

**UNDERSTANDING KNOWLEDGE
PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION IN
THE FIELD OF URBAN PLANNING
The case of business consulting
and sustainability assessment**

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A Thesis submitted in Fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of
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2014

DECLARATION

This work has not been submitted in substance for any other degree or award at this or any other university or place of learning, nor is being submitted concurrently in candidature for any degree or other award.

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Summary

This thesis explores one of the key challenges in contemporary urban planning: understanding the production and dissemination of knowledge and how this shapes views and expectations towards urban policy and practice. Over the last four decades knowledge transfer has been considered as a 'panacea' for unsustainable urban growth. Private sector consultancies are believed to play an important role in this process as they are known to be policy advisors. As evidenced by the global growth of consulting businesses in the course of the twentieth century, so their influence might have strengthened. However, the role of consultancies in the production and dissemination of knowledge and the social outcomes of these processes have not yet been adequately evaluated: especially for the influence of sustainability assessment frameworks developed by these consultancies on urban policy and practice in a local context.

In order to address this gap, the 'Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse' of Keller (2011) is deployed in the case study of the 'Arena' development. The framework draws on the tradition of social constructionism (Berger and Luckmann, 1967) and the power-knowledge scholarship of Foucault (1986) in order to explain how knowledge, intertwined with power, defines the outcomes of the sustainability assessment. Insights from semi-structured interviews with key 'Arena' project stakeholders, documentary and secondary sources, demonstrate that the processes of valorisation and objectification of knowledge in the context of consultants are contested across time and space with regard to: their credibility and reputation, the reliability of the sustainability assessment framework, and social interaction around it.

This thesis defines the consultant-client relationship as the interplay of scientific-environmental knowledge and economic interests mitigated by the local socio-institutional context. It suggests that the 'reputation' of consultants is a 'relational' construct, limited by confusion over the meaning of sustainable development and the actions of their clients. It points to the pitfalls of using various frameworks in order to assess sustainability impacts with regard to a bias towards interests of a client. Finally, it also stresses the role of consultants in the production of competitiveness 'imaginaries' and how this fails under the pressure of local knowledge authorities and in the context of public-private relationships in Poland.

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Chapter 1 Introduction: Knowledge transfer in the field of urban planning

Knowledge production and dissemination issues have occupied academics, policy makers and practitioners in various fields. The travel of ideas is known to have accompanied the development of humankind over centuries (Rose 2000). Inquiry about knowledge in philosophy goes back to the fifth century before Christ and involves the scholarship of Greek philosophers, such as Plato and Socrates. Recently, even more attention has been paid to the notion of 'knowledge' as a development resource at an international scale (Stiglitz 2000; Howells 2002; Malmberg and Maskell 2002; Simmie et al. 2002; Simmie 2003; Malecki 2007). According to Gabe et al. (2012, p. 1179), 'it would be an understatement to suggest that knowledge plays a key role in today's economy; for much of the developed world, it might be more accurate to assert that knowledge is today's economy' (*italic as in original*).

Knowledge transfer has become an even more important research subject in Western societies over the last four decades, notably in urban studies (Owens 2006). In contemporary urban development, the creation and dissemination of knowledge that determines 'good practice' represents a well-established activity. There is considerable evidence that knowledge transfer has been one of the key aspects of the development of urban policy (Dolowitz et al. 1999). Policymakers and practitioners have undertaken conscious efforts to create organizational platforms, formal or informal, to enhance knowledge exchange (Johnson and Stone 2000). The impacts of knowledge sharing have also been discussed within planning theory (Rydin 2007; Rydin and Moore 2008).

As knowledge based development has been high on the political agenda (Chatterton 2000), so considerable attention in urban studies has been dedicated to the notions of innovation and economic progress. The reliance on knowledge to build the economic base of cities has led to the emergence of a range of concepts such as 'knowledge economy', 'knowledge based economy' and the 'learning economy' (Malecki 2007) as well as 'thinking regions' (Gabe et al. 2012), 'knowledge city' (Yigitcanlar et al. 2008a; Yigitcanlar et al. 2008b; Dur et al. 2010), 'entrepreneurial city' and 'creative city' (Chatterton 2000; Peck 2005; Landry 2008a; Yigitcanlar et al. 2008b). Scholars in the field of urban planning point to a number of ideas or policy concepts that have been diffused worldwide, the most prominent examples being 'global city', 'knowledge city', (Featherstone 1993, 1995; Swyngedouw 1997; Sassen 2000, 2001b, a; Swyngedouw 2004a; Tait and Jensen 2007), as well as 'compact city' (Geurs and van Wee 2006), 'creative regions' (Yigitcanlar et al. 2008b), 'urban village' (Tait and Jensen 2007) and 'sustainable communities' (Geurs and van Wee 2006). Similarly, Porter (1999) cited in (Simmie 2003, p. 610) states that 'in advanced nations, future prosperity will increasingly hinge on innovation – successfully developing and commercializing new technologies, new products and new processes'.

The issues of knowledge transfer and learning from each other have recently played a particularly important role in defining the objectives of 'urban regeneration' and 'sustainable development'. It is evident from the emergence and proliferation of centres of excellence that serve the purpose of improving quality urban regeneration practices (de Magalha 2004). As 'sustainable development' has become an objective for urban development, so academics and policymakers have turned their attention to the international exchange of sustainability strategies and practices. Bulkeley (2006, p. 1029) argues that 'in the promotion of urban sustainability in national and international arenas, numerous initiatives and programs have been put into place to facilitate the creation and dissemination of "best practice" through which to promote policy transfer and learning'. One should also note that an important part of the process has been the rise of international sustainability benchmarking (Cook 2008).

This recognition of the positive impacts of knowledge transfer in various settings includes that policy makers and scholars have ignored or omitted some critical aspects relating to the processes by which knowledge passes from context to context. The practices of knowledge sharing and lesson learning redefine urban policy and practice in various, often less 'obvious' ways, such as by establishing norms and values. Knowledge claims produced in various urban forums bring about implicit assumptions about what is desirable in relation to urban development. They then become 'cognitive' lenses and normative references for new practices and standards in urban development. In particular, urban actors 'use' ideas and knowledge to make sense of local events and reproduce them within policy decisions; they grow into key elements of narratives of political stakeholders and some of them gain ascendancy and enter the public policy arena. One particular risk, however, has been identified by Murdoch (2004) cited in Bulkeley (2006, pp. 1029-1030), with his observation that processes of knowledge transfer 'impede the translation and incorporation of local knowledge into political rationalities shaping the norms and rules of urban sustainability'. Practices of knowledge sharing and learning from each other are underpinned by rarely articulated beliefs about the 'transferability' of knowledge and the 'objectivity' of lessons learnt. They are not free from the impact of politics and power relations. Viewed in this way, interesting questions arise about knowledge transfer in relation to urban planning: Why are we seeking explanations of the knowledge transfer? Where does the process take place? Who does it serve? These are the primary subjects of investigation in this thesis.

1.1. Approaches to knowledge transfer in urban studies

In the quest to address these questions, one examines the contemporary explanations and evidence. A review of existing literature focusing on knowledge transfer processes in urban planning leads to the extraction of a range of themes, such as 'globalisation', 'policy transfer', and 'diffusion of innovation'. In this section these themes are discussed briefly in relation to their theoretical approaches, with a focus on the concepts of 'knowledge', 'social actor' and 'power' that they deploy. The review is organised as follows. It commences with the body of literature and

approaches whereby the issues of knowledge production and sharing are implicit and often treated superficially (which includes the majority of globalisation studies). Then the discussion moves to the scholarship that takes knowledge transfer in urban development more seriously, and which engages more thoroughly with social science.

1.1.1. Globalisation

The first stream includes a voluminous amount of literature, which incorporates most studies of 'globalisation', typically under the three headings of 'policy transfer', 'policy diffusion', and 'innovation' or 'technology transfer'. These are discussed in turn. In the context of 'globalisation' scholarship within the political economic tradition, there is relatively little attention given to the issues of knowledge transfer and careful empirical examination of the process (Keck and Sikkink 1999; Ladi 2000; Bridge and Wood 2005). This limited focus on the processes of knowledge 'transfer' is surprising given that the notion of "globalisation" has become a key word for organising our thoughts and how the world works' since the 1980s (Harvey 2000, p. 19) and has strongly dominated urban studies since the 1990s (Brenner 2000). Also, in the words of Bridge and Wood (2005, p. 200) studies regarding 'economic globalisation address the stretching of commodity chains and/or the integration of cities, regions and national economic into transnational networks, [yet] the role of knowledge in enabling and structuring these geographies of globalisation is rarely considered'.

In general, globalisation is associated with intense cooperation between governments, companies and societies, minimising the boundaries of international products and services trade, and obstacles in the mobility of people (Dicken 2003, 2004), and increasing the 'economic, political, cultural and environmental interconnections that make many existing borders and boundaries irrelevant' (Steger 2003, p. 7). However, the very notion of 'globalisation' and its impact on the built environment has also been contested (Weiss 1997; Brenner 1999; Bartelson 2000; Beck 2000; Held et al. 2000; Sutcliffe and Glyn 2003; Swyngedouw 2004a). In the light of inconclusive empirical evidence, 'globalisation' has been called 'a cliché of our times' (Held et al. 2000, p. 1), or 'an act of faith' in relation to urban development (Swyngedouw 2004a, p. 27). The arguments that capital production in the global context accelerated in the course of the twentieth century and that globalisation is a new development stage of world capitalism, are equally contested and are considered as 'misinterpretations' about globalisation (Bartelson 2000; Ladi 2000; Robinson 2001; Sutcliffe and Glyn 2003).

In such studies, knowledge transfer implicitly accompanies the mobility of human beings and financial capital. They provide some interesting suggestions about why and how these processes occur. For example, political-economic theories of 'globalisation', often inspired by Marxism and neo-institutionalism, offer a range of explanations about knowledge 'reproduction' processes in the field of urban development, especially pointing to the roles of various dominant stakeholders (Harvey 1989; Harvey 1996; Swyngedouw 1997; Pongsawat 2000; Robinson 2001;

Dicken 2003; Swyngedouw 2004a, b). It involves arguments that political-economic restructuring processes within a global economic system have led to the emergence of 'new' social classes (Brenner 1998, 1999, 2000; Sassen 2000, 2001b, a). It also entails a change in relationships between society, business and the state (Robinson 2001; Dicken 2003, 2004). There is also evidence that these 'new social classes' include international organisations and networks whose actions lead to 'hollowing out the state' (Jessop 2002, 2003; Howell 2006), or an emergent 'transnational state' (Nye and Keohane 1971; Cox 1997; Meyer et al. 1997; Keohane and Nye Jr 1998; Robinson 2001). It is therefore argued that transnational corporations 'push' certain agendas (knowledge claims) and that they can have a 'tremendous power and at the same time exercise a considerable "international" influence on national/local economies and economic policies' (Crossley 2009, p. 99). With regard to the rise of international, hegemonic 'networks', scholars suggest that processes of knowledge transfer are 'horizontal', taking place through 'channels' (Beck 2000; Levi-Faur 2005). For instance, Levi-Faur (2005, p. 28) claims that the new global economic order is 'diffused rather than reproduced independently as a discrete event in each country and sector'.

Such 'globalisation' studies offer useful insights for analysts of knowledge transfer, notably their strong emphasis on the importance of geography. They suggest that knowledge production processes are bound up with the redefinition of space, locality and territory under economic pressures (Brenner 1998, 1999; Harvey 2000; Dicken 2003; Morgan 2004), often making two main (intertwined) arguments. The first is that globalisation has a particular spatial dimension related to the centralisation of knowledge in metropolitan areas (Brenner 1998; Sassen 2000) and leads to uneven urban development (Harvey 1985, 2000). The issues are captured within the debates about the 'global city' and 'global urbanism'. 'Global city' scholarship focuses on the localisation of the new capitalist relationships (Sassen 2000, 2001b; Landry 2008a). Sassen (2000, p. 83) sees global cities as platforms for materialistic globalisation, where 'global elements are *localised*, international labour markets are constituted, and cultures from all over the world are de- and reterritorialised, [which] puts them right there at the centre along with the internationalisation of capital as a fundamental aspect of globalisation' (italic as in original). Landry (2008b, p. 21) acknowledges that global cities represent 'greater globalisation resulting in a new interlocking, interdependent economic system of cities, each playing different roles within an overall hierarchy of economic, political or symbolic power'.

The second argument concerns dual processes of resistance and the redefinition of local structures of power under globalisation pressures (Borja et al. 1997; Swyngedouw 2004a, b). Swyngedouw (2004a) conceptualises such processes using the notion of 'glocalisation', that is:

'The twin processes, whereby, firstly, institutional/regulatory arrangements shift from the national scale both upwards to supra-national or global scales and downwards to the scale of the individual body or to local, urban or regional configurations and, secondly, economic activities and inter-firm

networks are becoming simultaneously more localised/regionalised and transnational' (Swyngedouw 2004a, p. 25).

In the context of 'globalisation' debates, few scholars consider knowledge transfer and its impact on space as a primary subject of their investigations (Gertler 2001; Gertler 2003, 2004; Morgan 2004). Morgan (2004) takes an example of Information and Communication Technologies (ITC) to develop an argument that globalisation does not make location and territory irrelevant due to complexities of sharing tacit knowledge as opposed to codified knowledge. He argues that 'physical proximity may be essential for some forms of knowledge exchange' (Morgan 2004). This interest in the role of ITC in globalisation process entail that the concept of knowledge is more explicit yet rarely researched empirically.

Scholars interested in 'globalisation' approach issues of knowledge through the lens of 'culture', with primary interests in global impacts on local practices and identities (Featherstone 1993, 1995). They are concerned with the rise of 'information societies' (Castells 1996; Beck 2000; Sassen 2000). They reflect upon the influence of the intensification of capital and knowledge exchange on risk and the roles of information technology in addressing it (Castells 1991). It includes arguments about the impact of the second technological revolution and commercialisation of telecommunication technology and emergence of virtual domains, where knowledge diffusion processes take place (Giddens 1990; Castells 1991).

The studies include the idea that the impacts of globalisation involve the processes of 'delocalisation', 'mundialisation', 'cultural hybridisation' and 'reterritorization' (Brenner 1998, 2000; Swyngedouw 2004b; De Roo and Porter 2007), whereby places and people are becoming more alike (Relph and Charles 1976; Healey 1998; Relph 2007; Marquis and Toffel 2011). However, it is also suggested that 'culture' and historically bound social relations may be a 'barrier' to the international exchange and flow of knowledge. For example, according to Roux et al. (2006, p. 3), 'the diffusion of new knowledge would be simple if there were no social and cultural divides between the suppliers and prospective adopters of knowledge'.

In the context of cultural issues and globalisation debates, it is important to bring attention to the contribution of sociological scholarship to the debates about knowledge production and dissemination within the general 'globalisation' framework. Thomas and Znaniecki (1918) explored people's mobility and immigration issues in the context of globalisation and stressed the interactive aspects of knowledge production, especially with regard to an individual's circumstances, 'definition of situations' and 'self-position'. The potential advantage of adopting this view on knowledge transfer is further discussed below, in the sections addressing symbolic, cognitive and interactive aspects of knowledge transfer, and the analytical and methodological approach, including the framework of 'The Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse' (Keller 2011).

1.1.2. Policy transfer and cross-national lesson drawing

Aside from discussions of 'globalisation', the notion of knowledge 'transfer' has been explicitly addressed in the field of policy studies. The two bodies of literature are not, however, exclusive, as globalisation is suggested to influence the dynamics of international policy learning. For instance, Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) argue that policy transfer can enhance or reduce the effects of globalisation. According to Evans and Davies (1999, p. 362), globalisation 'appears to have increased policy transfer', with James and Manning (1996, p. 143) stating similarly that 'globalisation processes are increasing the amount of "lesson drawing" between countries and contributing to the spread of new forms'.

The scholarship on 'policy transfer' is extensive, covering a range of themes. Qualitative studies have followed the travel of policy ideas between the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Examples include the spread of the Business Improvement Districts ideas (Ashworth 2003; Lippert 2010, 2012; Lippert and Sleiman 2012), Urban Development Grants (Wolman 1992) and the Neighbourhood Revitalization Services model (Dommel 1990). There are also studies dedicated to the 'transfer' of risk-based approaches to contaminated land management from the UK to China (Luo et al. 2009), the international spread of transport policy tools from Germany to Central and Eastern Europe (Stead et al. 2010), the travel of housing administration ideas from France to Greece, rail planning models from France to Spain and from UK to New Zealand (De Jong 1999; De Jong et al. 2002), the diffusion of the New Urbanism paradigm from USA to the UK (Thompson-Fawcett 2003), housing subsidy schemes from Chile to Columbia (Gilbert 2004), the 'Europeanisation' of spatial planning (Alden 2001), and the diffusion of the 'Centres of Excellence' with regard to urban regeneration (de Magalha 2004). Similarly, policy studies address knowledge transfer issues from the quantitative perspective (Mitchell 1999; Gilbert 2004; Shaw and Satish 2007). Mitchell (1999) conducted a quantitative evaluation of Business Improvement Districts (BID) in terms of structure, function and management.

Scholarship on 'policy transfer' is however complex and there have been many attempts to make sense of it (Evans and Davies 1999; Page 2000; James and Lodge 2003). In this research, this heterogeneous body of literature is discussed using two conceptual axes: (i) the conceptualisation of the process of knowledge transfer, and (ii) approach to the notion of 'knowledge'. With regard to the first matter, the process of knowledge transfer is considered as deliberate action of one actor (or agency) learning from other actor (agency) (Wolman 1992; Lippert 2007; Cook 2008), or a simultaneous process of diffusion to usually from one actor (or agency) to a range of actors (agencies) (Rhodes and Marsh 1992; Keck and Sikkink 1999; Stone 2000c, 2001a, b; Simmie et al. 2002; Thompson-Fawcett 2003; Peck 2011). The concerns over the conceptualisation of 'knowledge' as 'object' or 'subject' of/in the process of knowledge 'transfer' in the field of urban planning are addressed further in the chapter.

Studies about a 'transfer of policies' (under the terms: 'policy transfer', 'lesson drawing' etc.) can be criticised for their 'naive empiricism' and 'positivistic attempts'. They represent 'rational' accounts, where policymakers systematically pursue goals, 'lessons' are chosen on calculative, means-ends efficiency (maximising performance) arguments, and abstracted from power relations (James and Lodge 2003; Cook 2008; Luo et al. 2009; Peck and Theodore 2010). In this context, many 'policy transfer', 'policy diffusion', 'policy innovation' and 'lesson drawing' studies treat knowledge as an 'object' (Hambleton and Thomas 1995; Dolowitz and Marsh 1996; Dolowitz and Marsh 2000; Rose 2000, 2002; Dolowitz 2003; Lloyd et al. 2003), which is also apparent in relation to the terminology – the use of the word 'transfer' that the researcher henceforth will try to avoid. They include generic definitions of 'policy transfer' as 'the process by which knowledge (of ideas, institutions, policies, and programs) in one political system is fed into the policymaking arena (in the development and change of policies, programs, and institutions) in another political system' (Dolowitz 2001, p. 374) and where 'lesson is a detailed cause-and-effect description of a set of actions that government can consider in the light of experience elsewhere, including a prospective evaluation of whether what is done elsewhere could someday become effective here' (Rose 1993, p. 27). They construct 'models' of policy transfer based on, for instance, differences between 'borrowed' and 'implemented' objects (Dommel 1990; Rose 1993; Dolowitz and Marsh 1996; Dolowitz et al. 1999; Rose 2000; Symes and Steel 2003; Ward 2006), or 'types of power' relations, e.g. (Hambleton and Thomas 1995; Dolowitz and Marsh 1996; Dolowitz et al. 1999; Dolowitz and Marsh 2000).

These problems also occur in studies of 'policy diffusion', 'policy network', and 'policy in motion'. In these studies too, little attention is paid to the conceptualisation of 'knowledge' and 'power', whilst authors attempt to create typologies of policy networks and other knowledge 'transfer' models (Rhodes and Marsh 1992). In spite of this, the scholarship on policy networks involves some thought provoking ideas about timing in the processes of knowledge transfer, in particular that 'networks' represent '*ad-hoc*, an action-oriented phenomenon set up with the specific intention of engineering policy change. They exist only for the time that a transfer is occurring' (Evans and Davies 1999, p. 376). Some scholars also suggest that knowledge transfer is particularly intense in certain locations such as Barcelona, Bilbao, Baltimore, New York, which are then conceptualised as 'Policy Meccas' (Cooke and Simmie 2005; Diamond and Liddle 2005; Cook 2008); a conclusion that echoes analysts of globalisation, and the identification of particular places as pivotal in the promotion of global knowledge sharing processes.

1.1.3. Innovation studies

After discussing two important bodies of literature relating to 'knowledge production in the field of urban development, a third theme warrants some attention. It concerns 'innovation studies' that broadly relate to knowledge in terms of the structure of capital, innovation production and location (territory, city-regions). Many studies are often inspired by Drucker, Florida, Porter or Schumpeter and explore the role of innovation in urban regional systems, especially in

underpinning the competitiveness of city-regions (Machlup 1962; Maskell 1998; Simmie 2003; Malecki 2007; Yigitcanlar et al. 2008b). There is a strong focus on the role of Knowledge Intensive Business Services on innovation production, usually taking a structural economic perspective (Simmie et al. 2002; Simmie 2003; Simmie and Strambach 2006; Gabe et al. 2012), and the emergence of 'creative class'. That being said, the processes are also described with regard to various conceptualisations of the notion of 'knowledge'.

Simmie (2003), for instance, builds on Polanyi's idea about knowledge 'types', such as codified and tacit knowledge and stresses that both of these types of knowledge play important role in inducing innovation-based development of cities and regions. Malecki (2007) argues that there is a different type of knowledge in developing the competitive advantage of city-regions and points to the 'dark' side of international benchmarking being a coercive rather than a voluntary process. While Landry (2008a) argues that the tacit knowledge of a 'creative class' (e.g. community artists) construct 'creative cities' and contribute to sustainable development. Yet, they rarely involve considerations about knowledge dissemination as an interactive process.

The notion of 'innovation' in urban development is often used to research the impact of technology and information services. Scholars also frequently use an 'innovation framework' or an 'information framework' to better understand the processes of knowledge production in space (Wolman and Page 2002; Thompson-Fawcett 2003). The frameworks carry implicit assumptions that knowledge is an 'object' that is 'transferrable'. For instance, in the context of the 'innovation' framework of Rogers (1995, p. 6) it is argued that knowledge is 'transferred' through communication channels and that 'diffusion defined is a kind of *social change*, defined as the process by which alteration occurs in the structure and function of a social system' (italic as in original). He also uses the model of rational choice to stress that social actors make independent choices guided by efficiency (Rogers 1995).

The 'innovation transfer', 'technology transfer' studies presented above are also used in conjunction with 'system theory' and they are embedded in ideas about 'technological systems' or 'socio-technical systems' (Coe and Bunnell 2003; Geels 2004). In relation to urban development, these approaches are adopted to investigate environmental issues (Markard and Truffer 2008; Hodson and Marvin 2010; Coenen et al. 2012). They indeed focus on the dynamics of knowledge and competences between stakeholders associated within networks, however, yet they are also under-conceptualised in relation to 'knowledge' and 'power'. This scholarship therefore, alongside research output described above, effectively ignores a 'micro setting', where processes of knowledge transfer and production take place. By doing so, they abstract from 'real life' situations, where knowledge the 'substance' of knowledge claims and vales underpinning them are negotiated between actors and organisations. This issue is also recognised in relation to urban planning, as it is discussed below.

1.2. Subjective and interactive aspects of knowledge transfer

Several studies about the processes of knowledge production and dissemination in the field of urban planning recognise that knowledge is not floating 'out there', but it is a social and inevitably subjective and relational construct.

In particular, some policy scholars have long perceived the so-called 'soft mode' of policy transfer (Stone 2000c, a, b, 2004), which relates to the production of certain norms and values in a policy context. The scholarship, although fragmented, provides interesting insights and allows critical reflections about why knowledge is 'transferred', and what constitutes a 'successful' process of 'transfer'. In the case of Business Improvement Districts (BID), Ashworth (2003) points out that BIDs were transferred as they were important political targets in the UK. Moynihan (2006) researches how new public management ideas became popular and 'transferred' across the globe. McCann (2011, p. 108) points out that imported knowledge can be 'a powerful political narrative that valorises existing development models in the city' and which, in his case study of Vancouver, legitimated the actions of the city's development coalition, and 'dampens criticism of the negative impacts of the current policy – such as the city's high housing prices and attendant unaffordability for the poor and middle class'.

Also, interactive aspects of policymaking are stressed within scholarship that focuses on the roles and influence of various stakeholders on policy, including those which examine how particular actor-centred constructs can explain the forms of knowledge transfer. It is particularly apparent in the 'policy network' or 'policy in motion' scholarship. Although both of them have been criticised for lacking a robust theoretical foundation, they provide defensible accounts of the role of stakeholders and knowledge in constituting networks (McCann 2008). It involves such conceptualisations as 'policy entrepreneurs', 'policy middle men' (Page 2000), 'epistemic communities' (Haas 1992; Litfin 1995a, b; Rydin 2007; Moore and Rydin 2008), 'discourse coalitions' (Hajer and Versteeg 2005a, b; Hajer 2005; Hajer 2006a; Hajer 2006b), 'advocacy networks' or 'advocacy coalitions' (Sabatier 2007). In this context, it is also worth noting the contribution of the 'Actor-Network Theory', which following Latour and Callon, entails that knowledge production is seen as a relative process involving human and non-human actors (e.g. technology, animals) and having multiplicity of representations transcending through symmetrical power effects (Murdoch 1997; Tait 2002; Farias and Bender 2010). It has however been criticised for having little explanatory potential and paying lip service to power relations and have generated limited output with regard to the issues of knowledge transfer, with some exemption, such as Tait and Jensen (2007).

Finally, one should note that while emphasizing relational aspects of knowledge production in the field of urban planning, scholars also draw inspirations from a number of philosophers and social scientists, who have provided more or less explicit, yet very influential views on the notion of knowledge. There are several studies that stress the interactive aspects of knowledge sharing and combine it with the view on the notion of power and its relationship with knowledge, especially a

considerable body of work based on Foucault (1986). It broadly focuses on environmental issues, for instance, the policy making processes addressing the site of the Romanian delta (Assche et al. 2011), sustainable development knowledge transfer within the 'Eurocities' network (Owens 2006; Owens et al. 2006), sustainable development policymaking in the European Union, in the cases of Bologna, Florence, Edinburgh and Leicester (Mazza and Rydin 1997), and the acid rain controversy in Britain and the Netherlands (Hajer 1995). This scholarship, as this research will demonstrate, can be further utilised to unravel the complexities of knowledge production and dissemination in the field of urban planning.

Having briefly reviewed existing approaches to the processes of knowledge transfer in the field of urban development, some interesting conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, one argument that received support in these studies is that the validity of knowledge claims should not be taken for granted, as knowledge is intertwined in complex, relational processes (and power struggles). This argument stems from a particular epistemological position – social constructionism discussed later in the thesis (in Chapter 4 Research Methodology). Secondly, there is growing number of studies which stress social aspects of the knowledge 'transfer' and where power dynamics of knowledge exchange are recognised, yet insufficiently investigated empirically. The third conclusion is that there is growing concern over knowledge, technology, and policy 'transfer' in relation to the environment and the notion of sustainable development which, as discussed later in this thesis, has evolved into an important dimension of urban governance. Fifthly, there are approaches that stress the active engagement of social stakeholders in the outcomes of knowledge sharing and even more importantly, redefining the very notion of knowledge or 'best practice'. All of these issues find a conceptual response in the SKAD approach, created by Keller (2011) and utilised in this thesis, which is briefly explained below and in more detail in Chapter 4 (Research methodology). Before turning to this, there is yet another question which emerges in the context of deliberations about approaches to knowledge transfer in urban planning. It is: how does existing (heterogeneous) scholarship about knowledge transfer portray the roles of various social actors?

1.3. Key stakeholders in knowledge transfer

'Policy transfer' is a multi stakeholder process (James 2000; Ladi 2000; McGuirk 2000; Stone 2000c, b, 2004), which includes public, private and third sector organisations working at international, national, regional and local levels. However, the most-identified stakeholders in the studies dedicated to the knowledge transfer in urban development are public sector organisations (Evans and Davies 1999; Dolowitz and Marsh 2000; Rose 2000; Stone 2004).

Many policy transfer studies focus on the role of large, international organisations, such as the European Union, the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization (Stone 2004). These organisations are often ascribed a regulatory role towards urban development, especially with regard to the ideas of

sustainability. They are also considered 'banks of knowledge' or 'banks of best practices' that dedicate resources towards and support other knowledge institutions (Johnson and Stone 2000; Stiglitz 2000; Stone 2000c, 2001a, b; Yigitcanlar et al. 2008a). For instance, Stone (2004, p. 554) states that the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, and the International Monetary Fund 'have set up research departments or hold conferences and consultants to advocate the "scientific" validity of their objectives, and have engaged in various outreach activities, data-gathering and mentoring to improve awareness and educate the public'. Similarly, Yigitcanlar et al. (2008a, p. 64) argue that 'major international organisations such as the World Bank (1998), European Commission (2000), United Nations (2001) and OECD (2001) have adopted knowledge management frameworks in their strategic directions regarding global development', as strategies aiming at increasing the competitiveness of urban areas.

One of the most important roles is played by the European Union, which uses regulatory and non regulatory tools to set direction for the development of urban areas. According to Alden (2001, p. 115), 'the growing interest in the EU spatial planning framework is illustrated by the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), which has asked Member States to work towards a 'Europeanization' of their national, regional and urban planning frameworks' (see more in Healey 1998). It is also worth noting that the European Union have played a particularly important role in agenda setting, establishing norms and values in sustainable urban development.

The organisations mentioned above do not operate in an institutional 'vacuum', but exist within networks engaging private and third sector representatives as contemporary politics and policy making involve a range of non-state actors (Keck and Sikkink 1999; Stone 2004; Schlesinger 2009). The European Union works in tandem with nongovernmental organisations (Radaelli 2000b; Radaelli 2000a). Johnson and Stone (2000) point to the existence of Global Development Network, an NGO, which brings together the most influential international organisations such as the World Bank, United Nations, think tanks, private sector consultants and independent professionals (Stone 2004).

In this wider context, scholars note that private sector consultancy companies have been playing an increasingly important role in international knowledge transfer (Haas 1992; Bessant and Rush 1995; Mintrom 1997; Stone 2000b). Mitchell and Beckett (2008, p. 75) state 'the last decade has witnessed the rise of private transnational institutions that increasingly influence the organisation and management of urban space'. Bessant and Rush (1995, p. 101) argue that management consultants are 'amongst this growing group of intermediary agencies, and of growing policy significance are those firms and stakeholders engaged in consultancy and related advisory activity'.

According to Stone (2001a) consultants perform intense interactions with policy makers, as a result of which they may be perceived as powerful. She states: 'In global policy networks, consultants are both advisors and implementers. Like think

tanks, they represent a store of knowledge about practices and approaches elsewhere' (Stone 2001a, p. 28). Keck and Sikkink (1999, p. 90) point out that consulting organisations are part of international advocacy coalitions and '[they] bring new ideas, norms, and discourses, into policy debates, and serve as sources of information and testimony'. However, the role of private sector consultants 'in shaping flows of knowledge about urban policies and transferring policies,... are longstanding but increasingly important aspects of the production of cities, yet they have not been adequately studied or theorized' (McCann 2011, p. 108).

This disparity between the apparent importance of consultancies and the number of studies exploring it is noticeable in other spheres, too. Scholars in urban planning have begun to argue that consultants play an important role as knowledge vendors in the production of cities (McCann 2011). There is also evidence that consultants have benefited from the wider application of knowledge economy paradigms more widely in Western societies (Castells 1991; Amin and Thrift 1995; Healey 1995; Healy et al. 1995; Litfin 1995a; Healey 1999). Although it is an attractive claim, the idea that consultants exercise powerful effects across time and space should not be taken for granted. Despite evidence that they helped to spread New Public Management across the globe, the ideas have been applied differently in developing, newly industrialised and developed countries (James and Manning 1996). This raises further questions about the reach of the influence of international consultancies on urban development processes, and of the knowledge generated.

Such questions can usefully be asked of post-communist, Central and Eastern European countries like Poland. To date the literature on urban development in Poland is rather fragmented, but suggests a number of issues that consultants may face when 'connecting' with the Polish context, especially local stakeholders. One of the issues that consultants face may be the lack of funds for urban regeneration investments in Central and Eastern European countries (hereafter CEE). The CEE countries are also likely to be struggling with economic globalisation and political restructuring (which itself becomes a context for knowledge transfer). Finally, post-industrial restructuring that commenced in CEE in the late 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s (Kiss 2002), coincide with the rise of the notion of 'sustainable development' and the implications of Poland's accession to the European Union, which can indeed create particularly complex circumstances for consultants 'knowledge work'. This review leads us to a summary in the form of research aims and objectives.

1.4. Research aim and objectives

In this thesis, the research aim is stated as follows:

The research aims to improve our understanding of knowledge production and dissemination in the field of urban planning. In particular, the thesis examines how transnational consultancies construct and mobilize

knowledge about urban development, and how this is shaped by processes of social interaction in this field.

The research objectives involve: (i) to critically assess existing literature about knowledge production in terms of the approach taken to notions of 'knowledge', how knowledge is defined with an empirical focus on the role of consultants in the field of urban planning, (ii) to investigate the effects of knowledge mobilisation in a local context, in particular, how knowledge, bound with power relationships, defines the outcomes of knowledge transfer; (iii) to explore the usefulness of the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD) for understanding how consultants create and promote knowledge, with what effects and as a research methodology in exploring the discursive dimensions of knowledge sharing.

These questions are particularly important in the current the context in which an increasing number of scholars and policy makers seek to promote sustainable development, and also because new insights are particularly valuable in the 'under-researched', empirical context of Poland. They are going to be revisited in the subsequent literature review chapters (Chapter 2 and Chapter 3) and methodology chapter (Chapter 4), which further elucidate the rationale for the choice of sustainable development and Poland as the particular context for this research.

1.5. Analytical and methodological approach

As noted above, the researcher uses the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD) as a research framework to investigate the processes of knowledge production in the field of urban planning. One of the research objectives is to apply discourse analysis and assess its usefulness as a research method. Broadly, SKAD relies on establishing how knowledge claims are constructed, following social constructionism ideas of Berger and Luckmann (1967), and how power and knowledge are intertwined in the context of discourse, following Foucault and Gordon (1980) and Foucault (1986). In the words of Keller (2011, p. 49), it enables to explore 'fixed and fluid rules of interpretation practices' and collective levels of 'situation definition'. For the purpose of SKAD, the research employs the following assumptions (and analytical concepts):

- *Social actors* – an individual or collectives, exist independently of, and outside of discourses. They can be involved in discourse coalitions and associated within an agency, which is socially and historically, spatially and time bound (Keller 2011),
- *discourse* – 'historically situated "real" social practices, not representing external objects but constituting them', (Keller 2011, p. 45)
- *public/special discourses* (a distinction made on the basis of their bearer), which can differ in their 'formation rules',
- *discourse coalitions* – groups of actors who through 'a more or less accurate repetition and stabilization of the same statements in a singular utterance' construct temporally fixed 'collective symbolic orders' (Keller 2011, p. 52),

- *dispositif* as an ‘infra-structure of discourse production and as a device for the realization of power effects of discourse’ (Keller 2005, paragraph 10).

Then, being broadly inspired by ideas about ‘symbolic interactionism’ and ‘frame analysis’, Keller proposes a particular analytical and methodological pathway, which relies on the reconstruction of ‘*symbolic ordering*’ of knowledge, ‘*materialities*’ of the processes of knowledge production and ‘*power*’. However, the way SKAD analytical concepts are deployed in relation to discourse is explained in more detail in Chapter 4, Research methodology.

1.6. Thesis structure

The thesis is structured as follows.

After an introduction, the second chapter focuses on the role of knowledge in consulting businesses. It depicts the proliferation of consulting companies during the twentieth century in Western societies. It reviews various definitions of consulting and stresses that consultants do not merely develop and transfer knowledge but create fashions and set standards in various aspects of urban planning policy and practice. The chapter uses insights from strategic, functional, process and structural approaches to consulting to map a range of rationales for employing consultants. The discussion highlights possible reasons why private sector consultancy companies can be powerful. Implications are drawn not only on the position and ‘demands’ of a client, but also on knowledge transfer issues within a consulting agency. The chapter explores how knowledge stocks are managed within companies, and on urban governance debates – the relationships between private sector knowledge consultants and other city counterparts. Finally, it examines various cases of foreign aid in public policy in Eastern and Central European countries and suggests that the application of knowledge in these countries may be particularly problematic, given the nature of public-private sector relationships.

Chapter 3 visits contemporary debates about sustainable development as an important yet contested element of urban development policy and practice. It brings to light how various players, especially private sector companies, shape discourse about sustainability internationally through design practice, research and networking, and in the context of governance debates. The discussion draws upon recent developments in sustainability assessment methods and states that these developments redefine the notion of sustainability in the built environment so that it becomes a ‘twin brother’ of science and technology. In particular, the chapter explores how private sector consultants are involved in international sustainability benchmarking through developing sustainability frameworks. This chapter concludes with a summary of the research issues that are raised within the first three chapters.

Chapter 4 describes the research methodology. It introduces the premises of SKAD in detail and points to a number of distinctions between discourse analysis as

proposed within SKAD and other types of discourse analyses. It then justifies the case study strategy of inquiry and the case study selected to carry out the empirical work on knowledge transfer in the context of private sector consultants. Based on the theoretical (and analytical) premises of the SKAD, the chapter demonstrates how these were applied in the context of a specific case. It further specifies the range of concepts that guide data collection and analysis and presents some reflections about the position of a researcher in this study and research ethics. In the end, the chapter clarifies the reasoning behind anonymising a case study and evaluating the usefulness of data obtained.

Chapter 5 begins with a description of the 'Arena' (a pseudonym), which is a large scale, mixed-use urban development proposal in a major Polish city. The introduction is followed by the first part of the research findings. This section examines debates about the reputation of the consulting company as an international standards setter and knowledge leader. It reflects on the skills and abilities of consultants, their long-lasting commitment to sustainable development and their alleged connection to global networks of policy makers and practitioners, many of which produce international sustainable development 'standards'. It suggests that knowledge claims exposed to these networks, especially consultants' knowledge claims, are subject to verification, therefore objectifying processes. Subsequent sections of the chapter explore a range of factors that underpin the impact of consultants across time and space, also with regard to a particular sustainability assessment method. At the same time, however, the final section notes that the reputation of the consultants was contested outside the project group.

Chapter 6 examines the interactive aspects of knowledge sharing in the context of sustainability assessment in the consultant-client relationship. It points to the roles of various stakeholders, and their '*infrastructures*', in building up the objectivity of knowledge claims emerging in the context of the sustainability assessment. It concerns the construction of the sustainability assessment, sustainability indicators and corporate procedures encompassing the assessment process. The research also shows that consultants leave considerable space for a client to negotiate their interests. The chapter also tracks the discourses about sustainable development and the way they are viewed by the various project stakeholders. Finally, it suggests that the matters highlighted as a result of the consultants' sustainability expertise might have been eclipsed by other issues in the development proposal studied.

Chapter 7 points to the range of issues that mitigated the role of consultants' knowledge claims in the 'Arena' case study. It depicts the dynamics of knowledge politics, especially with regard to the emergence of anti-development 'discourse coalitions'. It presents the lines of contestation of the knowledge claims of the 'discourse coalition' centred on the developer and including the project group, by the other 'coalition' representing local authorities – the municipality, the local master planner and local media. In particular, it argues that local municipality and local authorities considered that the location of the site and the 'character' of its surrounding were more important than the environmental claims made by the

consultants and the developer. It reveals that stakeholders outside the project group contested the development proposal with regard to the developer's intentions and the significance attached to the development site. It then highlights the roles of urban competitiveness and property driven urban regeneration ideologies in the processes of 'validation' and 'objectification' of knowledge claims by the project group and the responses it met among project stakeholders.

The thesis closes with Chapter 8, which is a summary of key research findings with regard to the consultants' reputation, the construction of sustainability assessment and investigation of the processes of social interaction. The chapter stresses a number of issues (i) the discursive nature of the consultant-client relationship and that it cannot be treated in isolation to local socio-institutional context, (ii) the socio-spatial and boundaries of reproduction of sustainability assessment, especially with regard to the meaning of sustainable development, the interests and expectations of various social actors, (iii) the tensions between the role of consultants as standards setters in the context of urban competitiveness 'imagineries' and interest and expectations of local knowledge authorities, and (iv) the macroeconomic and societal obstacles in the spread of private sector consultancies and the dissemination of sustainability assessment methods in Poland.

Chapter 2 Knowledge relationships, private sector consultants and urban planning

2.1. Introduction

The following chapter examines how private sector consultants shape contemporary urban policy and practice. It assesses the scholarship about urban governance with regard to its relevance to the subject of private sector consultants. After this, it reflects upon the emergence and proliferation of consulting businesses in the course of the twentieth century and points to the set of explanations behind the alleged growth of the consulting profession. It then uses stereotypes about 'modern' consulting, especially ideas about consultants as 'gurus' versus 'villains', to stress the lack of adequate, realistic conceptualisations of 'consulting' or 'consultancy' before pointing to several critical ideas about consultants and the idea of consulting as a negotiation process. It further depicts a range of factors that influence this negotiation process that can be found across research traditions. In this vein, it particularly stresses the importance of clients' interests, in defining the mechanics and outcomes of consulting processes. Finally, the chapter evaluates to what extent explanations about the influence of foreign, private sector consultants in Western societies are applicable in the Polish context.

2.2. Consultancies in urban planning

Understanding the various ways in which private sector consultants interact with other urban actors is a complex challenge. The role of consultancies is acknowledged in a wide range of spheres, but rarely researched in any detail in relation to more fundamental debates about knowledge production in urban development, and under-analysed in terms of the nature of these processes.

Consultants work in a wide range of fields: human resources, information technology, administration, and business management matters. However, existing urban studies about the role of private sector consultants focuses primarily on a few topics. One is the role of consultants in the global diffusion of New Public Management ideas, understood as 'the group of management ideas imported from the business sector that dominated the bureaucratic reform policy agenda of many Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries since the 1980s' (Saint-Martin 1998, p. 533). There is also evidence of the influence of private sector consultants on delivering bottom up urban regeneration through capacity building and empowerment (Healey 1998; Jones 2003); and urban design, also in the context of sustainable development (Moore and Rydin 2008; Rydin and Moore 2008; Moore and Bunce 2009). The roles of consultants in the development of Knowledge Intensive Services (KIS) have also attracted the attention of scholars in the field of urban planning (Wood 1996, 2002; Malecki 2004; Aslesen and Isaksen 2007; Malecki 2007).

Most analysts recognise that consulting companies carry out businesses all over the world and that economic globalisation plays an important role in driving the process. Thus consultancies are conceptualised as ‘multinational’ or ‘transnational’ corporations, and are alleged to have ‘big’ powers for delivering urban change across multiple contexts. In this vein, Olds (1997) depicts the role of renowned international consultants in the process of redevelopment of the inner city of Shanghai, especially in delivering ‘outstanding’ design – to create a ‘competitive’ place, able to attract mobile capitals. Jenkins (2000, p. 146) points to the role of foreign knowledge consultants in reviewing urban land management policy in Mozambique, where they implemented and supervised ‘the preparation of a series of laws, model by laws and regulations for decentralization, and in the development of systems for financial management within local government’. Atkinson (1996, p. 235) describes the role of scientific consultants in collaborative urban planning, especially ‘an initiative to introduce an urban environmental planning and management system into Thailand as part of a broader “decentralization” agenda’. These, in turn, lead one to question whether there are any explanations regarding the ways private sectors consultancies engage in relationships with various urban actors in urban studies, which is addressed below.

2.2.1. Private sector consultants in theories of urban development

Private sector consultants are often implicit actors in theories of urban development and urban governance. Existing scholarship, as the section demonstrates, broadly stresses the impact of political and economic factors on the roles of consultants in contemporary urban development, however, it also provides ambiguous evidence about the ‘powers’ of consultants in contemporary urban development.

Urban governance scholarship is complex and includes a range of approaches, which allow reflections on various aspects of consultants’ input to urban policy and practice (Davies 2002; DiGaetano and Strom 2003; Hemphill et al. 2006). One approach understands the notion of ‘urban governance’ in line with Stoker (1998, p. 19), as a ‘complex set of institutions and actors that are drawn from but also beyond government’. It substitutes the ‘traditional’, (to some degree) state-centred location of governing styles and capabilities into ‘new’ forms of relationships, and suggests a new way of looking at relationships between city actors in the eyes of increasing impacts of restructuring public administration, economic globalisation and the emergence of international organisations in Western societies, where private sector consultancies found their ‘place’ in the management of cities (Kearns and Paddison 2000; Van Kersbergen and Van Waarden 2004). Urban scholars recognize various ‘modes’ of urban governance, for instance ‘networking’, and partnership or collaborative approaches (Davies 2002; Van Kersbergen and Van Waarden 2004).

‘Networking’ approaches, represented by many strands, stress ‘pluricentric forms of governance in contrast to multicentric (market) and unicentric or hierarchical forms (state, firm hierarchy)’ (Van Kersbergen and Van Waarden 2004, p. 148).

They entail that institutions managing urban development are assembled within 'networks', which represent 'self-organising, interorganisational' modes of governing (Rhodes 1996, p. 660). This scholarship features the arguments about the presence of consultants and their alleged 'powerful' influences as having burgeoning capacities – negotiation and resources. However, it includes suggestions that relationships between city actors are symmetrical, governed with trust (Rhodes 2000). Also, there is a body of literature about urban partnerships (Healey 1998; Gunton and Day 2003; Nelson et al. 2008; Evans et al. 2009; Moore and Bunce 2009), especially urban regimes. They imply that power relationships in the context of consultants are asymmetrical and about dominating roles of local elites in decision making in cities (Stone 1989; Stoker and Mossberger 1994; Judge et al. 1995; Feldman 2000; Thomas 2010).

There is considerable evidence that the governance relationships described above form around particular entrepreneurial narratives, which are used by policy makers, scholars, business actors and others to interpret and give meaning to local occurrences (Hajer 1993, 1995; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003; Hajer and Versteeg 2005b; Keller 2005; Hajer 2006a; Hajer 2006b; Keller 2011, 2012). They often involve 'visions' about the development of a city. These 'visions' entail restructuring and reimagining the city (Mayer 1995; Jessop 2002), especially with an objective to attract mobile capital (Jessop 2002; Harvey 2007), and are often portrayed in the literature about Urban Neoliberalism (Conaghan et al. 1990; Swyngedouw et al. 2002; Larner and Craig 2005; Hall 2006) and 'urban growth' (Logan and Molotch 1996; Logan et al. 1997; Black and Henderson 1999; Troutman 2004).

Linked to this, a second set of approaches seeks to understand the contours of economic globalisation, especially its spatial centralisation in large cities. Although as complex and heterogeneous as other urban development theories, such approaches suggest that there is growing role of consultants as well as other transnational corporations in contemporary urban development. The phenomenon relates to reorganising local economies across various scales – international, national, regional and local – intertwined with a 'hollowing out' of the state (Harvey 1989; Lovering 1999; Jessop 2002; Swyngedouw et al. 2002; Jessop 2003; O'Neill 2004; Larner and Craig 2005; Harvey 2007; Tonts and Taylor 2010). It is argued that private consultancies play important roles in this new economic order involving a redefinition of the role of the state, especially local municipalities and the growing importance of 'capital class' and transnational corporations. For instance, Strange (1997) cited in Gertler (2001, p. 5) argues that:

'With the development of globalised financial markets, the rising power of multinational corporations (MNCs), and the emergence of a new set of supranational institutions to govern economic processes on a continental or world scale, nation-states have lost the ability to manage their own domestic economic affairs, having ceded control over exchange rates, investment, and even fiscal policy to extranational forces'.

In the scholarship about Urban Neoliberalism, the impact of private sector consultants on other city actors are believed to be strong, which is framed in various concepts, such as 'consultocracy', 'contractors state' or 'ad hococracy' (Hood 1997; O'Looney 1998; McKenna 2001; Hodge and Bowman 2006; McKenna 2006). The concepts allude to private consultancies pushing the restructuring of public administration (NPM, as describes above). It includes argument that the private sector management consultants underpinned the reform and agenda processes of the public sector' since the 1990s (Hodge and Bowman 2006), and further, to fetishising urban entrepreneurialism, competitiveness and innovation negotiations and supporting negotiations between public and private interests (McKenna 2001; Jessop 2002, 2003; McKenna 2006; McCann 2008; Mitchell and Beckett 2008). The modes of urban governance can differ across Europe (Hemphill et al. 2006). It is argued that the local government dominance is more apparent in Southern Europe, and less apparent in Northern Europe (Borraz and John 2004; Hemphill et al. 2006). That being said, this chapter proposes to address the subject of urban governance in Poland. Finally, analysts of urban economic development and regeneration increasingly see the effects of consultancies in a critical light, as actors generally supportive of local elites. This issue is critical to this thesis and is explored below.

