case studies in further depth. Two cases will be considered – Sydney Olympics and Manchester Commonwealth Games. As well as demonstrating important differences in city governance, they were both major precursors to the LVNAC project and actively informed thinking on mega events at the time.

### Sydney, Manchester and the LVNAC

Before considering Sydney and Manchester in more detail, it would probably be useful to briefly compare them with the LVNAC project (see Table 7.1). The case of Manchester and the MCG 2002 provides a particularly useful comparison with the LVNAC project given the time overlap,<sup>27</sup> the fact that both cities operate within the same national frameworks and the different outcomes of the projects. In both Sydney and Manchester ‘assets’ can be identified that were lacking from the LVNAC project. Whilst there is some overlap between the two lists, they are not coterminous which supports the earlier argument that there is more than one route to ‘success’. The Sydney Olympics benefited from the following:

- unified vision;
- sub-national (state) government that could provide financial resources and leadership;
- commitment of central (federal) government;
- mature partnerships.

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<sup>27</sup> Although the time overlap was short – the 18<sup>th</sup> months life of the LVNAC project (April 2000- October 2001) – it was at a significant time for the MCG as it was in difficulties and received £100m additional funding in summer 2001.

**Figure 7.1: Brief comparison between Sydney Olympic Games, Manchester Commonwealth Games and the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre.**

	<i>Sydney Olympics 2000</i>	<i>Manchester MCG 2002</i>	<i>LVNAC and WAC 2005</i>
<i>The event</i>	Olympic Games. The 'big prize' for nations and cities.	Commonwealth Games. Biggest multi-sport event held in UK since 1948	World Athletic Championships, one of the 'big three'. Never staged in UK
<i>The city</i>	Largest in Australia	'2 <sup>nd</sup> city'	Capital
<i>City governance</i>	City authorities minor player	Manchester City Council (MCC) lead partner in the bid. MCC underwrote the MCG, promised that council tax payers would not incur any debt.	No unitary authority when bid submitted/awarded. New unitary body (GLA) from May 2000 but unable to underwrite WAC.
<i>Origins of bid</i>	Part of mega event strategy.	Part of mega event strategy pursued by MCC and partners since 1980s. Unsuccessful bids for 1996/2000 Olympics.	Arose from government decision to remove athletics from WNS.
<i>Primary rationale</i>	Promotion of Australia	Regeneration of East Manchester	No unifying rationale. Sport vs regeneration.
<i>Partnerships</i>	Strong –public private sector links	Established. Strong public-private sector links. Long history of co-operation.	New and untested.
<i>Role of central government</i>	Key role	'Drawn in': from 'supportive' to significant funder and Cabinet Minister given responsibility for MCG.	'Let go': High profile commitment at start but appeared to get 'cold feet'. Cancelled LVNAC, decision that led to loss of 2005 WAC.
<i>Leadership and ownership</i>	NSW (state) government led.	MCC clear leader. Owned by 'Manchester'. Several champions.	No clear leader or owner. Lacked a champion.
<i>Context</i>	Sport integral to national identity.	Queen's Golden Jubilee. Problems with WNS and LVNAC.	Problems with MCG and WNS.
<i>Funding</i>	Public (state and federal government) and private. 30% public funding.	MCC (£86m); Sport England (£155m); DCMS (£35.5m) July 2001 – £105m 'rescue package' from MCC/DCMS/Sport England <sup>1</sup>	LVRPA (£5m); Sport England (up to £67m was available); CMF (£8m) Sport England reluctant to release funds. Capital gap.
<i>Facilities and costs</i>	Multiple new builds. Cost of approx. £2,534m	Multiple new builds Cost of approx. £190m (MCC £40.75m; Sport England £135.5m) <sup>1</sup>	Athletics stadium (43,000 seats for WAC, 20,000 in legacy mode) and High Performance Centre. Estimated cost £90-100m
<i>Legacy</i>	Under utilised facilities. Tourism boost.	Legacy use of facilities secured prior to MCG. Part of broad regeneration project.	Legacy function of stadium uncertain. Not integral to broader plans.

Compiled by author from various sources.

Whilst the MCG had the following 'assets':

- unified vision;
- a city council that could provide financial resources, albeit limited, as well as leadership and had a strong sense of ownership;
- commitment of central government;
- mature partnerships;
- a project that was firmly embedded into broader plans for the city.

A key difference between Sydney and Manchester was the level of governance that shaped and led the process. In Sydney it was the state (sub-national) government and federal (central) government that were the key drivers whilst in Manchester it was the city authorities. A consequence of this difference was that the Olympics were planned with national and sub-national needs in mind rather than those of the city itself, whilst the MCG was integral to wider socio-economic plans for the city. This difference probably at least in part accounts for the inadequate legacy planning in Sydney. It is also important to remember that in contrast to the LVNAC project, both the Sydney Olympics and the MCG enjoyed the commitment and support of central government.

### The 2000 Sydney Olympics

The Sydney Olympics were a sporting and cultural spectacle providing a showcase for Australia<sup>28</sup> and Australian athletes<sup>29</sup>. Sydney 2000 exemplifies the national use of mega sports events for national promotion and national sports glory and is reflective of the importance of sport and sporting success to Australia's national identity. The Olympics

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<sup>28</sup> The tourism benefits of the Sydney Olympics were reported to be £2.4 billion of the total £4.2 billion (Arup, 2002, p.8). Arup obtained the figures from the IOC official report and Ministerial statements reported in the press (Arup, 2002, p.8).

<sup>29</sup> Australia were 4<sup>th</sup> in the medal table with 58 medals whilst in the previous Games (1996 Atlanta) they had been 12<sup>th</sup> with 12 medals (Short, 2003, p11).

had only been staged in the Southern Hemisphere once before<sup>30</sup> and Australia had been striving to bring the Olympics back 'down under' ever since. Sydney's bid to stage the 2000 Olympics was the third attempt in successive Olympiads by Australian cities<sup>31</sup> and Sydney had been harbouring ambitions to host the Olympics since the 1920s (Jobling, 2000, p.258). Organisationally the Games ran like clock work – in strong contrast to the 1996 Atlanta Games that were beset with organisational difficulties – and received much praise for the structures that had been put in place to ensure the timely preparation and smooth operation of the Games. In terms of delivery Sydney raised the benchmark for subsequent events and this impacted on the MCG 2000. However, what Sydney also demonstrates is the drawbacks of an approach in which national and sub-national government set the priorities and dominate the process and where local government has little input or power. The Olympics were planned with national and regional needs in mind rather than those of the city and its inhabitants and once the 'show' was over Sydney was left with sporting facilities it did not need and uncertainty over the future development of the Olympic Village.

In Sydney Olympics the state (sub-national) and the federal (national) government were the main players and this reflects Australia's three-tiered system of governance and the sub-ordinate role of local government<sup>32</sup> (Stilwell and Troy, 2000). Furthermore, local government is a product of state government and state government may reduce or remove its powers and responsibilities (Stilwell and Troy, 2000). Under special Olympic legislation the New South Wales (NSW) state government created two special

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<sup>30</sup> The Summer Olympics were held in Melbourne in 1956.

<sup>31</sup> Brisbane bid for the 1992 Games and Melbourne for the 1996 Games (Jobling, 2000).

<sup>32</sup> The federal and state governments have their powers defined in the constitution, whilst local government is not recognised. Although the powers of the federal government are constrained by the constitution, its tax revenue means that it is economically dominant and thus able to exert greater power than state governments. (Stilwell and Troy, 2000).



planning agencies<sup>33</sup>. This legislation consolidated and centralised planning powers with state government and with statutory authorities that were responsible to that government thereby removing some planning powers from local governments (Owen, 2002). The NSW state did not want local government, which otherwise would have been the consent authority, to be able to delay the development of the Olympic facilities<sup>34</sup> (Searle, 2002). This 'streamlining' of the planning process was intended to 'fast track' developments and indeed most of the facilities were ready nearly a year a head of the Games (Owen, 2002).

However, the centralisation of planning powers meant that the Olympic developments were planned primarily from a regional or national perspective and in isolation from local planning. The state government and OCA were focused on staging a mega-event, presenting the best image to a global audience and maximising macro-economic gains and were less concerned than local governments about the local, site-specific impacts of venues<sup>35</sup> (Owen, 2002). The overriding concern for OCA was to get the venues built on time and to specification and this resulted in reduced openness, accountability and public participation<sup>36</sup> (Owen, 2002). There were positive legacies for communities but the benefits tended to be unequally distributed, with middle class areas gaining more than more disadvantaged areas (Owen, 2002). In a highly critical account of the Sydney Games, Lenskyi (2002) highlighted community issues such as local opposition, negative impact on social housing, the role of the media and racism. The tight timetable and deadline of the Games meant that there was little room for delay and the Olympic

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<sup>33</sup> The Olympic Co-Ordination Authority (OCA) which was responsible for delivering the venues and the development Homebush Bay. The Olympic Roads and Transport Authority (ORTA) was responsible for all transport – Olympic and also getting the populace of Sydney around on their day-to-day business (House of Commons, 1999).

<sup>34</sup> These powers have been used to forward other major urban developments such as Sydney's Darling Harbour redevelopment (Stilwell and Troy, 2002).

<sup>35</sup> Owen (2002) conducted a study of three local council areas.

<sup>36</sup> It should be noted that Owen (2002) found evidence of resistance to the anti-democratic tendencies of entrepreneurialism with managerial and democratic concerns continuing to be important to some councils and there were also examples of community resistance.

legislation enabled OCA to proceed without taking much account of the views of local communities – priority was given to the Games.

The OCA succeeded in getting the venues ready in good time for the Games and they fulfilled their Olympic function very well. Part of OCA's remit was to ensure that the Olympic sporting facilities were properly utilised after the Games, but even before the Olympics were staged, there were indications that the two large venues, built for the Olympics were going to struggle to find a long term role (Searle, 2002). Stadium Australia operates at a loss and although it has been converted (partially at government expense) for Australian Rules Football and has secured some key matches, its future is by no means certain (Sydney Morning Herald, 2005). The Stadium's problems are a result of a number of factors, including a dearth of major events and also competition for the few events that exist. The competition comes from smaller, state-controlled stadiums, in particular the Sydney Football Stadium located close to the city centre. Another important factor is the relatively small attendance at most matches which is a product of the nature of Australia's national sporting leagues and Sydney's place in them (Searle, 2002). The SuperDome – the indoor venue built for the Olympics – has suffered similar difficulties. From its opening the SuperDome<sup>37</sup> has failed to attract audiences from the smaller, State- controlled Sydney Entertainment Centre and in 2004 its lease was put up for sale on the international market (Cashmere, 2004). Sydney simply does not need these venues.

The choice of Homebush Bay<sup>38</sup> a de-industrialised neighbourhood in need of regeneration as the Olympic site was presented as a key element of the bid (Searle,

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<sup>37</sup> The SuperDome is the largest indoor stadium in Australia with a capacity of 21,000, but almost no indoor events in Sydney require more than 10,000 seats (Searle, 2002, p. 854).

<sup>38</sup> The site was identified in the 1970s and was large enough to accommodate most venues and the Olympic Village, and its proximity to the city centre reduced travelling times for both athletes and spectators (Jobling, 2000).

2002; House of Commons, 1999). However, little attention appears to have been paid to the post-Olympic function of the Olympic Park until after the Games were over. The development of the Olympic Park fell under the auspices of OCA, but the initial proposals were viewed as insufficient by the venue operators (Searle, 2002) and it was not until 2001 that the OCA invited architectural and urban designs practices to put forward their visions for a post-Olympic Park, and OCA unveiled their draft master-plan to create a 'vibrant' town centre with retail outlets, restaurants, bars and residential development. However, the master-plan was criticised on a number of fronts, in particular, for placing too much emphasis on current commercial potential<sup>39</sup> of the site at the expense of its long-term potential as a sustainable community (Royal Australian Institute of Architects, 2001). A revised draft master plan contained some modifications but overall kept the structure of the initial draft and Searle has little confidence that the master-plan can: "generate a vibrant, fine-grained neighbourhood of the kind that attracts patrons to rival venues" (Searle, 2002, p. 857).

Although the Sydney Games are often upheld as an example of how to deliver a memorable event and cities continue to draw on the experiences and expertise accrued by the Sydney team<sup>40</sup> other cities have probably learnt as much from what Sydney got 'wrong' as from what it got 'right'. In particular, the legacy problems have influenced the approach taken to hosting mega- events. Both Manchester and London paid a great deal of attention to legacy issues and embedded Olympic developments and regeneration projects into broader plans for the city. Interestingly Athens did not plan for the 'day after' but they have advised London to starting planning immediately (Sports Illustrated, 2005). The Greek government has attracted criticism for this lack of

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<sup>39</sup> Searle (2002) argues that: "It was essentially a developers' *tabula rasa*, containing little more than simple land use and density controls" (p. 856).

