Grassroots democracy: the role of volunteer community groups in the government decision making process: a case study of the origin and evolution of volunteer community groups in Tweed Shire, Northern NSW

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A case study of the origin and evolution of Volunteer Community Groups in Tweed Shire, Northern NSW

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Statement of Originality

I certify that the work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original, except as acknowledged in the text, and that the material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the University's rules, requirements, procedures and policy relating to my higher degree research award and to my thesis. I certify that I have complied with the rules, requirements, procedures and policy of the University (as they may be from time to time).

...............................................................

Samuel K. Dawson
Abstract

In recent times the scale and rate of environmental destruction has increased as has the ecological literacy of the public (Jones, 2004; Hundloe, 2009), community groups develop as a response by concerned citizens to the threat of local environmental destruction (Lines, 2006). Volunteer community groups, or grassroots associations perform an important social function in modern society providing services and representing community interests which are not supplied by government or industry (Smith, 2000). This thesis explores the origins and actions of four local community groups in Tweed Shire, Northern NSW. These groups were created in response to development pressures in the late 1980s. The thesis asks the questions, “Why do people create a new community group to campaign on an issue?” and, “How does a group survive and achieve its goals?”

Using qualitative investigation techniques including interviews with key actors and archival research, the topic is investigated through the use of phronesis (Flyvbjerg, 2001) to provide a guiding framework. The theory of voluntary altruism (Smith, 2000) is used as an analytical frame to investigate the characteristics and motivations of community groups, while the idea of cognitive ownership (Boyd, 2012) is used to map power relationships between groups. This is a case study of an historical development issue, the proposal to develop a mountain top for a sanatorium and health resort. The case study records the history of activity by the developer and local government to gain approval by apparently manipulating the land zone regulations, and the actions of volunteer community groups in attempting to support or oppose the development.

With the focus on the processes of community group development and evolution, the study identified that volunteer community groups rely on the activity of a few key individuals to become established and remain functioning. Groups can also ‘clone’ themselves to create the appearance of widespread community support on an issue. Flyvbjerg’s (2001) concept of a rationalising decision-making processes by government and industry was supported by the study. Success for a small volunteer
group can be achieved when there is sufficient political opportunity available. There are also differences observed between volunteer groups that support business interests and groups that support conservation, with conservation groups being better able to achieve their goals and survive longer. Political migration of members from conservation groups to government was observed to be more successful than from other groups. The study has supported the Theory of Voluntary Altruism (Smith, 2000) and proposes an additional core value to the theory to better describe the motivations of people involved in conservation groups.
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Dedicated to the memory of

Hop.E Hopkins

Founding member and coordinator Caldera Environment Centre

(1940-2012)

Image 1: Hop.E at ‘No CSG’ rally in Murwillumbah 2012.
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List of Acronyms used

CEC – Caldera Environment Centre

COI – Commission of Inquiry

EP&A Act – NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979

ICAC – Independent Commission against Corruption

LEP – Local Environmental Plan (Council)

MBC – Murwillumbah Business Corporation

MP – Member of Parliament

POP – Property Owners for Progress

TEL – Tweed Electoral Lobby

TLG – Tweed Landowners Group

TSC – Tweed Shire Council

TVCT – Tweed Valley Conservation Trust
Chapter 1 – Thesis Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1 Structure and Background of the Thesis

This thesis examines the role of community based organisations (or grassroots associations (Smith, 2000)) as social movement and political actors in contemporary society. Through the use of a case study the actions of a local environmental organisation are investigated, with the aim of understanding what motivates people to volunteer their time and energy to create a new group in a community with established community organisations and how they form a group to successfully achieve their goals. The case study explored is the formation of the Caldera Environment Centre in 1989, and how different groups attempted to influence the decision making of the Council at the time.

This study examines the history of a proposal by a developer to construct a sanatorium/art gallery complex on the top of a local mountain in the Tweed Shire, northern rivers NSW Australia in the 1980s. The case is important because it is the first local example of community based environmental activism that uses formal political and bureaucratic processes to achieve its goal, without the use of major protest action. The community reaction to the proposal represents the first challenge by hippie counterculture to mainstream economic activities in the Tweed Shire. Other events in the region are better known like the story of Protestors Falls, the Border Ranges and the North East Forest Alliance (Kelly, 2003; Lines, 2006; Rickets, 2003). It is the purpose of this thesis to reflect on the events that led to the formation of Caldera Environment Centre and its Mt Nullum campaign and learn lessons from this event that are applicable to groups today.

How did one small group of environmentally concerned citizens unite and work together to achieve their goal? Why did this group triumph and other more established
and elite groups fail? The case study examined is the formation of several volunteer community group on the north coast of NSW in the late 1980s, and their differing motivations, organisational structures and tactics. Figure 1 below is a schematic illustration informs the reader of the structure of the document.

The focus of the thesis is on environmentally based community groups operating at a local level. Doherty (2002) explains that local environmental groups are an important (but small) part of the overall Green movement who unfairly are labelled as Not in my Back Yard (NIMBY) organisations. Grassroots Associations (a term which can apply to local community environmental groups) have important democratic and social functions that are not found in other, larger non-profit or government organisations (Smith, 2000). Doherty (2002) and Jones (2004) explain how the “ecological crisis” reported by scientists (such as Diamond, 2005; Flannery, 1994; Leakey & Lewin, 1995; Lindenmayer, 2007) has motivated individuals within Western industrialised societies to become active in attempting to prevent further damage to biodiversity and global life-support systems as a result of unrestrained development driven by free-market capitalist ideology.

Chapter 1 explores the idea of social mythology and how it has informed the way people think about, take action upon and communicate ideas. This discussion examines the beliefs that are innate within environmental and mainstream thinking and how the idea of ‘the environment’ can be used for a particular agenda. The second part of this discussion examines the literature about how these personal beliefs are linked to individual actions. The role of community groups, organisations (or grassroots associations) and their inherent motivations is then discussed with reference to the altruistic (Smith, 2000) and selfish group theories (Olson, 1974) to explain why individuals seek involvement in groups, particularly community organisations that have the goal of greater input into decision-making processes. Concluding the chapter is an examination of volunteer groups or grassroots associations and their defining characteristics and how they fit into the modern political spectrum.
Chapter two will discuss the methodology used to collect data for the case-studies and explain the use of phronesis (Flyvbjerg, 2001) as the paradigm guiding the research to better understand the complicated nature of social science data. Specific data collection techniques and the methods of analysis are discussed in this chapter. Following on from the methods is the Case-Study protocol (Yin, 2003) which provided the structure for the interviews and the analysis.

The results are presented in four parts. The opening part acquaints the reader with the specific events of the case, this is a “Results summary” which presents a condensed version of the events examined in subsequent chapters. Following this is an “Interview Analysis”, which presents excerpts from the interviews and begins to draw inferences from the observations. The chapter on “Documentary Data and Analysis” is parallel with this chapter, and examines the primary and secondary historical sources, observations and inferences are made through this chapter. Concluding the results section is a chapter called “Analysis Summary” which presents the reader with a synthesis of the inferences from the previous two chapters and then reports additional information that examines the data in context of the literature examined in the introduction and methods. In particular this chapter introduces the idea of phronesis (Flyvbjerg, 2001) and the components which characterise a successful group (Smith, 2000).
Figure 1.1 Structure of Thesis, Introduction

Schematic diagram illustrating the structure of the thesis and the connections between the chapters. The diagram will be repeated at the start of each chapter, with the relevant section shaded, as in the box above, indicating the current chapter, Introduction. The boxes with dotted lines indicate different chapters within a theme, there are two methods and discussion chapters, and four reporting the results.
1.2 Introduction

‘The manner and speed in which the politicisation of environmental issues took place towards the end of the twentieth century will probably be ranked by future writers of human history alongside other great events that changed the direction of human society such as the age of Enlightenment and the Agricultural Revolution. In the space of a few decades, political viewpoints that had prevailed throughout much of the industrial era were compelled to take account of the findings of environmental scientists and also some of the more reactionary ideas that became prevalent among the general public’ [Jones, 2004:11].

‘Wilderness is a resource which can shrink but not grow. Invasions can be arrested or modified in a manner to keep an area useable either for recreation, or for science, or for wildlife, but the creation of new wilderness in the full sense of the word is impossible … Furthermore a militant minority of wilderness-minded citizens must be on watch throughout the nation and be vigilantly available for action’ [Leopold, 1966: 278-9].

Science has demonstrated that there are serious and quantifiable threats to the well-being of the planet and by implication the survival of Western civilisation (Diamond, 2005). Biodiversity loss from economic development and population growth is resulting in an extinction event comparable to an asteroid collision (Flannery, 1994; Leakey & Lewin 1995). Diminishing resources, particularly fossil fuels, undermine the foundations of modern agricultural systems and threaten the continued relatively peaceful existence of contemporary society through a Malthusian food crisis (Ehlrich, 1968 as cited in Robin, Sorlin & Warde, 2013; Hundloe, 2009). Anthropocentric climate change, sea-level rise and severe weather impacts are increasing in frequency and may even reshape coastlines and major cities constructed beside them (Hulme,
2009). The frightening predictions of a world altered by human interference have resulted in the rise of an ecologically literate citizenry who are determined to make positive changes (Hundloe, 2009; Jones, 2004).

The idea of nature as being important to the welfare of humanity and intrinsically valuable is an idea that has its roots in religion and philosophy in Eastern and Western cultures (Hundloe, 2008; Hundloe, 2009; Taylor, 2008). The quote, above, from Jones (2004) describes the optimistic view of increasing environmental literacy among younger generations as a ‘revolution’, Hundloe (2008: 17, 218) agrees with this assertion and describes the rise of environmental and ecological philosophies in the modern era as a ‘genuine environmental revolution’ or ‘a new enlightenment’. This self-styled revolution champions long-term sustainability over short-term economic gains, i.e., mainstream consumer society and the advocates for the extension of the Social Contract to non-human organisms (Hundloe, 2008; Hundloe 2009; Jones, 2004; Midgely, 2003; Taylor, 2008).

People have become involved in environmental protests at all levels of society. As far back as the 1940s Leopold (1966) illustrates the existence of and need for eternal vigilance and action in defence of nature. Local groups fight against developments that may affect their lifestyles, while global groups like Greenpeace champion causes such as Climate Change and over-fishing of the world’s oceans (Doherty, 2002; Lines, 2006). For Hundloe (2008; Hundloe, 2009) small actions by individuals such as improving energy efficiency and reducing waste can have a significant impact on global problems. Since the modern era of environmental philosophy developed in the 1960s there has been increasing awareness of environmental problems, and social movements have arisen to challenge complacency of mainstream society and advocate change (Doherty, 2002; Hundloe, 2009).

Berger and Luckman (1991) argued that habituation of everyday tasks leads to institutionalisation, and that institutionalisation is legitimated by creation of symbolic universes and this in turn leads to the creation of socially objective worlds which are taken as normalised social reality by subsequent generations. Symbolic universes are maintained through conversation, primary and secondary socialisation and the
creation of personal identity; the social world is perceived as objective through the existence of established institutions, and subjective in terms of the individuals place within it (Berger & Luckman, 1991). Green ideology challenges contemporary technocratic, economic and scientific thought and traditions by promoting ideas about sustainability and equality (Doherty, 2002). Green social movements and Green ideology have demonstrated its relevance and become institutionalised by being subject to generational learning (Doherty, 2002) and it has done this by creating its own symbolic universe through communication of ideas (Harre, Brockmeier & Muhlhausler, 1999; Killingsworth, 2005) that manifests itself as a powerful belief and normative system (Doherty, 2002; Hulme, 2009) which is a motivating force for its adherents (Foreman & Haywood, 1993; Foreman, 2013).

Some groups are more successful than others in campaigning for environmental protection, while a few groups survive for years or decades, others do not last very long at all. Why is this so?

1.2.1 Aim and Objectives

In this study the question is asked, how does a social pressure group form, operate, survive and achieve its goals?

The aim of this study is to examine the conditions under which a new community group is formed, how it operates, and what processes enable it to persist through time. Using a typical environmental campaign case study in which there are multiple pressure groups, the aim is addressed through three objectives:

- To analyse the processes behind the formation and continuation of functioning pressure groups.
- To analyse the processes by which these groups have succeeded within the chosen campaign.
- To examine processes of long-term sustainability and life cycles of pressure groups.
In short, the aim and objectives address the core issue of how a group manifests itself and survives in a democratic society filled with similar competing interest groups, and maintains an ability to make a useful contribution to social decision-making.

1.3 Summary of introduction

This chapter will explore the formation of environmentally based beliefs and how these compare to more mainstream belief systems, and how these beliefs are predictors for individual actions. How such beliefs are communicated in the media is an example of power relationships between different groups. The links between behaviours and actions is also examined and the some of the more common models such as the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the Value Belief Norm System will be discussed.

Theories explaining group motivations and the defining characteristics of grassroots associations or community groups are discussed with reference to the two main competing paradigms based on the logic of collective action (Olson, 1974) and the Theory of Voluntary Altruism (Smith, 2000). The role of artificially created grassroots organisations, astroturfing, will be discussed.

The unique characteristics, structure and organisation of volunteer groups, or grassroots associations, will be examined in detail, in order to highlight the difference between community based organisations and other, larger, more familiar volunteer groups.

1.4 The Mythology of Western society

Mythologies are an important component of social life and help to establish a narrative that links people to the place they live (Claval, 2001). There are fundamental, foundational myths that define the structure of global cultures and justify the motivations and actions of people (Midgely, 2003). National mythologies in Australia that have emerged out of global conflicts such as World War 1 have helped to create a sense of cultural identity and foster a sense of patriotism (Lines, 2006). The focus of this review is to discuss the development of a new kind of
Mythology, that provides the basis of Green ideology; these Green beliefs underlie a normative system that enhances the foundational ideas of Western society by creating a more inclusive and holistic understanding of the world and non-human organisms (Foreman & Haywood, 1993; Lovelock, 2009; Midgley, 2003). Most importantly these myths convey a philosophy which allows Western society to rediscover its place within nature (Lovelock, 2000; Lovelock, 2009; Naess, 2001), and how this understanding can be translated into political action that will help conserve the environment (Lines, 2006).

Myths are (re)-presentations of reality which resonate across space and over time...which are broad enough to encompass diverse experiences yet deep enough to anchor these experiences in a continuous medium of meaning...An environmental myth can contain both fact and fancy [Short, 1991: xvi].

Myths are traditionally seen as stories about time immemorial when gods and heroes walked with people (Claval, 2001). For the purposes of this study I am viewing myths not as creation stories, nor as tales of heroes and gods as traditionally defined (Claval, 2001), instead as cultural interpretations of the world (Midgley, 2003; Short, 1991; Simmons, 1993). Mythologies and stories also help to establish a connection between people and place (Anderson, 2013; Lines, 2006; Midgley, 2003; Short, 1991; Simmons, 1993). What these definitions of mythology have in common are the use of imagination, symbols (Anderson, 2013; Claval, 2001; Midgley, 2003) and the differentiation of time into distinct parts; in the West these are composed of the unscientific past, the rational present and a utopian future (Claval, 2001). The continued role of myths within modern society is explained by Davies (2004: xii) commenting on the development of scientific theories “scientists are inventing stories to explain patterns we think we perceive in our incomplete data”. Anderson (2013: 170-174) goes further saying that cultural tales such as myths about nature are present in all cultures ‘they are there to build concern and teach wise use…. They create bonds with the nonhuman world…These are the methods used by traditional societies
to enculturate the young in the immediate ecological and economic worldviews that matter to them.’

People intuitively use cognitive short cuts to make sense of the world (Mackenzie, 2010) and psychologically, myths help to fill in blank spaces in our understanding and they also help to determine what is relevant or not, in this way the myth becomes a source of knowledge (Midgley, 2003), or a source of denial (Giles, 2010; Stoll-Kleeman, O'Riordan & Jaeger, 2001). The founding myths of Western society, which help determine our moral and spiritual values, have become ingrained into every aspect of daily life and so they have become invisible (Midgley, 2003). Midgley (2003) states that myths play a fundamental role in society as representing a way of seeing the world; different cultures have myths that prescribe morality and determine what information is valuable and what actions are justifiable (Claval, 2001). There are myths that underpin thoughts of people in Western culture and have a strong influence over individual actions as well as the collective direction of society (Claval, 2001; Midgley, 2003).

Midgley (2003) claims that while myths are still being created in the modern world most take their inspiration from the founding myths of the Enlightenment, the most powerful of which are the Social Contract and scientific reductivism. Claval (2001: 148) claims the modern idea of progress has origins in philosophical histories (e.g. Marx and Freud), these are founding myths presented under the guise of scientific law. Pellizzoni (2001) makes the case that ‘the best argument’, that is the seemingly most rational or objective explanation put forward as a means of compromise in strategic deliberations is also a myth because in reality such arguments are articulated by those who are already have the influence, or power, to make decisions. Flyvbjerg et al. (2003) explains how when a government or corporation desires to build a major project they engage in a public information campaign of “deliberate misrepresentation” which exaggerates benefits and understates costs, and such tactics are routinely employed to gain project approval and public acceptance. Modern myth-making, according to Louw (2008) is the transformation of political rhetoric into spin and hype in order to manipulate public opinion and that this hype has
become integral to the functioning of democracy in the modern era, and all political parties and interest groups engage in the process.

Midgley (2003) states that the prevalence and success of myths in recent times has created a faith in science and scientific products, and as a result radical new technologies, for example genetic engineering, are often embraced unquestioningly by governments and corporations despite the moral objections of some. Similarly, society has faith in concepts that seem being presented with the rationale of scientific objectivity (Midgley, 2003). The seductive reasoning of these older myths and their more modern descendants such as economic growth and scientific progress, have removed people in modern society from the primeval connection with nature (Midgley, 2003), and perhaps as the myths are so entrenched a sense of segregation from and superiority to the natural world is reinforced (Anderson, 2013; Claval, 2001; Short, 1991; Simmons, 1993).

The next section presents some of those myths that have created the social norms that exist today, such as the Social Contract. The Social Contract is continually redefined by protest action when it becomes obvious that the welfare of ‘others’ is being neglected (Midgley, 2003). Such actions that redefine the Social Contract are a direct challenge to pre-existing social norms and redefine power relationships within society. The concept of power is then considered leading into a discussion about the communication of mythologies within society. Finally some of the more common environmental mythologies behind Green ideology as motivating forces to action.

1.4.1 The Social Contract

Western society has been founded on several myths that influence how people relate to each other within society and by implicit omission have helped shaped social values towards people in other societies as well as with non-human organisms and nature (Claval, 2001; Midgley, 2003). The concept of the Social Contract is one of the important ideas central to Western democracy; it promotes equality of individuals within a society and thus the society permits itself to be governed as long as fairness exists there is promotion of and promotes individual equality (Midgley, 2003). The
concept of the Social Contract is inherently anthropocentric and has developed into the ethics of human rights (Midgley, 2003). The extension of the contract to ‘others’, i.e. members of another society or non-human organisms or the rest of the natural world, is the major limitation of the Social Contract idea; there is no contract with ‘others’ outside a society and so ‘other’ welfare is neglected as this does not impinge on the functioning of everyday life (Midgley, 2003). The original notion of political suffrage which accompanied the Social Contract was only applicable to wealthy men, and the gradual extension of political suffrage to other sectors of society such as women was legitimised through laws over an extended period of time (Baird, 2010; Doherty, 2002; Martin, 1994; Phillips, 2003). Similarly, the same legitimisation of the rights of other organisms by preventing cruelty to animals or protection as threatened species, is brought about by developing new laws which has been interpreted as an extension of the Social Contract (Higgins, 2010; Midgley, 2003; Zanetti, 2009) and is a concept that defines Green ideology as unique from the rest of society (Bradshaw, 2013; Doherty, 2002).

A similar concept is the idea of ‘legal standing’ where a person is recognised as having a legitimate existence under the law (Zanetti, 2009). The gradual recognition of indigenous land rights is an example where legal recognition has been granted where formerly denied. Similarly the extension of legal standing or ‘rights’ to non-human entities is seen as a respectable way to incorporate ‘other’ into the Social Contract (Higgins, 2010; Midgley, 2003; Zanetti, 2009). The extension of rights to non-human organisms is considered a ‘radical’ perspective and has not been widely accepted by wider society (Bradshaw, 2013; Jones, 2004; Norton, 2005). However, the incorporation of “Mother Earth” (Pacha Mama) into the revised Ecuadorian constitution represents the possibility of still greater changes in this field (Zanetti, 2009). Successful campaigns to protect the environment involve improving the legal protections available for such areas, recently in New Zealand a river was given legal standing equivalent to a person or a corporation (Wilton, 2014).
1.4.2 Power

The idea of power is complex and is described in a conceptual way by Foucault (Kendall, 1999), however Flyvbjerg (2001) has elaborated upon these ideas to develop a more pragmatic understanding of power. Foucault (1978:93) describes power as “not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society”. For Castells (2007) this “strategical situation” is present in contemporary society communication technologies and is manifested as a competition to “shape the minds of the public”. Within the context of managing protected areas Brechin, Wilshusen, Fortwangler, and West (2002:46) explain the concept of “legitimacy”, stating that “legitimacy refers to any behaviour or set of circumstances that society defines as just, correct or appropriate”. Power without social legitimacy becomes oppressive and is ultimately doomed to failure as oppression creates resistance (Brechin et al., 2002).

The concept of legitimate power is an important part of understanding the way in which contemporary society manages problems or develops solutions. Flyvbjerg (2001) developed the concept of phronesis as a methodological paradigm to guide social science research with the purpose of developing an understanding of the merits of political decisions and power relationships within social settings. For Flyvbjerg (2001:32) problems with the biosphere and society demonstrate the failure of social and political development based upon “instrumental rationality”. Power is linked with the ability to effectively communicate ideas, and environmental conflicts are particularly contentious and power laden (Ryan & Brown, 2015). One of the best ways to examine power and social relationships is to examine communication (Castells, 2007; Flyvbjerg, 2001).

1.4.3 Communicating Mythologies

The method of transmitting knowledge in contemporary Western society is through the written word, as opposed to oral transmission in pre-literate or folk societies (Claval, 2001; Fiske, 1994; Harre et al., 1999). The transmission of knowledge using
writing has certain rigidity that reduces bias (Claval, 2001), but ultimately the interpretation of the meaning of the text is dependent on the individual (Fiske, 1994; Harre et al., 1999; Killingsworth, 2005). Dawkins (2006) proposes the idea of *memes* as a method of idea transmission; *memes* are self-replicating ideas that are indirectly responsible for the development of culture. Transmission of memes can be through any number of mechanisms, so long as the meme/idea has survived. The most common and effective method of transferring myths or memes is by the use of traditional and modern media tools, including radio, television, newspapers and the Internet (Claval, 2001; Harre et al., 1999; Midgley, 2003; Simmons, 1993). For Hansen and Cox (2015) communication of environmental discourse has evolved over the past fifty years and has developed its own distinct vocabulary and perspectives.

The use of political spin as a communication method between political leaders and the public has enhanced the role of myths in society (Louw, 2008). Media reports increasingly condense information and the meaning of certain words and phrases can be redefined through the use of politically correct language (Watson, 2004), political spin enhances existing myths by using a myth as verbal shorthand to convey meaning about policy initiatives (Louw, 2008). Existing mythologies are reinforced and promoted through established media reducing the ability for alternative mythologies to develop (Louw, 2008; Midgley, 2003; Simmons, 1993). Harre et al. (1999) argue that while new mythologies are created the greatest distribution and public acceptance is received when the myth conforms to standard narrative structures.

Louw (2008) describes modern democracy as having an agenda set by the media which has become reliant on hype to communicate a message. Rhetorical devices such as tropes can be used to effectively communicate a complex message through the modern media (Hoeken, Swanepoel, Saal & Jansen, 2009). Harre et al. (1999) explain that the power of metaphor and narrative are useful tools when trying to explain complicated environmental messages. Hulme (2009) links the broad public discourse of climate change with four biblical stories of the Apocalypse, Jubilee, Eden and Babel. Killingworth (2005) defined the concept of ‘ecospeak’ to explain the way in which the environmental debate in the media is dumbed down into a binary
argument of ‘trees vs jobs’ which simplifies the argument to such a degree that rational debate is impossible. McManus and Gibbs (2008) explain how the overuse of a trope conflates analogy and concept which has a detrimental effect by leading to unrealistic expectations.

D’Angelo (1992) identifies the ‘four master tropes’ that are important to rhetoric and communication; these tropes are additional to the classical concept of rhetorical construction. Metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and irony are the tropes used in the delivery of rhetoric and help in the composing process to transform text from ‘an undifferentiated whole to increasing differentiation to hierarchic integration and reflectivity’ (D’Angelo, 1992: 105). Harre et al. (1999) describe metaphors as a powerful linguistic device capable of exploring the world and increasing knowledge. The use of metaphors according to Harre et al (1999), increases understanding of abstract concepts and also helps construct (mental) models about how humans interact with the world; a metaphor can be specifically designed to communicate a complex environmental resource issue. Tropes and rhetoric also represent ‘a set of strategies that integrate ethical, emotional and logical appeals’ and use, according to D’Angelo (1992: 105), can be used to link the logics of rhetoric with the poetic styles. To gain favourable coverage and wide exposure of a particular issue, a media message has to be well composed but also hyped (Louw, 2008). Louw (2008) describes the shift in public discourse dominated by hype of special interest groups which has had a fundamental impact on the functioning of modern democracy. Interest groups dominate public debate on environmental issues and this can have a dramatic impact on government policy (Hamilton, 2007; Oreskes & Conway, 2010).

Framing occurs when a movement or an organisation defines their broader social objectives to reach a wider audience; typically in an ‘us versus them’ discourse (Doherty, 2002; Smith, 1999b; Tarrow, 2011). For Louw (2008:30-34) individuals have no direct connection with politics and mass media become an intermediary turning individuals into “a public” that is able to be tacitly manipulated into behaving in a certain way, such as grieving over a celebrity death. The use of a frame (or framework or schemata) enables the media to control public opinion and influence
debate on an issue by supplying people with an established formula for thinking about an issue. The result is a passive public instead of an engaged citizenry (Louw, 2008; Ryan & Brown, 2015).

Ryan and Brown (2015) claim that environmental communication falls into two broad categories; social marketing and media advocacy. Media advocacy involves using the media to promote a policy and/or behaviour changes, while social marketing uses marketing tactics to promote social issues. However, Ryan and Brown (2015) identify three problems with the current approach which are: firstly that institutional barriers that limit the participation of marginalised communities are often overlooked, and secondly, the same marginal communities are not empowered to make positive change to the debate even despite the ability to play a crucial role. Thirdly, there is no long term ability to build capacity within marginalised communities as the end goals are focused on broad policy and behaviour changes across all of society. The result is what Ryan and Brown (2015) label “environmental apartheid” i.e. marginalised groups (often the worst affected by environmental problems) remain marginalised as the debate is dominated by voices of the privileged and middle-class.

1.4.4 Environmental Mythologies

According to Simmons (1993) the traditional Western definitions of the environment invoke a fundamental dualism that results in our understanding of the environment as separate from humans; there are “people” and “the environment”. The distinction is arbitrary as humans are the only reference point; Simmons (1993:1-2) suggests that the environment in fact only exists in the mind, however cautions not to perceive humans and the environment as one undifferentiated mass of mind and matter as human actions are such make a qualitative distinction between humans and non-humans is made. The Gaia theory by Lovelock (2009) bridges this ontological gap and sees humans as an integral part of the Earth’s dynamic systems capable of working profound change (both positive and negative) through science and technology.
Simmons (1993: 15) defines the concept of constructing environmental mythology:

Myths can be one class of interactions between human societies and their non-human surroundings.... ecological systems cannot communicate directly with humans and so our cognition of these systems and their behaviour is a result both of such direct contact as we may have and of all the other channels of communication about environmental matters.

Some key myths that frame conservation worldviews and ethics are the ideas of over-population by Malthus (as cited in Robin et al., 2013) and Ehlrich (as cited in Robin et al., 2013), resource depletion and environmental degradation from Hardin’s (1968) *Tragedy of the Commons*, chemical pollution from Carson’s *Silent Spring* (as cited in Robin et al., 2013) and more recently the concept of self-regulating whole earth systems as described in the Gaia theory developed by Lovelock (2009). These are all major environmental concepts but were presented in a metaphorical way in order to stimulate public debate on an issue, and unlike other social narratives such as economics, there was a scientific logic based on empirical research supporting these environmental claims (Robin et al., 2013).

Lovelock (2009) has stated that he was deliberately presenting the Gaia hypothesis as a myth or story as a method to convey the importance of the interaction of the Earth’s systems and the precariousness of human existence. Other mythologies that have been developed in the defence of the environment include the Noble Savage and Wilderness (Lines, 2006; Pyne, 1997). Authors such as Taylor (2008) and more critically, Lovelock (2009) claim that Green sentiments about saving the planet and renewable energy are also myths but have taken on the aspects of a religion. Hulme (2009) examines the discourse of Climate Change and analyses how the terms of debate are often framed in religious language, particularly that the world is about to end in fiery apocalypse. Environmental mythologies contrast starkly to mainstream ideas of humanity’s ‘war’ on nature that were prevalent in the early 20th century (Midgely, 2003; Simmons, 1993).
Myths about the sanctity of nature and new understandings about the interconnectedness of living organisms gleaned through the science of ecology have been useful in developing a society that is more integrated with the natural world (Hundloe, 2009; Lovelock, 2009). These environmental myths provide a platform on which people can place moral objections and realign a worldview from other more established ideas (Short, 1991; Midgley, 2003). Furthermore myths can be invoked and used as media hype as a means of communicating environmental issues to the wider public (Louw, 2008; Hulme, 2009). When media exposure is accomplished successfully, usually in tandem with some form of protest, the result can be political action on an issue (Lines, 2006; Martin, 1994; Meyer, 2004). Credibility of alarmist claims is undermined when there are no immediate or tangible impacts fulfilling the predictions and there is a loss of support with the wider public who become sceptical and apathetic (Hulme, 2009; Hundloe, 2008). Shellenberger and Nordhaus (2004) and Freyfogle (2006) claim that environmentalists’ arguments and activities are increasingly impotent and incapable of effectively challenging the conservative and corporate dominance of government, despite the fact environmental threats are more serious than ever and the opportunity of mitigating impacts is diminishing.