2.2.2. Consultants and local elites

There are several urban regime and urban partnership studies that point to instrumental roles of consultants towards other city actors. These studies suggest that consultants play roles of agents of promotion and legitimacy (Black and Henderson 1999; Henderson 2003; Moulaert et al. 2003). It includes ideas about their roles in securing 'collective interests' and 'universal goods' in the context of growth 'coalitions' and rhetoric (Molotch 1993; Logan and Molotch 1996; Logan et al. 1997; Cox 1999; Jonas and Wilson 1999; Troutman 2004).

The studies that demonstrate the instrumental roles of consultants in delivering change support the wider reasoning that a demand to hire consultancies, especially international consultancies, is both bound-up with broader agendas of driving policy change and part of the strategy of legitimacy and rationalising action (Le Gales 2001; McCann 2001; Ashworth 2003; Jones 2003; Bulkeley 2006; Temelová 2007; McCann 2008; McCann 2011). Le Gales (2001) depicts consultants as powerful within governance constellations, in acting as an 'arm' of the local municipality in the case of public sector reforms in Rennes, France. He points out that they were part of a network of public and private organisations and acted as managing experts in market regulation, 'mediation, intergovernmental relations and coalition building' (Le Gales 2001, p. 182). McCann (2001) studied the development of a new form of collaborative planning in the American city of Lexington in the 1990s. He recalls that consultants advised and provided vision to local public-private coalitions. It concerned new forms of management that would primarily serve local elites: 'the workings of the process were tightly controlled by the consultant, leaving little room for the alternative visions to be negotiated' (McCann 2001, p. 211). Similarly, in the case of a development proposal in Vancouver, McCann (2008) stresses the role of design consultants in emulating the

most successful waterfront developments in North America. Jones (2003) points to local authorities employing consultants for legitimacy purposes, as they needed an 'independent' view on matters of urban regeneration in the case of Merseyside, England.

In summary, the review of research streams regarding the role of consultants in urban development theories and their relationships with local actors provides some interesting insights about knowledge transfer processes in the field of urban development. It concerns especially the arguments that knowledge claims of consultants can serve the interests of business and political elites. At the same time, the section revealed that although private sector consultancies influence policy making, scholars make little attempt to conceptualise and empirically research their various roles and that existing insights rarely draw on the debates about the complex nature of the consulting profession in relation to knowledge and social interaction. Also, providing limited explanations about the growth and impact of consulting businesses in urban studies directs the researcher's attention towards the field of business management, where research about management consulting has a strong tradition. Scholarship in this field is expected to aid our understanding of the role of private sector consulting companies in urban development with regard to a range of questions: How and why did private sector consultants become institutionalised? What are the factors that influence on the impact of consultants across time and space? And finally, how does the relationship between a consultant and a client influence the outcomes of consulting process?

2.3. The emergence and expansion of management consultancy

Within the business management literature, arguments about the global rise and proliferation of consulting businesses in the course of the twentieth century are well established (Kirmani and Baum 1991; McKenna 2006; Gross and Poor 2008). Scholars in the field dedicate considerable attention to the emergence of this 'new' profession, which is believed to have strongly affected contemporary urban development.

The origins of 'modern' (institutionalised) consulting businesses can be traced to the beginning of the twentieth century in the USA and, since being formally acknowledged in the 1960s, it has been called a 'new profession' (McKenna 2001; McKenna 2006; Gross and Poor 2008). Consultancy companies proliferated in the United States of America between the 1950s and the 1990s. McKenna (2006) argues that in the middle of the 1960s the number of management consultants per 100 salaried managers was 4 to 100, whereas by the mid-1990s it was 1 to 13. Revenues in the profession also expanded: in the 1950s approximately \$1bln worldwide and by the middle of the 2000s it had reached \$150bln (Gross and Poor 2008). The annual growth rate of the profession is estimated at 15% in the USA (Greiner and Ennsfellner 2008).

The emergence and proliferation of consulting companies in the USA is usually related to two sets of macro-economic 'explanations' (McKenna 2006; Gross and Poor 2008; Canato and Giangreco 2011). Firstly, it concerned the increasing number and complexity of companies as a result of (technology-driven) industrial revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and changes in the management of production associated with Taylorism at the beginning of the twentieth century (McKenna 2006; Gross and Poor 2008). These changes led to scientists (e.g. of the Massachusetts University of Technology) taking occasional jobs outside academia, in local industry clusters, which had an impact on the development of consulting business in the fields of engineering, geology, accounting, and chemistry between the 1930s and 1960 (McKenna 2006). The processes made company managers realise that by employing these 'external' experts 'either as short term consultants or as long-term research staff, they could control the pace of innovation within their science-based industries' (McKenna 2006, p. 30). Secondly, it related to the organisation for the World War II effort, the growth of the American economy and regulatory changes such as the deregulation of financial markets and anti-monopoly regulations. For instance, the central government of the USA introduced the Glass and Steagall Act, the so-called 'banking act' in 1933, in order to restrict information exchange between big companies as they were seen to underpin monopoly attempts. In this context, companies started employing lawyers, engineers and accountants to perform certain task on an ad-hoc basis (McKenna 2006).

There is a geographical and sectoral pattern to this growth of consulting companies. In line with Robert David (2001), Gross and Poor (2008, p. 70) argue that it has been observed primarily in large metropolitan areas and is also attributed to 'the spread of corporate ideology to non-corporate sectors; (...) and the growing impact of business education and the business press; and the impacts of globalisation' (Grant and Nijman 2002). Cannato and Giangreco (2011) stress that the growth of consulting companies is sustained by the globalisation of production, capital mobility and the 'market uncertainty'. There is a degree of consensus that the rise and proliferation of consulting businesses has concentrated in metropolitan areas, because then the companies can benefit from the economies of scale. Wood (2002) argues that it concerns especially access to markets characterised by competition and specialisation supporting a greater variety of high-quality service provision. Cities are believed to embed a range of professional and organisational networks, as proximity between people and companies supports exchange and innovation building (Glaeser et al. 1992). Also with regard to the consultants' specialised knowledge it is suggested that consulting companies reinforce demand for their knowledge services through diversification of services in Western societies (Wood 1996, 2002). Wood (2002, p. 994) comments that:

'Diversifying international consultancy firms offer a quality and range of expertise that far exceed the requirements of the simple "externalisation" by clients of their established functions. They often offer strategically significant technical or organisational knowledge that client staff do not possess, or could not exploit without consultancy support'.

Also, it is important to note that the patterns of emergence of consultancies vary across borders (Kirmani and Baum 1991; Fincham 1999; McKenna 2006; Canato and Giangreco 2011). It concerns, for instance, differences between the USA and Europe as the institutional reforms of the former, which enabled the rise of 'modern management consulting', were allegedly deeper than in Europe (Gross and Poor 2008). It is also argued that experiences of the development of management consultancy, which reached the turnover of \$220 billion per year globally, included \$15 billion growth in the United Kingdom (Law 2009). There is also a range of explanations about the emergence of consulting companies in developing countries, including suggestions about particularly strong knowledge 'transfer' links between foreign consultants and local 'hosts', and the struggles of local consultancies (Svensson 2007). There is evidence that foreign consultants fostered socio-economic development in Africa and Middle East in the 1990s (Johnson and Stone 2000; Shaw and Satish 2007). For instance, private sector consulting companies worked in tandem with other actors of knowledge transfer in developing growth policies in Bangalore (Karnataka) and Kolkata (West Bengal) (Shaw and Satish 2007). However, it is also argued that in developing countries consulting companies:

[Emerged] in the form of public sector enterprises, often as off-shoots of public works departments, and have lacked the discipline and stimulus of competition. Universities, and professional societies and associations, have not achieved the status that enables them to perform a supportive role. Governments, while active in protecting domestic firms from foreign competition, have otherwise done relatively little to nurture a strong profession' (Kirmani and Baum 1991, p. ii).

Additionally, one can find assertions that the issues described above also refer to Central and Eastern Europe (Svensson 2007). In particular, scholars point out that management consulting companies have benefitted from the emerging markets, including the opening up of the CEE countries (Fincham 1999). That being said, (i) scholarship about the impact of foreign consulting companies on agenda setting and practices in post socialist countries is fragmented and rarely considered with regard to specifically the subject of urban planning (Johnson and Stone 2000; Krastev 2000); (ii) the spatial divergences in consultants' impact are expected to add yet another layer of complexity to, what is already known as a 'messy' profession, dealing with intangible objects, such as knowledge, and with unclear sources of power, all addressed below.

2.3.1. Consulting as a knowledge business

There is much contention surrounding the definition of consultants in both urban and management studies (Glidewell 1959; Saint-Martin 1998; Fincham 1999; McKenna 2001; Ernst and Kieser 2002; Czarniawska and Mazza 2003; Meriläinen et al. 2004; Jacobson et al. 2005; McKenna 2006; Greiner and Ennsfellner 2008; Gross and Poor 2008; Jackson 2010; Canato and Giangreco 2011). Analytically, 'consulting' can be understood in terms of 'structure' versus 'process', or 'strategy' versus

'function', which focus on various aspects of consulting (Fincham 1999). For instance, structural perspectives on 'consulting' deal with 'the constraints on the consultancy process and the industry's dependence on wider corporate structures and processes (such as the forces of interfirm relations and the institutional power game)' (Fincham 1999, p. 336), while functionalist definitions stress the provision of counsel to a person who is responsible for conducting a particular task (Kubr 2002). Such perspectives focus on a broader context in which consultants are situated and involve research themes relating to Knowledge Intensive Industries. Their role is usually framed within the notion of post-industrialism and explaining knowledge intensity and capital extensity (Fincham 1995, 1999), and market and power structures (Sturdy et al. 2009). However, in the context of the thesis it is also important to explore the implications of these analytical approaches for the process of knowledge exchange and 'transfer'.

Analytical considerations about consulting in terms of 'function' and 'process' converge in that they often assume 'transfer' of knowledge between a consultant, a 'supplier' and a client, a 'user', which echoes the 'policy transfer' literature (Bessant and Rush 1995; Fincham 1999; Druckman 2000; Jacobson et al. 2005). For instance, Jacobson et al. (2005, p. 302) point out that consulting is 'a process of transferring expertise, knowledge, and/or skills from one party (the consultant) to another (the client) with the aim of providing help or solving problems'. Some scholars posit a neutral-technical form and converge on traditional ideas of consulting as a linear activity (Bessant and Rush 1995; Fincham 1995, 1999) and deploy such conceptualisations as 'typical knowledge worker(s)', 'knowledge intensive firm(s)', 'knowledge industry' (Fincham 1999), innovation or technology 'brokers' (Meriläinen et al. 2004; Canato and Giangreco 2011). They often focus on the 'effectiveness' of consultants' interventions. Interestingly, the definitions often involve insights into various 'stages' of consulting process, tasks, and functions (Kubr 2002; Jacobson et al. 2005).

The conceptualisations of consulting in terms of 'process' or 'function' also often include references to the notion of skills and abilities (Kubr 2002; O'Mahoney 2007; Greiner and Ennsfellner 2008). For instance, Kubr (2002, p. 4) argues that the consulting process requires 'technically competent persons whose main occupation may be teaching, training, research, systems development, project development and evaluation, technical assistance to developing countries and so on'. Also, '[t]he apotheosis of this image is the popular characterisation of the Anderson consultant as a "cyborg"' (O'Mahoney 2007, p. 1). Finally, however, the two approaches have in common the idea that the majority of cases are poor in explaining where the consultants' legitimacy comes from and abstain from focusing on interaction and power, either theoretically or empirically.

Also, in the context of 'functional' approaches, it is important to point to the conceptualisations of consultants as standards setters, which suggests that they do not merely (re)produce existing standards, they produce 'new' knowledge(s) (Abrahamson 1991, 1996; Czarniawska and Mazza 2003; Meriläinen et al. 2004; McKenna 2006; Rolfsen and Knutstad 2007; Canato and Giangreco 2011). For

instance, McKenna (2006, p. 181) recalls that the name McKinsey became a verb 'just as "to Xerox" became synonymous with copying a document... in Britain, "to McKinsey" came to mean the complete restructuring of a corporation'. Consulting companies 'played active roles in selecting a few administrative models from many and in developing organisations' awareness and tastes for these models in order to render them fashionable and to prompt their diffusion' (Abrahamson 1991, p. 595).

In the context of ideas about consulting as a 'knowledge work', one should also note that consultancies actually promote specific ideas and models, which involve and lead to the conceptualisation of 'consulting' in relation to power. In particular, scholars who use conceptualisations on consulting as a 'process' stress the importance of recognising the nature of relationships between a consultant and a client, whereby a consultant has no control over the implementation of his advice by a client (Fincham 1999). It has also been argued that consultancies' solutions are built in problem framings and that they build up discourses explicitly to supply the industry with a set of methods and solutions to which they can offer some support (Meriläinen et al. 2004). Thus as Stiglitz (2000, p. 33) suggests, 'the "knowledge business" has its own political economy'. According to Meriläinen et al. (2004, p. 540), 'management consultancies and consultants continue to extend their influence, actively generating and spreading "modern management knowledge"... they are preoccupied with the development of ideas into practices and techniques'. Cannato and Giangreco (2011, p. 234) comment:

'Management consultants have an explicit interest in exercising power and try to convince clients of the indispensable nature of the solutions they propose. This standards setter role gets amplified by the ambiguity of the returns on the implementation of complex administrative innovations'.

Finally, one should note that there have been few attempts to move away from polarised conceptualisations of management consultants as saint or sinner (O'Mahoney 2007), divine or demon (Czarniawska and Mazza 2003), gurus or wizards (Cannato and Giangreco 2011). It concerns conceptualisations of 'consulting' that stress dynamic and interactive aspects of consultants' work and where the influence of knowledge consultants is 'subtle' and 'consulting' is an open ended profession (Bessant and Rush 1995; Fincham 1999; Czarniawska and Mazza 2003; Czarniawska and Sevón 2005; McKenna 2006). The conceptualization suggests rather balanced relationships between a consultant and a client and stresses that the process is underpinned by negotiation of goals and interests (Fincham 1999; Rolfsen and Knutstad 2007). The outcomes of consulting processes are influenced by both the strategies of consultants and a client. For instance, Fincham (1999, p. 335) states that 'the consultancy process contains no "necessary" structures' (which may be implied by pairings such as the dependent client and indispensable consultant, or alternatively the resistant client and vulnerable consultant). Interestingly, Czarniawska and Mazza (2003, p. 267) termed this dimension of consulting work in terms of 'liminality' as a 'condition where the usual practice and order are suspended and replaced by new rites and rituals'. We shall return to these ideas at the end of the chapter.

In spite of a number of critical views on the consulting profession, the field is fragmented as scholars often also fail to research micro-scale practices of consultants and a client, especially power relations. The lack of engagement with the concept of power could be explained by the fact that the literature about consultants as standard setters (Clark 2004; Rolfsen and Knutstad 2007) is based mainly on institutionalist traditions. It stems from institutional theory, which assumes the isomorphic behaviour of organisations (Canato and Giangreco 2011). Having reviewed various approaches to consulting, one may ask what the role of a consultant towards a client is.

2.4. The roles of consultants towards a client

In line with the ideas about the interactive aspects of consulting and the embeddedness of consultants in certain discursive structures, it is important to consider the issues that influence the role of consultants in a particular context. Explanations fall into three intertwined sets: those that unpack 'consultancy knowledge'; those that unpack 'client demands'; and those that unpack consultancy 'agency and actions'.

2.4.1. Consultants' knowledge and client's demands

Across a range of approaches to consulting, it is commonly argued that consultants are employed for practical and economic reasons. Analysts, especially these who take a pragmatic view on consulting, refer to the specific know-how of consultants, their skills, and abilities to deal with certain types of assignments which are the key reasons for employing consultants and which bring about particular project management constraints (McKenna 2001; McKenna 2006). Issues of project management which define consultants' roles and impact include a focus on the scope of work agreed upon, scheduling, and monitoring procedures (Jackson 2005; Jackson 2010). It entails that the impact of, say, engineering consultants is bound up with the type of assignment and the stage of development of the project (Lisowski and Szklennik 2010). Some scholars also stress that clients do not often have specialist expertise in house and are willing to buy one. This explanation about the rise of private sector consultancies relates the issue of 'transaction costs' (McKenna 2001; McKenna 2006; Svensson 2007), in particular the arguments that it is cheaper to buy advice than to produce it internally (McKenna 2006). Svensson (2007, p. 547) explains that it entails the situation, when 'it is easier and less costly for the client to let an experienced contractor organize, lead and coordinate the different steps and suppliers in the implementation phase of the project than to do this itself'. Also, with regard to the issues of cost, several scholars point out that clients are often unable to judge the quality of advice from consultants (Fincham 1999; Lisowski and Szklennik 2010).

It is also argued that the role of consultants is related to the strategies of a consultant and a client. In this vein, attention is brought to the role of consultants in translating complex, specialist knowledge claims into a 'usable' format, meaning

these can be understood and endorsed by a client (Fincham 1995, 1999; Roux et al. 2006). 'Managers, on the other hand, meet this knowledge "push" strategy with their own set of realities and constraints' (Roux et al. 2006, p. 4).

Although scholars agree that the consulting profession is inevitably connected to the client's world (Meriläinen et al. 2004; McKenna 2006). Demands of a client are can be, however, difficult to pinpoint. Some 'expectations' of a consultant towards a client are unspoken, and may not be specified in any contract, as knowledge plays various roles at the same time. The unspoken ones usually relate to the political purposes and relate to their positions as outsiders to an organisation (McKenna 2001; McKenna 2006).

More social science oriented approaches, on the other hand, point to a range of 'immaterial', 'soft' factors that underpin the consulting process and influence consultant-client relationships, such as trust between a consultant and a client and those related to the reputation of consultants and consulting companies. It is argued that it is important to develop a positive, 'helping relationship' with clients (Edvardsson 1990; Clark 1995; Clark and Salaman 1998a; Bäcklund and Werr 2004; McKenna 2006; O'Mahoney 2007; Greiner and Ennsfellner 2008). They also note that trust reflects a state of compromise between the values of a consultant and a client, and the 'cultures' they represent (Bäcklund and Werr 2004) as well as the discretion of a consultant to fulfil his tasks (Clark 1995; Clark and Salaman 1998b; Clark 2004). This leads us to deliberations about issues that some may call the most important aspect of consultants' work, which are image, credibility and reputation.

2.4.2. Reputation and agency

Many scholars argue that one of the most important dimensions of consultants' work is 'reputational', relating to the image of a consultancy in a society and in relation to a client. These 'symbolic' and 'immaterial' issues have important repercussions for both parties. It concerns the 'credibility' of consultants, which is based on factors which go beyond their practical skills and abilities. Scholars working within the 'strategic' tradition stress that consultants are 'rhetoricians' (Legge 2002), and that the impact of consultants is connected to the effectiveness of their 'persuasion' techniques (Fincham 1995, 1999). Alvesson (2001, p. 876) argues: 'where knowledge intensity is central, so is ambiguity and, contingent upon this ambiguity, issues of image, rhetoric, orchestrating social relations and processes'. These processes also involve codification and commodification of knowledge for the purpose of building a common 'identity'. It is argued that these issues of 'identity' are important from the point of view of relations within an organisation and with a client as they are tools of power and control (Meriläinen et al. 2004; Roux et al. 2006).

The matters of image, reputation and credibility are inevitably linked to the issues of legitimacy of consultants towards a client. Alvesson (2001, p. 882) argues that knowledge is 'a resource for persuasion in marketing and interactions with customers... [or] a means of creating legitimacy and good faith with regard to

actions and outcomes; and... obscuring uncertainty and counteracting doubt and reflection'. In this vein, some scholars suggest that what is important for companies is to be seen and reputed as fashionable. Abrahamson (1991) states that if the client is doubtful about what knowledge contains, he would be willing to buy into it, as the idea is fashionable. Also, in the situation of uncertainty, a client would choose a 'fashion' leader and that 'consulting firms, because of their expertise, may dominate in the selection of fashionable administrative models' (Abrahamson 1991, p. 595). That reputation and fashionableness can be important mediators of consultancies' credibility where knowledge is ambiguous may have particular relevance to the contested field of urban sustainability, an issue we return to further on (in Chapter 3).

Scholars point to the relative character of consultants' reputation and the credibility of their knowledge claims, and suggest that it can be bound with the reputation of agencies that consultants cooperate with. This is broadly termed 'networked' reputation (Glückler and Armbrüster 2003) and stems from the idea that in these networks consultants source expertise from other actors and it is where expectations towards consultants are formulated (Kipping 2002; Legge 2002; Meriläinen et al. 2004) and that the consulting profession is embedded in and relies on spanning various networks in order to build valuable referrals (Lilja and Poufelt 2001; Meriläinen et al. 2004). McKenna (2006) recalls that consultants become powerful when they have representatives in policy circles, and when these representatives endorse the credibility of consultants. He provides the example of Taylor's idea of 'scientific management' that was disseminated thanks to Louis Brandeis, the legal reformer who testified that American railroads needed to implement Taylor's systems and promoted the term scientific management. He also explains that consultants build their network through existing contacts and professional referrals as well as publishing in the Harvard Business Review to promote themselves (McKenna 2006).

It is also important to note considerable evidence that contemporary processes of knowledge production in the context of consultants is bound up with the ability of an organisation to institutionalise knowledge in a way that supports a company's image. The process is argued to involve a range of techniques allowing to store, actualise and reuse knowledge towards better efficiency and improved visualisation in a market (Dieng et al. 1999). Apart from criticism about the fuzziness of the conceptualisation of the processes of institutionalisation of knowledge and fragmentation of existing output, several studies provide some interesting insights into issues relating to the process. It involves arguments about the interplay between tacit knowledge and standardised knowledge towards better efficiency, and the difficulties of capturing the former (Argote and Ingram 2000; Goldkuhl and Braf 2001), including in the context of environmental problems (Boiral 2002).

In this context, the attention of business scholars has turned to notions of 'corporate culture', which is a concept produced by, among others, a large consulting company: McKinsey (Kotter and Heskett 2008). Traditionally the notion of 'corporate culture' was considered as value-neutral, as scholars working within a

structuralist tradition define it as a set of meanings used within and by a company as a reference point for common identity (Alvesson 1993; Wilson 1997; Alvesson 2001; Melewar 2003). It involves the use of knowledge as 'a means for creating community and social identity through offering organisational members a shared language and a common way of relating to themselves and their world' (Alvesson 2001, p. 882). It embraces 'the visible and less visible norms, values and behaviour that are shared by a group of employees which shape the group's sense of what is acceptable and valid' (Wilson 1997, p. 163). At the same time, however, scholars also make observations that 'corporate culture' represents the deliberate attempts of organisations to build up a powerful image. It is also believed that it can bring significant material gains; yet there is little evidence supporting the existence of a causal relationship between corporate reputation and financial performance (Inglis et al. 2006).

This being said, the reputation of consultants, and attempts to 'stand out' among the competitors and look credible, is subject to global and local influences including institutional structures.

2.4.3. Consultancy knowledge in global-local axis

In the light of both the existing evidence about growth of international consulting companies in the course of the twentieth century and the idea that knowledge transfer processes in the context of consultants take place in interactions at and across various geographical 'levels' (addressed above), one can refer to the issues of image, reputation and the very substance of consultants' knowledge with regard to a global-local axis. In this vein, large, international consultancies source legitimacy from, and reproduce globally derived structures of knowledge, especially various international 'standards'. There is evidence that, for instance, consultants have operationalised Environmental Management Systems (e.g. ISO 14000, ISO 9000 series) in external and internal operations, and in this way they have supported the processes of global 'codification' and 'commodification' of knowledge (Boiral 2002). This also implies that expectations towards these corporate actors are confined at a global level (Ruggie 2004) and concern their ability to comply with 'standardised' knowledge (Wood 2002; Aslesen and Isaksen 2007).

On the other side, however, for all the discourses of 'global consultancy businesses', scholars argue that consulting is primarily a local business. They point to the role of local social, economic, political and cultural contexts in defining the content and outcomes of the consulting process (Lundvall and Tomlinson 2002; Malecki 2004; Malecki 2007) and that it effectively supports or mitigates the roles of consultants (Kirmani and Baum 1991; Meriläinen et al. 2004; O'Mahoney 2007). O'Mahoney (2007, p. 2) explains that 'it is only recently that serious consideration has been given to the social and political contradictions that underpin consulting work'.

In literature about the Knowledge Intensive Services, the ability of consultants to connect with a local context is discussed in terms of 'absorptive capacity' of a 'donor' (Svensson 2007), or 'stickiness' of places (Asheim 2002; Malecki 2004; Malecki 2007). It entails that the 'success' of the advisory processes is bound with more or less institutionalised 'modes of practice', such as institutional protocols and proceedings, or individuals' skills and abilities, as well as one's willingness, to support or constrain the processes of 'adoption' of 'new' knowledge. In this vein, Pauly and Reich (1997, p. 3) stress that the 'leading MNCs [Multinational Corporations] are not converging around common patterns of behaviour at their cores' due to differences in national structures and national cultures of 'dealing with things'. They also argue that 'the institutional and ideological legacies of distinctive national histories continue to shape significantly the core operations of multinational[s]' across the world (Pauly and Reich 1997, p. 3). Some management studies point out that corporate culture and identity are locally defined and that the cultures and identities of branches within organisations differ. The case study of a bank reveals that the culture of individual branches is determined by the behaviour and attitudes of its staff (Wilson 1997, p. 163).

2.4.4. Dilemmas of credibility and effective support towards a client

This review of the roles of consultants in relation to knowledge and needs and expectations of potential clients leads to a longstanding question about their accountability and professional ethics. In order to unveil the 'true' nature of the consulting profession, many have asked whether it is possible to be allegedly objective and value-neutral, while being subject to a client's demands, and whether consultants' care of image and reputation is greater than their efforts to help a client (Fincham 1999; McKenna 2006; Sturdy et al. 2009). For instance, McKenna (2006) states that 'the importance of legitimacy and knowledge varies from assignment to assignment' and stresses that knowledge and legitimacy can stand in opposition, or that in the United States of America, the legitimating function of consultants becomes more prominent than in Europe; however he does not provide insights into this. Some management scholars stress assumptions that transnational corporations are utilitarian profit maximisers and that they are by default ready to compromise the validity of their knowledge claims (Hofferberth et al. 2005).

Such issues are also debated with regard to the question of whether consulting is a 'profession' or a 'quasi-profession' (Fincham 1999; McKenna 2006; O'Mahoney 2007; Greiner and Ennsfellner 2008). Management scholars stress that for various reasons consultants may not be, or be perceived to be, 'credible' in the eyes of a client and other stakeholders. There is considerable evidence in management studies that various consultants can provide self-contradictory advice on the same matters (Johnson and Stone 2000) and that consultants provide self-contradictory in general (Rolfen and Knutstad 2007). Johnson and Stone (2000, p. 14) refer to the meeting of Global Development Network – an independent organisation launched by the World Bank in 1999 with the aim of supporting emerging economies – and

state that one of the strong thoughts emerging from the meeting was about competition and conflict between consultants and think-tanks, in particular, that:

[Consulting] work diminished the status of substantive research undertaken by institutes. In other cases, the use of foreign consultants was viewed as undermining the development of local capacity and undervaluing endogenous knowledge’.

The argument that consulting is a ‘quasi profession’ is also supported by suppositions about written or spoken arrangements between a consultant and a client, which, in turn, feeds mistrust to the consulting profession in the public domain. Some scholars point out that the knowledge exchange between a consultant and a client is discrete and that the details of consultants’ expertise are hardly disclosed to the general public (McKenna 2006). Some studies stress the differences in the quality of services of management consultants worldwide, which entails the idea that ‘the quality of their performance has not kept pace with the growth in numbers’ (Kirmani and Baum 1991, p. i).

The challenges relating to the development of professional standards have also been raised in terms of the integrity of consultants and the credibility of their expertise (McKenna 2006; O’Mahoney 2007; Greiner and Ennsfellner 2008). Scholars argue that consultants work under a huge amount of pressure and hence in many instances they may not be able to meet quality standards. For instance, O’Mahoney (2007) suggests that consultants may not have executive knowledge and skills in a certain subject area and they are still attributed certain tasks. They also cannot learn ‘properly’ about the subject and from the subject due to time constraints, that is, the necessity of delivering an outcome within (tight) timeframes (O’Mahoney 2007; Canato and Giangreco 2011, p. 231). In particular, O’Mahoney (2007, p. 8) argues that:

‘In the consultancy world, the need to meet the varied demands of new projects often means that consultants have to learn skills excessively fast and never achieve proficiency, let alone expertise in any skill-set... [also] partial learning leaves the consultant reliant upon the interventions of others and unable to trust their own knowledge’.

The professional conduct of consultants is also contested with regard to their skills and training. There are questions about their ‘standards’ in reference to education and professional accreditation. They stress the importance of academia in educating management consultants and argue that the quality of the courses differ so as graduates are often not prepared for the challenges of the profession. (Greiner and Ennsfellner 2008). In a similar vein, many suggests that consulting is a difficult profession and suggest that low job satisfaction and an ‘existential angst’ may contribute to lowering the performance of consultants over a long period of time (see, for example O’Mahoney 2007).

Finally, in the context of the discussion about consultants' knowledge and client's demands, reputation and agency, one may ask the question of whether in a particular empirical context, these explanations 'coexist'. Also, having established that various socio-political structures influence the outcomes of the consulting process, one may wonder how the objectives of a consultant and a client are played out in the geographical context of Poland. In particular, there are premises to think that consultants wanting to work in Poland would have to embrace more or less explicit 'rules of interpretation' about urban development with regard to both macroeconomic processes and trust issues between representatives of public and private sectors, as the following section unravels.

2.5. Urban planning and transnational consultancies in Poland

Little is known about the influence of large, private sector consultancies in urban planning policy and practice in Poland. However, there are a variety of reasons to think that the relationships that consultancy agencies establish with local urban actors in Central and Eastern Europe may be different than those established in Western societies.

Poland has experienced a considerable increase in the presence of international companies since the beginning of the 1990s (Artisien-Maksimenko and Rojec 2001; Gross and Poor 2008). It relates to the significant increase of Foreign Direct Investment in Poland after the first democratic free elections and it involves 'greenfield' investments and acquisitions (direct or indirect) (Jermakowicz 2001). Also, the turn towards a market economy involved the rebirth of independent research institutes in the 1990s. This created more suitable conditions for the development of private sector consulting businesses and think tanks (Johnson and Stone 2000; Krastev 2000). Although with no direct reference to urban policy and practice, it is argued that foreign consultants advised about regulatory, macroeconomic changes in Poland at the end of the 1980s and at the beginning of the 1990s. In this vein, however, few scholars point to a range of obstacles in knowledge production. One of the main concerns has been the difficulty in engaging with local public stakeholders, underpinned by the issues of trust. This includes discussions of 'long-established networks of a domestic nature in each nation—family firms, interlocking directorates, and the tradition of doing business only with family members, trusted friends, and domestic partners' in Poland (Gross and Poor 2008, p. 66). Some scholars also conceive that trust issues arose between public and private sectors are the result of post-communist transition at the end of the 1980s (Johnson and Stone 2000, p. 19). The role of consultancies in Poland is therefore expected to inhabit these difficult institutional spaces.

Assessing the extent to which existing urban governance relationships affect urban policy and practice is a difficult task. It is argued that governance relationships are specific to particular local institutional contexts to such an extent that existing theorizations (e.g. urban regime literature, post-socialist city studies) are not useful because they fail to depict accurately the complexity of social realities (Feldman

2000; Carothers 2002; Badyina and Golubchikov 2005; Nedović-Budić et al. 2006; Gross and Poor 2008; Golubchikov and Phelps 2011; Sýkora and Bouzarovski 2012). However, in spite of these criticisms and limited (and fragmented) research output, existing studies about urban governance in Poland provide some interesting insights into circumstances in which knowledge production and dissemination processes take place in Poland.

In particular, scholarship on post-socialist cities (although strongly contested, as it is argued above) attracts considerable attention as it argues in favour of the development of common patterns of urban development in post-soviet countries, such as Poland, Lithuania, and so on. It refers to the changes of governance relationships in these countries in relation to the processes of restructuring public administration and particular in the power of state or regional authorities (Von Beyme 1996; Pagonis and Thornley 2000; Wu 2003; Badyina and Golubchikov 2005). In line with this scholarship, the character of relationships between consultants and other urban actors in the Eastern European Area could feature different patterns of relationships than Urban Neoliberalism, Urban Growth and Regime literature may suggest. There is also evidence that both sectors feel dissatisfaction with the situation (Feldman 2000), especially as it allegedly constrains urban redevelopment processes (Leunig et al. 2008).

There are few scholars, who argue that contemporary practices in urban development in Poland have become caught between 'old' logics influenced by post-socialism (especially in public institutions) and neoliberal economic and capitalisation pressures (Taşan-Kok 2004; Nedović-Budić et al. 2006). For instance, in the context of large scale investments, it is argued that they primarily benefit the private sector (Sýkora and Bouzarovski 2012). It involves an argument that urban regeneration in Poland is mainly market driven and involves a rhetoric of 'economic growth' (Sýkora and Bouzarovski 2012), and that public-private relationships in Poland are characterised by 'clientelism': ad-hoc decision making benefiting private sector clients rather than strategic, long term planning for urban development and that it is partly related to the corruption problem (Sýkora and Bouzarovski 2012). On the other side, several authors observe large scale redevelopment and regeneration projects being public sector driven in Poland and characterized by considerable state interventionism, as majority of the development programmes at local and regional level are state driven and involve the instrumental role of private sector (Feldman 2000; Leunig et al. 2008).

In the context of urban governance in Poland, scholars also converge on the idea that state-market relations are problematic. This is reflected in the discussions of restructuring processes, especially decentralization of urban development policy that led to the privatisation of land (and deregulation of rent) and influenced planning system issues in general (Nunberg et al. 1999; Feldman 2000; Altröck et al. 2006; Markowski and Moterski 2010). Scholars often refer to existing Public Private Partnership (thereafter PPP) legislation as a burden to PPP (Leunig et al. 2008). The main issue also being the lack of trust in between central and local government (Taşan-Kok 2004; Leunig et al. 2008; Sýkora and Bouzarovski 2012). For instance,

Sýkora and Bouzarovski (2012, p. 51) argue that 'politicians have perceived the state as the root of all evil in society, and the main enemy of the economy in particular. Urban planning has also been seen as contradictory to the market'. There is some evidence about 'symbolic' use of knowledge in the context of post-socialism. It is stressed that using new symbols and references seeks to cut off unwanted past and rebranding cites in terms of competitiveness (Young and Kaczmarek 1999).

2.6. Summary and conclusions

The first part of the chapter demonstrated various ways in which private consultancies can influence urban development policy and practice. It argued that their relationships with local actors are complex and there is little we can learn about it from the theories of urban development. In the chapter, attention was drawn to the matters of social interactions in the context of consultants as they are portrayed in 'success stories', rational accounts of the transfer of policy tools, where consultants are considered knowledge vendors who successfully 'delivered' change. This, however, begs a question: what are the specific circumstances that mitigate the role of consultants in a particular, local context? It would be reasonable also to expect that the influence of consulting companies on urban policy and practice is linked to their 'profiles' and the key activities they perform. Yet in the study, it is difficult to reflect upon it as there is no relevant, comparative data.

The second part of the chapter stressed the importance of researching consultants by taking into account the issues of consultants' reputation and credibility, and social interactions that are the very base of knowledge sharing. The chapter pointed to a range of issues defining the knowledge 'work' of consultants. In the light of arguments that consulting is a lucrative profession and that consultancies bank on the credibility and reliability of their expertise, the chapter further sought to find answers to the questions about which factors, or circumstances, underpin consultants' influence and impacts. It provided insights into the 'dark side' of consulting profession, as reflected in the poem of Bernie Ramsbottom (no date), cited in Canback (1998, p. 3):

'Of all the businesses, by far
Consultancy's the most bizarre.
For to the penetrating eye,
There's no apparent reason why,
With no more assets than a pen,
This group of personable men
Can sell to clients more than twice
The same ridiculous advice,
Or find, in such a rich profusion,
Problems to fit their own solution'.

The review stressed the existence of many 'naive' definitions of 'consulting', which do not sufficiently engage with both the notions of 'knowledge' and 'power'. Hence they provide unrealistic views about consulting work. In order to address this in this thesis, the discussion follows the propositions of Fincham (1999). Fincham (1999) draws inspiration from Czarniawska and Mazza (2003), whose understanding of consulting as a relational process, bound with the process of social interaction, allows bridging the gap between 'strategic' and 'structural' approaches to consulting. Also, a focus on the open ended nature of the consulting profession helps to stress the importance of the multiplicity of influences that the expertise of consultants entails as well as the peculiarities of a context in which consulting processes take place (Fincham 1999, p. 342). This perspective also shows the closest compatibility with SKAD, which assumes a focus on social interactions in the context of certain regimes of discourses and mutually intertwined relationships between power and knowledge (as discussed in Chapter 4).

Lastly, the chapter unfolded complexities of urban relationships in Poland, as they are expected to influence on the various issues and risks discussed above. It includes an idea that knowledge production processes are intertwined with (i) the redistribution of (often scarce) financial resources for urban regeneration investments, and (ii) the coordination of urban development initiatives, especially with regard to the public-private mistrust issues. Drawing on these issues, Taşan-Kok (2004, p. 38) argues that 'in certain aspects of society, politics, and economics, a partial resistance to internationalisation can be observed in Poland'. Before turning to the methodology issues, the next chapter, Chapter 3 aims to unravel how nuances of knowledge about sustainable development influence on consultants' practices and define their impact across time and space. Chapter 3 will indeed demonstrate that these considerations are particularly relevant to understanding the character of knowledge reproduction and dissemination in contemporary societies in the light of evidence that sustainable development is currently one of the most powerful political and moral imperatives.

Chapter 3 Sustainable development, urban planning and sustainability indicators

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter suggests that consulting companies influence agenda setting and practices in urban development in various ways. It is argued that consulting is a fuzzy process and that its impact is difficult to assess as it is bound with the subtleties and peculiarities of an individual consultant-client relationship. Consultants have also mastered techniques that make them look indispensable in the eyes of a client. This chapter unravels the potential challenges of 'knowledge work' in relation to the more specific context of 'sustainable development'. Sustainable development is both an expanding, but also a problematic sphere which is relevant to the work of consultants in two ways. Concepts of sustainable development and their institutionalisation define the institutional and regulatory contexts in which consultants 'operate', yet through their practice, consultants face a multiplicity of interpretations of sustainable development in theory, policy and practice, across various domains, time and space. It should be added that consultants have contributed to the proliferation of particular sustainability assessment frameworks. Such enterprises, in turn, expose consultants' claims to 'objectivity'. In the final section, the chapter identifies the relative lack of investigation of knowledge production and dissemination processes in the context of sustainability assessment, especially the influence of sustainability assessment on local constellations of power-knowledge.

3.2. The rise of sustainable development – definitions and lines of contestation

Over the last four decades, considerations of urban development have been strongly focused on notions of 'sustainable development'. Broadly defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development, or the 'Brundtland Commission', as 'the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs' (World Commission on Environment and Development March 1987, p. 41), it has established values that embrace various aspects of urban life. It 'became the theoretical basis and the increasingly important societal norm for human development worldwide' (Keiner 2006b, p. 1) and one of the key issues with regard to urban regeneration (Jones and Evans 2008; Bunce 2009; Evans et al. 2009). Concepts of sustainable development often exhibit an ideological side and a practical side. The former relates to regeneration as a metaphor that means the 'rebirth' of a city while 'sustainability' entails a city's survival. On the practical side, redevelopment can be associated with regeneration of resources, e.g. land release that allows 'shifting' current stock into future use, with an immediate tie across to the future concerns of sustainable development (Furbey 1999; Evans et al. 2009).

Although the concept of sustainable development emerged in mainstream policy in the late 1980s, 'in the context of planning, it has been claimed that the fundamentals of sustainability are already familiar' (Hall et al. 1993, cited in Owens 1994, p. 442). The values of sustainable development such as 'conservation', 'preserving ecosystems resources' refer back to the 'models of the steady state economy' developed in the 1960s and 'prudent resource use' ideas in the context of emerging environmental policies (Boulding 1966). The relationship between humanity and nature was addressed within 'The Limits to Growth' of Meadows et al. (1974). However, it is important to note that with time, the expectations surrounding sustainable development in the context of urban planning policy and practice grew significantly and currently involve a range of more detailed objectives such as 'reducing emissions from transport..., promoting sustainable use of water, minerals and energy resources..., protecting what is most valuable in the cultural environment' (Owens 1994, pp. 439-440). This is partly due to considerable interests in sustainable development agenda setting in the policy-practice interface.

Sustainable development is also widely identified as a 'fuzzy' concept (Briassoulis 2001; De Roo and Porter 2007). By 1996, three hundred definitions of 'sustainable development' and 'sustainability' had already been documented (Keiner 2006b), and the concept of 'sustainable development' is 'continuously contested in a struggle about its meaning, interpretation and implementation' (Hajer and Versteeg 2005a, p. 176). These issues create uncertainty about decision making in urban policy and practice (Lele 1991; Redclift 1993; Roberts and Sykes 2000; Marshall and Toffel 2005; Miller and De Roo 2005; De Roo and Porter 2007; Jones and Evans 2008; Agyeman 2011; Franklin and Blyton 2011). Also, there are two ways of looking at the multiplicity of definitions of sustainable development and sustainability. One is to prioritise a particular one over the rest, assuming that it is more suitable or true to a certain context. The other one, pursued in this research, argues that these definitions are social constructs, 'true' to some social actors and 'false' to others, again in certain circumstances. Hence the aim of this research is to examine why particular interpretations dominate over others.

Definitional debates include attempts to distinguish between the terms 'sustainable development' and 'sustainability'. The former can be considered to represent a policy objective stated in, for instance, the definition of sustainable development cited at the beginning of the chapter. The latter refers to a range of 'approaches' of how to achieve it in practice, notably, also redefining the very meaning of the term 'sustainable development'. In this way, for instance, the notions of 'sustainable development' and 'sustainability' are debated with regard to the relationship between three (or more) main dimensions of sustainability: economic, social and environmental. It involves a line of argumentation about balancing sustainability impacts or outputs in practice and it is often referred to as 'three pillars', a 'three legged stool', 'Triple Bottom Line' or as a diagram with three intersecting circles of Venn (Owens 1994; Briassoulis 2001; Pacione 2007). Also, with time scholars started adding new 'dimensions' to the three-way model, for instance a five dimension model that involves economic, social, natural, physical and the political

(Pacione 2007). One can also find distinctions between 'material' and 'post-material', or 'instrumental' and 'non-instrumental' aspects of sustainable development. Broadly, the 'material' or 'instrumental' aspects of sustainable development are human-made, whereas the 'non-instrumental' ones relate to particular values (Owens 1994; Cowell and Owens 2001; Owens 2006; Owens et al. 2006; Owens and Cowell 2011). Another set of distinctions differentiate between 'weak' and 'strong' sustainable development (Owens 1994; Pacione 2007). Both are concerned with the intergenerational transfer of capital stock, but 'weak sustainability' implies that 'all forms of capital are interchangeable', whereas 'strong sustainability' is about environmental capital that can be only partly exchanged with human made capital (Pacione 2007, p. 254).

The implementation of sustainable development in the spatial plans and urban development projects adds further to the complexity and leads into questions about how concepts interface with policy-practice (Lafferty 2004; Pacione 2007). With regard to planning practice, the practices in sustainable development are contested over urban form, urban economy and so on (Dur et al. 2010). Scholars also stress that the context of a particular project defines the scope of implementation of sustainability ideas (Shelbourn et al. 2006; Moore and Rydin 2008; Dur et al. 2010; Sarkis et al. 2012). These 'unique characteristics' of a particular project relate to, among others, human and material resources, project specification and timing (Shelbourn et al. 2006; Sarkis et al. 2012). Sarkis et al. (2012) refer to the various stages of the design of a project and suggest that sustainability principles have got the strongest power at early stages of design. Shelbourn et al. (2006) point out that sustainable development often entails contradicting objectives when, for instance, one starts to examine the life cycle of a project. Also, the challenges of balancing social, economic and environmental outcomes may not be adequately addressed in urban redevelopment projects and may result in gentrification (Bunce 2009; Dale and Newman 2009; Moore and Bunce 2009).

Frequently, however, scholars point out that the term 'sustainable development' is 'subjective' in nature (Briassoulis 2001). To some commentators the concept 'attracts hypocrites and fosters delusions' (Robinson 2004, p. 369). This issue is of particular relevance to this thesis and is going to be explored in detail in the second part of this chapter. Finally, it is important to note that the multiple meanings and interpretations of the notion of sustainable development are not simply free-floating, but are (re)produced within policy and knowledge networks, which consultants are part of. Particular meanings may acquire importance as they are produced by well-reputed and potentially powerful international organisations that utilise a range of strategies to secure their impact. The issues of whether and how such processes shape knowledge production and dissemination in the context of sustainable development are explored below.

3.2.1. The institutional and regulatory context of urban sustainability

In line with the previous chapter (Chapter 2), in which the ways consultants are intertwined in urban governance relationships is discussed, the present section sheds light on the roles of consultants in the context of regulatory frameworks of international policy makers, such as the EU and the UN with regard to the notion of 'sustainable development'. It suggests that these institutions represent a particular expertise and reproduce a particular system of 'knowing' through policy making. They also ascribe specific roles to various social actors including consultants, and execution of their powers through various 'tools', including sustainability assessment methods. This institutional environment is believed to have an influence on the way consultants build up their expertise and influence on a local context.

Since the 1990s, sustainable development has become a common 'task' for international, regional, and local policymakers and practitioners (Pacione 2007; Moore and Rydin 2008). Following the call of the UN Agenda 21 (United Nations 1992) for 'a comprehensive plan of action to be taken globally, nationally and locally by organisations of the United Nations System, Governments, and major groups in every area in which human impacts on the environment', the UN, the EU, the OECD, and the World Bank have developed policies and regulatory frameworks that stress various aspects of sustainable urban development. They have in turn helped to provide a setting for sustainability consultants' activities and knowledge production and sharing.

The United Nations, the European Union, and the OECD have played important roles in establishing goals of sustainable development since the 1990s (Alden 2001). In line with the 'Millennium Declaration' (United Nations 8 September 2000) of the UN, global sustainable development goals involve fighting poverty and hunger, improving access to primary education, tackling gender inequalities, child death, HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, and environmental problems. Social and environmental aspects of sustainability (with reference to biodiversity, food security etc.) and the need to develop sustainable means of transportation have been stressed by the EU. Also, international sustainable development objectives have increasingly been informed by concerns about Climate Change. In this vein the European Climate Change Programme (European Commission 2005) and the European Union Sustainable Development Strategy (the EUSDS) (European Commission 15 May 2001, 26 June 2006) sustain regulatory arrangements of the 'Kyoto protocol' of the United Nations and the Montreal Climate action plan under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. In particular, the European Union Sustainable Development Strategy 2006 recommits most of its Member States to the Kyoto Protocol, which entails a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by twenty percent compared to the 1990s levels (European Commission 15 May 2001, 26 June 2006).

As soon as the first policies were developed, the EU also promoted the creation of measures that allow tracking progress towards sustainable development. In relation to urban planning, the matter was emphasized in the Leipzig Charter, the Aalborg Charter and the New Athens Charter. In the Aalborg Charter it is argued that:

‘We know that we must base our policy making and controlling efforts, in particular our environmental monitoring, auditing, impact assessment, accounting, balancing and reporting systems, on different types of indicators, including those of urban environmental quality, urban flows, urban patterns, and, most importantly, indicators of an urban systems sustainability’ (European Commission 27 May 1994, p. 4).

This will be further addressed at the end of the chapter.

The power of the institutions in establishing sustainable development objectives is however bound with formats they execute and embed. Some arrangements can be ratified by nation-states, and included in their policy frameworks, but their power is not binding. This has been the case of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Economic Commission for Europe Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the ‘Aarhus Convention’), Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo, 1991). In the context of the EU, they involve the European Union Sustainable Development Strategy (thereafter EUSDS) developed by the European Council in Göteborg (European Commission 15 May 2001), Renewed Sustainable Development Strategy (European Commission 26 June 2006), the New Athens (European Council of Town Planners 20 November 2003) and The Leipzig Charter (German Federal Ministry of Transport Building and Urban Affairs 02 May 2007). That being said, some conventions and policies started to play more important roles in framing more ‘binding’ mechanisms described earlier. It was the case of UN’s Climate Change convention, for instance, which gained power in the context of the EU’s Emission Trading Directives (Scheuer 2005). This, in turn, inscribes into more general observations that the most (overt) ‘powerful’ tools in the context of the EU’s sustainable development policies are Environmental Quality Standards and Emission Limits Values (Scheuer 2005). They are often implemented in the form of Directives, such as Environmental Liability and Emission Trading Directives (mentioned above), among which some of the most relevant to the urban planning are the Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment Directive and the Energy Efficiency directive (Scheuer 2005).