<sup>40</sup> The MCG 2002, the London Olympic bid team and now the 2012 Olympic team included personnel from Sydney.

post-Olympic planning<sup>41</sup> which has resulted in many venues being either empty or under utilised and their future uncertain (BBC/Galpin, 2005; Sports Illustrated, 2005). In addition, in inviting bids for the 2012 Olympics the IOC made it clear in its bidding criteria that host cities should not be left with expensive, unused facilities after the Games (O'Connor, 2004; Vigor *et al*, 2004).

### Manchester Commonwealth Games 2002

The Manchester Commonwealth Games followed in the footsteps of the Barcelona Olympics in using a mega-sports event as a tool for economic development and urban regeneration. They are also both examples of cities where city government played a major role in driving the whole process (bid through to delivery). In both cases the city authorities were trying to project a new image of their city – as vibrant, a good place to visit and do business in – and assert a distinct identity, strengthen their position within the global city hierarchy.

In order, to fully understand the differences between the MCG and the LVNAC project it is necessary to take several steps back and trace Manchester's path to the MCG.

Manchester is part of the group of cities (along with Sheffield, Birmingham and Glasgow) that are regarded as 'second cities' in the UK after London. As van den Berg *et al* (2002, p.51) observe: "they share the challenge of finding their own competitive niche in the British urban system". Manchester like many other cities suffered as a result of the decline of its industrial base and this led to significant social and economic problems. Since the mid 1980s Manchester has actively used sport to 're-imagine' the

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<sup>41</sup> There was a change of government five months prior to the Games and the current Conservative government blames the previous Socialist administration for this lack of post-Olympic planning (Sports Illustrated, 2005). However, a year later ( August 2005) the plans were still vague and the empty venues costing €100 million a year to maintain (BBC/Galpin, 2005).

city and as a tool for regeneration<sup>42</sup>, putting itself forward as a candidate to be the British nominated Olympic city for 1996 Summer Games.<sup>43</sup> The bid was initiated not by the city, but by a private entrepreneur, Sir Bob Scott, who was an important figure in the Manchester business world. Manchester was chosen to be British candidate city.<sup>44</sup>

Although unsuccessful in its bid<sup>45</sup>, undaunted Manchester put itself forward to be the candidate for the 2000 Olympics, but this time Manchester City Council actively backed the bid. The bid was well organised, better resourced and strong public-private partnerships had been established (Cochrane *et al*, 1996). Manchester once again secured the nomination this time beating off London.<sup>46</sup> A major drawback to a London bid was the lack of a unitary authority to back London or underwrite or co-ordinate the bid whereas Manchester had the city council (Hill, 1994). In other words the governance of London was seen as a 'problem'.

Peck and Tickell (1995) and Cochrane, Peck and Tickell (1996) examined Manchester's Olympic bids within the context of globalisation and 'new urban politics'. The politics of the Olympic bids symbolise the 'new urban politics' – with its emphasis on growth, place-marketing and public-private partnerships. During the 1980s Manchester city council (MCC) was a "citadel of municipal socialism" (Peck and Tickell, 1995, p.56) but it was transformed still under the same Labour administration to "a metropolis of Olympian expedience in the 1990s" (Peck and Tickell, 1995, p.56). During this period there was a burgeoning of public-private partnerships, an increasing accommodation of business interests and an emphasis on Manchester's growth potential. A group of business players (including Sir Bob Scott) dubbed the 'Manchester Mafia' come to the

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<sup>42</sup> Up to this period Manchester's sport reputation was based on being the home to two football clubs - Manchester City and Manchester United –it lacked experience and its sports infrastructure was limited.

<sup>43</sup> Manchester had been beaten to the 1992 nomination by Birmingham.

<sup>44</sup> Birmingham was the other city in the running to be candidate city.

<sup>45</sup> The 1996 Olympic Games were awarded to Atlanta.

<sup>46</sup> At one point there had been three rival bids from London, one dropped out and the other two made an uneasy and fragile alliance to bid on behalf of London (Hill, 1994).

fore during this period. They were the private end of public-private partnerships and could be found on the boards of a myriad of organisations<sup>47</sup>. Although “going for gold became synonymous with going for growth” (Peck and Tickell, 1995, p. 56), the authors concluded that what had emerged during this period was a ‘grant coalition’ rather than a ‘growth coalition’ with the money being drawn into the area being in the form of government grants rather than through private enterprise (Cochrane, *et al*, 1996).

The 2000 Olympic bid focused on urban regeneration in deprived East Manchester<sup>48</sup> and the plan was to create a ‘new town’ within the city. The regeneration of depressed inner city areas was firmly on the central government’s policy agenda and this coupled with a strong business presence enabled the bid to make successful overtures to the Department of Environment. Hill (1994) argues that securing Environment was important because: “If the bid had been seen as a sports issue, it would have been downgraded to fit into the scale of expenditure associated with sport: as it was, the £55m development aid (for that is what it was) received from the Department of Environment was, of course, a sizeable sum” (p. 353). Manchester city council had by taking the private sector on board and by focusing on the growth and regeneration elements of the bid successfully played central government’s game.

Manchester did not win the 2000 Games<sup>49</sup> but van den Berg and colleagues (2002, pp.54-55) argue that “it was a ‘race worth losing’.” Firstly, the bid boosted Manchester’s international profile. Secondly, the bidding process led to increased co-operation between the various key players in the city and improved relations between

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<sup>47</sup> Training Enterprise Councils, Urban Development Corporation, East Manchester Partnership, North West Business Leadership Team and the Olympic Committee (Cochrane *et al*, 1996).

<sup>48</sup> A once thriving industrial area it suffered badly in the economic recessions of the 1970s and 1980s and effectively lost its industrial base. For example, between 1970-1985 it lost 60 per cent of its economic and employment base (Russell, 2003). Initiatives to ‘kick start’ the area failed, the population declined and the area scores highly on a wide range of indicators of deprivation (Russell, 2003).

<sup>49</sup> The 2000 Olympics were awarded to Sydney.

the city and central government. Thirdly, it led to improvements in a number of strategic areas including transport, telecommunications and tourism. Fourthly, the bid instilled a new confidence and sense of civic pride. Finally, it generated £200 million, including £75 million of capital investment from central government. During the bidding period two sports venues were built<sup>50</sup> that are well utilised<sup>51</sup>. However, the plans for the Sport City Stadium were shelved along with the major regeneration programme for East Manchester. The city council still believed that a major sporting event could act as a catalyst and it was with this belief that led to the decision to bid for the 2002 Commonwealth Games<sup>52</sup>, which Manchester secured in 1995.

What is evident is that by the time Manchester secured the Commonwealth Games, a great deal had been learnt from its earlier bids. Manchester presented a unified vision and the MCG was firmly embedded into broader plans for the city. City leaders had a clear vision and belief in what a mega-sport event could do for Manchester, they were prepared to commit resources and take a leading role. Furthermore, mature partnerships were in place and all this put Manchester on a good footing to take forward this highly complex project. This is all in marked contrast to the LVNAC project. So why was Manchester with its networked system of governance able to successfully pursue a mega- event strategy while London was not? The answer may lay in the nature of the networked system that developed in the two cities during the 1990. In Manchester the partnerships were public-private and focused on market led regeneration, so suitable for a mega-event strategy. In London the partnerships were more public- third sector based,

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<sup>50</sup> The National Cycling Centre (the Manchester Velodrome) in East Manchester and the Manchester Evening News Arena, a multifunctional venue (i.e. used for conferences, concerts as well as sports events) in the city centre with excellent access to public transport networks

<sup>51</sup> For example, the Velodrome has staged 1995 World Cycling Cup; 1996 World Cycling Championships; 2002 MCG; 2003 World Track Master's Cycling Championships (from [www.games-legacy.com/cgi-bin/index.cgi/34](http://www.games-legacy.com/cgi-bin/index.cgi/34) ) [Accessed 18 Feb 2004]. The Arena is home to a basketball team and an ice hockey team and the matches played by both teams are well attended (van den Berg *et al*, 2002).

<sup>52</sup> It is a multi-sport event held every four years in one of the 70 countries of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth comprises of countries that were former British colonies including Australia, Canada, India, Pakistan, Jamaica, Nigeria and South Africa.

focused on community based regeneration, so not a model that works well for mega-sports events.

The award of the MCG allowed the plans to regenerate East Manchester to be revived. In 1999 the New East Manchester Urban Regeneration Company<sup>53</sup> was established to oversee the area's regeneration. A long term plan<sup>54</sup> was formulated with the twin overarching aims attracting people and business back to the area. The area has also been the focus of a range of central government initiatives<sup>55</sup> and all this activity has led Ward (2003) to describe East Manchester as the "most *policy thick* (area) in Britain" (p.123, original emphasis). The regeneration programme for East Manchester is ongoing and it will be some time before it is certain whether the aims and aspirations of New East Manchester have been transformed into reality. Brown (2001) and Ward (2003) have raised concerns that the entrepreneurial thrust of the redevelopment and the need to demonstrate 'success' may mean that the needs and wishes of the residents have been set aside.

Although the MCG were declared an all round 'success' (CPC, 2000), during the course of preparations a number of problems arose and there were many that doubted that Manchester could 'pull it off'. The bid was essentially a local one, with Manchester city

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<sup>53</sup> New East Manchester as it is known was one of the first three Urban Regeneration Company's to be created in the country. It comprises of English Partnerships, the North West Development Agency, MCC and local communities. New East Manchester coordinates budgets and remits of others working in the area.

<sup>54</sup> The plan was set out in the New East Manchester Regeneration Framework 2001. Its aims includes doubling the local population to 60,000 over a 10-15 year period, building 12,500 new homes, renovating 7000 existing homes, creating a new business park, creating a new town centre, creation of over 10,000 new jobs in the area and the raising of educational attainment above the city average (Source: Commonwealth Games Legacy, Manchester 2002 available from [www.gameslegacy.com](http://www.gameslegacy.com) [Accessed 18 February 2004].

<sup>55</sup> Including Sure Start, New Deal for Communities, Health, Sport and Education Action Zones.



council (MCC) taking the leading role<sup>56</sup> and although central government was supportive its role was peripheral. MCC underwrote the bid and promised that local council taxpayers would not be burdened with any losses. However, by 1999 concerns were being raised about the organisation and funding of the MCG (House of Commons, 1999). The Commonwealth Games had grown in size and scope<sup>57</sup>, in political and economic significance<sup>58</sup> and the 1998 Commonwealth Games held in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) raised the benchmark. All this meant that the plans for MCG were in many ways 'out of date'<sup>59</sup>.

Central government accepted the argument forwarded by the Select Committee that it was an event of national importance and thus central government should play a 'leading' rather than 'supporting' role and invest in the MCG (House of Commons, 1999). A Minister of State was appointed with responsibility for the MCG and links were forged between central government and the MCG organisers, funding committed<sup>60</sup> and the MCG linked into the celebrations for the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002.

Preparations continued and new senior staff brought in to deliver the MCG, along with personnel from the Sydney Olympics. Although significant progress was made<sup>61</sup> with little over a year to go there remained concerns over the budget. Central government appointed Patrick Carter to review the organisation and finances of the MCG. He concluded that the MCG required a substantial cash injection and if that could not be found then the Games should be cancelled (Hetherington, 2001). Ministers did not want to entertain the thought that the MCG would collapse in the midst of the Queen's

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<sup>56</sup> The MCC had direct responsibility for facility development and regeneration and delegated responsibility for organising the event to a Company with a separate legal identity (Manchester Commonwealth Games Ltd) and a subsidiary Manchester 2002 was responsible for delivering the Games.

<sup>57</sup> In the end the MCG were the largest event ever with 17 sports and 5,9000 athletes and officials – an increase of 20 per cent on earlier Games (CPC, 2002, p.5).

<sup>58</sup> The end of apartheid in South Africa and the conclusion of the Cold War have increased the political and economic significance of the Commonwealth Games (House of Commons, 1999).

<sup>59</sup> This was compounded by the success of Sydney that once again raised the bench mark.

<sup>60</sup> Central government committed £10 million to the opening and closing ceremonies.

<sup>61</sup> For example, the Aquatics Centre opened ahead of schedule and other developments were on target.

Golden Jubilee celebrations and extra funding was found in the form of a £100m rescue package put together by central government, Sport England and MCC (Hetherington, 2001).

The preparations for MCG 2002 involved constructing new sporting venues<sup>62</sup> and MCC was keen to avoid the problems experienced by other cities, such as Sydney, that have been left with expensive, underused facilities. A number of strategies were employed to prevent the 'white elephant' scenario. For example, the Aquatics Centre was built for its legacy use<sup>63</sup> and temporary seating was added for the Games. More significantly, prior to the Games MCC secured the post-Games future of the stadium, as home to Manchester City Football Club. Although the 'deal' struck between MCC and the club was criticised for favouring the club (Brown, 2001), it did avoid the embarrassment of a costly 'white elephant'.