Hulme (2009) breaks down modern perspectives on Climate Change into four myths presented as Biblical metaphors; Apocalypse/Fear, Loss of Eden/Wilderness, Jubilee/Justice and Babel/Hubris, these categories could apply equally well to other environmental problems. These myths, according to Hulme (2009), are the means by which ideas about nature and the environment are communicated amongst members of society, in particular with the implication that some form of action is required upon receipt of the message. The use of apocalyptic language is a common feature of environmental discourse; it is invoked as a method of shaming policy makers and the public into action. The continued repetition of these apocalyptic ideas has numbed some people to the urgency of the problem (as most such predictions never materialise on schedule or are predicted to occur far into the future) (Hundloe, 2008; Jones, 2004). The ideas of justice and pride concern the social side of environmental issues and urge people to be more humble in treatment of the planet and more respectful in regard to less fortunate societies (Doherty, 2002; Hulme, 2009).
One of the first environmental myths that became popular in the twentieth century was the idea of the “Noble Savage”. This was a concept which presented indigenous people firstly as benign inhabitants of a landscape, and later as ecological geniuses capable of utilising the landscape through “firestick farming” (Lines, 2006). The concept according to Lines (2006) originally developed out of a feeling of guilt by white society towards indigenous people and later became a stereotype that limited understanding of indigenous people and culture. The myth became that the perils and problems (stress, alienation, ennui) of modern life were unique to modern society and not experienced in indigenous societies and so it was imperative that the modern world “get in touch” with nature and return to a more wholesome lifestyle. The reality was that indigenous people were capable of making profound changes to the landscape and driving species towards extinction as claimed by Flannery (1994). The appearance of Indigenous Australians living in harmony with nature only developed after thousands of years of trial and error, and furthermore, the burning of forests by indigenous people is claimed by some authors as being one of the first instances of human induced climate change and may have resulted in delaying the return of the ice-age (Flannery, 1994; Lovelock, 2009). While largely debunked in scientific circles, the Noble Savage myth holds great popular appeal to the public and has been used to advocate sustainable lifestyles and protection of natural areas (Lines, 2006; Peterson del-Mar, 2006).

The idea of “Wilderness” is another strong mythological force amongst conservationists. The appeal of Wilderness was enhanced by literary and visual artists and was presented as a crucial aspect of the human condition by providing a natural space that humbled modern urban people and revitalised their soul (Hill & Mulligan, 2001; Lines, 2006; Short, 1991). The idea of Wilderness presented natural areas as “pristine” and unmodified by humanity, when in fact the areas had been part of a human landscape for millennia and had been previously inhabited by indigenous peoples (Hill & Mulligan, 2001; Lines, 2006; Short, 1991; Pyne, 1997). While the idea of Wilderness is an important symbol it reinforced the concept of Terra Nullius by implicitly removing indigenous people from the environment under consideration (Hill & Mulligan, 2001; Lines, 2006; Pyne, 1997). Despite these shortcomings, the
idea of Wilderness, large areas of pristine land untouched by humanity, is still strong and a motivating force for conservationists.

The “Loss of Wilderness” myth is one of the most salient criticisms of the continued march of progress and has been commented on by many authors (Foreman & Haywood, 1993; Hulme, 2009; Leopold, 1966; Lovelock, 2009; Marsh, 1998). Even though the concept of Wilderness is essentially arbitrary and anthropocentric (Peterson del Mar, 2006; Short, 1991; Simmons, 1993) the concept provides a useful metaphor for justifying the existence of places without unnecessary interference from humanity (Lines, 2006; Pyne, 1997). Hulme (2009) presents the Wilderness myth in terms of a biblical metaphor, as the loss of “Eden”. In Hulme’s (2009) explanation, the atmosphere represents the Wilderness and once irreversibly damaged through carbon pollution the human population will suffer the consequence of being expelled from the current optimal climatic conditions. The same argument extends to the preservation of other natural areas as once they have been developed there is no return to the former Edenic state (Lines, 2006).

1.4.4.1 Environmental Cornucopia

The myth of Wilderness manifests as the concept of wilderness conservation and this idea presents an issue for environmentalists. On the one hand Wilderness is seen as an important symbolic gesture that sets apart tracts of land to remain free from human interference, however this has often come at the expense of indigenous cultures (Anderson, 2013; Flannery, 2005; Lines, 2006; Pyne, 1997). Ecologically Sustainable Development, or sustainability represents an attempt to create a new paradigm that merged both the progressive economic theory with the complexity ecological knowledge (Beder, 1996; Hundloe, 2008; Jones, 2004; Norton, 2005). Ecologically Sustainable Development is associated with a whole range of criteria that are excellent goals, but have rarely been achieved (Beder, 1996; Jones, 2004).

However there is a particular dichotomy that is highlighted by the idea of Wilderness and Ecologically Sustainable Development which Foreman (2013) defines as competing environmental ideologies of ‘resourcism’ and conservation. The idea of
resourcism is about sustainable use of natural resource, however it is predicated on the idea that nature be ‘managed’ for the benefit of the maximum number of people; nature is seen as a resource cornucopia to supply the needs of humanity and is conserved primarily for the economic benefits provided, not for the intrinsic benefits of nature itself (Foreman, 2013), a similar dichotomy was identified in the middle of the twentieth century by Aldo Leopold (1966). Whereas conservation is about preserving nature for its own sake irrespective of the utilitarian benefits nature can provide for human society (Foreman, 2013; Leopold, 1966).

1.4.4.2 Apocalypse

There are a variety of apocalyptic scenarios presented by environmentalists; most recently Climate Change has been explained in apocalyptic terms, the future change in climate heralds no less than the end of civilisation now known (Diamond, 2005; Flannery, 2005; Hulme, 2009; Lovelock, 2009). Other grim environmental apocalyptic visions of the future include a Malthusian population crash due to famine (Malthus cited in Robin et al., 2013) or mass extinction of Earth’s life-forms (Flannery 1994; Leakey & Lewin, 1995; Lindenmayer, 2007; Low, 2003). The Sixth Extinction is a term that was applied by Leakey and Lewin (1995) to describe the current massive loss of biodiversity occurring across the globe. Lindenmayer (2007) and Flannery (1994) claim that no country has experienced a greater loss of biodiversity than Australia. Low (2003) states that humans have gone beyond just making ecosystems and species extinct and are now also creating new, homogenous global ecosystems by transposing animals and plants across the globe into new environments and so making mirrored continental ecosystems. The implication is that as the animal and plant species become extinct and anthropocentric Climate Change manifests our civilisation is imperilled or may even become extinct (Diamond, 2005; Leakey & Lewin 1995; Lovelock 2009). As a consequence of the failure of the Apocalypse to appear on schedule as predicted by environmentalists, the public is no longer responsive to such profound claims of doom, and this has undermined the credibility of environmentalist’s arguments for change (Hulme 2009; Hundloe, 2008; Peterson del Mar, 2006).
1.4.4.3 Gaia

The theory of Gaia was first hypothesised by James Lovelock in 1976 (Lovelock, 2000) and was not taken as a serious scientific proposition until the early 2000s (Lovelock, 2009; White, 2003). Lovelock (2009: ix) says ‘because of my ignorance twenty-six years ago I wrote as a storyteller and gave poetry and myth their place along with science’. This mythic idea has resonated with conservationists and has itself become a symbol used in campaigns to inspire morale, even if it still seen as embarrassing (Rickets, 2003). Rickets (2003) reports that in 1992 during forest protests on the Northern Rivers protestors used the signature, “Om Gaia: the forest and the people are one”, this was later changed to “Om Gaia dudes” to avoid overtly spiritual connotations (and to make reference to the newly emerged pop culture icon, Bart Simpson). Lovelock (2000) unabashedly uses the myth of Gaia to help promote a new moral ethic, while supporting his theory with science and despite his attempts to distinguish Gaia as scientific, the mythic interpretation dominates and has a profound spiritual influence over people.

1.4.4.4 Deep Ecology

The philosophy of Deep Ecology as popularised by Arne Naess in the early 1970s epitomised the thinking of the eco-centric Green groups by promoting the concept of intrinsic value in non-human organisms and a non-anthropocentric worldview (Naess, 2001; Peterson del Mar, 2006; Simmons, 1993). Similarly the Gaia hypothesis developed by Lovelock was another means of attempting to establish a new paradigm designed to reorient Western culture and help to generate a more compassionate understanding of the world by personifying it, in essence people could now extend intrinsic value not only to nature but to the whole planet (Simmons, 1993). The final extension of this environmental belief and one of its common criticisms is that environmental ideology is itself a religion (Anderson, 2013; Taylor, 2008). The amorphous definition of what comprises a religion helps in this labelling of environmentalism by detractors as a religious enterprise (Anderson, 2013).
1.4.5 Scientific Reductivism and Economics

However, these mythologies are often interpreted within a dominant socio-political context of Western science which, in itself is a constructed mythology. According to Midgley (2003) the idea of reductivism provides not only the basis of scientific inquiry but also influences the way an individual acquires and filters information. Reductivism causes information to be seen as more acceptable when it conforms to a model that reduces it to smaller parts rather than having a more holistic perspective. The science of economics is an example where scientific reductivism has reduced complex social interactions to descriptions of ‘rational’ interactions of individuals within the marketplace, using as an analogy, the movement of atoms (Davies, 2004; Heilbroner, 1999; Keen, 2011). Economics is reputed to have a very narrow worldview that has little basis in reality (Keen, 2011), but provides a means by which people can simplify complex information to help understand real-world problems (Davies 2004). Accepted social theories, such as economics, it is argued, gain popularity by reducing the human individual to a type of atom, incapable of independent thought and following a set of predetermined ‘laws’ that dictate actions that can be easily quantified (Davies, 2004; Heilbroner, 1999; Keen, 2011; Louw, 2008; Midgley, 2003). Keen (2011) argues that the field of neo-classical economics is a myth-making exercise that deliberately ignores empirical evidence.

The apparent objectivity of economics has resulted in the development of the most pervasive of modern myths; Neo-Classical Economics (Neoliberalism) (Keen, 2011). The most seductive idea promoted by this myth is the continual development and progress of society towards an economic utopia. Modern ideas for economics rely on the early founding scientific principles for reasoning and logic (Davies, 2004; Heilbroner, 1999; Keen, 2011; Midgley, 2003). Davies (2004) and Keen (2011) claim that while the sciences of physics and chemistry have evolved with new insights that incorporate ideas about systems, interconnectedness and feedback, the same cannot be said of neoliberal economic theory, which is rooted in original assumptions of independent atomic particles and ignores contrary evidence. Heilbroner (1999) agrees with this assertion, however adds that, while admittedly there are some problems with
the economic principles, economics is continually developing new ideas and refining old concepts and importantly has developed new insights into social behaviour. Hundloe (2009) states that even though modern economics has caused many social and ecological problems, the science is an integral part of developing solutions about Ecologically Sustainable Development. Keen (2011) argues since because Neo-Classical Economics is so rooted in out-dated ideas, and has a symbolic universe replete with mythology, it merely serves to support elite financial interests and serves no benefit to the rest of society. Oreskes and Conway (2010) explain how economic arguments have been repeatedly used to stifle debate and delay action on important environmental issues such as acid rain, the ozone hole and most recently Climate Change.

Economics has become removed from real-life, and is overtly mathematical, resulting in only being understood by experts, and this has come at the expense of society and the environment (Davies, 2004; Heilbroner, 1999; Keen, 2011). For Hundloe (2008) economic theories and rhetoric have taken on a religious aspect with alternative perspectives being dismissed or ignored by those with power. Two problems are identified that arise from the general acceptance of the Neo-Classical Economic myth into people’s lives: 1) The theory is seen as a justification for selfish actions (Davies, 2004); and 2) the negative consequences of economic action are justifiable as being entwined with the notion of progress (Midgley, 2003). ‘Faith in the free-market’ is substantiated by belief in the power of money to buy happiness through consumerism and material acquisition (Leonard & Conrad 2010). Heilbroner (1999) claims that consumerism and the implicit promise of attainable wealth implied by the Capitalist system ensures the general stability of Western society and continued progress of the economic system. The notion of progress and growth as beneficial is an intrinsic part of economic theory and the strongest myth (Davies, 2004; Heilbroner, 1999).

These social mythologies have a profound influence over people’s lives and the welfare of every living thing on the planet (Midgley, 2003). The prevalence of Neo-Classical Economics has affected the lives of billions of people and affects non-human organisms (Davies, 2004, Hundloe, 2008). The current aim of critical
Neoclassical Economic thinking has been to simplify matters by creating models to better understand the world, however the real world is a lot more complicated (Hulme, 2009; Keen, 2011; Midgley, 2003). The concept of externalities is just one example of the environment being overlooked in economic analysis (Keen, 2011). Oreskes and Conway (2010) explain how economic arguments such as discounting and cost-benefit analyses have been used to cast doubt on the validity of science based policy.

1.5 Beliefs and Actions

For Claval (2001) mythologies describe the sacred and the profane within a society and provide guidelines for self-controlling behaviours by defining what is ‘good’ and ‘bad’ within social groups. There are many constructs about the links between an individual’s belief system, personal values and behaviour or actions, including the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), the Value, Belief, Norm model (Stern, 2000) and the Action Coalition Framework (Henry & Dietz, 2012). Midgley (2003), Lines (2006) and Doherty (2002) claim that the emphasis based upon scientific progress by modern society has been done without any moral guidelines or consideration of the ultimate goals of such progress, which has resulted in a social backlash epitomised (on the political ‘left’) by the Conservation movement and Greens, which has attempted to provide some moral guidance to development and progress.

Hundloe (2008:17, 218) states that the period from the 1960s to the present day can be seen as a ‘New Enlightenment’, where a mixture of new ideas, technologies and social movements inspired a new way of people relating to each other and the world around them. One of the major social movements that developed at this time was the modern notion of Environmentalism (Hundloe, 2008; Jones, 2004; Peterson del Mar, 2006). Environmentalists have taken inspiration from various twentieth century scientific writers such as Rachel Carson and James Lovelock (Robin et al., 2013).

The work of Lovelock (2009) in promoting the Gaia hypothesis and Naess (2001) with Deep Ecology have provided a distinctive Western philosophical orientation to
this inclusive holistic worldview, that incorporates established science and ecosystem theory with a faith and belief in the natural world as an entity or at least as something precious that needs human stewardship (Hill & Mulligan, 2001). Generally these ideas have imbued the wider community with the concept of the intrinsic value of nature, which provides an opposite perspective to the utilitarian values of nature promoted by Neoclassical Economics (Hundloe, 2008; Norton, 2005). At one extreme these new ideas have helped to establish a global phenomenon of New Social Movements (Doherty, 2002; Jones, 2004), and locally as a counterculture that exists today in the Northern Rivers of NSW, broadly defined as the Rainbow Region (Wilson, 2003).

1.5.1 Social Theories of Environmental Action

The preceding section of this chapter has elaborated on concepts of mythology and social process, Social Contract, power, communication and their relationship to beliefs specifically the primary beliefs that support or reject an environmentally framed worldview. For such a discussion to have relevance in understanding environmental activism it is important to examine the pragmatics of personal and social action that might arise out of the concepts of mythologies.

There is no single accepted model that is used to describe how someone’s belief system turns into physical action (see Dono, Webb & Richardson, 2009; Henry & Dietz, 2012). Even what constitutes environmental action seems to be a topic of deep discussion. Stern (2000) developed a theory of environmentally significant behaviour that ranges from consumer behaviour through to political action. The New Ecological Paradigm (Stern, 2000) has been demonstrated as a measure of individual beliefs about environmental responsibility.

1.5.2 Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) hypothesises the links between the action of an individual with personal identity, beliefs and social norms. Lloyd (2005) uses the Theory of Planned Behaviour to describe how it can be used to help manage conflict over resource issues. Fielding, McDonald and Louis (2008) elaborate on the
Theory of Planned Behaviour and how it relates to environmental activism and concludes that membership of an environmental group creates a social identity and increases normative social values and is a strong predictor of environmental activism.

Other models that exist and compete to explain environmental actions include the Value-Belief-Norm System and the Action Coalition Framework which have been combined by Henry and Dietz (2012). The Value-Belief-Norm model has been used to explain the motivations of the public while the Action Coalition Framework model has been used to explain the actions of “policy elites” (Henry & Dietz, 2012). Stern (2000) endeavours to combine the multiplicity of theories explaining environmental behaviour and elaborates on the value-belief-norm model to explain how environmental actions stem from personal beliefs (Figure 1.2).

![Figure 1.2: Values, Beliefs, Norms Model](image)

A person’s values such as altruism and empathy for the environment or “Biospheric Values” help to influence beliefs and norms which relate to behaviours. Many different behaviours can result from environmental beliefs ranging from protests to less radical actions such as behaviour and lifestyle changes (Source: Stern 2000: 412).

What these models and descriptions all have in common is the idea that actions flow on from an individual’s value and belief system. Debate surrounds significance of particular actions, and the causal links between values and beliefs, and generally as Figure 1.2 illustrates the idea is accepted that actions flow from beliefs and beliefs are determined by a person’s values. Stern (2000) explains how altruism is insufficient to explain the motivations and actions of environmentalists, and as altruism is essentially
associated with relationships between people and motivations of environmentalists, as described above are derived from values and understanding of the ecological crisis and the protection of non-human organisms and wild places. This is labelled by Stern (2000:414) as a “Biospheric” value which is distinct from human centred altruism and can better explain the values of environmentalists.

1.5.3 Cognitive Ownership of the Environment

Boyd and Cotter (1996; Boyd, Cotter, O’Connor & Sattler, 1996) developed the cognitive ownership heuristic to describe the multiple claims made on heritage sites by different social, cultural and political groups. The idea of cognitive ownership is to broaden site management beyond the constrained concepts of legal and economic ownership and examine how the wider community becomes involved in interpreting, utilising and managing a site. This model suggests that anyone can have an ownership of a place and provides a mechanism for mapping networks between groups and individuals in relation to a specific place. No distinction is made between the public and elite policy makers; anyone who has a claim on the place, no matter how tangential, can be considered in the cognitive ownership model (Boyd & Cotter 1996, Boyd et al., 1996, Boyd & Cotter 1999, Boyd 2012). Boyd (2012) expands the model of cognitive ownership to other fields such as environmental management explaining that values about and owners of a site shift over time.

1.6 Altruism and Selfishness as Motivating Forces

Selfish and altruistic motivations are both attributed to driving individuals to cooperate as a group, this section examines these roles in group formation. Wilson (2012) claims that altruism is an evolutionary adaptation that emerges from biological eusociality. According to Wilson (2012) altruism and selfishness are both competitive forces driving human evolution. Individual selection is driven by selfish motivations, however group selection is driven by altruistic motivations, and organisms living in groups are far more successful than those living solitary lives. Wilson (2012) claims there is a need for both selfishness and altruistic components in group survival, and a neither purely selfish nor a purely altruistic group would
survive, and so evolutionary pressure selects a balance between selfishness and altruism. Further, Wilson (2012) asserts that there is as a result a psychological tension in humans, where individual selection based on biological imperatives for resources or reproduction competes with altruism and the needs of the group where group survival depends on individuals cooperating and functioning as a single unit. According to Wilson (2012) the “human condition” is a chimera resulting from evolution derived from the competing needs of individual selection and group selection. Smith (2000) proposes the Theory of Voluntary Altruism to explain voluntary participation in Grassroots Associations, while Olson (1974) describes the logic of collective action as being motivated by pure selfishness within the context of economic rationalism.

The theory of *voluntary altruism* is articulated by Smith (2000) to explain the existence of voluntary organisations and inherent uniqueness from other organisations, particularly business, government and the family or household:

I define altruism as *the cause of service and service as the result of altruism*. With this version of altruism there is no added condescending emotional baggage coming from the earlier history of philanthropy, charity, "noblesse oblige".... In my theory of voluntary altruism the *altruism itself involves at least a significant mixture of self-serving and other serving dispositions for a provider entity in any societal sector...*altruism never is a "pure" set of altruistic motivations or goals in human beings as entities, nor is it a pure set of selfish or self/entity-serving goals...Service is a normal and integral part of human life for we are social animals [Smith, 2000:17-18 original emphases].

For Smith (2000) there are seven humane core values linked to the Theory of Voluntary Altruism; 1) civic engagement values, 2) socio-political innovation values, 3) social religiosity values, 4) sociability values, 5) social aesthetics values, 6) economic system support values, 7) personal social service values (Smith, 2000).
Voluntary altruism is manifested in a group through ‘a combination of purposive, solidary, and other nonmaterial’ incentives within a grassroots association, whereas the incentives are more material remunerative within a paid staff volunteer group (Smith, 2000: 96). These incentives are described by Smith (2000: 96-103) as ‘internal guidance systems’ necessary for the success of a grassroots association. The incentives are:

- Type A: Sociability Incentives,
- Type B: Purposive Incentives,
- Type C: Service Incentives,
- Type D: Informational Incentives,
- Type E: (Self) Developmental Incentives,
- Type F: Utilitarian Incentives,
- Type G: Charismatic Incentives,
- Type H: Lobbying Incentives,
- Type I: Prestige Incentives.

1.6.1 Voluntary Altruism Compared to Logic of Collective Action

There is some debate about the motivating forces that drive individuals to collective action, while Smith (2000) advocates a theory of voluntary altruism; the dominant economic paradigm of Neo-classical Economics promotes self-interested and rational behaviour as the primary motivating individual force (Davies, 2004; Heilbroner, 1999; Keen, 2011; Midgley, 2003; Olson, 1974). The environmental problems facing the modern world have arisen from the belief of humanity’s separateness from nature and a concomitant right to utilise the resources of the world as best suits our economic interests (Davies, 2004; Doherty, 2002; Midgley, 2003; Simmons, 1993). Modern ecological thought has developed as a response to this mainstream dissociation and so many people in Green organisations claim to be working for the greater good (Doherty, 2002; Hill & Mulligan, 2001; Lines, 2006).

Doherty (2002) describes local environmental groups as being more likely than other Green groups to be motivated for selfish reasons, and are therefore labelled NIMBY
groups (Not in my Backyard) by the opposition in an attempt to undermine their legitimacy. Olson (1974) argues that individuals are only motivated to participate in group activity when there is a clear collective good to be obtained and when the personal benefits of a share in the good exceed costs of participation.

Any group or organisation, large or small, works for some collective benefit that by its very nature will benefit all of the members of the group...Though all of the members of the group therefore have a common interest in obtaining this collective benefit, they have no common interest in paying the cost of providing that collective good. Each would prefer that the others pay the entire cost and ordinarily would get any benefit provided whether he had borne part of the cost or not... in a very small group, where each member gets a substantial proportion of the total gain simply because there are few others in the group, a collective good can often be provided by the voluntary self-interested action of the members of the group [Olson 1974:21, 34].

However, Olson (1974: 160-161) does add this qualification to his theory:

In philanthropic and religious lobbies the relationships between the purposes and the interests of the individual member and the purposes and the interests of the organisation may be so rich and obscure that a theory of the sort developed here cannot provide much insight. The theory here is also not very useful for the analysis of groups that are characterised by a low degree of rationality in the sense in which that word is used here ....Where non-rational or irrational behaviour is the basis for a lobby it would perhaps be better to turn to psychology or social psychology than to economics for a relevant theory. The beginnings of such a theory may already exist in the concept of 'mass movements' (which incidentally are not very massive). The adherents of mass movements are usually explained in terms of their alienation from society...A fanatic devotion to ideology or leader is common in mass movements and many of these mass movements are often
said to be on the lunatic fringe. This sort of lobby is more common in periods of revolution and upheaval and in unstable countries than it is for stable, well-ordered and apathetic societies that have seen the "end of ideology".

From the economic perspective of Olson (1974), collective action is irrational where personal motivations are based on belief, ideology or charity. Olson (1974) uses indifference curves and intersecting lines to describe optimal group performance and participation. Keen (2011) dismisses economic understanding of social phenomena which uses intersecting curves based on supply and demand as the ‘totem of the micro’ (or with Olson (1974:24) ‘supply’ is the increase in the availability of the public good and ‘demand’ is the cost of group participation).

As discussed Green groups are motivated by a unique ideology that for some is akin to a religious or belief system, and protestors who put themselves in harm’s way in non-violent direct action is irrational from an economic perspective (Doherty, 2002; Hill & Mulligan 2001; Lines, 2006). Similarly members of Grassroots associations described by Smith (2000) are acting irrationally in an economic sense, when there is no public good to be received or other tangible economic benefit from group activity. Using the theory of voluntary altruism provides a more meaningful understanding of behaviour of community environmental groups than economic logic.

Oliver (1993) disassembles Olson’s economic perspective of group behaviour and discusses alternative theoretical understanding of group and individual actions. The concept of selfish motivations by a ‘rational actor’ being a primary cause leading to collective action, while having some relevance, is no longer the dominant concept (Oliver, 1993). The concept of Smith’s (2000) voluntary altruism incorporates elements of selfish motivation (for example prestige and self-developmental incentives) and is a more realistic way to perceive the motivations of community groups, particularly Green groups. People are motivated to join a community group out of a sense of voluntary altruism (Smith, 2000), and are involved in the Environmental movement due to a mixture of spiritualism and ethical considerations (Naess, 2001; Stern, 2000; Taylor 2008); and mostly, it seems, that the sense of doom
of an impending ecological crisis is a unifying factor amongst Environmental groups (Doherty, 2002).

1.7 Components of a Community Group

Grassroots association membership is typically informal, with few records or lists kept of members. Formal group membership, with membership requirements, and formal membership lists are more typical in larger Non-Profit Organisations and paid staff Voluntary Groups. A group’s goals and goal accomplishments are a measure of a group’s internal and external success, similarly goal specificity and goal displacement help to describe the relative success of a group.

Having a clear and specific goal is important for a newly established group. Groups that do not achieve goals, or whose goals change (displacement) away from the original goal are unlikely to be able to recruit new members and the group will likely ‘die’, whereas a group that is successful in accomplishing goals will be likely to survive to recruit new members (Smith, 1999a; Smith, 1999b; Smith, 2000). Goal displacement can also be a positive attribute for a group, if a group is to survive after completing the original mission, then new goals for the group will need to be developed, this longer-term displacement of goals is only a problem if the group’s goals become solely focused on group maintenance, i.e. keeping the group ‘alive’. Group longevity is important if a group is to survive long enough to achieve its goals (Smith, 1999a; Smith, 2000).

Researchers have attempted to develop numerical indicators which summarise the performance of volunteer or non-profit groups. These models have not been universalised as such groups have diverse organisational structures with different mixes of paid staff and volunteers (Brooks, 2004; Herman & Renz, 1998; Polonksky & Grau, 2011; Ritchie & Kolodinsky, 2003). The success of small groups can be primarily assessed by ascertaining whether or not a particular group has accomplished stated goals (Smith, 2000). Failure to accomplish stated objectives usually results in the group being disbanded or otherwise wound-up; and in other cases accomplishing the stated group objectives may also mean the end of a group simply because there is
nothing more for members to do (Smith, 2000). Understanding a group’s goals and the manifestation of the related objectives can be a useful way to determine the success of group activities. In the case of ecological or environmental groups, Lines (2006) describes numerous cases where small groups have successfully challenged industry or government (or both) and how, when inflated by initial success such groups have grown to become larger state or national organisations with paid staff.

The Australian Conservation Foundation is one such group that started from small grassroots beginnings and grew to become a national organisation after successful goal accomplishment, while groups such as the Border Ranges Preservation Society were disbanded after accomplishing the goal of getting State Forests listed as National Parks (Lines, 2006). Unsuccessful groups, such as those which attempted to stop uranium mining in the 1980s, are described by Lines (2006) as conflating a range of different issues including Aboriginal land rights, alternative energy and feminism with the conservation message, which resulted in a diluted media message, dwindling public support and concluded with the failure of the campaign. For a group to be remotely successful it needs a clear goal to provide a course of action and act as a lure to recruit new members (Smith, 2000).

Community groups can have various levels of autonomy. Smith (2000) uses two terms to define how autonomous a group is relative to other groups; monomorphic and polymorphic. Autonomy is distinct from having partnerships or being linked with other groups. Partnerships can be seen as horizontal linkages, whereas vertical relationships such as those present in groups which are local chapters or affiliates of international, national or regional bodies. Polymorphic groups are those groups which are linked vertically to other larger regional groups and rely on the founder groups for a name, funding and decision making; Lions and Rotary Clubs are an example of polymorphic groups. Monomorphic groups are those groups which are independent of other bodies and so are able to make internal decisions and raise revenue.