The execution of various sustainable development objectives brings about a range of new concerns not least with regard to coordination of infrastructures of decision making at various administrative (inter-sectoral, and inter-departmental) and spatial levels. It is important to note that not all policies and strategies mentioned above have been equally endorsed within the EU Member States (Newman and Thornley 1996). Some countries embedded the policies faster than others, even outside the EU regulation. For instance, the UK was the first to endorse sustainable

development in policy making in the document referred to as the Environment White Paper of 1990 (Owens and Cowell 2011). The application of the international sustainable development policy frameworks in Poland is yet another issue. In the early 1990s, 'sustainable development', then called 'eco-development', was broadly addressed within '*Polityka Ekologiczna Państwa*' (The Ecological Policy of Poland – own translation), which not only made sustainable development a national challenge, but set sustainable development goals as societal aspiration and need (Minister właściwy ds Środowiska 2007). The term 'sustainable development' was also included in the Constitution of Poland. According to article 5 of the '*Konstytucja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*', from April 2, 1997, Poland 'protects national heritage and ensures environmental protection, following the premises of sustainable development' (own translation) (Sejm Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 1997, p. 2). Following the requirements of the EU, in 2007, the '*Polska 2025 - Długookresowa strategia trwałego i zrównoważonego rozwoju*', which is the Sustainable Development Strategy of Poland, emerged (Minister właściwy ds Środowiska 2007). The policy then cascaded through its main environmental and spatial planning legislation, such as '*Ustawa Prawo Ochrony Środowiska z dnia 27 kwietnia 2001 r.*' (Minister właściwy ds Środowiska 2001) and '*Ustawa o planowaniu i zagospodarowaniu przestrzennym*' (Minister właściwy ds Budownictwa Gospodarki Przestrznej i Mieszkaniowej and Rada Ministrów 2003).

The inclusion of sustainable development goals within national policy frameworks is supported by the EU's economic and financial instruments. They include, for instance Structural Funds: the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund, and the Cohesion Fund. The former supports investment in business and infrastructure as well as developing social capital by tackling unemployment issues. The latter finances environmental and transport initiatives (European Commission 2013b). Within the financial instruments, there are others (operational programmes) that include: PHARE, dedicated to pre-accession economic support of the Central and Eastern European Countries; INTERREG (currently INTERREG EUROPE), which aims to improve international cooperation in areas such as innovation and knowledge economy, and environment and risk prevention (European Commission 2014); and URBACT (currently URBACT III), dedicated to 'European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development (European Commission 2013c). Some of the financial instruments focus on poor regions, while others are available for all. As a result of a recent emphasis on Climate Change in international discussions, the EU provided a range of schemes to limit CO₂ emissions.

In order to support the application of sustainable development policies, the EU and the UN has also launched a range of knowledge, expertise exchange schemes. For instance, the UN set up the Urban Management Programme (UMP) as a platform for the 'transfer and exchange of the substantive knowledge on various aspects of urban management... [to] provide technical and advisory services to local authorities and civil society partners advocate and influence policy changes at local and national level' (United Nations Habitat 2013). The UMP established in 1986, is a technical assistance programme, including the WB, which:

‘Develops and applies urban management knowledge in the fields of participatory urban governance, alleviation of urban poverty and urban environmental management, and facilitates the dissemination of this knowledge at the city, country, regional and global levels’ towards economic, social and environmental problems in developing countries, including poverty reduction, improvement of local participatory governance, improvement of environmental conditions and the management of economic growth’ (United Nations Habitat 2012).

The UN also established the ‘UNECE strategy for Education for Sustainable Development’ ‘to equip people with knowledge of and skills in sustainable development, making them more competent and confident while at the same time increasing their opportunities for leading healthy and productive lifestyles in harmony with nature and with concern for social values, gender equity and cultural diversity’ (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe 2014). The OECD, EU and WB established sustainable cities programmes and other platforms of knowledge production and exchange (Bulkeley and Betsill 2005; Dur et al. 2010). In particular, the EC sees knowledge economy as a route towards sustainable development and redefines the latter as ‘a creative, local, balance seeking process extending into all areas of local decision making’ (European Commission 27 May 1994, p. 2). Also, the EU creates platforms for international exchange of ideas and dedicate funds to research activities within e.g. the 7th Framework Programme of the European Community for research, ‘European Research Area’, the European Construction Technology Platform and aims to increase research funding (Moore and Rydin 2008).

The OECD has also supported the development of environmental policies in Central and Eastern European Countries in the 1990s (Lafferty 2004). It has provided recommendations and advice to public officials on various institutional aspects of sustainable development, for instance, how to improve policy coherence and integration (Jordan 2008). Another large international organisations that produce sustainable development agendas and policies is the World Bank (thereafter WB). The organisation has limited direct influence on policymaking within nation states, yet it is a key player in global governance constellations, as it works in tandem with the UN, and often provide financial resources, low interests loans to nation states in developing countries, which allow them to produce deliver sustainable development objectives (Lafferty 2004). Some even claim that these practices are particularly powerful as:

‘The only existing global governance today is provided by commercial and financial institutions: only the WTO, through its DSB has the mandate and the power of enforcing the rules for resolving trade quarrels, whereas for the financial issues, the IMF can oblige states to modify their policies by suspending access to international financing’ (Kreiner 2006b, p. 10).

Last but not least, the process of creating 'sustainable development' frameworks described above entails establishing some kinds of 'standards' in urban development. These 'standards' are more or less explicitly defined 'rules' of carrying out 'sustainable' initiatives. They define what urban development is and ought to be. These 'standards' also become subjects of sustainability benchmarking practices that have increasingly grown in importance in the context of urban competitiveness agendas. The matters of sustainable development and sustainability benchmarking are of concern to various nation states and international organisations, such as the OECD. The organisation supports the practices of states' benchmarking, especially with regard to the role of plc administration in implementing sustainability measures (Van Kersbergen and Van Waarden 2004).

Finally, having established that the large, international governmental organisations play strong roles in defining these 'standards' and (to some degree) executing them, it is also important to note that third parties: nongovernmental organisations, think-tanks and private sector companies, including consultancy firms, and play strong roles in these processes (Keiner 2006b, a; Rydin 2007; Dresner 2008). The possible influence of the organisations is addressed below.

3.2.2. Third parties and the creation of international sustainability standards

As it was mentioned in the previous section, an inherent part of establishing sustainable development goals is setting up delivery and follow-up mechanisms. In this context the OECD, EU, UN, as well as Non-Governmental Organisations' (thereafter NGOs) have produced a sustainability indicators schemes. Prior reviewing the mechanisms, the present section will present a broad picture of how other organisations, such as the ISO, NGOs, think tanks and consultancies influence on sustainable development agenda setting.

There are many ways in which NGOs establish standards in urban planning (Bendell 2000) as it is a broad field in relation to construction and/or management. In this context, an important role is played by the International Standardisation Organisation (thereafter ISO). ISO developed a family of standards that broadly address the matters of sustainable development. They involve, among others, ISO 14000 and ISO 9000 series. The former concerns the issues of environmental management in production and services, with a special focus on the use of natural resources, materials, energy and water (International Standardisation Organisation 2013b). The latter refers to quality management regarding products and services (International Standardisation Organisation 2013a). The schemes work alongside the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) of the EU, a voluntary initiative with the aim of improving companies' environmental performance (Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013).

NGO's are known to have underpinned the development of sustainable development 'standards'. One of the most prominent ones are 'Greenpeace',

primarily concerned with the issues of environmental protection, or 'Oxfam', which fights social inequalities, especially poverty (Bendell 2000). As NGOs do not have power 'to sign treaties, pass legislation or set targets for emissions as governments are' (Elliott 2012, p. 182), their influence on agenda setting involves lobbying but also more explicitly, involving direct actions, protests, manifestations. For instance, the NGOs brought to the forefront environmental debates, especially as they evolved with the environmentalism movement in the 'North' and that they provided 'blueprints' that can effectively influence policy actors (Bendell 2000; Marquis and Toffel 2011). In particular, 'Greenpeace' advised the UN Economic and Social Research Council to create direct pressure on companies to be considerate about environmental issues. The case of Shell's proposal to dispose Brent Spar offshore oil platform in the middle of 1990s. It gained the attention of 'Greenpeace' and lead to longstanding dispute, which eventually concluded with the development of alternative proposals (Bendell 2000).

Although there is a considerable output of sustainable development governance literature dedicated to the role of NGOs, relatively little has been said about private sector organisations, especially private sector consultancies. Studies of sustainable development governance stress that consultancies, in the context of management consultants had an influence on the outcomes of the World Summit in Johannesburg (Bäckstrand 2003). Also, the attitudes of companies, including consultancies, towards sustainable development, are complex issues. Business scholars interested in Corporate Social Responsibility developed various models to gain understanding of their approach to environmental regulations with regard to environmental management standards about product design and quality labelling, reducing carbon footprint, safeguarding employee welfare and safety (Gunasekaran and Spalanzani 2012). For instance, Roome (1992) proposed model of a 'non-compliance', 'compliance', 'compliance plus', 'commercial and environmental excellence', and 'leading edge'. Non-compliance put simply, stands for the lack of compliance regarding certain regulations. The 'compliance' position suggests that businesses implement relevant regulations into business activities and operations. Whereas, 'compliance plus', 'commercial and environmental excellence', and 'leading edge' go beyond it. They can involve attempts to influence sustainable development policymaking and practice by provoking environmental change. Accordingly, companies can deliberately work towards industry standards; and support stakeholder integration and engagement (Zadek 2004). In this context, interesting questions arise: what constitutes a reasonable and an unreasonable demand for companies? (Leisinger 2006). How are the goals of sustainable development established within an organisation or transferred onto a client?

However, business practices with regard to sustainable development regulations cannot simply be fitted into these specific dimensions as: (i) the scope of incorporating sustainability standards in a particular business relates to a 'core' business activity, (ii) various actions and processes in a company, which refer to various aspects of sustainability, take place at the same time, (iii) companies are the ones having insights into the way the objectives are implemented, and (iv) the rules of environmental compliance and non-compliance are also fluid, bound with

mutually intertwined practices of how a company projects itself towards society (which, in the case of consultants, was addressed in Chapter two), and how company stakeholders conceive these initiatives. With regard to the latter, it is important to point out that companies' influence via 'informal networks carry information in the same way as formal institutions do, and often more effectively. Some are electronic, some involve people looking each other in the face every day' (Meadows 2006, p. 169), which include actions that are deliberately and non-deliberately directed on knowledge transfer, such as grassroots initiatives, such as educational practices and promotional activities (Leisinger 2006). There is also considerable evidence that businesses (as much as other urban actors) can use the ideas of sustainable development for legitimacy strategy. There are also considerable resources deployed on generating illusions of companies' engagement in sustainability standards via 'effective' outside stakeholders' relationships (Bendell 2000).

Finally, it is important to note that the institutional context of contemporary sustainable development policy making described above can be considered as representing various 'regimes of discourse', whereby some knowledge claims embedded in their agendas are considered 'valid'. In this context, the process of 'validation' of the 'truthfulness' of knowledge claims forms part of the process that define which and how the sustainable development agendas are implemented. It involves the use of various tools, templates against which the fulfilment of the objectives can be assessed – sustainability assessment methods. In this context, therefore, the following question can be asked: how these various definitions and understandings of sustainable development and interests of various stakeholders (presented above) are played out in the context of sustainability assessment methods, which may be considered a natural extension of their agenda setting practices?. Insights into how to answer to this complex question can be addressed as are presented in a historical-institutional analysis below.

3.3. Sustainability assessment

The issues around 'sustainability assessment' involve various terminologies. Often, in literature, one comes across terms such as sustainable development and sustainability 'assessment frameworks' or 'methods', as well as 'sustainability indicators' and 'indices'. The terms: 'sustainability assessment frameworks', 'methods' or simply 'sustainability assessment', broadly refer to the same thing, meaning a formal infrastructure or an institutional arrangement that serves the purpose of evaluating sustainability impacts (Briassoulis 2001). With regard to urban planning policy and design or construction practice, the 'sustainability assessment' methods described above are often based on 'indicators', formal units of reference (quantitative and/or qualitative), then aggregated into sets or blocks of indicators that in the end construct a 'sustainability assessment framework'. In the thesis, the terms: 'sustainability assessment' (alternatively 'sustainability assessment framework/method' are used interchangeably.

The production of sustainability assessments has been a common project of policymakers and practitioners. The first official sustainability indicators were derived from the public sector. It concerns Environmental Impact Assessment, which originated in the USA, in the context of the US National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and was designed to tackle the issue of negative environmental impacts of large scale capital investments. It then diffused to over 100 nations and became a key reference point for contemporary policymaking in the context of the EU's European Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (Cashmore et al. 2004; Gibson et al. 2005; Therivel and Levett-Therivel Consultants 2013). The first international policy sustainability indicators were produced in the late 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s in the context of policy appraisal schemes (Briassoulis 2001; Astleithner et al. 2004). The Brundtland Commission assumed the effort to develop ways of reviewing progress towards sustainable development in 1992 (Ortega-Cerdà 2005). The challenge was undertaken by the UN, OECD, and the EU. For instance, a range of sustainability indicators has been developed by the European Commission with the support of other agencies, especially the European Environmental Agency and EUROSTAT (European Commission 2009, p. 7). Examples of relevant policy initiatives include the European Union Sustainable Development Strategies (European Commission 15 May 2001, 26 June 2006), which involves reflections about indicators, or special initiatives, such as the 'European Common Indicators' (European Commission 2013a). It is also worth noting that using various sustainability assessment frameworks, the OECD monitors greenhouse gas emissions in relation to the Climate Change agenda (Wilbanks and Kates 1999), while the European Environmental Agency uses them to track progress on such issues as Arctic and Baltic Sea ice and Ocean acidification (European Environment Agency 2013).

In line with Agenda 21, governments and public sector officials from various countries, including Poland, have also developed a range of sustainability assessment frameworks. These have taken place at various administrative levels, following the EU's 'subsidiarity rule', which shifts decision making to the lowest feasible level of administration (Pacione 2007). The UK government produced various sets of sustainability indicators in the context of, for instance, 'Local quality of life counts: a handbook for a menu of local indicators of sustainable development' (Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions July 2000), or the 'Sustainable development indicators in your pocket' (Office for National Statistics and Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs 2004). Similar efforts were undertaken by the Australian and New Zealand governments. They involve, for instance, 'Triple Bottom Line indicator suite' developed by Australian Housing and Urban research Institute and Waitakere City Council's (New Zealand) Tool for Urban Sustainability – Code of Practice (Newman 1999; Dur et al. 2010).

There has been a growing interest in developing sustainability assessments within private sector or third sector organisations: companies, universities, product labelling organisations, banks and other institutions. Some sustainability assessment frameworks produced by businesses and NGOs have diffused across

sectors and worldwide, and currently underpin urban planning policy and practice. This was the case of various resource usage tools and sustainable emissions tools (e.g. global warming indicators, Carbon/Ecological Footprint), and design tools (e.g. BREEAM – Environmental Assessment Method of Building Research Establishment, the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (thereafter LEED) of the U.S. Green Building Council in structural architecture engineering and master planning. Cidell (2009) points out that LEED standards diffused into forty countries, including Brazil, Canada, and China.

One should also note that in contemporary urban planning frameworks based on the idea of assessing sustainability impacts refer directly to the construction industry. They are embedded in the DETR (UK) publication of 'Building a Better Quality of Life: A Strategy for more Sustainable Construction' (Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions April 2000). Also, one should note that many of these frameworks established with regard to a very particular product (e.g. assessment energy efficiency based on building design), extended their functions and started including elements of master planning. This is the case with BREEAM and LEED. Also, many of these sustainability assessment frameworks have gained 'reputations' and are preferred or not across spatial contexts.

Notably, sustainability assessment frameworks have been developed and adopted by businesses. There is a range of frameworks that can relate to environmental or labour management practices, or methods to calculate sustainable emissions and resource usage (Marshall and Toffel 2005; Eccles et al. 2011). In the context of growing international interest in non-financial reporting, a range of sustainability indicators are often part of the Corporate Social Responsibility infrastructures and include, for instance, energy efficiency and waste indicators (Marshall and Toffel 2005; Eccles et al. 2011). Many of the methods have also been guided by international policy initiatives. They include, for instance, The Dow Jones Sustainability Index, Global Competitiveness Report of World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Programme, World Competitiveness Yearbook of the Institute for Management Development's World and the Global Reporting Initiative dedicated to create a global framework of assessing sustainability impacts based on common concepts, language, and metrics (Global Reporting Initiative 2000).

The processes described above also relate to the consulting businesses. In contemporary urban development, consultancies offer a range of sustainability assessment services. They are often hired to apply these assessment methods to various products and services by both public and private sector representatives. This often is the case with various engineering consultancies, where the sustainability assessment is one of the services they offer. There are also companies that focus on sustainability assessment as a core business, such as Sustainable Measures (Sustainable Measures 2012). In this context, however, a question emerges: How do these sustainability assessment frameworks influence urban policy and practice?

3.3.1. Roles of sustainability assessment methods in urban development

Sustainability assessment frameworks play important, yet complex roles in contemporary urban planning. As well as multiple frameworks' for assessing sustainability there are also multiple purposes for their use, within and beyond knowledge creation. In line with the general definition of 'sustainability assessment' presented above, one can distinguish 'pragmatic' or 'applied science' approaches and 'constructivist' approaches, which stress various issues relating to the reproduction of sustainability assessment frameworks across time and space.

'Pragmatic' approaches to sustainability assessment frameworks have also attracted considerable attention in practitioner literature in the context of urban design, structural engineering and architecture (Pope et al. 2004; Bond et al. 2012; Bond et al. 2013b). They include considerations about the influence of sustainability assessment on efficiency of decision making and demonstrate a preoccupation with how sustainability assessment relates to the definition of objectives, and design of methods and procedures, which would allow a faster and more efficient way of delivering sustainable development objectives (Glasson et al. 1997; Bond and Wathern 1999; Gibson et al. 2005; Gibson 2013), how sustainability assessment fits into various decision making models (Bell and Morse 2008; Sarkis et al. 2012; Cashmore and Kornov 2013), especially with regard to roles of different stakeholders (Craig and Jeffrey 2013), or how it underpins environmental design (Cashmore et al. 2004).

In line with pragmatic approaches, which broadly focus on the practical utility of the 'tools', sustainability assessment frameworks are meant to support progress towards sustainable development. They serve various social actors as tools or toolkits in monitoring or the management of urban development practices. It includes providing directions towards the 'improvement' of the environment and the delivery of 'positive contributions to sustainability – multiple, mutually reinforcing, fairly distributed and lasting positive contributions to sustainability – while avoiding persistent damages' (Gibson 2013, p. 3). This can be portrayed by using a definition of indicators presented by a private sector company, which provides various sustainability assessment services:

'Something that helps you understand where you are, which way you are going and how far you are from where you want to be. A good indicator alerts you to a problem before it gets too bad and helps you recognize what needs to be done to fix the problem. Indicators of a sustainable community point to areas where the links between the economy, environment and society are weak. They allow you to see where the problem areas are and help show the way to fix those problems' (Sustainable Measures 2012).

These issues are then subject to deliberations about the roles of sustainability assessment frameworks in benchmarking practices in urban planning across time and space (Keiner 2006a). In particular, scholars favouring 'pragmatic' approaches

focus on how various principles of sustainable development make sustainability assessment 'more comprehensive' or 'holistic' (Rees and Wackernagel 1996; Holland 1997; Levett 1998; Briassoulis 2001; Astleithner et al. 2004; Kibert 2008; Cidell 2009; Dur et al. 2010). For instance, Dur et al. (2010) try to develop a sustainability framework that seeks to be holistic and comprehensive, looking at it from step-by-step procedures. Ugwu (2005, p. 245) expresses similar sentiments:

'In order to achieve the broad goals of sustainability it is necessary to adopt a holistic approach that considers the impacts of various types of civil infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water projects etc on the environment, economy, and social aspects of a society – "the triple bottom line". There is therefore need for generic tools that provide decision support for sustainability appraisal of different types of projects', but alongside a general desire to pursue assessment frameworks that are holistic or comprehensive.

Although the 'pragmatic' approaches produce some useful insights, especially from the point of view of designers and managers who use the tools on the daily basis, scholars preoccupied with the issues of efficiency and effectiveness of sustainability assessment, also stress that the outcomes of the assessment can be contested with regard to a range of issues. It includes ideas about the construction of the assessment frameworks, 'technical' and 'project management' issues (Bond et al. 2012; Bond et al. 2013b, a; Howitt 2013). It is also argued that the 'quality' of the sustainability assessment is insufficiently addressed (Gibson 2013).

Furthermore, scholars who take pragmatic approaches to sustainability assessment imply linearity of the process of deriving knowledge outcomes based on the assessment. They tend to assume that these methods are objective and reliable. They also seem to suggest that the problem of non-sustainability of urban spaces (e.g. socio-spatial polarisation of urban development) can be resolved by using sustainability assessment frameworks. In particular, they abstract from the social context in which the assessment takes place. They do not take seriously the idea that sustainability assessment is a human construct, which is subjective and gets redefined in the processes of social action and is subject to power relations, in its very nature (Curwell and Cooper 1998; Guy and Shove 2000; Whitehead 2003; Guy 2006; Bond and Morrison-Saunders 2013). One should note, however, that there is growing interest in 'social' and 'interactive' dimensions of production and dissemination of sustainability assessment, which look beyond rationalistic ideals and seek to understand how assessments are constructed and utilised in practice (Rydin et al. 2003; Whitehead 2003; Astleithner et al. 2004; Bulkeley and Betsill 2005; Pope 2007; Pope and Morrison-Saunders 2013).

In particular, scholars working within the constructivist tradition attempt to understand the social 'effectiveness' of sustainability assessment, especially how sustainability assessment tools are received by various city actors and the political struggles that they bring about (Evans 2002; Whitehead 2003), the realities of project stakeholder's relationships in the context of the application of sustainability

knowledge (Nurick and Johnson 1998). They argue that sustainability assessment frameworks are underpinned by a particular theory of value, which serves to make judgements about differences in international urban development standards (Briassoulis 2001).

Constructivist approaches to sustainability assessment have been applied to explore a range of issues. For instance, there is a study about the way informal knowledge influences EIA (Bond et al. 2010). Ugwu (2005) explores the subjective dimensions of the sustainability assessment framework from the end-user perspective and points to the difficulties that the use of sustainability assessment brings. There is also a range of critical studies that stress the conflict of interests and trade-offs between various aspects of sustainable development that get caught up in assessment (Cashmore et al. 2008). These issues have repercussions for knowledge transfer as they represent 'compromises' or 'conflicts' between the interests of stakeholders. By way of illustration, Pope (2007) described the case of the Gordon Gas development proposal to be located at Barrow Island, Australia and based on the sustainability assessment, two separate reports about whether to approve the proposal were written by different state government agencies and their recommendations were different. In the end, one's ideas and knowledge are endorsed and someone else's is rejected.

Scholars working within the constructivist tradition suggest that these sustainability frameworks play roles, which go beyond assessment making. It is argued that they play the role of education tools, which allegedly allows learning through better understanding of sustainability impacts in a particular case and promoting self-reflexivity (Bond and Morrison-Saunders 2013; Therivel and Levett-Therivel Consultants 2013). Having said that, the constructivist scholarship about sustainability assessment is fragmented and involves a gap between theory and empirical research (Redclift 1993; Palmer et al. 1997; Norman and MacDonald 2004; Howard 2005; Marshall and Toffel 2005; Cashmore and Kornov 2013), especially with regard to the influence of sustainability assessment frameworks on goals of sustainable development (Bond et al. 2013b). This is surprising given that, one can begin to see how efforts to construct effective sustainability assessment frameworks and indicators 'regimes' cannot escape the wider disputes about the meaning of sustainable development discussed above. Moreover, such disputes are often present (even if only implicitly) in discussions about how the outcomes of assessment might be used.

3.3.2. Sustainability assessment and various goals of sustainable development

The matters of generalisation and adaptation of sustainability assessment methods, especially knowledge quality and transferability, have been raised alongside debates about the competition and trade-offs between various aspects of sustainable development. For instance, with regard to the debates about the three pillars of sustainability, scholars and policymakers stress limits of the arguments that all societies have to comply with the same sustainability standards based on

overall standards of wellbeing in societies (Krueger 2007; Pacione 2007; Krueger and Gibbs 2008). It involves particular references to resourcefulness, demography, social and cultural context, and institutional arrangements of a particular country (Church and Elster 2002; Pacione 2007). This, in turn, leads to debates about sustainability assessment frameworks as more or less fixed entities, and to what extent the frameworks should reflect national versus international goals and standards.

In particular, policymakers and practitioners argue that, on the one side, it should reflect the three pillars of sustainability: social, economic and environmental (Gibson et al. 2005). On the other side, however, it is argued that sustainability assessment frameworks and indicators should be reflective of a particular national context (Bina 2008; Gibson 2013; Stoffle et al. 2013), embedded in national regulations and legislation (Marquis and Toffel 2011). The issues concern also collecting, aggregating and disaggregating data within sustainability assessment schemes – ‘generic criteria’ are not good enough to assess sustainability impacts. They need to be elaborated and specified for application to particular cases and contexts’ (Gibson 2013, p. 7). These have been addressed in, for instance, governmental documents in the UK, such as the ‘Local quality of life counts: a handbook for a menu of local indicators of sustainable development’ (Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions July 2000).

Having acknowledged that knowledge production and dissemination processes in the field of urban planning are shaped by a variety of meanings of sustainable development, this section points to recent focus on the notion of science and technology in internal sustainable development policy making. It involves suggestions that: (i) the reproduction of the logics of sustainable development in terms of science, technology and economics, underpin the processes of reproduction of sustainability assessment, (ii) that the processes may be more beneficially to some urban actors – business elites and technocrats than others, and that (iii) these can impede learning about sustainable development from consultants and dissemination of new knowledge across time and space, which is addressed below.

3.4. Sustainability ‘science’ as a dominating conception of sustainable development

Early studies on sustainable development have strong quantitative, scientific underpinnings, especially with regard to the ‘Limits to growth’ (Dresner 2008), often grounded in econometric modelling about the finite capacity of ecosystem services. It concerns, for instance, the ideas of limits to growth of Malthus, which ‘are anchored in complex computer modelling that utilizes relatively sparse or inconclusive data... [which, however] enjoying some empirical validation by events’ (Buttel et al. 1990, p. 59). This was later transferred and underpinned a division between ‘strong’ versus ‘weak’, as well as ‘instrumental’ versus ‘non-instrumental’ aspects of sustainability, which assume putting a value, a price, on our planet and its resources (Dresner 2008; Fourcade 2011a, b). This tendency towards quantifying

sustainability is considered to be underpinned by the growing importance of Climate Change and evidence about stratospheric ozone depletion (Buttel et al. 1990).

The evolution of sustainability assessment has also often been linked with such assumptions around science, technology and economics (Sadler 1996; Briassoulis 2001). One can see this among the earlier accounts of Environmental Impact Assessment as 'both a science - involving methods for identifying, predicting and evaluating the impacts of particular actions – and a set of procedures for ensuring that analysis takes place and informs the decision making processes' (Kennedy 1988, cited in: Owens and Cowell 2011, p. 63). Bell and Morse argue that the word 'indicator' represents a technical meaning and implies relevance to statistics and economics and technocrats (Bell and Morse 2003, see also: Munasinghe 2009). It is also argued that the 'scientisation' of sustainable development reflects a trend of growing reliance on numbers, market statics, or so-called 'market epistemology' in decision making processes (Malecki 2004).

Science plays a key role in the traditional conception of economic growth as saliently tied to technological innovation. It may come with no surprise therefore that international sustainable development agendas and objectives present a strong focus on eco-restructuring and eco-modernisation (Stiglitz 2000; Shelbourn et al. 2006; While et al. 2010). Shelbourn et al. (2006) point to the association of the term with techno-economic growth and strong environmental agenda. Siglitz (2000, p. 38) brings to attention that 'it has been almost an article of faith that if certain technical allocation issues were solved, economic development would inevitably follow'. One can see this linkage to economic competitiveness at the EU level, too.

For instance, the European Union Sustainable Development Strategy (European Commission 15 May 2001, p. 2) states that the purpose of the EU is 'to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion'. Similarly, the new EUSDS (European Commission 26 June 2006) and the 'ESDP – European Spatial Development Perspective: Towards Balanced and Sustainable Development of the Territory of the European Union' (European Commission May 1999) focus on greater economic, social and territorial cohesion between old and new member states towards competitiveness. The issues of territorial and socio-economic-environmental cohesion are embedded in the proposals of the Leipzig Charter (German Federal Ministry of Transport Building and Urban Affairs 02 May 2007) and the New Charter of Athens (European Council of Town Planners 20 November 2003). Additionally, in delivering the competitiveness and cohesion targets, an important role is expected to be played by various kinds of infrastructures. For instance, the New Charter of Athens (European Council of Town Planners 20 November 2003) stresses the objectives of social cohesion by strengthening functional and infrastructural links between cities.

Also, running through these connections is the long-standing argument about quantification and credibility. Thus, sustainability indicators are intertwined with

decision making processes as they 'have the particularity of having a scientific-objective appearance' (Ortega-Cerdà 2005, p. 1). It is also argued that there 'will always be a tendency to give more weight to what is most easily quantifiable and measurable' (Lundvall and Tomlinson 2002, pp. 211-212). Similarly, trust in sustainability indicators fits into 'evidence-based' approaches, where sustainability 'science' also perfectly fits in (Cowell and Owens 2001). These processes, however, as the section below will demonstrate, do not remain uncontested.

Of course, science is not value-neutral (Barnes et al. 2004; Wallington and Moore 2005).

"Science" – at least the word – can be abused; as the word has undertaken positive overtones, ideologies have claimed to find justification for their tenets in "science". Yet the foundations for the scientific methods have managed to withstand such abuses, whatever form they take' (Stiglitz 2000, p. 26).

There is evidence that the 'scientific turn' in sustainable development has benefitted certain groups of people and organisations, for instance, scientific, chemical and energy companies that aim at the creation of new technologies, products and services (Buttel et al. 1990; Redclift 1993; Swyngedouw 1997, 2004a). The scientific discourses of sustainability assessment can then be used by bureaucrats and experts to gain or maintain power, which, as a critical issue in the study, is elaborated upon next.

3.4.1. Sustainability frameworks, science and politics

In spite of considerable attention being dedicated to the processes of 'improving' sustainability indicators, with a belief that they can present an 'objective' view on contemporary urban development, sustainable development is a political project (Munton 1997) and this reality filters into sustainability frameworks that reproduce global political and technological relationships (Pacione 2007).

Critical scholars point to the existence of trade-offs between ideological and non-ideological dimensions of sustainable development, whereby the ideological dimension of the concept can be outweighed by the practical one. It is argued that the concept can be used as a placebo, 'in order to shed a favourable light on continuing activities that may or may not be capable of continuing for a long period of time' (Bartlett 2006, p. 19). Similarly, in the context of sustainability assessment it has been argued that such assessment can be used as a rhetorical device, a fashion, for legitimising decision making by various urban stakeholders, including policymakers and businesses (Rydin et al. 2003; Astleithner et al. 2004; Pacione 2007; Dresner 2008; Moore and Bunce 2009). They can serve to obscure 'old' conflicts between various values and interests (Owens 1994; Cowell and Owens 2001).

There is evidence that processes of indicator production can be expert-exclusive and anti-democratic (Flyvbjerg 1998; Cowell and Owens 2001; Bäckstrand 2003; Rydin et al. 2003; Pacione 2007; Rydin and Moore 2008). It is argued that the use of a 'toolkit' metaphor suggests linear models of knowledge transfer and avoids looking at the complexity of processes, conflicts and contradictions regarding the validity of knowledge outcomes (Cowell and Owens 2001; Bell and Morse 2008). In the study of Impact Assessment measures by Flyvbjerg (1998), the author explores hidden relationships of power between local elites.

To address this suite of risks, a number of commentators have argued that the production of sustainability frameworks should be underpinned by participatory, democratic initiatives. The calls are underpinned with a belief that sustainability assessment can be a dialogical vehicle, to improve understanding, and mediation of interests of various groups of stakeholders (Bond and Morrison-Saunders 2011; Bond et al. 2012; Bond et al. 2013b), often in the context of stakeholder participation (Bell and Morse 2003; Pope et al. 2004; Bell and Morse 2005; Pope 2007; Bell and Morse 2008; Pope and Morrison-Saunders 2013). Yet, it was stated by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, the European Commission, and many academics that participatory approaches to sustainability assessment originate from the lack of trust by rulers (Gibson et al. 2005). This also opens up other debates about the role of expert knowledge and the importance of local knowledge in sustainability assessment (Howitt 2013).

3.5. Summary and conclusions

The chapter portrayed 'sustainable development' as a discursive terrain, where complexities of knowledge relationships in the field of urban planning unravel. It pointed out that 'sustainable development' has become a value shared worldwide, however also that the 'fuzziness' of the concept and its heterogeneous nature, bring uncertainty in implementation. It also stressed that in the context of multiplicity of understandings of sustainable development in theory and practice, one should pay attention to a context or circumstances, where some of these interpretations prevail. Most notably, the chapter pointed out that large, intergovernmental (and international) organisations play important roles in establishing sustainable development agendas and practice these goals are operationalised and redefined by public, private and third sector organisations, which consultants are parts of.

Then, this chapter demonstrated how sustainability assessment methods are intertwined in the relationships between these stakeholders and that they only partially extend the powers of international organisations as sustainable development standards setters. The chapter further raised issues about common reproduction of various sustainability assessment frameworks across time and space. It favoured recognising subjective and social dimensions of the reproduction of sustainability assessment frameworks, against rational and pragmatic accounts of their use; and pointed out that they have an objective appearance and legitimization capacity. Also, in the chapter questions about the use of various

sustainability assessment frameworks in relation to urban planning in Poland were raised. They have, however, proven difficult to answer not least with regard to the fuzziness of this knowledge domain, but also very limited data about sustainability services as a separate segment of a market. The latter allegedly relates to such problems in construction industry as the lack of financial incentives from the side of government and limited supply of (certified) eco-friendly materials (Construction Marketing Group 2014). That being said, these are environmental sustainability is one of the key issues in architecture, engineering education and urban planning education in Poland (Wydział Budownictwa i Inżynierii Środowiskowa 2010).

The chapter stressed that sustainability assessment frameworks that consultants disseminate can be more or less reliable. The use of indicators as a way of inquiring into social phenomena is contested in academia (all methods have their pitfalls). Sustainability assessment can be weak and lack influence or strong and robust, because that is the nature of knowledge, that is subject to discourse and power and is bound to the meaning of sustainable development (Cowell and Owens 2001). Yet, one should note that the validity of scientific evidence enjoys a certain status. In the context of the UN Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992), the scientific evidence, although ambiguous, has led to 'precautionary' actions, where 'there is scientific uncertainty, implement evaluation procedures and take appropriate preventive action in order to avoid damage to human health or to the environment' (European Commission 26 June 2006), which is one of the key issues in contemporary urban development policy and practice.

Finally, having identified a range of issues relevant to the roles of consultants in urban development and production and dissemination of knowledge in Chapters 2 and 3, it is argued that the findings reaffirm the validity and importance of the research objectives stated in Chapter 1 Introduction, especially (i) to critically assess existing literature about knowledge production in terms of the approach taken to notions of 'knowledge', how knowledge is defined with an empirical focus on the role of consultants in the field of urban planning, (ii) to investigate the effects of knowledge mobilisation in a local context, in particular, how knowledge, bound with power relationships, defines the outcomes of knowledge transfer; In particular, Chapter 2 identified that the subject of private sector consultants is relatively new in urban studies in relation to processes of knowledge 'transfer'. It pointed to considerable evidence that consultants play important roles in urban management, for example, they 'stood behind' major urban management reforms, such as New Public Management ideas (James and Manning 1996; Benson et al. 2012), yet little is known about the circumstances which allow them to achieve such considerable impact. This relates to another argument, which supports the research questions, that the consulting process has a 'fuzzy' and complex nature. It is bound with interaction between subjective constructions, which go beyond 'conventional' understandings of consulting as a primarily linear process between a 'host' (consultant) and 'adopter' (a client). Additionally, as the impact of consultants is uneven across time and space, and that governance relationships play a considerable role in it, the chapter contended that exploring processes of knowledge production in Poland is particularly interesting, as it raises questions

about such political and cultural contexts of knowledge relationships that 'Western' urban development theories do not explain well.

At the same time, Chapter 3 argued that the pursuit of sustainable development, being a key urban development goal, involves international 'lesson drawing', especially from 'best practices'. However, it also unveiled that these processes are intertwined with struggles for legitimacy and power that can distort the validity of knowledge claims. This can also be true for the outcomes of sustainability assessment methods, which have dominated urban policy and practice. Finally, based on the summary, the following empirical questions regarding knowledge production processes are deduced to be relevant and expected to lead us to better understanding of the roles of private sector consultants in the field of urban planning: (1) How do consultants build the credibility of their expertise? (2) How is knowledge mobilised in a local context? (3) How do social actors interact around sustainability assessment brought about by consultants? This thesis now turns to the description of the research methodology chosen to investigate these issues.

Chapter 4 Research methodology

4.1. Introduction

In line with the objective of the research, which is to investigate the processes of knowledge 'transfer' in the context of consultants in the field of urban planning, the chapter explains a range of issues relating to research methodology. It commences with deliberations about discourse analysis in general and the Sociology of Knowledge Approach Discourse (SKAD) as the theoretical and analytical research framework with regard to the notion of 'discourse'. It involves reflections about research epistemology – 'social constructionism'. The chapter then introduces the key premises of discourse analysis as proposed by SKAD, against other discourse-related research methods. Then, it proceeds to present the case study strategy of inquiry, and examines its suitability for the research questions, followed by data collection processes. Lastly, it considers the strengths and weaknesses of the collected primary, secondary and documentary data in relation to the research questions and in the light of considerations about research ethics.

4.2. Discourse analysis

In the study, discourse analysis as a particular qualitative research method was chosen. Qualitative methods are known to aid 'exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social and human problem' (Creswell 2009, p. 4). They 'consist of a set of interpretative, material practices that make the world visible' (Denzin and Lincoln 2005a, p. 3). Qualitative research does not assume superiority of one method over another and can be executed with reference to various, often intertwined, philosophical traditions (e.g. post-positivism, post-structuralism), and fields (e.g. 'interpretative studies' and 'cultural studies') (Denzin and Lincoln 2005a).

Discourse analysis is particularly suitable for empirically researching processes of knowledge 'creation', as it provides tools that allow an understanding of patterns and peculiarities of sense-making regarding the credibility of consultants and their interactions with city actors. Discourse analysis has also proven to be effective and useful in informing research inquiry regarding urban development. In particular, the 'discursive turn' in urban studies has accumulated considerable scholarship over the last two decades (Mazza and Rydin 1997; Hastings 1999, 2000; Jacobs and Manzi 2000; Mele 2000; Lees 2004; Jacobs 2006; Yin 2009). Discourse analysis has been used to study various aspects of environmental policy, politics and planning (Hajer 1995; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003; Hajer 2005; Hajer 2006a). It includes cases of acid rain in Great Britain (Hajer 1993), rebuilding 'Ground Zero' in New York (Hajer 2005), the evolution of the implementation of policy for the Roman Danube Delta (Assche et al. 2011), and discourses of regional sustainable development policy in Sweden (Hilding-Rydevik T. 2011).

Etymologically, the word 'discourse' means to run or to enter a course, a path, a regularity of human existence (Chia 2000). However, broadly, discourse can be defined as a system of signs, such as texts, talk, images (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002; Phillips and Hardy 2002), or 'a sum of communicative interactions' (Sharp and Richardson 2001, p. 195). The queries about knowledge production and dissemination processes make discourse analysis relevant to study phenomena which are not overt, or visible to an observer, in particular individual and collective 'problematizations', and meanings (Wagenaar 2011). They are important, as they bear practical implications as they become the grounds of everyday social life and practice (Smith 1988). In this vein, discourses are powerful 'devices' that reflect and shape the way social phenomena and occurrences are conceived (Hajer 1995, 2005). They have causal effects on policymaking, society and economy (Schmidt 2008). They construct narratives, enhance the persuasiveness of a given argument and serve various interests (Schmidt 2008). Finally, in relation to urban planning, they allow reflection upon urban development theories and urban policy as a contested terrain, where various power-knowledge constellations collide (Hajer 1993; Feindt and Oels 2005).

Also, discourse analysis is ambiguous. It entails multiple theoretical and analytical approaches (Sayer 1992, 1997; Bacchi 2000; Bacchi 2004). It has a long history and can be found in a variety of disciplines, which transcends differences in the analytical and theoretical focus of discourse analysis (Richardson and Jensen 2000; Sharp and Richardson 2001; Jørgensen and Phillips 2002; Phillips and Hardy 2002; Keil and Debbané 2005). In this vein, discourse analysis can be tailored in line with different ontological and epistemological assumptions (Lees 2004; Feindt and Oels 2005). The way the notion of 'discourse' is approached in this research study, in the context of the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD) of Keller (2011) as a research framework, is presented below.

4.3. The Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse

The Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD) is a relatively new research framework having been developed by Keller since the 1990s (Keller 2011). Broadly, the SKAD adopts a social constructionist perspective, and focuses on relationships of power, which unfold in the process of knowledge transfer in urban development. It has been applied in few studies within German speaking societies (Keller 2011). The first article introducing the SKAD in an international academic journal, in English language, was published in 2011. These studies are however difficult to access due to the language barriers. Recently, SKAD has gathered some attention. It was used to investigate issues of corporate social responsibility (Herzig and Moon 2013), the experience of geoscientists and engineers in the context of climate change science (Lefsrud and Meyer 2012), people's approach to various kinds of food (Kooijmans and Flores-Palacios 2014), and water management issues (Hornidge et al. 2013). However, the output is limited to just several articles in the English language with many more written in German (Truschkat 2008; Dresen 2010).

The SKAD proposes a particular theoretical and analytical approach to investigate social and interactive dimensions of knowledge embedded in discourse. It uses the concept of 'sociology of knowledge', which emerged from the works of August Comte in the nineteenth century. Major contributions to the field were made over the last century by Marx, Weber, Schütz, Dilthey, Thomas, Mead, Berger and Luckmann (Keller 2011). For instance, the scholarship of Comte explored the processes of building meanings and transformations of knowledge claims in societies (Keller 2011). Weber contributed to the 'sociology of knowledge' by exploring the processes of interpretation (sense making) of social phenomena in terms of discourse. The development of sociology of knowledge was shaped by 'historicism', 'hermeneutics', and the scholarship of Mead on 'symbolic interactionism' and the idea that people construct their own identity through everyday social interaction significantly contributed to the development of this school of thought (Burr 1995; Clapham 2010). Within the Chicago School of Sociology William and Dorothy Thomas believed that social acts depend on 'definitions of situations' (Keller 2011, p. 44). The scholarship of Schütz was dedicated to 'the methodology of understanding' and the processes by which the 'social stock of knowledge' shapes the way social agents act in a society (Keller 2011, p. 44). Following Alfred Schütz, Keller assumes that meaning is produced in a human's consciousness and that knowledge precedes individuals (Keller 2011). Yet, some of the most important ideas brought to the sociology of knowledge were those of Berger and Luckmann (1967) and SKAD sustains several arguments of Berger and Luckmann in relation to social constructionism, especially in relation to the notion of knowledge.

In general, social constructionism embraces the philosophical assumptions that there are multiple interpretations of the world and social phenomena, and neither knowledge nor language is a reflection of reality, but they actively construct it. It is contrary to sociological objectivism (Szacki 2007) and embraces a move away from 'Enlightenment' in terms of the 'philosophy of science'. In particular, it rejects 'positivist' and 'empiricist' traditions, inspired by philosophers like Karl Popper or John Stuart Mill as they assume knowledge is a mirror of society (Wallington and Moore 2005; Williamson 2006). It stands opposed to Durkheim's objectivism in sociology that there are the 'naked social' facts hidden 'underneath' and entail that social life should be explained by looking at causality of social occurrences and not through people's ideas about it (Szacki 2007, p. 487). ideas that language is not a mere reflection of reality, but that it constitutes the social world (Berger and Luckmann 1967).

One of the most significant contributions to social constructionism scholarship is the seminal publication of Berger and Luckmann (1967), 'The Social Construction of the Sociology of Knowledge: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge', upon which several analytical concepts of SKAD as built. Berger and Luckmann (1967) assume that what people consider as 'real', is embedded in mutually intertwined processes of 'subjectification' and 'objectifications', which are shaped by social, cultural, historical contexts (Berger and Luckmann 1967). Broadly, the former refers to a subjective, intentional act (thinking about something, which most often is grounded

in one's worldview). The latter refers to the process of sharing one's thought and if accepted it gets 'objectified'. Also, social constructionists claim that language 'is capable of building up zones of meaning that serve as a stock of knowledge that individuals use in everyday life and which can be transmitted from generation to generation' (Clapham 2010, p. 61). In this vein, in this study knowledge is represented by 'all social systems of signs, and in so doing, the symbolic orders and stocks of knowledge constituted by these systems which mediate between human beings and the world' (Keller 2011, p. 48). It includes both positive and negative knowledge claims, i.e. religious doctrines, sociological theories, interpretative knowledge about something and so on (Keller 2011). Also, the inevitable part of knowledge relationships are the struggles between competing discourses and the social, economic, historical and political conditionings (Keller 2011).

In relation to the built environment, social constructionism leads to a redefinition of urban problems so as not to focus on 'bricks', but meanings attributed to the issues around urban planning (Feindt and Oels 2005). The 'constructivist turn' in planning commenced in the 1960s and has grown since (Healey 2003). Social constructionism delivered a considerable input firstly into housing research (Clapham 2006, 2010). Such approaches have been used there to explore homelessness (Brinegar 2003), housing management (Clapham et al. 2000; Darcy et al. 2004), and in relation to housing policy (Clapham 2010). It has also been used to stress ones societal responsibilities by stressing the subjective nature of relationships between ecology and society, humanity and its environment (Latour 2005) and social perceptions of environmental issues. However, it is important to note that social constructionism scholarship, is complex and confusing and entails various 'versions' (Berger and Luckmann 1967).

4.3.1. 'Strands' of social constructionism and SKAD

Social constructionism overlaps with various traditions: interpretivism, post structuralism, postmodernism and anti-essentialism, which in various ways redefined social constructionism and led to the emergence of 'strands' of social constructionism. They favour certain assumptions about social constructionism and reject others. There is considerable consensus that social constructionism and interpretivism share the assumption that all knowledge comes from interpretation and that knowledge is intertwined in the processes of social interaction and focusing on contextual interpretations of a problem rather than causal ones (Wagenaar 2011). Social constructionism is also often associated with post structuralism, which 'denies any foundations of knowledge in the sense of operative assumptions regarding a self-evident basis of knowledge claims' (Bleicher 1993, p. 258), and with postmodernism, which can be understood as a threat to science and reason 'as potentially exclusive, suppressive, technocratic and ultimately undemocratic' (Hoppe 1999, p. 202).

Social constructionism shares the principles with anti-essentialism, which diverges from a reductionism to biological and other factors as being key factors that determine human action (Sayer 1997). It assumes that taken as granted categories

that people use in everyday life, such as man, woman, are in fact complex discursive constructs (Schwandt 1994). That being said, however, the notion of 'social constructionism' is confusing with regard to 'relativist' traditions of philosophy (Woolgar and Pawluch 1985; Burr 1995; Edwards et al. 1995; Sayer 1997; Clapham 2010). This, in turn, leads to the idea that social constructionism can be understood in terms of an epistemology (in line with ideas about 'epistemological relativism'), or an ontology, which then bears implications regarding relationship between ideas, individuals and structures of knowledge.

in line with the statement: 'the truth on the one side of Pyrenees is error on the other' (Pascal Pensees v 294, in: Berger and Luckmann 1967, p. 17), relativist traditions in philosophy and social science associates with that knowledge claims taken for granted in one context, may be rejected (to various degree) in another context. For instance, an extreme, relativist version of social constructionism, which often associates the social constructionism with an ontology, suggests that 'things' (e.g. God) are tied to particular conceptual system (Parker 1998). It is often criticised with regard to 'naive realism', meaning 'an unquestioning faith in reality in what we perceive' (Wetherelt and Still 1998, p. 99) and for undermining ability of moral judgement {Burr, 2003 #804} and 'ideational focus' (Edwards et al. 1995; Szacki 2007). It has even been a subject to entertaining anecdotes delivered by critical realists about 'extreme social constructionists', who by reducing the entire world to language, ignore that things exist independently from our own experience, therefore eventually walking into furniture (Edwards et al. 1995, p. 26).

Scholars also refer to social constructionism as an epistemology, which constitutes a so-called 'light' or 'moderate' version of it (Sayer 1997; Parker 1998). The 'light' version of social constructionism does not question the ontological stance that a social world has got a particular 'shape', regardless what its residents think about it (Szacki 2007, p. 872). It entails that 'things' are situated in a particular historical context and best understood as a reflection of this context (Parker 1998). In this context, certain interpretations, and that in certain periods of time, particular interpretations of science and modes of validating knowledge are prevailing (Taylor 1998), which have repercussions over the 'identity' of social actors. The 'light' approach therefore often accepts a degree of fixity, in relation to, for instance character of people, practices, institutions and other social phenomena (Sayer 1997; Parker 1998). This, in the urban environment, can mean various 'material' consequences, relating to decision making over the flows of energy, resources, and materials use.

In the context of these debates, SKAD treats social constructionism rather as an epistemology, as Keller argues that:

'It does not indicate any kind of escape from reality and its occasionally painful materiality... [and] as the basic approach of a discourse-theoretical and analytical program, means focusing the analysis on the socially produced "order of things"... in this context, neither the resistant character

of reality nor the existence of physical phenomena and processes that are independent from assignment of meaning are denied' (Keller 2011, p. 62).