As an event the MCG were a sporting, organisational and financial success.<sup>64</sup> In sporting terms Britain did well, with England coming second in the medal table overall after Australia<sup>65</sup>. Moreover, the MCG demonstrated that Britain could successfully stage a mega sports event and given the UK's track record this was important. What Manchester clearly illustrates is the dynamic and competitive nature of hosting mega-events. Each city strives to at least match or preferably better the last city's event and

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<sup>62</sup> Including a 38,000 capacity stadium; Aquatics Centre, Regional Athletics Arena (legacy of MCG built around the warm up track and training facilities), National Squash Centre, National Tennis Centre, Bolton Arena (multi sport with indoor and outdoor facilities adjacent to Reebok Stadium home Bolton Wanderers FC) and Heaton Bowling Centre (from: [www.gameslegacy.com/cgi-bin/index.cgi/34](http://www.gameslegacy.com/cgi-bin/index.cgi/34).)

<sup>63</sup> It is used as a training facility for elite swimmers and for leisure swimming for the community.

<sup>64</sup> The Chairman of the Commonwealth Games Federation, the international governing body declared "Manchester, you are the best" (Manchester 2002, 2002). Contrary to the dire predictions of financial disaster that emanated from Whitehall, commercial revenue (£55m) exceeded forecasts by £4.4m (Hetherington, 2002). This was in part due to phenomenal ticket sales with many events taking place in front of near capacity crowds and the contingency fund set remains largely untapped. Organisers have been able to return money to funders - Sport England, central government and MCC all received at least £2m back (Hetherington, 2002).

<sup>65</sup> Australia secured 206 medals (82 Gold; 62 Silver; 62 Bronze) and England secured 165 (54 Gold; 51 Silver; 60 Bronze) (BBC, 2002b).

given the time period between being awarded the event and staging it, the original proposals can easily be superseded. In the case of the Commonwealth Games the status of the event itself is increasing so that the MCG had to adapt from being a modest city based event to one of national standing. What is also clear from Manchester is that cities can learn from both their own experiences and also from other cities.

Perhaps most significantly MCG demonstrated the key role of city government in delivering mega sports events that can benefit the city and its inhabitants long after the athletes and the international media circus have left. It also confirmed the importance of central government in the mega-sports event process. The MCG was a success because both the city and central government committed to the event. However it should be noted that the MCC and its partners laid down firm foundations for the MCG and without those foundations it is unlikely that even with central government support such a successful event could have been delivered.

## UNDERSTANDING THE CHANGING RELATIONSHIPS OF SPORT AND GOVERNANCE IN LONDON

### Sports events and London: a brief history

Sport is important to London and Londoners: approximately 45 per cent of Londoners take part in sport (excluding walking) once a month (Sport England, 2001). Many more are spectators, for example, at one the capitals' twelve premier and football league clubs. That sport can be used as tool for city promotion and regeneration has not gone unnoticed in London and it has a past history – the 1948 Olympics and the 1966 Football World Cup- which demonstrated this role and it has been host to non sports

major events. In addition, London plays host to high profile calendar events, most notably the London Marathon<sup>66</sup> and the Lawn Tennis Championships at Wimbledon. However, apart from a few matches for Euro '96, the last mega sports event to be staged in the capital was 1966 FIFA World Cup. Given London's position as a global city, this is perhaps somewhat surprising. With its many cultural attractions and amenities London is regarded favourably by international sporting bodies, indeed, the IAAF made no secret of the fact that they wanted the World Athletics Championships to be held in London (House of Commons, 2001a). Following the failure of the Birmingham and Manchester bids for the Olympic Games, the British Olympic Association (BOA) decided that any future bid had to be centred on London having concluded that it was the only British city that stood a chance of winning.

This raises the question as to why at the turn of the twenty first century London had not played host to a mega sporting event for nearly 40 years? One reason is that London lacks international standard sporting facilities so that hosting an event entails considerable capital investment. For example, London has only two 50 metre swimming pools, neither of which meets the requirements for international competitions, and this compares unfavourably to other European capitals<sup>67</sup> (ASA, 2002). The London Olympic bid<sup>68</sup> involved the construction of an Aquatics Centre which is currently being built<sup>69</sup> and this forms part of the legacy of the bid. The award of the Olympic Games means that extensive sporting facilities will have to be constructed<sup>70</sup>. However, in the past

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<sup>66</sup> The London Marathon was begun in 1981 by former Olympic champion, Chris Brasher, and is now firmly established on the international circuit for professional athletes as well as the large number of amateur athletes who take part. In 1981 there were 7,747 runners and in 2003 there were 46,500 and the race has about twice as many applications as it has places (London Marathon, website [www.london-marathon.co.uk](http://www.london-marathon.co.uk), accessed 5 May 2004).

<sup>67</sup> The National Facilities Strategy for Swimming, stated that as a *minimum*, there should be at least one eight lane 50m pool in each quadrant of the area bounded by the M25, and that one of these pools should have ten lanes and be sized to stage major events such as European championships (ASA, 2002).

<sup>68</sup> The Aquatic Centre would have gone ahead whether the Games had been awarded or not.

<sup>69</sup> It is due for completion in 2008.

<sup>70</sup> Including an 80,000 capacity stadium, hockey complex, velodrome, multi-sport complex, tennis complex in the Olympic Park, Stratford, East London. In addition a canoeing slalom in Broxbourne,

developing international standard sporting facilities in London has proved to be far from a straight forward process, as evident from the re-development of Wembley Stadium and the LVNAC project.

A second reason for London's poor record is that in terms of bidding for and delivering major sporting or cultural events is that between 1986-2000 there was no strategic overview or unitary authority to take the lead. Until the arrival of the GLA and Mayor there had been no strategic framework in which to locate sport, synchronise developments or tap into its potential in a co-ordinated manner. It was within this context that the LVNAC project was operating and the case study showed that the governance of London in that period was a key element in the failure of the project. The success of the Olympic bid within a few years of the failure of the LVNAC project is intimately related to changes in governance structures as well as changes in attitudes evolving over time. The next section will consider the relationship between the evolving governance of London and its significance for mega-sports events.

### London's changing governance

In relation to the evolution of the London's governance and its significance to mega-sports events three distinct periods can be identified and will be considered in turn:

- Pre-Mayor (1986-2000);
- Establishment of the Mayor and GLA (2000-2003);
- Maturing Mayoralty (2003 onwards).

*Pre-Mayor (1986-2000)*

The period in which London was without a unitary authority was characterised by a lack of strategy, vision, effective partnerships and co-ordination that impacted on London as there was no one responsible for thinking about London as a 'whole' or to give 'voice' to London issues. Governance was fragmented with government ministers, the London boroughs, and various joint arrangements all playing a part. The result was that decision making became very fragmented and power shifted to Whitehall (Newman and Thornley, 1997; Pimlott and Rao, 2002). In practice it meant it was extremely difficult to get 'big' (e.g. major transport developments) decisions made and London was dogged by indecision.

In relation to mega sporting events, one of the clearest illustrations of the problems that arose from the lack of a unitary authority was London's failure to become the British bid city for successive Olympics. The lack of a unitary authority led to a situation where it was possible for there to be three rival London bids vying for the 2000 Olympic nomination (Hill, 1994). The 2000 nomination went to Manchester with its metropolitan council. As already noted this failure led London organisations with an interest in sport, to form a small pan-London organisation in the mid 1990s – London International Sport (LIS). The membership of LIS was broad, including the Association of London Government, London First (business organisation), sport bodies and the London Tourist Board. In the absence of a unitary authority it was hoped that being pan-London would give LIS legitimacy and work began with the BOA on a potential London Olympic bid in 1997. The LIS is an example of the pan-London networks that developed in order to fill the gap left by the lack of a unitary authority.

From other cities we have seen that leaders and individuals can make a difference not only to the success or otherwise of a project but also to the form and direction of

projects. Network governance systems require clear leadership and direction, particularly in the case of large complex projects like mega-events. For example, in Manchester a period of stability and continuity provided the city's leaders with an opportunity to take a longer term strategic view and to pursue a mega-event strategy as a means of regeneration. The LVNAC project began at a time when London lacked a leader or an overall vision, so there was no one to take forward the project or situate it within the overall plans for London and it suffered as a consequence (see Figure 7.2).

The LVNAC project began to take shape in early 2000, shortly before the election of the Mayor and Assembly, and so the roots of the LVNAC project lie firmly in the pre-Mayor era. The LVNAC was planned when there was no overall strategic framework for London (sporting or otherwise) in which to locate it, no 'city' to sign the IAAF contract to stage the World Athletics Championships, no London leader to take the lead and champion the project. Furthermore, these roots continued to strongly influence the project even after the establishment of the Mayor.

#### *Establishment of the Mayor and GLA (2000-2003)*

The Mayor and Assembly were elected in May 2000 and thus the LVNAC project unfolded during the transitional period as the new institutions and personnel were coming on stream. Although many of the personnel were not new to London governance<sup>71</sup> they had new roles in new institutions that were 'bedding down' and the whole system was in a state of flux as it shifted to accommodate the changes. Making all the new appointments required by city government can take a considerable time<sup>72</sup> and although most senior posts had been filled within a year, lower levels posts within the GLA and functional bodies were still being filled early in 2002 (Travers, 2002).

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<sup>71</sup> A number of bodies including the London Ecology Centre, London Planning Advisory Committee and the London Research centre were absorbed into the GLA and personnel transferred their employment to the GLA (Pimlott and Rao, 2002).

<sup>72</sup> Evidence from Toronto, Canada –where a new Mayoral system was established in 1996- is that it can take over two years to make all the new appointments (Travers, 2002).

**Figure 7.2: The LVNAC project and the London Olympic 2012 bid compared.**

KEY ELEMENTS	LVNAC/WAC 2005	LONDON OLYMPIC BID
Origins	Removal of athletics from WNS, a need to find a venue for WAC 2005	Unsuccessful bids based on 2 <sup>nd</sup> tier cities led BOA to believe that only a London bid had a chance of success
Sports governance	WAC committee long standing and well connected but LVNAC team new.  UKA small, little negotiating power.  Sport England sceptical and un-supportive.	BOA and LIS working on bid for 6+ years, strong sport-politics network.  'Hard line' approach from BOA – total buy in from government or no bid.  General support from other sporting bodies.
Regional government	GLA new body, on the sidelines LDA peripheral role Mayor – equivocal	GLA forefront of bid LDA central role Mayor- vocal champion
Central government	The Dome and WNS fiascos mean that there is not universal support from Whitehall departments.  'Let's do it' approach – Appeared to not have thought though the implications of either WAC or LVNAC.	Encouraged by the success of the MCG means that there is universal support from Whitehall departments.  'Balance sheet' approach – considered deliberations before committing the government
Leadership and champions	No clear leader. Committed team but lacked experience and 'clout'. Chris Smith only champion within government up to June 2001. Local business player acted as champion but recognised own limitations. Perceived as vote loser for Mayor.	Bid initially led by Barbara Cassani, business player, replaced 2004 by Lord Coe, former athlete and politician. High profile, experienced team, including ex-Manchester 2002 staff. Mayor of London key champion along with others from sports, politics, business and in the Prime Minister in the latter stages. Perceived as vote winner for Mayor.
Rationale	Provide national stadium and centre for athletics Regeneration potential contested	Regeneration of East London Consolidate/reassert London's position as a world city

Source: Compiled by author.

**Legend:**

BOA: British Olympic Association

GLA: Greater London Authority

LDA: London Development Agency

LIS: London International Sport

LVNAC: Lee Valley National Athletics Centre

WAC: World Athletics Championships



From other cities, such as Manchester we have seen the advantages of having mature stable governance arrangements when hosting mega sports events.

Although a significant issue for the LVNAC project, the problems caused by the transition to the GLA were essentially short term. However, more fundamental questions were raised within the LVNAC case study and elsewhere (e.g. Travers, 2002) about the ability of the new arrangements to deliver major sports projects. The Mayor's limited powers and resources and the continuing complexity of London governance were seen as factors that would militate against hosting mega sports events. Early research (e.g. Travers, 2002; Kleinman *et al*, 2002; Rao, 2003; Syrett and Baldock, 2003) on the impact of the GLA and the Mayor on the governance of London indicated that there was a great deal of continuity with network governance and coalition building, inter-agency and partnership working continuing to be important. British government institutions at local regional and national level tend to evolve within their original legislative framework and this appears to be the case for the new arrangements for London (Travers, 2002).

The governance of London remains complex<sup>73</sup> and central government continues to play an important role, with very few government institutions ceasing to operate post May 2000. For example, the Government Office for London (GOL), the *de facto* "regional" tier of central government remains important (Travers, 2002; Kleinman *et al*, 2002). There is agreement that the creation of the GLA and Mayor does not constitute a significant reversal of the centralism which is characteristic of British politics and the new bodies have to work within the constraints of a centralist framework (Kleinman *et al*, 2002; Travers, 2002; Syrett and Baldock, 2003). Travers (2002) argued that even

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<sup>73</sup> Travers (2002) argues that there are in effect four different kinds of governmental institutions: central government departments; government appointed boards; GLA and the boroughs.

achieving modest change was going to require the various players working together and that: “Securing the powers and funding for a major project such as a new railways line or a key sports event will often still be beyond the capacity of this multiplicity of organizations and individuals” (p.788). In fact, as we have seen throughout this thesis such sports events often involve the construction of a new railway line in *addition* to building new facilities.