Links to other organisations are seen as another measure of group success. Rarely can a Grassroots association accomplish goals alone, and so needs to make alliances with other Grassroots associations and regional groups in order for goal achievement. The
more alliances a group can have, while remaining independent of other groups, the more likely the group is to achieve its goals (Smith, 2000).

Funding is also linked with autonomy; when a group receives most revenue from internal sources, such as membership fees or by fundraising, the group is likely to be more autonomous than a group that receives most funding from external sources such as government grants. Government funding can often link Grassroots association performance criteria to the funding agreement and can also place implicit or explicit restrictions on particular group activities; receipt of external or government funding is a measure of group autonomy. Other risks to autonomy as a result of receiving external funding such as grant money, which can create a dependence on that form of revenue, ultimately limits the functioning of a Grassroots association by compromising the group’s activities to maintaining the funding, or even cause the Grassroots association to ‘die’ if that funding is suddenly withdrawn (Smith, 2000).

*Internal hierarchy* in a Grassroots association is the number of administrative levels the group has, mostly this is two; general members and an executive committee. Grassroots association’s tend to avoid developing an extensive internal hierarchy as this is contrary to the groups’ purpose and is often resisted by the membership. However as a result of external funding, goal displacement and group longevity the development of hierarchy within a group is almost inevitable (Smith, 2000).

Grassroots associations can develop several layers of hierarchy depending on the previously mentioned factors as subcommittees are established in some cases as a result of receiving external money. Similarly the displacement of goals through the lifetime of a Grassroots association means that the group pursues new activities which in turn leads to the development of different subcommittees in order to effectively manage the group’s activities.

### 1.7.1 Local Environment Groups

Smith (2000) explains that there are five sectors to society; Government, Business, Home/Family, Religious Organisations, and Voluntary Organisations. Voluntary Organisations are considered separate from the family and religious categories even
though family and religious sectors are voluntary, these sectors are slightly coercive and individual involvement is seen as socially mandated particularly in more isolated and less integrated or developed societies, whereas participation in a Volunteer Organisation is optional. Smith (2000) explains that Volunteer Organisations are not a modern phenomenon and have been in existence for millennia, and as such, are one of the oldest types of formal social interaction. The voluntary non-profit sector, as it is referred to, is composed of many different types of groups and is subdivided into categories based upon criteria such as source of revenue, paid staff, and size of the organisation.

There is a distinction in motivation or incentives to be made between paid staff voluntary groups, non-profit organisations and Grassroots associations. The primary consideration is whether a group has any paid staff. Grassroots associations are distinguished from other groups in the Non-Profit sector being run exclusively by volunteer effort, with a cut-off point being the employment of paid staff being equal to or greater than one Full Time Equivalent (1700 hours p/a). This characteristic and others have been used to create the following tables (Table 1-1 and Table 1-2) which summarise the characteristics of the community groups or Grassroots associations that have been part of this study. The groups examined in this study are, according to Smith’s classification (2000:25) all-volunteer groups: “95% or more of whose cumulative, group related hours of actions by analytical members are volunteer action for the given voluntary groups during a given time period.”

The presence of volunteer groups in society, according to Smith (2000) has not been properly accounted for and is often overlooked in research into the voluntary sector, with attention being focused upon larger groups, such as paid staff non-profits. The organisations that are the focus of this study are termed Grassroots Associations and are part of the voluntary non-profit sector as defined by Smith (2000) and have no paid staff, a small territorial scope and are financially independent. Table 1-1 lists the characteristics Smith (2000) defines for a voluntary group. The terms “Volunteer Group” or “Voluntary Organisation” is used in this thesis synonymously with the term Grassroots Association.
Table 1-1 Defining Characteristics of a Group

The defining characteristics of a Grassroots Association or Volunteer Group as defined by Smith (2000: 9). These characteristics have been used to identify the groups labelled as Volunteer Groups in this study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of a Grassroots Association</th>
<th>Omitted From Grassroots Association Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group Form</td>
<td>Individual, unorganised amorphous behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Altruism based</td>
<td>Business, government or household/family goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significantly autonomous of other groups (even if formally affiliated)</td>
<td>Completely controlled subunit of another group/organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association form (common interest, members elect officers, members pay dues etc.)</td>
<td>Non-membership-dominated groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local (Small in territorial base or scope)</td>
<td>Supra-local territorial base or scope (regional, national, international)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer staffed</td>
<td>Paid-staff worker based</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Typically Grassroots Associations form as a community led response in opposition to the established bureaucratic hierarchies present in business and government, offering simple and accessible services to the community without the interference of the levels of bureaucracy:

If people see a problem in their community or the world or if they simply have a common interest then they can immediately start to work on the problem … themselves in a grassroots association now, as I write – not tomorrow or next year [Smith, 2000: 145 original emphasis].

The role of these community groups in modern society is an important one; Smith (2000) makes a distinction between Member-Benefit and Non-Member-
benefit/External Benefit groups. Self-help (or Member-Benefit (Smith, 2000)) groups like Alcoholics Anonymous have an important social function and are the most common type of community group; another example of a member-benefit group is the Lions or Rotary Club which have a primary social function for members. Advocacy or political lobby groups (Non-Member Benefit or External Benefit (Smith, 2000), which are the subject of this study, are less common however play an important democratic role by helping to politicise members and gain outcomes that can benefit society.

Doherty (2002) discusses the ambiguous nature of local environmental organisations in the overall Green movement. While weak on some parts of Green ideology and not always successful in accomplishing goals, local environmental groups are crucial in providing opportunities for local people to engage in democracy, and through activism help build strong networks and strengthen regional communities (Doherty, 2002). Doherty (2002:187) identifies five characteristics common to local environmental organisations in Western societies:

1. Usually the result of autonomous local initiatives and not created from above.
2. Local mobilisation is most likely to be provoked by a new development and based upon local and immediate risks or environmental costs.
3. Local opposition is most likely to become confrontational when political opportunities are restricted and also when officials are seen to be acting arrogantly or unfairly.
4. Local environmental groups require some technical expertise and must define an attitude to science and technology.
5. The arguments of local environmental groups depend on a socially constructed conception of interests of the local community.

The most important aspect to acknowledge about local environmental groups is the existence mostly as single-issue groups; and constituted to achieve a particular goal (Doherty, 2002; Lines, 2006). Also, such groups are typically short lived, or exist only for the duration of the particular campaign (Doherty, 2002; Smith, 2000). However in some cases these smaller groups grow to become regional or national organisations or can become institutionalised just as other, larger environmental groups (Doherty,
In other instances involvement in a local environmental group radicalises, or politicises individuals who engage in further protest or political activity as a result of the experience (Doherty, 2002; Lines, 2006). The following section defines many of the characteristics that categorise community groups, which Smith (2000) terms Grassroots Associations.

### 1.8 Green Social Movement

The advent of Green groups is seen as a recent social phenomenon that has manifested in the last half of the twentieth century and is distinct from earlier historical conservation initiatives. Doherty (2002) defines The Greens as being a social movement within contemporary society, that has emerged recently, and is distinct from, earlier conservation initiatives of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Doherty (2002:7) defines a social movement as having the following general characteristics:

- Must have a consciously shared collective identity,
- Must act, at least partly, outside political institutions using protest as one of the forms of action,
- Is characterised by un-institutionalised network of interaction,
- Must reject, or challenge dominant forms of power.

The ‘Silent Revolution’ has been described as a shift in focus from material acquisition to non-material values (Grant & Papadakis, 2000). In the Northern Rivers of NSW this Silent Revolution has been defined by a social identity and sub-culture that formed in the 1970s which was characterised, among other things, by a deep respect for and a love of nature (Wilson, 2003). The Alternative-lifestyle cultures that settled the Northern Rivers in the late twentieth century embarked on a series of coordinated campaigns to protect the ecosystems of the region from what was perceived to be gross violations sponsored by a misguided economic system (Kelly, 2003; Kijas, 2011; Ricketts, 2003). Seed (2010) is a proponent of Deep Ecology and bases his organisation within the NSW Northern Rivers. The Northern Rivers/Rainbow Region is still recognised as culturally distinct due to the perpetuation of
these ideas within the community (Wilson, 2003). Doherty (2002:70) claims that there are three unifying aspects that define a Green ideology and distinguish Green groups from other conservation or environmental lobby groups, these are:

- Acknowledgement of the ecological crisis,
- Pluralist egalitarianism and
- Grassroots or participatory democracy.

1.8.1.1 Leadership

An important factor in the successful functioning of any group is good leadership, and Smith (2000) argues that there is a distinct difference between leaders of volunteer groups and leaders of other groups such as a paid staff non-profit. In organisations with paid staff, leadership is largely focussed on management of resources while in truly volunteer groups, the lack of remuneration and need for sociability incentives helps to create more charismatic and influential leaders. These leaders tend to have past experience in group management are highly sociable however lack the managerial and professional qualities present in the leaders of other formal organisations.

Tarrow (2011) describes the role of Paul Revere in the North American Revolution. Paul Revere was one individual with multiple connections that enabled him to have acceptance and trust within a multiplicity of different groups and organisations, and hence is described as a connector. Revere’s ability to move between groups enabled the American colonists to be forewarned and forearmed when British forces started the repression. Smith (2000) states the leaders of Grassroots associations need to be socially mobile, and have good interpersonal connection with members and have had experience with other groups.
1.8.1.2 Successful Groups

For groups to be successful there is need of a clearly defined goal which is used to state the purpose of the group and recruit like-minded individuals (Smith, 2000). A group’s goals and resultant goal accomplishments are a measure of the group’s internal and external success, similarly the terms goal specificity and goal displacement help to describe the success of a group (Smith, 1999a; Smith, 1999b; Smith, 2000). Having a clear and specific goal is important for a newly established group, groups that do not achieve goals, or whose goals change (displacement) away from the original goal are unlikely to be able to recruit new members and the group will likely die, whereas a group that is successful in accomplishing goals will be more likely to survive and recruit new members (Smith, 2000).

Smith (1999a) describes seventeen factors that he considers crucial to the internal success of a community group as an organisation. The first two primary factors in group survival are that the community group be established and survive long enough to achieve goals and also attract and hold membership. Internal success according to Smith (1999a; Smith, 2000) is not about financial resources, rather the volunteer time, Table 1:2 summarises the characteristics of successful group relevant to this study. The factors described by Smith (1999a; Smith, 2000) are a synthesis of a variety of community group types including self-help groups and so not all the factors are directly applicable to environmentally based community groups such as those discussed here. Smith (1999a) considers the social function and ideology of the community group as having paramount importance for a group’s success.

1.8.2 Green Groups

Despite its promise of a ‘utopia’ Green ideology remains on the fringe of contemporary society and has failed to develop widespread support (Freyfogle, 2006; Hill & Mulligan, 2001; Shellenberger & Nordhaus, 2004). Other social movements have largely succeeded achieving aims, such as feminism and minority rights, however environmentalism has as yet not achieved all set goals (Hundloe, 2008).
Table 1-2 Successful group characteristics

Summary of the aspects of internal group success (Smith 1999a). These characteristics are seen as the most important in creating a healthy functioning and homogenous group. Without achieving internal success, a group cannot hope to achieve external success, or otherwise accomplish their goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruits peer members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face to face interaction of members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes member participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creates solidarity; social support for members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective ideology that explains the situation and action planned to improve the situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persists over time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has external socio-political advocacy goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has cooperative relationships with external groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoids factionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutionalised</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shellenberger and Nordhaus (2004) claim that Environmental groups were initially successful by creating awareness of environmental issues and lobbying for protective legislation, such as clean air and water acts, however, recent initiatives have been retarded by corporate interests and lack of public support. Freyfogle (2006) argues that the Green Movement has lost sight of an overall goal by not addressing inherent philosophical roots and has become too diffuse to accomplish the agenda of
sustainable social transformation. Shellenberger and Nordhaus (2004) and Lovelock (2009) both criticise the wider Green movement for being opposed to developments such as nuclear energy and fracking or coal seam gas extraction.

Doherty (2002) says that while Greens are typically aligned with the political ‘left’ and have shared origins and some common interests, Greens are not representative of society. However, this has not stopped Greens from forming groups to advocate change. Doherty (2002) categorises four broad types of Green Groups; Political Parties, Environmental Movement Organisations (such as Greenpeace), Non-violent Direct Action Groups and Local Environmental Groups. There is a wide spectrum of ‘Green’ groups, based on different opinions and organisational structures. This thesis will discuss the successful political engagement of a local environmental group with a well-developed preservationist perspective.

1.8.3 Political Involvement

McAllister (2000) has described Australian Democracy as being unusually stable when compared to other democracies. This observation has been attributed to a balance between apathy and activity in politics on the part of the Australian public. While functioning democracy is dependent on the involvement of people within politics, it is claimed by McAllister (2000) that democracy fails when there is too much political activity. There are a large proportion of people who sympathise with environmental issues, but only a small percentage of them act upon these sentiments and take direct action to create change in society and politics (Grant & Papadakis, 2000; Shellenberger & Nordhaus, 2004; Stern 2000). Most people in Australia (and other democratic societies) are only politically active when casting votes in an election; however there are other opportunities and other forms of political engagement apart from voting in elections that are available to the public to engage with the process of government (Baird, 2010; Grant & Papadakis, 2000; Louw, 2008; Martin, 1994; McAllister, 2000).

Political engagement has been divided into ‘conventional’ and ‘unconventional’ means; unconventional means have been utilised by the environmental groups to great
effect within the last decades of the twentieth century (Grant & Papadakis, 2000; Martin, 1994). Conventional political activities include joining political parties, attending meetings, contacting politicians or officials and voting; unconventional means include signing petitions, marches and rallies, occupying buildings or property, and boycotts or blockades (Grant & Papadakis, 2000). The use of social media has recently been seen as a method of reengaging people in politics, however research shows that this may have the opposite effect with people preferentially making a tokenistic support for a cause rather than engaging in more meaningful personal contribution, a phenomenon labelled Slacktivism (Kristofferson, White & Peloza, 2013).

Martin (1994) analysed the role of protest in liberal democracy and determined that the concept of ‘protest’ is loaded with connotations, which can result in negative perceptions by researchers, the public and the establishment towards protests and protestors as being a ‘problem’. According to Martin (1994) this inherent bias in the perceptions and reporting of protests sees the use of violence by the State (either physical or non-physical, e.g. censorship) as legitimate, similarly rejects the actions of protestors as reprehensible if seen as stepping outside of the bounds of the ‘normal channels’. Protestors sometimes utilise ‘unconventional’ methods to get their message across to the public and politicians (Grant & Papadakis, 2000; Martin, 1994; Meyer, 2004), and demonstrations, sit-ins and civil disobedience and are often construed as challenges to the power of authority and the establishment and, as such, are sometimes met with violence (Martin, 1994). These ‘unconventional’ methods are utilised by protestors when attempts to gain political influence for their cause by using the more conventional methods of direct contact for example lobbying, fail (Doherty, 2002; Foreman & Haywood, 1993; Grant & Papadakis, 2000; Martin, 1994; Meyer, 2004). Protests against established customs and values within democratic societies have previously resulted in many of the ‘freedoms’ that exist today such as political suffrage for women and Indigenous people (Baird, 2010; Martin, 1994).

Sociologists have used “political opportunity” structure or theory as a means of explaining the rise, success, and decline or failure of social movements and protest
activity (Meyer, 2004; Newman, 2008). Opportunities and openness need to exist within the political structures that permit protest activity as an acceptable mechanism to air social grievances (Doherty, 2002, Meyer, 2004, Newman, 2008). According to Meyer (2004) there is a curvilinear relationship between democratic openness and protest activity; the more open political institutions are to public involvement and influence, the less prevalent protest actions would be. Conversely, the more closed government institutions are to public debate and influence, the more susceptible the institutions are to directly inciting protest activity, that is, up until a certain point when the authorities actively repress the constituencies and the perception is that the populace are unable to build the cognitive or organisational capacity to articulate their claims (Meyer, 2004; Newman, 2008). However when a government is tolerant and receptive to the concerns of a constituency and provides openings, then mobilisation of a social movement is possible, once the government neglects the social movement and denies the demands involved demobilisation follows (Meyer, 2004; Newman, 2008).

Another feature of the stability Australian politics identified by McAllister (2000) is the ability of the major political parties to adapt to the public grievances that give support to minor parties or minority concerns. This then legitimises the concerns of the minority groups and provides opportunity for them to have their concerns become part of government policy. Jones (2004:67) and McAllister (2000) describe the process where major political parties will absorb some of the policies of minor parties when challenged electorally, to alleviate threats to major party support bases and undermine the support of the opposition. There is a ‘synergistic spiral’ where political opportunity encourages mobilisation, which in turn encourages policy development, however this is not always the case (Meyer, 2004). According to Meyer (2004), the absorption, or internalisation, of a social movement into the government, reduces the need for protest activity and similarly reduces the support for the social movement with the wider public. However when a government is hostile towards the goals of a social movement, when its goals seem least likely to be achieved, that a movement is likely to have widespread public support (Meyer, 2004). Activists need to be able to
adjust their primary causes in response to opportunities presented in pursuit of a wider political agenda (Meyer, 2004).

While there are plenty of opportunities for concerned citizens to engage with politicians and participate in democracy with the hope of influencing government decisions (Grant & Papadakis, 2000), the reality is that current government Environmental policies are seen as inadequate by Green groups (Foreman & Haywood, 1993), as influenced by corporate interests (Hamilton, 2007; Oreskes & Conway, 2010) or are shrouded in secrecy (Flyvbjerg, 2003). Following the Political Opportunity Theory articulated by Meyer (2004), once a government policy has been legislated that is contrary to the aims of a social movement and subsequently, opportunity to engage in conventional lobbying has been removed, ‘unconventional’, or, perhaps violent protest action ensues (Martin, 1994). In the case of Greens groups this is likely to take the form of non-violent direct action or rarely property damage (Doherty, 2002). The phenomenon of protest (or even guerrilla) activity against development projects and government policies is widespread, however is not publicised by the media for fear that this may incite others to mimic the type of activity (Foreman and Haywood, 1993; Flyvbjerg, 2003). Foreman and Haywood (1993) and Foreman (2013) claim that government policy seems to be directed towards revising and implementing plans that downgrade the quantity and quality of protected areas, the emphasis is placed on facilitating economic development and once such plans have been legitimised by becoming legislated, conventional methods of political lobbying are made more difficult. While in some countries this has resulted in violent confrontations and sabotage or ‘ecotage’, and even though this has occasionally happened in Australia, a more common response is to form a local interest group and lobby government directly (Doherty, 2002; Lines, 2006).

1.8.4 Astroturfing

Before proceeding further with a discussion on the particular characteristics of Grassroots Associations, a brief examination is needed on the topic of astroturfing. The phenomenon of astroturfing is when corporations pay for the creation of ‘Grassroots Associations’ to counter the claims of authentic community-based groups
(Beder, 1998). The use of astroturfing in the self-interest of corporations is undertaken by Public Relations companies to create doubt regarding an issue or to pressure politicians by insinuating popular support (Beder, 1998; Oreskes & Conway, 2010; Wilson, 2006). The tactic is designed to counter the arguments of legitimate groups and affect the democratic agenda through developing artificial hype on an issue and dominating media space and public attention, disrupting previous opinions and further complicating issues (Louw, 2008; Oreskes and Conway, 2010).

Groups created by corporate astroturfing can have the appearance of legitimate community groups and contain members of a local community in order to fulfil a charade of locally concerned citizens (Beder, 1998; Wilson, 2006). The goals of such groups conform to the objectives of corporations who may be attempting to quell community dissent on a particular development in order to speed up the approval process (Beder, 1998; Wilson, 2006). The funding and resources of such groups can be used to ascertain validity as a genuine community based organisation (Beder, 1998). Oreskes and Conway (2010) provide several examples of how the Tobacco Industry pioneered this tactic in the 1990s and was repeated in later debates over Climate Change.

1.9 Author Statement

This section is designed to provide some background information about the author and explain the context to the thesis. My family moved to the Tweed Shire in the Northern Rivers of NSW in the mid-1980s as part of what is now labelled a ‘tree-change’. My father was employed in the public service at the then Office of Social Security and my mother was one of the first Yoga teachers in the town of Murwillumbah. We lived on a rural property at Eungella which is about 15km west of Murwillumbah which we began to revegetate by planting combinations of rainforest trees. This new green thumb was not well-received by other established families in the area who had origins with the first selectors and had owned their land since the late 19th century. We rejected farming, grazing and instead enjoyed planting trees and having fallow land. As time went on we realised that we had unwittingly blundered into the middle of some sort of family feud between our neighbours, the two major
established families who were squabbling over the piece of land we had bought. Our family had, and probably still has, a pariah status in the valley.

Growing up during the 1980s and 1990s in what is a politically conservative area shaped my morals and beliefs. At school I was teased for being a Greenie, and having Hippie parents before becoming aware of what a Greenie or a Hippie was. Seeing eroding riverbanks, denuded mountainsides and weed choked forests while growing up helped to reinforce my burgeoning sense of environmentalism. I studied Applied Science at Southern Cross University, graduating in 2003 and I completed my Honours in 2005 which was an oral history of the ecology of the Oxley River. I work as a bush regenerator in the Tweed area and own a company called ‘Wollumbin Environmental Services’.

When the events of this case study were happening I was eight or nine years old, and completely unaware of what was happening beyond the confines of the school playground or my home. While my parents were aware of the Mt Nullum rezoning and the other political events of the time such as the corruption inquiries, I was too young to understand or even be interested in such things, so I approached the following case study with an open mind, having only a very rudimentary understanding of what had happened.

As a consequence of researching this topic I got to know the people involved in the original campaign and was myself recruited into the organisation of the Caldera Environment Centre. Due to the amount of time that has elapsed between the events described in this case study and my own involvement in the group (20 years), I do not consider my reporting to be biased. In fact by being involved in a volunteer group, or Grassroots association I have gained a good insight into the practical functioning of small groups by having a participant observation role. Such insights could not have been gained from a purely objective stance outside of the group.
Chapter 2 – Methodology

2. Methodology

This study is a qualitative inquiry and uses a case-study approach to investigate the issue of community groups interacting with the democratic process. This chapter will discuss some of the different qualitative methods available to researchers and explain the rationale behind the approach selected for this study. Figure 2.1. below, illustrates where this chapter fits within the framework of the thesis. Following on from this chapter is the case-study protocol (Yin, 2003) which sets out the questions guiding the structure of the research.

In this chapter some of the research paradigms available to a qualitative study are discussed and this explains why the particular approach was taken for this study. Table 2-1 presents an overview of the different techniques available for this study. The data collection techniques; interviews and documentary research, utilised in this study are then described. Table 2-2 provides a summary of unpublished material and government reports that were the source material for the documentary research. The final section presents the analysis techniques and reporting of findings.
Figure 2.1 Structure of Thesis, Methods
The paradigm guiding the research is presented in this section followed by a discussion of the particular data gathering and analysis techniques. The research project is primarily qualitative and follows the philosophy of phronesis as described by Flyvbjerg (2001). This study is a retrospective examination of the actions of a community group in response to a development in the Tweed Shire, Northern NSW in 1989 and can be classified as a historical case study. Data collected was entirely qualitative and consisted of interviews with key actors and archival research. This data is presented as a case study in the results section (Chapter 5 Interview Analysis, and Chapter 6 Documentary Analysis). Table 2-1 below compares some of the more common qualitative research methodologies and relevance to the study is commented upon.

Table 2-1 Different qualitative techniques

A comparison of different methods of qualitative inquiry considered for this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitative research and analysis method</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Applicability to this study</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action Research</td>
<td>Investigation of contemporary events through participant observation. Involves participants in developing research outcomes through reflective</td>
<td>Dick (2003), Greenwood (2005).</td>
<td>Not Applicable.</td>
<td>Events are historical, participants too detached from events to provide useful reflective comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative research and analysis method</td>
<td>Brief Description</td>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Applicability to this study</td>
<td>Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatism/ Mixed Methods</td>
<td>Use of both qualitative and quantitative data to reduce bias. Can use different ratios of each depending on the question. Can be applied historically.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Applicable.</td>
<td>Mostly used for examining contemporary events. The methodology has been used to look at an historical event for this study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>A detailed examination of contemporary events. Examines unique events that aren’t likely to be repeatable. Multiple data collection both</td>
<td>Yin (2003), Flyvbjerg (2001).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative research and analysis method</td>
<td>Brief Description</td>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Applicability to this study</td>
<td>Comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualitative and quantitative.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phronesis</td>
<td>Applying value-rational questions through a case-study to explore the ethical and practical impacts of historical and contemporary power relationships on society.</td>
<td>Flyvbjerg (2001).</td>
<td>Applicable</td>
<td>Provides a means of increasing the relevance of case-studies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following section, below presents in greater detail the different types of qualitative paradigms that could be utilised for this inquiry. The selection of a particular paradigm, in this case, phronesis is discussed in greater detail. Following on from this is a description of the qualitative data collection techniques used. Concluding the chapter is an explanation of the data analysis techniques used to interpret the data. Following this chapter, is the Case-Study Protocol which is the framework designed to guide the research by outlining further questions to be used in interviews and assist analysis by outlining the structure of the final report (Yin, 2003).
2.1 Paradigms - Qualitative Research

This section compares the applicability of different research paradigms and relevance to this study. The study sits within the qualitative field of inquiry, the merits of which have been argued extensively elsewhere (See Ashley & Boyd, 2006; Flyvbjerg, 2001; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Patton, 2002). Qualitative methods of inquiry, and particularly case-studies are suitable research methods when examining social phenomena that are unrepeatable. When examining and reporting on social experiences and personal realities, qualitative methods are more descriptive and exploratory however do also have explanatory power (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Yin, 2003).

2.1.1 Pragmatism

The paradigm of pragmatism has been developed for mixed-methods research, which is a type of inquiry that involves both qualitative and quantitative components. This enables researchers to choose the particular data collection that is most suitable for a study. Instead of being limited to either a pure qualitative or quantitative approach, the pragmatic paradigm enables researchers to develop a research design that incorporates both types of data (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). There are a variety of combinations of methodological mixing with either qualitative or quantitative being the dominant data collection method, or being of equal value in the study (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) state that the choice of paradigm is less important than the choice of research question, as the question will determine not only the paradigm, it will also determine the most appropriate methodology. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) provide a practical guide into the variety of ways a mixed methodology might be composed with greater or lesser emphasis on the quantitative or qualitative components as is necessary to investigate the research question. There are different definitions for defining mixed methods studies, however there is ultimately reliance upon quantitative data to validate or improve reliability of the qualitative component of the study. Adhering to a mixed methods design as defined by Creswell & Plano-
Clark (2007) and Tashakkori & Teddlie (1998) was not conducive to generating useful results from the questions of this study due to the small amount of quantitative data available to be collected.

2.1.2 Action Research

One of the most widely recognised strategies for producing positive social outcomes is Action Research. A benefit of Action Research relates to the cyclical nature, which invites the researcher to reflect upon the research as it progresses in order to develop an understanding and refine objectives. This is a methodology that is applicable to a researcher who is working with a group to implement change in a community organisation or other social setting (Dick, 2003). According to Greenwood (2005) the researcher, becoming part of the organisational setting being studied, is in a unique position to help initiate a solution to the problem being investigated; the degree of acceptance of the solution by the participants can be seen as a measure of the validity of the research process. For this Case Study, the involvement of the researcher as a participant in the actions of the groups being studied is impossible due to the historical nature of the case. For this overarching reason, Action Research is not considered an applicable methodology for this study.

2.1.3 Phronesis

Phronesis was developed and utilised by Flyvbjerg (1998) in his seminal case study examining the effects on democracy of rationality and power in Denmark. Flyvbjerg (2001) developed the philosophy of *phronesis* as a foundation for undertaking social research in order to increase its relevancy. Flyvbjerg’s (1998) study used a combination of standard social science research methods including interviews, and combined them with archival analysis or “genealogy” which explores power relationships and development of ideology (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Flyvbjerg (2001) based his work on the philosophy of *phronesis*, a concept that has its roots with Aristotle as a primary school of inquiry and applied knowledge, ranking equally with the philosophical concepts of *techne* and *episteme*. 
Briefly summarised, according to Flyvbjerg (2001), *episteme* is scientific knowledge, with products which are universal, invariable and context dependent, currently understood by the terms epistemology and epistemic. *Techne* is craft and/or art, is pragmatic, variable, context dependent and oriented toward production, and based on practical instrumental rationality governed by a conscious goal, understood by the terms ‘technique’, ‘technical’ and ‘technology’ (Flyvbjerg, 2001). *Phronesis* is prudence or ethics, the deliberation of values with reference to praxis, and the orientation is pragmatic, variable and context dependent. Phronesis is oriented towards action, and based on practical value rationality, and there are no contemporary terms (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 57). In Aristotle’s words phronesis is a ‘true state, reasoned, and capable of action with regard for the things that are good and bad for man’ (Flyvbjerg, 2001: 2).

Using social science to develop a predictive theory is difficult, if not impossible (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Rather, the principal objective for social science with a phronetic approach is to carry out analysis and interpretations of the status of values and interests in society aimed at social commentary and social action (Flyvbjerg, 2001:60). This is addressed by having the following four questions as guiding questions when preparing phronetic research:

1) Where are we going?
2) Is this desirable?
3) What should be done?
4) Who gains and who loses; by which mechanisms of power?

The notion of power is central to phronetic study. The concept of phronesis is designed to explore social aspects of decision making which are neglected through standard scientific enquiry and has been used to guide this research. For this project these phronetic questions have been modified to reflect the focus of the inquiry on community groups:

1) What are the personal motivations and group objectives?
2) What is the group trying to achieve?
3) Did a particular group support or oppose the proposal?