In this vein, one should note that Keller uses both terms 'constructionism' and 'constructivism' in his work without explaining what the latter means against the former. He argues in SKAD the meaning is produced in consciousness, and in this vein converges with scholars working within the sociological tradition of 'symbolic interactionism' and 'interpretivism', who often use the term 'constructivism' in order to acknowledge social psychological inspirations (Schwandt 1994). However, the debates about the differences between 'social constructionism' and 'constructivism' are complex and will not be discussed further here. Finally, the implications of using this 'light' version of social constructionism in this study are addressed below, in the section dedicated to the notion of discourse and social interaction.

4.3.2. Discourse, social actors and power

Following SKAD, this research pursues 'social constructions' of sustainability consultants with particular reference to the notion of 'discourse' as defined by Foucault. Although the scholarship of Foucault has been criticised for not fitting within a particular field (Sawyer 2002), and with regard to being complex and inconsistent (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002; Wagenaar 2011), it has been widely applied to investigate planning policy and practice (Feindt and Oels 2005).

Foucault perceived discourse as a context within which the knowledge is produced and reproduced and an act to structure what is 'thinkable' (Atkinson 1999). In this vein, 'discourse is constituted by a group of sequences of signs, in so far as they are statements, that is, in so far as they can be assigned particular modalities of existence' (Foucault 1972, cited in Jansen 2008, p. 109). Conversely in SKAD, they are defined as 'regulated, structured practices of sign usage', which yet are heterogeneous entities that involve competing knowledge claims (Keller 2011, p. 51). Keller (2011, p. 46) also believes that Foucault advanced the understanding of knowledge within the sociology of knowledge tradition based on the idea of discourses as socio-historically 'situated practices' rather than structures of arguments, and that he 'liberate(d) discourse analysis from the specific linguistic issues' with ideas that knowledge/discourse and power are mutually intertwined.

Also, this research contends that knowledge is produced within discursive practices through its connection to power structures. Foucault argued that power, discourse and truth are intertwined, and that every discourse has its own 'regime of truth', which embeds acceptable definitions and solutions to a certain issue (Foucault and Gordon 1980; Hajer 1993; Foucault 1995; Sharp and Richardson 2001; Jørgensen and Phillips 2002). He stressed that texts can be considered as representations of such functions as they have rhetorical, legitimizing and synthesizing capacities. Foucault claimed that 'power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere', that power relations are also socially and historically contingent (Foucault 1976, p. 93).

With regard to the influence of discourse on social actors, Foucault claimed that language constructs and controls social relations and institutions, 'actors and relations between them' (Rydin 1998, p. 178), and that through discourse 'things and identities get constructed' (Lees 2004, p. 102). Therefore, in terms of the relationship between structuring and structured objects, subjects and processes, Keller (2005, 2011) claims that social actors and discourses are involved in 'structuration' processes, where discourses are structured by actors, and vice versa. He explains:

'In the words of Anthony Giddens, to the "duality of structure" (Giddens 1986: 24–26)... structures originate out of actions, and in turn, actions originate out of structures in the process of structuring. There is no discourse without statement events; without discourses, statement events could not be understood, typified and interpreted, and therefore could not constitute a collective reality. This kind of structure is both structured—i.e., is the result of previous structure-forming processes—and structuring in respect to the scopes of future discursive events' (Keller 2011, pp. 53-54).

Also, in the context of SKAD, social actors have unfixed and complex identities (Keller 2005, 2011). They are individuals or collectives:

'[Who] are not the empty addressees of knowledge supplies and the value assessments embedded therein, but they are also socially configured incarnations of agency, according to the socio-historical and situational conditions, who more or less obstinately interpret social knowledge supplies as "offered rules" in their everyday interpretation of activities' (italic as in the original) (Keller 2011, p. 54).

Building on this overview, one can attempt to differentiate between SKAD and other 'types' of discourse analysis with regard to theoretical underpinnings and analytical focus. According to Keller (2011), SKAD's discourse analysis diverges theoretically from Critical Discourse Analysis as it is too concerned with language in action and the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe for being concerned too much with the issues of hegemony. However, he provides little insights into it. In this vein, however, it can be deducted that SKAD breaks from the scholarship inspired by Marx, as the latter represents a foci on the issues of interests, ideology, hegemony, rather than the interplay between power and knowledge (Lees 2004; Jacobs 2006). It assumes that 'the exercise of power is contingent on the relationships formed between individuals within and beyond organisations' (Jacobs 2006, p. 41). Also, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) draws strongly on Marx and appears to be more some concerned with the interplay between interests and language in action rather than social world and knowledge structures (Feindt and Oels, 2005; Keller 2011, Hook 2001).

This being said, what Keller fails to acknowledge is the scholarship of Foucault in relation to 'discourse'-inspired discourse analysis methodology (also in the field of

urban planning) in many ways: (i) Richardson (1996) points out that Critical Discourse Analysis can be also based on the scholarship of Foucault (see: Fairclough 1992), (ii) SKAD shares with CDA assumptions about the dialectical relationship between discourse and social practices (rather than discourse as 'constitutive' or 'constituted') (as in: Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, p. 20). Finally, one should note that many scholars claim to be inspired by Marx and/or Foucault to greater and/or lesser extent in their discourse analyses and that these inspirations can find variety of reflections in the assumptions about the nature of a human and social world, and relationship between structure and agency.

In the context of newly emerging discourse-analytical traditions, one should note that discourse analysis within SKAD shares the theoretical assumptions and analytical focus on the structures of knowledge in relation to power, with Argumentative Discourse Analysis of Forester and Fischer (1993), which also uses the ideas of Foucault in relation to 'discourse'. However, detailed deliberations about how the SKAD of Keller is executed in the study can be found later in the chapter. Before then, the case study strategy of inquiry is presented, which is considered the most suitable with regard to research questions and the SKAD framework of Keller (2011).

4.4. Case study

A key element of the strategy of inquiry in this research is a case study. This 'strategy of inquiry' allows the making of 'connections between lived experience, social injustices, larger social and cultural structures, and the here and now' (Denzin and Lincoln 2005b, p. 375). One cannot detach it from considerations about epistemology and research methodology, and research questions, explained below.

The case study is a reliable and respectable strategy of inquiry in the field of social sciences and is well established with regard to urban policy and practice (Ritchie and Lewis 2003; Flyvbjerg 2006; Mitchell 2006; Adams 2008). In general, it can be defined as 'an in-depth study of the particular, where the researcher seeks to increase his or her understanding of the phenomena studied' (Johansson 2002, cited in Ruddin 2006, p. 798). However, it is particularly useful in explaining how a social occurrence or ranges of occurrences emerge with regard specific circumstances, and the context that the case is bound with. A 'case' constitutes an 'entity' with its context and 'should be read in their entirety' (Flyvbjerg 2001, p. 86). In the context of research questions regarding the role of consultants in urban planning in relation to knowledge, a case study is able to combine situational, contextual circumstances within which knowledge is produced and 'transferred', with a micro focus on processes of social interaction and power dynamics. It facilitates 'richness of detail' and is essentially flexible in practice (Masser and Williams 1986; Yin 2009). It also allows one to reconstruct and summarise, what other methodologies would not be able to, the complex narratives of a real life (Flyvbjerg 2006). This, as the literature review suggested, is an important aspect of consultants' work, whose role towards a client does not rely on solely providing know-how to resolve a particular problem, but also entails 'sharing' or 'imposing'

certain understandings of urban problems, values and norms, which are embedded in the forms of 'stories' about urban change.

Scholars in social sciences depict multiple ways to find a 'case'. They, however, often draw from positivist traditions and embody the term in terms of a 'sampling' or 'sampling strategy', 'probability sampling' (e.g. Eisenhardt 1989), while this research is not concerned with questions about statistical representativeness, but 'whether something is or is not an instance of the relevant phenomenon' (Bauer and Gaskell 2000, p. 187). In this research, the 'case' has been selected purposively, based on characteristics of social phenomena (Bauer and Gaskell 2000; Stake 2000; Ritchie and Lewis 2003; Flyvbjerg 2006; Mitchell 2006). Also, this research pursues a single case study, which is a large scale, and multi-functional urban development proposal in a major Polish city. The case study is anonymous, and it is attributed the 'Arena' name, in order to capture the characteristics of the development site, especially a stadium located in it, whilst 'Midfields' in the name to describe its surrounding. The key premises of this choice are explained in the section below.

The rationale for the selection of the 'Arena' as a single case study is that it featured international sustainability consultants and involved the use of a sustainability assessment method, therefore is expected to demonstrate how discourses about consultants and sustainability assessment unfold in a particular local context. Also, the case study is a single urban development proposal as opposed to a particular consultancy or/and a number of its projects for a number of reasons. First, it concerns the researcher's primary interests in the role of specialist and lay knowledge(s) in contemporary challenges in urban planning, rather than management dilemmas in the context of inter- and intra-institutional dynamics, which is primarily subject of the business studies. Secondly, this study is designed to achieve rather a considerable 'depth' of understanding of the particularities of processes of knowledge production and dissemination, rather than 'breadth' or focusing on 'repetitiveness' of a certain aspect of knowledge dissemination. Also, the selection of a single case, against a number of cases, was made, as the case study can be considered a 'special' one for a number of reasons. There are premises to think that the reputation of consultants and truthfulness of knowledge outcomes produced in the context of sustainability assessment could play a particularly important role in the 'Arena' case study as it concerns a potentially economically and environmentally 'sensitive' area of a city, with regard to (i) the scale of the project – it is a 20ha area in a city centre of a major city; (ii) its prominence, meaning that the development represented a flagship regeneration project on an international scale (which will be elaborated upon in the introductory sector of Chapter 5) and it was the only 'case' among other development proposals carried out that gained considerable publicity.

Finally, the context of Poland is chosen to deliver new insights on an under-researched area of urban studies, which is about the role of private sector consultants in urban development processes, with an emphasis given to consultancy knowledge around sustainable development. Exploring urban phenomena in Poland is particularly interesting as there are no in-depth studies

that focus on the global travel of knowledge with regard to the role and influence of transnational consultants in urban development in this context. Also, this research could exemplify wider issues relating to the potentially growing role of consultancies in urban regeneration in post-Socialist transition countries. One could note that resting on the ideas about the relative fixity of local social and institutional context in Poland and its influence on knowledge transfer and innovation building in Poland, the insights into the roles of private sector consultants in knowledge production and transfer in the context of sustainability assessment could be then used to develop a hypothesis. The research proceeds with the presentation of how the data collection strategy in the 'Arena' case was executed.

4.4.1. Data collection strategy and data sources

In this research, it is assumed that data collection and analysis are processes executed simultaneously. The latter is considered a logical extension of the former, as organisation of data collection proceedings is part of the interpretation (Flick et al. 2004; Soeffner 2004). The general approach to data collection and analysis is based on the idea of 'triangulation'. It entails use of multiple data sources: primary sources (interviews), documentary sources and secondary sources, for the purpose of gaining an in-depth understanding of processes of knowledge production and transfer in the context of consultants (Flick et al. 2004; Stake 2005; Silverman 2006). In particular, triangulation was used to indicate the 'points' of convergence or divergence in the ways the social actors 'structure' social phenomena (including contradicting ideas embedded in one's discourse) as well as validating the chains of social occurrences (events), and spatial and temporal circumstances in which social utterances are produced. Triangulation is thus not solely a tool or a strategy of validation (Flick et al. 2004; Denzin and Lincoln 2005a, b).

Primary data collection involved visiting multiple sites, spanning the areas in which knowledge was created, deployed and contested, which are primarily in two major Polish cities and one in England. Four field visits were conducted in the city where the 'Arena' development was proposed and where also one sustainability assessor (notably sustainability consultant 2; see Figure 1) of the development proposal is based. One field visit was conducted in another Polish major city, where another sustainability assessor (Sustainability Assessor 1) is situated. Also, three field visits were conducted to the Headquarters of the consultancy in London, England.

The relevance of the interviewees was determined based on mapping a decision making network in the context of the development proposal, especially the matters of sustainability assessment. This network was identified mainly based on the sustainability assessment report, which clearly stated individuals consulted in the processes of carrying out the assessment. The strategy was supported by the 'snowballing' technique, which aimed to identify those 'Arena' project stakeholders, who are not mentioned in the report, yet could play a role in delivering sustainability assessment. The interviews were semi-structured, conducted face to face, in the natural setting of interviewees – their workplaces

Three different schedules were developed: first, for sustainability consultants (with slight variations), second, for other project group members, third, for other project stakeholders (see Appendix 1). The interviewing strategy was purposefully deployed in order to observe how research participants act within their own context, and for the researcher to have some control over the line of enquiry. The interviewees are experts in the field, and possessed knowledge or information about the development proposal studied (Creswell 2009). At this point, it is worthwhile mentioning that the researcher gathered particularly insightful data from (i) the developer, who personally worked with sustainability consultants from Poland and coordinated the process of developing the proposal and carrying out the sustainability assessment; (ii) two sustainability assessors from Poland, who had first-hand expertise about the proposed development, the site and sustainability issues; and (iii) a local master planner, who on behalf of the city council, worked on a policy framework that concerns the 'Arena' site and had good understanding of the local spatial and institutional context.

The general approach to data collection included tape recording and taking notes. In the light of limited consent for tape recording (which is addressed further on in this section) an important part of data collection and analysis was taking notes. Altogether, three interviews were tape-recorded and twenty one interviews were captured through note-taking. In practice, the researcher's strategy was to take as many notes as possible during the interview, quoting statements and words used by an interviewee, rather than noting down the interviewees' communicative statements as responses to the research questions. Also, notes were taken in the language of the interviewee in order to preserve meanings embedded in language, and avoid any unnecessary loss of meaning. The interview notes were checked and typed up after an event in order to reduce the scale of any loss of detail. The interview notes involved reflections on general impressions of the research and about the interview, stressing what discourses dominated interviews, and ideas about how the interviewee approached the interview. More detailed insights into the experience of interviewing and the approach taken in response to the issues raised above is addressed in Appendix 3.

Data collection involved piloting elements in the early stages of this research. At this time, it was established that the research questions concern consultants, however the more precise focus regarding sustainable development was not fully specified at that point in time. The piloting activities took place between October 2009 and February 2010. They included desk research: collection and review of on-line materials addressing the 'Arena' development proposal, especially the project website, newspaper articles as well as information about the consulting company. They also involved a visit to the sustainability consultancy headquarters in London inquiring about their engagement in sustainable development, and a field visit in Poland. This led to semi-structured interviews with several project stakeholders, in particular the developer, the representatives of the city council and the local master planner. The purpose of these meetings was to refine the roles of various actors in the project and unpack how the broad issues of sustainable development

were addressed in the case study to verify the case study selection criteria, and secure access to data.

During initial visits in the field, interviews were not recorded but detailed notes were taken. During these visits the most important documentary sources from the point of view of the research questions were collected. One shall note that they have never been disclosed to the public and include, among others, (i) the development proposal booklet, a sixty page document with pictures, maps, diagrams describing in detail the proposed investment, which includes a separate section about sustainable development and sustainability assessment; (ii) the compact version of the sustainability assessment report of the 'Arena' development proposal carried out by sustainability consultants. The document states how the assessment was conducted and what parties were consulted in the process. The main outcome of the document analysis and interviews was the reaffirmation that sustainability assessment played an important role in the 'Arena' case study, which data analysis chapters – Chapters 5, 6 and 7 – will demonstrate.

The researcher conducted further interviews, as part of the 'main' field work in summer 2010 and autumn 2010. The last two interviews with sustainability consultants in London were conducted at the beginning of 2011. For this purpose, a schedule of interview questions was developed. In total, twenty one key project stakeholders' interviews were conducted (see Table 4.1.).

Table 4.1. List of interviewees

Function in the project	Project group	Organisation	Country	Date of Interview
Developer	Yes	Developer	Poland	13-Oct-09
				08-Nov-10
Junior Architect 1	Yes	Architect studio	Poland	14-Jul-10
Senior Architect 2	Yes	Architect studio	Poland	15-Jul-10
Sustainability Consultant 1	Yes	Sustainability consultancy	Poland	25-Mar-10
Sustainability Consultant 2	Yes	Sustainability consultancy	Poland	13-Nov-09
Senior Consultant	Yes	Sustainability consultancy	United Kingdom	19-Oct-09
				11-Feb-11
Head of Consulting Division	Yes	Sustainability consultancy	United Kingdom	11-Feb-11
Junior Consultant	Yes	Sustainability consultancy	United Kingdom	26-Jan-10
Environmental Consultant	Yes	Local Development Agency	Poland	09-Nov-10
Public	Yes	Public Relations	Poland	10-Nov-10

Relations Manager 1		agency		
Public Relations Manager 2	Yes	Public Relations agency	Poland	10-Nov-10
Sports club Manager	Yes	Sports club	Poland	10-Nov-10
Designer 1	Yes	Master planning and Urban Regeneration consultancy	United Kingdom	19-Jan-11
Designer 2	Yes	Master planning and Urban Regeneration consultancy	United Kingdom	19-Jan-11
Head of Local Planning Office	No	City Council	Poland	08-Nov-10
			Poland	13-Nov-09
Senior Spatial Policy Officer 1	No	City Council	Poland	13-Nov-09
Senior Spatial Policy Officer 2	No	City Council	Poland	13-Nov-09
Chair of Local District Council Board	No	Local District Council	Poland	10-Nov-10
Local Master planner	No	Master planning studio	Poland	13-Nov-09
				25-Mar-10
				13-Jul-10
Junior Master planner	No	Master planning studio	Poland	13-Nov-09
Local Journalist	No	Local newspaper	Poland	13-Jul-10

Source: author's own construction

Based on the table above, one can note two groups of stakeholders interviewed – ‘Arena’ project group members, and other project stakeholders. The project group members include: the developer (also referred to in this thesis as the ‘client’), the sustainability consultants (or simply ‘consultants’; both terms are used only to address the members of Sustainability Consultancy, which is one of the primary objects of investigation in this thesis), the designers (1 and 2), the architects (1 and 2) and the environmental consultant. The rest of the project group members are associated with the term ‘other project stakeholders’. Also, the table points out that the developer and the representative of the council (the Head of the Spatial Planning Office) were interviewed twice, with the first meeting focusing on defining the scope of interests of the researcher, securing access to data through establishing face to face contact and secondary data collection. The outcomes of the meetings, in the format of notes, were transcribed and analysed in detail.

Also, for the purpose of research inquiry, the researcher obtained seventy one secondary and documentary data sources, including the articles in two local daily newspapers, one national daily newspaper and ecological portal, national business magazine, the portal of 'Midfields', a construction magazine, information from social portal 'Skyscraper city' and policy documents (regarding the city council in Poland and sustainability consultancy), reports about the 'Arena' project prepared by the project group members and websites (see Appendix 2). These sources can be broadly defined with regard to agency/author: the developer, the sustainability consultancy, the architect studio, the newspaper 1 and so on, and this is how they are referred to in the analysis chapters (Chapter 5, 6, 7). One should also note that (i) the most prominent contribution in the matter of coverage of the 'Arena' development proposal in the media was made by a daily local newspaper 1, (ii) the website of the project shut down in 2011, however, the researcher managed to get access to it and make notes prior to that point and the cut-off date for data collection for the entire thesis was October 2013.

All data collected was then subject to coding. Coding of interview notes, transcripts and secondary data was conducted in English. The research employed a mixed strategy of coding – deductive and inductive (Bazeley 2007; Creswell 2009). The data analysis procedure was deductive, in the sense that the research design imposed a particular focus on discourses (re)produced in the context of consultants and their actions. The inductive elements involved a bottom-up strategy of meanings construction as suggested by Keller (2011). Data was analysed in sequential, extensive and detailed way, in a line-by-line manner (Keller 2011), with a care was taken not to prejudge meaning or to 'create(s) an account of many conceivable/possible interpretations', which Keller, after Hitzler, calls an 'artificial stupidity' (Hitzler 2005). Also, Nvivo software was used for the purpose of efficient data management, especially storage and analysis (Bazeley 2007). The paragraph below presents the details of how data analysis was executed using the premises of SKAD as an analytical framework.

4.5. Operationalising SKAD

As stated in the Introduction (Chapter 1), the SKAD approach entails a particular methodological framework (Keller 2011). It consists of an '*interpretative frame*' – an analytical device inspired by the concept of the '*interpretative repertoire*' of discourse by Potter and Wetherell (Potter et al., 1990). Keller (2005, 2011) acknowledges that the concept of '*interpretative frame*', which emerged in the 1970s in Germany, is quite broad and accumulated considerable scholarship that is complex and incoherent. The relevant considerations can be found in the field of social and human sciences, especially political science. The '*interpretative repertoire*' of discourse is a theme that bounds various discourses. It is used by Keller as an '*interpretative frame*' of discursive phenomena in a society (Keller 2005, 2011). The '*interpretative frame*' represents the 'typified clusters of disparate elements of meaning production, the core configuration of signs, symbols, sentences and utterances, which create a coherent ensemble of meaning'

(paragraph 27 in: Keller 2005); a 'fundamental meaning and action-generating schemata, which are circulated through discourses and make it possible to understand what phenomenon is all about'. It is a macro structure that links discourses into a meaningful, yet not homogenous whole, although Keller provides little clues of how they are supposed to be addressed.

Also, as a part of the '*interpretative frame*', Keller (2011) distinguishes the '*classifications*', '*phenomenal structure*', and '*narrative structure*'. '*Classifications*' represent the qualifications of phenomena performed with and by various discourses – 'more or less elaborate, formalised and institutionally fixed form[s] of social typification process' (Keller 2011, p. 57). The '*phenomenal structure*' provides insights into causal and normative settings of the reproduction of discourses, with regard to the notions of '*causes*', '*responsibilities*', '*need for action/problem solving*', '*self-positioning*', '*other positioning*', '*culture of things/wealth*' and '*values*' (for an illustration see Figure 3). Within SKAD, Keller also proposes to explore the '*narrative structure*'. According to Keller (2005, 2011, 2012), '*narrative structure*' brings together the elements of the '*interpretative frame*,' classifications and phenomenal structure into a story line, a plot, and allows the researcher to bring into surface dramaturgical elements of social interaction. The '*narrative structure*' understood by Keller (2011, p. 59) as 'episodes and processes, personal and the "*actants*" and their specific positioning, the spatial and temporal structures as well as the dramaturgy (the plot) of a story line... as narratives are the elements of knowledge configurations through discursive events'. In the case study the insights into '*narrative structure*' were difficult to execute due to lack of full transcripts (detailed analysis was difficult to perform).

Table 4.2. Keller's phenomenal structure of the administrative discourse on waste issues in France

Dimensions	Concrete Implementation
Causes	Waste as 'sanitary issue'; discrepancy between amount produced and disposal or recycling infrastructure
	Wealth growth, economic and technical advances, consumption needs of the consumers [causing] rise in waste produced
	Waste as a problem of deficient waste disposal at landfills
	Waste as a problem of the lack of citizen responsibility and discipline
Responsibilities	Politics/Government/National administration (must develop and enforce a waste politics framework program in coordination with the economy)
	Regional corporations, economy (individual responsibility for the implementation of the political specifications)
Need for action/problem solving	Low problem level; technical mastery of the waste issue is possible through recycling and elimination; guidelines: (...) technological expansion of disposal and recycling infrastructure, (...) comprehensive mobilization of citizens' responsibility (local authorities, economy, consumers)
	Regional corporations, economy (individual responsibility for the implementation of the political specifications)
Self-positioning	Representatives of the scientific-technical, economic reason, of civil (socio-cultural, socio-technical) progress
Other positioning	Civil actors (regional corporations, economy, citizens) show their lack of consciousness for their responsibility irrational fears and suppression
	Irrationalism and fundamentalism of German waste politics, disguise for economic protectionism
Culture of things/wealth	Not a topic of waste discussion; follows seemingly 'sacrosanct' modernization dynamics and market rationalities; material model of affluence; freedom of needs (production and consumption)
Values	Government secures collective interests (...), nature as a resource, whose usage can be optimized, 'Society as it is here and now' as realization of 'good life'

Source: Keller (2011, p. 59)

In this context, one should note that Keller did not explain how he derived the 'concrete implementations' yet, they in combination with the definitions above, they are expected to help and guide data analysis.

Having described the analytical frame proposed by Keller, the section further presents how it was executed in the 'Arena' case study. Keller admits the SKAD methodological propositions do not come as a complete entity: it can therefore be tailored based in the context of a particular case. With regard to the SKAD's '*interpretative frame*', one faces the question: what is being framed? In this vein, the adopted approach here also took insights from the scholarship of 'frame analysis'. It directed the researcher towards the idea of 'issue framing', which can be understood as 'different ways in which actors make sense of specific issues by selecting the relevant aspects, connecting them into a sensible whole, and delineating its boundaries' (Putnam and Holmer 1992, cited in Dewulf et al. 2004, p. 178). In this study, the 'issue framing' was captured with regard to dominating (often repeating) statements on two fronts (i) the reputation of consultancy (and consultants), (ii) the reliability of sustainability assessment, and in a particular space and time, as there is no data to inform how individual's 'frame' changed over time, in the processes of social interaction. In the context of the two 'issues' mentioned above, the processes of deriving '*phenomenal structure*' and '*classifications*' were simultaneous, followed by '*interpretative frame*', based on primary, secondary data and documentary data.

The process of deriving the '*phenomenal structure*' was based on a table proposed by Keller (Figure 4.2.) and first executed per source (e.g. interview script, policy document), then per agency (e.g. consultancy, developer). In a process of building up an 'agency view', attention was paid to nuances of discourses – as heterogeneous entities, they include competing and often contradictory knowledge claims. In the context of '*phenomenal structure*', they manifest themselves as differences in, for instance '*values*' transcending through particular knowledge claims (which are also underpinned by the circumstances in which the statements are made). This was particularly the case of 'bringing together' – comparing and contrasting – constellations of knowledge embedded in documentary sources (often directed to the public) as opposed to scripts from anonymised interviews. In the context of a particular '*phenomenal structure*' table, the researcher derived '*classifications*'.

Here, it is important to note that Keller does not elaborate on the meaning of the concept of '*classifications*', neither does he propose a particular way to extract data to inform it. Instead, he directs a reader to the scholarship of Bowker and Leigh-Star (1999) and argues that they created a comprehensive framework to analyse '*classifications*' in a society (Keller 2005, 2011). However, having reviewed the source, one learns that '*classifications*' can be found everywhere. As people talk, they classify social phenomena (Bowker and Star 1999). Therefore, in the case study, the '*classifications*' were derived as adjectives and adverbs describing the scope of qualification (and in the context of sustainability assessment,

quantification) of social phenomenal transcending through discourses about consultants. This emerged in the end as a view about where does something fit in the scope of interpretations – extremes, which in the context of '*phenomenal structure*' allowed reflecting upon what social actors consider as, for instance, 'good' or 'bad', and why.

With regard to '*narrative structure*', it is important to note that again, Keller does not provide a particular pathway. Broadly, 'narratives' are universal interpretative-analytic tools that help to examine how social phenomena and occurrences are constructed as they allow asking questions about why a story is told in a particular way (Riessman 1994; Hajer 1995; Daiute and Lightfoot 2004; Elliott 2005; Hajer and Versteeg 2005a; Hajer 2005; Keller 2005; Hajer 2006b; Keller 2011). Narrative structures are created through discourses being tied up together, in order to create a communicative, portrayable representation (Daiute and Lightfoot 2004; Keller 2011).

Narratives appear in various disciplines: economics, political science, psychology, philosophy, anthropology, ethnography, and education and have even acquired the relevant framework name 'narratology' (Kreisworth 1992, cited in Borisenkova 2009, p. 70). Keller suggests that tracking '*narrative structures*' is about finding discursive events, episodes and seeing how the dynamics of the structure of discourse encompass it. It is about what is being said and how it is being said, the setting of the communicative utterances (Keller 2012). However, as proposed by Keller, the narrative analysis was difficult to execute due to the fact that the researcher had limited access to data. The only source that treated upon face to face interaction between project stakeholders, in detail, based on a statement-by-statement basis was a committee meeting that took place in the city council in winter 2009. It involved a conversation between the developer and the representatives of the council about the development proposal and did not cover the sustainability consultants' reputation or the sustainability assessment. In short, if there is a narrative, it took place in a more dispersed, fragmented way, across an array of sites; only occasionally yielding accessible documentary or interview data.

At the same time, it is important to note that some elements of '*narrative analysis*' are embedded in the '*phenomenal structure*' of discourse, as the latter sheds light on what leads to the emergence of a particular occurrence and what was its outcome, as understood by Hajer (1993, 1995); Hajer and Wagenaar (2003); Hajer and Versteeg (2005b); Hajer (2006b). In particular, the narrative analysis as proposed by Hajer (under various terms, for instance Argumentative Discourse Analysis or Dramaturgy analysis) broadly relies upon reconstruction of 'story lines' (including metaphors), which depicts a certain understanding that one uses as 'a short hand' in discussions (Hajer 2006b, p. 69). Whereas in the context of SKAD, the matters of comparing a certain occurrence to a different one transcend through such analytical concepts as '*self-positioning*' and '*other positioning*', which refer to not only real-life rules of a social actor in, for example organisations, but a 'symbolic' position as a 'saviour'.

Having had the '*phenomenal structure*' and '*classifications*' derived, the analysis proceeded with comparing the 'actors' view in order to understand the points of convergence and track the emergence of '*discourse coalitions*' (if relevant). In this vein, SKAD also resembles discourse analysis as proposed by Hajer, whereby elements of narrative are mobilising forces that provide guidance for actions and allow assembling people in coalitions (Hajer 1993, 2006b). It then proceeds to assess how the '*discourse coalitions*' interact and in which circumstances one '*discourse coalitions*' wins over another.

Within the SKAD framework, Keller devotes little attention to the issues of researching power empirically. He provides no methodological and analytical clues about it, nor does he indicate a body of scholarship that could serve as a reference point for a researcher (as with the concepts of '*classifications*', and '*interpretative frame*', as mentioned above). This may come as no surprise as the scholarship of Foucault that served as an inspiration to SKAD, does not commit a researcher to one particular methodological pathway (Kelly 1994). The very notion of 'power' is considered by Foucault as 'inherent to all social relations', encompassing everything and everyone (Foucault and Gordon 1980), which, in turn, broadly support the idea that power is one of the most obscure, and one of the most debated concepts in social sciences (Haugaard 2002).

In order to bridge this gap, the research seeks to draw additional insights also from the study of the 'three faces' of power of Lukes (1974). In particular, there is considerable evidence that power effects are multidimensional and cannot be researched with regard to one particular dimension, for instance, 'who wins over whom' (Foucault and Gordon 1980; Foucault 1986). In this vein, Gaventa and Cornwall (2008) allude towards the idea of a 'four dimensional' view of power, by drawing both on Lukes (1974) and Foucault and Gordon (1980); Foucault (1986). They suggest that all three dimensions of power described by Lukes (1974) bring onto surface certain aspects of it, namely power as an attribute, resource (following the one dimensional view of power of Dahl, 1969); power as 'a mobilisation of biases', which relies on deliberately keeping certain actors away from decision making (two-dimensional view of power of Bachrach and Baratz, 1970); power as an ability to influence consciousness by using a range of 'less obvious' power tools, such as education, media and so on (Lukes 1974). Gaventa and Cornwall (2008) further suggest that they can complement the view of power as a 'force' ordering discourses, constructing 'regimes of truth' (Foucault and Gordon 1980; Foucault 1986), which is indeed a part of SKAD of Keller.

In this context, investigating power relations relies on looking at the notions '*speakers' positions*', and '*subject positioning*', which are parts of the '*phenomenal structure*' of SKAD, (i) the role of '*dispositif*' – institutional infrastructure of knowledge reproduction, including '*model practices*', 'exemplary patterns (or templates) for actions which are constituted in discourses for their addressees' (Keller 2011, p. 55), which create conditions of possibility of a particular occurrence (following Foucault); and (ii) in a way that the notions of '*speakers' positions*', and '*subject positioning*' are represented with regard to particular decision making

situations. Practically, the former relates to the research questions about ‘sources’ of consultants’ authority and consultants’ expectations about their effect on society and other project stakeholders (and an attempt to reconstruct ideational and practical ‘influences’), ‘prior’ to their engagement in a particular case, which from an outset can shape the relationships of power. For instance, consultants’ may hope for, or expect, admiration from project stakeholders in the context of some charitable contributions, or acceptance of their authority over other project stakeholders with regard to the scientific rigour of the proceedings they carry out.

The latter primarily relates to the matters of interaction around sustainability assessment and involves reconstructing ‘visible’ and ‘invisible’ effects of power during a particular event (or series of events). In this vein, one should note that looking at a ‘win-lose’ dichotomy in decision making is a relatively straightforward task, yet exploring ‘invisible’ effects of power appears more problematic. In particular, in this study, it involves an attempt to track possible change in individuals’ structures of sense-making, their goals and objectives in the context of interactions with consultants. The main reference points are about (i) accommodating norms and values of consultants’ in one’s judgement of a situation and into the sustainability assessment process, and (ii) facilitating or discouraging future use of the sustainability assessment methods and using (or not) ‘new’ knowledge claims, these sourced from sustainability consultants in making sense of a particular issue. Finally, one should note that in the data analysis chapters (Chapter 5, 6, and 7) all analytical concepts of SKAD are signposted by using inverted commas.

Having introduced the key premises of data collection and analysis, this research presents next, the deliberations about generalisation from the case study, and then, other research issues, in particular, ethical considerations and access to data. They inevitably have had an influence on the scope of opportunities of using the SKAD as research framework and guiding the methodological approach, which will be demonstrated in subsequent data analysis chapters (Chapter 5, 6 and 7).

4.5.1. Generalisation from research

The issues of ‘generalisation’ from qualitative case study research have been widely debated in the social sciences (Stake 2000; Ritchie and Lewis 2003; Mitchell 2006). Often, the underpinning debate was about which kind of research, quantitative or qualitative is able to ‘produce’ more reliable outcomes. It involved arguments of researchers working within a positivist tradition that qualitative research is ‘unscientific, only exploratory, or subjective’ (Denzin and Lincoln 2005a, p. 2), or that ‘one cannot generalise on the basis of an individual case; therefore, the case study cannot contribute to scientific development’. These arguments have been labelled by qualitative researchers as ‘misunderstandings’ about case studies (Flyvbjerg 2006; Ruddin 2006). However in this study, these issues are discussed here with regard to two interrelated themes based on Ruddin (2006) and Flyvbjerg (2006), on the one side; and Stake (2000, 2005) and Mitchell (2006), on the other side. The first theme includes references to the research design and what the

research aims to uncover (Mitchell 2006). The second one is about extrapolation from the case to larger numbers of cases (Stake 2000).

Generalisation concerns research design, in particular, the objectives, strategies and procedures of data analyses (Stake 2000; Ritchie and Lewis 2003; Soeffner 2004; Stake 2005; Flyvbjerg 2006; Mitchell 2006; Ruddin 2006; Platt 2007; Siggelkow 2007). In line with the idea that case studies have got a strong hypothetico-deductive character (Mitchell 2006), the issue of generalisation relates to the compatibility between the procedures of data analysis and research objectives, which allow a certain degree of theorisation. In the context of this particular case study, the research questions and data collection and analysis are concerned with the role of private sector consultants in the production and dissemination of knowledge. Outcomes of the analysis are expected to be used against existing scholarship about knowledge transfer in the field of urban planning.

The second important element of the generalisation strategy in the research is that it does not prevent extrapolation from a single case to a wider social system (Ritchie and Lewis 2003; Mitchell 2006). Findings derived from the 'Arena' development can be useful in understanding how knowledge transcends through other cases of development proposal featuring consultants generally, and sustainability assessment in particular, within and outside Poland (Stake 2000, 2005; Ruddin 2006). The issue emerges with reference to the concerns over the practical application of findings. 'It is a concern for which social interventions work best' (Ruddin 2006, p. 798). Last, but not least, an important function for the qualitative research is producing social science exemplars and the process of validation of findings is collective, bound with researchers' return visit in the field (Flyvbjerg 2006).

4.6. Other research issues

Now the thesis discusses the issues of positionality, research ethics and access to data. These deliberations allow to gain better understanding of relationship between the researcher and the social world described in the study, including practical concerns over the integrity of data collection strategy and the reliability of collected data.

4.6.1. Positionality

In the study, it is assumed that the researcher is part of the symbolic constellations of knowledge produced in the context of sustainability consultants. In line with social constructionism, the researcher cannot exist outside the reality of the case study by detaching a social object from the subject's interpretation of it (Ritchie and Lewis 2003; Denzin and Lincoln 2005a, b). The process of the interpretation of data by a researcher is 'interpretation of interpretation, understanding of understanding' (Szacki 2007, p. 872), as the data of a social scientist is pre-interpreted (Soeffner 2004). In fact, a researcher is a traveller 'who journeys with an interviewee. The meanings of the interviewee's "stories" are developed as the

traveller interprets them' (Legard et al. 2003, p. 139). In the study, the matters of co-production of reality do not entail the researcher deliberately intervening in the (re)production of accounts of the events. Also, the researcher does not prejudge meanings, or suggest certain answers. Instead, she attempts to tease information out from the interviewee by asking open-ended questions and follow-up questions.

In the study the key premise of the data analysis is to be cautious and not to prejudge meanings. Therefore, in the study, the researcher attempted to understand her own hermeneutics, to be reflexive towards her own strategies of data analysis in order to be truthful to empirical data (Reichertz 2004; Keller 2005, 2011), and be considerate about her own skills and abilities (Denzin and Lincoln 2005a, p. 3).

4.6.2. Research ethics and obstacles in access to data

In the research, the Cardiff University ethics guidelines were followed. The researcher obtained Ethics Committee approval for field work. In this study, ethical considerations included that the researcher informs interviewees about the purpose of the research, when possible, prior to any face to face contact. The researcher was also obliged to send potential interviewees a short version of the research proposal and information about general interview themes, as a basis for informed consent. However, the case study demonstrated that obtaining a tape record of the interview was particularly difficult, which is explained below in the context of the decisions about anonymising the case study.

Upon the commencement of the main phase of the field work in Poland in spring 2010 a number of data collection issues were encountered. They concerned primarily 'sensitivity' of the case studied in general and the fact that while establishing initial contact with several project stakeholders the researcher experienced issues of mistrust. The researcher understood that the development proposal was controversial based on media accounts prior to 'entering' a field. However, six months after that the development was rejected by the council, it had still generated 'negative' responses. These manifested themselves as a suspicion over the alleged 'real' interests of the researcher as opposed to a genuine attempt to explore issues of knowledge 'transfer' for the purpose of this research, and a reluctance to engage in the discussion about the project in general (which is depicted in detail in Chapter 7).

In order to tackle this issue – and to enhance access to data, and with considerations towards the comfort of an interviewee, a decision was taken to anonymise the case study, so that neither the name of the development proposal, nor the names of agencies and project stakeholders represented are explicit. If the name of the case study would be disclosed, then identification of individuals is possible based on publically available information (such as newspapers articles). In this context, the case study was then given the name 'Arena', in a resemblance of features of a particular development proposal, and 'Midfields' with regard to a particular socio-spatial context in which 'Arena' is located (which is explained in

detail in Chapter 5). This strategy, as this research demonstrates, helped to build up trust between the interviewer and interviewees; albeit just partially as, in many cases, the latter did not agree to be recorded.

When in the field, the researcher also experienced other, practical issues regarding access to data. The developer was not approachable via phone, email, or in person (requests were turned down a number of times by a secretary in spite of the fact that the developer agreed to participate in the research). Interviews were also declined by: the Head of a local sports club (in this case, the second-in-command manager was interviewed), second project manager (she was on health leave), a local councillor (did not want to take part of the research), the Head of the architecture studio (did not want to be interviewed, however directed the researcher to two of his colleagues), a junior master planner (who was not allowed to share any information) as well as a range of identified stakeholders who did not admit to be working on the case study at all (two sustainability consultants from London).

Also, in spite of the anonymous treatment of the case study, the researcher encountered difficulties in obtaining data due to the contractual nature of relationship between a consultant and a client. For detailed insights about the case study, some interviewees directed the researcher to the developer for consent. This was particularly the case of sustainability consultant 1, who did not want to be recorded and he did not agree to disclose the full version of the sustainability assessment report without having permission from a developer (the permission was not granted, as the researcher learnt afterwards), however detailed notes from the conversation with the consultant were taken.

That being said, the interviews that were conducted provided rich insights, as they were conducted with the 'key players' in the politics of knowledge in the 'Arena' case study, which is demonstrated in the analysis chapters (Chapter 5, Chapter 6, and Chapter 7). They illuminated a set of issues shaping knowledge that documentary data did not disclose or unambiguously indicated. They involved in particular, consultant-client relationships and related to the position of a developer towards the 'Arena' development proposal. The research findings were additionally strengthened by a range documentary and secondary data sources as presented above.

After the field work, during the writing up stage, the researcher partially learnt why access to data proved difficult, especially on the side of the project group. These extend beyond the project itself being controversial, as addressed in the next chapters. It turned out that the main concern of the interviewees was that the developer intended to re-submit the development proposal after being turned down in 2009. During field work several interviewees indicated that their contracts with the developer have not 'officially finished'. Indeed, as the time demonstrated in 2013 the developer emerged with a revised development proposal, which was rejected by the council at the beginning of 2014 with the resolution of the court

that the developer cannot extend the land lease regarding the development site. However, in general, data collection and analysis finally concluded in October 2013.

Chapter 5 Knowledge production and consultancy reputation

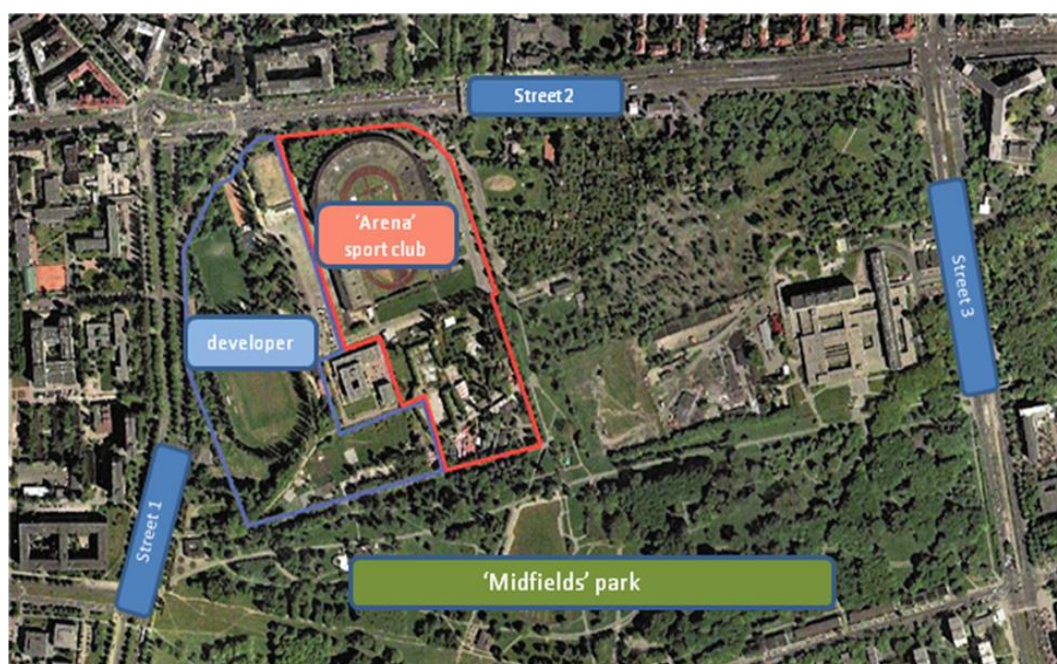
This chapter presents the analysis of the roles of consultants in the production and dissemination of knowledge in the field of urban planning with regard to their reputation. It begins with a description of the 'Arena' development proposal, providing a chronological account of its implementation. A number of events are identified as having provoked the emergence and fall of the development proposal. The second part of the chapter discusses the reputation of sustainability consultants and the credibility of their expertise using SKAD methods presented above. The application of SKAD is based on analytical concepts such as the '*interpretative frame*', '*phenomenal structure*' – '*causal structure*', '*responsibilities*', '*need for action/problem solving*', '*self-positioning*', '*other positioning*', '*culture of things/wealth*' and '*values*', as well as '*classifications*'. The chapter draws attention to the idea that in spite of their considerable efforts to be recognised as a credible source of knowledge, the reputation of consultants is a relative construct, contested across time and space.

5.1. Presentation of 'Arena' development proposal

The setting of the 'Arena' development is the extended city centre of a major Polish city. It concerns a 20.4 hectares site located by a 'Midfields' park, see Figure 5.1. The image below (Figure 5.1.) shows the 'Arena' site as consisting of two parts; bounded by the red line (12.2 hectares) and blue line (8.2 hectares). The reason for this division is explained below and in the subsequent chapters. The 'Arena' site is owned by the city council and is under the jurisdiction of three local (district) councils. It is temporarily utilised by the 'Arena' sports club, which built there an athletics stadium¹. The reason is that the city sold the lease of the site to the sports club in 1974 for forty years.

¹ Here, it is important to note that in the thesis the term 'Arena' is used in three ways: as a sports club, a site, and a development proposal. They however all refer to the same spatial entity.

Figure 5.1. Map of the site.



Source: Developer (2008)

The right of land lease is regulated by the Polish Civil Act from 1964 – cf. *Kodeks Cywilny, Tom II, Księga II, Art. 232-243 z 1964 roku*. According to the law, the right authorises its holder to exploit the site in line with the objectives set up by its owner, under the condition that the site user pays to its owner an annual fee. In the case of the 'Arena' site, the land lease agreement between the city council and the 'Arena' sports club allows the latter to generate profits from day to day commercial activities in exchange for the maintenance and development of sport infrastructure on the site. This arrangement is stipulated in a letter from the vice president of the city to a local councillor which explains the legal status of the 'Arena' site.

The part of the land lease right obtained by the 'Arena' sports club was then sold to an international private sector development company² in December 2000. It concerns the 12.2 hectare area (blue line bound area on Figure 5.1.), which surrounds the athletics stadium. The aim of this agency was to establish a hotel in the site. However, the planning permission was not granted. The agency 'kept' the land lease right until July 2006 and then sold it to another organisation, who decided to produce a proposal for the redevelopment of 'Arena'. This development proposal is the subject of this study.

It is useful to point to two important and interrelated issues regarding the condition of the entire 'Arena' site and sports club in 2006, when the second private sector development agency obtained the land lease. Firstly, the club faced considerable financial issues. According to information provided by the local daily newspaper 1 and insights from the interviews (especially with the developer and the 'Arena' sports club manager), the 'Arena' sports club was indebted to a number of

² The term 'developer' is used to describe the individual interviewed for the purpose of the study.

organisations, e.g. *Zakład Ubezpieczeń Społecznych* (the national social security service), *Urząd Skarbowy* (the national tax office), and the city council. The debts were estimated at 20 million PLN (*Polski Nowy Złoty* – Polish currency). The second point extracted from interviews with the ‘Arena’ project stakeholders is that these financial difficulties resulted in the lack of maintenance of the stadium, swimming pools, breaches and grandstands, and racetrack, which raised important concerns over the safety of its users among all project stakeholders.

Furthermore, the Head of *Biuro Planowania Przestrzennego* in the city council, thereafter referred to as the Head of the Local Planning Office pointed to a number of issues with regard to the spatial policy arrangements of the development site in July 2006. She stated that the ‘Arena’ developer took over the land lease (from the previous developer) when planning policy arrangements addressing the area expired. According to the Planning Act I Poland, which is *Ustawa o Planowaniu i Zagospodarowaniu Przestrzennym z 23 marca 2003*, local spatial policy arrangements include two main elements. One is *Studium Uwarunkowań i Kierunków Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego* (‘The Study of Conditionings and Proposed Development’ – authors own translation). The second one is the *Miejscowy Plan Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego*, (‘The Local Spatial Plan’ – author’s own translation).

The *Miejscowy Plan Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego* represents the local plan and it is legally binding. The implications of the *Miejscowy Plan Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego* to granting a planning permission is that a proposed development must fit into the arrangements stated in the document with regard to both the functions attributed to a site and the height of buildings. While the *Studium Uwarunkowań i Kierunków Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego* is not part of the local law, however it holds implications for *Miejscowy Plan Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego*. In the data analysis chapters *Studium Uwarunkowań i Kierunków Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego* is addressed as ‘*Studium*’, and *Miejscowy Plan Zagospodarowania Przestrzennego* is called a local plan.

According to the information obtained from the Head of the Local Planning Office, the local plan for the ‘Arena’ site expired on the 23 March 2003 due to legislation change. Similarly, there was no *Studium* that would include the ‘Arena’ development site in July 2006. The city council, however, undertook resolutions in 2003 to prepare and enact both the *Studium* for the city as a whole and the local plan for the ‘Midfields’ area. In this context, it is worthwhile mentioning that the ‘Midfields’ area concerns not only a park as the Figure 5.1. displays, but also a wider surrounding of the ‘Arena’ site, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 7. The city council commissioned a private master planning studio to prepare the local plan of ‘Midfields’. Additionally, the *Studium* for the city was enacted in October 2006, shortly after the developer purchased the right of perpetual land lease to the site.

Although the details of the development proposal were not announced until 2008, the news about the investment appeared in a key local daily newspaper 1, local daily newspaper 2 and national daily newspaper 1 in July 2006. The local daily

newspaper 1 speculated about the profile of the investment, in particular the intentions of the developer to regenerate the 'Arena' area, combining sport and commercial functions. In the meantime, the developer assembled a project group. The parties were selected through a process of bidding and were contracted in various ways, usually for a couple of months, between 2007 and 2008. The work of the project group generated the master plan proposal for the development site.