Sweeting (2003) assessed the ‘strength’ of the Mayor in relation to two dimensions – strength within the administration and power beyond the confines of office- and concluded that Ken Livingstone was a type 3 mayor: that is strong in relation to the GLA but with limited autonomy and power in local governance. The Mayor and GLA functions in a political environment that limits local autonomy and like local authorities the Mayor and GLA owe their existence to Parliament, who also decide their functions, structures and sources of finance. Moreover, central government could reform or even abolish them, if it so wished (Sweeting, 2003). It is clear that when the GLA and Mayoral structures were being developed some Whitehall departments took steps to limit the autonomy of the Mayor<sup>74</sup>. Gordon (2004) argues: “the basic position of the Mayor and GLA as a whole is very weak, both formally and in terms of resources” (p.4). Although the Mayor is powerful in relation to the Assembly, he is financially weak in relation to central government (Kleinman *et al*, 2002; Travers, 2000). The Mayor has no tax-raising powers and thus, London continues to be reliant on central government and private sector funding, with government being the key (Gordon, 2004). In the case of the LVNAC the Mayor argued that he did not have the resources to underwrite the WAC.

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<sup>74</sup> For example, the structure of the MPA means the Home Secretary retains a great deal of power and under the existing legislative arrangements the Mayor would find it difficult to effect major change in the police service (Travers, 2002).

In addition, Ken Livingstone was elected in 2000 as an Independent having been expelled from the Labour party and relations were strained between the Mayor and central government. Although this independence gave him manoeuvrability and meant he was not tied to party politics (Kleinman *et al*, 2002; Syrett and Baldock, 2003), as Sweeting (2003) argued it meant that he was politically isolated and thus could not rely on party loyalty or use party connections to gain influence at other levels of government as some French and American Mayors have done.

As noted in Chapter Five one of the main responsibilities of the Mayor is to produce London wide strategies but the LVNAC project preceded these strategies. The LDA began work on two key strategies quickly<sup>75</sup> and *Towards the London Plan: The Initial Proposals for the Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy* (GLA, 2001) and the EDS *Success through Diversity* (LDA, 2001b) were published in the summer of 2001<sup>76</sup>. The Upper Lee Valley, the location of the proposed National Athletics Centre was identified in both documents as one of the regional corridors that would be the focus of development. Interestingly the plans for the LVNAC were mentioned only in passing and in a manner that with hindsight hinted at the stance that the Mayor would take to the project:

London is an important location for international, national and local sports activities. However, some existing international facilities are inadequate to meet modern requirements. To reflect its world city role, London should be able to host a range of world class sporting events. Proposals to accommodate these are currently being investigated (for example at Wembley and in the Lee Valley).

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<sup>75</sup> For example, a draft Economic Strategy was published in December 2000 (LDA, 2000).

<sup>76</sup> These documents have been superseded by *Sustaining Success: Developing London's Economy* (LDA, 2005) and *The London Plan* (GLA, 2004a).

These will form part of a wider evaluation of capacity to inform an Olympic bid, focused on East London (GLA, 2001, p.37).

The use of the word ‘investigate’ is telling, as by then the LVNAC project was seemingly well under way – the project was over a year old, the stadium design had been unveiled and the planning application had been submitted to the London Borough of Enfield. Although the Upper Lee Valley and LVNAC featured in early documents, it was clear that the Mayor and the LDA had their sights focused firmly on the Lower Lee Valley, East London and the Thames Gateway for regeneration activities. From these early documents it is evident that although the Olympic bid was already firmly embedded in the Mayoral plans for London the LVNAC project was not. Furthermore, the appeal of the Olympics for the Mayor appeared to lie not only in its regeneration potential but also in its ability to consolidate London’s position as a world city. The Mayor had vocally championed another London mega-sports project (WNS)<sup>77</sup> but he did not – as many expected him to do- take up the mantle for the LVNAC project giving it (at best) lukewarm support probably because it did not seem to be able to deliver significant gains for London (i.e. regeneration, status etc )

*Maturing Mayoralty (2003 onwards).*

In January 2004 Ken Livingstone was readmitted to the Labour Party<sup>78</sup> following Prime Minister Blair’s admission that far from being the “disaster” he had predicted, Ken Livingstone had done a good job as Mayor (Muir, 2004a)<sup>79</sup>. This opened the way to him becoming the Labour candidate for the June 2004 Mayoral election in which he

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<sup>77</sup> Both as Mayor and earlier as MP for Brent the constituency in which the development lies.

<sup>78</sup> Ken Livingstone was expelled in 2000 and banned from membership for 5 years for standing as an independent mayoral candidate.

<sup>79</sup> Indeed, this move was thought to be prompted by fears of Labour losing the Mayoral election and being harmed in the European elections on the same day (Muir, 2004a).

was re-elected for a second term with Livingstone arguing that being within Labour party structures would strength his ability to argue the case for London (Muir, 2004a).

Early research Kleinman *et al* (2002) on the governance changes described the change from pre to post GLA as a shift from network governance with no centre to network governance with a weak centre. Nevertheless the difference is significant and with time the significance has become more apparent as the structures, networks and personnel have become established. Pimlott and Rao (2002) argued that the Mayor's success was dependent "upon his ability to work within the institutional and political constraints" (p.20) and certainly he has proved to be adept at working within this system.

In order to take forward his strategies, including the Olympics the Mayor has to work with a variety of actors, including central government, the boroughs, sub-regional partnerships and business and in general he has proved to be skilled in building coalitions and working in partnership (Kleinman *et al*, 2002; Syrett and Baldock, 2003). Ken Livingstone has fostered a positive relationship with business and has managed to combine a commitment to social issues (equality, diversity and social inclusion) with a pro-business and pro-growth vision of London as a global city (Syrett and Baldock, 2003). Certainly business was seen to 'back the bid', with a reported eighty one per cent of businesses supporting the London Olympic bid<sup>80</sup> and the list of supporters included many private sector players, both individual businesses<sup>81</sup> and national and regional representative bodies<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> London Chamber of Commerce poll conducted 23 January 2003 and cited in BOA press release 11<sup>th</sup> Feb 2003 (BOA, 2003b).

<sup>81</sup> By February 2003 (when the cabinet was due to announce decision as to whether central government would support the bid or not) 138 letters of support had been received from individual businesses (BOA, 2003b).

<sup>82</sup> Including Confederation of British Industry, London First, London Business Board, London First, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other local Chambers of Commerce and Industry (e.g. Leeds).

Unlike other recent mega-sports projects (LVNAC, WNS), the Olympics were planned within the context of London wide strategies and neither the Mayor nor central government rushed into the Olympics, indeed central government attracted both praise (House of Commons, 2003) and criticism for its measured approach ( e.g. Observer, 2002).<sup>83</sup> A great deal of background work was done on a potential Olympic bid by the BOA and others and a cost-benefits analysis of staging the Olympics based in East London was commissioned<sup>84</sup> (Arup, 2002). The Arup report delivered a positive assessment but emphasised the need for all levels of government and other agencies to work together on a common proposal and for political priority to be given to the bid and subsequent Games (Arup, 2002). In readmitting the Mayor to the Labour party, the Prime Minister emphasised the need for the Mayor and government to work together particularly on London's 2012 Olympic bid (Muir, 2004a). The Olympic bid received broad support from the Select Committee (House of Commons, 2003) and London Assembly (GLA, 2003d). Both reports highlighted legacy issues, the need for the costs, proposed funding and underwriting arrangements to be clearly explained and recommended the appointment of an Olympics Minister<sup>85</sup> (House of Commons, 2003; GLA, 2003d).

From the outset the Mayor placed great store on London hosting major and mega sporting events and the title of the Cultural Strategy *London Cultural Capital: Realising the Potential of a World Class City* (GLA, 2004b) reveals the importance ascribed to world class events and institutions. The London Plan was published in 2004 and described as: "the first democratically sanctioned, statutory, strategic plan prepared for London for nearly three decades" (GLA, 2004a, p. 3). The Olympics featured strongly

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<sup>83</sup> The 'will they-won't they' question received a great of attention in the media and was exacerbated by the growing crisis in Iraq that led to the decision being delayed.

<sup>84</sup> Arup was commissioned in January 2002 by a 'Stakeholders Group' comprising central government, Mayor of London and BOA.

<sup>85</sup> Tessa Jowell, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport has been appointed as Olympic Minister.

in the London Plan which has an integrative role in relation to the other strategies and thus according to Gordon (2004) makes it of greater importance than the other strategies. The EDS (LDA, 2005) identifies mega sports events as a key tool for marketing and promoting London, for developing London as a 'brand' as well as a means of forwarding infrastructure projects. Similarly mega sport events are thought to be an important component of business tourism, with the experiences of Barcelona and Sydney being drawn upon to support this proposition (LDA, 2004b; LDA, 2005)<sup>86</sup>.

It is not just mega-sports events that have received consideration but sport more generally, although interestingly the initial proposals contained in the draft Culture Strategy *London: Cultural Capital* (GLA, 2003e) were criticised for not paying enough attention to sport (GLA, 2003e). Since then there has been a plethora of London sport related publications from both the GLA and other key bodies, examining sport from its many different angles<sup>87</sup>. These studies have highlighted that sport is an important part of the fabric of London. For example, one study mapped out the issues facing football clubs and residents when clubs look to redevelop or relocate and highlighted the integral place of football in London's cultural and community landscape (GLA, 2003b). It is also evident that sport forms a distinctive and significant sector of London's economy<sup>88</sup> and there appears to be scope for sport to have a greater role in London's economy (GLA, 2003a). Sport has also featured in other strategies, for example, the Children's and Young People's Strategy (GLA, 2004c) draws attention to the importance of physical activity (play and sport) to children and young people and the need to improve facilities and access. The possibilities presented by a successful Olympic bid thread

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<sup>86</sup> Barcelona and Sydney both experienced an increase in business events following the Olympics because of infrastructural improvements and the enhanced profile of the city (LDA, 2004b).

<sup>87</sup> For example, increasing overall participation and improving access (Sport England, 2004a), improving sporting opportunities for young people (GLA, 2003), the part sport plays in the leisure economy (GLA, 2003a), tennis in London (GLA, 2005a) and the socio-economic impact of football stadiums on their immediate vicinity (GLA, 2003b).

<sup>88</sup> According to the GLA study sport employs 29,000 people and generates £700 million in sales (GLA, 2003b, p.7)

through documents, for example, both the London Plan for Sport (Sport England, 2004a) and the Children's and Young People's Strategy (GLA, 2004c) highlight the potential opportunities for grassroots sport that arise from London hosting the 2012 Olympics.

Gordon (2004) argues that given the Mayors limited financial resources the strategic plans for London are contingent on the being able to persuade central government to underwrite key items of investment. Although this remains the case, there are several important points to note. Firstly, that the Mayor has been successful in persuading the government to underwrite major projects, the London Olympics being a clear example and certainly, the London Olympics and the associated regeneration of East London would not have proceeded without central government as ultimate guarantor<sup>89</sup>. The Olympic bid provides an example of the importance of persuasion, patronage and publicity for the Mayor which Kleinman *et al* (2002) identified as an important means in which the Mayor had levered in powers.

Secondly, the Mayor has committed London to paying a large component of the costs of staging the Games via an Olympic precept. This precept represents an extension, albeit a modest one of the Mayors powers and along with the congestion charge<sup>90</sup> demonstrates that the Mayors powers and resources are not fixed and that there is room for manoeuvre. The London Olympics Bill will grant the Mayor Olympic specific powers to enable the GLA to fulfil its obligations as host city (DCMS, 2005c). The Olympic precept and the congestion charge are important precedents and it seems likely that the Mayor will continue to seek means to consolidate and extend his powers.

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<sup>89</sup> Central government has guaranteed that it will act as the ultimate guarantor of the construction costs of the infrastructure, venues and facilities necessary for staging the Games (DCMS, 2005b)

<sup>90</sup> Since February 2003 vehicles have had to pay a 'congestion charge' to travel through central London during the hours of 07.00-18.30, Monday-Friday (excluding public holidays) as a means of reducing traffic congestion. The cost was initially £5 but rose in 2005 to £8 and the money is used to improve London's public transport system. In September 2005 the Mayor announced that the congestion charging zone will be extended to the west from September 2007.



However, the power to rescind the Olympic specific powers lies with the Secretary of State and this should act as a reminder that the balance of power still lies firmly with central government. Thus, the Olympic bid benefited from the improvement in working relations and the restitution of trust between the Mayor and central government that were lacking during the LVNAC project.