4) What was the outcome to the group action: What result did the community get and what result did the group get; and what tactics were used to achieve these results?

These ideas were used as a framework for the analysis and provided a point of comparison between groups and are presented in Table 7-1, Chapter 7. The questions as stated above have been modified for this study to incorporate the study aims and objectives and focus on aspects of By applying phronetic methods, Flyvbjerg (1998) demonstrated that the democratic process was being influenced by outside interests with economic agendas. Lloyd (2005) in his case studies of protected area management performs a similar phronetic study, by using a combination of methods he was able to explore the power relationships, and official (ir)rationality that lay hidden behind the use of community consultation informing the decisions made by government about protected areas.

The concept of phronetic research developed by Flyvbjerg (2001) is useful as a guiding framework for this study because of the emphasis on developing a practical result that is of benefit in examining the power mechanisms that are at work when decisions are made. To investigate the problem of power relationships and success in community engagement with political decision making, the research approach that has been formulated involves concurrent qualitative methodologies (for example, interviews and archival research) with the results presented as a case study. Case studies are an excellent method of presenting qualitative data from a variety of sources in a single format (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Yin, 2003). This study will use a qualitative paradigm termed ‘phronetic research’ as its foundation as it is flexible enough to examine historical events and does not require a reliance upon quantitative data.

2.2 Data Collection

Methods used to collect data for this study will include interviews and archival research of documents and audio-visual material (Yin, 2003). The sequence of data
collection and analysis will be determined by a Case Study Protocol; this document will prioritise procedures, guide interview questions and help establish the procedures for analysis (Yin, 2003).

2.2.1 Researcher Bias

Within qualitative research it is possible for biases of the researcher to inadvertently influence the results (Patton, 2002). For Yin (2003) and Flyvbjerg (2001) bias in qualitative research can be reduced by good project design, particularly the design of case studies can act to reduce bias as the reporting of results can disconfirm preconceptions. With the proper precautions it is possible to reduce the bias within a qualitative study. Interviews were one method of collecting data used in this study and the risk of interviewer bias is discussed in detail in this section.

Bias within an interview can be defined as the ‘intrusion of any unplanned or unwanted influence’ (Kahn and Cannell, 1957: 176; Patton, 2002). Such bias can arise through a complex interaction of the interviewer’s background characteristics, psychological and behavioural factors relative to the interviewee. For example an interviewee may behave in a certain way according to their own psychological preconceptions based on judgements made about the background characteristics of the interviewer that may potentially bias the interview. The interviewer can reduce such bias by taking some initiative to ‘cloak’ their background by presenting a neutral face at the interview.

Another source of bias within an interview is the use of the interviewer’s language which may inadvertently suggest to the respondent answers that are more desirable, or lead them to give responses that fit the interviewer’s own opinions (Kahn and Cannell, 1957; Patton, 2002). This can be mediated, according to Patton (2002), by allowing the respondent to answer the questions in their own terms through the use of open-ended questions. However, to avoid digression it is acceptable to use certain prompts or probes to keep the interview on the topic that is of interest to the researcher (Patton, 2002).
‘Triangulation of data’ is a method that can be used to corroborate qualitative information (Bowen, 2009; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2003). For example, evidence is checked against multiple sources and interview comments are compared with documentary evidence (Bowen, 2009; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2003). Through the use of multiple data sources and data triangulation it is possible to eliminate bias within a qualitative study.

2.2.1.1 Bias and Advocacy

Qualitative researchers have emphasised the democratic and advocacy role of the researcher in helping communities to become empowered (Denzin & Giardina, 2005; Flyvbjerg, 2001; Patton, 2002; Whitney, 2007). However, it can be for this reason that the research is criticised as being subjective, or biased as researchers can be seen as taking on a role of advocacy rather than objective data reporting. Whitney (2007) explains the dilemma researchers have between making the choice of objectivity and non-participation, and risking bias in the results by intervening by offering advice and experience to help develop a solution. According to Whitney (2007) this unique position of the researcher needs to be acknowledged and is seen as a potential strength of the qualitative method as experience and theory can be applied and practical changes may result leading to positive improvements. However, such influences need to be reflected upon and reported accurately to eliminate the threat of bias in the results.

Angrosino (2005) states that the role of the purely objective observer is unachievable and a more realistic position is to become part of the community being studied. In this way the researcher may become an advocate and help the group to advance a position within society by using the data and results gathered through the research process (Angrosino, 2005; Flyvbjerg, 2001; Lloyd, van Nimwegen & Boyd, 2005; Whitney 2007). Whitney (2007) states that researcher involvement in human rights or environmental issues relies upon the researcher being ‘positioned’ within the movement in order to provide a more nuanced perspective of that movement. However, this raises serious questions about the role (or possibility) of objective
scientific engagement as the researcher becomes influenced by events (Whitney, 2007:36).

A possible solution proposed by Whitney (2007) is to acknowledge a middle ground, that of an ‘Advocate Researcher’. This can be achieved by ‘recognising our own limits and impacts and scrutinising our own interactions with our multiple institutions … we should also approach our collaborations as a space to innovate mutual understandings’ (Whitney 2007: 39). This would involve the researcher actively considering the question of Researcher Advocacy prior to, during and while writing up the research. To increase the reliability of results the researcher can provide a statement explaining their role in events and connection to the organisations being examined.

In respect to this study, as the case is historical, there is no opportunity for the researcher to become an advocate for the group being studied. Similarly creating feedback with participants was attempted but unviable due to the length of time which had elapsed between the events and this study. Interviewees claimed that they had forgotten some of the details of events and were therefore unable to provide any additional meaningful data.

2.2.2 Interviews

The interview is a well-established data collection tool in qualitative research (Patton, 2002; Yin. 2003). Interviews are a form of inquiry that allow a researcher to explore the mind of another person, a world that cannot be directly observed, however can be (re)constructed with language by asking questions that explore personal thoughts, feelings and actions (Paget, 1999). Using interviews and questionnaires to collect information is well established in the literature on volunteer groups (Green & Griesinger, 1996; Herman & Renz, 1998; Sarstedt & Schloderer, 2010; Sawhill & Williamson, 2001; Smith & Shen, 1996).

There are several interview types available for use by the qualitative researcher ranged along a continuum from structured to unstructured (Patton, 2002). Each type of interview has its own strengths and weaknesses, and it is regarded in the qualitative
sciences that a semi or unstructured interview (also called conversational interview) is a preferred means of collecting qualitative data. Questions are just as important as the interviews themselves. Open-ended questions promote a more conversational approach to the interview. Closed questions typically force a respondent to choose a response from a predetermined array of options in an order from more to least likely, and are a typical feature of surveys. Dichotomous questions are worded in a way that allows the respondent to reply with either a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer (Patton, 2002). While each type of question has certain application, and can be used in any type of interview, it is preferable to use open-ended questions to generate the most reliable response from an interviewee. The type of interview and a series of questions need to be decided upon prior to the interview being conducted. This can be achieved through developing an interview schedule (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2003), which lists the questions and appropriate probes and prompts for the interviewer.

2.2.3 Archival and Documentary Research

Qualitative inquiries rely upon the collection and analysis of documentary data to provide a detailed understanding of an issue (Bowen, 2009; Patton, 2002; Scott, 1990; Yin, 2003). Table 2-2 below, lists the documentary material collected as part of this study. Documentary sources are an important source of information for qualitative research, particularly for historical events when interviewees are unable to completely remember the details of their roles in the events being studied (Bowen, 2009). However, it is important to not be over reliant on documentary evidence as it is produced for a specific audience and can be biased (Bowen, 2009; Yin, 2003). Ryan and Brown (2015) explain how the media can silence dissenting voices, while Louw (2008) shows that the media has an important role in manipulating public sentiment on an issue.

The main benefit of documentary evidence is that it helps to validate the comments of interviewees by triangulation (Bowen, 2009; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2003). Rather than using the information to provide a chronology of events, an interpretive analysis of documentary information can provide the basis of a discourse of the case and the genealogy of decisions made by various groups. A genealogy of documentary
evidence enables an analysis of power knowledge relations within the terms of the investigation (Kendall, 1999). A Genealogy is a narrative of the case with interpretive comments relating to the research question, Flyvbjerg (2001: 104) says ‘the establishment of a concrete Genealogy opens possibility for action by describing the genesis of a given situation and showing that this particular genesis is not connected to absolute historical necessity’.

Table 2-2 Documents used in the study

List of documents contemporary with the Case Study collected as part of the study. The audience column gives some indication about the potential bias within each document.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Name</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous articles from the Tweed Daily News.</td>
<td>Anonymous. Articles were not attributed to a reporter. Names are quoted if the article was not a letter to the editor or an opinion piece where the author was clearly identified.</td>
<td>The residents of the Tweed Shire and southern Gold Coast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocean Blue at Fingal Head.</td>
<td>Kate McKenzie &amp; Olga Vidler.</td>
<td>Unpublished work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental groups say, ‘Hooray for ICAC!’</td>
<td>E. Smith.</td>
<td>Press Release; Public.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3 Data Analysis

Qualitative research is renowned for producing massive amounts of data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2003), most of this data is in the form of written information, such as documents, or interview transcripts. Analysing the information can be a daunting task and at this point errors and bias can enter into the report (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In order to minimise these subjective biases within qualitative research a well-defined analytical procedure is important. The researcher typically becomes ‘immersed’ in the data and able to constantly compare different themes and ideas and begin to represent these diagrammatically (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Patton, 2002; Yin, 2003). This section first outlines the general methods used for this study, before discussing the data analysis procedure in greater detail.

2.3.1 Anonymising Interviewees

Interviews were conducted with four people who were involved in the events of the case study. The identities were anonymised in order to respect privacy and in accordance with the ethics approval from the University, and are described as Interviewees 1, 2, 3 and 4, and linked to involvement in particular the groups or institutions. Where the names of Interviewees have appeared in the media, the relevant labels of Interviewee 1 or Interviewee 2 etc. has been retained for consistency. Where the names of other people in the community had been published in documents, such as a Letter to the Editor or in the newspaper, the names have been left in full as matters of public record.

2.3.2 Memos and Diagrams

Memos are a nascent form of analysis and record the researcher’s thoughts about a particular piece of data, about the overall trend, or the story that the data is highlighting (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Memos provide a record of the analytical process and can be built upon to achieve a degree of theoretical generalisation about the case. Diagrams are also an analytical method that helps to unify concepts found
within the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). By creating diagrams such as flow charts and schematic representations of concepts and ideas, the analyst can begin to better visualise the data and the relationships between different pieces of data. This can serve as a mechanism for understanding the complexities of qualitative data and communicating the results to the reader (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). As the study progressed, diagrams illustrating the relationships between individuals and various groups were created, for example Figure 7.2 in Chapter 7 is derived from analysis of both documentary and interview data.

2.3.3 Constant Comparison

The Constant Comparative method involves the researcher becoming immersed in the data analysis process and ordering the data in a thematic manner by comparing units of data (Ashley, 2003; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Codes are given to data to represent certain themes; the labels of the codes are usually a word or phrase that the participants have used to describe the situation. Data is coded and then codes are compared until all the data has been sorted into themes pertaining to the research question. As data collection and analysis proceeds, the researcher constantly compares the statements made by different participants in interview transcripts or excerpts from documents for similarities, these themes are grouped together under a particular code (Corbin & Strauss 2008; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). This allows the researcher to identify the properties unique to that particular theme and develop a hierarchy of themes as these have emerged from the analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

2.3.4 Qualitative Analysis Software

With advances in technology digitise qualitative data can be digitised and, the use computers as an aid to analysis can be employed. Most authors advocate taking advantage of qualitative analysis software, however warn not to rely on these programs to the exclusion of using the researcher’s own initiative and judgement (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Patton, 2002). The use of mind mapping software is an excellent way to graphically represent thoughts and ideas and was used by Witsel
(2008) to explain the relationships between concepts in her thesis. Using a program like N-vivo or NUD*IST can help to analyse the massive amount of data collected through qualitative inquiry. The program will search for common themes amongst the collected words and allows theories to grow from the data (Richards, 2002). Ashley (2003) used standard office software such as Microsoft Word to analyse his data using a constant comparative method. This involved using the standard features of MS Word such as the ‘find’ function to locate keywords in interviewee transcripts.

2.3.5 Case Study Protocol

Yin (2003) states that the most reliable way to analyse data for a qualitative study is to create a Case-Study Protocol. This is a document that provides an outline and summary of the case before in-depth research has begun. Aims and objectives are outlined, and subsequent themes and questions are developed from these. The Case Study Protocol outlines the interview schedule and the phrasing of specific questions and the field procedures. Finally, the case study protocol begins to frame the units of analysis for the study and the structure of the final report. Section 2.4, below, describes the role of the Case-Study Protocol in more detail.

2.3.6 Frames for Analysis

To answer the study’s questions and interpret the qualitative data that has been collected, the Case Study needs to have an analytical framework. Phronesis (Flyvbjerg, 2001) has already been discussed as a guiding paradigm for the research and provides a foundation for data analysis and reporting, Table 7-1 in Chapter 7, uses phronesis to analyse the data. However, to better understand the functioning of a community group and its place in the community additional units of analysis need to be considered.

The Theory of Voluntary Altruism (Smith, 2000) discussed in the introduction, provides a useful way to study the components of Grassroots Associations or volunteer groups. The components Smith (1999a; 1999b; 2000) uses to define groups’ internal and external success are used to create Tables 7-2 and 7-3 in Chapter 7. The aspects that are linked to group success have been listed as the headings for the table.
rows, while the group’s names make the column headings. Data and interpretations from the interview and documentary data analysis chapters have then been entered into the table cells. The relative success of a group can then be observed and an easy comparison between groups can be made. Additional contributing factors identified during the course of the research have been added to these tables.

Understanding the power relationships between people, organisations and government within the community is important to the idea of phronesis (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Corbin and Strauss (2008) discuss the importance of diagrams in communicating qualitative research data to readers. In order to visualise these relationships cognitive ownership has been used to illustrate the connections between individuals, institutions and the proposed development site (Boyd & Cotter, 1996; Boyd, 2012). The number of connections between any one particular individual or a group is a means of measuring the relative degree of influence or power that existed at the time. Figure 7.3, in Chapter 7 uses the concept of cognitive ownership to illustrate the concept of power relationships.

2.4 Data Reporting

2.4.1 Case Studies

Case studies are a useful method of presenting a complex array of social data (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Yin, 2003). The use of case studies is applicable when a “how” or “why” question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control (Yin, 2003:9). The purpose of a case study is to try and illuminate a decision or set of decisions, explaining why these were taken, how these were implemented, and with what result (Yin, 2003). Instead of just attempting to develop a theory through the research of a case study the additional aim is learning; an education of the researcher and the education of the reader and the public about the issue being investigated (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Flyvbjerg (2001) revises common negative criticisms of case studies:
1) Predictive theories and universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs. Concrete, context-dependent knowledge is therefore more valuable than the search for predictive theories and universals.

2) One can often generalise on the basis of a single case, and the case study may be central to scientific development via generalisation as supplement or alternative to their methods. However formal generalisation is overvalued as a source of scientific development, whereas 'the power of example' is underestimated.

3) The case study is useful for both generating and testing hypotheses however is not limited to these research activities alone.

4) The case study contains no greater bias towards verification of the researchers’ preconceived notions than other methods of inquiry… the case study contains a greater bias toward falsification of preconceived notions than towards verification.

5) While summarising case studies is often difficult, especially regarding ‘process’, however less correct in regard to ‘outcomes’. The problems in summarising case studies, however, are due more often to the properties of the reality studied, than to the case study as a research method. Often it is not desirable to summarise and generalise case studies

2.4.1.1 **Designing Case Studies**

With a proper research design, case studies can be used as an effective means of producing insightful and useful scientific information. Yin (2003) developed a methodological process for use when designing a case study report. The five key components of Yin’s (2003: 21) case study design are:

1) A study's questions;
2) The case study propositions, if any;
3) Its unit(s) of analysis;
4) The logic linking the data to the propositions; and
5) The criteria for interpreting the findings.
The components developed by Yin (2003) are a logical way of increasing the rigour and validity of case study reports. The study’s questions lead to its propositions (What are the issues being investigated?), which in turn lead to the units of analysis (What object is being studied, an individual or event?). The data gathered has to fit with the propositions, and there must be criteria and a process available for interpreting the data once it has been collected. To successfully manage the case study process, a case study protocol needs to be developed which defines the above components relative to the issue being investigated. A case study protocol defines the research questions, prescribes field procedures and provides a guideline for interview questions. Finally, the protocol also acts as a guide for data analysis and reporting (Yin, 2003).

This case study protocol is part of the evidence that improves the reliability of the findings, allowing review of the process by other researchers (Yin, 2003). After determining the case study objectives and protocol, the choice is whether a single or multiple case studies is/are appropriate. Data collected from multiple cases is more compelling and is preferable to single cases, single case studies being appropriate for unique events (Yin, 2003).

2.4.2 Applying Case Study Methods to this Research

For this study, data will be collected and reported as a single historical case study. According to Yin (2003:5) case studies are better applied to contemporary events which the researcher has some involvement with. When the events being examined have occurred in the past, the inquiry is more accurately described as a history. The events being examined for this study occurred in 1989 and the author was neither a participant nor an observer of these events, so the report is classified as a history according to the definition by Yin (2003:5). However, the analytical structure of the case study, particularly the development of a case study protocol to guide data collection and analysis is a useful methodological tool that can be used to guide the research.

This project will use the methods of case study research as developed by Yin (2003) to guide data collection and analysis. This will assist in providing clear boundaries to
the case and provide a procedure for reporting and analysing the data. The use of a case study protocol is the most important methodological component of case study research that can be applied to this project.

For this study the following procedure was observed:

1) Develop a case study protocol (following Yin, 2003)
   a. Define questions
   b. Structure reporting of the case
   c. Provide analytical criteria
2) Create an interview guide based on case study protocol
3) Apply for University Research Ethic Approval based on research design
4) Conduct research
   a. Conduct archival research
   b. Conduct interviews
5) Analyse results with reference to case study protocol

The case study protocol for this study is presented after this chapter.

2.5 Summary and Application to this Study

Flyvbjerg (2001) developed the philosophy of phronesis as a foundation for undertaking social research in order to increase its relevancy. The concept is designed to explore social aspects of decision making which are neglected through standard scientific enquiry and has been used to guide this research; the key questions of phronetic research have been modified for this study to reflect the focus of the inquiry on community groups: What are the personal motivations and group objectives? What is the group trying to achieve? How did your group manifest your objectives? What was the outcome to the group action: What result did the community get and what result did the group get, and what tactics were used to achieve the desired result? The specific data collection methods used to obtain data for the Mt Nullum case study are described below.
The project was similar to an Action Research project because as a researcher I became involved with the people and group being studied and there was reciprocal learning (Dick, 2003), however, due to the historical perspective, the methods of Action Research were not entirely applicable. Data analysis followed a constant comparative method (Ashley, 2003; Ashley & Boyd, 2006; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) which uses inductive categorisation to generate results, which are then presented as a case study (Yin, 2003). To increase the relevance of results and link them with existing Research, data is presented following the guide of three established heuristics that are useful in explaining different aspects of social interaction; power, inter-group dynamics and intra-group interactions:

1) **Phronesis** (Flyvbjerg, 2001) provides an analysis of power.
2) **Voluntary Altruism** (Smith, 2000) explains components of a group that contribute to the group thriving and becoming successful.
3) **Cognitive Ownership** (Boyd & Cotter, 1996; Boyd et al., 1996) maps the interactions between different people, community groups and a geographic place.

### 2.5.1 Data Collection

#### 2.5.1.1 Documentary and Archival Research

Documentary research began prior to interviews so that the researcher was able to become familiar with the events of the case. The major source of documentary material was collected from the archives of the Tweed Daily News which were available at the local Murwillumbah Library. Official government reports such as the ICAC inquiry reports (Temby, 1989; Temby, 1990) were available online, while other reports such as the report of the Commission of Inquiry (Woodward & Carleton, 1990) and the consultant’s reports (Mitchell, McCotter & Associates 1988a; Mitchell, McCotter & Associates, 1988b) were unavailable and had to be requested. Other documentary evidence collected such as consultants and commission reports, published and unpublished histories were examined. Newspapers regularly provide details of various developments, including announcements about applications and
public submissions. Articles in the newspaper described the developers’ plan and proposals and community reactions through Letters to the Editor. Archives of the period 1987-1990 from Council were consulted to obtain relevant environmental reports and Council decisions.

Newspaper records were collected at the local library on microfiche and were manually examined for headlines using key words like Nullum, environment, Moran and the names of other contemporary individuals, such as the Mayor, and leaders of the various community groups and the names of the groups. These articles were then printed and compiled into a folder that provided a timeline of the events concerning the development as it had been reported in the Tweed Daily News between the years 1987-1990. Relevant articles were then typed verbatim into a MS Word document to enable searches for keywords. This documentary evidence was also used as prompts in interviews when interviewees had difficulty remembering details on a particular subject.

Documentary evidence is not inherently reliable and needs to be correlated with other forms of information to be valid (Bowen, 2009). Yin (2003:87) cautions against the overreliance upon documentary evidence as documents are created for a specific audience. According to Louw (2008) media such as newspapers can promote the agenda of elite groups or as Ryan and Brown (2015) claim official media can effectively silence minority voices. Therefore by using a variety of documentary sources and interviews the possibility to collect more in depth and personal experiences of the case exists.

2.5.1.2 Interviews

To explore more deeply the actions and motivations of the community, interviews with participants/members of these groups were conducted. Interviews were sought with the key actors in the events. Four people were interviewed, three group leaders and a newspaper reporter. Interviews were conducted with the leaders of three community groups; the Murwillumbah Business Corporation, The Tweed Electoral
Lobby and The Caldera Environment Centre. The Ethics Approval Number for the interviews is ECN – 11 – 99.

Interviews were conducted in an open-ended conversational manner with an interview guide providing structure for the interview. The interviews were recorded digitally and were transcribed by the researcher. Responses from the interviews were then analysed thematically following the outline of the case-study protocol (see Chapter 3), and then these responses were combined into a single document, i.e. Chapter 5 interview analysis. Interpretations by the author were included to provide structure and a narrative interpretation to the interview responses (see Cloke & Little, 1997; Flyvbjerg, 1998).

Not every person approached wanted to participate in the study. For instance the then Shire President declined to participate, as did the leader of the free enterprise groups. Other people referred to in the text, such as Brice Chick, have passed-away and other people have moved out of the area. Interviewees were selected on the basis of involvement in a group or institution that was operating at the time and had an influence on the public debate about Mt Nullum, and were still alive and able to be contacted.

Data for the following groups, Tweed Landowners Group and the local government body of the Tweed Shire Council were sourced largely from newspaper archives and other primary source material which provided a high level of detail regarding group actions and motivations. The Shire President had made many comments on the public record such as in the newspapers and in an ABC 4-Corners interview. Comments from these sources were used to provide data for analysis.

Interviewees participated with the understanding that there comments would be anonymised. Table 5-1 in Chapter 5 Interview Analysis describes the interviewees, in relation to involvement in particular groups they were from.
2.5.2 Data Analysis

Data from interviews will be analysed through the Quadrat Method developed by Ashley (2003). This is a constant comparative method that uses existing computer software to determine outputs (Ashley, 2003). Following Corbin and Strauss (2008) diagrams were generated from the data to illustrate the insights that had been gained through the research. Interviews were firstly transcribed by the researcher. Responses from the interviews were then analysed thematically following the outline of the case-study protocol, and then these responses were combined into a single document which provides a structured interpretation and narrative of the interview data following Cloke and Little (1997). Diagrams were generated from the data to illustrate the insights that had been developed through the research following Corbin and Strauss (2008) suggested method.

Data from documentary research and interviews is presented in Chapters 4 and 5 titled ‘Interview Analysis’ and ‘Documentary Analysis’. Following these chapters is an ‘Analysis Summary’ Chapter which draws on and combines both the interview and documentary data. The framework of phronesis is used to create a table to analyse the data and compare the different groups and explore the motivations and actions. Similarly the works of Smith (1999a; 1999b; 2000) are combined into two tables to compare the groups’ internal characteristics and external successes. Finally, cognitive ownership is used to map the relationships between individuals and groups.

Following on from the Methods chapter will be the case study protocol which shows the structure guiding the development of the case study. A summary of the case is then presented in chapter 4 (Result Summary). After this the main results Chapters, ‘Interview Analysis’ and ‘Documentary Analysis’ are presented and the data is then brought together in the ‘Results Analysis’, which combines the data as described above.
Chapter 3 – Case Study Protocol

3. The Case Study

This Chapter presents the Case Study Protocol which was developed prior to the commencement of research. It provides a basis for collecting data, and organising and analysing results. Figure 3.1, below shows where the Case-Study Protocol falls in the structure of this thesis:

![Diagram of thesis structure]

Figure 3.1 Structure of Thesis, Case Study Protocol
## 3.1 Case Study Outline

**Case study question outline:** The following list of questions (Box 3.1) will guide the collection and analysis of data. As the study progresses new questions may arise and some of those listed here may become redundant or obsolete (Yin, 2003).

### Box 3.1 Case Study Outline

*Questions concerning the case study. Generic questions about the historical context were necessary to understand the social issues that were relevant at the time.*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>What was the historical context of 1980s?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. What external factors (national or international) may have had a bearing on the case? Globally/Nationally/Locally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Politics of the era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Social changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. The regional environmental context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Post-Aquarius Northern Rivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Public opinion of the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. What other environmental action was happening in the Tweed in the 1980s?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Why was there an Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) inquiry? What was it about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. What impact did it have on the case?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>What is Mt Nullum, and what was being proposed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Mt Nullum: Geology and ecology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>What environmental values does the area have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Where was the development to be constructed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>Why was Nullum to be developed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>What were the advantages of the development?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>The development proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g.</td>
<td>Synopsis of events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h.</td>
<td>How did this development compare to other developments at the time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>What legal protection did the area have?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Who were the main actors in this case?
   a. What were the motivations for each of these groups?
   b. What were the concerns of conservationists?

5. How did the newspaper report the Mt Nullum proposal?
   a. How was the community presented?
   b. Is there a detectable bias in the newspaper reporting?

6. Who was the developer?
   a. How did the developer become involved with the community?
   b. Persuading the Council
   c. Persuading the community
d. How did the actions of Moran compare to the actions of other developers at the time?

7. What was the role of Council?
   a. Local Environment Plan Amendments No. 1 and No. 16
   b. Environmental studies
   c. What was the process used to make Amendments

8. What was the role of the NSW State Government?
   a. Political Support
      i. Member for Murwillumbah, Don Beck
      ii. Environment Minister Tim Moore
      iii. Deputy Premier Wal Murray
   b. Section 65 approval
   c. Commission of Inquiry
   d. Influence of ICAC inquiry

9. What was the Commission’s process?
   a. Who participated in the Commission of Inquiry?
   b. What conclusions did the Commission make?
   c. What were the conclusions/findings of the Commission of Inquiry?

10. Why did the developer not proceed with the development?

11. What community groups existed before the Mt Nullum proposal?
a. What community groups developed during the proposal (1987-90)?

b. How do these groups relate to the above personalities?

c. Was there much crossover between groups?

12. What was the fate of these groups?

a. What other local/regional conservation groups existed?

b. Where are they now?

13. *Analysis* Fit data with established models for describing social actions:

a. Use the four phronetic questions by Flyvbjerg (2001) to guide comparative analysis of different motivations and actions of the particular groups

b. Utilise Smith (1999a; 1999b; 2000) to compare internal and external group functions and test the motivations of community groups (Question 1 from Flyvbjerg, 2001) against Theory of Voluntary Altruism.

c. Map connections between individuals, groups and government in relation to geographical space following idea of Cognitive Ownership (Boyd & Cotter, 1996; Boyd, et al., 1996)

14. *Discussion* How does a group achieve its goal?

a. Framing the debate and the influence of the media

b. How do groups achieve their goal politically?

c. How does a new group form?

d. Connections between groups
| 15. Discussion | Theory of Voluntary Altruism and the core humane values  
(Smith, 2000) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16. Discussion</td>
<td>Why did the environment group succeed where others failed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Membership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Longevity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Group ideology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Funding sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Political Opportunity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Discussion</td>
<td>Defeating development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Discussion</td>
<td>Power Struggles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Discussion of the four Phronetic questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Where are we going?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Is this desirable?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. What should be done?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Who gains and who loses through which mechanisms of power?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 Interview Schedule

This section contains the Interview Schedule, Table 3-1. Interviews were approved by the Southern Cross University Human Research Ethics Committee, approval No: ECN – 11 – 199. The interviews were performed in an open ended format with the following guide providing a checklist to keep interviews on topic.