According to the developer and the sustainability consultants assigned to the 'Arena' project, the proposal rests on ideas about sustainable development. The developer in the 'Arena' project booklet argued that the 'Arena' project aims to create an open, green space with flexible services: leisure, sport, education facilities, extension of the existing 'Midfields' park, which is situated next to the site, and regeneration of existing the athletics stadium. It would however, also involve the development of a number of museums, such as a sport museum, earth museum, aquapark, offices, a four or five-star hotel, apartments and so on. According to the developer, two master plan options were considered. 'Option A' includes skyscrapers (see Figure 5.2.). 'Option B' does not include skyscrapers (see Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.2. Option A of the 'Arena' development proposal



Source: Developer (2008)

Figure 5.3. Option B of the 'Arena' development proposal



Source: Developer (2008)

The key focus of the study is however the sustainability assessment of the 'Arena' development proposal. According to the developer, the sustainability assessment was carried out based on the originally proposed scheme, master plan – the 'Option A'. The sustainability consultants from Poland (in interviews and in the sustainability assessment report), and other project stakeholders recalled that data collection took place between December 2007 and March 2008. The outcomes of the assessment were presented in the form of a report, which consists of graphics and text. The sustainability assessment report indicates that the 'Arena' development scored well in terms of energy, competitiveness effects, and attractiveness and its limited effects on the environment, boosting cultural and historical heritage. By contrast, the proposal scored low in such aspects as waste and water management. The outcomes of the sustainability assessment were reproduced by the developer in the 'Arena' proposal booklet and on the project's website.

The developer presented the proposal for the 'Arena' development during a private meeting in the city council on 27th Feb 2008. No formal statement indicating the position of the city council towards the development proposal was issued. Meanwhile the city council carried on the preparation of the local plan of the 'Midfields' area, including the 'Arena' site. According to the official communications of the city council, the document was subject to public consultation between 1st December 2007 and 25th January 2008. In this context, the developer and the 'Arena' sports club manager applied to the city council for three measures in January 2008: (a) the exclusion of 'Arena' from the local plan of 'Midfields', (b) the extension of the right of perpetual usufruct to the area from 40 to 99 years, and (c)

the inscription of the 'Arena' site into the list of infrastructure available for the EURO 2012 football championships.

In late spring 2008, the 'Arena' development proposal was intensively debated in the media. The matter in question was whether 'Arena' development is a desirable investment in the context of the 'Midfields' area and park, taking into account also such aspects as local demand for this kind of infrastructure and visual impacts (further addressed in Chapter 7). In the light of the contestation of the project, the developer commissioned a research agency to organise a public poll on 7th May 2008 (which is documented in the local daily newspaper 1 in June 2009). The results of the public opinion poll were that 56% of respondents were 'convinced' and 34% of respondents were 'rather convinced', that 'Arena' is a desirable investment. The results were disclosed by the developer on the 'Arena' project's website, in public consultation meetings organised by the developer and in some newspapers, and this generated further controversies. In late 2008 and early 2009, at least thirty nine critical articles regarding the 'Arena' development proposal were released in the local newspaper 1, local newspaper 2, and the national daily newspaper 1 (for relevant sources see Appendix 2).

At the beginning of 2009 the proposal of the local plan of 'Midfields' received positive opinions from the three local district councils, and by various bodies in the city council. It is in line with the proceedings of enacting the local plan. The local plan and the 'Arena' development proposal were discussed at the meeting of the *Komisja Ładu Przestrzennego* of the city council board of councillors ('The Spatial Order Committee' of the city council) on the 16th June 2009, where the developer strongly contested. In the meantime, signatures were gathered by the local daily newspaper 1 in support of the local plan of 'Midfields'. On 18 June 2009, the *Rada Miasta* ('The City Council Board of Councillors') enacted the local plan with forty-four votes in favour, zero votes against and four abstentions.

The local plan of 'Midfields' points out that the 'Arena' site is an integral part of the 'Midfields' area. It includes a number of restrictions with regard to the development of 'Arena'. The local plan establishes that the primary function of the development site is sport and recreation (including administration services). The secondary function of the site is to offer space for a green belt. While the first function applies to at least 60% of the area which is affected by the local plan, the second one applies to the remaining area. The document restricts the height of the buildings to 12 meters or 20 meters and the density to the value of 1.2 (which refers to the floor area ratio). In the context of the arrangements proposed by the local plan, both the 'Arena' development proposals ('Option A' and 'Option B') were impossible to implement. The enactment of the local plan of 'Midfields' was followed by the developer's withdrawal from the investment proposal.

5.2. Knowledge production in the context of consultants' authoritative expertise in sustainable development

In the complex context of 'Arena' described above, this thesis provides an analysis of the role of consultants. The first section of the research findings addresses the empirical question stated in Chapter 3: How do consultants build the credibility of their expertise? How do consultants portray themselves to the client (the developer) and other 'Arena' project stakeholders? For this purpose it draws on the insights from the interviews with the sustainability consultants involved in the 'Arena' development proposal (sustainability consultants 1 and 2) and documentary sources produced by the consultancy. The latter are referred to as corporate documents in order to signpost that they concern all company branches across the world.

The chapter unpacks the discursive nature of the consultants' reputation as knowledge producers and vendors. It also assesses how the 'Arena' project stakeholders responded to these claims. It states that the consultants' reputation, also with particular reference to sustainability assessment, is linked to elements such as skills and abilities, commitment of the consultancy company to sustainable development and its alleged 'boundary organisation' status – working on the intersection of global networks of policy makers and private sector companies. At the same time, the discussion also stresses that the reputation of consultants is contested across time and space with regard to, for instance, differences in sustainable development agendas across the globe.

The study reveals the discourses about the reputation of the consultants in the 'Arena' and portrays how they are assembled within an '*interpretative frame*' of credibility of consultants' expertise. The notion of credibility entails a certain believability about consultants' expertise (Peck and Theodore 2010, p. 173). The '*frame*' was derived based on discourses dominating with regard to the consultants' image and reputation based on accounts of the developer, public relations managers, the sports club manager, and the architects from Poland and the United Kingdom.

The study also unveiled various dimensions of this discourse as part of the '*phenomenal structure*' analysis (see Appendix 3). In particular, the insights into the '*causal dimension*' of the discourse about the credibility of the consultants' expertise stress why the sustainability consultants were employed by the developer. The developer, the public relations managers (thereafter addressed as PR managers), the 'Arena' sports club manager, the urban designers from London, Polish architects converged in their statements about the consultants being 'experts in sustainable development' in general and with reference to the sustainability assessment. This was unravelled both during interviews and in secondary data (on company websites) but in various 'degrees'. For instance, the developer described the sustainability assessment framework as an 'expert tool' on

numerous occasions, for instance, in the 'Arena' development proposal booklet, the developer's company website, 'Arena' brochures and two interviews.

The study teased out that the reputational claims of consultants also related to the '*position*' of sustainability consultants as 'outsiders' towards the 'Arena' project group members, and therefore allegedly being able to provide an 'independent' view on the sustainability credentials of the project. During interviews, the developer explained that the sustainability consultants represented 'an objective' expertise from an 'independent' private sector company (8 November 2010). In the sustainability assessment report, sustainability consultants from Poland – sustainability consultants 1 and 2, who indeed prepared the sustainability assessment report studied – considered themselves as 'independent assessors'. When interviewed, the 'Arena' urban designer 1 from the United Kingdom stated that the sustainability consultants conducted an 'independent assessment of collected data' (19 January 2011). The consultancy company also presents itself this way. Its website states that the company is 'an independent firm of designers, planners, engineers, consultants and technical specialists offering a broad range of professional services' (website accessed in November 2009 and multiple times afterwards).

In line with the analysis of the '*causal*' structure of discourses about sustainability consultants' reputation in the 'Arena' case study, the data point to ideas about consultants' skills and abilities in various areas relevant to sustainable development. This particularly refers to the technical skills, especially design, structural design, and urban design, of the consultants and was argued in the sustainability assessment report of the 'Arena' development proposal (by sustainability consultant 1 and 2, both from Poland) and in the corporate documentary sources. With regard to the latter, the consultancy website includes a historical note about the creation of the organisation as a structural engineering company which has both specialised in (structural) design services and grown into a multidisciplinary global consulting company over years. The website also indicates that the consultancy is known for 'iconic' design and that it raised 'world known landmarks' (website accessed in November 2009 and multiple times afterwards). When interviewed, the developer echoed that the consultancy is well known for 'iconic design'. It is important to specify that the sustainability consultants mentioned in this thesis are educated as engineers and have at least 6 years work experience in the company, with the exception of the junior consultant.

In this vein, additional insights are provided by the documentary sources of, and about the consultancy organisation. Corporate documentary sources, such as promotional material 1, include statements that consultants' expertise is built on their skills in social and cultural, environmental and technical, and financial and economic aspects of sustainable development. Also, in particular, the reflections about the skills and abilities of consultants involve references to the roles of corporate education '*infrastructures*', with regard to training and certification. The company website, Corporate Report (2009), sustainability assessment of the development proposal, and interviews with the sustainability consultants revealed

that the company supports the development of trained sustainability assessment auditors. Corporate promotional material 2 includes the statement that: 'we have invested in training and developing sustainability specialists' (undated, p. 15). When interviewed, the sustainability consultant 2 argued that 'all sustainability assessments conducted in Poland have got certified auditors' (13 November 2009). The sustainability assessment report includes a statement that: 'in order to ensure that the assessment is reliable, the value of indicators [of sustainability assessment] is attributed during a discussion of experienced experts in various domains' (2008, p. 10).

The reference to the corporate training '*infrastructure*' also leads to the ideas that the consultants' reputation is bound with the durability and institutionalisation of their commitment to sustainable development in general as other element of the '*causal*' structure analysis and the insights into alleged '*responsibilities*' of consultants with regard to sustainable development. In various ways consultants inform society and a client of the existence of various corporate 'internal' and 'external' '*infrastructures*' that involve statements about their commitment to sustainable development. The discourses are embedded in the sustainability assessment report of the 'Arena' proposal, the Sustainability Policy Statement (2007), the Corporate Reports (2009, 2010), promotional material (1 and 2) and on the consultancy website. The Corporate Sustainability Policy Statement (2007) indicates that the company's engagement in sustainable development began long before sustainable development became a part of the mainstream agenda. When interviewed, the sustainability consultant 1 and sustainability consultants from the United Kingdom explained that the history of written engagement of the company with sustainable development reaches back to 1970.

However, the Sustainability Statement (2007) which was the first official (public) company policy statement that addressed sustainable development issues in internal and external relations and since 2007, the company have produced Sustainability Reports annually, in 2008, 2009, and 2010. The Sustainability Report (2008) explains that applying the values of sustainable development is a systematic process, which includes various areas of company activity. Sustainability consultants recall that they apply 'Key Performance Indicators' in order to verify the progress of the company in the implementation of sustainability ideas. The 'Key Performance Indicators' refer to four areas: business, people, facilities and external relationships.

The company website also points out that the 'Management Consulting' division within the company is another '*infrastructure*' that supports its commitment to sustainable development. The division is composed of a 'Sustainability Consulting' subdivision, where sustainability assessment services are offered. The division, according to the company website, 'support(s) corporate responsibility and sustainability agendas' and the company aim to provide a consistently excellent multi-disciplinary service, which also incorporates its concern for the environment' (website accessed in February 2011).

Finally, sustainability consultants also explained that the '*model practices*' of the consultants with regard to sustainable development, their '*responsibilities*' include extracurricular activities. The junior sustainability consultant from London stated that consultants engage in voluntary activities, investments and donations (26 January 2010). The Corporate Sustainability Report (2008) points to the fact that the company annually donate 1% of their profits to charities.

In various ways, then, the research findings suggest that consultants' knowledge claims should be read unambiguously by other project stakeholders and in society, in general. They show that the sustainability consultants (and some members of the 'Arena' project group) consider the sustainability consultants' expertise in sustainable development to be reliable and that it is linked to the fact that they are 'outsiders' to a particular issue, and that their expertise in sustainable development is long lasting as are their skills and abilities (therefore, they are able to provide objective advice). In terms of the independency claims of consultant, one may refer to the presumed influence of 'Arena' project stakeholders on knowledge production processes that consultants dismiss from the outset (however the subsequent chapters will shed critical light on it).

Also, it is important to note that whether, and to what extent, these corporate '*infrastructures*' play a primary role in informing decision making at a project level, is a complex issue. On one side, the analysis of corporate documentary sources suggests that the commitment of consultants to sustainable development is shared amongst employees. This also allegedly relates to the company's business model, whereby all company shareholders (employees) have influence on its agenda as they are corporate trustees with 'voting shares' (Corporate Report 2008). On the other side, there is little data to inform the inquiry about decision-making processes within a company.

In this context, the next section proceeds to further demonstrate that the discourses about the credibility of consultants' knowledge claims is a relative construct embedded in the notion of 'networked' reputation of consultants.

5.2.1. Expertise of consultants within policy-practice networks

Alongside skills, abilities, and commitment to sustainable development, insights into '*phenomenal structure*', especially the '*causal*' structure of discourses about consultants' reputation, demonstrate the claims about consultancy's belongingness to, and endorsement by, global networks of policymakers and practitioners, who are commonly known to be leaders in sustainable development. In this way, the reputation of consultants reveals itself as an inter-institutional construct.

The study unveiled that consultants' reputation is underpinned by a dual process, where consultants allegedly set standards in sustainable development based on their authoritative expertise (they feed ideas and knowledge to policymakers and practitioners) and that they derive existing standards (objectified knowledge) from other organisations, and use them in their consulting practices, all within a

network. The network that consultants (and the developer) refer to is not a formal entity, but rather a loosely defined construct including organisations, agencies that in various ways demonstrated their interests in sustainable development and are linked with consultants in various ways.

The 'network' discourse is embedded in the sustainability consultants arguments that in their '*model practices*', also with reference to sustainability assessment they use international 'standards' (and that they do it also voluntarily). The project stakeholders (the developer and sustainability consultants) and the inventor of the sustainability assessment argue that sustainability assessment draws inspiration from sustainability indicators proposed in policies of the European Union, the United Nations, the OECD, the Global Reporting Initiative, and the United Kingdom government. The sustainability report of the 'Arena' development proposal includes a statement that the proceedings of sustainability assessment with regard to public consultations are in accordance with the OECD Background Document on Public Consultation. The discourses were reproduced by the developer, who argued in the 'Arena' project leaflet:

'The proposal was subject to a stringent assessment of the degree of its sustainability, which was carried out by sustainability consultants in accordance with the criteria set forth by the European Union as well as the United Nations' (no page number).

The consultancy website also specifies that sustainability assessment was based on the Sustainable Development Indicators embedded in 'Local Quality of Life Counts: A Handbook for a Menu of Local Indicators of Sustainable Development' (DETR 2000), 'UNEP project manual: formulation, approval, monitoring and evaluation' (United Nations Environmental Programme 2000) and 'Sustainability reporting Guidelines' (Global Reporting Initiative 2000) (website accessed in March 2010 and multiple times afterwards). Sustainability consultants also explained that 'model practices' in the context of sustainability assessment are in line with the sustainability standards created by the International Standardisation Organisation and Lloyds Register Quality Assurance. During an interview, the senior sustainability consultant from London indicated that all consultants have to comply with a range of international standards. They involve quality assurance practice. Similarly, with regard to the '*model practices*' of carrying out sustainability assessment in Poland, corporate promotional material includes a statement that the sustainability assessment in Poland is based on a Combined Quality and Environmental Management System, ISO 9001, ISO 14001, and Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance.

Also, within this network consultants claimed to have a particularly powerful '*position*'. In particular, in the context of the 'Arena' case study specifically, and in general, sustainability consultants claimed to have had a considerable influence on policymakers across the globe. With regard to building standards and regulations, for example, the consultants argue:

‘The firm has been working with business and national and regional governments to develop policy on carbon management and climate change, as well as ensuring that all issues are considered as part of its design and consultancy work’ (website accessed in October 2009 and multiple times afterwards).

On the company website and in promotional material the consultants also claim that they contributed to setting up a Climate Change agenda within a C40 network, which commits cities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (C40 website accessed in June 2012). The sustainability consultants also state that they work together with the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council in the UK and are part of the US and UK Green Building Council network.

Consultants and some project group members emphasized that they are leaders in sustainable development on various other occasions. The arguments are reproduced by sustainability consultants and project group members. For instance, sustainability consultants’ statements converge on this argument during interviews and in secondary sources such as Corporate Reports (2009, 2010) and the company’s website. The ‘Arena’ project booklet states that the company ‘is a global leader in its [sustainable development] field’ and that the consultants are ‘world leaders in pro-ecological design’ (2008, p. 90). Corporate secondary sources include reference to a number of awards received by the consultancy organisation in recognition of its excellence in the field of sustainable development. The promotional booklet 1 points out that the consultancy was awarded with ‘Sustainable Engineer of the Year’ at the Building Sustainability Awards and ‘Best Business Practice’, in the Sustainability Awards in the 2000s.

Finally, one should note that the insights into the ‘networked’ reputation of consultants reveal certain aspect of consultants’ expertise – that the network is where consultants’ expertise is verified and ‘objectified’ Also, the processes are bound within a particular time and space. They construct a socio-temporal ‘regime’ of discourse. Also, these reputational, associative claims can be quite slender. The claims about sustainability consultants’ ‘networked’ expertise are one sided and it is difficult to determine to what extent the consultants have really fed ideas into global political players or the way various policy initiatives underpinned the design of their sustainability assessment method. Also, the developer argued that Skidmore Owings and Merill was part of the project group, while the interview with urban designer 1 revealed that he indeed worked for the company, but prior to his engagement with the ‘Arena’ development proposal.

This leads also to different kinds of reflections on the ‘*position*’ of consultants with regard to the notion of sustainable development, addressed below.

5.3. 'Positions' of sustainability consultants towards other project stakeholders

Pursuing the '*phenomenal structure*' of SKAD allows consultants' reputation to be considered with regard to the notions of '*self-positioning*' and '*other-positioning*', in particular consultants' '*positions*' towards 'sustainable development', and as a result of this, towards other project stakeholders and society in general. In this vein, the study unveiled the claims about consultants positions as experts in sustainable development (addressed in the previous section), and related to this – various ways in which sustainability consultants, including these directly involved in the 'Arena' development proposal, projected themselves as 'saviour' or 'carers' towards society.

The study traced that discourses about consultants' commitment to sustainable development were communicated in the form of 'stories'. They were supposedly addressed to society in general. In these stories, the consultants stressed moral and ethical conducts encompassing their practices. The corporate website indicates that the company's mission is to shape a better world and that 'the firm is acutely aware of the responsibility it has to do the best possible work for current and future generations in designing and influencing the built environment' (website accessed in May 2010). Corporate promotional material 2 stresses their awareness about the influence urban design has on people's lives. It includes the statement that 'buildings provide us with safety, shelter and comfort, and generate huge social and economic benefits... buildings are key to achieving sustainable development' (undated, p. 2).

With regard to their professional standards, consultants also stressed, in these 'stories', being considerate about the environment. Corporate documentary sources (corporate promotional material 1 and 2 and company) point out that since the 1970s consultants have paid considerable attention to how design affects people's lives. They stress that reaching high quality, economic feasibility in design is as important as the harmony of design with their surroundings. This is also called a 'Total Architecture' or 'Total Design'. In corporate policies consultants also claim to be able to deliver a 'change' and efficiently mitigate environmental risks. Sustainability consultants on numerous occasions, in the Sustainability Policy Statement (2007), on the website, and during public appearances (such as delivering a lecture), reflected upon the rapid environmental changes people are experiencing. For instance, one of the directors, representing the consultancy at the local university, delivered a lecture, where he stressed the challenges facing engineers in the XXI century. He described that:

'Current economic growth is rapidly becoming unsustainable and a global transition is underway to the ecological age of human civilization... in recent decades it has dawned on many of us that there can be no viable future for humanity without a healthy planet... our globalising economic system is

destabilising the planet's life-support systems – the very systems that support us and the future of our children' (Consultancy director 2, 2006, p. 5).

Also, these 'stories', as this thesis unveils, concern not only the well-being of society in general, but also caring for the interests of a client. In corporate documentary sources sustainability consultants argue that a rapidly changing environment with regard to time, resources, regulation and policy and the occupier demands influences on the conditions in which businesses operate. Corporate Policy (2009, p. 1-4) includes a statement that:

'Today, much of our focus is on helping our clients to plan for an unpredictable future and to prepare for a low-carbon economy, devising solutions to these challenges in both the developed and developing world... we will work with our clients to pursue, promote and develop sustainable outcomes that support their businesses'.

In the context of these statements and also in the context of '*positions*' of consultants as experts in sustainable development, addressed in the previous section, it is important to note an implicit '*others-positioning*'. In corporate documentary sources and in the context of the 'Arena' development proposal (in the sustainability assessment report) consultants suggest that other stakeholders are not experts. In the sustainability assessment, it is implied that other 'Arena' project stakeholders should let themselves be guided by experts, and learn about sustainable development from them.

Also, one should note that for all the ethical claims made for the moral worth of sustainability, key actors were under no doubt that their activities are also a business, which provides some valuable clues about the importance of consultants' reputation. Insights into the 'position' of sustainability consultants towards sustainable development revealed references to the notion of business. Although not in the context the 'Arena' development proposal, the sustainability consultants explicitly argued that their practices in the arena of sustainable development are a 'business'. The Corporate Policy Statement (2007) and the Corporate Report (2008, 2009, 2010) included ideas about sustainable development 'markets'. In the Sustainability Statement (2007, p. 2), it is argued that:

'Our approach to business has always aimed to deliver solutions based on the cornerstones of sustainability (...) as a professional services firm, it is in our work for our clients – our business – that we naturally have the largest impact: **Our business:** delivering innovative, sustainable solutions to clients to address global challenges, such as climate change, natural resource degradation and resource depletion' (bold as in the original).

Expectations of economic returns from core business activities were only vaguely and indirectly expressed by the interviewees. This, however, would not decrease their value. In this vein, it can be noted (i) the statements about the commitment of the consultants to sustainable development embedded in the secondary sources

were directed towards the public and accessible through the public website of the company and aim to attract the attention of potential clients; (ii) that the Corporate Reports point out that the consultancy is financially sustainable; (iii) consultants' statements about early commitment to sustainable development were also underpinned by the desire to attract funding to then small businesses.

Last, but not least, as the previous sections in this Chapter suggests, the sustainability consultants and the 'Arena' project group members used a range of ideas to stress the credibility of the consultants' expertise. However, it is important to note that the discourses about the reputation of consultants were not homogenous. Despite the fanfare made about consultancy status and contribution to the 'Arena' project, this does not mean that the importance of consultants was unambiguously read by the actors involved, at all times, including some closely involved in the 'Arena'. In particular, when the 'Arena' development proposal was discussed with the developer during the pilot phase of the interviews, the developer failed to mention the consultants when he numbered companies that were involved in the 'Arena' and with whom he was proud to work (13 October 2009). He stated that the company consultants did not play an important role in the 'Arena' case study and that 'they just did the sustainability assessment analysis' (13 October 2009). However, at the same time, the study revealed that discourses about expertise of sustainability consultants in sustainable development were used by the developer (and other 'Arena' project group members) to 'position' themselves as 'carers' for society as well. The emergence of the dual position of the developer towards sustainability consultants emerges in a more overt manner in Chapter 7.

Outside the project group, the 'Arena' project stakeholders did not acknowledge the reputation of the company as a well-known, best-practice 'provider'. The Head of the Local Planning Office, when asked whether she knew that the company worked for the developer, stated that she knew where the company is located: 'just across the road', but did not comment upon the expertise of the company (13 November 2009). Whereas, the local master planner considered the reputation of the company as a 'brand' and hinted that the reputation of sustainability consultants could have an influence on other 'Arena' project stakeholders: 'I do not pay attention to surnames and company brand, they do not impress me, but they may impress others' (13 July 2010). The local journalist did not acknowledge the credibility of the sustainability consultants. He called them 'some designers' (13 July 2010). In the local media, suggestions were raised that the sustainability consultants may not be considered as credible given that the developer paid for their study. However, no such comments were made by other project stakeholders. More importantly, however, the discourses about the reputation of the consultants as global knowledge, or 'best practice' vendors, were contested by the consultants themselves, which is addressed further in the chapter.

5.3.1. 'Culture' of benchmarking

The case study revealed that the discourses about the reputation of the sustainability consultants are bound with, and supported by, the company and other infrastructures of benchmarking. The insights into the notion of '*culture of things/wealth*' reveal that the consultants' environment and contemporary urban development relies on building up innovation and achieving a leadership.

The sustainability consultants and the 'Arena' project stakeholders converged on/with the ideas that the consultants' and their clients' practices are benchmarked and that one's innovation capacity played an important role in the process. According to the company's website, the Research and Development department 'is to expand and communicate know-how' through innovation building and commercialisation (website accessed in May 2010). The inventor of the sustainability assessment explains that the company has a 'strong tradition of research and the desire to find innovative methods'. Also, the Corporate Report (2007, p. 3) includes the following statements:

'Our company has a history of innovation. The team that manages our global innovation program has carried out pioneering work in determining "drivers of change" that affect the global environment in which we live... Our approach to our business has been assisted by our focus on innovation and research and has given us particular insight'.

On various occasions the consultants argued that they use various indexes in their internal and external relations not only to track their progress towards sustainable development, but to assess their position against competitors. When interviewed, all sustainability consultants admitted that they use a number of appraisal and assessment tools in design work, such as BREEAM (Environmental Assessment Method of Building Research Establishment) or LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). In corporate promotional material 1 they state that nowadays socio-economic assessment is a key element of policy programs. Sustainability consultants in promotional material 2 explain that consultancy performance in the area of sustainable development is benchmarked using the Dow Jones Global Sustainability Index. They also argued that they use their own product – sustainability assessment for this purpose.

It is important to note that consultants claim that their own sustainability assessment framework has distinguishing characteristics. The corporate website indicates that their sustainability assessment is compatible with Product Life Cycle Assessment, Ecological Footprinting, Carbon Footprinting, the Integrated Resource Management (IRM) model, BREEAM and LEED (website accessed March 2010 and multiple times after). In the eyes of the Sustainability Assessors 1 and 2, the novel function of sustainability assessment is allegedly that it allows sustainability appraisal of diverse entities, such as a master plan proposal, a building, or a

company. In this context, one should note, some project stakeholders stressed the implications of knowledge transfer for urban planning, which is addressed below.

5.3.2. Knowledge and place branding

The insights into the *'culture'* of benchmarking allow reflection on how project stakeholders refer to knowledge as a *'classification'* of practices in urban planning. It concerns the idea that the use of benchmarking *'infrastructures'* underpins the construction of a particular *'brand'* – *'constellations'* of knowledge about a particular product or place and suggest that it can make, for instance, a particular place *'stand out'* and look attractive.

The study unveiled in the *'Arena'* development proposal booklet includes statements that the knowledge outcomes of the sustainability assessment could influence the *'Arena'* proposal such that it *'could be an exemplar, establishing world class standards, to be followed'* and that sustainability assessment would help in the branding of the city (where the site is located) using the brands of *'a city of sport, culture and science'* (2008, p. 10). He also argued that the sustainability assessment was an *'outstanding solution'* that would make a city *'re-appear in the map of Europe... [and] provide evidence that the city is a modern capital'* (2008, p. 10). It highlighted that the city had been developing dynamically over the last couple of years, especially thanks to the accession of Poland into the European Union. In this international setting, the city has to compete with other European capitals for mobile capital. This could also converge with the organisation of the EURO 2012 or competitions for the European Capital of Culture.

The statements were also reproduced during interviews with other project stakeholders, the *'Arena'* sports club manager and the public relations manager. The senior PR manager of the *'Arena'* claimed that *'the place [Arena site] would be a brand of the city'* thanks to the sustainability assessment (10 November 2010). On the website of the architectural office it is stated *'the appraisal has confirmed that the "Arena" development proposal is one of the most sustainable designs in the world which may become an international standard for sustainability'* (website accessed in June 2012).

While reflecting upon the role of sustainability assessment as a benchmark, the developer also emphasized that infrequent use of sustainability assessment with regard to building construction suggests that urban planning in Poland is *'bad'*. It includes his statements that *'developers [in Poland] rarely take sustainable development and sustainability assessment into account'* and that through employing sustainability assessment he wanted to *'show [to Polish society] how things are done in the West'* (8 November 2010). Similarly, the sports club manager argued: *'it is important to know that not many investments take into account the matter of sustainable development [in this city]'* (10 November 2010).

Insights into the *'classification'* and the *'culture'* of benchmarking presented above, lead to the ideas that some project stakeholders could benefit from this process

more than others. 'Arena' stakeholders outside the project group acknowledged the role of sustainability assessment in place marketing and implied that it could generate profits for a developer. According to the Chair of the Local District Council Board, the status of the place is about a particular brand. If something is branded as sustainable, it should meet certain sustainability criteria' (10 November 2010). What is more, the senior PR manager contended that the function of sustainability assessment in the latter stages of project implementation was to be one of place marketing: 'it later could be used in different ways, [as a] place marketing, investment, in order to attract investments' (10 November 2010). In line with these ideas, it is also important to note that the implications regarding the roles of sustainability assessment in place branding and marketing are further discussed in Chapter 7, which focuses on the overall marketing strategy regarding the 'Arena' development proposal.

5.3.3. Consultants' sustainable development expertise caught in global-local divide

In the context of the reflections on the consultants' *'position'* as experts in sustainable development and a range of *'responsibilities'* it entails, the study unveiled the importance of a socio-spatial context in defining the scope of opportunities in utilising the sustainability consultants' expertise, which is manifested in the context of SKAD under the term *'need for action/problem solving'*. In this vein, the discourses about the reputation of consultants as knowledge producers and vendors embed tensions on various interpretations of sustainable development, especially on global-local axis, which consultants hardly refer to in documentary sources, yet they opened up about it during interviews.

Consultants' ideas about their reputation across time and space included contradictory statements. On the one side corporate documents include the statements that consultants have been endorsed for their expertise across the globe. In promotional material 1 and 2 consultants contend that they shape best practices across various levels of government all over the world. For instance, the sustainability consultants' engagement in a regulatory push with regard to Climate Change in terms of the Kyoto Protocol and the EU's Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) in 2007 allegedly had an international influence, so that public, private and third sector representatives had to comply with the change of regulations (promotional material 1). Also, the developer, in the 'Arena' booklet (2008), in the section dedicated to the consultancy, describes the corporation as 'acknowledged internationally'.

The corporate website explains that the company had grown into a multidisciplinary global one since the 1940s. Consultancy has had offices in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, China, Saudi Arabia, Poland; and that the company had 90 branches in 33 countries in North America, Australia, New Zealand, Asia and Europe (website accessed in February 2011). With regard to the consultancy work in Poland, the company website points to the existence of two offices, in two different cities, and that they offer a range of services, mainly from

the construction/ engineering perspective, master planning and scheme design (website accessed in February 2009). Consultants also argued that their authoritative expertise is acknowledged globally as their sustainability assessment framework was used across various contexts. The inventor of this sustainability assessment states that just three years after launching, it was applied to hundreds of projects all over the world. The 'Arena' sustainability assessment report includes a statement that the sustainability assessment framework was developed by the consultancy, however it has been used globally.

On the other side, however, consultants unravelled that the recognition of expertise in sustainable development is subject to their abilities to embrace elements of dominating, in a particular spatial context, discourses about sustainable development, and then institutionalise it. In particular, based on seven years of work experience in the consultancy, the senior sustainability consultant suggested that different countries have different timings in adopting global ideas about sustainable development (11 February 2011). She also pointed out that:

'Here [in the United Kingdom] we are seen as an innovative thinking leader that does exciting projects. Whereas in America, no one has thought of it, a lot of bottom line focus, niche, we do not get big rail projects here or highways' (11 February 2011).

Interestingly, discourses about differences in ideas about sustainable development across contexts included reflections on power relations. The senior sustainability consultant from London argued:

'You cannot impose London and UK view on other environments, and obviously we do not know the clients and ... each region is independent, but each region has a view on sustainable development, and each region has got different matters, and especially in Europe, each country is different' (11 February 2011).

Corporate secondary sources stress that the consultants attempt to tailor their 'mode practices' and 'infrastructures' depending on a particular 'region'. When the 'Arena' development proposal emerged (2007-2008), Poland was included in the UK-EUROPE region, which had a common corporate policy framework. Additionally, it is important to note that that consultants also acknowledged the differences between various 'cultures' of corporate branches. The senior sustainability consultant from London pointed out that 'we are an organic company, there are lots of small companies under one umbrella... company's branches do things in their own way' (11 February 2011). The sustainability consultant 1 elaborated that although it is officially contracted to do sustainability consulting, in Poland the notion of 'sustainability consulting does not exist... things should be simply well done. Having separate services is a strange thing' (25 March 2010).

Sustainability consultants also highlighted the issues of adaptability of sustainability assessment into a local context. They argued that sustainability assessment

originally was quite fixed and it was made more flexible with time. The senior sustainability consultant revealed that:

'Historically what happens, with previous versions it was quite fixed and you could customize it and you could customize it for regional differences underneath, other regions dealt with it their way, there are different versions of [the sustainability assessment] out there and that they customized it' (11 February 2011).

Also, interviews with the senior sustainability consultant from the UK pointed to controversies over several indicators, especially with regard to the issues of Climate Change and biodiversity. The senior sustainability consultant from London argued: 'we had a lot of feedback about sustainability assessment not to include Climate Change [indicators], because it does not mean that much for other people' (11 February 2011). While the Head of the Sustainability Consulting Division in London elaborated:

'Culturally there are different issues, I know that we [in the UK] talk about diversity a lot, but you do not necessarily have this debate in other countries, which may be right or wrong. In the other countries, like South Africa you have got other socio-economic issues, probably more important in a number of projects rather than environmental issues' (11 February 2011).

With regard to the context of Poland specifically, sustainability consultants from London acknowledged that they have little experience. However, the senior sustainability consultant pointed out:

'The workshops we held there were about Climate Change did not mean anything for these people. It is a set list, they are more interested in what effects it has on their family and immediate surroundings, so sustainability in that context is better' (11 February 2011).

Sustainability consultants from Poland specified that sustainability assessment had not been used often in Poland. During interviews, the sustainability consultant 1 and the sustainability consultant 2 acknowledged that there were only two people who can use this methodology in Poland. Interestingly, the senior sustainability consultant from London states that between 2007 and 2008 the assessment could be conducted only in the English language.

It can also be noted that while other project stakeholders outside the project did not address this matter, the environmental consultant stated that the ideas about sustainable development addressing Climate Change and environmental protection in the context of sustainability assessment were insufficiently adapted to local contexts. He commented:

'I am observing spatial planning over last 35 years, maybe a little bit longer... and I can see that there are attempts to impose certain behaviours and

solutions, which are transferred from other countries without adjusting... There is no need to adopt such solutions as sustainability assessment in Poland... it is important to understand that the idea of sustainable development is not sufficiently adapted to local conditions... in the very idea of sustainable development, there is too much global and too little local... the second matter is about the Climate Change that I am also sceptical about. I live so long that I can remember how it was before all the interest in the climate Change. I know and I am interested in that, I learnt geology to know better what is happening now' (9 November 2010).

Last but not least, the study indicates that the ideas about adaptability of sustainability expertise of consultants embedded in sustainability assessment standards concern the issue of affordability. The developer stated that Polish developers cannot afford buying sustainability assessments (8 November 2010). This, however, is down to a particular situation of a client, which is addressed in the next chapter.

5.4. Conclusions

The chapter presented reflection upon the role of consultants in the processes of knowledge production and dissemination in the field of urban planning with regard to the consultants' reputation. It stressed the consultants' knowledge objectification 'capacity' based on the evidence about consultants being knowledge experts with regard to their skills and abilities, especially with regard to urban design and engineering, their position as an outsider to a particular issue, the consultancy's long lasting commitment to sustainable development, embedded in their stories about being 'saviours' of human kind. The chapter unveils that consultants' knowledge claims are validated and valorised in the context of the consultants' network, which associates the international sustainable development agenda setting organisations. It also stressed various dimensions of the consultants' leadership claims, especially with regard to the '*infrastructure*' (e.g. consultants' sustainability assessment framework) and '*culture*' of benchmarking encompassing urban development across various contexts.

Finally, the chapter depicted that consulting is primarily a business and that knowledge benchmarking practices are expected to bring capital returns to both, a consultant and a client. This may not be easy to achieve, however, as consultants' reputation as knowledge vendors is contested across time and space. It includes 'Arena' project stakeholders including the developer (a client) and sustainability consultants themselves, who acknowledged that they are not equally well reputed and it is due to the differences in dominating sustainable development agendas across the world and consultants' ability to draw lessons from local contexts (for an overview of some of these ideas in the form of the SKAD's '*phenomenal structure*' table, see the Appendix 3). This issue is dealt with in detail in the subsequent chapter, which focuses on the processes of deriving knowledge outcomes in the context of the consultants' particular sustainability assessment framework employed in the case of the 'Arena' development proposal.

Chapter 6 Knowledge production in the context of the principles of sustainability assessment

The previous chapter of this thesis shows that the role of the consultants in the 'Arena' development proposal is bound up with their reputation as global knowledge vendors. It reveals that various '*infrastructures*', especially sustainability assessment methods, play important roles in objectifying and controlling consultants' efforts with regard to sustainable development. In line with these deliberations, the current chapter examines the mechanics of the process by unravelling various dimensions of '*classifications*' that sustainability assessment and benchmarking entail. It particularly includes reflections on: (i) how sustainability assessment frameworks perform as an assessment, evaluation tool, (ii) the meanings of sustainability, and sustainable development that underpins the construction of sustainability assessment framework and (iii) the power effects that permeated the processes of social interactions in the context of the sustainability assessment framework in the case of the 'Arena' development proposal. It addresses primarily the following empirical questions stated in Chapter 3: How is knowledge mobilised in a local context? How do social actors interact around sustainability assessment brought about by the sustainability consultants?

6.1. Construction of the sustainability assessment

In line with the insights from the previous chapter that the consultants were employed in the 'Arena' development proposal for the purpose of carrying out a sustainability assessment, this section reveals various dimensions of the discourses about the 'reliability' of the consultants' framework. The notion of 'reliability' represents an '*interpretative frame*' used by 'Arena' project stakeholders to make sense of the role of sustainability assessment in the case study. It entails the ability of the framework to perform certain tasks and fulfil certain requirements. It is derived, as in the case of the 'credibility' of the reputation of the consultants in Chapter 5 as a dominating discourse about the role of sustainability assessment in the 'Arena' development proposal.

The insights into '*causes*' in the '*phenomenal structure*' of discourse about the reliability of the sustainability assessment include ideas about the construction of the tool and the proceedings that accompany it. The study unravelled that 'Arena' project group members (especially the sustainability consultants and the developer) evidently considered sustainability assessment a reliable assessment tool. They argued that it enhances effective decision-making around issues of sustainability in the project. It involves comparison of sustainability assessment to an audit tool, as exemplified by the developer and the sports club manager, when interviewed. In the 'Arena' project booklet the developer communicates to the public that the 'development project was subject to a stringent assessment of the degree of sustainability' using the sustainability assessment. When interviewed, the developer also stated that the consultancy was employed by him primarily because of sustainability assessment and that the tool is 'conclusive, there are particular

rules for preparing the analysis' (8 November 2010). The senior public relations manager declared that 'sustainability assessment... is supposed to be a sort of [sustainability] auditor' (10 November 2010). Also, the sustainability consultant 2 associated sustainability assessment with the notion of 'science', arguing that 'the extended version of the sustainability assessment report is more scientific' (13 November 2009). These issues are reviewed below.

In this context, the 'Arena' project group members argued that the tool is reliable with regard to the notion of 'indicators'. The sustainability consultants from Poland in the sustainability assessment report state that the assessment consists of indicators, and sub-indicators, and that the indicators are constructed based on both quantitative and qualitative sets of data. The sustainability assessment includes a statement that 'behind the assessment diagram is a series of detailed worksheets, with over 120 sub-indicators of social, economic, natural resource and environmental performance' (2008, p. 11).

The sustainability assessment report (2008) also points to the details of the '*classifications*' of urban development practices (also noted in the previous chapter). It reveals that '*classifications*' embedded in the sustainability assessment framework have quantitative and qualitative, numerical and non-numerical values. The latter include such numerical values as -3, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, 3. For instance, the sustainability consultants from Poland (in the assessment report) recall that the 'Arena' development is attributed a mark of '+2' in e.g. 'energy'; scores '+1' in 'water usage', '0' in 'transport', and '-1' score in 'waste management'. The claims coincide with other statements made by corporate consultants, e.g. the inventor of the sustainability assessment, and the developer. The qualitative '*classifications*', include the notions: 'poor', 'average', 'good' or 'best' and so on. The qualitative and quantitative indicators represent a relationship whereby the negative numbers suggest that the performance of a particular indicator/block of indicators is 'poor' ('below average level' or 'the worst solution'); '0' means 'good practice' ('average level' or 'the best solution') and the positive numbers represent 'above good practice'.

With regard to the discourses about 'indicators', data comprehensiveness and temporal reach are also dimensions of the 'reliability' *frame* afforded to sustainability assessment. The assessment report states that the sustainability assessment includes four sets of indicators: the economic, social and the environmental ones and that 'the environmental aspects were divided into the impact on the environment and sourcing from non-renewable sources' (2008, p. 11). The report emphasizes that the change in value of one indicator influences the change in value of interrelated indicators, as all three aspects of sustainability (economy, society and environment) are interrelated. This can be pictured with regard to the 'sources of energy' indicator, which is discussed in the context of the 'air quality' segment of 'environmental indicators' and in the 'sources and the use of energy' segment in the context of 'natural resources'. This is further demonstrated as bounding the reliability of the sustainability assessment.

The statements about the comprehensiveness of the indicators involve insights into '*model practices*' of data collection, especially in the context of a project life cycle. The sustainability assessment report also demonstrates elements for improvement, strengthening the sustainability performance of an indicator or a group of indicators over a life cycle. When interviewed, the sustainability consultants and the PR managers argued that the indicators are collected by taking into account all stages of the life cycle of a project (11 February 2011). The junior PR manager expressed awareness about the notion of life cycles in the context of sustainability assessment. She stated: 'the project had to be sustainable at every phase, at the beginning, at the stage of... marketing' (10 November 2010).

These insights also lead us to the other '*model practices*' that underpin the 'reliability' frame. It concerns, the '*model practices*' of collaboration in data collection. The sustainability assessment report of the 'Arena' development proposal and the '*infrastructure*' points out that these practices include organising various meetings, workshops, conducting interviews in order to provide the best accuracy possible in the process of data collection and analysis (as argued in the sustainability assessment report of the 'Arena' development proposal). This is also confirmed by a few other project stakeholders. According to the sustainability assessment report, the meetings with, for instance, the designers from the United Kingdom took place on the 18th and 21st December 2007. This is also confirmed by the sustainability assessment inventor in other documentary sources when he argues that the collaborative practices underpinning sustainability assessment, especially the workshops, 'allow the assessment team to ensure that data for every indicator is provided and, more importantly, validated' (2004, p. 5).

The sustainability consultants from Poland in the sustainability assessment report (2008) also state that the list of consultants for the sustainability assessment would be updated in order to provide the most objective view possible in the later stages of the design process. More insights into the collaborative processes of preparing the assessment, especially with regard to the processes of interaction, are provided further in the section.

The study unveiled that the discourses about the construction of the sustainability assessment also involve reflections on the flexibility with regard to the practices of data collection and in general. The sustainability consultants converge with the statements that the assessment has become fairly flexible in practice. Sustainability consultants from Poland, in the sustainability assessment report, recall that the flexibility entails that consultants choose indicators which are relevant to an assessment of a project. However, at the same time the interview with the Head of the Sustainability Consulting Division in London revealed that it is not 'fully flexible' and that the use of some indicators is obligatory (11 February 2011). A further dimension of this flexibility was timing. The sustainability consultants from Poland reassure that sustainability assessment can be used at any stage of a project, at the beginning of the project and in the later stages. However, at the same time they state that sustainability assessment helps to establish project objectives and that the sustainability assessment makes the greatest impact during the first stages of

the design process, when a development proposal can be improved and when the objectives of a project are set up; a point echoing the inventor of the sustainability assessment.

The insights into the 'causes' of the phenomenal structure of the discourses about reliability of the sustainability assessment also include statements about the presentation of its outcomes. The study brings into light that the outcomes of the assessment are embedded in the form of a diagram, which has a circular shape and is divided into four quadrants. The form corresponds to the four sets of indicators: economy, society, environment and natural resources. The quadrants of the sustainability assessment diagram are coloured as the inventor of the sustainability assessment explains: 'the green sectors towards the centre of the diagram are areas of strength while the oranges and reds moving towards the edge are increasing weaknesses' and that 'the ultimate achievement of a sustainable organisation is to aim to have as many sectors in the green areas as possible' (Inventor of the sustainability assessment 2004, p. 5).

Also, the 'Arena' project group, the 'Arena' sports club manager, the PR managers and the 'Arena' developer, converged with the idea that the sustainability assessment recalls a particular management tool, assessment matrix – SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). In the context of the 'Arena' development proposal, the strengths of the project include for instance, 'the investment [of the developer] in the sports club', 'the idea to link the development site with its surrounding, in particular 'Midfields' park or spending 4% of budget on pro ecological solutions (Sustainability assessment report, 2008). These are several examples out of a few of them recalled in the report, which, it is also important to note, provide scanty explanations about what lead the sustainability consultants to these conclusions.

With regard to the format of the sustainability assessment, several 'Arena' project group members regarded it as easy to read and the outcomes of the assessment easy to comprehend. For instance, the sustainability consultant 2, in the press release addressing the sustainability assessment, stated that the assessment 'shows the strengths and the weaknesses, it is clear and objective'. Similarly, the sports club manager argued that sustainability assessment has an easy to read format: 'the diagram cannot be simpler' (10 November 2010). The inventor of the sustainability assessment points out that 'such a framework... can be of great assistance for an organisation to have EMS [Environmental Management System] or CSR [Corporate Social Responsibility] systems as much of the data needed within the framework will be in well-organised and readily accessible format, which saves time and effort for all' (Inventor of sustainability assessment 2004, p. 3).

Summarising, the insights into the construction of the assessment tool and the proceedings encompassing it, unravel key issues relating to valorisation, especially objectification, of knowledge produced by consultants. The objectivity of knowledge outcomes in the context of sustainability assessment was assumed not only with regard to alleged the 'outlook' of the tool, and its resemblance to

scientific and mathematical formulas, but also its alleged ability to embed a range of expertise in sustainable development and from local 'Arena' stakeholders.

Last but not least, one should note the context in which statements about the reliability of the construction of the sustainability assessment in the 'Arena' case study were made. The discourses about reliability of the sustainability assessment were embedded in the publicly available documentary sources. Also, some 'Arena' project group members such as PR managers and the sports club manager claimed that the sustainability assessment was reliable, however, without an extensive commentary regarding its construction. For instance, the 'Arena' sports club manager when talking about sustainability assessment, simply stated: 'sustainability assessment was the best assessment of the project' (10 November 2010). When interviewed, the senior public relations consultant pointed out: 'we [both PR consultants] technically know of what is the sustainability assessment' (10 November 2010), however neither of the two managers recalled the principles of its construction, which may suggest certain exclusiveness of the assessment, which is addressed further in the chapter, meanwhile the subsequent section demonstrates the '*responsibilities*' of consultants in the context of sustainability assessment.

6.2. '*Responsibilities*' of consultants in the context of sustainability assessment

This section depicts the 'Arena' project group members' pragmatic attitude towards their '*roles and responsibilities*' in the context of sustainability assessment and allows understanding of varied dimensions of power relations in its context.

When elaborating upon their roles, the 'Arena' sustainability consultants argued that they primarily followed '*model practices*' when carrying out sustainability assessment broadly described in the previous section. They therefore 'complied' with corporate proceedings regarding sustainability assessment. The sustainability assessment report of the 'Arena' development proposal points out that the '*model practices*' include: carrying out an introductory meetings dedicated to presenting the notion of sustainable development and the sustainability assessment to project stakeholders and the investor; the overview of the main indicators of the sustainability assessment to ensure their applicability to the project proposal and ensuring that there is no need to apply additional indicators; meetings and conversations with the project stakeholders according to the list agreed with the investor, the field visit, data analysis, collecting missing data towards the first (baseline) assessment and acceptance of the analysis but with the specialists having the ability to certify it; and preparing the sustainability report, which describes the information collected, strengths and the areas for improvement.

The insights into the model practices of carrying out the assessment also revealed that the responsibilities of consultants are not to compromise with any external pressures, and maintain their dedication to the roles of 'independent auditors' or 'guardians of objectivity' (addressed especially in Chapter 5). The 'Arena'

sustainability assessment (2008, p. 11) includes a statement that 'the final assessment is verified by an independent expert whose role is to ensure the objectivity of the assessment independently from [the pressures emerging] in the place where the assessment is conducted'. Similarly, the inventor of the sustainability assessment states that the outcomes of the assessment are 'reviewed with the client, but as the assessments are independent, the only changes accepted are those where the client can provide additional validated data which was not previously provided' (2004, p. 5).