It is evident that a great deal of thought was put into the Olympic bid, that different levels of government were engaged with the process and also that the plans were subject to scrutiny and debate. This is in strong contrast to previous bids and mega sports projects in London, including the LVNAC project, WNS and attempts to be the candidate city for earlier Olympics. Perhaps most importantly central government have committed themselves totally, they have approved a funding package<sup>91</sup> and agreed to act as guarantor (DCMS, 2005b). In addition the structures to manage and deliver the Games were set out in the bid and the legislation necessary to create them set in train immediately after the Games were awarded (DCMS, 2005c) and to recruit the personnel for the key posts<sup>92</sup>. There is a clear separation of responsibilities between the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) and the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) (DCMS, 2005b). The LOCOG is responsible for the delivery of the event and the ODA will manage central government's and the Mayor's interests and will be accountable to them (DCMS, 2005b). These arrangements are similar to those for Sydney 2000 and demonstrate how cities learn from each other. In the same vein London has learned from the legacy problems of Sydney and venues have been

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<sup>91</sup> Central government and the Mayor have agreed a public funding package of £2.375 billion that will be found from London council Tax (the Olympic precept), LDA and Lottery funding (DCMS, 2005b).

<sup>92</sup> An interim LOCOG with Seb Coe as Chair began work immediately and by the end of 2005 Chief Executive should be appointed – the list of candidates include Frances Done who headed up MCG, Jim Sloman organising chief from Sydney 2000 and Nick Bitel, London Marathon Chief Executive. (BBC,2005). The Chair and Chief Executive of the ODA were appointed in November 2005. The Chair, Jack Lemley, was Chief Executive of the consortium Transmanche Link that was responsible for constructing the Channel Tunnel (DCMS, 2005d). See below for details of the Chief Executive.

designed with their legacy use in mind<sup>93</sup> and the Mayor has promised post-Olympic funding for the remaining London venues (DCMS, 2005b). This not the only way that London has drawn on the expertise amassed from Sydney: the Chief Executive of the London ODA – David Higgins<sup>94</sup> - was Chief Executive of the company that built the Sydney Olympic Village and Aquatic Centre.

## CITIES AND MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS: CONCLUSIONS

From this examination of cities and the hosting of mega-sports events a number of critical points emerge. In general terms, it is clear that cities take different approaches to staging such events and that ‘success’ comes in a number of forms. The variations in approach reflect local conditions and aspirations, with cities using these events to promote their particular vision within the context of globalisation (Newman and Thornley, 2005). Despite the diversity of approaches it is possible to identify key ‘elements’ required for the delivery of successful mega sporting events. Although for the purposes of clarity these elements will be separated, they are in reality inter-linked and as we have seen throughout this thesis they are not unproblematic and tensions can arise.

Firstly, there needs to be a vision and clarity of purpose, this helps shape the bid, giving a focus and framework to work within. For example, Barcelona and Manchester were firmly focused on regeneration and this was reflected in the form that the events took,

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<sup>93</sup> Some venues are temporary (e.g. indoor arena next to Dome), others (e.g. Olympic stadium will be scaled down) and some (e.g. five swimming and diving pools) will be dismantled and re-erected in other locations in the UK (DCMS, 2005b).

<sup>94</sup> David Higgins was Chief Executive of English Partnerships the government’s national regeneration agency which he joined in March 2003. Prior to this he was MD and CE of the Lend Lease Group in Australia. In addition to the Sydney Olympic developments, the company was also responsible for the Bluewater Shopping Centre in Kent which is the largest retail and leisure complex in Europe (GLA, 2005b).

with an emphasis on infrastructural improvements, and creating a sustainable legacy. London has adopted a similar approach for the 2012 Olympics. This is not to argue that having a clear vision is necessarily unproblematic, it is very dependent on the architects, and for example, it can lead to priority being given to the needs of particular groups, perhaps at the expense of other groups. In Manchester, although there was clear vision of how Manchester would benefit, it was a particular vision, one framed and dominated by an elite group of local business players.

Following on from this, the whole process from deciding to bid, through delivery, to sustaining the legacy, needs to be underpinned by strategic thinking at all levels of governance. Given the complex nature, costs and kudos involved, as we have seen it is rare for national government not play a part, indeed they often play a central role. At city level a mega event needs to 'fit' into the overall development of a city or run the risk of being dislocated from other developments both at city and neighbourhood level. What is difficult to achieve is a strategic framework that integrates national, sub-national, city and local needs, as well as economic development, physical regeneration, community development and social cohesion needs. For example, in Sydney the Olympics were planned and delivered within a strategic framework that prioritised national and sub-national needs to, at times, the detriment of those of the city and its inhabitants.

Thirdly, mega-sporting events require strong, credible leadership to drive them forward. At the city level strong local leadership coupled with a clear vision can help ensure that the city needs are incorporated into bidding and staging of the event. For example, in Manchester, local actors - from the city council and the private sector- were the architects of the bid and central to the delivery of the MCG. However, as noted above it

was a particular vision, heavily influenced by an elite group of local business players. In other words, a strong local presence does not necessarily mean that the needs of local communities or all sections of society will be forwarded. In London the Mayor was crucial in driving forward and shaping the 2012 Olympic bid as one that would be 'good' for London and inclusive. However, there has been considerable opposition from certain communities, for example, small businesses in East London who face re-location or closure as the result of Olympic developments (Muir, 2004b; Smit, 2005).

We know from Chapter Six that at the national level, the extent of involvement varies across nations, cities and events. However, there are two key ways in which central government can fundamentally undermine a mega-sporting project. First, when central government is not explicit about what their role is and the limits of that role. Second, if politicians and policy makers fail to demonstrate commitment and confidence in a project. As we have seen both the LVNAC and WNS projects were dogged by a lack of clarity about the role of central government and a lack of confidence in the project.

Securing the requisite resources to bid and host a mega-sporting event is crucial and with a few notable exceptions (e.g. LA Olympics), most mega sport events are to varying extents reliant on public funds. Governments are usually keen to reduce their expenditure and draw in private sector funding. Even in France, there have been moves away from the traditionally government funded '*grand travaux*'. Central government wanted the Stade de France to be privately financed and although in the end government funded almost half of it, it was the first time that the private sector had played such a major part in a large-scale sports project. What is important to remember is that the French government was standing firmly behind the project and was forthcoming with the rest of the funds. It does appear that if the government demonstrates commitment and confidence in a project – then the private sector are more likely to follow suit, as

was seen in the Sydney Olympics. Conversely, if the government does not appear to be committed and confident, as in the case of the LVNAC, then private investors stay away.

Delivering mega sporting events is a mammoth undertaking, as it generally entails the construction of venues, improvements to transport infrastructure in addition to the organisation of the actual event, and all to a deadline. In order to meet the deadline, specific governance bodies are often created and endowed with increased powers to 'fast track' the process. Although these bodies are often very effective the desire to 'get things done' can result in opposition or certain local interests being overridden, as was the case in Sydney. In terms of actually hosting the event, it is evident that the requirements of the event need to be balanced with those of the host city. For example, in Atlanta the arrangements for the transport of the Olympic 'family' were divorced from those of day-to-day needs of the populace. The result was a shambles. Whilst in Sydney they were treated as a whole and a special body empowered to co-ordinate transport for the entire city during the Games with much better results. A related point is the need for organisations involved to have clear roles and responsibilities, without this, gaps, overlaps and confusion can arise – as they did in Atlanta.

The number of costly 'white elephants' left behind after mega sporting and also cultural events is testament for the need for an exit strategy. The danger, as so evident in Sydney, the Millennium Dome in London and more recently Athens, is to focus on the event itself and not on the long term use of venues. In the case of Sydney this was probably the result of the dominance of central and state level government and the relatively small part played by the city. In contrast Manchester built venues for use at the MCG with their legacy use in mind and is a good example of the reflective nature of

the mega-event process. Coalter (2004) argues there has been a tendency to assume that the sporting benefits of hosting such events will 'trickle down', but the evidence suggests that this does not happen automatically. The result Coalter (2004) suggests is that cities and nations are left with a 'facilities legacy' rather than a "sporting legacy", because the latter requires a pro-active approach that builds routes into sport for all sections of the community.

In raising this issue Coalter (2004) points to a central tension that runs through the whole mega-sports event debate. On the one hand there are those from the national and regional perspective that argue for the large-scale economic development and regeneration associated with mega-events, maintaining that the benefits – economic and sporting - will 'trickle down' to all communities. Whilst on the other hand, there are others, often from local agencies and the sports development field who argue that the money would be better spent harnessing sports potential to improve the health and social well being of local communities by providing community facilities, encouraging participation by providing routes into sport for all and using sport to reach excluded groups. This agenda is mostly associated with local and neighbourhood scale initiatives and is often overshadowed by large scale economic development projects, including mega-events, large scale cultural projects and improvements to transport infrastructure.

Mega-sporting events are bound by time and space, and this gives them a tangibility which seems to appeal to a diverse array of actors – they are a 'project' albeit a large and highly complex one, with visible outcomes and an immovable deadline to work towards. In the case of Manchester, Peck and Tickell (1995) suggested that these qualities made mega-sporting events attractive to private sector players and this may be the case for the London Olympics. The LVNAC project seemed to have somewhat

limited appeal for anyone other than a few local and sub-regional business players probably because it was not planned within a London-wide framework nor had the confidence of central government.

Hosting mega sporting events involves a myriad of players, including different levels and sections of government, all with slightly varying agendas and also, external players such as the international sporting bodies with very specific agendas: with so many points of articulation tensions are inevitable. It does appear that time and 'practice' can help reduce these tensions. For instance, most successful events are the result of many years work - building up partnerships and networks, nurturing relationships, negotiating compromises, reworking and 'fine tuning' proposals and can involve repeated attempts to secure an event. Manchester is a clear example of this process. However, given the high stakes involved in bidding for and hosting mega sporting events, there are pressures to secure an event quickly and this may mean trying to 'speed up' the process with all the uncertainties this entails.

It could be argued that successful global cities need governance structures that permit them to secure and host mega-sports events. However, it is also evident that what is required here is constantly evolving as the nature of these events is changing.

## Chapter Eight

### Discussion - Conclusions and way forward

#### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to draw together the findings of the study, set out what has been learnt and also suggest possible ways of taking this new knowledge forward in both the research and policy arenas. Firstly, a brief summary of the thesis will be given, along with the questions it sought to answer and the theoretical ideas underpinning it.

The remainder of the chapter is divided into three sections, focusing in turn on methodology, governance issues and sport.

#### SUMMARY OF THESIS

This thesis set out to explore the inter-relationships between governance, sport and the city, with a particular focus on mega-sports events, using comparison and a case study.

Mega-sports events have become important tools for cities seeking to enhance their global position, undertake regeneration and promote tourism. There is intense competition to win the rights to host such events, in particular for the 'big three' – the Olympics, the World Athletics Championships and the FIFA World Cup. At the outset of this thesis in 2001 UK and London had a relatively poor record in relation to bidding for and hosting mega and major sporting events. The case study – the failure of the LVNAC project and the loss of the rights to stage the 2005 WAC– was the latest in a series of large-scale sporting and cultural projects in London to encounter significant difficulties. All this raised a number of questions. Firstly, why had the UK generally and London in particular experienced so many difficulties in securing and realising mega-sporting events? Secondly, what was required to enable the UK and London to secure



and deliver such projects? Finally, for some there was a fundamental doubt that UK and London could ever stage a successful mega-sports event. Over the course of this thesis as the plans to bring the Olympics to London in 2012 began to take shape and as the bid gathered momentum these questions became even more pertinent.

At the same time as sport has become an important economic tool for cities, there have been changes in the way cities are governed. These changes are set against a background of a more general shift from government to governance, the involvement of a much broader range of actors in the process of governing and debates about what constitutes 'good governance'. What has emerged in some cities is a particular form of governance- termed network governance – based on the intense interaction of a large number of partners from all sectors (i.e. public, private etc). In the case of London, network governance has taken a particular form because of the economic and political importance of the capital and also as a practical response to the absence of a unitary authority for so long. This thesis was based on the premise that the key to understanding the failure of the LVNAC project and the development of other mega-sporting projects lay in understanding the nature of the prevailing governance arrangements. From this premise a working hypothesis was developed to underpin and guide the thesis, which is that the relative failure of the UK to bid for, and stage mega-sporting events is rooted within aspects of the style of network governance that has evolved in London and other UK cities.

### Research questions

At this stage it would probably be useful to remind ourselves of the main questions that the thesis set out to address and to set out the answers in a 'nutshell' before further discussion later in the chapter.

1. Is there a particular style (s) of governance associated with securing and delivering successful mega sports events?

This thesis has clearly demonstrated that there is no one particular style of governance that is best suited to securing and delivering successful sports events and that different systems have their own strengths and weaknesses. It is also evident that there are different routes to 'success' but also that 'success' comes in a variety of forms and is a relative concept. In relation to mega-sports events the terms 'success' and 'failure' are full of ambiguity: depending on the criteria and time frame used the same event can be deemed both a 'success' and a 'failure'. However, the LVNAC project was plainly a failure and by examining this failure and comparing it with other nations and cities it has been possible to identify three key elements rooted in governance that are critical to securing and hosting a successful event: leadership, vision and strategy. Furthermore, it is apparent from this thesis that whatever the style of governance it needs to be clear (at all levels of governance) what the role of government is, the limits of that role and for government to visibly demonstrate their commitment and confidence in the project.