A letter explaining the project and displaying the Approval Number was shown to the interviewees, who were asked to sign the letter to show that consent to the interview. Interviewees were supplied with a transcript of their interview. Interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Table 3-1 Interview guide

*Interview schedule used to guide the interview process.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Check</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) What was the Mt Nullum proposal?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Details genesis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Land ownership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Tweed in 1989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) How did you first learn about the proposal?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Newspaper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Gossip</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Who were the supporters/opposition of the proposal?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Shire President</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Councillors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Bruce Chick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Other groups in the community – was there an organised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pro-development lobby group?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tweed Landowners Group,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Aust. Small Business Association,
- Tweed Coast Tourist Association,
- Tweed Electoral Lobby,
- Tweed Valley Conservation Trust,
- Murwillumbah Business Corporation
- Caldera Environment Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4)</th>
<th>What were your first reactions/response to the proposal?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Did you decide to form a new group in response?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5)</th>
<th>How/Why did you become involved in Mt Nullum proposal?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>But why did you, personally choose to act now on this particular issue?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>There were many other proposals on the table, why become involved with Nullum?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 6) | What was the reason you started or first became involved in a community group? |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7)</th>
<th>Were you involved in other community groups?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>See list above…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>What can you tell me about these other groups?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 8) | What position did the other groups take on the Nullum proposal? |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9)</th>
<th>Why did you start your group?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Did the formation of your group affect other, more established groups?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>What happened to these other community groups?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Did your group have a physical presence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Is it important to have a physical presence like that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>Did other groups have a similar base?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10) Tell me about the formation of your group
   a. What was the mission/objective of the group?
      i. Was it single issue – stop Mt Nullum?
      ii. When did the mission broaden? Why?
   b. Who were the members? How did you recruit members?
   c. What were the first meetings like?
      i. Town hall style or more intimate?
      ii. Were minutes taken
      iii. Were there defined roles?
      iv. How long did it take to become organised?
   d. How did your group relate to other community groups at the time?
      i. Which groups were supportive of your group?
      ii. Where are these groups now?
      iii. What about new groups?
   e. Was fundraising important?
   f. Was there any infighting in the early days?
      i. How was this dealt with?

11) What strategy did your group decide upon to oppose/support the Nullum development?
   a. Protest?
   b. Lobbying?
   c. Letter writing?

12) In hindsight, what was the most effective strategy?
   a. Media
   b. Protest
   c. Lobbying

13) What made your group politically effective?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14) How long, how many years did your group last for?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15) What did your group mean for people in the community?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16) What activities did your group engage in to make its point?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. How did you communicate your message?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17) How did your group operate?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Were meetings formal with defined roles?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. How did people interact?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Has this changed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18) What happened to your group?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3 Conclusion

A summary of the events of the case study will be presented prior to the documents analysing the results in detail. This summary is designed to familiarise the reader with the events that took place and provide some further insight into what was happening at the time. Following this summary the chapters analysing the results follows, firstly analysing the interview data and then analysing the documentary data.

Analysis will follow the description above in ‘Case-Study Outline’, comments from interviews and documentary evidence will be sorted into the categories corresponding with the items listed above. Interpretations from the author will structure these chapters. A final ‘Results Analysis’ chapter will bring together the defining ideas of phronesis and voluntary altruism.
Chapter 4 – Results Summary

4. Case study summary

There was a large amount of qualitative data collected as part of this study and data reporting and analysis is quite detailed and consists of several chapters. This section will briefly summarise the case study, before providing a more detailed analysis of the data in subsequent chapters. The following Figure 4.1, is a diagram of the results and explains the connection between the following chapters.

Figure 4.1 Structure of the Thesis Case Study Summary
This chapter, the ‘Results Summary’, will provide the reader with a brief background of the case study and the next section breaks down the case into separate areas; the site, the proposal, Council rezoning and community reaction. This chapter provides a concise description of the case with the subsequent chapters providing detailed evidence and analysis. This chapter will also provide an introduction into the different community groups and briefly explain the roles in the proposal (Section 4.2).

4.1 Case Study Background

In 1987 there were many community and volunteer groups already well-established and thriving in the Tweed Shire. There were the typical Residents and Ratepayers Groups for every town and village, as well as Business Chambers and Commerce Groups. Landcare and other more familiar conservation groups like the Wildlife Carers had not yet been established. Anti-development groups were motivated by the threat of environmental destruction and the impact on current lifestyles, these groups took a stance based on a desire for the Tweed Coast/Shire to be distinct from the neighbouring heavily urbanised Gold Coast. Other people in the community formed Pro-Development/Free Enterprise Groups to promote the benefits of development which included jobs, infrastructure and overall community prosperity.

During the late 1980s an estimated $2000 million of development proposals were proposed for the Tweed Shire. One of the more prominent of these was the Ocean Blue proposal for Fingal, which was officially investigated in one of the first ever NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) inquiries in 1989 examining Council and State Government corruption (Hopkins and Moore, 2003; McKenzie and Vidler, 2003; Temby, 1989; Temby, 1990). No formal charges were laid as a result of the inquiry, however it ruined the reputations of some Councillors and senior staff, in particular the Shire Deputy President (“I’m ruined”, 1989).

The proponents of some of the major coastal development proposals were found to be acting corruptly by the Independent Commission Against Corruption in 1989 and this has stigmatised community attitudes towards development in the Tweed Shire (Kijas, 2011; Temby, 1990). The philanthropic actions of Doug Moran as described in
Section 4.1.1 made the proposal more attractive to the public and there was quite a lot of community support for this development.

During data analysis, four volunteer community groups emerged as having played major roles in supporting or opposing the development of Mt Nullum and the actions related to this are described below in Section 4.1.4. There were other community groups around at the time who also took sides on the development, but the four groups are examined in detail as highlighting the polarity of the public debate on the issue, and as these groups took the most active roles in supporting or opposing the development. Chapters 5 and 6 will elaborate on the details of the composition and actions of these groups.

The Council proposal to rezone the land on top of Mt Nullum under Amendment No. 16 was the catalyst for a strong community backlash against the project. Corruption was a major issue in the Tweed and contributed to motivation of the groups opposing the development. The Council’s actions were suspected as being complicit with the developer, and in an attempt to reduce this perception the Council publicly released all its internal documentation pertaining to the case (Chapter 5, Sections 5.3 and 5.4; Chapter 6 Section 6.6 and 6.7). This information provided the basis for an extremely detailed submission by the conservation groups, Tweed Valley Conservation Trust and the Caldera Environment Centre. These groups analysed the Council’s documents and used the evidence to show that decisions were being made for the Council by the developer and evidence was found post-hoc to justify them. Unfortunately all these internal Council documents have now been lost, but the submission of the Caldera Environment Centre and the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust [CEC/TVCT] (1990) provides an excellent record of the Council procedures. The assertions of the conservation groups were validated by the Commission of Inquiry into the rezoning (Woodward and Carleton, 1990).

Section 4.1.1, below, describes in summary the specific proposal for Mt Nullum and the background of the developer Doug Moran. Section 4.1.3 outlines the involvement of Council in the proposal and the ways in which the Council tried to facilitate the development by using planning powers is presented.
4.1.1 The Developer and the Proposal

As with any development proposal, there was a long lead time for the Mt Nullum development, and sufficient interest needed to be supplied from the private sector to realise the development. Doug Moran was the CEO of the Moran Health Care Group which had just recently completed the “Doug Moran Hospital of Excellence” in Tugun on the Queensland side of the NSW/Qld border (now John Flynn Private Hospital). The NSW State Government at the time prevented the hospital being built in NSW (“Council Strikes back”, 1988). The Moran Health Care Group had also just finished constructing a nursing home in Murwillumbah, and had plans to build a large retirement village in the town, which at the time had negligible aged care facilities (“Village opens its doors”, 1988). In addition to these developments, Doug Moran initiated the Moran Art Prize (for portraiture) which in 1988 was the richest art-prize in Australia, and also helped fund the construction of a public art gallery in the town (“Gallery Director in row”, 1987). The actions of Moran in creating the art prize and developing a public gallery to house it put “Tweed on the map” (Beck, 1988b), and with the construction of his Hospital of Excellence and retirement villages, Doug Moran was widely respected by Government and business groups as a generous, philanthropic entrepreneur (“Village opens its doors”, 1988).

The proposal to develop Mt Nullum was the next step in the plan to create an ‘integrated health care village’ linking hospitals, retirement villages, established communities with health resorts (Wynne, 2006). The development was proposed to be primarily a health care resort for convalescence after surgery at the Hospital of Excellence, with patients being flown in by helicopter or transported in an aerial tram from the valley floor. The development was not limited to just a health resort, plans also included a five-star hotel, artists’ collective, art-gallery, workers buildings and a golf course (also an artificial lake for irrigating the site) (“Dynamic Development”, 1987; Mitchell, McCotter & Associates, 1988b).
4.1.2 The Site

The environment of the Tweed Valley is unique due to a combination of factors, a volcanic geology provides fertile soils, the proximity to the coast means reliable rainfall and the area’s latitude means that there is an overlap of temperate and tropical species in the region (Kingston, Turnbull & Hall, 2004). The floristic communities of the Tweed Valley are typified by diverse rainforest types in the lowlands, along the coast and on fertile plateaux and within sheltered gullies and ravines. There are significant areas of wet and dry sclerophyll forest on areas with shallower soils (Kingston et al., 2004).

Mt Nullum is a prominent geographical feature of the Tweed Valley, Tweed Shire Northern NSW (see Figure 6.4 in Chapter 6). The geology is considered a separate intrusion to the formation of the Mt Warning Volcano some 20 MYA, and the area has a distinctly unique geology of micro-granite which results in a different soil type to the surrounding, largely basaltic geological features typical of the Mt Warning erosion caldera (Graham, 2001). The ecology of Mt Nullum is considered unique due to the underlying geology, being the only granitic mountain east of the New England Tablelands, and has a close proximity to the coast which results in a distinct ecology. The main ecosystems present on Mt Nullum are et-sclerophyll forests with gallery rainforest in gullies and ravines. There are also patches of dry sclerophyll forest on the ridgelines and rocky outcrops (Graham, 2001). Mt Nullum lends its name to the Silver-Leaf (*Argophyllum nullumense*) – a ROTAP listed plant; the type specimen was collected there in 1899 by R T Baker (“Australian Plant Name Index”, 2011). Many other endangered flora and fauna species also occur on Mt Nullum. The mountain is located 20 km from the town of Murwillumbah and is visible from that town and most viewpoints in the Tweed Shire (Mitchell, McCotter & Associates, 1988a). The top of the mountain has a substantial plateau (compared to other local mountains) and the proposal by the Tweed Shire Council was to develop the land for tourism use in the 1980s (Mitchell, McCotter & Associates, 1988a; 1988b).
4.1.3 Council Land Rezoning

The land on the Mt Nullum Plateau had just been zoned as environmentally significant with a 7 (d) - Environmental Protection and Scenic Escarpment and 7 (l) Environmental Protection Habitat Zones being placed on the site in the 1987 Tweed Local Environmental Plan (LEP). In order to permit the development, the Council started to make amendments to the brand new LEP; Amendment no 1 to LEP 1987 was to include “Tourist facilities” as a permissible development in the land use table for Zone 7 (d) – Scenic Escarpment. This was approved by Council and the State government. The next issue was that the development site was on the plateau was a zoned 7 (l) Environmental Protection Habitat, and therefore the zones 7 (d) and 7 (l) had to effectively be transposed with each other, making the top of the plateau scenic escarpment and the mountainside a habitat zone, and so allowing the development under that zone; this was Amendment no. 16.

This was no simple matter and required consultants to study the areas environmental values and determine if this was acceptable. The consultants found this ‘zone swap’ to be a possibility and made a report supporting Councils request justifying the land rezoning. The report also questioned the efficacy of wildlife corridors (zone 7 (l) acted as a ridge-top wildlife corridor) in general and in particular the suitability of Mt Nullum as a wildlife corridor (Mitchell, McCotter & Associates, 1988b).

4.1.4 Community Reaction

Business groups in the community welcomed the proposal at Mt Nullum, seeing it as just the right sort of development to stimulate the Tweed economy. Pro-business and pro-development groups vocally supported the proposal and criticised what was seen as government interference which slowed the approval process (The Murwillumbah Business Corporation and Tweed Landowners Group). The requirements of the State for further studies and the actions by the Council for obliging the States interests were perceived as an unnecessary delay and an infringement on private property rights.

Other groups in the community (Tweed Electoral Lobby) took a different opinion and saw Council as being too amenable to a developer who had spent hundreds of
thousands of dollars as a patron of the arts. The fact that Council openly admitted to facilitating the development by changing its newly enacted planning laws to make it permissible was an insult, especially in light of the fact that the Council (Councillors and staff) and State MPs had just been investigated by the Independent Commission Against Corruption the previous year for being involved in corrupt developments along the coast (Temby, 1989; 1990; TVCT/CEC, 1990).

A new community group was established, the Caldera Environment Centre (CEC), with the primary objective at the time was to raise awareness about the proposal and attempt to stop it. The CEC appealed to the State Planning Minister and initiated a Planning Department Commission of Inquiry which is a procedural mechanism under section 119 of the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979) to investigate zoning issues and other issues surrounding the EPA Act. While having no authority, the report from the Commission of Inquiry provided the basis for determining the Minister’s decision (Cleland, 2003). Before the Commission of Inquiry delivered its final report in April 1990 which supported the community’s concerns and criticised Council planning as inadequate, Doug Moran withdrew his support for the Mt Nullum development and the proposal ended there.

4.2 Summary of Key Groups

The section above has outlined the case study, and further details are provided in the following chapters 5 and 6. However in order to familiarise the reader with some of the more important groups in the case, the following summary has been included below. More detail about the origin of these groups is explained by interviewees in Chapter 5 and further actions of key members that are recorded in the media are presented in Chapter 6.

Caldera Environment Centre

Formed in September 1989, coordinator Interviewee 1. The CEC grew from a meeting held in a house at Mt Warning in August 1988 between [several close friends including Interviewee 1]
because of concern for a proposed development on Mt Nullum and a feeling that the executive of the TVCT was too conservative and too willing to be compromised by ruthless developers notably the Moran Nursing Home group. The first public meeting was held on October 19th 1988 in a room above the Wombat Bookshop in Murwillumbah Main St. [Hopkins & Moore, 2003: Emphasis added].

During 1989-91 the Caldera Environment Centre and Tweed Valley Conservation Trust operated in tandem. The submission to the Commission of Inquiry in March 1990, was a joint Caldera Environment Centre and Tweed Valley Conservation Trust effort.

**Tweed Valley Conservation Trust (TVCT)**

Action: Successful Bitou Bush eradication program at Kingscliff, 1000 trees planted.

TVCT helps CEC prepare submission for the Nullum inquiry in 1990.

The inaugural meeting of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust (TVCT) took place at Ted Wilson’s house at Banora Point on the 25th of February 1972.....The group was interested in protecting the environment and was particularly concerned with a proposed development for Ukerebagh Island and the adjacent mainland (where the Minjungbal Aboriginal Cultural Centre now stands).

Chief achievements of TVCT:

- Permanent reservation of Ukerebagh Island and Portion 224, Tweed Estuary in the late 1970s.
- Successful prosecution of court cases to conserve sea grass beds in Terranora Inlet launched in the Land and Environment Court in 1985.
- One of several groups successful in calling for ICAC investigation into Ocean Blue development at Fingal Head and subsequent rejection of Development Application 1989.
- Successful in calling for Planning Commissioner's Inquiry in March 1990, into development by Moran Corporation of Mt Nullum on Council-owned land and halting the proposed 'health resort' and residences.

[Hopkins & Moore, 2003].

**Tweed Landowners Group**

“...we will protect landowners against unjust treatment by Councils and State Governments...its first job will be to coordinate action against the unjust LEP. Public land is degraded and polluted, private land is productive and nurtured...under the guise of public interest and environmental consideration State and Local Governments seek to erode rights...control your land...pick them off one at a time”.

Coordinator: Frank Wyton.

Council representative; Virginia Wyton (wife of Frank).


This group is run by Frank Wyton a vocal Council opponent. The Tweed Landowners Group was a pro-development free-enterprise/anti-communist group. This group and
another, Property Owners for Progress were set up in opposition to the Kingscliff Residents and Ratepayers Association.

**Property Owners for Progress Assoc. (POP)**

Inaugural meeting October 1988.

Chaired by Cr. Tom Hogan (later heavily involved in corruption allegations).

President: JA (Frank Wyton’s receptionist).

Mission: To transform Tweed Shire into Tweed City, also opposes TSC on the 50 year erosion line and supports development in South Kingscliff. ["Support for Development", 1988].

A new progress association for Fingal – called Property Owners for Progress – formed to give support to balanced development and as an alternative to the then present Kingscliff Ratepayers Association, which Property Owners for Progress described as a ‘left wing anti-everything’ group.

“We were shocked to hear that letters from Kingscliff Ratepayers were read out in TSC saying that the people of Kingscliff were against development…purport to represent people of Kingscliff but they do not”….there was a groundswell of opinion being generated that was opposed to the opinions being circulated by people claiming to be representing the community… POP will be a group that wants to see jobs for our children and prosperity for our people. This meeting will give people the opportunity to stand up for themselves, especially the young people….They are going to be the future property owners and will want to have a say in their own future ["Support for Development", 1988].

**Murwillumbah Business Corporation**

The leader of this group (Interviewee3) was fully supportive of the Nullum project. The group hosts several meetings critical of Council’s slow pace of development approval in 1988, and also released a land shortage document in 1988, critical of Councils urban land release in Murwillumbah. Interviewee 3 was president for 6 years.
up until June 1989. The goal of the group was to protect promote and advance the interests of the business community, a task which it has carried out for the past 30 or more years. The major objective had been to encourage the development and growth of Murwillumbah for the benefit of all its residents and those of the Shire. The group spent funds helping to promote local retailers.

Past activities of the Murwillumbah Business Corporation:

- Paint the Town project
- Employment of a Promotions Officer
- Negotiation of special bulk advertising rates
- Involvement with tourist associations
- Sponsor of various local events
- Keep Australia Beautiful/Tidy Towns
- Contributed to Doug Moran Art Prize
- Established close links with Council
- Highway beautification - $55 000 CEP grant + $5000 of the groups own funds
- **Involvement with major developments in the region including the Mt Nullum proposal**
- Produced a land shortage document and was involved with talks and representations on various matters including retention of the Court House
- Passenger rail services
- Motor Registry Office


**Tweed Electoral Lobby (TEL)**

President: (Interviewee 4)

Actions: Council ‘watchdog’, commented on Council activities and made several criticisms of the Nullum project early on.
4.3 Chronology and Synopsis

This section is a Chronology of Events that show how Council attempted to create the information necessary to justify its decision to relocate the wildlife corridor and the influence of the developer in that process. The following is a chronological synopsis of significant events showing the decisions made by Council staff, Councillors and the developer in respect to changing the land zone on Mt Nullum to facilitate the development. It has been reproduced (verbatim) from the Submission to the Mt Nullum Commission of Inquiry, Appendix 2, by Tweed Valley Conservation Trust and the Caldera Environment Centre (1990) with annotations and explanations added by the author – in [….]. The synopsis is actually a summary of the (now missing) file of Council documents such as memos, internal correspondence and minutes from meetings. The chronology here lists events from 1986 right up until the Commission of Inquiry is established in 1990.

“The developer’s interference and the Council’s compliant responses can best be appreciated by following the chronology of events marked with an asterisk …”

1980       Mt Nullum land bought by Council

Moran buys site for nursing home [Mountain View Retirement Village]

Commencement of Moran operations Nursing Home, Murwillumbah

Many Development Application amendments [to the nursing home approval]

21/3/86    Moran Art Prize initiated

26/3/86    Council accepts offer and responds with $50 000 contribution

*17/7/87   Shire President, Max Boyd, given Kinhill report on visit to Sydney

*20/7/87   Proposal to address Council on 12/8/87 to present Kinhill Scheme and offers:
1. Purchase price for Mt Nullum, $1 million
2. $1.2 million contribution for access road costs
3. Development Company to gift Art and Cultural Centre to Council costing $2 million

29/7/87  Moran and Kinhill address Council

30/7/87  Council accepts points 1-3 above

31/7/87  Chief Town Planner advises Kinhill that a formal DA would need to be dealt with before gazettal of Draft LEP

“You will appreciate some complications may be experienced regarding the helipad and perhaps golf course components. It is suggested that, if acceptable to Mr Moran, these items could be omitted for the time being, if the above procedure was adopted.”

4/8/87  Kinhill advised Council how to circumvent the brand new LEP

“Peter [Border: Chief Town Planner]: As discussed with Max [Boyd] we have identified through very senior contacts at Dept. of Planning that the following options are available:

• Amend Draft LEP with new Draft LEP
• Rescind portion of the Draft LEP:

.... Write a very carefully worded letter...

Kinhill would be happy to assist in this matter”

8/8/87  Dept. of Planning reject changes to Draft LEP

19/8/87  Chief Planner advises Moran that Council has resolved:

• Accept $1 million
• Construct but not pay for the road for $1.2 million
• Accept $2 million for Art Gallery
• Pay Kinhill $35 000 for EIS
• Developer to pay for services
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26/8/87</td>
<td>Moran’s solicitors accept above conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28/8/87</td>
<td>Director meets developers and stresses need for Zone change and protection of the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/9/87</td>
<td>Council’s solicitors advise against haste</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mt Nullum Environmental Study (MNES) not by Kinhill</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/9/87</td>
<td>Kinhill decline MNES commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>16/9/87</td>
<td>Council resolve to amend LEP to allow tourist facilities in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental Protection (Scenic Escarpment) zone [Amendment No. 1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/9/87</td>
<td>Chief Planner advises Dept. of Planning of intention to amend uses in Scenic Escarpment zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/8?/87</td>
<td>Chief Planner advises Dept. of Planning of intention to amend LEP after Gazettal to avoid delays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/9/87</td>
<td>Mitchell McCotter appointed to execute MNES for $15,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/11/87</td>
<td>Council resolve to amend Shire-Wide LEP to allow tourist facilities within specific Scenic Escarpment zone(s). No environmental study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/1/88</td>
<td>Council requests Minister to make plan for above Amendment No 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/2/88</td>
<td>Mitchell McCotter complete MNES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19/2/88</td>
<td>Chief Planner forwards Moran MNES and advises modifications to Kinhill scheme. Claims that access road designs are being prepared and requests further information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/5/88</td>
<td>Moran’s solicitors advise Council’s solicitors that Minister has signed Amendment No. 1. Preliminary approaches by Moran for Crown Land</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
27/5/88 Council’s solicitors advise that Amendment no. 1 may not be wide enough to permit proposed scheme

*22/6/88 Council’s solicitors receive contract of sale. Advise ‘fine-tuning’ for collateral agreement to achieve completion of scheme including art gallery. Conditions include:
   i. Zoning being satisfactorily changed
   ii. Development Approval
   iii. Acceptable joint venture agreement within 12 months
   iv. Access and approval to use lookout etc. in Crown Land

Moran flies to Murwillumbah in private plane with sale documents. Council agree to exchange documents with 28 conditions attached including long list of recommendations

24/6/88 [Ian] Causley [National Party, Member for Clarence, Minister for Natural resources] visits Tweed Heads Council meeting.

Deputy Director Crown Lands (Sinclair) reports developers made approach and were requested to make detailed proposal to Minister.

30/6/88 Council’s solicitors advise Moran he cannot acquire access road land

7/7/88 Council buys land for road access $100 000 for 17 acres

*21/7/88 Moran with Webster and Boyd visit [Deputy Premier] Wal Murray’s office. Claims he will reverse tourist drain to Queensland and to have cooperation and assistance from ‘Local Environmental Protection Organisations’. Site to be policed by ‘park ranger troop’. Seeks transfer of Crown Land

Director meets with Boyd and Moran. Doubts are raised with Director and Council whether development is a tourist facility or a nursing home.

26/7/88 Moran seeks assurance that the following are allowable:
• Sanatorium
• Subdivision of scheme
• Extension of any listed elements onto Crown Land which is to be acquired

*29/7/88 Moran writes to Causley stating he has purchased Council land for ‘great health and tourist facility’ and seeks purchase of Crown Land Portion 71.

*2/8/88 Deputy Planner, Gary Smith, flies to Sydney to meet developers and explain planning constraints and discuss alternative devices to accommodate requests from Moran Operations

*4/8/88 Moran writes to [Don] Beck [National Party, MP for Murwillumbah] seeking assistance to move wildlife corridor


Discontent with TLEP [Tweed Local Environmental Plan] because of large numbers of amendments sought

Shire wide review to allow Tourist Facilities in Environment Protection Zones


24/8/88 Applications for shire wide Review to change Environmental Protection (Habitat) 7(a) and 7(d) zones

*25/8/88 [Crs. Max] Boyd, [Tom] Hogan, [Shire Clerk, Jim] Nixon, [Chief Town Planner, Peter] Border, [?] Forster (Council) and Moran,
Webster (Developers) to meet Tim Moore. Moore requires extra study on wildlife corridor “to minimise its impact on the development… (But) conserve the proper fauna access paths.”

30/8/88 Council’s solicitors advise on 6 conditions of contract (Road access not acquired by Council). Problem paying Stamp Duty before everything is resolved in developer’s favour. (60 days from July 1 - 31 August)

1/9/88 Developer threatens to rescind contract. Unhappy with Moore

*1/9/88 After a brief visit by McCotter and Holmes (consultants) [Bruce] Chick (local eccentric [*! - former head of TVCT, supported the development]) and Shane Moran (son and heir) to the site, McCotter claims he:

- Assessed the ecological function of the wildlife corridor;
- Inspected alternative linkages between Mt. Warning and Nightcap Range;
- Determined whether development is compatible with the site

And advises on ways of manipulating zonings to allow for exploitation. These studies executed at the behest of Deputy Premier, Wal Murray, and Mr Moran

2/9/88 Mitchell McCotter claim they can move corridor around site to allow development on plateau. “This will be confirmed when Mr Holmes studies are complete.”

13/9/88 Cabinet Office informs Moran that Environment Minister is responsible for conservation of environment and that flora and fauna study should be undertaken

21/9/88 Environment Minister informs Local Member [Don Beck] NPWS is prepared “to work expeditiously with representatives of the proponent in redesigning the wildlife corridor through the area so as to minimise its impact on any proposed development and to do this in a fashion that
will still conserve the proper fauna access paths.” He stresses the need for further studies.

30/9/88  Moore informs Boyd he is prepared to have NPWS consider the wildlife corridor in context of MNES and MNSES [Mt Nullum supplementary Environmental Study]. Points out potential problems of lake and golf course, need for careful consideration at the planning stage.

5/10/88  MNSES report received and distributed to Moore, Hay, Beck and Moran. Suggests:

1. Apply to have permissible uses of Habitat (7(l)) the same as scenic escarpment (7(d)) zone.
2. Amend boundaries of Habitat (7(l)) around site as shown by consultants.

14/10/88  Council to Moran suggesting meeting to discuss above.

*17/10/88  Moran to Council complaining that Mitchell McCotter “have produced a totally unsatisfactory report which is not only deficient in correcting the wildlife corridor problem but also presumes to detail a layout for the proposed complex.”

17/10/88  Council meeting resolves to make correspondence public. Wal Murray advises in person that Horizontal Strata may be solution to subdivision problems.

*16/11/88  Without proper discussion, LEP Amendment No. 16, drafted by Moran’s solicitors is sent to Dept. of Planning to seek Section 65 Certificate.

19/11/88  Discussion between Hume and Apitz (Dept. of Planning) Border (Chief Council Planner), Nixon (Shire Clerk) and Boyd (Shire President) agree that draft plan should be returned to Council.
6/12/88 Council write to Dept. of Planning asking for Council’s Section 65 request to be expedited quickly

8/12/88 Local Member, Beck to Dept. of Planning, “ditto”

23/12/88 Draft Plan Amendment 16 returned to Council with 11 points of concern:

i. MNES recommendation that a more suitable wildlife corridor or Habitat (7l) zone should be determined as an alternative to the site

ii. Landscape/scenic qualities should be maintained and not that the natural environment is considered part of a tourist facility.

iii. Many of the list of facilities (Clause 50 (C2)) are ancillary activities and do not need to be independent of tourist facility, especially permanent residential accommodation because other land within the shire has been identified for such development.

iv. “Any other like purpose” is too open. More thought on appropriate form and intensity of development

v. Include a ‘sunset clause’

vi. MNSES has recommended further studies. Environment Minister has advised more detailed studies at DA stage. Therefore, council should consider a clause requiring “consultation with NPWS”.

vii. General planning matters concerning inconsistencies with NCREP:

   a. Clause 20 Permanent residential to be justified.
   b. Clause 29. Altered controls in Environmental Protection zone to be justified
   c. Clause 45: Hazards such as soil instability, bushfire and septic effluent require State Dept. consultations.
   d. Clause 71. Sewerage servicing requires definition and justification
   e. Clause 72. Permanent residential should be deleted [??]


*16/1/89 Letter from Moran to Council:

“We review with dismay the recommendations of your Chief Town Planner which virtually amounts to a capitulation without opposition
to the suggestion of the local Director of the Dept. of Planning, and would be a repudiation of the agreement reached between Council and ourselves.”

*18/1/89 Chief Planner recommends:

- Consultation with the NPWS
- Sunset Clause of four years
- LEP Amendment No. 18 wildlife corridor over surrounding (private) land.

*Councillor Hogan says he has been instructed by Moran to advise Council to send plan back to Dept. of Planning unaltered

Council votes against recommendations of Chief Planner and requirements of Dept. of Planning and re-submits (Moran’s) Draft Plan.

Deputation of Don Beck (Local Member), Moran, Boyd (Shire President), Peter Border (chief planner), Jim Nixon (Shire Clerk) and Tom Hogan to lobby Planning Minister, David Hay

3/2/89 Planning Minister discusses project with Dept. of Planning officers, delegation from Council and Moran.