This suggests that the knowledge outcomes produced by consultants almost force a client to take a particular decision. In the 'Arena' development proposal this was suggested by sustainability consultant 2 and the public relations managers. The former stated that sustainability assessment tells a client what decisions he or she 'must', 'can' and 'should not' take (13 November 2009). According to the senior PR manager (responsible developer) 'the entire project was constructed in a way that if there is a weakness, there would be an immediate response [from the developer]' (10 November 2010). At the same time, however, the study unravelled considerable evidence that the relationship between a consultant and a client is more balanced than the consultants portray in publicly available sources.

In particular, the sustainability consultants converged on the idea that their expertise and the way they apply it, is a unique process. Sustainability consultants from London pointed to such everyday interaction as a key 'channel' for expertise exchange and learning from each other. The junior sustainability consultant from London stressed that the company does not centralise expertise and that there is no universal way consultants approach projects and that 'transfer chains are very strong; you can just ask somebody for advice, a specialist in a particular field' (26 January 2010). When asked about how to secure expertise sharing, the Head of Sustainability Consulting division in London, responded: 'meeting people... the best way of breaking down barriers is working with people' (11 February 2011).

All sustainability consultants interviewed also emphasized the role of the internet in knowledge exchange. The junior sustainability consultant stated: 'intranet it is a basic tool at work, if there is no project guidance' (26 January 2010). The Head of the Sustainability Consulting division in London explained that the intranet allows the discussion of issues in a forum, uploading resources, and contended: 'sustainability skills network... you can post a question, and get an answer from the globe, learning and training within the organisation. A lot of internal communication has got a very strong sustainability angle' (11 February 2011). This was also acknowledged by the senior sustainability consultant from London.

During interviews the sustainability consultants also argued that the power relationships between a consultant and a client are balanced as they depend on the skills and abilities of a consultant on the one side, and expectations of a client on the other side. When interviewed, the senior sustainability consultant and the junior sustainability consultant from London argued that the client plays an important role in the collaborative design processes and in conducting the

sustainability assessment. She pointed out that the expertise and the skills of a particular consultant can influence the final outcome of this collaboration with a client: 'having skills to articulate value to the client, and confidence of the consultant to address it' (11 February 2011).

The consultants from London stressed that their '*model practices*' of using environmental standards partly secure their influence on a client and on a project. For instance, the Head of the Consulting division of the company contended that 'ISO14001 prompt to think of environmental objectives, how to come up with (...) but sometimes it is a tick box, that would prompt people's thinking' (11 February 2011). The study provides evidence that the '*responsibilities*' of a consultant in the context of sustainability assessment are bound with their 'service' position towards a client.

6.2.1. Consultants' service 'position' towards a client

The insights into '*responsibilities*' of consultants in the context include reflections about their service '*position*' towards a client, which was already noted in Chapter 5. The research unveiled that '*model practices*' of consultants entail that they present a number of design options based on the outcomes of the assessment. When interviewed, the senior sustainability consultant from London stated that based on the outcomes of the assessment, a number of design options are presented to a client, who solely decides between them (11 February 2011). Turning to the practices of data collection, the sustainability consultants stated that the developer agreed with them about the list of project stakeholders who would be consulted in terms of sustainability assessment of the 'Arena'. However, the report does not state who had a final voice in establishing the list.

Also, the inventor of the sustainability assessment stresses that model practices in the context of sustainability assessment take into account client's time. He states: 'these half day workshops [when the sustainability assessment is introduced to project stakeholders] are very time efficient for both client and consultant' (2004, p. 5). Also, the study unveiled that the consultants' influence is bound with the client's view on the economies of a project. The discourses are reproduced by the sustainability consultants (directly and indirectly involved in the 'Arena' development proposal) and the developer. The Head of the Sustainability Consulting Division in the United Kingdom pointed out that, when interacting with a client, a consultant needs to be considerate about the 'main issues' such as 'the client's sustainability awareness and willingness to devote funds towards improvement in sustainability performance' (11 February 2011). The senior sustainability consultant from London also argued that (re)production of sustainability assessment can be limited by a 'client not wanting to know about it... sustainability as [it is] a luxury and dirty word' (11 February 2011). Whereas, the developer, when asked about the role of sustainability assessment in the development proposal states that 'the most important thing was the matter of optimisation of indicators... the most important were economic criteria' (8 November 2010).

The study unveiled that sustainability consultants from both Poland and the United Kingdom pointed to their '*model practices*' for translating sustainability into something profitable for a client. The sustainability consultants argue that their aim is to meet the client's needs and expectations on the one side, and to make him 'realize' his needs, on the other side. The practices are explicitly acknowledged by the sustainability consultants from Poland and the senior consultant from London. The latter stated that she 'need[s] to think of what value it is giving to my client, what they are going to get out of it' (11 February 2011). When elaborating on the various interests of stakeholders in the matters of sustainability, the sustainability consultant 2, stated that 'the part of sustainability which is profitable to an investor is the most important [to us]' (13 November 2009). He also stated: 'for investor, sustainability is something different than to the rest [of stakeholders]..., the problem is that it is not the investor that is the beneficiary of sustainability but local communities... investors build, sell and local communities exploit' (13 November 2009).

Indeed, the developer argued that the economic premises of sustainability are the most important ones and says that the primary concern of sustainability assessment is a matter of 'optimisation of a budget' (13 November 2010). The latter, one should note is a particularly meaningful statement as it hints as the general approach of the developer to the sustainability assessment, which is one of the key elements of the investigation of social interactions around sustainability assessment in the case of the 'Arena' development proposal.

These findings, one should note provide rather a blurry image about how responsibilities of consultants translate into power relations. The power effects in the context of the sustainability assessment refer to various dimensions of the consultant-client relationship. One of them is rather invisible or symbolic and relates to consultants' expertise and position as a knowledge leader, a specialist, which implies certain compliance of a client with regard to acceptance of the validity of the outcomes. The other dimension of power relations is embedded in the infrastructure of the contract, whereby a consultant is in a position of service towards a client. The argument emerging from the research is also that since the client has bought the independent advice of sustainability consultants, he must also be able to exercise it independently as consultants argue that it is a client, who has a final 'say' about the matters and as they also admitted that they always 'internalise' client's priorities. These insights, therefore, suggest power relationships in the context of the sustainability assessment being rather balanced, which is also explicitly stated by one of the sustainability consultants of the 'Arena' development proposal. Also, one should note, however, that these dimensions coexist and at this stage of investigation there is little evidence that that validity of knowledge claims of consultants in the 'Arena' case study were compromised.

Further insights into this issue are discussed based on evidence about the interaction between the consultants and project group members in the context of sustainability assessment.

6.2.2. Client as an intermediary in knowledge production

The study unveiled that the 'Arena' project group members (apart from the consultants and the developer) were detached from carrying out the assessment and that they played an instrumental role in the process of preparing the assessment, apart from data collection.

The 'Arena' project group members, while reflecting upon their roles in the project admitted that they indeed provided data for the assessment, yet their main responsibilities were different. In particular, the sports club manager, the architects from Poland, the designers from the United Kingdom explicitly argued that their 'main' responsibilities did not include sustainability assessment. For instance, the role of the Polish architects in the case of the 'Arena' development proposal was 'a couple of studies and design work', yet they admitted providing the sustainability consultants with the indicators regarding the design of the 'lower version' (option 'B') of the project (14 July 2010). However, this version of the sustainability assessment was never published. Also, the 'Arena' sports club manager stated that she did not deal with sustainability assessment but provided indicators regarding the stadium (10 November 2010). The public relations manager explicitly stated: 'I did not deal with this matter. It was all done by the sustainability consultants' (10 November 2010). Otherwise during interviews the architects did not extensively engage with debates about the construction of the sustainability assessment, either to support it or to discredit it.

The study also suggested that the detachment of the 'Arena' project group members pervaded the processes of social interactions in the context of the sustainability assessment. It suggests that interaction between the 'Arena' project group members featured few opportunities of direct exchange of expertise. In general, communication and work patterns of the project group members – around sustainability assessment and more generally – included minimal face-to-face contact. The project stakeholders recalled just a few meetings where all of them were present. The environmental consultant stated that he did not have contact with the project group as such, there were no meetings about sustainability assessment with other project stakeholders (9 November 2010). Primarily, however, the project group members could not remember how many the meetings were dedicated to sustainable development and sustainability assessment. They usually suggested one or two, including the initial meeting, where key premises of sustainability assessment were introduced, or could not remember it at all, which was expressed by the Chair of the Local District Council Board. The sustainability assessment report itself provides few details from which to reconstruct the meetings.

Discourses about the detachment of some 'Arena' project stakeholders from the considerations about sustainability assessment include reflections on the matter of spatial distance. Such discourses were produced by the project group members from Poland and the United Kingdom. The sustainability consultants from Poland in the sustainability assessment report revealed that the final assessment was

prepared in London. Also, when asked about the details of how sustainability assessment was conducted, the developer stated that he knew little about it as 'it all [sustainability assessment data] went to London' (8 November 2010). Similarly, the designers from the United Kingdom claimed that they co-worked in the matter of sustainability assessment with two senior consultants from the sustainability consultancy Headquarters in London. However, neither of the two admitted that they worked on the case, when approached with interview requests. Also, the designers from London argued that they were detached from the 'Arena' project stakeholders in Poland and were not kept informed about how the development proposal was executed (19 January 2011). The designers even asked about how the development proposal was received in Poland.

With regard to the process of data collection, the project group members recalled that the developer played the role of an intermediary between them and sustainability consultants. For instance, the environmental consultant reflected upon the contact with the developer and he stated: 'I used to receive the final things. I used to receive something. I made my comments and sent them back. It was this way' (9 November 2010). The architects from Poland stated that the main means of communication both with the developer and sustainability consultants was internet (14 July 2010). The sustainability consultants from Poland stated that the sustainability assessment was developed using email contacts and that there was a meeting in London. The sports club manager pointed out that the developer coordinated all the actions: 'it all was done by [the developer] mainly' (10 November 2010). Additionally, one 'Arena' project group member suggested that, in the context of the developer's intermediary role, a misuse of data occurred. In particular, the environmental consultant recalled that the developer pressured him to 'stretch facts': 'there is not only to find arguments for... but also...stretching facts, conclusions, for the project to be well conceived... and these were not lies as such' (9 November 2010). However, no other 'Arena' project group member mentions this matter.

The power effects in the context of sustainability assessment can be observed by tracing whether the outcomes of sustainability assessment influence design objectives or targets in a project.

6.2.3. Practical influence of sustainability assessment

As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, achieving a clear 'picture' of sustainability impacts is a difficult task with regard to trade-offs between indicators. However, putting this issue aside, the study of the 'Arena' development proposal shows that the sustainability assessment has had a limited influence on setting up new sustainability objectives. Designer 1 acknowledged that sustainability assessment did not change the project beyond February 2008, which is in fact the time, when the sustainability assessment was conducted (19 January 2011). Developer suggested that there was no intention to set new sustainability objectives beyond February 2008: 'it [sustainability assessment] was a final product' (8 November 2010). Similarly, the sports club manager argued that 'it was rather a

final result' (10 November 2010). Developer also explicitly stated that 'we could make it without it [the assessment]. The utility function of sustainability assessment in the matter of project design was zero' (8 November 2010). These statements contradict the ideas of other project group members' suggesting that the assessment methods could be used in the latter stages of the project (providing that the council would grant a planning permission).

Having reviewed the evidence about the '*responsibilities*' of consultants in the context of sustainability assessment, the chapter now turns to discuss how consultants '*positioned*' themselves in the context of the debates about sustainable development and how this '*positioning*' was subject to one's understanding of sustainable development, as another attempt to assess the effects of knowledge claims produced in the context of sustainability assessment on various project stakeholders.

6.3. The '*position*' of the consultants towards other project stakeholders

The following section reveals that the reliability of knowledge outcomes produced in the context of sustainability assessment is as in the previous Chapter, bound with the position of consultants as 'experts' in sustainable development. It transcends into the notion of sustainability assessment as a workshop tool. The section however, also reveals that the consultants' claims about their expertise entail a very particular '*positioning*' of the notion of sustainable development, which then means the consultants' knowledge claims only can be endorsed by those social actors who do not possess specialist knowledge.

The consultants' expert '*position*' in the context of sustainability assessment includes statements about their roles as tutors and mentors in sustainable development and the role of sustainability assessment as a workshop tool. The senior sustainability consultant from London stated that 'the framework has been developed with the aim of making sustainability meaningful to a wide range of stakeholders' (11 February 2011). Sustainability consultant 1 argued that sustainability assessment is a 'workshop tool' and that one can learn a lot from it. The sustainability assessment report also states that consultants indeed engage in the practices of tutoring other 'Arena' project stakeholders about sustainable development including the workshop organised on the 10th December 2007 at the corporate premises, where the sustainability consultants introduced the assessment to 'Arena' project stakeholders.

Other project stakeholders also converged with consultants' '*self-positioning*' in the context of sustainability assessment and stressed that sustainable development is an exclusive, professional domain. The sports club manager acknowledged her 'position' outside the circle of experts regarding sustainability assessment and urban planning and suggested that it concerns other project group members as well. She stated 'none of us [indicating the project group members] knows anything about spatial planning... the planners had to bring it together' (10 November 2010).

Similarly, the developer and the PR managers pointed out that sustainability assessment and issues of sustainable development in general were dealt with by the sustainability consultants. The PR managers also stated that their understanding of sustainability and sustainability assessment comes from 'sustainability experts' – planning professionals (10 November 2010).

The study unveiled that these statements also refer to the idea about redefining sustainable development in terms of science and technology.

6.3.1. Redefinition of sustainable development in terms of science and technology

The insights into the construction of sustainability assessment revealed the domination of scientific and quantitative aspects of sustainable development. This especially includes the statements of the sustainability consultants and project group members about sustainability assessment as a 'model', a 'scientific method' or an 'audit system' and all point out that the sustainability assessment consists of 'indicators'. Also, an important role in the definition of sustainable development in terms of science and technology is played by the fact that sustainability consultants interviewed are engineers (unveiled in Chapter 5). When interviewed, they stated that the '*model practice*' in their work entailed using various sustainability assessment methods, such as BREEAM and LEED.

This 'positioning' of sustainable development as scientific and technological issues was also carried out by other project stakeholders. In the 'Arena' project booklet, the developer elaborates on the eco-friendly technologies which are meant to improve the environment of the 'Arena' development site, prior to introducing sustainability assessment and then he calls sustainability assessment 'the newest pro-ecological solution'. He did this also during interviews. Outside the 'Arena' project group, the Chair of the Local District Council Board also approved the practices of quantifying sustainability. He acknowledged that sustainability indicators are helpful in design practices in the field of civil engineering: 'when you assess a particular project... it applies mainly when choosing a housing estate, if it meets particular norms, it has got particular indicators' (10 November 2010). Similarly, the local master planner stated 'it can be agreed upon how the idea [of sustainable development] is interpreted, in the matter of carbon footprints for instance' (25 March 2010).

The study also unveiled the relationship between the '*positioning*' of the subject of sustainable development in the context of sustainability assessment and a '*culture of things*'. Sustainability consultants in secondary sources stress that the '*model practices*' of quantification are carried out by various international organisations, including the EU, the OECD, the UN as well as the government of the United Kingdom within the network they are part of (as stated in Chapter 5).

At the same time, however, the study of the 'Arena' development proposal hints that the discourses about sustainable development in terms of science and

technology were contested both by sustainability consultants and outside the project group. It also concerned the model practices of quantification that underpin the construction of sustainability indicators, with regard to a range of issues. In this vein the local master planner provided a comprehensive critique. When interviewed, he argued that based on a master plan, sustainable development 'cannot be quantified' (13 July 2010). The local master planner stated that he is reluctant to use the term 'sustainable development' and states that he 'prefer[s] using the term "harmonious development" instead' (13 July 2010).

Also, while reflecting upon the practice of assigning values of indicators based on a particular technological solution, the sustainability consultant 1 suggested that the scientific and technological values embedded in the assessment are not equally appreciated across the borders. He recalled the example of double glass windows when elaborating on sustainability standards in Poland and in the United Kingdom and argued that British people would be more willing to consider them 'sustainable' (25 March 2010). When asked about the issues relating to the implementation of sustainability assessment across borders, the senior sustainability consultant from London indicated that language use is an obstacle: 'people do have quite evolved language around sustainability in this country [the UK]' (11 February 2011). Power relations in the context of sustainability assessment are also bound up with the 'state' of knowledge about sustainability outside the project group. The sustainability consultants from London pointed out that if people across societies know little about sustainability, they may not understand the results of sustainability assessment. For instance, the senior sustainability consultant from London stated that the problem with the reproduction of sustainability assessment is that 'people have [seen] a diagram and think that it is all about sustainability' and/or 'people have a diagram and think that it is all' – indicating that people are unwilling to engage with the ideas about sustainable development (11 February 2011).

The project group members also reflected upon sustainability awareness in Polish society and with regard to the practices of developers and designers, which brings about the ideas that in these circumstances sustainability assessment is unlikely to be enthusiastically adopted and supported in Poland. The 'Arena' sports club manager stated 'the [sustainability assessment] graph was dedicated to anyone who has been interested, but the matters of the awareness [in the matters of sustainability assessment] are really limited in our society' (10 November 2010). When asked about how sustainability assessment was received outside the project group, the senior PR manager pointed out: 'sustainable development... no one knew anything about it, and everyone understood things differently... no one could understand the premises of sustainability assessment and its results' (10 November 2010). The developer also suggests that sustainability assessment was not well received as there is little understanding of sustainability in Polish society (8 November 2010).

Furthermore, the reflections upon (local/regional/national) practices in urban development reveal few uses of sustainability assessment in Poland. The

sustainability consultant 1 mentioned that he was trained in the use of sustainability assessment in 2008 and he is one of two people who can use this methodology in Poland (the other person is the sustainability consultant 2 (25 March 2010)). The sustainability consultants, the developer and the PR managers acknowledged that until 2009, sustainability assessment has been used in Poland only six times, however they refuse to disclose the names of the projects and state that it is due to the fact that the assessment results were bad and not disclosed to the public. The developer admitted that he was 'not aware of the existence of sustainability assessment [himself], until [the company] introduced it' (8 November 2010). He argued 'there are no other references, other sustainability assessment analyses, people do not know how sustainable is a "standard" project... when it comes to sustainability assessment, investors do not use it often in Poland' (8 November 2010).

As the project group members pointed to a range of others (than scientific-technological) interpretations of sustainable development that transcend through the sustainability assessment, the PR managers and the sports club manager, all felt that the notions of sustainable development and sustainability are difficult to understand.

6.3.2. Sustainable development as a mysterious concept

In light of the findings about the role of sustainability assessment as a workshop tool, several project group members expressed that they gained new insights into the matter of sustainable development. The sports club manager portrays the workshops in the following way:

'I am a little bit interested in the matters of spatial planning, but I was not aware about some things from the beginning to an end, and then we realized... I was learning at discussions... we were sitting at the table, talking about the project, there were a couple of people from sustainability consultancy, the representative made us realize a lot of things... I improved my sustainability awareness' (10 November 2010).

The developer stated that during the sustainability workshops '[we] all learnt' about sustainability from the consultants (8 November 2010). At the same time, however, reconstructing the accounts of 'learning' during these workshops (as well as other 'procedural steps'), and making definite claims about them, is difficult due to restricted access to data. At the same time, however, the research unveiled that the statements could have been exaggerated in the light of evidence below.

The sports club manager, when interviewed after the workshops and asked about how she understands the meaning of sustainable development in the context of the assessment, admitted that she is unsure what sustainable development means. She stated:

'It [sustainable development] concerns the bigger space mainly... the ecological matters, creating jobs, it would revitalize the city, the city would have incomes to budget, linking the site with park and sport function and services, set up a library, it would be a more beautiful place for students too. There [in the site] are supposed to be offices, services, housing functions and we wanted to make services not related to sport too, not to close the area, but to link it with neighbourhoods, to make it a place available to others. Generally I can tell you, for it to generally function [well], for these elements to be sustainable' (10 November 2010).

When interviewed, the senior public relations consultants point out: 'we [both PR consultants] technically know of what is the sustainability assessment, but are unclear about the idea of sustainable development' (10 November 2010). Although with no reference to the outcomes of the sustainability assessment (as he could not remember participating in the data collection process), the Chair of the Local District Council Board argued that sustainable development in the context of the 'Arena' site, entails 'maintaining sport function, adjusting transport infrastructure to the needs of running big sport events and to fund it from a common pot of public and private funds' (9 November 2010). During the interview, the local journalist, who was strongly involved in debating the 'Arena' development proposal in the media, stated: 'I do try to understand an idea of sustainability in my own way. I think that the idea of sustainability refers especially to cities, and promoting brownfield investments, and more compact development. It makes cities denser and does not allow them to overflow' (13 July 2010). Among the many interpretations of sustainable development that are reproduced in the context of sustainability assessment, the study shows that it is notions of science and technology that prevail.

The study traced the practices of the developer, the PR managers and the sustainability consultants from Poland including that they reproduced the results of sustainability assessment on the project website and the organisation of a number of events. The sustainability consultants in the sustainability assessment report recall a number of promotion activities directed to local communities, happenings, meetings, where sustainability assessment were displayed. However, project stakeholders converge on the idea that the practices met with no or little response outside the project group.

The reproduction of the sustainability assessment diagram of the 'Arena' development proposal in various local and national daily newspapers and professional magazines and the professional social networking sites also raised little discussion. Few references to the sustainability assessment of the development proposal can be found in the local daily newspaper 1, which has been strongly involved in debating the 'Arena' development proposal. The references stated only that the 'Arena' development proposal was a subject of the assessment. Similarly, the outcomes of assessment were broadly referred to in articles about the development proposal reproduced in the three professional magazines (magazine 1, 2, 3). The articles seem to (re)produce information provided by the developer in

the project booklet and on the project website. The online article in one of the magazines recalls the sustainability assessment diagram, the sustainability assumptions of the 'Arena' development proposal, and states that 'sustainability assessment is in accordance with the "European Union Sustainable Development Strategy" in the matter of environmental, social, economic and natural resources aspects' (May 2008). It can be also noted that sustainability assessment is not extensively discussed in the 'Skyscraper city' forum, which is dedicated to people who are interested in broad issues of urban development, especially urban design. Although the 'Arena' development proposal is extensively discussed between seventy seven users commenting on the thread, matters concerning sustainability assessment are almost not raised at all; with the exception of the user called 'Magaptera', who simply recalls what the developer wrote in the project booklet, in particular that the 'Arena' development proposal was assessed by the consultants and that the project proposal is one of the most sustainable development proposals prepared in Europe over the last couple of years.

The insights into interaction around sustainability assessment revealed yet another interesting thread, in particular, that the interactions between project group members concerned 'other things', which did not directly involve sustainability matters. For instance, the sports club manager stated: 'you know, we had a lot of other issues to discuss... we discussed project issues generally... things were happening all the time, with the land lease of 'Arena' site, the newspaper articles' (10 November 2010). The environmental consultant stated that in general there was 'no discussion about the merit of the project' (9 November 2010).

6.4. Conclusions

The chapter sheds a critical light on the processes of knowledge, expertise exchange in the context of consultants by stressing the contested nature of sustainability assessment. On the one side, it argues that there are certain premises to assume the validity of the knowledge outcomes that emerged from the sustainability assessment of the 'Arena' development proposal. It concerns (i) the reputation of sustainability assessors as experts in the field (endorsed with regard to skills and abilities in global networks of sustainable development standards setters), as argued in the previous chapter, (ii) The resemblance to science and technology in the construction of sustainability assessment and accompanying practices. On the other side, the chapter demonstrates that the heterogeneous character of discourses about the reliability of sustainability assessment entails that the very issues that define the 'validity' of knowledge outcomes, define the limits of the context where this validity is assumed.

It is unravelled especially with regard to the discourses about sustainable development that underpin the construction of the sustainability assessment. In particular, the dominating discourses about sustainable development in terms of science and technology (which represent the complexities of the construction of the tool) and are supposed to play a legitimating role for a client and a consultant towards other project stakeholders, are likely to limit the scope of learning of lay

people from consultants and the developer. The sustainability assessment unveiled itself as a knowledge construct exclusive to chosen a few – professional circles and a few (competent) individuals. In this context, it is worthwhile noting also that the limits of learning from consultants was also signalled in Chapter 5 with regard to the differences in sustainable development ‘agendas’ across time and space.

The chapter also shows why it is difficult to be conclusive about power effects of consultants articulated through sustainability assessment in the case study. On the one hand, there is evidence of the allegedly uncompromised ‘*positions*’ of sustainability consultants in the context of their corporate roles. On the other hand, it unveils that consultants’ practice in the context of sustainability assessment include a ‘bias’ towards a client – the necessity to draw on client’s expectations, especially economic targets – and define which knowledge claims are included in the assessment and which are rejected (for an overview of these ideas in the form of the SKAD’s ‘*phenomenal structure*’ table, see Appendix 4). Also, one should note that interaction between ‘Arena’ project stakeholders was in fact difficult to trace due to the limited access to data (as mentioned in the Methodology chapter), and whatever the ideals might be about sustainability assessment working through integration with the full development process – thereby providing a framework for the consultants to exercise influence through their technical expertise – the reality of the relationship between sustainability assessment and project construction shows any such integration to be partial and fragmented.

Chapter 7 Knowledge production in the context of the key assumptions about the ‘Arena’ development proposal

Previous chapters of this thesis have shown that the role of sustainability consultants in the ‘Arena’ development proposal is in various ways bound with the credibility of their expertise in sustainable development and principles of the construction of the sustainability assessment. Chapter 6, in particular, introduced that the interaction around sustainability assessment was the subject of ‘other issues’ about the ‘Arena’ development proposal. This, in turn, represents a new stream of research findings about the key assumptions of the ‘Arena’ development proposal, and serves to relativise the role of expertise and the substance of environmental knowledge claims of sustainability consultants and project group members’ presented in the previous chapters, hence mediating the role of consultants in knowledge production processes.

There is limited evidence about direct, face to face interactions between the consultants and local knowledge authorities. The argument in this chapter is based on the insights into the role of the developer in mediating consultants’ expertise. The chapter points to the importance of the interaction between the developer and other ‘Arena’ project stakeholders over the location and design of the ‘Arena’ development proposal as well as the perceived and real of interests of various project stakeholders in this matter. The first part of the chapter outlines the developer’s ideas about regeneration of the ‘Arena’ site with regard to the location (and the character) of the site and the notion of a public good. The second part of the chapter unravels the lines of the contestation of the ‘Arena’ development proposal as a regeneration scheme, and as a ‘strategy’ of seduction of ‘Arena’ project stakeholders. It includes insights into the developer’s and the ‘Arena’ project group members’ *‘strategies’* of seduction – in an attempt to legitimise the development in a sensitive context – and how it affected the image of the developer and the project group. Finally, it tracks the emergence of an anti-development *‘discourse coalition’* and how power relations between local knowledge authorities and project group members found a resolution in a local plan.

7.1. Regeneration of the ‘Arena’ site and its surrounding

Insights into the *‘causal’* structure of discourse about the key assumptions of the ‘Arena’ development proposal unveil the implicit role of sustainability consultants in mediating the developer’s ‘regeneration plan’. The statements about the ‘Arena’ development proposal as an outstanding example of an urban regeneration were produced by the developer and reproduced by other the project group members during interviews and in a range of documentary and secondary sources. They included ideas about the condition of the ‘Arena’ development site and the reasons behind it.

The 'Arena' project stakeholders converged on the idea that the development site was rundown, including derelict sport infrastructure. They described it as a dangerous place that attracted anti-social behaviour that was detached from the rest of the city. The sustainability consultants from Poland in the sustainability assessment report acknowledge that they visited the site while preparing sustainability assessment analysis and although they did not make extensive statements about the development site they included pictures of derelict infrastructures, including the stadium and its immediate surroundings.

The developer, when interviewed for the first time argued that the condition of the development site was common knowledge among the residents of the city. He looked surprised and angry, when asked about the problems of the site during the first interview. He stated: 'have you not seen it yourself?! It is a dreadful place!' (13 October 2009). The sports club manager, who had been based in the development site for twenty three years, reflected upon the condition of the development site and negative associations it used to bring about:

'You can see the site, it is impossible to protect the area, [bad] things happen here all the time, the site is derelict, it is a twenty hectare area. We have plenty of so-called tramps, homeless people. We used to find these people here, in the empty buildings [indicating the buildings at the site], scrap metal was stolen whatever they could... here [also] used to be a commodity exchange, however there was no parking [serving it],... so poorer tradesmen used to occupy staircases in local estates; and since then there was a dislike to the development site' (10 November 2010).

Numerous actors in the council and local media testified to the lack of public funds to sustain the 'Arena' stadium and that the club was indebted to the city council as it did not pay charges for the right of perpetual usufruct and the Inland Revenue. The sports club manager stated: 'we have tried to manage the site as much as we can, according to our abilities. However, we struggled with lack of resources... You have to invest [here] a lot. Someone has to invest here a lot, so it will look good' (10 November 2010). Also, in the article of the local daily newspaper 2 (19 May 2009) the general manager of the sports club was quoted saying: '[w]e spoke with the city council and we know now, that there is no chance to get [from them] any money to regenerate the stadium'.

Interviews also traced how discourses about the regeneration of the development site allegedly referred to the interests of local communities. It concerned the sport and cultural values and involved references to the notion of 'pride'. The sports club manager stressed that the site belongs to people of city residents and that they helped to 'raise' a stadium and that it represents important, common, values (10 November 2010). The senior public relation manager stated: 'we studied the main issues of the site, the key matters are the loss of the only one athletics sports club in the city... [it turned into] a bleak centre of a historical area that has experienced a lot of things, [e.g. clothes and food] markets' (10 November 2010). Whereas, the

Chair of the Local District Council Board stated: 'the sports club had a sport tradition. In the past athletics competitions were hosted there. This is the place where European records were beaten. Once, we were almost champions. There are traditions indeed' (10 November 2010).

The case study revealed that discourses about regeneration of the 'Arena' development proposal were also linked with the discourses about sustainable development. The developer stated that he respects the needs of the current and future generations of residents (and stressed the importance of restoring cultural, sport and 'green' values), which alludes to the generic policy definition of the Brundtland Commission. He emphasized it also by using the metaphor of 'light', as he stated that in the 'Arena' development proposal:

'The metaphor of LIGHT represents convergence of all colours. In this vein, the project proposal sustains all the values and functions creating a synergy effect. As much as LIGHT is available to anyone, the project aims to be open to everyone. As much as LIGHT serves everybody, the project aims to create space for current and future generations of the residents of the city and will allow the sports club to return to its former glory. In our project LIGHTS is a symbol of ethical cooperation, transparent financing and constructive partnership and works in social interests' ('Arena' project booklet, p. 7).

This very idea of urban regeneration however was contested by other project group members in various ways, as is demonstrated below.

7.1.1. 'Need for action' – the green surroundings of the 'Arena' site

The analysis of the '*need for action/problem solving*' as a dimension of discourse about the key assumptions of the 'Arena' development proposal reveal the issue of the location of the site and the roles of policy '*infrastructures*' in determining the acceptance or rejection of the developer's propositions. A key line of argument was, whether the development site could presently be regarded as a public park – 'Midfields' park, and thus whether the developers' claims to be creating a park constituted an environmental gain or a loss.

The study brought to light that the project group members' assumptions underpinning the proposal of 'regeneration' of the 'Arena' (and the knowledge outcomes of the sustainability assessment based on this regeneration proposal), were underpinned by the ideas about detachment of the 'Arena' site from 'Midfields' area. In the context of reflections on the condition of the development site, the developer also stressed his '*responsibilities*' include 'opening' up the development site, towards the 'Midfields' park, which lays in the south and east of it, and in this way, 'extending' it. The project group members also argued that the design proposal of the regeneration of the 'Arena' includes the extension of the 'Midfields' park, and included ideas about creating a 'Central Park'. The sustainability consultants from Poland in the sustainability assessment report

(2009, p. 20) acknowledge that 'the redevelopment of the area is promoted as the creation of the Central Park in the city, which is supposed to serve children and youth'. The debate was also quoted in the local media, especially the local daily newspaper 1.

The 'Arena' project group members, including sustainability consultants, also argued that the 'Arena' site is not part of the 'Midfields' area. When interviewed, the sustainability consultant 1 stated: 'the area is a kind of cut off from its surroundings' (25 March 2010). The architect 2 stated: 'it was an empty site for us [no buildings to maintain], and we were designing in accordance to this idea' (14 July 2010). The designer 1 stressed that the development site is 'brownfield' and that 'the development site was not open to the public' (19 January 2011).

The developer emphasized numerous times in the project booklet that the development site is not part of the park. The 'Arena' booklet (2008, pp. 37-54), the section titled: 'Enlarging the park', includes the statement: 'in spite of the fact that the area is not and has never been part of a park, the investor offers to dedicate the majority of the site for the open park'; or that 'our proposal assumes the creation of over 12 hectares of a park'. In a different place in the same document he stresses (using the bold font) that '**[t]he investment site is not and has never been the part of park**' ('Arena' booklet, 2008, p. 24). The project group members stressed that the site is not part of the 'Midfields' park. This was also acknowledged by the local master planner, who prepared the local plan of the 'Midfields' area: 'the "Arena" site is not a part of a park according to property law' (13 November 2009).

At the same time, however, the study also points to the roles of various 'infrastructures', especially the role of local planning law and policy, in determining whether the 'Arena' site is part of the 'Midfield' area. There was a silent 'consensus' between 'Arena' project stakeholders that the development site was the part of a park in urban policy and practice, and so should already been seen as part of the city's green space resource. This was not explicitly acknowledged by the developer or the project group members as the former primarily focused on emphasizing that the 'Arena' site is derelict and that the developer will provide new, good quality green space.

One should note, however, that the developer acknowledged the importance of complying with local planning law, however, at the same time, he argued it in a two-fold manner: (i) that there is no local law applicable to the site and (ii) that the development proposal appreciates urban planning guidelines established in '*Studium*'. Similarly, the designer 2 stated: 'the land was a part of the city strategic plan of green spaces... the challenge was how to create a new place that is built as a green corridor, a stadium in the park' (19 January 2011).

Outside the project group, the local master planner pointed out that 'in the context of spatial planning practice the development site is in a wider sense a part of the park' (13 November 2009) as did the environmental consultant in two reports: one dedicated to the history of the 'Midfields' site (2008) and the environment of the

'Midfields' site (2007), and the civil servants of the Spatial Policy Department during interviews (13 November 2009). The latter expressed that in 'Stadium' the 'Arena' site is part of 'green corridors', which extend beyond the park. The 'Stadium' (2006) indeed states that the city council aims to support the growth of green spaces in the city, including attempt to build green corridors.

The debates were also commented in media, especially local daily newspapers. For instance, the local journalist in the local daily newspaper 1 (25 May 2009) states:

'The response to the [developer's] argument "this is not a park" is simple: the 'Arena' development site is part of 'Midfields' as much as other buildings the city clean up service, the National Library, or the stadium of the city polytechnic). We never wrote, that the entire 'Midfields' supposed to be a park with trees. We liked the ideas of cafes there. We miss public swimming pools that used to be here'.

Additionally, the insights into the relationship between the development site and its surrounding showed that the latter was seen widely as an important public space hence the proposition of the developer conveyed a sense of risk and loss. The Head of the Local Spatial Planning Office in the city council commented that the 'area that has been of importance to the residents of the city... one of few places you can feel relaxed... the park is a place where you can really live' (8 November 2010). Also, the local journalist considered the developer's proposal in the following way:

'They [local communities] were afraid that the proposal is a beginning of an end of this particular green space, which is a kind of "Central Park" in the city. It is one of few parks that are half-wild in the city, where people spend a lot of time. City residents are emotionally attached to the park and they do have magic memories associated with this particular place... this park has been for everybody and many residents remember it this particular way... when the local plan was enacted, the public good was defended. It was saved from a developer who did not understand a meaning of the area for residents' (10 July 2010).

Finally, the insights into the '*need for action/problem solving*' with regard to the development site is part of a green space – and which thus could be seen as adding to, or taking from, the city's parks resource – can be summarised with regard to the ideas whether in general, the 'Arena' development proposal matches its surrounding. The 'Arena' project group members, the sustainability consultant 1, the designers from the United Kingdom, the architects from Poland and the developer, stressed that the proposal was neatly fitted into 'green' surroundings. When interviewed, the designers from the United Kingdom pointed out that their model design practices always involve considerations about the surroundings of a site and demonstrated to the researcher how various elements of their master plan were connected with 'Arena's' surroundings (19 January 2011). Sustainability consultants from Poland in the sustainability assessment report state that the

'designers [from the United Kingdom] and investor aim to reflect the natural circulation of water and that they design a sustainable drainage system linked with lakes in the park'. On a different occasion, they stated that the version 'A' of the 'Arena' development proposal, the one with high-rise buildings, could introduce a number of new elements into the local landscape. Yet they insisted that the elements were not contentious:

'The project proposal, apart from skyscrapers, relate in its form to the surrounding area. It concerns one of the local districts, where buildings with just a few storeys dominate..., whereas the skyscrapers dominate the skyline of the city centre... these elements... are not controversial' (Sustainability Assessment report, 2008, p.7).

Other commentators echoed this juxtaposition of park and 'skyscrapers'. The local master planner during the second interview a number of times stated: 'they wanted to build skyscrapers on the "Midfields" site!' (30 March 2010). Converging statements were also produced in media – the local daily newspaper 1 (29 February 2008); or the portal skyscraper city.

Similarly, in the 'skyscraper city' portal, some users, for instance, 'Grimlock', rejected the idea of the development proposal with skyscrapers and stated that one of the neighbourhoods around the 'Arena' site has a very particular atmosphere, unlike other districts in the city. These opinions were however contested as other users 'SirWacek WRR', 'Dareky', 'Luki', who suggested that the proposal matched the surrounding and looked impressive.

Also, as discussed later on, the signal importance of the effects of the development on green space – which turned, for many, on people's conceptions of the traditional status of the development site – rather fell outside any calculations of sustainability expertise. This, with particular reference to the developer's interest, is addressed below.

7.2. The 'position' of the developer as a 'saviour' towards local communities

The discourses about key assumptions of the 'Arena' development proposal, the notion of 'regeneration' of the site analysed by using SKAD, also allow reflections on the '*position*' of the developer and the project group towards other project group members, which unravelled to be the one of a 'saviour'.

The developer argued that he was respectful and generous towards other project stakeholders. The statements about the 'Arena' development as a kind of 'gift' to local communities were reproduced by all 'Arena' project group members. Sustainability consultants from Poland suggested that the developer was considerate about local values and generous towards local communities in the statement: 'the aim of the developer is to revitalize the site and sport infrastructure and the quality of green space-including the habitat' and dedicate 60% of the

development site to green space (Sustainability assessment report 2008, p. 20). The senior designer from the United Kingdom pointed out: 'they [the developer and the investors] wanted to recreate the park too, it was important to renew the stadium too' (11 January 2011).

The statements were also produced by other project group members. The architect 1 when asked about his role in the 'Arena' development proposal, stated: 'our aim was to rehabilitate the part that has been a wasteland. We wanted to open the area to the public and making this area friendly to local residents' (14 July 2010). The study also demonstrated other elements of the positioning of the developer (and the project group) as 'good', such as financial matters.

In the light of the '*causes*' for regeneration of the 'Arena' site such as financial matters, sustainability consultants from Poland in the sustainability assessment report (2008, p.7) argued that the 'important part of the investment is the willingness of the investor to save the sports club from bankruptcy confirmed by the fact that the investor paid the club's debts of a value of 20 million PLN in 2006'. The developer in the project booklet specifies that the proposal assumes the scenario of public-private partnership in the form of the Development Corporation, and the developer transferring into its account either 180 mln PLN in case of an implementation of option A, or 173 mln PLN and that the entire amount of the subsidy to the public could reach 200 mln PLN.

The developer was also clear about other financial reasoning involved. In the project booklet, he also points out that high-density commercial development lines the edge of the park, which would provide funding for rehabilitation of the 'Arena' park. When interviewed, he also stated: 'the project should be "given a shot" [by the local council]. They should think about the commercial and the sport site [of the project]. The former would create profits and the place would be a brand for the city' (8 November 2010). Similarly, the designer from the United Kingdom, when reflecting upon the key ideas of the 'Arena' development proposal stressed that 'it responds well to the concern over how to balance the needs of the developer [profit] and the city residents, so that the place does not lose its character' (19 January 2011).

The issues of the accountability of the developer in relation to the 'Arena' development proposal, especially the transparency of his actions were also raised by the 'Arena' project group members. It was mentioned that the reasoning behind the 'Arena' development proposal involved a developer offering a city council a deal which balances returns between the two stakeholders. The senior PR manager stated that:

'The "Arena" development proposal was our first project, a premier one that was managing the financial issues in a novel way. It was led and managed in a transparent way, in an open way' (10 November 2010).

It is also important to note that the developer commissioned an external organisation, which is 'Public-Private Partnership Institute in Poland' to assess the 'fairness' of financial arrangements proposed to the city council. Based on his own experiences about PPP in Poland, the representative of the Institute stressed in a national business magazine that the developer proposed an outstanding financial opportunity to the city council.

The enthusiasm in the sport environment towards the developer was also echoed in the local media. For instance, in the local daily newspaper 2 (19 May 2009) it was recalled that some celebrity athletes were aware of this issue and wanted to pressure the city council to give the developer a 'green light'. Other local media, the local daily newspaper 1 (2008a) also noted that the presentation [of the developer] amazed two Olympians and that the general manager of the development site allegedly stated: 'there was no developer, we would be in debt again. He sponsors us all the time'.

Finally, as discussed later on, the signal importance of the effects of the development on green space – which turned, for many, on people's conceptions of the traditional status of the development site – rather fell outside any calculations of sustainability expertise. This, with particular reference to the developer's interest, is addressed below.

7.2.1. Developer's seduction practices

The insights into the '*position*' of the developer in the context of the 'Arena' development proposal revealed the role of economic interests of the developer and how they are played out in the context of his 'seduction' strategy. In particular, the section unveils that the developer's '*positioning*' as saviour was a deliberate attempt to attract attention of 'Arena' project stakeholders and that in this context the sustainability consultants played instrumental roles in the developer's 'seduction' strategy.

When interviewed, the developer admitted deliberately using the sustainability assessment to add credit to the 'Arena' development proposal and project group: 'the project had to be sustainable, that was an assumption, to use it and to have a "bargaining coin" (8 November 2010). Awareness about this was also expressed by the architect 1, who stated 'all of these [promotional activities] were to create an excitement around the project' (14 July 2010); and architect 2 stressed that 'the ideas [about the 'Arena' development proposal] had to be "persuasive"' (14 July 2010). The environmental consultant stated: 'they do something for the city in order to get something [a planning permission] back and they used for this purpose green ideas' (9 November 2010). The senior public relations manager described his role and the role of sustainability ideas in the project in the following manner:

'It was that a group of investors wanted to sell ideas for money... sustainability assessment was to "clear" [city council's] decision making. I work for a PR agency ... public relations is a strategic communication tool,

which aims at clearing the decision making [of the local municipality]' (10 November 2010).

In this context, the study also unravelled a range of models; marketing practices and how they were underpinned by the objectives of obtaining public support for the 'Arena' development proposal and obtaining a planning permission. The interview with public relations managers revealed that the development proposal involved 'usual public affairs practices', which aimed at creating discussion about the project and good associations with the project. The senior public relations manager stated:

'We were studying the problems of the site, and organising meetings, promoting this place as better, conducting a survey, organising events with famous sport celebrities... . One company conducted market research, in the form of interviews conducted via the phone. The action was aiming at creating discussion around the project..., contact with local media was important too. What was important, it was the way the project is talked about. It was important to educate people, so they would know what they were talking about' (10 November 2010).

This was also stated in the sustainability assessment report of the 'Arena' development proposal.

The study revealed that the developer's consultation practices featured national sport celebrities. Media recalled that the public consultations organised by the developer included also the representatives of '*Polski Związek Lekkiej Atletyki*', which is 'The Association of Polish Athletes' and local communities. Local media, the local daily newspaper 2, recalled that the sport lobby was present during open meetings on occasion when a local district board was giving its opinion on the local plan. During this meeting, a famous female athlete allegedly stated that the city 'could be the only one capital in Europe that does not have an athletics stadium... we need not only football pitches in our city' as cited in the local daily newspaper 2 (19 May 2009).

It is also important to note that the developer's attempts to win public support included references to public consultations. Project group members stressed that they 'complied' with public opinions about the 'Arena' development proposal and included it in their project design. The sustainability consultants from Poland in the sustainability assessment report (2008, p. 21) state that the design of 'Arena' was underpinned by the 'processes of informal consultation to the project, which ensured the implementation of comments and contributions of parties' collected interested in the project'. The developer of the 'Arena' went as far as to suggest that their promotion activities aim to empower local communities. She stated that: 'our aim is to carry on with the public consultations until we reach all people who are interested in the project. In our opinion the residents of the city should have an opportunity to get to know a project of such importance and have their own opinion about it' (A construction magazine, 15 May 2008).

Also, data analysis unveiled that the aim of the environmental claims of consultants aimed was to fulfil economic interests of the developer. This may not be wholly unfounded, insofar as the environmental evaluation of the project discussed above formed part of the developer's representational practices.

Numerous 'Arena' project stakeholders outside the project group indeed saw discourses of sustainability as marketing in order to obtain planning permission. The Chair of the Local District Council Board when asked about the meaning of sustainability assessment to the site, stated: 'it is difficult to implement the solutions, as proposed [by 'Arena' project group] by justifying it with pro-ecological reasons, right?' (10 November 2010). During the second interview, the local master planner was reluctant to speak about sustainability to the extent that he asked the interviewer to change questions in a way that the word 'sustainability' does not occur. In this vein, he stated:

'The project had nothing much to do with ideas of sustainability... sustainability aspect was to "cover" media... they wanted to secure media... it ["green" ideas of the developer] was untrue... these were simple lies... talking about sustainability is impudent in this case! It was a fight about money' (13 July 2010).

The statements are (re)produced implicitly also on the website of the agency that the developer represented at the time, when he was working on the 'Arena' development proposal. The website includes statements that the aim of the agency is to generate returns, according to the will of the investors. That being said, not only the claims of the developer that he is charitable or philanthropic, therefore trustworthy, were not taken as granted outside the project group. They also did not appreciate developer's attempts to win their support.

7.2.2. 'Unreliable' developer

The study unveiled that bound up with the seduction strategy of the developer were ideas with different moral valencies that could have brought about considerable reputational risks to sustainability consultants and might have become an obstacle for communication and knowledge exchange in the context of sustainability consultants.

The representatives of the council argued that the developer was not trustworthy and reliable and pointed to the 'culture' of profit that encompasses developers' practices. The project stakeholders outside the project group expressed mistrust towards the developer on various occasions, for instance, while reflecting upon the location of their civic exhibition; the design of public polls; visualizations of the project proposal; locating the proposal on the site, which includes the final years of the lease and also towards the development sector in general. These categorisations of the developer's practices involved negative associations as the stakeholders argued that the developer was: 'aggressive', 'fool[ing] (people)',

'tricky', 'unethical', 'vague', 'suspicious' or 'confusing'. For instance, the Head of the Spatial Planning Office, pointed to the fact that the developer organised an exhibition dedicated to the 'Arena' development proposal at the same time and in the same place, where the city council's public viewing of the local plan took place. She stated: 'it was confusing. People were coming over to my office and asking which one is a proposal of the local plan. It was a sort of trick of the developer' (13 November 2009).

Also, the project stakeholders outside the project group stressed developers being unreliable in general in the context of the reflections about the 'model practices' of commercialisation of space by the developer. In particular, the local master planner and the Head of the Local Spatial Planning Office expressed that developers do all sorts of things just for profit and stress that some developers attempted to obtain planning permission to redevelop the 'Arena' site prior to 2006. According to the local master planner:

'The developer had a materialistic approach to the development area, and it was reflected in the way he was treating and conceiving space... there is a kind of flow of thinking of space, that space should be commercialised... there is a very popular way of thinking of space [between developers] that the space should be built up... in the proposal of the development proposal, green would be only a corner. Well, but we know tricks of developers, they think that if they call an estate "a green field", "a sunny slope", they will force an idea of development when one neighbour is looking at the windows of another' (25 March 2010).

The Head of the Local Spatial Planning Office pointing to the example of the 'Arena' development proposal argued that 'the developer was just one of many developers that tried to bite a piece of this area and he was treated as all of other developers were before him' (8 November 2010).

The evidence about the 'vicious' practices of the developer, suggest engendered mistrust towards associates of the developer. While reflecting upon the positive results of the polls, organised by the developer (in order to explore the support of the local communities towards the development proposal) and published in a local press, the local journalist, other media reporters, the local master planner, and the Head of the Local Spatial Planning Office accused the developer of cheating. The Head of the Spatial Planning Office argued that 'they [the developer and the project group] were doing a public poll... the questions suggested the answers' (13 November 2009). The criticism was also reproduced in the media, especially the local daily newspaper 1, and included such names of articles as: '*Research or Brain-draining?*' (20 June 2009) or '*Research or manipulation?*' (17 June 2009). In this context, the representative of the company, who designed the public poll, had to defend himself also in another article of this newspaper.