2. What are the relative strengths and weaknesses of the network style of governance in relation to bidding for and delivering mega sports events?

A key strength of the network style of governance is that it helps forge links and establish relationships between the different players involved in the highly complex process of securing and delivering a mega-sport project. Network governance has the potential to produce a more 'joined up' approach to mega-sports projects and thus facilitate the expeditious delivery of such projects but also help embed the event and the associated developments into the city as a whole. However, networks can be dominated by sectoral interests and thus not deliver broad benefits. Network systems require strong leadership and the LVNAC project is a clear example of what happens without such

leadership. In similar vein network system benefits from having a coherent framework for all the players to work within, and again the LVNAC project demonstrated the drawbacks of not having such a framework to locate the project in. The London Olympic bid displayed the possibilities of a network system with strong leadership, clarity of vision and overall strategy for London.

3. In the specific case of London, how do the arrangements for urban and sports governance influence how events are bid for and delivered?

From this thesis it is plain that the absence of a city-wide authority for London before 2000 had a negative influence on the city's ability to secure and deliver mega-sports events. In particular it meant that there was a lack of leadership and no strategic framework in which to locate such projects. So although London as a global city was in a strong position to attract major and mega events it could not capitalise on this advantage. In other UK cities with metropolitan government, the 'city' has played a critical role in securing and delivering major and mega sports projects, for example Manchester and Sheffield. The critical role played by the Mayor and GLA in the London Olympic bid and their continuing importance in the delivery of the 2012 Games is illustrative of the significance of a unitary authority for London in the mega-event process.

### Theoretical framework

In order to further understand the relationships between governance, sport and city there was a need to capture different dimensions, scales and inter-connections. Consequently the theoretical framework, the research-design and methods used within this thesis were adopted in order to capture the sport, governance and city relations.

Having reviewed key theoretical perspectives (see Chapter Two) – urban regime theory, multi-level governance and policy networks – two main conclusions were drawn.

Firstly, that the theoretical framework for this thesis needed to take account of the following five key elements: the local context and local actors in the political process; the role of central government; the nature of sectoral relationships i.e. between private, public and voluntary sectors; the role of networks of individuals and institutions; and the importance of scale and governance operating at different levels and also between scales.

Secondly, that multiple theoretical perspectives were required to provide understanding of a process operating over different scales and over time. Therefore, to avoid giving a partial account an integrative theoretical framework was constructed drawing on each of these theoretical perspectives, in order to provide a lens through which to look at the specifics of the LVNAC project and also at governance, sport and the city more generally.

## DISCUSSION

### Methodological issues: The value of using comparison and the case study approach in examining mega-sporting events

Mega sports events are by their very nature discrete and thus well suited to case studies. Taking both a comparative and case study approach produced rich, situated data and in doing so highlighted the importance of timing, contextual and cultural factors in shaping the form and outcome of the LVNAC project. The LVNAC project was born out of on-going problems with WNS and played out against a backdrop of the troubled preparations for the MCG, the transition to a new governance system in London, the on-

going saga of the Millennium Dome which made central government wary of mega projects and within a political culture that was ambiguous about the importance of sport in national life. In addition to these 'external' and more general issues, there were a number of 'internal' project specific issues concerned with ownership and direction of the project and these external and internal factors interacted to create a number of obstacles and challenges.

Timing was also crucial, and perhaps if the LVNAC project had happened a year or so later the outcome could have been different. For example, there would have been the recent success of the MCG to build upon, the prospect of a London Olympic bid to work towards and of course the Mayor and GLA would have been in place. Although this is of course speculation, what it does illustrate is that the 'success' or 'failure' of a project is often the product of a specific historical moment. Other writers such as Marshall (1992; 1996) and Garcia-Ramon and Albet (2000) have emphasised the specificity of the Barcelona experience, arguing that history, geography and politics combined to create a unique historical moment that will not be repeated. This is an important cautionary note, particularly for policy actors, keen to replicate the 'successes' of other cities and nations or promote a 'model' based on the success of a particular event. This is not to argue that policy makers or cities can not learn from each other (there is plenty of evidence that they can and do) rather it is to warn against seeking simple 'off the shelf' models of 'how to stage a successful mega sports event'.

Case studies need to be permeated by theory in order to avoid the danger of simply providing a description, to connect the study to broader bodies of work and to enhance the generalisability of the findings. Theory should inform the research questions, guide the study, the data collection, the analysis and the conclusions drawn. This thesis is

underpinned by an integrative theoretical framework constructed following the examination of alternative theoretical explanations of urban governance. In this thesis an integrative theoretical framework was adopted to avoid giving a partial account and also to capture the complexities and dynamic nature of governance and urban politics. Thus, it has been possible to make connections between the LVNAC project and the UK's and London's successful bid for the 2012 Olympics, and also the on-going debates about the central government's attitude to sport at all levels from grassroots through to elite. The issues are still alive and evident in the debates as the nation and London prepares for 2012. In this way a case study of a recent event has helped further understanding of the past but has also suggested changes that are needed to strengthen the ability of the UK in general, and London specifically to both secure and deliver mega-sporting projects.

The bounded nature of mega-sporting events means that the case study approach is commonly employed and this has allowed comparisons to be made across nations, cities and events. The uniqueness of each study does, however, make objective, systematic comparison difficult. Therefore, care has to be taken not to overstretch the comparison, but it does enable connections to be made both horizontally across space and vertically through time. Moreover, stripping away the detail of the case studies has revealed the basic building blocks of mega-sporting projects.

The whole mega-sporting event process involves constant comparison with previous host cities and between rival bid cities, in an attempt to secure events and deliver them successfully. This international reflexivity is in fact a central process driving forward the evolution of mega-event strategy; there is an ongoing international multi-vocal dialogue between events which shapes future events. It is not only ideas that are

transferred but as we have seen some of the key actors. This is all part of a more general dynamic, reflexive process whereby cities are trying to learn from each other in order to gain a competitive advantage over 'rival' cities. Cities look to each other for ideas on a variety of issues (e.g. regeneration, transport, tourism) and also strive to recruit key actors associated with successful policies and interventions. For example, Ken Livingstone recruited Bob Kiley- the man attributed with transforming New York's ailing public transport system - to the task of turning around London's public transport system. The impact of highly paid international city experts brought into 'lead' on areas of city management and governance is a possible area for further research. However, it also apparent that cities do not always 'learn' the lessons, for example Athens is counting the cost of not planning for the 'day after' and like Sydney before it is left with costly underused facilities facing uncertain futures.

Different policy actors interpret and use case study evidence in a variety of ways, and at times draw selectively on it to support their position. For example, strong evidence can be found that suggests that sporting-mega events can not be justified on economic grounds (e.g. Baade and Matheson, 2004). Nonetheless, the primary rationale for cities pursuing these events remains economic. Although evidence is sometimes used selectively, clear examples can be found of its use. The legacy problems experienced by Sydney following the 2000 Olympics and the Millennium Dome were reflected in the priority given to legacy use of the stadium post-MCG and were also evident in the London Olympic bid. Furthermore, the IOC is now paying much more attention to legacy issues when assessing bids and making the decision to award the Olympics.

Researching a recent event which still has resonance within policy making and political circles, whilst very stimulating and productive, did present a number of challenges.

Firstly, the dynamic nature of urban politics and policy making means that much has happened over the course of the thesis and there have been many changes at national, city and local level. Much of what and who were in place in 2000-2001 are no longer there, but it is important to locate the LVNAC project its contemporary context, as well as consider what has changed and what these changes may mean for future projects. The issues discussed in this thesis are still 'live' and a matter of public debate and policy activity. This is perhaps most evident in relation to the London Olympic bid and now the preparation for the London Games but also in the debates about health, obesity and the need to promote physical activity. This topicality highlights the value and relevance of this thesis but has also acted to both complicate and strengthen it. In general terms it has meant that the thesis has been conducted on 'shifting sands' as reports have been commissioned, policies implemented and legislation enacted to take the Games forward. Without the Olympic bid this thesis would have simply been about the failure of yet another mega-sporting project and although it could have provided pointers as to what needed to be learnt, it would not have been able to examine some of the lessons being put into action. The securing of the 2012 Olympics has meant this thesis has had to embrace 'success' as well as failure but has also given 'weight' to tentative ideas and enabled them to be developed further.

Secondly, the LVNAC project was a 'failure' that lingered in the collective memory and as such it is a sensitive subject. Although in general it was not difficult to secure interviews or information, there were cases, for instance in the DCMS, where I was unable to obtain an interview. Although there was a great deal of information from the DCMS in the public domain in the form of official reports<sup>1</sup> it did mean that this dimension was underdeveloped. Such problems are not uncommon when researching

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<sup>1</sup> The existence of official reports in the public domain was the main reason given for not giving an interview, the argument being that there was nothing else to add.



recent or contemporary policy issues, but it in something that has to be borne in mind when planning, executing and drawing conclusions from this type of research.

Thirdly, many of the individuals and organisations involved in the project have a high public profile, whilst others still collaborate with each other on other projects. In reporting the findings care had to be taken not to compromise anonymity or jeopardise these relationships, whilst at the same time retaining the integrity and richness of the research. Again this is part of the process of conducting research on recent and contemporary events.

### Governance

This thesis has demonstrated the importance of governance issues throughout the whole mega-sports events process and at all levels of governance. From the initial idea to bid for an event through to delivery and beyond to its legacy governance issues impact on the shape and success or otherwise of the event. Although it is clear from this thesis that a successful mega-sports event can take a variety of forms, it is possible within the diversity to identify key elements for success that are rooted in governance. These elements are intimately related and interactive. Firstly, strong credible leadership is essential at national, sub-national, city and local level. The LVNAC project was hampered by failures of leadership and direction at all levels of governance, whilst the London Olympic bid benefited from strong leadership. The contrast between these two mega-sporting projects is particularly striking given their close proximity in time, lingering doubts about the UK and London's ability to manage mega-sports projects and the involvement of the same Mayor and Prime Minister. In relation to the Olympic bid there appeared to be a better understanding of need for strong, credible leadership, perhaps best illustrated by the replacing of the first Chair (Barbara Cassani) with Lord

Coe, a Olympian and former politician, but also by the way in which the Mayor and more latterly the Prime Minister championed the bid at home and abroad.

Secondly, there needs to a unified vision and a clarity of purpose, in other words everyone needs to know and agree about what they are setting out to achieve. In the LVNAC project there were two competing visions. One vision saw the LVNAC as a sporting project- building a stadium, staging the WAC and leaving a sporting legacy. The other vision saw the LVNAC as a catalyst for broader regenerative activity in the Upper Lee Valley. There was a failure to either reach a compromise or make a decision as to which vision to follow and this produced a fundamental fault line in the project. A clear vision provides a focus and framework to work within and without it a project is liable to be pulled in different directions, stall and fail to some degree, if not entirely, as in the case of the LVNAC project. The London Olympic bid presented a unified vision of what the Games could do for East London specifically, London more generally and the nation as a whole. However, as has been shown in this thesis having a clear vision is not necessarily without its problems as any vision is the product of its architects. Thus, the promotion of a particular vision can mean that the needs and interests of some groups are prioritised whilst those of other groups are marginalised. The Atlanta Olympics is an example where the dominant vision was that of the city boosters and this led to poorer and disadvantaged groups missing out on the potential benefits of the Games and in some cases being further disadvantaged. Of course it remains to be seen if the Olympic vision proffered by the London bid can be delivered and this represents an important area for further research.

Finally, the whole process needs to be underpinned by strategic thinking at all levels of governance so that mega-sport events 'fit' into broader strategic plans. The LVNAC

project is a clear example of the problems that arise when a mega-sports project is not part of a broader strategic approach and thus does not 'fit'. The benefits of embedding mega-events into wider strategic plans have been most apparent at the city level, with Barcelona being a key example. What can be difficult, as has been shown in this thesis, is to integrate national, sub-national, city and local needs and there are many examples of where this has not occurred, for example, the Sydney Olympics. The failure to articulate these differing needs manifests itself in many ways - under utilised facilities, missed opportunities for training and employment, debt - and these negative impacts are generally felt most keenly by cities and their inhabitants. This represents another area for further research about how the differing needs of nations, cities and citizens can be integrated and the barriers and challenges to this process.

Having made comparisons with other nations it is clear that national governments play a critical role in the mega-sports events process and that they adopt a variety of approaches to mega-sports events that reflect wider political systems and cultural attitudes. It is also evident that no simple governance system is 'best' for delivering mega-sporting events, with each approach having its own advantages and disadvantages, so whilst a centralised approach might get things done quickly it is often at the expense of proper engagement and legacy planning. However, whatever approach is taken it is evident that there the needs to be clarity about the role of national government and that politicians and policy makers have exhibit confidence in the project (e.g. by underwriting, funding). The LVNAC project is a prime example of what happens when national government fails on both these fronts.