27/2/89 Dept. of Planning issues a conditional Section 65 Certificate requiring:

i. Further consideration of wildlife corridor and relationship to golf course

ii. Moran to provide details to justify permanent residential accommodation (contrary to clause 72 of NCREP)

iii. Show any changes at Exhibition Period that are proposed when Council resubmits plan to Dept. of Planning and Minister

iv. As part of Section 68 [should be 65?] submission, Council should assess environmental effects of golf course and lake proposals.

(These points are not clearly expressed. Council did not show changes at Exhibition Period. NO justification for 250 units. Golf course out
but lake in Exhibited Plan the same as one submitted two months earlier but rejected with 12 items of concern)

May 1989 Philip Cox, architect for Moran prepares detailed plans for presentation to Council. No golf course. Suggestion of wildlife corridors through development

3/6/89 ICAC announces hearings into the conduct of the Tweed Shire Council

19/6/89 Plan exhibited

31/7/89 Same drafting as the original Moran solicitor’s plan, but:

i. Change of 7 (l) to 7 (d) zones on subject site A switch of Scenic Escarpment to Habitat and Habitat to Scenic Escarpment.
   a. No Environmental Study for proposed wildlife corridor.
   No amendment of zones for proposed corridor

ii. Public not informed of proposed changes (Golf course, 7(l) and 7(d) transposition).

1/8/89 Council receive 172 submissions (154 against)

Council Planner claims the following day in press “that all questions can be answered” and prepares report by August 2.

Public comment treated contemptuously

NPWS report ignored (two days late).

9/8/89 Council approve plan in essence but requires further studies before DA stage (Apparently do not realise that wildlife corridor is not legally defined by Amendment No. 16 but requires Shire-wide review No. 3 – change of allowable uses in Habitat Zone)

2/2/90 Commission of Inquiry established.
Chapter 5 – Interview Analysis

5. Interview Data Reporting and Analysis

This chapter is an analysis of the interview data; three community group leaders and one journalist were interviewed. Leaders of the groups Tweed Electoral Lobby, Caldera Environment Centre and the Murwillumbah Business Corporation, were interviewed following an interview guide developed from the Case Study Protocol. The following analysis of interview data sorts the responses into a structured format that is derived from the Case Study Protocol, this helps to ensure that interviewee statements are kept relevant to the aims of the thesis. The leader of the pro-development group was unavailable and not interviewed, the material supplied in the local media preserves an excellent chronology for the groups he was involved in, and selected quotes from the documentary analysis are supplied here to clarify statements in the interview analysis. A journalist of the time was interviewed for his perspectives on the role of the media and the relative influence of the developer, Council and volunteer community groups. Table 5-1 below lists the interviewees and the respective community groups.

Limitations on the interviews included the length of time between the events examined in the case study and time of interview (over 20 years). In order to validate the data from interviews documentary research and newspaper archives was used to triangulate the data. Figure 5.1 shows where this chapter fits within the study and analysis of results. The responses from the interviews inform the later discussion chapters.
Table 5-1 List of Interviewees

*Interviewees and associated groups and the groups’ stance in respect to the Mt Nullum development proposal.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Stance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 1</td>
<td>Caldera Environment Centre</td>
<td>Anti-Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 2</td>
<td>Newspaper Reporter</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 3</td>
<td>Murwillumbah Business Corporation</td>
<td>Pro-Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 4</td>
<td>Tweed Electoral Lobby</td>
<td>Anti-Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chapter will explore the main actors in the case and the related personal motivations and ideologies and whether the interviewees were in support or opposition to the proposal to develop Mt Nullum. The next sections of this chapter (Sections 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4) explore interviewee’s recollections of the developer, the proposal and the role of Government in the decision making process. The next section (section 5.5) explores the role of the media in reporting the issue and the challenges to a volunteer group in getting their message across. Section 5.6 explores the Commission of Inquiry and the roles people played in the inquiry process. Sections 5.7, 5.8, and 5.9 examine interviewees’ roles in establishing and running community groups, and explores the question of group formation and longevity posed in the Introduction. The chapter concludes with five lessons about the function of community groups learned from the interviewees’ responses.
Figure 5.1 Structure of Thesis, Interview Analysis
5.1 Who were the Main Actors in this Case?

5.1.1 Who were the Conservationists?

From the community’s perspective there were two opposing forces in the community at the time, business interests and mainstream economic development versus the hippy environmentalist or conservationist ethic. As described in the next chapter documentary analysis, there was a major demographic change on the NSW far north coast with new internal migrants bringing a different view on the world to the established rural communities of the Tweed (Kijas, 2011). This demographic change brought with it social disruption as the accounts below indicate. As explained by Interviewee 1 the Hippies were seen as second class citizens, and they were especially derided when their nonconformity impacted upon the established democratic and economic institutions of the community of Murwillumbah. Even now the claims of conservationists about the merit of the wildlife corridor that ran through the development site are disputed by the former leader of the Murwillumbah Business Corporation.

*In those days it was the Dirty Hippies. The Dirty Hippies never washed, had morals like Tomcats, smoked dope and didn’t pay their rates probably….There was the thing about the alternative community and therefore the people like myself who were actually trying to stop the development ... I think you can read it in the Wyton’s attitudes....and how dare we be poor dole bludgers anyway.*

Interviewee 1

The comments below are excerpts taken from Letters to the editor written by Wyton (1988b; 1988c) as the leader of the Tweed Landowners Group and as an individual. These comments reflect the vitriolic contempt and cynicism by some of the Pro-development groups towards the motivations of conservationists. These included here as they graphically illustrating the rhetorical force that the local media employed to intimidate the opposition to development and provide strong evidence that the community was polarised over the issue.
Some sticky-beaks have all day to sit around hatching plans to restrict the freedoms of other enterprising people. It’s no secret these groups have an aversion to job creating projects. They use Greenie rhetoric and left-wing clichés to batter achievers. Like communists, radical feminists and other unsavoury agitators they specialise in the circulation of letters and petitions....our nation is in the grip of oddball minorities who are wreaking havoc with our economy and social fabric....Principles are principles and freedoms are freedoms...The principle at stake … is the developers right to control his own private land. If one person’s right can be violated by a gang of envious non-productive letter writers we all have reason to fear for the future of our nation [Wyton, 1988c].

One of the most hackneyed words around today is community. Our left wing political activists seem to use it in almost every sentence. Often when people use the word community they are in fact talking about the ‘state’. When a person says the community must be consulted … they really mean ‘permission must be granted by the state’. Adolf Hitler …firmly believed in the supremacy of the community or state over the individual...Joseph Stalin used the ‘good of the community’ or the national interest to outperform Hitler...Mao Tse Tung knocked off millions more (people) no doubt to benefit the community. The most recent example of ‘state’ or ‘community’ power at work was in Cambodia only a decade ago. That great communist ‘Greenie’ Pol Pot banned all farm machinery and agricultural chemicals...he destroyed industrial machinery and tried to banish all technology from the land. He murdered the doctors and scientists and for the good of the ‘community’ he forced all the hapless city dwellers back to nature [Wyton, 1988b].

Conservationists, environmentalists and Greenies were seen in this context as a major impediment to the economic development of the region, doing nothing productive and hampering the productivity of others. Conservationists also represented (as the letters above try to assert) a major threat to free societies as members could be the vanguard of communism or be the start of some other totalitarian regime. Oreskes and Conway
(2010) describes the effort of conservative social forces to establish a link between environmentalists and communists during the 1980s and traces it back to the debate over nuclear winter and the Reagan era ‘Star Wars’ program. This is a link that Wyton exploited to his best advantage.

5.1.1.1 Conservationists Stated Motivations

Despite the vitriolic attacks in the media and becoming pariahs within the established towns and villages where the activists lived, the environmentalists and conservationists had a robust worldview that motivated actions. This differing perspective on the environment and landscape was partially informed by tertiary education and global travel, and having a greater sense of compassion for non-human entities whether flora, fauna or a landscape feature. Besides these factors, the perception of the developer Doug Moran as manipulating due process, especially in light of the recent Independent Commission against Corruption inquiries, helped motivate conservationists. Interviewee 1, from the Environment Centre explains how he thought that the intrinsic natural values of landscape and environment were absent in Australian culture but present in other cultures he had visited and that this perspective made him more alert to the threat posed by the development of Mt Nullum:

[The Japanese] have a respect for mountains, like Fuji is the holy mountain... a bit like the people in Nepal, the Himalayas are sacred. So I had a bit of an idea that mountains are not places that you build on that you should leave them as wild places. The idea of a wild place being sacred at that time was very contrary to ... 80% of Australians who think that any piece of dirt is something you can exploit.

I think the idea of landscape value, something that I have always been conscious about because I am an architect and I have always liked landscape paintings and, the landscape...I think the Australian landscape is just the most wonderful asset we’ve got really and its’ very undervalued by the majority of people. I always saw Mt Nullum as a
landscape feature that deserved to survive just on that basis really [...] the idea of it being developed as a ‘volcano land’ or as a resort, it wasn’t very hard to imagine buildings poking their heads above the ramparts as it were... and would you want to have such a fantastic view of Mt Warning with a whole lot of shit in the foreground? I had a strong visual impression about it.  

Interviewee 1

Besides the landscape values of the area another major concern for the conservationists were the social and legal processes occurring due to the development proposal. Doug Moran was viewed by the conservationists as a member of the social elite, akin to an English Lord, being granted special treatment in response to his wealth and philanthropy. Council was facilitating Moran’s wishes by not undertaking rigorous environmental studies and ignoring community objections.

[Also] the way it was done via Moran; people like myself who were in the more in the old-style socialist type of thinking even though I went to an exclusive school I’ve always had the feeling it’s not really for the wealthy to lord it over the public. And with Moran it was the very wealthy developer from Sydney coming up and using his money and charm ... to manipulate the Council to get what he wanted was a very strong motivation for myself and enough other people.

Doug Moran was really dictating to the Councillors how they should go about this process...even to the point of telling them where the good land....telling them where the wildlife corridors should be and so he was really... it wasn’t at arm’s length at all. And that was our argument. Here you have a developer that was dictating to the Council about how they should go about the development application process... and it actually involved a rezoning, and... if there is a time when you can get things going on a more scientific basis it is at the rezoning stage because [rezonings] are supposed to be based on scientific evidence and it was fairly easy to show that they had really drawn these notional...
lines on the map that didn’t follow the environmental values, that these lines had been put on the map to facilitate the development.…

Interviewee 1

The journalist (Interviewee 2) explains his perspective on the issue in terms of the precedent that had been set through Amendment No. 1 which allowed the development of tourist facilities within Environmental Zones. Mt Nullum was only the first campaign of many for the newly formed Caldera Environment Centre.

One of the setbacks was that it was zoned scenic escarpment and there was supposed to be no development and so they changed that to allow development in the scenic escarpment, and that set off a bloody rush in other places then for anything that was…on a hill, ‘you beauty! …Views!’ … and that’s where the environment centre then had all their battles to prevent these scenic escarpment developments.

Interviewee 2

The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) inquiry of 1989-90 strongly influenced perceptions of complicity between developers and the local Council. The leader of the Tweed Electoral Lobby explains how the ICAC inquiry motivated him to begin his community group to keep an eye on Council decisions. He further explains how the Mt Nullum development would create a precedent for future development.

Interviewer: what was the reason given for starting up [Tweed Electoral Lobby]?

It was mostly in relation to development in the Tweed and it followed a period of investigation of Council members by the ICAC. [...] There was some philosophical stuff, mainly surrounding Moran but I think it was mostly environmental. How dare they! There’s this mountain you can see from everywhere and they want to put a nursing home up there or something; and how was he going to get it up? And what did it mean for the environment in general if that sort of thing could be thrust into
the middle of it? It was like a war of principle ... it was a big development in an environmentally sensitive area and that was incompatible in the thinking of people on the left. I'm not sure if there was going to be that much environmental damage. But it just seems so silly.

Interviewee 4

The primary motivation of conservationists was to challenge the paradigm of development and protect the natural environment. Concerns ranged from procedural legal issues, social considerations and the desire to protect nature. The threat posed by the rezoning and the development in creating a legal precedent and feelings of elitism and corruption on the part of the developer and Council were also motivations. The concerns of the conservationists were not well received by the established business community.

5.1.1.2 Business Perception of Environmental Motivations

The concerns of the business community were centred on economic growth and the development needed to achieve greater regional prosperity. In 1989 the concerns of environmentalists were hard for economically minded business people to understand; the environment was viewed as a resource to be exploited and claims about wildlife corridors were spurious as these denied the reality of the site as steep, inaccessible and impenetrable. The rebuttal of environmental arguments by the business community was anthropocentric and denied alternative perspectives and uses for the area that were not catering to human needs.

And I will never forget this environmentalist up there when he turned around and started to talk about wildlife corridors and how it was an important link to Mt Warning. He actually identified on a map this wildlife corridor and how the animals would track across to Mt Warning. You know what the interesting thing about that is? That the wildlife corridor, there’s an absolute cliff; on Mt Nullum there’s a plateau and there’s a cliff down here like that and here’s Mt Warning.
The route to Mt Warning doesn’t exist through Mt Nullum because of the cliff. But that didn’t stop the argument. And the reality was that it wasn’t going to be... it had already been logged...

Interviewee 3

This anthropocentric view of the environment is what Leopold (1966) and Foreman (2013) consider to be a utilitarian or resourcist perspective. The leader of the Business Group still passionately defends the development concept and laments its loss. The development of Mt Nullum was seen as a major economic boost to the area, providing much needed employment and generating extra revenue for the shire. The environmental impacts, according to the Business Group were negligible and would easily be offset by any economic development.

And in fact the whole philosophy of the [Nullum] project was to blend and be part of that environment. And there was potentially going to be a chairlift up from the riverside I think. And I saw that as a major plus for the region.

We certainly supported the Mt Nullum project because we could see that it would be a major driver for two things; one for the health industry which we began to realise had enormous potential, and the other thing of course was that there was a tourist component as well.

Interviewee 3

The leader of the Murwillumbah Business Corporation not only failed to understand the motivations of conservationists in protecting the landscape of Mt Nullum, but also viewed revegetation or environmental restoration work in very utilitarian terms. For example, Stott’s Island is a subtropical rainforest remnant in the Tweed River Estuary, the only piece of lowland vegetation not cleared for sugarcane. In 1988 the land adjacent to it was starting to be revegetated by planting mixed rainforest species on the site, the area was named Bruce Chick Park in honour of the man who had initiated the project. However even this project is criticised as unnecessary as it obscures the view of the water; unless there is an immediate utilitarian or economic value to
society the business group leader did not want to acknowledge environmental benefits.

*Interviewer:* [...] I noticed along your driveway you’ve got a lot of pine-trees and stuff... was that part of Tweed Valley Conservation Trust’s or Bruce Chicks pine-tree planting scheme perhaps?

Yes, and I curse him every single day ... I mean only from the point of view that I understood that ... I believed in what he was saying about reafforestation and all the rest of it...but they [the pine trees] are not worth a cracker [...] So there’s a great idea, and a great example and I guess if I had been smarter I would have asked the question, and I thought Bruce had all the answers, he told me we were running out of timber [...] in fact I have got about 20 Red Cedar up there in my pine-trees as well, one day maybe, who knows?...but the problem with these people is [...] every time I drive past Stott’s Island the hair goes up on the back of my neck because Stott’s Island used to be a really, really nice area. Can you see the creek now? [...] No. There’s not much is there? So you know Bruce went too far in the sense that again, he was about planting trees. And you see that’s a really good point and it’s not just about ...it’s about the big picture. I don’t know how to explain that even more. His idea was sound, ‘grow pine-trees’. Right, but hang on a moment Bruce, but what are the broader implications and long-term implications of that? Plant trees around Stott’s island. It looks good, but what are the broader implications of that? See what I am saying?

*Interviewee 3*

The emphasis of the statements from the leader of the Business group is that the revegetation has obscured the views that were there previously, which was the primary value of the site. This highlights one of the fundamental failures of business groups to comprehend the motivations of environmentalists or conservationists, who without any immediate economic benefits seem to struggle to understand the purpose of revegetation projects or the concept of conservation.
5.1.1.3 Business Group Motivations

Tweed Landowners Group, Property Owners for Progress and the Murwillumbah Business Corporation were motivated by wealth and the prospect of development, not only of Mt Nullum, but also by the rest of the $200 million worth of developments proposed at the time. The Business Group and Pro-Development Group established in a fashion similar to the Conservation Groups, perceiving a lack of government support and understanding for their particular worldview. From the business perspective it was that government, particularly at a local level, did not understand business and created too many obstacles (or red tape) for free enterprise and the economy to prosper.

Our frustration was that we knew we had a problem in terms of economics and we were accepting of the fact that we didn’t have the answers but we didn’t believe that other levels of government, certainly local government, understood the needs [...] actually, would you believe that the economic development corporation, which was an evolution of my involvement with the chamber originally, is the first time that governments started to really understand the problems?

Interviewee 3

The Tweed Landowners Group headed by Wyton made the following claim:

…we will protect landowners against unjust treatment by Councils and State Governments… Its first job will be to coordinate action against the unjust Local Environment Plan. [Wyton, 1988a]

The two business groups had different approaches, the Murwillumbah Business Corporation was committed to investigating the problems and working on a solution with Council. The Wyton groups were more antagonistic and made public proclamations about “unjust” treatment and were the beginning of a sustained attack on Council policies (and personalities) that affected a landholder’s ‘right’ to develop without interference. The business groups attacked conservationists for the same reason Council was attacked, the difference was that the business groups failed to
understand the motivations of conservationists, whereas conservationists understood the motivations of the business groups.

5.1.1.4 Perception of Business by Conservationists

It appears that the business groups failed to understand the scientific research behind nature reserves, landscape connectivity and the role of planning in nature conservation. However, it is interesting to note that the leader of the Tweed Electoral Lobby had taken the time to understand the motivations of the business groups. While there was no agreement on principles, the conservationists had a better understanding of the business perspective than business people had of the conservation perspective.

Wyton was very much into simply rezoning Cudgen. I don’t think it was so much in his interests, it was purely a philosophical thing ... he was into the very broad difference between conservatives and right wing [which] is greater freedom for conservatives down to an individual level and the other [side’s belief] is greater involvement or greater actions on behalf of a broad community. There’s room for both of those. But if you get locked into one as opposed to the other it becomes a bit of a philosophical war. Wyton was very concerned about left wing Greenies; people saying what you could and couldn’t do with your land. Zonings were irrelevant and the principles behind zonings were just bureaucracy and so that was where he was coming from.

Interviewee 4

5.1.2 Who Supported the Development?

It was not only the business groups who supported the Mt Nullum development, one of the Tweed’s premier conservationists publicly supported the development in its initial phase. Bruce Chick was lauded as “the Man of the Trees” and received an Order of Australia Medal for his efforts in revegetation. Able to cut across generations and social barriers, Bruce Chick popularised and normalised tree planting in a time before Landcare or other revegetation groups were established. He was seen as an
inspirational figure and was able to convey his message to a wide variety of groups of people.

Yes, I think a role model that would be a reasonable thing... [Bruce] was a very difficult man to follow, I mean he was so, so energetic; he climbed Mt Warning at 90! Maybe 92, but anyway, he was very important in getting me started and getting me into the Conservation Trust and me believing that the Green movement needed community support got me into community involvement...
Interviewee 4

People liked Bruce Chick because he achieved a lot with his activism in rehabilitation, and that attracts people, and they say ‘this is not just about whinging Hippies, they are actually trying to do something good for the environment’, and that’s become a lot stronger now with Landcare and Dunecare.
Interviewee 1

Bruce Chick helped to establish the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust and also the Tweed-Brunswick Reafforestation Committee which were respectively, the forerunners of the Caldera Environment Centre and Tweed-Brunswick Landcare in the 1990s. In the late 1980s Bruce Chick was the most well respected environmentalist in the Tweed Shire. It is surprising then to find that he vocally supported the proposed development of Mt Nullum when the idea was first proposed. An article in the local newspaper, “Conservationist backs corridor location” (1988) quotes Bruce Chick as head of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust saying “In my opinion the corridor shown is not a good corridor. It could be moved aside to the escarpment without doing any harm and, in fact, would be improved…” However this was seen by others in the conservation movement as a betrayal and he was criticised for this stance.

Bruce Chick has always been a bit of an opportunist, I think. He has done a lot of good, and one shouldn’t subtract from that. But he also
realised that by toadying up to [Shire President] Max Boyd that he could then influence the Council...Bruce Chick ... he was a bit of a saint, in fact he was anointed ... The Man of the Trees...and Bruce Chick became a Man of the Trees and also got his Order of Australia Medal of which he was very proud, and good luck to him, but Bruce was not beyond fairly egotistical, self-centred viewpoints. I don’t want to sound too embittered, it did annoy me a bit that he would launch into the wonderful things he had done at any opportunity and I suppose, really in a way he was a good politician, because that’s what politicians do, they always talk themselves up, and remind people about how invaluable they are.

Interviewee 1

The public support of Bruce Chick may have had to do with the fact that he and the President of the Shire were quite close friends, and the Shire President was an enthusiastic supporter of the Mt Nullum project. Bruce’s support of the Mt Nullum development may have been motivated more by fraternity than by actual understanding of the ecological issues involved as Interviewee Two explains.

Yeah, well [Bruce] was a favourite of Max-y [shire president], he just used to just love going out and planting trees wherever he could. He understood the environment; his career was trees and he just liked the environment, he didn’t like anything being knocked down especially the rare and endangered stuff. So he was one of the few who had a good local knowledge of what the Valley had to offer and he was passionate about the Valley and about protecting some of its finer stuff...

Interviewer: He comes across as very supportive of the Moran proposal.

Yeah, he could have been. Look, it doesn’t mean that they don’t step out of that role but...He might have been....well Max was full on for it and Bruce and Max were good friends and that happened. You know I
think Max has told him that. What was he going up there and saying that there were no good trees worth protecting [...] I think when you looked at Mt Nullum; it had been severely logged, so it was all regrowth...So I guess he was saying, 'look, there’s nothing up there that’s really super-duper…'[...] Max had just pulled him along and he’s just joined Max in ....you know him and Max might have got together one night and Max’s just convinced him that we need this, and there’s nothing really up there, is there?

Interviewee 2

The friendship between the Shire President and the region’s leading conservationist helps to explain the support that was expressed by Bruce Chick for the project. Even after Bruce Chick removed himself from the debate, his earlier comments were recycled in the newspaper and even on a ‘form letter’ supporting the project. However, the comments he made in the media on behalf of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust supporting the project can be seen as a primary reason for the eventual creation of a new environmental group.

5.1.2.1 The General Community

The two extremes in this debate over the development of Mt Nullum were the conservationists who did not want the mountain developed and the Business groups who were in favour of development. Interviewee 1 explains that it was hard informing the public about the issue and that there was support for the project from many in the community. Other interviewees do not recall many other sectors of the community being supportive of the project. Even the business community was not vocal in its support of the project according to Interviewee 3, instead public comments were left up to the business lobby group.

But people [...] quite prominent in the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust, thought that because people like Phillip Cox [a prominent and respected architect] was involved that it was going to be an okay development. So there was quite a lot of support that was quite difficult
to counteract. You had the artistic people who should have known better, and the business people who thought that was going to be a boom, real estate and other booms because of the Moran empire, “Interviewee 3” and all of them. [...] It was a bit like out of sight, out of mind for most people... Very few people have been to the top of Mt Nullum so you have that problem. It was like with the Franklin River, when people saw the beauty that some of those photographs … and The Wilderness Society had those calendars made.

Interviewee 1

Interviewer: Here is a form letter supportive of the development I would like to ask you do you remember any individuals or other community groups who were supportive of the proposal?

2: No. I don’t remember any.

Interviewer: So there was no concerted campaign to promote it…?

2: No... I don’t recall any. Bruce Chick and Max ...It was a fait accompli everyone was going for it anyway...

Interviewee 2

3: Mt Nullum was another interesting thing that we certainly supported at the time and there were several things that were proposed for the Tweed but never eventuated [...] we had established a relationship with Doug Moran and he had identified Mt Nullum and we also thought that was a good idea and we supported that as well. That’s the other interesting thing again. And this is really an important point; there was enormous support for Mt Nullum. But, the business community individually are not going to stand up because of the implications of standing up for something that can offend potential customers.

Interviewee 3
The three comments here from different respondents show quite different perspectives on the broad community support for the development. Conservationists saw many people ‘who should have known better’ supporting the project, and the business group seems to indicate that there was wide community support for the project. However as Interviewee 2 reveals there was no organised community support for the project comparable to the organised opposition established by conservation groups.

5.2 What was Being Proposed for Mt Nullum?

The exact details of the Mt Nullum development proposal are discussed in greater detail in other chapters (see the following chapter, Documentary Analysis). The comments below highlight the different ways in which the conservation group and the business group saw the same development. Conservationists saw ulterior motives in the development proposal, while the business group accepted it at face value because of the inherent economic spin-offs.

*The Mt Nullum proposal was basically the Moran Health Care Company. Moran had this empire and had become very wealthy... So Doug Moran had this idea that he was going to have a health care resort on top of the mountain. But I think it was a Trojan horse for just a resort... But he was also developing the Tugun Hospital.... One idea was that people would fly to the (Coolangatta) airport from overseas and have procedures done in Australia and then fly out again. So he (Moran) had a few irons in the fire including the Mountain View Retirement Village and that was being developed about the time he was trying to get Mt Nullum up.*

Interviewee 1

*Well it was always going to be the latest, you beaut, Gee Whiz; latest, modern up-to-date, glam, glitzy...it was going to out glam the Gold Coast really. And there was going to be this luxurious spa and health resort.... I think that’s what they were calling it a health resort and spa.*
Where the rich, the super-rich would be recuperating after their operations in... Doug Moran’s Hospital of Excellence.

Interviewee 2

As an extension to that Mr Moran’s vision was to establish facilities in the southern Gold Coast, Tweed area that would allow people to fly in for specialist type surgery and accommodate them in facilities that would allow them to recuperate and part of that was ... he then identified Mt Nullum as a possible mountainous area in a subtropical zone which would be perfect for his plan to fly people in for surgery and have them rest and recover up on Mt Nullum. We certainly supported the Mt Nullum project because we could see that it would be a major driver for two things; one for the health industry which we began to realise had enormous potential, and the other thing of course was that there was a tourist component as well.

Interviewee 3

The Mt Nullum proposal was seen by these community group leaders as either an economic boon or a money making exercise for an already very rich man. The impacts of the development were seen as having a major outcome on the economy by the business groups, however the conservation groups believed that the development would be a real-estate venture from which Doug Moran would profit greatly and the concept plan of a sanatorium was just a means to an end. The same distinctions were made by the groups in respect to the developer were also held by the community groups.

5.3 Who was the Developer?

Doug Moran was seen as a man of vision, an expert at public relations or simply a ruthless businessman by the Interviewees. The construction of the art gallery and the establishment of Doug Moran Portrait Prize are still widely acknowledged as being beneficial to the Tweed region. Interviewee 2 explains how Moran’s ego interfered with the projects he desired to build, such as the Hospital of Excellence having doors
not wide enough for hospital trolleys. Interviewee 3, from the Business Chamber provides a brief glimpse into the connection between the developer, Council and the community.

Doug Moran, he set up the art prize which put the Tweed on the map.... he’s just a businessman... a businessman with a fair amount of influence. You build a hospital that is that big and you propose something for Mt Nullum that’s happening. And he had a lot of influence. I didn’t have any other issues with him, as a matter of fact I liked his idea of art-prize, but I didn’t like his idea of constraints on the art-prize...But he was valuable to the Tweed because ... it was one of the things that I will always find acceptable is to have a great [art] gallery.

Interviewee 4

I thought that he [Doug Moran] was a brilliant individual that had vision. ... I camped on Mt Nullum with Doug Moran [the developer], Max Boyd [Shire President], Peter Border [Council Chief Planner] and myself [Leader of Murwillumbah Business Corporation].

Interviewee 3

He was just an ego-maniac, Moran. He just built this hospital...you can have a look at it now...it’s just glass; the bill to keep that air-conditioning on is just through the roof. This is what an idiot he was. He didn’t care about the environment; well I suppose this was before Global Warming, but for goodness sakes, if you want to run a hospital you want to try and minimise your operating costs, and the first thing he does is that, he covers it in glass, but it looks bloody great....And then everything had to be redesigned inside because he had these grandiose schemes for the rooms and everything...but the doors weren’t wide enough for hospital trolleys... he didn’t even have the nous to get people who build hospitals to come in and consult otherwise that wouldn’t have happened. ... And there was going to be helicopters....
and all this. He was full of big ideas…he was just a big ideas exponent and a con-artist. And if it comes off it could work you know, but who knows?

Interviewee 2

I think Doug aspired to nobility because one of his daughters, Kerry Jones is one of the main Monarchist spokespersons. So I get the impression that Doug probably didn’t have much education or culture and now that he has become a very wealthy person he wanted to become known for his artistic and cultural perception….it became pretty obvious that Doug Moran was manipulating the process to suit an aim which wasn’t in the best interests of the Shire; well that was our argument...

Interviewee 1

Described here variously as a brilliant individual, influential businessman, and con-artist, Doug Moran left quite a legacy in the community. Through his philanthropic work he created an art prize and an art gallery that helped to define the area and remove it from regional obscurity. It was this philanthropy that endeared him to the Council, business groups and the local community. The camping trip referred to by the head of the Business group demonstrates the close relationship that Moran had been fostering with the Council and others. However, in his business dealings he was considered quite manipulative and naïve (Wynne, 2006; the chapter, Documentary Analysis presents further information about Moran).