Additionally, the local master planner also stated that the developer forged their visualization of the project proposal, or even accused him of bribery. He argued:

'The entire affair with the development proposal... relates to the interests of a particular group... [private] interests were an impulse to the 'Arena' proposal... the development site was purchased cheap and through various actions... [t]he developer undertook actions that were aiming at bribing one group of people and convincing [expressed ironically] other groups of people to the idea of the development. I do not consider it as ethical at all... they would be able to do it ... they have done that in the past' (30 March 2010).

The reception of the lobbying practices in the media was also critical. The reporter of the local daily newspaper 1 stated that:

'The developer, feeling a blade on his neck convinced a minister of sport, to lobby the city about the idea of a development in the corner of the development site. The developer did not give up his weapons. He emphasized that it is was just an initial conception and proposed a lower-rise version of the development however it met a chill response from local councilors' (12 February 2009).

Finally, the Head of the Local Spatial Planning Office after learning that the consultants worked for the developer from the interviewer, stated that 'the status of sustainability consultants can be downgraded by their association with the developer' (8 November 2010).

Last, but not least, the study revealed that mistrust issues between 'Arena' project stakeholders were underpinned by perceptions of the culture of private sector representatives, especially developers. This suggests that the spatial reach and influence of commercial knowledge brokers like consultants is shaped by wider attitudes towards private sector development.

Indeed, the study found a disengagement of the 'Arena' project stakeholders outside the project group from the considerations about the 'Arena' development proposal due to an association with a developer. Public relations managers, the developer and the sports club manager suggested that the locals were difficult to communicate with. The local master planner stressed that the developer and local communities present different interests therefore it is difficult for them to converge: 'it was like they were living in two different worlds... developer represents a religion of profit... which does not make him a good partner in a discussion' (30 March 2010). Additionally, the 'Arena' project group members acknowledged that the developer experienced lack of communication from the representatives of the city council.

Revealingly, members of the project group considered these attitudes as a form of 'prejudice' of the public sector against the private sector with regard to urban planning in Poland. According to the sports club manager, the city council 'did not even want to look at it... they asked me: why do you need this developer?... this is

the conception here: as far from developer as possible' (10 November 2010). The developer acknowledged that he was in a difficult position to pursue the proposal of 'Arena' redevelopment. He pointed out that the sustainability assessment 'was not compatible with Polish ground' as it was criticized by local authorities for the fact of being produced by the representative of the private sector. He mentioned 'they questioned the construction of [the sustainability assessment]' and stated that 'if we pay [for sustainability assessment], we will get expected results' (8 November 2010). The senior public relations manager commented: 'in general, the private sector is considered as evil in Poland... a business man is considered as evil, in partnership and in the entire game... were fighting against the stereotype that developer is a thief and foreign capital is bad in the city' (10 November 2010). The environmental consultant, while reflecting upon the practices of legitimacy of the 'Arena' development proposal of the developer, suggested that urban planning was underpinned by 'a socialist left over'. He stated:

'Seeking arguments in favour of the 'Arena' development proposal did not make sense because urbanism and spatial planning in Poland is ruled by previous regime... the city [council] states the dimensions of the development, which is in the best public interests, the developer wants to maximise profit, and an architect will [propose a] design in line with client's expectations; and this way of thinking has not been appreciated yet, there is no balance, there is the superiority of public interests, which are often an abstraction' (9 November 2010).

Also, the statements that the design of the development does not match its green surrounding involved references to the 'position' of the developer as an invader and a thief made by the project stakeholders outside the project group. Local media and local civil servants implied that the developer's proposal was kind of an attempt on a public, common good and that the developer aimed to privatise a part of green space. Local civil servants, journalists and the master planner indicate that the development proposal was a threat to public good insofar as it would destroy green space.

In the context of arguments that the developer aims to 'steal' public good, the 'Arena' project stakeholders emphasized the role of the council in shaping the 'regime of truth' about urban planning practices and the special role institutionally and historically bound structures of knowledge played in underpinning it. This is believed to have collided with the developer's 'seduction' strategy as all these discourses about the merits of the proposal and about any 'expert' knowledge claims being brought to bear took place in institutionally structured terrain, which allocated authority to certain actors, as discussed in the next section.

7.3. 'Culture' of knowledge production in the context of the city council

The final section of the chapter points to perceived 'roles' and 'responsibilities' of local knowledge authorities and particular constellations of public-private sector

relationship they bring about in the context of the 'Arena' development proposal. In the end, it suggests the emergence of anti-development '*discourse coalition*' and stresses a range of power relations that transcend through the processes of interaction between this coalition and the developer.

The section depicts that knowledge claims of the developer and sustainability consultants, were confronted and challenged by other, well entrenched, knowledge(s), which have a certain, local authority. The insights into the '*culture of things/wealth*' as a dimension of discourses about regeneration of the 'Arena' site unravelled a particularly important role of local institutional setting. It concerns especially knowledge embedded in local policy frameworks and represented by the expertise of state's representatives – local civil servants and their trustees.

The study reveals various ways in which the council is '*positioned*' as a local 'knowledge authority'. Various project stakeholders argued that the local city council sets rules and normative values of local urban development using such '*infrastructures*' as the local plan, '*Studium*', and that it is expected to bring about particular power effects – the compliance of various city actors.

In particular, the project stakeholders outside the project group, especially the civil servants from the Spatial Policy Department and the Head of the Local Spatial Planning Department, shared the view that the 'Arena' development proposal needed to be in accordance with local spatial planning arrangements embedded in '*Studium*' and the local plan in order to be granted planning permission. Civil servant 1 from the Spatial Policy Department explicitly stated that in the context of '*Studium*' 'the city [council] decides what is going to be in the area of the "Arena" site' (13 November 2009). Civil servant 2 also argued that they would exercise their authority over the developer even in the absence of the local law based on whether a development proposal matches a surrounding. In this context, the representatives of the council also stressed the importance of the continuity of planning thought.

Local civil servants and the local master planner pointed out that new local laws usually maintain the arrangements of preceding local law. It implied that the primary function of the development site would be 'sport' and the secondary function would be 'green' in the local plan of 'Midfields'. The environmental consultant stressed that the surrounding of the site had been designated for 'green corridors' in planning policies (especially '*Studium*') since the beginning of the twentieth century, from the 1940s onwards (9 November 2010). In the report dedicated to the history of the 'Midfields' area he point to the city plan from the 1980s, he stated that in '*Studium*' and historically that the development site has been seen as a part of green space. Also, the local master planner admitted that he was commissioned by the city council to prepare the local plan in line with '*Studium*' and the ideas embedded in the previous local plan (30 March 2010). Civil servant 2 also stated that the development site was subject to the hierarchy of plans in the 1970s to the 1990s. She stated that 'there was a general plan', the sport and green site has always been a park: that was its leading function' also the

planning policies from the 1970s dedicated the site to green, sport and leisure functions (13 November 2009).

The ideas about the continuity of planning policy with regard to the 'Arena' site included the arguments that the city council did not intend to extend the land lease right of the sports club (and by implication, also the developer), which was expiring in 2014. The local daily newspaper 1 reported that the representatives of the council secretly applied to the local court for the cancellation of the land lease in January 2009 (the local daily newspaper 1, 19 May 2009); or that the Head of the Property Management office in the city council stated:

'The user of the site does not respect the perpetual usufruct agreement. The agreement states that the very user should maintain sport infrastructure of the site. Do you have a recollection that this has happened? Secondly, regardless that the user paid part of the debts towards the city council, it still has a backlog' (12 February 2009).

Ultimately, the representatives of the council indeed got the site back (Local daily newspaper 1, 2014).

There is further support for the interpretation of data that the process of the preparation of the local plan was well underway, when the developer bought the right of perpetual usufruct of the development site in 2005 and suggested that representatives of the local council did not consider the idea about the change of a local plan.

Whereas, the president of the city in the local daily newspaper 1 argued that:

'The project proposal is tempting and interesting. The advantage [of the project proposal] is that it resolves the issue of sport [the lack of athletics stadium, which meets international standards to host big events in the city]. However, the proposal of local plan [for the site and its surrounding] had been already prepared... [and] it does not allow high rise development and nor housing. There are hospitality services and we are not going to change it. The plan is going to be enacted as it is. I cannot see an opportunity to change it' (30 May 2009b).

With regard to the development pressure on the development site and its neighbourhood, civil servants and the local media pointed out that the council had continuously rejected the proposals of commercial and housing development in the site prior to 2006. The Head of the Local Spatial Planning Department and the local councillor recalled the case of the previous developer, which held the right of the perpetual usufruct right of the site between 2000 and 2006.

The '*position*' of the local council in defining validity and appropriateness of knowledge claims were also underpinned by the position of the council as sourcing from a political mandate to represent a society and defend public values.

The insights into the identities with regard to professional positions revealed that the civil servants' roles are to serve a society and ensure the inclusion of public opinions into local planning law. The Head of the Spatial Planning Office on numerous occasions stressed that 'she is only a civil servant' and explicitly stated that her duties are defined by the state (13 November 2009). This however includes complex power relations whereby the representative of the council must consider public opinion in their decision making in the context of policy '*infrastructures*':

The Head of the Local Spatial Planning Department argued that:

'Although a city council enacts a local plan, there are opportunities to modify it.... Every person has got the right to put forward an application with suggestions to a local plan, and every person can give an opinion in the process of public viewing of the plan' (14 July 2010).

The civil servant 1 expressed his view that 'you are allowed to put a proposal to '*Stadium*' and you give comments when it is propounded' (13 November 2009).

The discourses about the position of the council in representing and defending public interests are also embedded in national law from 2003, which stresses various ways in which the proceedings of the preparation of the local plan should be inclusive as every citizen having a right to give a proposal to and give comment on a local plan. That being said, the ways in which these 'model practices' are played out are often difficult to grasp and are subject of the influence of other local knowledge authorities.

7.3.1. Credibility of other local experts

Given the institutionalised momentum behind the green space and sporting uses of this area, one can see how the developer's proposals can be badged as non-compliance of the developer. The project group members and media pointed out yet another dimension of non-compliance of the developer with the law; it concerned the height of the buildings in the context of the airport zone. The reporter of the local daily newspaper 1 stated that the 'Arena' development site was embedded in 'an area of low rise buildings around the city airport, which does not allow buildings to reach higher than 145 meters' (12 February 2009).

The research was able to trace how practices of advocating the reliability of the local plan involved references to the credibility of the organisations and individuals in the context of planning process. The project group members outside the project shared the view that local experts gave positive opinions about the project. The Head of the Local Planning Office commissioned the preparation of the local plan to a local master planner represented. He was argued to possess specialist expertise in spatial and land use planning. When asked about the main assumptions and the idea behind the local plan, she stated: 'all enquiries about the details of its content should be directed to them' (13 November 2009).

Interestingly, secondary data sources provided other instances underpinning the authority of the master planner, especially that he holds a PhD degree and had been a lecturer in the local university or that he had designed around half of local plans in the city. Also, while reflecting upon his role in the 'Arena' development proposal, the local master planner '*positioned*' himself as specialist knowledge expert, educator, and mentor towards local communities. He suggested that they are undereducated and needed guidance to make up their minds about the development proposal. He stated: 'people in the city do not have a feeling of space or spatial mind set, and are concerned in the matters of survival mostly' (25 March 2010). He also pointed out that local communities allegedly pressured him to express his opinion about the case (13 July 2010). Finally, he confessed that 'I decided that it [the 'Arena' development proposal] is not going to happen' (13 July 2010). At the same time, however, the '*position*' of authority in the public circles – network of power-knowledge – of the local master planner brings about questions concerning the transparency of the relationship providing that his company does not have a website, and it was also difficult to find as it was poorly marked and located in the basement of a multi-storey building in neighbourhood of the 'Midfields'.

It is important to note that the conceptions of knowledge put forward by the actors were underpinned by their state-related status and credentials. The documentary sources provided by the city council state that the proposal of the local plan was accepted by all relevant committees and commissions in the city council, which includes "*Komisja Polityki Przestrzennej, Gospodarki Komunalnej i Ochrony Środowiska*" [The Commission of Spatial Policy, Council Properties and Environmental Protection], *Komisja Polityki Gospodarczej, Budżetu i Finansów*" [The Commission of Economic Policy, Budget and Finances] and by the three local city councils.

In an echo of the credibility-building actions of the consultancy, the knowledge claims and judgements that lie behind their plan also draw in supra-local actions and benchmarking-type judgements, albeit mainly with a national scale of reference. The Head of the Local Spatial Planning Department argued that 'a specialist commission, "*Komisja Architektoniczno-Urbanistyczna*" [The Commission of Architecture and Urbanism] gave a positive opinion about the local plan (...) [and] that "*SARP*" ["*Stowarzyszenie Architektów Polskich*" – The National Association of Polish Architects"] issued a letter' to support the process of enactment and the ideas behind the local plan (8 November 2010). Civil servant 1 stated that the local plan received a positive opinion from '*Rada Architektury i Rozwoju*' of the city, the advisory body, which in her opinion consisted of 'the group of specialisits, reputed, who have an influence knowledge and experience' (13 November 2009).

Also, in the case of the 'Arena' development proposal, the representatives of the council did not indicate that the private interests are inferior to the public. The civil servants from the Spatial Policy Department pointed out that the private sector

plays an important role in implementing a local plan. The civil servants also drew attention to the existence of infrastructure of public-private partnerships, where the interests of the representatives of the two sectors can be negotiated. For instance, the Head of the Local Planning Office, stated: 'there are instruments, such as PPP, it depends if there is an investor' (13 November 2009) and civil servant 1 from the Spatial Policy Department, for whom '[t]he [local] plan suggests only directions [of development]' (13 November 2009).

At the same time, however, the research unveiled that the power of local knowledge authorities was deeply contested. It involves the practices of the developer, who sought to undermine the idea that the council's views could be considered rational and consistent. Also, none of this is to say, however, that the local planning process in the city was beyond criticism, with various actors concerned about public-private relationships, the slowness of the process and lack of inter-departmental cooperation and the quality of the planning law in Poland. Such discourses were produced during interviews (Interview with the civil servant 1, Interview with the local master planner), and in media.

7.3.2. Contested credibility of local expertise

The 'Arena' project group members suggested that the city council for various reasons is not in a position to take care of the 'Arena' site, therefore also negotiate its interests in the context of the 'Arena' development proposal.

The developer dismissed the councils' arguments about non-compliance with local plans in several (potentially self-contradictory) ways. Firstly, that they did comply with what was required. It concerned the ideas about convergence of the design of the 'Arena' development proposal with '*Studium*' or the '*Strategia Rozwoju Miasta (...) do 2020 roku*'. Secondly, that they were deliberately seeking change in the area, and had secured some support for this, which was addressed by the developer and sustainability consultants. It should be also noted that the developer requested the change of functions of the 'Arena' development site from green to housing in '*Studium*'.

Thirdly, it concerned the claims that the council's views on how the area should be developed were not as enduring as the strict compliance culture might suggest. The discourses were reproduced by several 'Arena' project group members, for instance the environmental consultant in the report dedicated to the history of the development site, in sustainability assessment report, in the local daily newspaper 1 (12 February 2009), and in the 'Arena' project booklet (2008, p. 30), recollecting that:

'The development site was designated a military base at the end of XIX century and as an airport in the early XX century. Between the First and the Second World War the idea was to build housing estates in the, which were raised in the 1920s... in the last local plan, the site was dedicated to recreation and services complex. In 1998 and 2002, the city council gave

planning permission to the proposal that included the development of a hotel, offices and trade’.

Fourthly, the developer claimed that attitudes to the site were politicised. It included the supposition that left-wing politicians are in favour of the ‘Arena’ development proposal and the right wing politicians are not. The reporters of the local daily newspaper 1 (19 May 2009) reported that civil servants associated within one of the political parties were against the ‘Arena’ development proposal. Since 2006, the ‘Arena’ development proposal was supported by a left wing politician, who was also the general manager of the sports club. Interestingly, the project group members, especially the developer, the PR managers and the sports club manager, also stated that the disputes between political parties were the reasons why the ‘Arena’ development proposal met with the resistance of the city council. The sports club manager also implied that the project has not been conceived by parties outside the project group in an ‘objective’ manner because the local council ‘was not interested in the project... it was politics from the beginning to an end... in here [in the city], everything is underpinned by politics’ (10 November 2010). However, it is difficult to verify these claims.

It is also important to note that the project stakeholders converged on the grounds public-private relationships in the local context, and in Poland in general these are problematic. This not only manifests the implicit dimension of the contestation of the credibility of the local knowledge authorities, but also stresses another way in which the developer’s and the project group members knowledge claims were mitigated by the local socio-institutional context.

The ‘Arena’ project stakeholders converged with the observation that PPP relations are problematic in general and the infrastructure does not support PPP initiatives. The civil servants from the Spatial Policy Department claimed that the PPP law in Poland does not provide tools that would enable its implementation. The civil servant 2 mentioned that ‘there are no opportunities to implement the plans as proposed by investors, as the public-private partnership legislation is practically dead [in Poland]’ (13 November 2009). Some civil servants also argued that local authorities did not invest in creating such structures, which is paradoxical in the light of ongoing financial issues of the city and local councils. The Chair of the Local District Council Board estimated the cost of raising the new stadium as 160mIn PLN and admitted that it be paid neither by government, nor by the City Council (10 November 2010).

The study also revealed that sustainability consultants from London, although not directly involved in the ‘Arena’ development proposal, expressed awareness about PPP issues in Poland. The senior sustainability consultant from London observed a reluctance of public sector representatives to engage with the private sector:

[W]e run workshops there, we took them through project life course, at this stage what questions I should ask, what tools can I use, it was held in Poland, and impression: Poland they use example of project, airport and it

was really a robust and good piece of work, but the political landscape has not evolved sufficiently as it has evolved here, a bit of tension' (11 February 2011).

Some of the concerns about PPP link to the issue of probity and money laundering. For example, the Head of Local Spatial Planning Department stated: 'I cannot recall any successful example of PPP in Poland' and that in case of successful PPP and significant investment returns, there may be a suspicion of money laundering (8 November 2010). Similarly, the Chair of the Local District Council Board also recalled an example of a successful PPP initiative in one of the biggest cities in Poland, however he noted that 'as investment returns occurred relatively fast, the public prosecutor's office got engaged' (10 November 2010). Other discourses of concern centred on the difficulties of aligning the interests of public and private sectors. Civil servants in the local council Spatial Policy Department and the Chair of the Local District Council Board argued in interviews that PPP should be driven by the public sector with no expectations of significant returns from investment.

The insights into dimensions of the contestation of production of knowledge in the context of local authorities lead to the final sections of the thesis. It demonstrates how these issues were played out in the social interaction between the developer and local knowledge authorities in the context of a planning permission.

7.3.3. Interaction in the context of planning permission

The section unveils that power relations in the context of the local institutional '*infrastructure*' had an overt, explicit character and it brings about the ideas that the 'Arena' project stakeholders' struggle for power included some 'fierce' practices. This was summarised by the environmental consultant: 'the project was controversial and it was focusing on how to please the local city council... there was a serious fight based on arguments' (9 November 2010).

The study revealed that between March and June 2009, the developer 'unleashed' the actions aiming to question public expertise in enacting and delivering spatial planning arrangements and that he was prepared to take the argument into other arenas to win it, including the courts. The developer, when interviewed, pointed out that the local plan, the local plan of 'Midfields' was (i) enacted unlawfully (the city council allegedly did not meet statutory regulations for enacting local plans), (ii) poorly done i.e. contains a lot of mistakes and contradictions (8 November 2010). During a meeting, where one of the local council boards gave an opinion about the proposal local plan, the developer claimed for instance, that the designers of the local plan made an unlawful assumption that the 'Arena' site stadium was heritage. He asked a junior master planner, who assisted the local master planner in the preparation of the local plan: 'does the financial impact assessment of the local plan include compensation that the owners of properties [which are part of the wider surrounding of the site] can lawfully, according to the article 36 of the *ustawy o planowaniu i zagospodarowaniu przestrzennym*, pursue because of a decrease of

commercial value of their properties?', indicating that he may sue the city council based on this argument .

The study suggested also the developer's 'legal' strategy was bound with the notion of economic/financial risk as there were considerable organisational and personal stakes involved. During the second interview, the developer admitted that the investor committed a vast amount of resources prior to engaging with the process of negotiations of planning permission. It included that the investor purchased the right of perpetual usufruct of the development site to a value of 2,2 mln \$, but also for instance, the cost of applying sustainability assessment methodology that the developer, when interviewed, considered 'very high'. Something of what was at stake is indicated by the fact that after the local plan was enacted, the developer lost his job.

In this context, the study also unveiled the emergence of a local anti-development 'discourse coalition'. It allegedly associated the representatives of a local city council, the local master planner and media and had a considerable influence on the dynamics of dismissal of the 'Arena' development proposal.

7.3.4. Anti-development 'discourse coalition' and democracy

The section depicts another dimension of the resistance towards the 'Arena' development proposal and how this was bound by another set of authority arrangements that derives from something other than knowledge. It refers to the accountability of the electoral process, which was a subject to the influence of hidden relationships between the representatives of media, the local master planner and possibly the city council. This, in turn, suggests that the nuanced arguments about the environmental 'performance' and benchmarking of 'Arena' were never likely to gain much traction in a media debate, which reinforced a public-private interest line of conflict and the protection/loss of green space as the main axes of debate.

This thesis so far revealed that the representatives of the city council and the local master planner converged in the way they conceived the 'Arena' site and the 'Arena' development proposal. This relationship was bound with the compliance of the local master planner with the local institutional '*culture*', which sets out expectations about behaviour and practices of various urban actors. In this context; however, one shall not omit the role of the local media played in 'empowering' local communities.

The study revealed that the local master planner actively engaged in information exchange with the local journalist. The local master planner admitted this during the second interview that he deliberately tried to spark off action against the developer by feeding information to the local journalist (local newspaper 1, which is referred to often in the thesis). He, although very reluctantly, provided details to this particular local journalist, and that the journalist confirmed drawing insights

into the 'Arena' development proposal from the local master planner. The impact of the actions of this journalist and the local daily newspaper 1 are discussed below.

The investigation of the articles about the 'Arena' development proposal in the local newspaper 1 indicates that the representatives of this newspaper '*positioned*' themselves as defenders of public interests. The local journalist, when asked about his role in the 'Arena' development proposal stated:

'I have been interested in all the things that relate to cities. My interests became more specific in the middle of 1990s. I wrote about commercial investments then, I was interested in how private capital shapes cities, and what the interaction between public and private sector in Poland is. I was following a dispute between what is public and private in the city... The role of the media is to inform people about what is happening in the city. I presented the 'Arena' redevelopment proposal in the article, and I wanted to talk about it upfront, to open up a debate. I showed what the developer was intended to build on the development site, and what his desires are when media are not present. They wanted to break into the area. Master planning is an important thing for people and I wanted to show that it concerns everyone, especially neighbourhoods' (13 July 2010).

On a different occasion he positioned himself as a 'brave defender' that made considerable efforts to unmask the intentions of the developer about the 'Arena' development proposal. When interviewed, he stated that the developer's intention was to keep media uninformed about the official presentation of the 'Arena' development proposal to the city council which took place in February 2008. He explained that he was 'tipped off' about the situation from his 'source' and decided to explore the issues. He described the situation in an article, as follows:

'''Are you a journalist? Please, leave''' – the representative of Polish-Irish investor stated nervously just before the presentation [of the 'Arena' development proposal] in the city council. They finally did not decide to eject the representative of the local newspaper [indicating himself] out and we managed to take some pictures with a mobile phone' (the local daily newspaper 1, 28 February 2008).

The study revealed that the involvement of local media in the case of the 'Arena' development proposal was very strong and that they might have had considerable influence on shaping public opinions. They covered the topic for four consecutive years, from 2006 to 2009. In the three months preceding the enactment of the local plan (March 2009 to June 2009), at least 36 critical press releases were produced in two daily newspapers (1 and 2). The project group members acknowledged the 'frantic' response of the media to the 'Arena' development proposal. The senior PR stated 'no one looked at sustainability later on... we carried out our campaign, which was open and transparent, however, lots of things were happening in media' (10 November 2010).

Additionally, the study suggested that the power relations included encouraging resistance of local communities and local authorities towards the proposal, and implicitly, the developer. The representatives of the local media scrutinised the city council and local councils with regard to the practices of preparation and enacting the local plan, which allegedly should protect the 'Midfields' area from development. The headers of articles about the 'Arena' development proposal in the local daily newspaper 1 included such titles as *'Do not wait! Enact the local plan'* (14 May 2009), *'Will they [the city council representatives] save the 'Midfields' from the developer?'* (18 June 2009), *'Fingers crossed for Board'* (18 June 2009); see also (the local daily newspaper 1: 18 June 2009 and 19 June 2009; the local daily newspaper 2: 30 May 2009).

The practices of the local daily newspaper 1 in portraying the interaction between 'Arena' project group members featured dramaturgical elements. They can be found by looking at the titles of newspaper articles and were framed in terms of an overt conflict, a battle. They included picturesque conflict metaphors, which seemed like reports from a battlefield in titles of articles, for instance: *'Midfields battle'* (the local daily newspaper 1, 23 May 2006), *'Hustle with the developer of Midfields'* (the local daily newspaper 1, 12 February 2009), *'This is not a final fight about 'Midfields' (the local daily newspaper 1, 30 May 2009a)*, *'Midfields... How they fight to develop it'* (the local daily newspaper 1, 30 May 2009b).

Several 'Arena' project stakeholders also reflected upon the atmosphere in which the local plan was prepared. The Head of the Local Spatial Planning Office pointed out that the city council had to rush with preparations of the local plan. She stated: *'[i]t was a battle with time, the battle to protect the area from the developer. The local plan had to be enacted sooner or later. In this case, it had to be sooner'* (14 July 2010). The journalist of the local daily newspaper 2 recalled that the representatives of the city council pushed other civil servants to enact the local plan swiftly. She reported:

'The quick issuing of the local plan was demanded by the councillors of a the local district council... the president of the city committed herself to do everything in her powers to enact the local plan as soon as possible.... The councillors of local districts, in order to speed up the proceedings, decided to give opinions to the local plan during a meeting of "Komisja Architektury i Ładu Przestrzennego" and "Rada Dzielnic"' (local daily newspaper 2, 19 May 2009).

Finally, it is important to note that the members of the anti-development discourse coalition suggested that their *'positions'* towards the 'Arena' development proposal converged with already existing democratic pressures to enact the local plan of 'Midfields', which in a way contradicts their previous statements that they in fact supported the emergence of a local pressure to dismiss the 'Arena' development proposal.

In particular, the local daily newspaper 1 reported the existence of the petition in appeal to the president of the city to enact the local plan of 'Midfields' as soon as possible. According to a reporter of the local daily newspaper 1, the petition was submitted to the president of the city on 18th May 2009 and four thousand people signed it. In a similar vein, it is difficult to state who prepared the petition. The reporters of local daily newspaper 1 also recalled that residents of the city gathered on a picnic organised in front of the city council main office on the day when the local plan was enacted. They also stressed that local residents, representing especially the 'green' lobby were present in the room, where the city council enacted the local plan:

'In the council room, little trees were awaiting councillors... The 'Ents' (Alive trees from the story of J.R.R. Tolkien), reminded, that the councillors should protect public interests and keep 'Midfields' free from commercial development. If some of the councillors cannot understand it, the electorate will explain it, next year [during election]' (the local daily newspaper 1, 19 June 2009).

The local master planner stated: 'people started to collect votes against the 'Arena' development proposal... I do not know if you can remember but there was a large assembly of young people in the city council building' (13 July 2010).

The study revealed that the fact that the Board of councillors enacted the local plan with 44 votes in favour, 0 against and 0 upheld on 18 June 2009 was interpreted by 'Arena' project stakeholders outside the project group as a 'democratic outcome'. The Head of the Local Spatial Planning Office stated that 'the [park] function is expected by the residents [of the city] and this function is being reflected in the local plan... we are obligated to follow the will of local communities' (8 November 2010). Civil servant 1 from Spatial Policy Department pointed out that 'Midfields' site is 'an important site for the [three local] districts and the area has been maintained green over years, and this is the function the residents see [in the future]' (13 November 2009). Civil servant 2 from the Spatial Policy Department added: 'a lot of people wish the site to maintain its function. The park is a place where you can really live, not only pass by' (13 November 2009). Whereas, the local master planner stated:

'Democracy won... the developer did not manage to convince residents ... of their idea. They thought that people are very naive... the battle the developer unleashed brought him a defeat. Developer was lost by his conceit and the belief that if they prepare nice pictures and organise a group of sports men as a support, they will succeed' (13 July 2010).

The local journalist stated that 'the local plan reflected the general opinion of local communities' (10 July 2010).

Finally, the questions about speculation may be the salient points in my research. Certainly it would be good not to present this case as one in which a developer who

distorts knowledge, is opposed to a council that follows the rules and represents democracy. The council's position too is something of a construction, in which key factors may have greater influence. But the fact that they attracted public support, and were voted on, gives them some legitimacy.

7.4. Conclusions

Chapter 7, based on the insights into interactions between 'discourse coalitions' revealed that the consultants mediated complex and multidimensional power relations featuring particularly the mechanisms of persuasion and manipulation in order to obtain planning permission, and therefore fulfil economic interests of the developer. It entails the findings that by using the '*infrastructure*' of policy tools and public mandate, the anti-development (second) '*discourse coalition*' (including the local master planner, the city council and local journalist) was in a better position to negotiate rightfulness and appropriateness of knowledge claims regarding the 'Arena' site. This, in turn, levered – or rendered irrelevant – the various knowledge claims of sustainability consultants and the developer reproduced in the context of sustainability assessment not least with regard to the meaning of the development site and its future functions, but roles of various actors in urban planning in Poland.

Chapter 8 – Thesis conclusions

8.1. Summary of key findings

In order to investigate knowledge production and dissemination processes in the field of urban planning, the study provided insights into an ‘architecture’ of these processes. It concerns the roles of discourse, social actors and power, and how these unfold in specific local contexts.

The Introduction chapter (Chapter 1) stated that researching knowledge production processes in the field of urban planning is an important issue from the perspectives of both urban policy and practice. There is considerable evidence that the development of cities is based on knowledge, and that knowledge exchange, ‘best practice’ transfer or ‘lessons drawing’ play a key part in contemporary policy making (Stone 2001a; Bulkeley 2006). A number of examples of global diffusion of urban development concepts and policy tools were recalled (e.g. Lloyd et al. 2003). The chapter pointed out that sustainable development has been an important goal of urban policy and practice over the last four decades. At the same time, it argued that transnational organisations, in particular private sector companies like consultancies play an important role not only in delivering this agenda but redefining it (Stone 2001b; Kemp et al. 2005).

Based on the analysis of contemporary approaches to knowledge ‘transfer’ in relation to urban planning in terms of ‘knowledge, ‘social actors’ and ‘power’, the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse framework of Keller (2011) was chosen to address questions about its subjective and interactive aspects. The framework is grounded in the social constructionism scholarship of Berger and Luckmann (1967), and the power-knowledge ideas of Foucault (Foucault 1976; Foucault and Gordon 1980). Also, two empirical ‘gaps’ with regard to scholarship dedicated to knowledge transfer processes in the field of urban planning were identified and addressed in this thesis: first, that there is limited research about the influence of consultants on the knowledge production and dissemination processes in specific, grounded, local contexts; second, that research about knowledge relationships in Poland is scarce, especially so in the context of urban planning. These insights informed the aims and objectives of the research, viz.:

The research aims to improve our understanding of knowledge production and dissemination in the field of urban planning. In particular, the thesis examines how transnational consultancies construct and mobilize knowledge about urban development, and how this is shaped by processes of social interaction in this field.

The research objectives are as follows: (i) to critically assess existing literature about knowledge production in terms of the approach taken to notions of ‘knowledge’, how knowledge is defined with an empirical focus on the role of consultants in the field of urban planning(ii) to investigate the effects of knowledge mobilisation in a local context, in particular, how knowledge, bound with power

relationships, defines the outcomes of knowledge transfer; (iii) to explore the usefulness of the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse (SKAD) for understanding how consultants create and promote knowledge, with what effects and as a research methodology in exploring the discursive dimensions of knowledge sharing.

The literature review chapters (Chapters 2 Knowledge relationships, private sector consultants and urban planning, and Chapter 3 Sustainable development, urban planning and sustainability indicators) explored the various roles of consultants and the way they embed a focus on knowledge, while identifying their role in the emergence of sustainable development agenda as a dominant way of looking at ideas and practices in relation to urban planning.

Chapter 2 argued that research output about the roles of consultancies in urban planning is fragmented and that little is known how knowledge production and dissemination processes are affected by the relationships surrounding consultants in the context of urban policy and practice. It showed how, in spite of the alleged ability of consultants to 'push' specific agendas into policy domains, consultants have been viewed primarily as 'serving' local political and business elites. After exploring the geographical patterns of emergence of consulting companies, the chapter unpacked various conceptualizations of 'consulting' or 'consultancy', and adopted the perspective of Fincham (1999), and Czarniawska and Mazza (2003) as it does not entail certain presuppositions regarding the nature of consultants ('saints' versus 'sinners') and stresses the conceptualization of consulting processes in terms of the negotiation of interests and ideas. Later, it presented a range of explanations about consultant-client relationships. They include the issues of skills and abilities of a consultant, transaction costs, meeting client's needs and expectations; a focus on agency, especially on the reputation of consultancies. It suggested that these explanations can co-exist on the ground and based on it, a question was asked whether there are trade-offs between consultants' desire to be seen as independent and a source of an 'objective' expertise, and their responsibilities towards a client. Finally, the chapter also posed the question whether the circumstances that underpinned the development of the profession and certain explanations about consultant-client relationships could be significantly different in Poland than in Western Europe.

Chapter 3 reviewed potential challenges of the 'knowledge work' of consultants in relation to the notion of 'sustainable development'. It unpacked various interpretations of the term sustainable development in theory, policy and practice, and stressed a regulatory context in which consultants' advising services take place. It argued that the objectives of some sustainable development policies, especially environmental objectives introduced by the EU, UN and OECD as well as international quality assurance standards with regard to environment, have a strong influence on the way consultants carry out their businesses. It further introduced sustainability assessment frameworks as an impact management tool, primarily in policy, but now playing increasingly important roles in benchmarking practices in both urban policy and practice. It was also shown that although the

knowledge outcomes of sustainability assessments have enjoyed considerable trust from various urban actors, they can be also contested not least with regard to construction and design of the methods, but also pressures arising in the context of social interactions around them.

The methodology chapter (Chapter 4) explained why discourse analysis is a suitable method to explore patterns of social interaction and that the case study is particularly relevant to enquiries of the particularities of context of knowledge production and transfer processes in the field of urban planning (Stake 2000; Platt 2007). Then, in line with the analytical proceedings of SKAD and based on primary and secondary data sources, three streams of research findings were presented. They are based on a detailed, qualitative case study of a large scale, urban development scheme in Poland – ‘Arena’ – in which a team of international consultants had key roles in assessing the project’s sustainability performance. The set of findings involves following themes: (i) Knowledge production and consultancy reputation in sustainable development (Chapter 5); (ii) Knowledge production in the context of ‘principles’ of sustainability assessment (Chapter 6); (iii) Knowledge production within public-private relationships in Poland (Chapter 7).

The first stream of research findings (Chapter 5) showed how consultants projected themselves to society and how these representations were ‘received’ by other project stakeholders. It reflected upon a range of discourses produced in the context of an *‘interpretative frame’* of ‘credibility’ of sustainability consultants’ expertise in sustainable development. Consultants’ representations pulled together a range of factors, such as skills, abilities and their long lasting commitment to sustainable development, which were embedded in the form of ‘stories’, where consultants positioned themselves as ‘saviours’ towards society. It also showed how the consultants’ knowledge purveying ‘capacity’ was allegedly validated by their clients and organisations they cooperate with. These organisations, the research findings suggest, constitute a network – a loosely defined, spatio-temporal construct that entails agencies sharing particular values and views on sustainable development. The discourses about commitment of consultants to sustainable development featured references to the roles of various infrastructures that serve benchmarking functions in the matter of sustainable development for companies’ internal and external relations, and that one of the infrastructures is a particular sustainability assessment framework addressed in Chapter 6.

Chapter 5 stressed how the credibility claims of consultants were played out in the ‘Arena’ development proposal and how it shaped the processes of knowledge production and transfer. It pointed out that the ‘Arena’ project group members expressed rather ‘unquestioning’ attitudes towards the consultants’ ‘capacities’ to produce objective and reliable knowledge outcomes. They reproduced the discourses about consultancy reputation in a range of publically available documentary sources. This, in turn, points to a particular type of representation of the project stakeholders in discourse arena – a discourse coalition – tied with project group members’ views on sustainable development and the expertise of consultants. It also showed that the ‘credibility’ of the sustainability consultants

could be used by 'Arena' project group members to 'position' themselves as 'saviours' to society and 'superior' knowledge holders with regard to their abilities to deal with societal issues. The meaning of sustainability was also shaped by these processes.

Chapter 5 teased out the importance of certain fields of knowledge, especially engineering, to the consultants' practices and their reputation in relation to sustainable development. It implies transferability of their expertise embedded in various representations – urban design, technologies and other kinds of 'solutions', including sustainable development (also stressed by the developer). Based on insights from consultants' corporate sustainability statements and the interviews, the study also unveiled consultants' redefinition of sustainable development in terms of capital. Yet, at the same time it stresses that the reputation of consultants, and the credibility of their knowledge claims, is contested across time and space with regard to (i) skills and abilities of an individual consultants (to convey corporate expertise); (ii) clients' expectations. Also, despite the 'fanfare' made about the consultants' status, the credibility claims of sustainability consultants were not unambiguously read by the actors involved in the project, including a client, who could not decide whether he found the company 'prestigious'.

Chapter 6 unravelled the patterns of 'objectification' of consultants' expertise with regard to the construction of the assessment and model practices underpinning it. The research showed the recurring importance of '*interpretative frame*' of 'reliability' of sustainability assessment tool that encompassed the project group members' arguments about the 'scientific' (therefore unquestionable) character of the assessment. It pointed out that the processes of objectification and valorisation of knowledge in the context of the sustainability assessment framework were underpinned by the use of quantitative and qualitative indicators and global environmental standards, such as the Environmental Management System. At the same time, however, the study revealed that the elements of the construction of sustainability assessment that underpin its reliability, also define boundaries of this reliability. It especially concerns access and quality of relevant data, timing and so on, which often remain beyond consultants' control.

The research findings also suggested that the processes of production of knowledge in the context of sustainability assessment were confined with yet another redefinition of sustainable development. It turned out to be particularly important as it reaffirmed and complemented the ways consultants see the issues of sustainable development mentioned already in Chapter 5. It includes evidence about the role of practices of carrying out the assessment in actively reproducing discourses about sustainable development in terms of science and technology. This redefinition of the subject (sustainable development) bears implications for knowledge production and transfer by suggesting certain exclusivity of 'audiences', specialist communities, who are able to acknowledge and appreciate consultants' expertise. This was particularly apparent as the chapter pointed to multiplicity of 'interpretations' of sustainable development that competed with the scientific-technological in the statements of 'Arena' project stakeholders within and outside

the project group. Many of these 'interpretations' arising from the characteristics of the particular locality in which the development of the 'Arena' development project was supposed to take place

In line with the findings that the reliability, or 'quality' of the outcomes of the sustainability assessment in general reflects a range of project management issues, the chapter also pointed to collaborative practices of data collection. In particular, it unveiled how the processes of social interaction and power relations define 'boundaries' of knowledge claims and the very reliability of sustainability assessment studied. Insights into sustainability consultants' model practices in the context of sustainability assessment uncovered that the consultants' position as objective and independent knowledge vendors could be contested with regard to the ideas that (i) sustainability consultants followed the 'intentions' of a client, when assuming the values of indicators and that interaction around sustainability assessment was developer-centred; (ii) that project group members were detached from sustainability assessment. What is interesting in this context is that the limited interaction resulted primarily in 'it is not my role' attitude of the project stakeholders; (iii) that the developer, a client, had alternative motives to use the assessment.

Also, if the research unearthed copious evidence of 'Arena' project group members' convictions about the 'truthfulness' of sustainability consultants' knowledge claims, the data discussed in Chapter 7 revealed the near-irrelevance of these claims in the context of 'real issues' about the development proposal. It unveiled the extended boundaries of the social interaction in the context of sustainability assessment in general. It pointed to relevance of the key assumptions of the 'Arena' development proposal to the issues of credibility and reliability of consultants' expertise as it pointed to the between knowledge claims about the 'Arena' site and its surrounding reproduced by the project group members and other project stakeholders. It concerned especially the rhetoric produced by the 'discourse coalition' centred on the developer. It further argued that the rhetoric was used by the 'Arena' project group members alongside the claims about 'prestige' of the consultants (and other project group members) in order to position themselves as 'good' and 'respectful' towards the needs of local communities, which implied a moral obligation of the local communities to allow redevelopment of the 'Arena' site. It involved strong evidence that these issues were meant to serve as a 'bargaining coin' in planning permission negotiation process. Also, aligned with speculative purchase of the land lease by the developer, they were expected to reduce a risk of development in potentially unfavourable institutional and political context.

At the same time, however, the chapter pointed out that the credibility of consultants' environmental expertise (bound with their reputation), as well as the reputation of other project group members (allegedly translating into the quality of the design proposal) were insufficient to compete against knowledge claims produced by local (knowledge) authorities. With regard to the sources of authority (power) emanating from the local institutional and policy context, it unveiled the

emergence of another (second) 'discourse coalition'. The 'discourse coalition' included project stakeholders outside the project group, especially the local city council, the local master planner and media, who converged in their understanding of the key issues about the 'Arena' development proposal. It assembled around the idea of keeping the Midfields green, including 'Arena' site, which is part of it, and aimed to counter balance the impact of the developer and the project group members' seduction practices. One should note, however, that the discourses reproduced within these two discourse coalitions were heterogeneous and included both converging and diverging (competing) knowledge claims. For instance, the coalitions used the same reference which is the development site as a 'Central Park' for the city, however they differed substantially over how to execute this idea.

Chapter 7 uncovered the range of power relations in the 'broader' context of sustainability assessment. It concerns that power effects 'covert' the form of developer's seduction, or persuasion strategy, and become 'overt' when the developer openly pressured the council to give him planning permission. It also related to the issues of power as a resource which entail the findings that by using the infrastructure of policy tools and public mandate the 'second' discourse coalition (including the local master planner, the city council and local journalist) was in a better position to negotiate rightfulness and appropriateness of knowledge claims regarding the 'Arena' site. This, in turn, levered – or rendered irrelevant – the various knowledge claims of sustainability consultants and the developer reproduced in the context of sustainability assessment not least with regard to the meaning of the development site and its future functions, but roles of various actors in urban planning in Poland. Finally, the collision of discourse coalitions described above manifested itself as interactions between various 'types' of knowledge and 'forms' of power. It concerns scientific-environmental knowledge claims of the developer and the project group against less-'scientific' knowledge claims reproduced by the representatives of the city council and the local master planner, lay knowledge claims about the practices of the developer and developers in general and common knowledge about local needs and expectations with regard to the 'Arena' site and 'policy' knowledge about the designated functions for the 'Arena' site.

8.2. Key findings

As set down in Chapter 1, this thesis research was designed to critically reflect upon knowledge production processes in the context of the private sector in the field of urban planning. It involved the collection of empirical evidence about the role of consultants in the 'Arena' case study based on three main research questions: (i) How do consultants build the credibility of their expertise?; (ii) How is knowledge mobilised and reproduced in a local context?; (iii) How do social actors interact around sustainability assessment brought about by sustainability consultants?

8.2.1. How do consultants build the credibility of their expertise?

The issues of 'reputation' and 'credibility' have been long at the forefront of academic debates with regard to the roles of consultants in today's economy and this is no less true – though under-examined – in the field of urban planning. The research provides an overview of a range of factors that underpin the credibility of consultants' expertise, which confirms the value of 'pragmatic' (which broadly stresses causal explanations) and 'discursive' or 'symbolic' (accounting on the role of knowledge) perspectives used to examine consulting processes.

The research findings in several ways support 'pragmatic approaches' to consulting or so called 'demand side' perspectives on consulting a process in business management studies (McKenna 2001; McKenna 2006) (explained in Chapter 2). It concerns especially understandings of consultants' position as independent, 'outsiders' to a particular problem; and their skills and abilities, in this case with regard to sustainable design and sustainability assessment, are one of the key sources of their authority. The study found the roles of transaction costs explanations (McKenna 2001; McKenna 2006; Svensson 2007) to be relevant, however with no extensive data supporting the claims.

The research findings also entail that knowledge production and dissemination processes in the context of consultants cannot be fully understood using solely 'pragmatic approaches' (causal), as urban studies often do. They indicate the value of the approaches of business scholars who stress 'discursive' and 'symbolic' aspects of consultants' power and influence across time and space which is bound with particular knowledge fields. This issue is particularly well recognised in management studies (Alvesson 1993; Clark 1995; Alvesson 2001), however it too has attracted limited scholarship in urban studies, especially outside the circles of urban policy. The outcomes of the research especially point to the importance of uncovering 'values' and 'norms' embedded in consultants' knowledge claims and their relevance to existing dominating or niche discourses about sustainable development as influencing their reputation and impact.

In this vein, the research outcomes pointed to the issue of the reputation of consultants as a 'relational' construct. The research findings expand and support the limited evidence that the credibility of consultants is 'networked' (Glasser 2002; Glückler and Armbrüster 2003). The argument has been particularly present in policy network and policy in motion scholarship in relation to scientific, boundary organisations and their influence on environmental policy (ref). It is recognised with regard to the credibility of scientific institutions, which for providing legitimacy refer to political institutions (Miller 2001; White et al. 2010), but has rarely been researched in detail (Glückler 2007), also with regard to urban planning practice. This study, however, provides an account of consultants' attempts to build this 'networked' reputation in general and in the context of sustainability assessment. It suggests that an important part of the consultant's reputation is validation and valorisation of their knowledge claims by organisations, which have significant

influence on sustainable development agendas. Data shows that the claims about skills, abilities and commitment of consultants to a particular field of knowledge are 'validated' in processes of interaction with parties they cooperate with, where power relations cannot be simply categorised and where particular laws of 'governing' are beyond the influence of consultants.

In this context, the study also touches upon the 'networked' reputation of consultants, in particular that the consulting profession is embedded in and relies on spanning various networks in order to build valuable referrals (Lilja and Poufelt 2001), and arguments that 'by definition, networks are relational: the conditions for possibility and actions of network participants are defined by their relationship with participants, rather than by their own inherent characteristics' (Leitner and Sheppard 2002, p. 496). In the context of the 'Arena' development proposal, they are revealed in those research findings that show how consultants represented the network of public, private and third sector organisations – standards setters, which include (i) consultants' clients; (ii) and/or organisations that establish international 'standards' in sustainable development, such as the EU. They allegedly sourced knowledge claims from, and fed back authoritative expertise to this network.

The research also demarcates the frailties and boundaries to the credibility of a consultant with regard to the credibility of a client. The argument is implicit in the studies about 'networked' reputation of consultants in the sense that consultants openly acknowledge highly prestigious clients they work with (and omit other, non-prestigious clients). It suggests that the problematic reputation of a client opens up a space for the contestation of consultants' expertise. By tracing interactions around sustainability assessment, this study provides a detailed account of the contestation of clients' credibility and a void that it creates with regard to consultants' expertise. This void indeed makes consultants' knowledge claims redundant, which undermines their 'standard-setter status'.

Finally, in the context of deliberations about the credibility of consultants, the research findings concern the power mechanics, of consultants' influence in society. The research findings point out that the claims about consultants' credibility as knowledge vendors and the reliability of their expertise are embedded in the forms of various 'stories'. In the stories, the consultants positioned themselves as 'heroes' that fight alongside the United Nations, working to mitigate common risks and uncertainty in the world, with regard to, for instance, the effects of global Climate Change and the loss of biodiversity, and offer a helpful hand to a client, who faces competitiveness pressures. The findings therefore reinforce the arguments that their 'power' cannot only be conceptualised in a two-tier setting (a consultant tells a client what to do or the reverse). Rather, consultants' power is discursive, relying on creating conditions, opportunities for certain interpretations of urban problems, with attributed roles of various social actors. It is therefore tied with their ability to 'manage impressions', as stressed in management studies (Alvesson 1993; Clark 1995; Clark and Salaman 1998b; Clark and Salaman 1998a). In the case study, the 'myths' and images consultants built around themselves can be neatly captured thus: as a 'largely autonomous, self-regulating and self-perpetuating institution, the

altruistic members of which are filled with a desire to work for the common good in the most effective way' (Brante 1988, p. 122). In relation to urban planning, however, these issues are subject to very few studies, which can be broadly referred to as focusing on the 'symbolic' nature of the consulting profession in relation to urban policy and planning (McCann 2001, 2008; McCann 2011).

The aims of 'myths' are various, but includes to persuade local decision-makers, organisations and individuals, to support consultants' knowledge claims, and by association – acknowledge the credibility of a client and others of his associates (Alvesson 1993; Alvesson 2001). That being said, such 'myths' or 'stories' are not detached, purely rhetorical constructs but they are actively reproduced in the processes of institutionalisation of knowledge (Alvesson 1993), which, in the case study, concerned the infrastructures of consultants' commitment to 'sustainable development' and corporate 'culture' around it. The latter is a particularly interesting research thread, which points to efforts made by consultants to keep their expertise 'floating' in a company.