The uncertainty and debate about what the role of central government should be in relation to mega sports events so manifest within the UK in recent years reflects broader

deliberations about the changing role of the central state. When it came to the Olympic bid the role of central government was much clearer and limits of that role better defined which suggests that network governance systems can learn.

Similarly, this thesis has shown that cities take different approaches to mega-sports events and that 'success' comes in a number of forms. It is also evident that mega-sports events are an important tool for cities wishing to promote a variety of city level interests, including regeneration and place marketing on the global stage. Moreover, this thesis has demonstrated the pivotal role of city level governance in hosting mega sports events. The failure of the LVNAC project was in part the consequence of a London without city-wide government, there was no overall strategy for London for it to be part of and it appeared disconnected even from the more piecemeal plans. In contrast the London Olympic bid was the product of the new governance arrangements with the Mayor and GLA providing a coherence and structure lacking for the LVNAC project. The Olympic bid was deeply embedded into the Mayor's strategic plans for London in a way that the LVNAC was not and as in Barcelona, the London Games are being used as a catalyst to forward these plans.

Governance arrangements evolve over time. However, the prevailing governance arrangements are a product of, and reflect what has gone before. The post-2000 arrangements for London were described as a move from networked governance with no centre to networked governance with a weak centre (Kleinman *et al*, 2002). From the outset doubts were expressed (Travers, 2002) as to whether these new institutional arrangements would be able to deliver complex projects. The London Olympic bid has shown that the new arrangements are indeed capable and without the Mayor and GLA it is unlikely that the London Olympic bid would have even proceeded let alone have been

successful. However, what is also crystal clear from this thesis is that Mayor and GLA could not have secured or be able to deliver the Olympics without the support of central government. Under the current arrangements although the Mayor and GLA have shown themselves as adept at working effectively with a diverse array of partners from all sectors, they simply do not have the power or capacities to deliver highly complex and costly projects (sporting or otherwise) without the financial and political support of central government. The current arrangements for London reflect its position as the seat of central government, the desire of central government to retain a reasonable degree of control over London matters and the continued importance and power of the nation state more generally. In the case of the London Olympics, the support given by central government is wide ranging and substantial (e.g. funding, legislative powers, designated Olympic Minister) but as we have seen the exact form that this support takes varies from place to place (nation and city) and also depends on the event.

Pimlott and Rao (2002) argued that Ken Livingstone's effectiveness would depend on his ability to work within the institutional and political constraints placed upon him: he has shown that he is capable of working within the system whilst at the same time pushing at the boundaries to strengthen his position. In relation to the Olympics, Livingstone took on a 'crusader role'. His role in relation to the LVNAC project is less easy to classify – he certainly was not a 'crusader' but neither was he a 'broker' in fact he resisted ratifying an agreement made by others and the LVNAC suffered because of the lack of Mayoral support.

The findings of this thesis support the assertion that whilst policy networks are an important component of governance they do not necessarily mean a reduction in the role of the state (Taylor, 2000; Pierre and Peters, 2000). As we have seen the state continues

to control financial resources, legislation and grants political legitimacy and without these mega-sports events just do not happen- policy networks can not 'go it alone' in the UK. Moreover, as Taylor (2000) asserts central government can dominate policy networks and impose their value preferences so, for example, whether the UK promotes elite sport development over grass roots sport or vice versa will largely be down to central government rather than policy networks.

This thesis has highlighted the dynamic and interactive relationship between governance and events that develops as a result of both bidding for and hosting events. Manchester and London are good examples of this process with both cities learning from their earlier unsuccessful bids (as well as other successful cities) to improve their chances of securing an event. Manchester was successful with the Commonwealth Games once a mature partnership had evolved. As noted above, governance arrangements evolve and even within the short life of the GLA and Mayor there have been changes, albeit incremental and modest in nature (e.g. the congestion charge, Olympic precept) but significant nonetheless. Newman and Tual (2002) pointed to the moves in France away from a highly centralised approach to mega-sports projects to a more de-centralised one as a result of more general governance changes. Given the dynamic nature of governance it is evident that cities and nations have to be engaged in a constant process of learning and reflection, not just in relation to the specifics of mega-sports events but also more generally, because what might have been successful in the past may no longer be appropriate.

This thesis has shown that mega-sporting events can provide an excellent focus point for actors from different arenas to work together on a common agenda. In this way mega-sports events can act as a catalyst, as actors set aside differences to achieve a

common goal, which has resonance with Stone's (1989) concept of civic co-operation and the social production of power. However, on balance it does appear that these tend to be temporary alliances related to specific projects rather than urban regimes as set out by proponents of regime theory, although given the capacity for a mega-event to transform a city such alliances are nevertheless important. The LVNAC project demonstrated that this process of civic co-operation is not automatic, indeed fundamental differences remained and co-operation between actors was somewhat limited.

The LVNAC project involved actors with a variety of interests and motivations and although all the 'usual' actors were present (i.e. from public, private and non-statutory sectors), the private sector was not as involved as either the empirical or theoretical literature would lead us to expect. There was active support and interest from local and sub-regional business players who saw it as an opportunity to boost the local and sub-regional economy. However, this was as far as it went and the LVNAC project was unable to secure major sponsorship or a legacy tenant for the stadium. The private sector can choose whether it is part of a particular project or not (and the extent of that involvement) and on the whole it chose not to be part of the LVNAC project. This situation probably reflected a lack of confidence in the project and given the ambiguous position of both central government and the Mayor this was perhaps unsurprising. Sheffield also experienced difficulties getting the private sector to support the staging of the World Student Games and in both cases the partnerships were new and untested so had no track record to build upon or use to lever in the private sector. In addition, the LVNAC project did not evolve organically, rather it was created from the problems from another mega-sports project and this contrasts strongly with other events where the business sector has taken a more active role. For example, the private sector was

integral to mega-event strategy pursued by Manchester from its unsuccessful Olympic bids through to delivering a successful Commonwealth Games and indeed was a key architect of the strategy.

The London Olympic Games presents an ideal opportunity to explore further some of the issues raised by this thesis. The whole process of preparing to host the Olympic Games presents a huge challenge for the organising committee, central government, the Mayor and GLA and raises many questions. Having secured the bid, can the prevailing governance arrangements deliver a successful mega-sporting event? Are the institutions established to deliver and manage the Games and associated developments fit for purpose? In the past the benefits of mega-sports events have been distributed unevenly. Will the London Games be any different?

### Sport and policy making

In 1999 Bourdieu stated that: "Talking about sport scientifically is difficult because in one sense it is too easy: everyone has their own ideas on the subject, and feels able to say something intelligent about it" (1999, p. 15). More than a decade earlier Bill Shankly (1981) had, perhaps rather more famously commented that: "Some people think football is a matter of life or death. I don't like that attitude. I can assure them it is much more serious than that." Both these statements illustrate the essential elements of sport and why it presents challenges to those trying to formulate and implement policy, or research the area. Having conducted a case study of a mega sporting project, reviewed the literature and made comparisons with other nations and cities, there would seem to be something 'particular' about sport that makes it different from other areas of policy.



Firstly, sport is infused with emotion. This appears to make some policy makers uncomfortable and does not sit easily with ideas of 'rational' evidence based policy making. This may partly explain why policy actors often put forward 'rational' economic arguments to justify expenditure on sports projects, even though strong evidence can be found to suggest that mega sports events can not be justified on economic grounds. Although arguments are made for the 'feel good' factor, the promotion of national and civic pride, and individual achievement, they are usually secondary to broader economic arguments. There seems to be a reluctance to acknowledge that such factors are integral to sport and have 'value', probably because they are very difficult to measure and the prevailing policy environment places such store on measurable outcomes. However, given that the economic benefits of large-scale sports projects have proved to be uncertain and uneven, perhaps policy makers would be wise to consider and take account of the 'other' factors, or run the risk that such projects will continue to fall short of expectations.

Secondly, the 'value' and legitimacy of sport as an area of policy is contested, and varies across space and time. The UK government has shown contradictory attitudes to sport over time and displayed a great deal of ambiguity. The tendency in some quarters is not to regard sport as a 'serious' subject of study or policy, partly because people think they 'know' about sport and have nothing to learn, or because they think sport does not 'matter'. For some policy actors sport has an intrinsic value of its own, but as we have seen throughout this thesis most governments – at national, regional and city level – value sport for what it can do, for example, in terms of regeneration, health and tourism. Certainly within the current UK context the renewed interest in sport is linked in with concerns about the adverse effects of physical inactivity on health. It should of

course be remembered that these arguments about what sport can do are not universally accepted and indeed are often challenged.

Following on from the last point, this thesis makes it apparent that there is some confusion in the minds of politicians and policy makers about what sport can do, and also when and how the potential benefits can be delivered. There is a tendency on the part of some politicians and event organisers to argue that mega-sport events can deliver all of these benefits most, if not all of the time, although as we have seen there is scant evidence to support such bold claims. The LOB bid team made much of the legacy that the London Olympics will leave for sport in the UK not just in terms of facilities but in inspiring the population as a whole to participate in sport and thus deliver on a number of other agendas, particularly health and social inclusion. However, as Coalter (2004) has highlighted, to date mega sports events have only left 'facilities' legacies, largely because there has been an assumption that the sporting benefits would 'trickle down'. However the evidence suggests that without proactive steps this will not happen. This opens up a whole area of study about what mechanisms are being put in place during the preparations for the London Games to actively promote grassroots sport and are they adequate to translate into a sustained and significant increase in participation across the whole population?

There is evidence from the literature that hosting mega sports events, in particular the Olympics has an impact on sports funding. Host nations have their eyes on the medal table and funds are often focused on supporting elite level Olympic sports and at times this has been at the expense of non-Olympic sports and grassroots initiatives.

Furthermore, there is already evidence from the UK that central government funding of elite sport is linked to performance, so that sports that do not fulfil their medal potential

can find their funding reduced.<sup>2</sup> It is unclear<sup>3</sup> whether the London Olympics will lead to more generous funding in general or to an even more targeted approach with only a handful of potentially 'high return' sports being funded. This raises questions as about the impact of staging mega sports events on the UK's sporting landscape in the short, medium and longer term. In more general terms, the on-going project to modernise sports governance also presents research opportunities as inevitably there will be 'winners' and 'losers' and it may be that the London Olympics will have a bearing on the direction of the modernisation project more generally.

Underpinning a great deal of the discussions about sport and an important undercurrent throughout the LVNAC project was the question as to whether central government should focus its efforts (and funding) on elite sport, winning medals and trophies or on grassroots sports and increasing participation across all groups. This links into fundamental questions as to what sport is and its 'purpose' that have dogged sport policy in the UK for so long and which other nations have settled in different ways, with some focusing on mass participation (e.g. Finland) and others on elite sport (e.g. Australia). There is also a strong argument that elite and grassroots sport require equal support as they have a symbiotic relationship and need each other to thrive, but this of course has considerable cost implications. Plans to host mega-sports events seems to bring these tensions to the fore, perhaps because of the immense amounts of money involved which some argue could be better spent on improving the general sporting infrastructure whilst other maintain it is important to provide a showcase for elite

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<sup>2</sup> Following moderate results at the 2004 Athens Olympics UK Sport cut funding to sports that were not thought to have a great potential for medals, for example, British gymnastics saw its' funding from the Olympic Medal Programme cut by 45% (Downes, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> There has been an ongoing debate about funding for elite athletes in preparation for 2012, with sports governing bodies expressing concerns about the failure of central government to swiftly commit funds and rumours that up to £250m has been allocated to develop Olympic athletes (Campbell, 2006). In the 2006 Budget the Chancellor announced £200 million funding for elite athletes to prepare for the London Games and £6 million funding for Schools Festivals and £7 million for the NSF's 2012 Kids Programme (HM Treasury/Chancellor of the Exchequer, 2006, p.149).

athletes and point to the 'feel good' factor and bolstering of national pride to support their position. Unless the UK government either commits itself to fund sport across the board more generously, which is unlikely given its other commitments and the ambiguous place of sport on the political agenda or can find a way to resolve the funding issues – there are plans for a National Sports Foundation to bring in private funding- then these tensions will persist.

What was evident throughout, but not a focus of this thesis was the prominence of the media in the mega sports events process. Not only are the broadcasting rights a valuable commodity and the income from them and the associated advertising a key economic incentive to cities but the whole mega sports event 'game' is played out in and by the media. There is extensive coverage and comment about the bidding process, the progress or lack of in of mega sports projects as well as the events themselves with comparisons being made with other nations and cities (a glance at the references gives an idea of the extent and scope of this coverage). The coverage ranges from jingoistic celebrations of success to gloom laden predictions of financial disaster or unfinished venues. What appears to be lacking is measured comment, but perhaps that is simply because it does not make for such a 'good story'. Examining the role played by the media in the mega-sports event process is an important area for further research. This thesis examined the LVNAC project within the context of governance but an alternative framework could be the role of media in the whole process.