5.3.1 How did he Persuade the Council and the Community?

In order to help cultivate his image Moran employed an adept ability in public relations. There were three prongs to his strategy. The first was to win favour with the public and local government through the use of philanthropy by funding the art prize, and a public art gallery. The second was to deliver on his promises of economic progress through development. Finally, Moran would help ensure favourable political
support and press coverage by taking local officials and media representatives to expensive dinners and lunches.

He virtually took over the...I don’t think we had an art gallery at that time, so he established the Moran art prize which is the most generous prize for portraiture and I think it was interesting that he chose portraiture...because if you don’t know anything about art you probably think that portraiture is the high point. If you think of Rembrandt…. I always think it was a bit ironic that the Tweed is really noted for its landscape so a local landscape prize might have been more pertinent for the area. ...So that’s Doug Moran

Interviewee 1

He was good on the PR. He would just launch a huge PR blitz on it all and used to take them [Councillors] out and wine and dine them [...] I remember being at one at Oskar’s [a renowned restaurant on the Gold Coast]....he used to court the press as well. He was sort of like a snake-oil sales man. He just knew the advantage of good press. Everything was positive and he just kept the ball rolling with these lunches and things like that like at Oskar’s and the wine would flow ...

Interviewee 2

Doug Moran, he set up the art prize which put the Tweed on the map. Max Boyd [Shire President] was always keen on the gallery and pushing the gallery along which was never a right wing issue, overtly; although plenty of right-wing people love getting involved in that scene but they never saw it as something that government should be putting money into. Anyway that built up Friends of the Gallery and that ended up getting it going.

Interviewee 4

Doug Moran cultivated his influence through donating money to the arts and ‘wining and dining’ important people in the community. The actions of Moran described here
provide an insight into the ability of this particular developer to gain influence over policy makers and the media. This background of Moran as a rich and influential developer that helps to explain the later actions of Council in facilitating the development.

5.4 What was the Role of Council?

As the planning consent authority and land owner the Tweed Shire Council played a crucial role in facilitating the development proposal. As Interviewee 1 relates below, the links between the Council and the developer were very close to the point where decisions were actually being made for the Council by the developer. This is a fact that was revealed after Council publicly released all its documents about the rezoning process providing evidence for the conservation group’s case (all these documents were not archived, and hence are lost the only record of existence being the submission of the Caldera Environment Centre). As described above, Doug Moran had cultivated very close links with the Council and a strong personal friendship with the Shire President, Max Boyd. Indeed some of the attributes of the development can be construed as being designed to appeal to Max Boyd and his particular disabilities; such as the escalator to the summit for “elderly and the infirm”.

Well, there was Max Boyd himself probably he could see that he was going to become a champion for converting this very cheap land into becoming a big industry for the shire.... Max Boyd has always had this thing about being one-legged, and people may not realise that he had a stroke because he was a heavy smoker, and many people think that Major Max Boyd, because I think he was a major in the ... Korean war... you could see it in the way that he approached the Council. The Boyd’s take themselves very seriously as the early pioneers and ‘the salt of the Earth’ as far as the Tweed is concerned....

Max Boyd was coming under a lot of flak from the business community about not being .... I am not too sure what they were complaining about, because basically they were getting what they wanted. I am sure
that Max Boyd realised that the planning processes had not been very rigorous, and he probably had the intelligence to realise that. But the business community probably saw Max Boyd as caving in, but Max Boyd was probably just trying to cover his arse, so he decided to release all the documents that had been involved in the Council process...and that was quite a bonanza for us because that clearly showed that Max Boyd was listening to Doug Moran, and Doug Moran was really dictating to the Councillors how they should go about this process...even to the point of telling them where the good land....telling them where the wildlife corridors should be and so he was really... it was not at arm’s length at all.

Interviewee 1

...Well [the Shire President – Max Boyd] was full on for it...

Interviewee 2

So Max Boyd held onto Moran for a long time and was prepared to help him out with his Mt Nullum exercise. I’m not saying he did it without believing in it either. Max Boyd believed in Mt Nullum. But he’s probably less likely to see the problems with Mt Nullum because of his friendship with Moran.

Interviewee 4

While the Council could help facilitate the development by changing planning regulations at a local level and providing financial assistance, ultimately approval rested with the NSW State Government. A more detailed discussion about the procedural and legislative changes necessary to approve the development is in the following chapters, Documentary Analysis and Analysis Summary.

Council processes just hadn’t been good enough to stand up to superior inspection and the council thought that they could control the whole process themselves, not realising that to get a rezoning they had to go to the Minister and the Minister wasn’t going to put his neck on the line...
if it could be shown that there hadn’t been a good basis for these decisions.

Interviewee 1

The Commission of Inquiry took it out of Council’s hands so the numbers didn’t matter in there anymore...

Interviewee 4

Ultimately the State Government audited Council processes through the Commission of Inquiry and used the findings of the inquiry as a basis to make a final decision on the development. The Council supported the development proposal in every way it could, however as Interviewee 1 states, above, this was not enough to get the development approved.

5.4.1 Getting Elected to Council

In response to what the community groups perceived as unjust decisions by the Council, members from these groups started to become more politically active and attempt to get elected to Council. Whereas in the past these groups had seemed content to be on the outside of the political sphere and try to influence public perception through the media and by creating more groups to convey particular messages, becoming an elected representative in Local Government was seen as the best way to make effective policy changes. It is debatable whether a person establishes a community group with the goal of becoming an elected official, or if this is a natural progression, an evolution from ‘inspired community member’ through to ‘community group leader’ and then elected representative. This question was not explored in this study, however the responses below give some indication about how the various groups approached the issue of election.

The only group whose members expressed absolutely no interest in becoming an elected official belonged to the business corporation. This may be due to the fact that this group was already closely affiliated with Council through a close funding arrangement and having a Councillor as a member of its committee. The first group to achieve electoral success was the pro-development group. Wyton helped his wife
become elected, however as described by Interviewee 2 below, he completely manipulated her to his own advantage.

*Frank Wyton’s wife, Virginia got elected to the Council, and he used to be in the public gallery giving her signals and calling her out and telling her... and putting her right about how she should go about and come back and vote, it was like ...he just stood over her, it was bizarre. She only lasted, she was a bimbo you know, a blonde bimbo sort of thing and she was quite attractive but he completely dominated her.*

Interviewee 2

*He eventually got his wife into Council and he used to sit up in the gallery and direct her virtually...*

Interviewee 4

After his wife resigned mid-term a by-election was called to replace her seat, Frank Wyton started campaigning to become elected as a Councillor. Of all the group leaders it is most probable that Wyton’s goal was to use community organisations to gain publicity to become elected. Unfortunately, Wyton failed in his electoral bid and his letters and articles in the paper begin to become less common until they disappear completely.

The Electoral Lobby and Environment Centre fielded candidates in Council elections from 1990 to the 2000s. Interviewee 4 describes how he had to change his methods from being a community group leader to an election marketeer in order to achieve this goal, which compromised his personal integrity. Ultimately the election of the Electoral Lobby group leader to Council meant that that group eventually ceased operations. The Environment Centre, retained their leader and had enough other members within the group that could stand for election without undermining the group’s functions.

*[One of the Caldera Environment Centre members] became a Councillor, although he did it through the Greens Party and there is an issue there, a nexus between the Environment Centre and the Tweed*
Greens Party....Initially I can remember someone coming along to meetings and he would say, ‘well, we’re obviously pro-Green, but we don’t want to alienate the Australian Democrats’. And so, we tried to take a fairly level headed approach where any political groups that had the same aims and objectives as our own, we would support them, rather than one group above another group...

Interviewee 1

There’s been a slow change if you like ... in what I was doing. I had this absolute belief in community involvement to achieve participation and everything was targeted at that. Then as time went on you became more - well, I became - more strategic, more focused on getting people elected and that turned me into a strategist that believed that community involvement information was the best way to get elected. And then when I came to realise that so few of the community can be touched – back then even, and now it’s even worse – when they’re just flat strapped doing everything else and then it became a marketing exercise. That’s the way I saw it. It was absolutely marketing your side of politics to the broader community in an election period. And I am a bit embarrassed about that. It’s a compromise in your whole belief system.

Interviewee 4

The statements here were not part of the original inquiry however help to explain the lifecycle of a community group. As it appears most groups are fairly small and are led by a charismatic individual, once that person leaves the group as a result of becoming elected the group risks losing relevance. For the Electoral Lobby and to a lesser degree the Environment Centre, engaging with the political election process meant making compromises in their belief systems in order to gain broad public support. For the Environment Centre it meant helping to create the Tweed Byron Greens Party but keeping the support of established left-wing political parties like the Democrats. For the Electoral Lobby it meant doing something completely different to what they were
already doing, engaging in advertising instead of engaging with people and other groups in the community. These statements have led to the development of the following diagram, Figure 5.2 (which is elaborated on in Chapter 8, Figure 8.2).

**Figure 5.2 Politics, elections and group survival**

Three scenarios on running for election and group survival based on interview data. Group 1 has the most public support and can successfully elect a candidate and continue functioning as a group. Group 2 has enough public support to get elected however not enough to survive as a group. Group 3 does not have enough support to either become elected or continue as a functioning group.

### 5.5 How did the Newspaper Report the Proposal?

The Tweed Daily News has been the primary news media of the Tweed Shire since the area was first settled in the 1880s. It is also the only source of archived news material for the region and as such provides an important source of primary data. Louw (2008) explains how media use hype and spin to justify their existence, and to create more interest in a story. Louw (2008:24-26) discusses how media narratives support the status quo and downplay or marginalise dissenting voices, by “legitimising or delegitimising a narrative”. So while the newspaper provides an excellent record of events, there is a detectable bias present in the paper as Table 6-1 in Chapter 6 Documentary Analysis shows, comments from environment groups were
completely ignored during the debate over the development while comments from the
developer and groups supportive of development were most common.

_The Daily News likes to make statements that are inflammatory.... People didn’t listen much to the ABC radio. It was pretty easy for us to get things on the ABC radio. But to get things printed in the Daily News was pretty difficult....I don’t know how many letters I would have written but they never got printed._

Interviewee 1

The parochial nature of the Tweed Daily News at the time is revealed below by Interviewee 2 who worked as a journalist for that paper. He describes for instance how the Hare Krishna community which had been established in the Tweed since the late 1970s was completely ignored by the paper and no stories or articles were published about them. The same deliberate obfuscation was used by the paper to marginalise environmental concerns, to the point where the editor is accused of writing letters to himself on behalf of pro-development groups.

_Interviewer: How was the community presented?_

_In those days I worked on the Daily News before I went to the Bulletin. ...and the whole outfit was run by Northern Star which was really the Murwillumbah Mafia at the time. They were very, very conservative. And they were all pro-development and so they didn’t like stories that, while we’re here, like when they first came here they didn’t want Hare Krishna’s mentioned...you couldn’t mention them in the paper! [...] I remember that when I came up here I was so amazed that you couldn’t even write their name in the paper. And there was this paranoia about this mob that had arrived, this religious freaky thing, you know, playing the drums down the street. I wrote this story for the Sydney Morning Herald that got a big run which was basically on about the Hares causing paranoia and fear and loathing in Murwillumbah, but that was the time. [...] The Bulletin was just straight down the middle and they_
didn’t have all that much interest in what was going on in the Tweed. But as far as the Daily News was concerned they were very partisan and all this stuff and they were criticised later. It wasn’t the editor running the paper but it was the managing director so that’s the way they went

In that period that was where the Daily News went completely weak at the knees when it could see all this money coming in from the pro-development crowd. So they were running the most outrageous pro-development stories, and stories to try and knock Max Boyd’s team on the head... it was far from impartial then [...] [the Editor] came unstuck there and that was when I was still with the Daily News ...there was sort of a bunch of letter writers that were all pro-development and real sort of extreme pro-development people who were [...] always writing letters into the paper but [the editor at the time] again was writing editorials, pro-development editorials and it turns out that the letters were using the exact same phrasing that was in the editorials. So it wasn’t hard to work out that he was actually the author of these letters and the ABC got wind of this and they would ring him up every morning and they would say “We’re ringing for ... the editor of the Daily News we’ll see if we can get him this morning to explain these strange coincidences that these editorials and these letters who are supposed to be written by other people have the exact same phraseology and the exact same sentences. And so [the editor] would sit in his office waiting for [the call] ...and saying ‘oh we can’t get him today, we’ll try again tomorrow’...he never ever came to the phone. And that was sort of the beginning of the end for [the editor] I suppose because then the journos tried to make a major push to try and get him outed and in the end he was given a push.

Interviewee 2
Adapting to the bias of the newspaper was necessary for political survival of the group, the leader of the Tweed Electoral Lobby describes his tactics for dealing with the editor of the newspaper:

*Interviewer:* Do you think that the Daily News was favourable towards the Nullum development?

*Interviewee 4:* Yep. I think on the whole they were, but still it was predictable and they also did not like people disliking the Daily News so they had to appear balanced. And one of the things that we end up doing, mid-way through doing a Tweed Electoral Lobby report, was attach press releases, to make sure people knew what was left out of the press-release. And then I would get to their meeting and say there was the press-release and that’s what we gave them and here’s what they published. And it’s not unusual for a paper to cut through that, but if it was biased, if stuff was deliberately left out, then they knew about it... I shouldn’t say ‘deliberately’ I should say ‘maliciously’.

As Louw (2008) explains media provides a platform for discourse and negotiation by providing a forum for different social groups to articulate their message. However, this can be twisted to serve a particular social group’s agenda; ‘agenda setting’ is a strategy used by politicians and other elites to dominate the debate and distract public attention from other issues (Louw, 2008). As can be seen from the comments above, the Tweed Daily News was having its agenda set by the editor and the local established elites. However, the more media savvy leaders of community groups were able to communicate their message effectively. Eventually the obvious bias of the Daily News at the time was discovered by other journalists and undermined the legitimacy of the editor himself.

### 5.6 Why was a Commission of Inquiry Necessary?

The NSW state government had decided that there was enough evidence for a Commission of Inquiry into the Mt Nullum development proposal as a result of the
lobbying from the Environment Centre, and the larger regional and State based environmental organisations. In this section interviewees recount opinions of the Commission of Inquiry and their role in the investigation. The Business Group had little to say on the subject, and too much time had passed for the leader of the Electoral Lobby to recall what role he had played in the event.

*They had a Commission of Inquiry the Caldera Environment Centre ... were calling for it, and they were saying ...it was just in the wrong place really. I don’t know if it was all to do with wildlife ... and they were saying it was an important wildlife corridor that was basically it... And then they had the Commission of Inquiry and it came down on their side so if it wasn’t for them, I don’t know if it would have happened or not, because [Moran] didn’t have any money and then there was a credit-crunch or something and it all went belly-up anyway...*

Interviewee 2

*We called for a Planning Commission of Inquiry and that meant that the government set up a ... tribunal of a sort where you had Commissioners of Inquiry that were appointed to hear both sides of the argument....The Tweed Shire Council position was pretty weak and they really didn’t have very much in the way of credible environmental science to back up their claims and plus with the obvious political meddling of Doug Moran it became pretty obvious that Doug Moran was manipulating the process to suit an aim which wasn’t in the best interests of the shire, well that was our argument that it was going to despoil invaluable natural assets.*

Interviewee 1

Interviewee 1 explains the important role of having connections with other groups when opposing the development proposal:
I think getting the Commission of Inquiry was crucial [to stopping the development], and we probably wouldn’t have achieved that without the help of the Total Environment Centre and John Corkhill from the Nature Conservation Council, so networking is absolutely important. And you need to find some people who have some influence with the Government or the Council. And so rather than presenting yourself as speaking on behalf of the Environment Centre if you can get other groups to take up the cudgels, like Total Environment Centre for example who have contacts down in Sydney... Because we are a long way from Sydney and Sydney is where the decisions tend to be made, and so you need some sort of representation with Parliament. [...] That’s what did it. And the fact that the commissioners were well disposed because of the softening up they had from the Fingal – Ocean Blue Inquiry [ICAC]...

Interviewee 1

The Caldera Environment Centre helped to arrange expert witnesses to support their case including representatives from the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. This enabled the case to the Commissioner being presented more intimately with a site visit and a flyover of the mountain. When it came to presenting oral evidence before the Commission which was done in the procedural manner of a law court, the Environment Centre arranged its witnesses to cover the separate aspects of the issue in great detail.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service [became] involved ... because the summit is a nature reserve....They didn’t particularly want to have a nature reserve next to a full-on commercial resort. They were quite keen to see the whole thing knocked on the head [...] We all spoke at the Commission of Inquiry and we all took a slightly different approach by that method... by concentrating on a very limited part of the puzzle we were able to put forward a pretty good argument I think [...] We said “if you had a look at this land you would realise that it was not
suitable for development”. [...] [The Commissioner] arranged this flight, he didn’t want to go up in a little aeroplane, he hired quite a big aeroplane and John Hunter [NPWS], [two others from the Environment Centre] and myself [Environment Centre] and the Assistant Commissioner all went up in the aeroplane. It was just simply stunning .... It is absolutely breathtaking when you see it from the air. Mt Nullum was not quite up to the Mt Warning standard, but you could see the connection between Mt Warning; which in later days became world heritage and so that has given Mt Nullum a whole different perspective.

Interviewee 1

The Environment Centre was ultimately successful in prosecuting its case as the Commission of Inquiry ruled in favour of not allowing the rezoning of the land to permit the development. The leader of the Business Group was somewhat confounded by that determination however accepting of the ruling. He then explains what he perceives as a fundamental difference between business lobby groups and environmental lobby groups, primarily being that business groups run the risk of a customer boycott by taking a vocal stand on an issue. However, during a meeting of the newly established Tweed Business Chamber which was reported in the Daily News, he explains his frustration to the business community and urges them to unite behind development proposals and publicly support them.

[The Commission of Inquiry] determined, even though [Mt Nullum] had been logged and all sorts of things they believed that there were too many environmental sensitivities and of course then the Mt Nullum project failed [...] So this is where the environmental movement has a power, because most of them, whether they be retired, or whatever...there’s no price for them to pay. But if you’re in business, you can’t afford to, in an economy that you’ve got right now, to offend a single customer. That’s where the environmental movement has got it over other movements
Interviewee 3

Disappointment with the loss of the proposed Mt Nullum development has prompted the Tweed Chamber of Commerce to re-examine the Tweed Shire’s Local Environment Plan (LEP). […] Chamber president Peter Cox said loopholes in the LEP had been found by the “anti-development lobby” which had resulted in the proposed Mt Nullum development being withdrawn by the developer. [Interviewee 3] said he had not seen any of the Chamber members at the Mt Nullum Inquiry making submissions. He said if the same approach were taken by the Chamber for the proposed Cobaki development, then it was giving the “kiss of death” to the project. “Plan early as Cobaki is facing similar difficulties as Mt Nullum” he said. “The ‘anti’ brigades submission for Mt Nullum was excellent”. He advised the chamber to formulate plans and put them into action [“Moran loss”, 1990].

As the newspaper excerpt, above, shows the business community while supportive of the development proposal was not organised enough to represent its concerns adequately at the Commission hearings. This led to what was perceived as a one sided debate on the issue, with environmental lobby groups dominating proceedings. However what has been overlooked in this analysis is the influence that the previous year’s ICAC investigation may have had on public perceptions as well as the Government’s decision.

And because of the mood of the [Corruption] Commission and Ocean Blue, the Commissioners were not prepared to put up any fight on behalf of the Council. The mood at the time was that the [state] Government wanted very much to appear reasonable and non-corruptible. […] I think it had a big effect, and I think especially where the Government was concerned the government was…one of the problems with Tweed is it’s a long distance from Sydney and we are much closer to Brisbane and so you tend to get the Gold Coast influence which people in Sydney do not understand, or have the equipment to deal with, or the interest maybe.
Interviewee 1

I: Do you think the ICAC inquiry that happened in the previous year had any bearing on the decision?

Only to the extent that people like us would have said ‘it’s happening all over again, and remember the ICAC!’ we would have used it like that.

Interviewee 4

Chapter 6 Documentary Analysis describes in greater detail the legal minutiae explaining why the Commission of Inquiry was initiated and the conclusions drawn. The important conclusions from this section are that the events of the Mt Nullum Commission of Inquiry cannot be seen in isolation from the historical context; a simultaneous corruption investigation had tarnished the reputation of the Council and property developers and the state government wanted to prevent another such embarrassment. Also groups cannot operate in isolation; the environmental groups describe the network of connections developed with each other and larger regional groups as well as the officers of the National Parks (as well as academics, not mentioned here). The business group reflects that fear of financial repercussions and a lack of unity within their membership resulted in the groups failing to put forward a coherent argument supporting the development proposal.

5.7 What Community Groups Existed Before and Developed During the Mt Nullum Proposal?

When trying to understand the formation of a new group it is necessary to know what other types of groups were already established in the community. This helps understanding what motivates people to create a new group. As interviewees reveal there is some suspicion over the motivations of the pro-development groups and the role played by the local newspaper (section 5.5 above discusses the role of the local newspaper in greater detail). As explained by Interviewee 3, the purpose of establishing a new group, even one that is motivated purely by self-interest was to fill
the niche that was available as established groups did not necessarily adequately represent a person’s particular needs or philosophy.

A lot of those [community] groups were I guess, not being picky here, but they were self-interest groups. By that I mean the Landowners Group was obviously about they were trying to grow more subdivisions … what I am saying is that they had a specific interest that they wanted to put forward. And I guess … the other thing about the chamber at one stage it was … the chamber can’t be the answer to everybody’s needs or wants, because at the end of the day they are volunteer positions.

Interviewee 3

There were sort of local groups like the Progress Association on the coast. There have been a few progress associations on the coast… But often at a place like Bogangar you would have a group like the Cabarita Business Association, you get it today still, and then there would be a Bogangar Progress Association, and they would be like chalk and cheese. There was a schism in the society between those who represent business and those who represent the environment, but they all call themselves “Progress Associations”.

Interviewer: Was there a pro-development lobby-group?

Well according to that newspaper there was….

Interviewer: Do you remember them?

Well, only through reading the Daily News. And then you’ve got to wonder about the Daily News. They have probably only printed a press release and you do not really know … It is like the Murwillumbah Chamber of Commerce [who] purports to speak on behalf of the business people in the shire but how many people actually belong to it or even know what they are saying half the time? […] You’ve got to wonder what is the substance to some of those organisations.
Interviewee 1

I formed a group called BEG: Bitou Eradication Group. Which was just people from around the place, who wanted to do some work on the dunes… [There were other groups] They were built around a guy by the name of Frank Wyton. … He realised it was a good pressure action to have groups and he started to link up the different development associations.

Interviewee 4

The Murwillumbah Business Corporation was unlike other groups at the time as it was funded by the Tweed Council through a special levy on businesses in Murwillumbah. This factor makes the business group distinct from the other volunteer groups as it can be seen as being officially sanctioned by the Council. The group used these funds to run the organisation and undertake civic projects, such as giving the main street in Murwillumbah a new coat of paint. In later years the levy was subject to a legal challenge and the group lost its funding and was forced to adapt. This levy enabled the Business group to hire office space and purchase equipment necessary to achieve its goals, unlike the other community based groups which relied on the resources of volunteers.

And when I realised that the Chamber was not being overly successful I actually formed … Murwillumbah Business Corporation we became a corporate entity and we employed a marketing and promotions officer and at the time our funds were coming from membership, donations and sponsorship but also a levy that was pretty unique to the Tweed that was levied by Council at the request of the business community many years ago on the unimproved value, or the land value of the properties. And we were able to employ a promotions officer and we did some other things, like we completely painted the town and it was through that process that we identified the architectural benefits. We then, as a business group, and by that time I had been here a lot longer and I started to realise that the problem was far bigger than just
Murwillumbah and during the process what I had done was that I met up with farmers, and tourist people, and a whole range of people trying to understand the dynamics of the Tweed economy. [...] I guess down the track, back in 1997 we formed the Tweed Economic Development Corporation and that went for 13 years until Council withdrew funding.

Interviewee 3

As the responses here indicate when individuals identify a need they will often create an interest group to further their ambitions, if one is not already present. The motivations of these groups can be centred on economic interests or social and environmental values. Sometimes groups with differing objectives can have similar names, like the Progress Associations, mentioned above. Other times, the role of the newspaper is seen as crucial in promoting particular groups, or certain individuals from groups.

5.7.1 How do these Groups Relate to Personalities?

Leaders of groups receive the most attention in the media and when reviewing documentary evidence there is some bias towards seeing a group, less as a group of people, and more as a cloak for a highly motivated individual. In this section interviewees reflect on their roles in group creation and functions. Interviewee 1 explains that with an environmental cause people only become active and participate in a group when there is a perceived threat, and most of the time, they will start their own splinter group to campaign on an issue. Interviewee 4 explains his role in starting different groups which had different functions. Interviewee 3 explains the economic challenges of running a volunteer group.

Interviewer: Do you think most community groups are driven by a single individual?

I think often they are...they do depend on individuals...and I suppose you could say the same for the Environment Centre. There is a core group of half a dozen that have been carrying the can for a long time ... and I suppose it’s when you get an issue like Byrrill Creek or Rocky
Cutting Dam that people coalesce and come out of the woodwork because there is an issue that is sufficiently motivating and that they realise they have got to do something...I used to be a bit resentful at one stage that they wouldn't necessarily gravitate towards the Caldera Environment Centre and put their shoulders to the wheel with the one group. ... I think a lot of people are driven they’re motivated by a good cause but they are very egotistical in their approach and tend to see it as “J and his wife” sort of thing. [...] [The early Caldera Environment Centre] was like a brotherhood or a sisterhood. A group of concerned citizens; who were all Greenies... and some of them had studied so like JH had done a degree. And MK is now a doctor. So you get a bit of gravitas from that.

Interviewee 1

Because at the end of the day you get an enthusiastic person who is really keen and wants to do something and sooner or later he runs out of puff, or energy or whatever [...] because at the end of the day they are volunteer positions. And that’s why we said [...] there needs to be a paid position. And that’s where Tweed Economic Development Corporation came in, and so we were able to [provide] the most advanced form of input into local government in terms of looking at long-term visionary sustainable socio-economic growth, because there were paid positions.

Interviewee 3

I was a member and eventually became president. ... And these things happen mostly by default, and became a spokesman which led to other things too [...] I formed a group called BEG:  Bitou Eradication Group. Which was just people from around the place, who wanted to do some work on the dunes and when I got interested in Green issues I realised the only way was... I realised the power of Council with respect to Green issues - and I realised I needed to promote that side
and I needed people on side for the Council to act. [...] The Business Associations, the case was that people who were interested in pushing a barrow became president and it was less obvious in Progress Associations.

Interviewee 4

The Interviewees explain the importance of an individual in running a community group, their statements have helped to inform the construction of Figure 5.3 below, which illustrates the influence certain individuals have over a group or a cluster of groups. The role of charismatic leadership in group formation is crucial, and one individual can start many different groups. The role of egotism should not be ignored either, interviewee 1 explains how he saw the formation of multiple single issue environmental groups as egotistical and better results could be achieved through a unified effort.

5.7.1.1 Was there Much Crossover Between Groups?

Tarrow (2011) explains the concept of “Paul Revere’s” as individuals who move between different groups and help create connections between them, this can be advantageous in helping groups be aware and up to date on a particular issue. Figure 5.3 below, illustrates the connections between Interviewees and the various groups that they were involved with. However, the role of one individual working across many different groups has an obvious flaw in that the groups become to be seen not as community associations but instead as fronts for that particular individual. This was the case of the pro-development groups, who were driven by the energy of a single individual. As Interviewee 4 relates, this crossover between groups by a single individual eventually led to the demise of this cluster of groups and the credibility of the organiser.

I think Wyton got various associations to write a letter to Council on an issue. And the letters from each of them were identical. And the mayor, Max Boyd, then said ‘Ah, this has all come from one person, this is not their ideas’, and then that shot him down and that was quite
a turning point from what I can recall because it embarrassed the other associations to be led by the nose by this Wyton and in fact they all....small business people ... do not like to be known to be led by the nose, and so I think that it was more damaging as a result of it being businesses that were being called on this issue. So it was not us that did it. It was The Mayor that got onto the issue. We might have beaten it up as well.

Interviewee 4

As mentioned in the previous section when it came to conservation groups there was much less unity, there were numerous people starting their own individual groups to campaign on a particular issue. Interviewee 1 elaborates on this topic and explains how there are many differing groups, each being led by a different person and focussing on a different issue, which contrasts starkly to the apparent unity displayed by the business and pro-development groups. The role of politics is also important and Interviewee 1 explains the link between Green groups and left-wing politics at the time.

Initially there was the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust but that was a bit more like we were supporting them than the other way around I think. And then there was the Murwillumbah Community Centre, we had a member that was part of that organisation, and she got the idea of getting World Environment Day together [...]. And I suppose we have always had contact with the people at Fingal Dunecare [...]. There has been local people there are today especially like Chris Cherry from Wooyung and the people from Bogangar seem to be running a fairly effective campaign, although some of their ideals I don’t really go for. Around Bogangar there was a local group... And there was the other guy from Stokers Siding .... Before the Greens Party got going there were people in the Labor party who had environmental concerns who were fairly active. But that is a story in
itself how the Labor party have drifted to the centre and the Greens have taken over that Left-Wing socialist role.