The research findings also demonstrated that the reputation of consultants is tied to a particular field of knowledge. It concerns professional, namely, scientific and engineering domains of sustainable development, and entails that the knowledge claims of consultants (and their associates) can be understood within these domains and may be contested outside them. The issue manifests itself in the claims about networks in which the discourses about credibility and reliability of sustainability indicators (and sustainable development policies) of the EU, OECD, or the UN are reproduced. That being said, it does not entail that the analysts within the scientific domain will take consultants' knowledge claims for granted; indeed, the study demonstrated that references to 'science' in underlining expertise and seeking legitimacy can be slippery with regard to the design of the sustainability assessment framework.

In fact, both experts in sustainable development as well as lay persons can directly and indirectly oppose the association of the reputation (credibility) of consultants (and the reliability of their knowledge claims in the context of sustainability assessment) with the notion of science. For instance, with regard to the very idea of 'locking' sustainability into the form of indicators, the experts stress the issue that it takes place through (often non-arbitrary) decisions of a consultant, while lay persons argue against the value judgements underpinning the choice of some indicators.

8.2.2. How is knowledge mobilised in a local context?

This thesis traces the geography of consultants' influence, especially with regard to differences in sustainable development agendas and meanings of sustainability across different contexts. The research findings reaffirm arguments that consulting is a local business and its influence depends on local contexts (Kirmani and Baum 1991; Meriläinen et al. 2004; O'Mahoney 2007). Thus the impact of consultants depends of the 'stickyness of places', with their local constellations of knowledge

and power relationships in a particular institutional context (Asheim 2002; Malecki 2004; Malecki 2007).

The research findings reinforce the view on knowledge production and dissemination processes in the context of consultants as being bound up with the interests of local business 'elites'. It includes evidence that the 'elites' seek consultants' expertise for the legitimacy of changes they propose and positioning themselves as powerful (sustaining a status quo with regard to their powers) in the context of the global economy. Such perspectives are well established especially in the context of the debates about Urban Neoliberalism and interrelated with this, studies on learning lessons from international flagship projects (McCann 2001; McCann 2011). It is however under-researched with regard to the role of sustainability assessment methods produced by private sector organisations. The insights into client's instrumental approach towards the expertise and status of consultants, as he used them as a bargaining chip in negotiation of planning permission for a potentially contested location, shows how knowledge mobilisation processes in local contexts can be underpinned by economic interests of a client and that consultants' knowledge claims serve a purpose of legitimating his interests. It also entails the role of knowledge in (re)production of a particular discourse, which in the case of the 'Arena' development proposal, concerned Neoliberal ideologies of property-driven urban regeneration and (improving) international competitiveness of a city.

These research outcomes show that knowledge production processes in the context of a particular sustainability assessment involves dealing with competing interpretations of sustainable development. In this case study they are revealed as the 'interactions' between for instance scientific and policy understandings of environmental issues of the 'Arena' and 'Midfields' site or they represent 'insolvable' concerns over trade-offs between environmental and economic objectives (in the context of the construction of sustainability assessment). The argument has been sustained in the studies dedicated to sustainability assessment methods (Gibson et al. 2005; Byggeth and Hochschorner 2006; Olsen 2007; Gibson 2013), however it has gathered only fragmented research focusing primarily on sustainability assessment frameworks created by the public sector.

This research points to the ways in which the considerations about discourse coalitions and the way they are assembled around a particular idea to allow better understanding knowledge production and dissemination in the context of sustainability consultants and sustainability assessment. The study reaffirms the view of knowledge mobilisation processes as a subject of competition between partnerships or coalitions, as heterogenous entities that assemble individuals into more or less coherent groups, conceptualised as 'discourse coalitions' (Hajer 1993, 2006b), 'epistemic communities' (Haas 1992; Litfin 1995a) or 'communities of practice' (Wenger 2000, 2004, 2011). The research also unveiled that in the local context being studied, more powerful are discourse coalitions and knowledge claims that are embedded in local institutional (social and historical) contexts, and being underpinned by local sources of authority (the city council).

The second coalition involved a local master planner, a journalist, and the representatives of the council, and was assembled around the development site, affiliated to the idea that the site was supposed to be kept as green, which includes sport and recreation functions. With regard to an involvement of media, especially local daily newspapers, it is believed that it played a powerful role in reproduction of knowledge about the development proposal especially, shifting a debate towards a focus on the issues surrounding the site itself, therefore mitigating the influence of consultants' knowledge claims.

The study points to potential challenges for consultants' reproducing internationally-derived sustainability assessment methods in Poland. The research findings suggest the existence of macroeconomic limitations regarding production and dissemination of knowledge in the context of a private sector consultant, which can entail a problem with local 'demand' for these kinds of knowledge claims. In this context, the research findings bring together two important sets of debates, one is about differences in maturity of building construction market with regard to the use of modern sustainability assessment standards, which includes arguments that this 'market' is allegedly 'newly emerging' in Poland (Minister właściwy ds Środowiska 2007; Bolkowski 2009; Construction Marketing Group 2014), the other one is about public-private relationships in Poland (Mayer 1995; Weinstein and Obloj 2002; Nedović-Budić et al. 2006). Here, the foreign consultants drawing on more 'mature' markets may not be able to create international 'alliances' to connect with local 'markets' (Simonin 1999). Also, the project stakeholders argued that there are difficulties in getting representatives of public and private sector into a common venture, such as a public-private partnership, and that such issues reflect a socialist 'left-over'. The latter is particularly important as it points to yet another dimension of trust relationships between project stakeholders that can impede or facilitate knowledge production processes.

8.2.3. How do social actors interact around sustainability assessment?

The study advances the understanding of knowledge production and dissemination processes in the context of sustainability assessment frameworks by stressing their discursive and interactive dimensions. The study demonstrates that knowledge outcomes from sustainability assessment are read within its context, with project stakeholders contesting the outcomes of the assessment as it was based on certain, unacceptable, propositions. There are a number of dimensions of power to consider. In this vein, the notion of sustainability assessment was shown to provide a 'liminal space' for the negotiation of interests of consultant and a client (Fincham 1999; Czarniawska and Mazza 2003; Czarniawska and Sevón 2005), but also other parties not directly involved in the preparation and delivering of the assessment.

The evidence from the case study reaffirms that the influence of consultants in the context of sustainability assessment is bound with micro-scale, project management issues, which converge with 'pragmatic' or 'rational' approaches to

sustainability assessment. These issues entail the skills and abilities of an individual consultant (and available learning infrastructures) and needs and expectations of a client. Particular attention should be brought to the matter of timing (Jackson 2005; Jackson 2010), as the evidence of the case study points out that consultants have had a limited impact on the project, as they arrived when the project proposal was designed and there was no opportunity to improve it.

The discursive perspective on interaction around sustainable assessment allowed disentangling of the various motives at work and power relations. It leads to ideas about the ambiguous position of consultants towards the issue of independence, especially in the context of the findings about a necessity to comply with a client's will as he decides between various design options; and the needs and expectations of the client and that consultants in fact make considerable efforts to make sustainability assessment suited to a client – a point that is hardly raised and hard to research with regard to reproduction of sustainability assessment methods in the field of urban planning. It also further supports the view that responsibility of a consultant is primarily towards a client (McKenna 2001; Meriläinen et al. 2004; McKenna 2006).

These insights further lead to the issues of redefining the notion of 'sustainability assessment'. 'Sustainability assessment' is primarily understood as a tool or method in policy circles, and has been interpreted as such in urban studies, as argued in the literature review. In the context of the outcome of the thesis, it becomes clear that the framework embeds hidden power relations, covering negotiations in which a consultant, allegedly an objective 'expert' may not necessary have a final 'say' in interaction with a client. The research findings should not be taken to imply that other functions of knowledge were irrelevant and that no learning about sustainable development in the context of sustainability assessment took place. The case study also presented a range of 'areas', which involved conflicting knowledge claims of the project group and other project stakeholders. However, the process is particularly difficult to assess as it has a psychological dimension in a sense that it includes a change of 'mental schemata', way of conceiving things, which may be implicit and difficult to articulate even to the individual in question.

8.3. Wider implications

This research ventures beyond 'traditional' understandings of the role of a consultant in relation to a client, in which power relations tend to be conceptualised as a win-lose game with a dominating position ascribed to either a consultant or a client, clearly defined tasks and 'rules of the game'. It recognises not only complexities of power relationships encompassing the production of knowledge claims with regard to decision making around a particular issue (which has proven to be continuously difficult to research especially with regard to attempts to define learning outcomes). But also the discursive aspects of the influence of a consultant on a client, whereby both a consultant and a client create circumstances for the mobilisation of purposefully selected fields and domains of

knowledge and their 'infrastructures' in an attempt to shape the 'hearts and minds' of various social actors.

By the extension of this thought, the consultant-client relationship cannot be really considered as isolated from, but 'symbiotical' with, a local context. The research points to consultants' struggle to acquire and sustain power as their influence is mediated by a client and his abilities to draw lessons from local socio-institutional context and the constellations of power-knowledge supported within this context. This however is paradoxical in circumstances, where a client expects from a consultant to be able to build acute awareness of contextual elements that affect a client's activities in order to mediate his interests in a local context. This kind of relationship may have certain repercussions if a client does not embrace values embedded in the local socio-institutional context. Not only can the ability of the consultant to draw a credible image of the client's representation be put into question, but also consultants may face difficulties in accessing the local context.

The finding that consulting is inevitably connected with the client's world (Meriläinen et al. 2004), in turn reaffirm the validity of the debates around the question where consultants' primary liability and obligation lays, their professional standards and ethics, such as: are there tradeoffs between their commitment to remain objective and independent in the context of clients' needs and expectations?

In line with the ideas that the consultant-client relationship is bound with a local context, the study unveiled the socio-spatial and temporal boundaries affecting the reproduction of sustainability assessment frameworks in urban planning policy and practice. One of them relates to the construction of new answers to (ongoing) urban problems based on a toolkit or checkbox that allow comparisons to be made and 'best practices' to be drawn from different contexts. Whatever the apparent practical merits of such sustainability assessment frameworks, this 'blueprint' strategy is by default condemned to fail if it is expected to represent a 'truth' about sustainable development or an ultimate remedy to urban problems. Although seductively appealing to policy makers and widely promoted by consultancies, these claims might be seen as exaggerated. 'Truth', however is obscured – it is a discursive construct – as a vector of multitude influences, subjective and collective, structural, ideational and multidimensional, with implicit and explicit power relations, which lead to a resolution, which cannot be easily classified as 'success' or 'failure' or, alternatively, as 'best' or 'worst' practice. Equally, 'managing' sustainability impacts entails managing various (competing) interpretations of sustainable development, as well as potential divergences between interests and expectations of various social actors.

Knowledge production and transfer in the context of various sustainability toolkits or assessment frameworks in a field of urban planning unveil themselves as closely related to the power of a scientific knowledge 'domain'. Sustainability 'science', with all its 'infrastructures', for instance sustainability assessment tools, enjoys considerable trust of policy makers and consultants. It represents an ongoing

reliance on neo-positivistic epistemologies, economics and science in contemporary policymaking and practice. It is underpinned by an implicit belief that sustainability assessment provides 'magic paths' towards sustainable development, and positive values are attributed to a linear process of production of knowledge outcomes, which allows avoiding contestations and contradictions (Owens and Cowell 2011). However, 'scientific' knowledge outcomes can be contested on various fronts and may be vaguely relevant to various conceptualisations of sustainable development in a local policy and socio-institutional context. 'Scientific', top-down planning approaches, often associated with the notion of 'modernism' in relation to urban theory and practice (Lyotard 1993; Featherstone 1995; Hoppe 1999), failed by producing social exclusion and spatial polarisation (Harvey 1989; Madani-pour 1995; Richardson 1996).

Also, the 'new', 'postmodern' mode of urban planning which stresses stakeholder integration', celebrates diversity and multiple epistemologies (Rydin 2007) and in the forms of a 'communicative turn' in planning (Healey 1996; Huxley and Yiftachel 2000; Alexander 2001) and 'deliberative' policy analysis (Forester 1999; Fischer 2003; Hajer and Wagenaar 2003), leads back to the questions about the nature of 'knowledge', its 'kinds' or 'types' and relevance to planning processes that have not yet been sufficiently addressed.

The reflections on the role of knowledge (and private sector consultancies) in contemporary urban planning so far provide us with valuable evidence that the image of consultants as powerful in relation to a client, and 'game changers' and 'standards setters' is contested. It concerns not only the recognition of consulting as a discursive process, including a range of social actors, but also, the evidence that consultants act primarily as 'recipients', 'reproducers' of international standards, who use associations with international agenda setting standards organisations such as the EU to gain credibility and therefore power. In this vein, one can ask the question: can consultants ever truly be standards-setters? What's more important to a client: consultants' innovation or their ability to reproduce already existing standards?

The study unveils that the role of consultants in the field of urban planning does not concern only the use of practical skills and abilities, but the reproduction of certain constellations of power-knowledge, the structures of ideology, 'imageries', which serve as cognitive and normative lenses through which urban planning policies and practices are assessed. It concerns especially the 'imageries' about cities as places of (?) competitiveness, which can be potentially powerful as they are well known and transcend across urban policy in the EU (Adams 2008) and in practice – with regard to a 'property-led' or 'market-driven' urban regeneration (Turok 1992; Miles, 2005 #910), especially in the context of flagship, large scale urban projects (Swyngedouw et al. 2002; Moulaert et al. 2007). This supports the perspective the structures of knowledge embedded in language play 'a more significant role in contemporary socio-economic changes than it has in the past' (Fairclough 2001, p. 6).

The study also shows that knowledge production and dissemination in the context of sustainability consultants and sustainability assessment are strongly underpinned by economic reasoning of social actors engaged in it. This, leads to ontological questions about the nature of a human, and how the world we live in, is 'ordered'. It also challenges 'naive' interpretations of urban planning and in particular urban 'regeneration' as 'the comprehensive and integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about a lasting improvement in the economic, physical and environmental condition of an area that has been the subject to change' (Lichfield 1992, in: Roberts and Sykes 2000, p. 17). It rather stresses that as a process represents primarily a power game whereby 'regeneration' is a substitute for the 'interplay (of interests)' such as the economic, physical and environmental 'conditions' of urban development.

In this context, this thesis also puts into question 'elitist' conceptualisations of urban planning. It demonstrates that 'elites' cannot easily be treated homogeneously or elided with the roll-out of an undifferentiated neo-liberal form of urban development. It demonstrates that 'elitism', as much as 'reputation', is a relational construct, which entails that the influence of an elite is negotiated based on the views of 'the others'. This does not entail that no political 'elites' had an influence on the 'fate' of the 'Arena' development proposal, or that political or business 'elites' have strong influence on urban planning policy and practice in general. They do so, but perhaps in a more limited scope than one may think. The questions about 'right to participation' and 'right to appropriation', 'Whose urban development?', 'Who primarily gains from and what has been gained in urban policy, development and regeneration projects?', which represent grass-root struggles about individual and collective interests remain important and, in this case study, the basis of effective challenge (Purcell 2002; Marcuse 2009; Porter and Shaw 2013; Brown and Kristiansen 2009).

Insights into the role of various elites in knowledge production and dissemination in the field of urban planning lead also to reflections about the particularities of the context of Poland. In spite of growing interests in environmental design, with green building standards in both urban policy and practice becoming an important part of structural architecture and engineering education (Wydział Budownictwa i Inżynierii Środowiskowa 2010), the study stresses that learning from foreign consultants (and the role of international private sector consultancies) can be affected by the impasse of public-private sector relationships and macroeconomic policy issues in Poland. There are premises that a 'sustainability assessment market' as known in the West (with consulting companies carrying out sustainability assessment of various products) has not yet developed in Poland and that it is due to the lack of financial incentives from the side of government and limited access to adequate building material as well as broader investor awareness issues (Construction Marketing Group 2014). This, in line with the lack of considerations of domestic investors and developers about climate change and biodiversity in the context of environmental policies (Bolkowski 2009; Construction Marketing Group 2014), as well as the trust issues encompassing public-private relationships, can effectively

constrain the influence of international private sector consultancies on innovation production in Poland.

Summarising, the research emphasizes a discursive dimension to the processes of knowledge production and dissemination in the field of urban planning. It entails that the process does not represent a singular act, occurrence, phenomenon, or event, which has a beginning and an end, can be modelled and simply categorised as 'success' or 'failure' (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996; Dolowitz and Marsh 2000). It denotes rather ongoing global circulations of knowledge embedded in urban policy and practice, engaged in the processes of dialectics between fixity and flow (McCann 2011). Central to the process is contestation of various representations, which entails power struggles between various groups of stakeholders (assembled within networks or 'discourse coalitions'), one of them being private sector consultants.

Knowledge production and transfer processes depicted in the study are 'caught' between two spatial and temporal logics. One entails strong economic and political pressures – the global flow of capital underpinned by corporations and convergence pressures with regard to sustainable development agenda setting, as international private sector companies and investors, often drawing on internationally derived standards especially with regard to building construction. The second refers to the local constellations of 'power-knowledge', 'orders of things', or local hierarchies, which feature certain patterns and fixity of knowledge and values, roles and responsibilities attributed to certain actors. This leads to the emphasis on the role of local socio-institutional structures in translation of knowledge in the context of 'glocalisation' processes and the idea that the global circulation of capital, economic globalisation, is successful as far as the ability of its agents (consultants) to create alliances with these local stakeholders, who have access to local resources, are able to change the status-quo.

From the perspective of this research, one can see how the evaluation of the outcomes of economic globalisation and 'cultural hybridisation' remains highly problematic and complex. It requires insights into the multiplicity of representations embedded in often hidden dialectics between subject and object, where the acts of speech, text and image are only partial representations of power relations. Finally, one should also note that this thesis points out that the mobilisation of knowledge, especially under the slogan of 'international lessons drawing' (although with various effects) entails considerable resources that in a short term are expected to pay off in the currencies of increased prestige and reputation and/or in long term capital returns for social actors engaged in the process. These issues, being particularly susceptible to economic and social pressures, competing discourses and power relationships, make in the end knowledge production and transfer look speculative and represent wider issue of the 'fuzziness' of the entire domain of urban planning (Palmer et al. 1997; De Roo and Porter 2007).

8.4. Reflections on research

In order to aid an understanding of the research findings presented above, the chapter proceeds to explain the issues related to lessons from the field, reflections on the SKAD method and the implications for planning policy and practice.

8.4.1. Lessons from the field

This research also entails a number of reflections on the lessons drawn from the field and how it influences its knowledge outcomes. In this thesis, the case study research design was employed, which included primary, secondary and documentary data collection. Although the study provided a considerable amount of evidence regarding knowledge production and dissemination processes in the field of urban planning it also signalled the way the scope of these research findings should be read. This may be particularly important with regard to the research findings addressing the 'networked' reputation of consultants as they claim association with a range of large international actors. They were not the objects of investigation in the study as they had little relevance to the 'Arena' development proposal, however, if researched they could provide some valuable insights into network politics.

It is also important to acknowledge that during data collection, the researcher benefited from the openness of two key stakeholders in the study. It applies to the developer (a client) and the local master planner. The former on multiple occasions acknowledged the 'real' premises upon employing sustainability consultants and the latter hinted about the dynamics of the creation of a second 'discourse coalition', which otherwise would not be discovered. At the same time, however, one should note that the study was carried out in a hostile environment, where project stakeholders were not willing to cooperate with the researcher. It did not concern only that they did not agree to be recorded or quoted, as signalled in the previous chapter (Chapter 7), but also that some of them gave an impression of sharing just 'safe' information. This concerns especially the architects and sustainable consultants due to their position towards a client. The latter explicitly stated he needed the developer's approval to allow the investigation. It was addressed by the researcher as she tried to manoeuvre through the difficulties by adjusting the interview schedule and starting more general questions and letting an interviewee to open up. However it also broadly explains the limited scope for examining power relations based on the accounts of interaction between project group members.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge a particular value of this research in the context of obtaining sustainability. The sustainability assessment report unveiled key model practices of the consultancy with regard to sustainability assessment,

which are not publicly available and led to contestation of the knowledge outcomes constructed based on the assessment. The fact that the report was shortened, however, did not allow the research to get full insights into how the model practices were deployed by sustainability consultants involved in the 'Arena' development proposal and the process of commodification of knowledge within the company. The reason for not sharing the full version of the report that was a property of a client (the developer). That being said, the subject of consultants and the issues of their influence on a local context are particularly difficult to research with regard to secrecy around the profession in general and complexities of power as a more or less 'overt' relationship that brings about both intended and unintended effects (as stated in Chapter 4). This will remain a challenge for future research into the role of consultancies.

8.4.2. Reflections on the method

The third objective of the thesis was to assess the Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourses developed by Keller (2011). The study identified a range of issues relating to efficacy of the SKAD as a research framework and a research method. Prior to engaging in them, one can reflect on some of the implications of the research design on deploying SKAD. The framework was appealing for the researcher for neatly integrating 'symbolic' and interactional aspects of the processes of knowledge production and transfer. The process of drawing insights from the framework and refining its focus was bound with a particular time and space. The framework was discovered during a conference in 2012, so it could not inform data collection practices from an early stage. This, however, did not raise a particular concern for the researcher as SKAD fits social constructionist epistemology and it was Foucault's take on discourse (and power) that inspired this research from the outset, guiding the literature review and data collection. Also, Keller (2011) himself stressed the flexibility of the framework in its applications at various stages of the research work.

Having been encouraged by the comprehensiveness of the framework (as demonstrated in Chapter 4), the research sought to unpack its theoretical and analytical propositions. The limited amount of sources about SKAD in English became, however, a considerable obstacle in making sense of, what turned out to be, a quite complex theoretical proposition. Keller, in his article (Keller 2011), which is the most elaborate version of SKAD, provides a condensed review of various traditions that underpinned the emergence of SKAD. The overview, however, provides relatively few statements of a comparison between his execution of discourse analysis, as opposed to other discourse-theoretical traditions, which was then addressed by the researcher (as stated in Chapter 4). The latter could be, yet particularly useful for early stage researchers, who have not worked with discourse analysis and are not equipped with knowledge and experience that would allow them to make relevant deductions.

Also, the theoretical propositions of SKAD are underpinned with a range of analytical concepts (e.g. the notions of '*interpretative frame*' encompassing

'phenomenal structure', *'classifications'* and *'narrative structure'* (Keller 2011). They provided the researcher with tools to develop an understanding of phenomena taking place in the field, aided further by a tabulation of the *'phenomenal structure'* of discourse. The notions of *'phenomenal structure'* and *'classifications'* turned out to be the most useful analytical concepts for this research and data gathered. The former proved itself helpful in teasing out, often 'hidden' in text, certain assumptions and ideas about *'responsibilities'* of social actors, *'self-positioning'*, *'other positioning'*, and became a base of the analysis of power relations. The notion of *'responsibilities'* allowed, for instance, teasing out stories about how consultants' knowledge is supposed to 'save' society from environmental challenges. The ideas of *'self-positioning'* and *'other positioning'* played an important role in identifying power-effects in the context of sustainability assessment.

A few obstacles emerged, when the concept of 'interpretative frame' was used. It concerns especially the process of aggregating various discourses with an expectation to find the single 'frame', a common theme, that was able to 'encompass' discourses emerging from text. Similar issues concern the notion of 'classifications'. Keller states that SKAD allows the exploration of fixed and fluid rules of interpretation. Keller argues that the analytical concept draws from the scholarship of Bowker and Star (1999) and provides a reader with a reference. However, when the reference was explored in detail, it was discovered Bowker and Star (1999) stress, on the other side, that 'classifications' can be found everywhere and that through talk, people implicitly and explicitly classify various phenomena with regard to material/symbolic, personal/objective (work/communities of practice) categorizations.

The notion of 'narrative analysis' and 'power effects' in SKAD is also underdeveloped. In this vein, a researcher can seek support from 'narrative analysis'; as indicated above, one can use the extensive scholarship of Hajer (1993, 1995); Hajer and Wagenaar (2003); Hajer and Versteeg (2005a); Hajer (2005, 2006b). The resemblance of his writings on first Argumentative Discourse Analysis, and then on Dramaturgy Analysis was already recalled in Chapter 4. The advantage of using this particular scholarship is the variety of guidance on how to reconstruct 'narratives' stemming from his own scholarship as well as its application by other scholars.

Keller (2011) provides no guidelines about how to assess an 'effect'. By supporting herself with ideas of Lukes and Foucault, the researcher attempted to bridge this gap (see Methodology chapter). It is worth mentioning that no scholars writing in the English language, who applied SKAD, deployed it with regard to the notion of 'power' too. The issue, however, is a considerable one for the researchers willing to use the SKAD framework in the future as without power the SKAD framework remains inconclusive and incomplete with regard to theoretical propositions – it would not be able to describe what happens when individuals' interpretative frames collide. Also, in the context of the challenges, one can turn to the

scholarship on interactive framing or attempt to draw inspirations from a particular power philosophy.

Finally, one should also reflect upon the SKAD's *'phenomenal structure'* as applied in this research. The *'phenomenal structure'* involves several categories, e.g. *'causes'*, *'responsibilities'*, *'need for action/problem solving'*, which suggests a certain linearity of processes described by data. This 'linearity' was challenged in the research in various ways, not least with regard to the presentation of research outcomes. In line with the theoretical proposition of SKAD, the very nature of discourse is that it includes competing and contradictory knowledge claims and vales. Some knowledge claims therefore fitted the framework better than others, and some embedded in the framework fitted into more than one category. Practically, it concerns ideas about the consultancy commitment to sustainable development'. It constitutes both the reason why developer employed consultants, meaning *'causes'*; and in a sense *'culture of things'*, that the consultancy develops a range of infrastructures. This is not that apparent when a SKAD was applied with regard to a particular 'source', but during aggregation from 'source' level to 'actor' level and agency level, if appropriate. These anti-essentialist premises of discourse make the entire SKAD framework, or 'programme', disparate. This also entails another point. One should not expect the process of carrying out discourse analysis to be straight-forward (linear), in which chunks of texts can readily be fitted into pre-defined categories. Rather it is iterative and 'messy', which includes both reconstruction of social occurrences and the researcher's reflective practice through reconstruction of the framework and social occurrences gathered from the field.

To summarise, the SKAD framework proved useful as a device in terms of connecting a complex, discourse-related body of theory with data. However, it fell short in helping the researcher to use data to inform the analytical concepts provided as part of the method. Approaching the framework as an entity, as a 'ready-to-use' method, using all elements originally proposed by Keller (i.e. the interpretative frame, phenomenal analysis, narrative analysis and classifications) may turn against a researcher who is not familiar with the research traditions that SKAD is based on and who also faces considerable time pressure. In this context, one could choose a part of the framework, say, 'narrative structure', to analyse discourse, and then proceed to deploy the concepts drawing lessons from already existing approaches to narrative analysis (while paying attention to the compatibility of a particular approach to narrative analysis and theoretical propositions of SKAD). Notably, this is the strategy adopted in this research. It is also important to note that a researcher also inevitably adapts the framework to particular research questions (and data sets) which supports the choice of relevant aspects of SKAD and re-defines the SKAD framework in line with the expectations of the researcher.

Finally, as a further reflection in this discussion on the issue of the usefulness of the SKAD, one should also note that the role of SKAD is not limited to enabling data analysis but also entails conceptually framing the nature of the social world

described in this research. As mentioned in the Methodology chapter, the SKAD proposes a particular pathway to approaching the issues of knowledge production and sharing in the field of urban planning (and effectively proposes a particular epistemological stand). The analytical assumptions regarding the notion of discourse, agency and structure, are argued by Keller to diverge from Critical Discourse Analysis, which is pursued with a focus on discourse as a text (or an act of speech) representing an interplay between interests and power.

The fact that the application of SKAD (as much as other research methodologies) meant to reflect an epistemological focus of a particular study bears a range of practical implications. It includes an emphasis on some aspects of a discourse (hence also the social world described in the research), while downplaying others. For instance, drawing from the tradition of symbolic interactionism the analytical proceedings of SKAD (especially with regard to the notion of the 'interpretative repertoire of discourse') allow a researcher to get in-depth insights into 'symbolic' constellations of knowledge – a kind of mind map of relationships between various ideas and practices. Yet this framework falls short in recognising in-depth how these ideas (knowledge) drive the decision-making of individuals or organisations and micro-scale power dynamics (which may be of particular interests to scholars particularly interested in the question of the ontology and supremacy of certain aspects of social life and relationships over others).

In the context of this research, the matter translates into a large volume of research findings relating to the symbolic constellations of knowledge – for example, the stories told by a client and a consultant about urban change – and relatively few findings with regard to a range of factors that influenced decisions taken by a consultant and a client and the interplay between the consultant's and client's interests. This, however, can be considered as a 'normal' way in which research frameworks or methods influence on the way in which data analysis is carried out. Also, the SKAD is a new proposition with regard to research methods and in part, the purpose of this study has been to reveal its strengths and weaknesses in analysing discourse. Finally, this study points to a range of opportunities for a researcher to develop this discourse analytic framework.

8.4.3. Implications for planning policy and practice

The study reflects upon the roles of various social actors in the process of knowledge production and transfer, consultants being one of them. It is hoped to prompt their reflections about issues relating to and possible effects of drawing lessons from various contexts, especially in the context of decision making frameworks and tools.

The primary implication of the study refers to facilitating better communication and problem solving. It goes beyond acknowledging that the responsibilities of the urban planner, regardless of what position one occupies (whether one is an urban designer, sustainability assessor or both), entail carrying out research and field

studies that allow adequate contextualisation (and conceptualisation) of a particular issue, but also that one should be reflective towards one's own 'position' towards a subject and to the investigation process in general. This point is illustrated, for example, by the notion of 'reflective practitioner' (Schön 1983; Richardson 1996; Forester 1999), who is not only a person that learns about contexts but learns about oneself and acknowledges that through learning one interprets and represents a phenomenon to oneself. It concerns recognising one's own 'limitations', the influence of an educational background and pressures from the field, which may lead to pre-judging meanings and create constraints in the dissemination of knowledge and impede cooperation processes.

The research outcomes also demonstrate relevance to urban planning education. The complexities of knowledge production dynamics, especially of power relations, emerging from the study point not only to the importance of educating a 'reflexive practitioner', who can learn through doing about contemporary issues of urban planning and oneself, but someone who is adequately trained and mastered negotiation techniques. Based on own experiences in academia, urban planners, designers across various countries in Poland, the UK, and Belgium often learn practical skills of how to draw a plan or write an urban regeneration scheme or programme during courses. However, they are not often taught or prepared to handle project management issues or face negotiation and bargaining that is an inherent part of urban planning. This issue has attracted considerable attention in the field of planning theory (Richardson and Connelly 2001), especially with regard to the role of planner in conflict mediation and negotiation (Pløger 2004, p. 86), however its implications for education in urban planning .

8.4.4. Future research

The study provides evidence about the forces that shape knowledge (re)production processes in the context of urban regeneration, especially with regard to the role of consultancies and interests of clients, and the notion of sustainable development 'science'. In particular, Chapter 5 of the research findings, which focused on how reputation and credibility of consultancy and consultants influence knowledge reproduction processes involves a number of 'threads' that could provide interesting insights into the debates about institutionalisation of knowledge within a development company and its effects on external relations. It includes ideas about a corporate business model, and alleged premises that trust ownership brings about particular dynamics of knowledge utilisation through decision making. Also, as the same chapter revealed that the transfer of 'expertise' within a company is affected by the culture of its branches. Further insights into the matter would be valuable in explaining how knowledge is produced in the context of *intra-*organisational power relations.

Additionally, in Chapter 5, which stresses the influence of consultants in terms of 'impression management', and Chapter 7 that points out about an 'image' of the developer as an 'evil' and the intensity of interaction between the developer and local authorities, the processes of knowledge (re)production in the context of

consultants could be researched using 'dramaturgy analysis', framework (Hajer and Versteeg 2005a, b; Hajer 2005; Hajer 2006a). It would further enhance our understanding of the symbolic influence of consultants, focusing on performance of consultants in the sustainable development 'arena'.

In a similar vein, Chapter 7 which unravels the importance of trust between a client and local project stakeholders in mediating the role of consultants, points to the future direction of research being more theoretically and empirically bound with the notion of urban governance. The future could therefore benefit from analysis of structural factors that shape urban governance constellations through for instance regime analysis.

Also, the research suggests that power relations in the context of sustainability assessment entail imposition, with regard to corporate model practices of carrying out sustainability assessment, and also 'translation'. The latter concerns not only translation of company policies into the project, but complex knowledge in a way it is understandable for project stakeholders, or sustainable development theory (that stresses, among others, the issues of social justice) into practice (where it becomes a project that is profitable to a client). The insights into the 'translation' practices allow an appreciation of the real, on-the-ground challenges of a consultant, but also the complex ways knowledge has to 'travel' before it reaches its addressee and recall, which reaffirms the validity of the Actor-Network and Communities of Practice theoretical perspectives for further research.

The presentation of the knowledge production and transfer as a discursive process in this research provides grounds for reflexivity about ethics and professional standards in consulting profession as two interrelated issues. It therefore concerns (i) re-recognising and re-discovering the importance of spatial and social context in decision making over contested issues; (ii) and that it is beneficial for international companies to learn about and from within a local context. With regard to the latter, Inkpen and Beamish (1997, p. 187) state that 'knowledge of the local environment is usually a key resource of local partners; it is also a key source of bargaining power, because it makes the foreign partner dependent on the local partner'. By pointing to the fragility of consultant's reputation and the importance of building a long term rapport with their clients (and implicitly the clients' stakeholders), which would bring benefits to consultants in the long term. It may require reflections about short-term financial gains and the influence of a reputation of clients on the long term credibility of the company.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Examples of interview schedules.

Questions to the developer:

- What was your role in the 'Arena' development proposal?
- How is the idea of sustainable development in the context of the 'Arena' development proposal?
- How did your interaction with 'Arena' project stakeholders look like in the context of sustainability assessment?

Questions to the local master planner:

- What is your view on the 'Arena' development proposal?
- What was your role in the 'Arena' development proposal?
- What was your role in the context of 'Midfield' plan?

Questions to sustainability consultant 1:

- What is sustainability agenda of your company? How is the idea of sustainable development understood in your company?
- How sustainability ideas are institutionalized within your company?
- What was your role in the 'Arena' development proposal?
- How sustainability ideas were incorporated the 'Arena' development proposal?

Appendix 2. Empirical data regarding the 'Arena' development proposal

No	Name of the source	Obtained from
1.	The developer. February 2008. <i>The 'Arena' project proposal.</i>	Developer
2.	The developer. 2008a. The brochure of development proposal.	Developer
3.	The developer. <i>About us</i> , website of the developer. [Accessed: 07 March 2010]	Internet
4.	The developer. Development proposal website. Accessed: March 2008] (expired 2011).	Internet
5.	The environmental consultant. 2008. <i>History of the development site.</i>	Developer
6.	Sustainability consultants from Poland. 2008. <i>Sustainability Assessment Report of the 'Arena' development proposal, revision C.</i>	Developer
7.	Sustainability consultants from Poland. 2008. <i>The development proposal - traffic report.</i>	Developer
8.	Environmental Consultant. 2007. <i>Environmental protection of the development site with a special account of airing phenomenon.</i>	Developer
9.	Sustainability consultants from Poland. 2009. <i>The geotechnical analysis of the development proposal.</i>	Developer
10.	Corporate Sustainability Policy Statement 2007	Sustainability consultants from London
11.	Corporate Report 2007-2008	Internet
12.	Corporate Report 2009	Internet
13.	Corporate Report 2010	Internet
14.	Europe Region Sustainability Strategy 2007	Sustainability consultants from London
15.	Architectural Studio from Poland. <i>Development proposal</i> , website [Accessed: July 2010]	Internet

16.	Inventor of the sustainability assessment 2004. <i>Sustainability Assessment - improving company performance.</i>	Internet
17.	The Head of Sustainability consultancy in Poland. 2010. Article on Eco-leadership and the role of consultancy in it.	Internet
18.	Consultancy Director 2 in the United Kingdom. 2006. Lecture about the role of engineer in a local university in London	Internet
19.	The founder of the consultancy. 1970. <i>The vision for the consultancy</i>	Sustainability Consultants from London
20.	City council. 2009. <i>The list of comments to the local plan, including comments rejected.</i> The attachment to the local plan.	City council
21.	City council. June 2009. <i>The local plan of the 'Midfields' area.</i>	City council
22.	City council. <i>The Commissions in the city council.</i> [Online] [Accessed: January 2010]	Internet
23.	The office of the development and European Integration of the city council. 2005. <i>Metropolitan Development Strategy until 2020.</i> [Online] [Accessed: June 2010]	Internet
24.	Local councillor. 2009. <i>Response to the query about the legal status of the development site in 2009</i>	City council in Poland
25.	The Office of the Spatial Order Committee of the city council. 2009. <i>The transcript of the Spatial Order Committee deliberations on 16 June 2009.</i>	City council in Poland.
26.	The Board of the Local District Council 1. 2009. <i>The decision of the Board of the local district council 1 about the local plan of 'Midfields'.</i>	Internet
27.	The Board of the City Council. 2009. <i>The decision of the Board of the city council on passing the local plan of 'Midfields'.</i>	Internet
28.	The Board of the City Council. 2006. <i>The Study of the Conditionings of the development of the city – 'Studium' for the city.</i>	Internet
29.	The Board of the local District Council 2. 2009. <i>The decision of the Board of the local district council 2 on the local plan of 'Midfields'.</i>	Internet
30.	The Board of the Local District Council 3. 2009. <i>The protocol from the deliberations of the Board of the local council 3.</i>	Internet

31.	The Board of the Local District Council 3. 4 February 2009. <i>The position of the Board of the local district council 3 on the preparation of the local plan.</i>	Internet
32.	The local journalist. 30 May 2009a. <i>Not yet the final battle about the development site</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 07 January 2009].	The local daily newspaper 1
33.	The local journalist. 25 May 2009. <i>How the developer lobbies towards the development of the [green] site</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 18 April 2010]	The local daily newspaper 1
34.	The local journalist. 20 June 2009. <i>Research or brain draining</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 05 April 2013]	The local daily newspaper 1
35.	The local journalist. 30 May 2009b. <i>Our green site. How the developer fights to build it up</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 02 October 2013]	The local daily newspaper 1
36.	The local journalist (co-author). 19 June 2009. <i>The green site saved by a local plan</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 06 February 2010]	The local daily newspaper 1
37.	The local journalist (co-author). 28 February 2008. <i>Skyscrapers on the green site? City council says 'no' and investor insists.</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 01 October 2013]	The local daily newspaper 1
38.	03 June 2009. <i>Councillors said 'no' to the idea of building up green space</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 01 October 2013]	The local daily newspaper 1
39.	18 June 2009. <i>Keep fingers crossed for councillors!</i> [Online]. [Accessed 07 July 2012]	The local daily newspaper 1
40.	19 June 2009. <i>You [city council] should finally start developing local plans!</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 11 October 2010] 2009b	The local daily newspaper 1
41.	19 May 2009. 2009. <i>Will the proposed development site remain green from June onwards?</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 13 February 2013]	The local daily newspaper 2
42.	30 May 2009. <i>Proposed 'Arena' development is in trouble</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 13 February 2010]	National daily newspaper
43.	23 May 2006. <i>The battle for proposed development</i> [Online]. [Accessed 08 July 2011]	The local daily newspaper 1
44.	18 May 2009. <i>Will they save the green site from the developer</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 15 May 2011]	The local daily newspaper 1
45.	6 June 2006. <i>Our 'Central Park' - the debate about the development</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 03	Local ecological portal

	March 2013]	
46.	16 June 2014. <i>The stadium is run down. Justice authorities took it away</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 02 February 2014]	The local daily newspaper 1
47.	12 February 2009. <i>Battle with the developer for the proposed development site</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 29 January 2011]	The local daily newspaper 1
48.	14 May 2009. <i>Do not wait! Enact the local plan at last!</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 13 December 2011]	The local daily newspaper 1
49.	Skyscraper city. 2008-2010. <i>Local investments</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 18 March 2012]	Skyscraper city
50.	15 May 2008. <i>The development proposal discussed during a meeting on the development site</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 21 December 2009]	Construction Magazine
51.	2006. <i>Plans to develop 'Midfields'</i> [Online]. [Accessed 01 October 2013]	The portal of 'Midfields'
52.	2009. <i>Political oppositions reconcile against the developer</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 01 October 2013]	The portal of 'Midfields'
53.	2009. <i>The proposed development site part 2: 'We raise a fence!'</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 01 October 2013]	The portal of 'Midfields'
54.	2009. <i>The proposed development site: They raise a fence</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 01 October 2013]	The portal of 'Midfields'
55.	Undated. <i>Utopia as reality. The proposed development has not yet obtained a planning permission</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 02.08.2011]	National business magazine
56.	20 June 2009. <i>Research or brain draining</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 02 October 2013] (local daily newspaper 1	The local daily newspaper 1
57.	Undated. Promotional material 1.	Sustainability consultancy
58.	Undated. Promotional material 2.	Sustainability consultancy
59.	2007. <i>Consultants in Poland.</i>	Sustainability consultancy
60.	The consultancy founder. 1970. <i>Memo</i>	Internet
61.	The local journalist. 28 February 2008. <i>Breaking the city council and the 'Arena' site</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 02.07.2009]. 2008a	The local daily newspaper 1

62.	16 October 2006. Our 'Central Park' – the debate about the 'Midfields' [Online]. [Accessed: 03.03.2009].	Ecological portal
63.	The local journalist. 25 May 2009. <i>How they lobby in favour of the 'Arena' development proposal</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 18.04.2010].	The local daily newspaper 1
64.	29 February 2008. <i>Skyscrapers on the 'Midfields' site</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 17.03.2010]	Local daily newspaper 1
65.	12 February 2009 The fight with the developer for the 'Arena' site [Online]. [Accessed: 29.01.2010].	Local daily newspaper 1
66.	19 May 2009. <i>Who played with a plan of 'Midfields'?</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 09.02.2013].	The local daily newspaper 1
67.	30 May 2009b. <i>Is 'Arena' lost?</i> [Online]. [Accessed: 13.02.2010]	The local daily newspaper 1
68.	Website of polish architectural studio [Online]. [Accessed: 07.07. 2010]	Internet

Appendix 3. Researcher's reflections on interviewing processes

This appendix includes reflections on issues encountered by the researcher while carrying out interviews in a hostile environment and how they were addressed.

As mentioned in the Methodology chapter, the processes of data collection for the purpose of this research required the researcher to be particularly reflexive towards the position of an interviewee towards the 'Arena' development proposal and her own position towards the interviewees in the field. It is however important to note that the situation also affected the role of an interview schedule (prepared as a main reference point to enquire the interviewees about the phenomenon in question) and made it necessary for the researcher to put in place and execute an alternative approach to interviewing in order to (i) secure access to relevant data, and (ii) ensure that collected data is comprehensive and responds to the research questions.

The recollection of the events described below concerns only a few interview situations – the interview with the Head of the Local Spatial Planning Office and the interview with the local master planner. The reason for this is that these two interviewees expressed considerable disapproval towards the focus of this research and using the 'Arena' as a case study; while other interviewees, for instance, the local journalist and the sports club manager, expressed curiosity and interest in the subject of sustainable development and sustainability assessment.

The interaction with the Head of the Local Spatial Planning Office unveiled the interviewees' distrust towards the researcher (addressed in detail in Chapter 7), which entails the lack of willingness of this person to engage in any discussion about sustainability in the 'Arena' development proposal. In this context, the researcher took a decision not to proceed with the prepared interview schedule *per se* but to understand where the unwillingness of the interviewee comes from. Execution of this approach relied on leaving considerable space for the interviewee to express her feelings about any development in the 'Midfields' site and the interviewers' attempt to 'speak' the interviewees' language. It proved effective as it allowed the researcher to understand where the approach of the Head of the Local Spatial Planning Office towards the 'Arena' development proposal comes from and the conversation slowly headed to cover the topic of the 'Arena' development proposal and the issues of sustainability consulting.

Similar issues unravelled in the context of the interview with the local master planner. When first approached, the local master planner expressed a concern over the identity of the researcher, as he asked the researcher where she comes from, and if she is a journalist. Having been informed that this was not the case, the local master planner was further dissatisfied about the focus of this research and the issues of sustainability consulting being at the heart of it. This involved a suggestion to change the focus of this research or at least not to use the word sustainability

during the interview. In this context, the researcher was not able to proceed with the interview questions as planned but focused on asking questions about the meaning of the area to him and how it relates to the work he did for the local city council. The conversation firstly concentrated on the issues of urban regeneration in Poland in general, which was partly induced by the researcher in an attempt to keep a focus on issues relevant to the themes of the 'Arena' development proposal (to learn more about this see Chapter 5). The focus then shifted towards the problems specific to the 'Midfields' site and the matters of sustainability and sustainable development in the context of the case study, which allowed the researcher to appreciate the position of the interviewee towards the subject of this study.

In summary, the researcher's compliance with the request not to use the word 'sustainability' during the interview with the local master planner proved beneficial from the point of view of securing access to data as the latter agreed to carry on the conversation. It also provided space for the interviewee to elaborate on his role in the 'Arena' development proposal, and his view about the idea of the development of the 'Midfields' site, prior to engaging in the discussion about the role of sustainability assessment and sustainability consulting. In this context, one should note that not all data gathered in this interview was attributed the same 'weight' during in data analysis and the researcher focused on the issues of greatest relevance to the 'Arena' development proposal primarily.

Finally, in the context of discussions about approaches to interviewing one should note that interview situations differ significantly and that the role of the researcher is to accommodate these differences. The interaction between an interviewer and an interviewee is bound up with the researcher's skills and abilities to carry out an interview, relevant training and experience. Some factors that influence interviewer-interviewee dynamics may be difficult to grasp for an interviewer, such as the general world view of an interviewee, one's personal experiences in being interviewed and one's feelings on a particular day.

Appendix 4. The application of ‘phenomenal structure’ of SKAD with regard to the consultants’ reputation

Dimensions	Concrete Implementation
Causes	Reputation of consultants as a subject of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • skills and abilities (and corresponding ‘infrastructures’, • position ‘outside’ an issue, • commitment to sustainable development and corresponding infrastructures, • networking and leadership,
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consultants: donate to charities, provide objective advice, increase awareness about sustainable development in society, meet clients’ needs, make client a leader, • society: must allow tackling developing environmental and societal problems,
Need for action/problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consultants as non-experts, • spatial differences in sustainable development agendas (attempts to adopt to differences between markets) • develop and sustain infrastructure and supports benchmarking • collective mobilisation of clients for their societal responsibility
Self-positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consultants as the representatives of the scientific-technical, economic reason and progress; endorsed by a network of sustainable development standards setters; saviour towards society,
Other positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-experts, part of the network or not, • society show little respect to environment,
Culture of things/wealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benchmarking, competition for capital • networking,
Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • environmental and social justice, sustainable development, • capital, • knowledge, • leadership,

Source: own construction

Appendix 5. The application of ‘phenomenal structure’ of SKAD with regard to the reliability of the sustainability assessment

Dimensions	Concrete Implementation
Causes	Sustainability assessment as a subject of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consultants’ authoritative expertise and leadership, • networks consultants belong to, • construction, e.g. indicators (scientific, quantitative, comprehensive), and proceedings (validated in collaboration)
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consultants: carry out assessment in line with corporate guidelines, • other project stakeholders: follow consultants, • make sustainable development profitable to a client,
Need for action/problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interconnected indicators – it may be not possible to improve the outcome • final decision lays in hands of a client • outcomes of the assessment depends on someone else • dealing with multiple meanings of sustainable development (sustainability cannot be quantified, differences in the meanings of sustainable development internationally),
Self-positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consultants: experts, exclusive guardians of objectivity, • practically useful: providing client with decision making tools, • educating other stakeholders about sustainable development (sustainability assessment as a workshop tool),
Other positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have to submit values for the indicators of sustainability assessment, • non-experts in terms of sustainability assessment
Culture of things/wealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited use of sustainability assessment methods in Poland • sustainability assessments commonly used in the West • sustainable development as technology and science

Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• science, technology, sustainable development
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Source: own construction

Appendix 6. The application of ‘phenomenal structure’ of SKAD with regard to the key assumption of the ‘Arena’ development proposal

Dimensions	Concrete Implementation
Causes	The ‘Arena’ development proposal as a problem of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • derelict site and debt of a sports club • democratic choice • system (no money for urban regeneration in Poland)
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developer: provide high quality design, respect value of sport, recreation and science and that it is important space for local communities,
Need for action/problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • council: protect ‘Midfields’ are with local plan • planning permission (seduction strategy; usual PR practice (the site has never been part of the ‘Midfields park) • various understandings of the ‘Arena’ site in the context of its surrounding (in policy and practice)
Self-positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developer: caring (good quality project design), fair and trying to give everyone access to decision making (public consult meetings), fulfilling interest of local communities, • city council: decides about urban space city council as a source of authority in a local context,
Other positioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developer considered as not considered as credible or reliable or trustworthy (economic interests of the developer; other developers not trustworthy) by local knowledge authorities, • city council considered by the ‘Arena’ project group as disinterested in economic development of city, incoherent with regard to decision making, and having a political bias,
Culture of things/wealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compliance with local plans (historical continuity of local policies with regard to ‘Arena’ site), • outsourcing experts, • ‘serious fight’ for planning permission,

Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• green space, sport, recreation; history and tradition; local expertise,• western products: design and sustainability assessment,
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Source: own construction