Finally, this thesis has demonstrated the value of studying an apparent failure. So often the emphasis within the policy and political arenas is on learning from success and failures are often overlooked as a source of positive knowledge. This thesis considered the failure of the LVNAC project within the context of the experiences of other nations

and cities, information drawn from interviews and documents and also the broader literature in order to draw lessons for the future.

## Appendix One

### Interview schedule for Lee Valley National Athletics Centre Project

Brief introduction. Permission to record. Confidentiality. Will not be identified in thesis or papers.

#### **Involvement**

Could I start by asking you to tell me a little about your involvement with the Lee Valley project?  
*(When/ How/ Why. What were your main responsibilities? Who did you work most closely with? [people and organisations])*

Were you part of the Lee Valley Stadium Forum? (Also the Stakeholders Group)  
*(What were the main purposes of the Forum? Did it 'work'? – why/why not [people/size/structure/task in hand] - examples)*

#### **Vision**

Casting your mind back to when you first learnt of the proposals for the LVNAC and hosting the WAC 2005, can you remember what your thoughts were?

What were your hopes and expectations for the development?  
In the short term? In the longer term? Local/ London/ National  
*Sporting; regeneration; community benefits; prestige*

#### **Key players**

Who would you say were the main players?  
*(What made them the dominant players? What were relations like between the dominant players - did they work together or was there every any conflict? – examples. How did the dominant players interact with other stakeholders? )*

#### **Key issues**

What would you say were the key issues facing the project?

Do you feel that they could have been addressed in the time available?  
*(What needed to be done? By whom? Was progress being made on these issues? What were the barriers to progress? Were they insurmountable?)*

**Decision-making** I am interested to know more about the decision making process. Where do think the key decisions were made? *(formal structures/ informal mechanisms/unclear)* By whom? *(individuals/ organisation/local/ central)* Did the way in which decisions were made ever create any problems *(what/for whom)*. How transparent was the process?

#### **Key events**

Looking back on the project, it is possible to identify any particular 'turning points' or critical events.  
*(Expand – What; When; Who was involved; Decisions made; Consequences)*

#### **Reasons for failure**

What was your reaction to the cancellation of the project?  
In your opinion what were the main reasons the project did not go ahead?  
*(Can you think of anything that might have made a difference? [structures/people])*

#### **Consequences and lessons learned**

What do you think were the main consequences of the cancellation of the project?

What steps do you think need to be taken to prevent a similar scenario occurring in the future?  
*(Can you foresee any barriers? – what/who/why. Any ideas as to how these barriers could be overcome?)*

Are there any issues you would like to raise that I have not covered?

Before we close, I was wondering who else you think it would be important for me to talk to?

Thank and close.

## Appendix Two

### Basic interview request letter

*Insert name and address*

*Insert date*

Dear *insert name*

**Re: Research on the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre project**

I am a postgraduate research student based in the School of Health and Social Sciences at Middlesex University. I am conducting research on the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre project as part of my PhD studies. There is considerable interest in local regeneration issues at Middlesex University and this study is part of a broader body of work currently being undertaken.

I am interested in the history of the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre project, how it evolved, what led to the decision to cancel the project and the consequences of the decision. I am also keen to see if any lessons can be learnt, particularly in the light of the difficulties encountered by other major projects in London, such as Wembley National Stadium and the Millennium Dome. Having spent some time reading about the LVNAC project, I am now in the process of speaking to people who were involved or had an interest in the project. To enable me to build up a complete picture, I would like to elicit the views of people with varying perspectives and responsibilities in relation to the LVNAC project. Therefore, I am trying to talk to people from a variety of organisations, people who had day-to-day responsibility and also those who had a more strategic overview.

I have spoken to *insert name* and he/she thought that you would be an important person for me to talk to. I would be grateful if you would consider being interviewed for this study. The interview would be conducted at a time and place convenient to you and I envisage it would take about 30 - 45 minutes. All information supplied will be treated as confidential and will be used for research purposes only. The main output of the study will be a thesis that will be submitted for consideration for the award of PhD. Respondents will not be identified in the thesis or in any publications. Please see attached sheet for further information.

I will telephone or e-mail you shortly, but in the meantime if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me at the above address or e-mail [r.herring@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:r.herring@mdx.ac.uk) or telephone 020 8411 5314 (direct line).

Thank you very much for your attention.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Herring

## **Appendix Three**

### **Information sheet for respondents**

#### **Research on the Lee Valley National Athletics Stadium project**

### **Information sheet for respondents**

#### **What is the study about?**

In Spring 2000 the IAAF awarded the 2005 World Athletics Championships to London: this involved the construction of a new National Athletics at the site of an existing Leisure Centre at Picketts Lock. However, in the autumn of 2001 the Government announced that the development would not be proceeding. This study is about the unfolding events, the processes and the decisions that led to that announcement. It is also about the impact on sport and athletics, on London and the Lee Valley, and more specifically on the ability of London to secure and host a major sporting event in the future.

#### **What will it involve?**

Talking to Rachel Herring, a postgraduate research student about the LVNAC project. The interview will be conducted at a time and place convenient to you and will take about 30-45 minutes. With your permission the interview will be tape recorded – this will only be heard by the research student. Everything you say will be treated as confidential and information you supply will be used for research purposes only. You will not be identified in the thesis or any publications or presentations.

#### **What sort of questions will be asked?**

I am interested in your ideas and perspective – your ‘take’ on events. There are no set questions rather a number of topics will be explored, including your role and responsibilities, your hopes for the LVNAC development and identification of key events and critical decisions.

#### **Who do you want to talk to?**

People who were involved or had a strong interest in the LVNAC project either in a professional capacity or through their role in the local community. I am keen to speak to people from different organisational levels, to people who had day-to-day knowledge of the project, those who were at ‘arms length’ and also those with a strategic overview.

#### **What are the outputs from this study?**

The main output of the study will be a thesis that will be submitted to Middlesex University for consideration for the award of PhD. Papers will be published in academic journals and presented at conferences. You will not be identified in the thesis or any publications or presentations.

#### **What if I have got any questions?**

Please feel free to contact me: Rachel Herring, School of Health and Social Sciences, Middlesex University, Queensway, Enfield, EN3 4SA. Tel: 020 8411 5314 (direct line). E-mail: [r.herring@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:r.herring@mdx.ac.uk)

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP**



## Appendix Four

### A 'who's who' guide to the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre Project

*Cabinet:* Prime Minister, Tony Blair, pledged his personal commitment to delivering the 2005 WAC in a letter included in the bid presented to the IAAF in April 2000. This commitment was reiterated in the 2001 Labour election manifesto. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, viewed by respondents as key given his control over budgets.

*Patrick Carter:* A businessman who led the inquiry into the LVNAC. Has been brought in by the current government to conduct other independent reviews, including of the Manchester Commonwealth Games, English National Stadium (Wembley), and Criminal Records Bureau (for the Home Office).

*Department of Culture, Media and Sport:* Secretary of State (up to June 2001) Chris Smith (MP for Islington South and Finsbury, London) made the decision in December 1999 that athletes would not be part of the WNS and a separate National Athletics Centre would be built in London. Supportive of the WAC 2005 bid and the LVNAC. From June 2001, Tessa Jowell, (MP for Dulwich and West Norwood, London), she transferred from Department for Education and Employment and comes from a health background. Tessa Jowell announced in July 2001 that an inquiry would be conducted in LVNAC led by *Patrick Carter*. On 4<sup>th</sup> October 2001, Tessa Jowell announced that the LVNAC project would not be proceeding.

Sports Minister (up to June 2001) Kate Hoey, (MP for Vauxhall, London) a former athlete. From June 2001, Richard Caborn (MP for Sheffield Central), he arrived from the Department of Trade and Industry. He was involved in bringing World Student Games to Sheffield in 1991, and has strong interest in regeneration.

*International Association of Athletics Federations:* World governing body for athletics, President is Lamine Diack, it has over 200 members and its headquarters are in Monaco. IAAF is a powerful body that receives considerable income from sponsorship and broadcasting rights for the competition programme it runs which includes the biennial World Athletics Championships.

*Sport England:* Non-Departmental Public Body accountable to Parliament via the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Its work is scrutinised by the House of Commons Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee and the Public Accounts Committee. Two main roles, firstly, to develop and maintain sports infrastructure in England and secondly, to distribute the National Lottery funds to grass root and major sporting projects. In relation to LVNAC they were the main source of funds – up £67m lottery funds were available. During period of LVNAC Chief Executive, Derek Casey, and Chair, Trevor Brooking.

*UK Sport:* Departmental Public Body, 'sister' organisation to *Sport England*, role is to focus on high performance sport at UK level and also has the strategic responsibility for bringing major events to the UK and through the National Lottery supporting their delivery. Worked with the UK Athletics to put the bid together for the WAC. During period of LVNAC, Chief-Executive, Richard Callicott and Chair, Rodney Walker.

*London Borough of Enfield:* Local authority in which the site of proposed LVNAC located, supportive of proposal and keen to maximise the regenerative potential of the LVNAC, had to balance this with their role as planning authority for the development.

*London International Sport:* Pan-London body with dual objectives of bring major sporting events to London and ensuring that these events are used for sport development. Led by Richard Sumray.

*London 2005:* Bid/event organising committee for the 2005 World Athletics Championships, General Secretary Bill Glad, Chair Len Hatton, worked very closely with UK Athletics.

*Middlesex University:* The proposed new campus development at Tottenham Hale was to provide the athletes accommodation for the 2005 WAC. Problems with securing sufficient land and planning issues delayed the development and there were concerns about whether the accommodation would be available for 2005.

*National Athletics Centre Stakeholders Board:* Established by the regeneration team at the LB Enfield and Chaired by Peter Lyne, a local businessman and Chair of North London LSC. Its purpose was to try to maximise the regeneration potential of the LVNAC. It had a broad membership including local, regional and national government, local and regional business organisations and sports bodies.

*North and East London Sports Network:* It is a partnership of organisations involved in raising the profile of the sub-region as a location for major sports facilities and services and to associated regeneration benefits. Key partners include LVRPA, LBs of Enfield; Haringey; Waltham Forest; Barnet and Newham, Middlesex University, London International Sport, Sport England, University of North London, London Sports Forum.

*London Development Agency:* One of the four functional bodies of the GLA, created in July 2001 to further economic development and regeneration in London. It is responsible for formulating and delivering the Mayor's economic and regeneration strategy for London.

*Government Office for London:* It is responsible for managing a range of government programmes in London and it aims to join up different programmes by working with key London stakeholders, Whitehall departments and local communities. The programmes include European Structural Funds, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and *LDA* grants.

*Lee Valley Regional Park Authority:* It is an independent statutory authority established by an Act of Parliament in 1966 and financed from the council tax base of Hertfordshire, Essex and Greater London through an annual levy. It has a broad remit to develop the Lee Valley for the purposes of sport, recreation and leisure for the region. The Regional Park is long and narrow stretching from East India Docks Basin on the River Thames to Ware in Hertfordshire.

*UK Athletics:* National governing body for athletics and key player in the LVNAC project.

*Mayor and GLA:* Ken Livingstone became the first elected Mayor for Greater London in May 2001.

*Transport for London:* It is the integrated body responsible for London's transport system and its role is to implement the Mayor's Transport Strategy for London and manage transport services across London. It is run by a management board chaired by the Mayor of London.

## Appendix Five

### The Lee Valley Athletics Centre

In March 2005 the plans for the Lee Valley National Athletics Centre (LVAC) were unveiled. The £16 million complex is being funded by the DCMS Capital Modernisation Fund (CMF) - £4 million, Sport England (via the Lottery)-£7 million and LVRPA £5 million. It should be noted that the LVRPA was originally going to contribute £5 million towards the cost of the construction of the LVNAC. The £4 million from the CMF is the money that was earmarked for developing sports facilities in the Lee Valley when the LVNAC project was cancelled. The LVRPA are going to provide full revenue funding (UK Athletics, 2005) and the London Marathon Trust has committed £70, 000 towards equipping the centre (EHAC, 2005).

The LVAC will be largest indoor and outdoor facility serving London and the South East and adds to network of exiting indoor athletics centres at Loughborough, Bath, Manchester, Cardiff, Sheffield, Birmingham and Grangemouth (UK Athletics, 2005).

The facilities are as follows:

#### Indoor:

- 200 metre six lane track (the first in the South of England)
- 110 metre sprint straight
- Permanent seating for 500 spectators
- A multi-purpose hall
- Full jumps and throw provisions
- Specialist sports facilities including sport science, sports medicine, physiotherapy and strength conditioning rooms.

#### Outdoor

- 400 metre track
  - Throws area
  - Permanent seating for 500 spectators
  - Café terrace
  - Floodlighting
- (EHAC, 2005)

The LVAC will be used for training elite athletes and for staging indoor competitions in the South. It will be come home to the Enfield and Haringey Athletics Club (EHAC, 2005). In addition, the Centre will be used by schools and clubs across North London, Essex and Hertfordshire (UK Athletics, 2005). Work began in 2005 and the LVAC is scheduled to be open in the autumn of 2006 (EHAC, 2005).

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