Interviewee 1

Interviewee 3 explains the role he played in establishing another Business Chamber at Tweed Heads. He indicates that he would have liked to have done more but felt constrained by his resources. This constraint on resources is seen as a factor limiting the effectiveness of business groups in successfully delivering their message to Government:

The Murwillumbah Chamber of Commerce and in fact would you believe that there was not … we actually initiated the formation of the Tweed Heads Chamber of Commerce because there wasn’t a Tweed Chamber at the time, because the Tweed economy was just evolving.

Interviewer: Were there links between the Murwillumbah Business Corporation and other groups in the community at the time?

Absolutely. We tried to communicate certainly with other chambers

Interviewer: just with the local ones in the Tweed Shire or…?

I did try to talk with other chambers as well. But in all honesty looking back again keeping in mind that time is money, and you have got to have enough time … but one of the big dangers with Chambers of Commerce is that they have meetings and they talk a lot and do nothing. And the reason that they talk a lot and do nothing is that because even a meeting is time out of their business … so again I don’t want to criticise them, but, I guess it’s an avenue for people to express opinions to government at all levels and depending on the enthusiasm and dedication, the passion of the people involved depends on its success.

Interviewee 3
Interviewee 4 explains the role he played as a ‘Paul Revere’ communicating his message between different groups and in establishing new groups. This involved creating newsletters, press releases and sitting in on meetings of as many like-minded groups as he could influence. Figure 5.3 at the end of this section illustrates the connections between the individual and the various groups.

We eventually wrote or constructed a newsletter after every Council meeting and the newsletter consisted of the decisions we thought were significant in terms of our organisation and a comment on those decisions, identified as a comment. Then any press release we did were included in the newsletter as well. The [Council] meetings were held on a Wednesday and we distributed that newsletter by Friday. And that was done through my wife typing it up and then we went out and photocopied it. It was not distributed to the public widely. It was distributed to business organisations and community organisations.

Interviewer: Were you involved in [other community] groups?

In the Conservation Trust I was in which preceded the Tweed Electoral Lobby [...] and it [Tweed Valley Conservation Trust] probably continued after the [Tweed] Electoral Lobby for some time. I can’t even remember if I held an office in the trust, I held an office in TEL, I was president or whatever. I think [I was president of Tweed Valley Conservation Trust] around the same time, about 1988-89. It probably would have carried the Green image into the Tweed Electoral Lobby. I had a pretty Green tinge anyway. Before I got down here I had no involvement in environmental matters at all. And it was because I wasn’t working. I had time to look at what was going on in the area and getting into it.

I simply got the idea going. The same at Pottsville and the same at Cabarita. Where I went to their Progress Associations and started talking about Dunecare and revegetation and there were enough
people within those organisations and the social side of Dunecare became important in tying people in and then they became more politically active.

We had the Progress Associations and if anyone went to them for a comment they had information from us. Accurate information so they could make a sensible comment. And that really was the empowerment that was important in the progress associations.

Interviewee 4

The comments from this section and the previous section have helped to inform the creation of Figure 5.3 below which illustrates the crossover between individuals and different groups. It is interesting to note the different perspectives from the business groups and conservation groups in respect to lobbying for change. The business groups felt unable to act as this would be detrimental to their business operations either for fear of scaring off customers or as this would lose productivity by engaging in non-financial activities for example meetings. The same restrictions did not apply to the conservation groups and as interviewee 4 notes the only reason he became aware of, and interested in, conservation matters was because he was retired and had the time to investigate matters more deeply.

Unlike the business and pro-development groups, the Electoral Lobby and Environment Centre demonstrated better personal interactions between group members which helped the group to survive longer. Interviewee 3 describes his group as driven by “an enthusiastic person who is really keen and wants to do something and sooner or later he runs out of puff, or energy” this is a contrast from the description of brother/sisterhood described by Interviewee 1 in the Environment Centre. Interviewee 3 also described the desire for a ‘paid position’ to maintain group function, the solution for the conservation group was to start a shop to raise revenue. Only the Electoral Lobby did not take the next step to seeking financial resources and this may have contributed to this group’s fading away.
Figure 5.3 Interviewees relationship with multiple groups

The influence of an individual over several groups from statements collected from interviews in this section. The shaded box represents the interviewee and the unshaded box the groups they have created. Where the group box is within the shaded area this indicates the relative amount of control that individual has over the functioning of the group and where the group box falls without the shaded area that particular group has some autonomy form the individual.

5.8 How did the Caldera Environment Centre Come into Existence?

One of the primary question asked by this study is why is a new community group created, especially when other similar groups already exist? In some cases, there is no similar pre-existing group to represent concerns of individuals, and for this reason a new group must be created as social norms change. So even though there was a pre-existing group that represented the community on environmental issues, it was found by new arrivals to the Tweed Shire that their particular concerns were not adequately represented. These ideas are discussed in Section 2, above, under the heading.
‘conservationists motivations’. In this section Interviewee 1 describes in greater detail the specific motivations and practical reasons for starting a new group.

Interviewer: What was the main reason for the establishment of the Caldera Environment Centre?

I think Mt Nullum was the catalyst really [...] and we realised we needed a presence at street level, and that’s when the idea of the Caldera Environment Centre became more relevant. [...] The Caldera Environment Centre became more popular, because it was newer. There is always a thing with novelty. And I think having a street presence paid off, because people could drop in. It still has that value today. Even though there are a lot of ratbags, I guess you could call them that that use the Environment Centre; it does provide a meeting place.

[The shop] didn’t happen until after Nullum I think. So Mt Nullum was really the focus for something new. And the realisation that the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust was too stuck in its ways, MK was really quite important for that idea too. His wife, one has to mention the wives and girlfriends of these people, because they’re always there in the background giving support.

Interviewer: What was the role of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust compared to the Caldera Environment Centre, sister organisations?

They were almost like mother and daughter perhaps. One had given birth to the other. And then gradually the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust became less relevant. There weren’t enough people to maintain both. And the Caldera Environment Centre became more ascendant and because it had a street presence. I think it becomes quite difficult if you’re meeting in back rooms to keep up...
Interviewer: Why couldn’t you do that through the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust?

Well, because the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust had a lot of older generation, conservative people. And I think we needed to take a more radical stand. I think a lot of people in the community ... The Tweed Valley Conservation Trust had become associated with Bruce Chick. And a lot of people thought Bruce Chick was too close to Max Boyd and so we had to break away from that prototype.

Interviewer: Was there a schism?

Somewhat. I mean it was all fairly amicable. But when some of the people like myself and MK withdrew from the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust then they didn’t really have a lot of strength left and that’s when HJ became President of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust along with [two other people mentioned].

Interviewer: The Caldera Environment Centre formed as a reaction against the conservative element of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust?

Yeah, but a more important point is that it was the issue of Mt Nullum was the catalyst [...] I think that was an important part of it, becoming an incorporated association so that we could say things that were fairly outspoken and not be worried about legal defamation and those issues. There’s no point having two incorporated organisations.

As already discussed, the primary motivation for creating a new group was one of philosophy, the existing group was seen as being linked too closely with the establishment who had supported the Mt Nullum development. And it was the Mt Nullum development proposal that had caused this group of people to initially unite. The development of the Caldera Environment Centre is described here as an almost organic evolution, one organisation evolved out of the other, and at the time there was
a simple logic of available resources which determined the fate of the organisations, there simply were not enough people to staff two environmental lobby groups at the time.

The other key element mentioned here is the shop, this building provided a meeting space for like-minded individuals to congregate. This was a ‘novelty’ at the time and helped to provide an income for the group and made the public aware of the group’s existence. Finally becoming an incorporated body enable the group to be more independent by providing a cloak for individuals to express radical opinions and not worry about defamation. The above description of the evolution of the one group from another has provided the basis for Figure 5.4 below, which is elaborated on as Figure 8.2 in Chapter 8 ‘Discussion’. Interestingly, the Business group evolved in a similar manner with the Murwillumbah Business Corporation becoming the Tweed Economic Development Corporation in later years.

5.8.1 What other Local/Regional Conservation Groups Existed?

As discussed in the Introduction, there was increasing public interest in environmental issues during the 1980s so the development of the Environment Centre was the most recent manifestation of this public concern at the local level. The Tweed Valley Conservation Trust was the pre-existing environmental lobby group in the area at the time. At a State level the Total Environment Centre was a well-recognised organisation headed by Milo Dunphy, this group helped out smaller groups and assisted them with developing resources and capacity to campaign more effectively on an issue. At this period of time it was also possible to obtain assistance from the legal organisation, the Environmental Defenders Office, through the legal aid process. The Total Environment Centre had connections with other large groups, such as the Nature Conservation Council who had connections with the State Parliament and this enabled the concerns of the Caldera Environment Centre to be represented at a State level.
Figure 5.4 Group metamorphosis

This diagram illustrates the formation of a new group from an old group based on comments from interviews. The community groups are represented by the block arrows and circle, and the Local Government and community are shown as the rectangles. The movement of individual people is shown as the line arrows. As a need arises, people join Group 1 however finding the political stance of this group insufficient for their personal needs a new groups is created, however both exist simultaneously because of a shared membership. Over time people, and the original leadership, abandon the original group for the new group, or simply leave both groups entirely and the original fades back into the community. However others from the old group or combined groups successfully become elected to Council or obtain a job, further weakening the membership base. Group 2 can only survive if the membership and leadership is sufficient to maintain its functions.
Well, we put a legal aid/EDO application in and we had to pay Michael Mobbs and that was bit of a “pass around the hat” affair and then we got Total Environment Centre involved. I remember writing to Milo Dunphy who was the head of the Total Environment Centre ... who took it as a project then, and liaised with John Corkhill who was the Nature Conservation Council [and who] had a person in State Parliament who would represent local environment groups to the parliament, that was his job. And John Corkhill came from Lismore and was a very effective spokesperson, very strident. So with his aggression and this other guys more softly, softly approach we managed to have interviews with the Minister at the time, Director of Planning.

Interviewee 1

By coordinating with other larger groups the Environment Centre was able to make their point heard with the NSW State Government. This highlights the importance of networking with other groups; the larger groups were able to facilitate meetings between government representatives and a small locally based volunteer group. Having a political connection facilitated by larger groups helped the local group express messages to the decision makers who ultimately would decide on establishing the Commission of Inquiry who would audit the development proposal.

5.9 Why has the Caldera Environment Centre Persisted until Today?

According to Smith (2000) once a group has accomplished its primary goal it tends to die not long after as there is no more to do. One response to this is for a group to create new goals to work towards and continue existance by redefining itself, what Smith (2000) defines as Goal Displacement. During the period being examined, there were many various community groups, and of those groups which are the focus of this study only the Environment Centre has persisted until today. This section explores the question posed about how a group survives in the long-term, beyond the success of the initial campaign and maintains existence in the long term.
Interviewer: So why has the Environment Centre persisted when others have failed?

I think that maybe our early success was important to show that we could achieve things. The fact that we always tried to run as a democratic group and not top-down...that always encouraged other groups and other interests. And we have taken up the cudgels of other interest groups a lot.... Autonomy....trying to be democratic and inclusive I have always thought that was important. Having a meeting place that was always accessible, because when we had the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust meetings above the Hotel it came down to the fact that you would get two or three people there who would do the actual work but it never reached out beyond that.

Interviewer: is having the shop presence important to the existence of the Caldera Environment Centre?

I think it is important because it creates a meeting place, and you get people coming in who have no primary connection with the environment and they see.... and you get visitors too looking for souvenirs and it spreads the word beyond the Caldera, and in the old days we used to get a lot of backpackers strolling in walking from the train station to the backpacker hostel and they would drop in ... So I think it is important. I know that there is people who think that it is a waste of time and it's not really environmentally focussed enough, but it provides, I think it provides a valuable service.

Interviewee 1 explains from his perspective that it was important that the Environment Centre have some sort of physical presence. By creating an Environment Centre shop that sold goods to the public and provided educational resources and information the group was able to persist for a longer period than its predecessor. However as Interviewee 2 relates below, many other groups have also survived for an
extended period such as Residents and Ratepayers Groups. Also other groups appear to arise on single issue topics as required. However the Caldera Environment Centre is credited with being more than a single issue group moving beyond parochial or NIMBY (not in my back yard) concerns and focusing on wider issues.

Interviewer: The Caldera Environment Centre is still around today; do you have any idea why it might have survived so long when all these other groups have vanished?

Well, I don’t know whether all these groups have vanished. I mean they were the only ones that have been around consistently. I mean there’s the dam group that bobbed up, but that was just like a single issue thing and then there’s the same with the [world] rally [championship], there was the No Rally Group.

People are getting more organised now. I don’t know if there all giving themselves names now or whether a lot of them have joined the Caldera Environment Centre ... so there’s a few more bobbed up. But in those days there was .... the Residents Associations, and they were always pretty strong and the Kingscliff Residents Association used to fight whatever was happening in their town. And the other entire village’s had Associations and they were always fighting these things but really when it came to stuff that wasn’t in someone’s backyard, or their front door or whatever, it was something happening in their village it was happening in the wider shire, it always seemed to me to be the Caldera Environment Centre. ... There weren’t too many people championing the environment back then, it was [Interviewee 1] and that crowd.

Interviewee 2

The longevity of the Caldera Environment Centre is explained by Interviewee 4 as being a result of the social composition of the Tweed Shire. He also describes the
district as a ‘battleground’ between conservationists, farmers and property developers which provides ample opportunity for conflict and continued creation of new goals.

*I think that a bit like Byron… so it had a very good base for the Green movement and they came here young and have lived here … in everything from Multiple Occupancy; and grown old here but have stayed Green…. The Tweed has always been a battleground; firstly between farming and conservation but it certainly quickly moved to development and conservation and the Greens maybe even pushed the Farmers into the other side. One of the big issues has always been that Farmers want to subdivide their land when they got too old to farm it.*

Interviewee 4

The long-term existence of the environment group as opposed to other groups examined in this study is a result of several factors. As Smith (2000) correctly observes the newly established group needs to successfully achieve its goal if it is to survive in the first place. Interviewees describe other factors of importance in the continued existence of the Environment Centre. Firstly there is having some form of physical presence, a base of operations which can help to raise revenue and provide information to the public. Secondly is focusing on the ‘big picture’, and being able to move between different issues on a landscape scale and assisting other groups and individuals when possible. Finally there is the society and physical location of the group, with a reasonable support base of likeminded citizens to provide resources for the groups operation. Also having pressure from other sectors of the community, such as farmers or property developers helped to create new goals and campaigns for the group into the future.

5.9.1 What Groups Didn’t Survive?

Not all the community groups of that era persisted into the twenty-first century. In this section Interviewees reflect on how community groups have changed over the past twenty years. As Interviewee 2 mentions above, there are many groups around from that time such as the local Residents and Ratepayers Associations, but such
organisations do not comment on issues beyond their own locality. The pro-
development groups are still present in some form, however are not as publicly vocal
as they have been in the past. Interviewee 2 explains how there is a remnant of the
Landowners Group still operating “The only landowners group I know of is the
Cudgen landowners group because that is about the last area of valuable land that is
about to be rezoned.”

The actions of a motivated individual is often behind the creation of groups, and this
can be a benefit or detriment to the group’s survival. As Interviewee 3 relates, the pro-
business groups “fell by the wayside because at the end of the day you get an
enthusiastic person who is really keen and wants to do something and sooner or later
he runs out of puff, or energy or whatever.”

The Murwillumbah Business Corporation lost its funding from Council which
affected its long term viability. It was reinvented later on under a new name and
received funding, but it had become more of a paid-staff non-profit organisation,
rather than a community group.

> When the Murwillumbah Business Corporation lost its funding through the [legal] challenges [to] Council […] The Business Corporation went on but then some of the leaders who followed decided to go back to a Chamber. I am not sure of the reason of that because I had had enough at that stage and I just walked away.
> Interviewee 3

Or alternatively the group can fade away as described below by Interviewee 4 who
explains the challenges of maintaining a highly political group (see Figure 5.2). The
Electoral Lobby had defined itself as a Council monitor, however this required a high
level of commitment from volunteers to maintain this function indefinitely. While the
leader of the group expressed a natural affinity for attending meetings and writing
reports, this talent was not shared by others in the organisation. Finally during the
mid-1990s the pro-development factions had been (temporarily) subdued and the
demand for such a group decreased. “I got elected to Council… maybe 1990….there
was some continuation after that ... but it was difficult for anyone to maintain the [group functions] but it did go on for a bit and I think once I got into Council ...they thought... ‘our job’s done’. It was certainly the following Council election that they felt that way, because the numbers in Council changed around and it became much more community based.

While the leaders of these groups eventually disappeared from their more public roles, they were still active in the community. There are various personal reasons for groups to become established and then disbanded. The main reason seems to be that there is not enough support from the respective community sectors to sustain group membership and keep the organisation alive, and this is closely linked to the perception that the group has achieved its goals. Only the Caldera Environment Centre was able to generate enough community support to sustain its membership and persist to the twenty-first century. Whereas the goals of development and business groups may have been achieved the goals of the Environment Centre remain unfulfilled as environmental problems have multiplied stimulating the motivation of new recruits.

5.10 Interview Analysis Conclusion

Community groups perform an important bridge between Government and the general public. Groups of likeminded citizens can unite together under the flag of a community group that represents their interests. Working with a group of committed people enables the individual to achieve more than they would alone. Interviewees describe their motivations for becoming involved in community groups and engaging in the political process. From the above analysis the following general statements can be concluded about the formation, functioning and survival of community groups. It has also helped to answer the question about why people need to start a new group.

Community groups are created in a democratic system to represent concerns of citizens that are not being addressed (or are ignored) by politicians or other elites. Existing groups may evolve into new groups as new members join their ranks and demand greater action on behalf of that group. The analysis here supports Smith
(2000) statements that a group will be disbanded when it achieves its goals or the membership cannot maintain group functions. The following five conclusions were developed from the interview data:

1) Achieving success in a group is not dependent on financial resources as the case of the business groups versus the conservation groups demonstrates. The business groups had received funding but were ultimately unsuccessful in supporting the development. The dedication of members and the amount of energy they are willing to volunteer is more important than the amount of money a group has, as ultimately it is the people in the group who will do the work necessary to accomplish the group’s goals. To survive long term the group needs a healthy membership of committed volunteers, and a continued input of new members. Financial resources are necessary for group maintenance in the long term. In the short term a group can function on the energy of a few individuals however if it is to survive for more than a few years then it needs to have a source of revenue. However, as described above financial revenue needs to be complemented by volunteers who are willing to contribute to achieving the group’s goals.

2) A group’s long-term survival is also dependent on having a flexible set of goals. The Caldera Environment Centre replaced the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust as the latter group was seen as being too conservative. Being responsive to changes in public sentiment is crucial for the survival of a group.

3) To some extent a group needs to ‘institutionalise’ itself within the community. For the Murwillumbah Business Corporation and the Caldera Environment Centre this was creating shops or consultancy type businesses. For the Tweed Electoral Lobby this was having its leader elected to as a Councillor. Also this may mean compromising to some extent on the principles with which the group was founded. Interviewee 4 describes it best as an emphasis on a shift towards marketing your view to others in the community at an election time. The Environment Centre found it became less radical with time as political opportunities disappeared and the business corporation was unable to survive without a Government subsidy.
4) Leadership is important to a group, a charismatic leader with a good network, the ‘Paul Revere’ (Tarrow, 2011) is able to move between groups spreading their information and aligning groups for a common cause. However this can undermine the group if the group is unable to function without that particular individual leading it when they retire or move into a different role in the community. Having a sufficient membership to recruit future leaders is crucial for the long term survival of the group. Also a group’s credibility can be undermined if the leader creates multiple interest groups for which they are the spokesperson and they lobby on a single issue.

5) Having connections between different groups at regional and state levels is also important as this helps to gain credibility for the cause and facilitates political connections. By utilising the networks of established larger and more professional groups the smaller local group was able to have its message heard by the relevant Government departments and Ministers. It was the government who then initiated the process of the Commission of Inquiry to further examine the allegations of the Environment Centre.
Chapter 6 – Documentary Analysis

6. Documentary Data Reporting and Analysis

This chapter analyses the documentary data collected as part of this case study; newspaper articles, Council reports, consultant’s documents, surviving letters and documents from community groups and submissions to the commission of Inquiry. Other modern historical documents are used such as social histories of the Tweed (Kijas, 2011) an online archive of the Moran dynasty (Wynne, 2006) and demographic studies of the North Coast (Walmsley, 1998). The data presented here provide a more objective interpretation of events. During the interview process certain documents were shown to Interviewees, particularly newspaper articles in order to stimulate their memory and provide more detailed answers. Figure 6.1 below illustrates where this chapter fits within the thesis. As well as the reporting of documentary data there are the interpretative statements that summarise key points.

The structure of this chapter follows the outline of the case study protocol and the section headings indicate the objectives of the study. The data and analysis here can be contrasted to the statements of the Interviewees in Chapter 5 Interview Analysis. These two chapters are illustrated as being next to other as they are non-sequential, but inform the results chapters and discussion.

This chapter will begin with a brief overview of the historical context of development in the Tweed Shire in the 1980s, and a synopsis of the case study events. The demographic changes of the post-Aquarius Northern Rivers in the 1970s and 1980s is then briefly examined, before discussing the ICAC inquiry and other environmental activities in the region at the time. This section shows that the events that led to the formation of the Environment Centre were just one in a series of environmental actions taking place at the time.

The details of the Mt Nullum proposal are then discussed in detail including a description of the natural environment of Mt Nullum. The developer, Doug Moran is
then discussed to show the type of personality that was behind the idea. This section provides an objective contrast against the statements of Interviewees in the previous chapter.

Figure 6.1 Structure of Thesis, Documentary Data
6.1 Background and Historical Context

“You can’t stop progress” was the catchcry of the corrupt local politician in the Australian movie classic *Muriel’s Wedding* from 1994. The film was directed by P J Hogan, the son of Tweed Shire Councillor Tom Hogan and events depicted in the film parody the history of the Tweed and the culture of corruption that had developed in the Local Government. During the late 1980s an estimated $2000 million of development proposals were proposed for the Tweed Shire. One of the more prominent of these proposals was the Ocean Blue proposal for the small coastal village of Fingal. Ocean Blue was officially investigated in one of the first ever NSW Independent Commission against Corruption (ICAC) inquiries in 1989 which examined Council and State Government corruption by property developers (Hopkins and Moore, 2003; McKenzie and Vidler, 2003).

After the ICAC inquiry, most of the controversial coastal developments proposals, such as Ocean Blue were withdrawn, some smaller housing estates were constructed, such as Black Rocks but others (which were empty blocks and concept plans) like Kings Forest and Cobaki Lakes are yet to be completely developed. During this period the reputation of the Mt. Nullum project was never brought into question and so now became the premier project for the Council. The community became polarised over the development proposals, with some people forming groups to support the projects and others forming groups to oppose them.

In 1990 there were many community and volunteer groups already well-established and thriving in the Tweed Shire. Advertisements in the Daily News (1987-1990) announce meetings of Residents and Ratepayers groups for most towns and villages in the Tweed. The Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers were established in 1989 (“About TVWC”, 2015) however Tweed Landcare was not formally established until 1997 (“About Us”, 2010).
6.2 What was the Historical Context of 1980s? – A brief note

This section will briefly present some of the major political changes occurring at the time and what social attitudes were prevalent at the time and how they may have influenced the case. The Daily News archive provided a good historical resource to explain some of the big news stories of the era, and a literature review helped to expand this section.

6.2.1 What External Factors (National or International) may have had a Bearing on the Case? Globally/Nationally/Locally

6.2.1.1 Politics of the Era (late 1980s)

The late 1980s was an interesting period of modern history, not only was global environmentalism on the rise (Jones, 2004, see below) but other social changes were happening. The barriers of segregation that had defined the politics in parts of the world like Apartheid in South Africa, and the Iron Curtain of Communism and the Berlin Wall were about to disappear (Elliott, 2009). Thatcherism and the merits of privatisation and the free-market were defining economic discourse in Western economies.

The still imposing presence of the USSR defines public discourse on environmentalism. As Oreskes and Conway (2010) discuss, conservative political forces in the USA had been linking the social movements of nuclear disarmament and environmentalism with Communism and threats to free enterprise/capitalism and democracy. This rhetoric filtered through to the local level, with letter writers in the Daily News accusing environmentalists, community minded people of being Communists and undermining the economic freedoms of Capitalist society. The following quotes are taken from the Daily News (1988), the Tweed Council is criticised as being Communist or Socialist for enforcing an erosion buffer and proposing other development controls through the newly created Local Environment Plan (see also Section 5.1 in the previous chapter):
The erosion setback line which provides an 80-100m buffer along the coast from the high-tide mark hamstring many of the development proposals on the Tweed coast. Both regulations are seen as heavy-handed government/bureaucratic interference in private property, and are construed by many as impeding free-enterprise, and so are thought of as a type of “creeping Communism”, which must be resisted [“Development Support Group to Form”, 1988].

After I reminded your readers that Adolf Hitler was a socialist I anticipated that local communists, Greenies and their fellow travellers would convulse with rage. These people conveniently forget the facts of history. … Communists Nazis and Fascists were all birds of a feather. All these groups hate democratic freedom and they despise free enterprise. They all claim individual rights were subservient to the community or State [Wyton, 1988d].

[Tweed Shire is a] socialist shire [that] wanted to wreck their livelihood and they were not going to sit back and allow that to happen … What was happening in the shire was indicative of “creeping socialism” and asked what has happened to the Australian way of life when people worked hard, played hard and reached their goals? ... One loud and clear message – get out of the Greenies bed and get the shire back into reality [Emotions High at “Gripe Night”, 1988].

As these vehemently worded articles and letters demonstrate there was a fear in the community that Green philosophy was a communist vanguard and had infiltrated local government. As discussed in Section 5.5 of the previous chapter, the newspaper editor had fallen under the influence of the property developers and was publishing in a less than partial manner. ‘Greenies’ were being framed as an enemy within by the local newspaper and conservative elements of the community, and it is worth noting that the articles cited above are all linked with the pro-development groups of Frank Wyton. As discussed below, local government was in fact becoming corrupted by private enterprise and bending rules to assist development.
6.2.1.2 Social Changes

The most profound social change occurring in the NSW Northern Rivers Region in this period is the internal migration occurring for lifestyle reasons (Kijas, 2003; Kijas, 2011; Walmsley, 1998). Unlike other nations where “decentralisation” had been occurring, the Australian experience is seen as unique as people were migrating to the North Coast for lifestyle and environmental reasons rather than due to economic motivations (Walmsley, 1998). According to Walmsley (1998), the Richmond-Tweed Region had the highest population growth in the state (3.3% compared to 1% in Sydney) during this period (1986-1991), and this was a driving factor behind development pressure on the coast. Economic considerations were not a factor behind this migration because the unemployment rate was up to 50% higher on the North Coast than the State average, and cost of living was also higher (Walmsley, 1998).

6.2.2 The Regional Environmental Context

6.2.2.1 Post-Aquarius Northern Rivers

Kijas (2003; 2011) describes the migration to the NSW North Coast post 1970 as the “fourth wave” of historical internal migration. This wave of migrations followed on from the “third wave” interwar period (1945-1970) which resulted in people moving away from country regions into the capital cities as the rural economy stagnated and farms became impoverished. The counter-cultural or alternative lifestyle seekers are the best-known migrants of this period, even though there were people coming to the area for other reasons (Kijas, 2003). The Aquarius Festival which was held in Nimbin in 1973 was seen as the catalysing event when people left the cities seeking a new lifestyle “where they felt they could experiment with alternative lifestyles …escape from the nuclear family structure, practice a new environmental ethic, follow an anti-war stance and reject corporate capitalism” (Kijas, 2011:24).

Before Aquarius, the Northern Rivers area is described as having a collapsing economy and poverty stricken farmers (Kijas, 2003; Kijas, 2011). The new arrivals bought old and neglected properties, abandoned dairy farms and banana plantations and began to revitalise the local economy. Kijas (2011) and de Launey (2003) explain
that the new migrants brought new money to the area through means that were not always desirable to established residents. The cannabis economy is described by de Launey (2003) as having an important role in helping the area develop during this period. The interviews in Kijas (2011) explain that cannabis played a role in the economy of the Tweed at this time and also welfare payments, such as the dole, enabled people to live a simple life and still contribute to the local economy which at the time was in recession.

6.2.2.2 Public Opinion of the Environment

1979 was an important year in environmental activism in the Northern Rivers; this was the year of the Terania Creek forest protests. This event inspired and defined the methods of subsequent environmental protests, as well as improving industry responses to protest actions (Kelly, 2003; Lines, 2006). The protest at Terania Creek was a major win for conservationists and resulted in the establishment of Nightcap National Park in the early 1980s (Kelly, 2003; Lines, 2006). The location of Terania Creek on the southern border of the Tweed Shire meant that forest workers based in that district were affected by the protests and political decisions, which resulted in a polarised community in the 1980s (Kijas, 2011).

Public opinion of environmental issues began to change in the 1980s as scientific evidence of the deleterious impacts of modern civilisation began to accumulate. The ozone hole, global warming, and species loss are all environmental concepts that became more popularised towards the end of the decade. In 1983 Bob Brown had successfully stopped the Franklin on Gordon Dam in Tasmania and popular environmental issues began receiving attention by the Australian Federal Government (Lines, 2006). In 1986 the Montreal protocol was ratified and in 1988 the threat of global warming starts making headlines and the first intergovernmental panel is established to examine the issue (Hulme, 2009). In January 1989 TIME magazine published a special edition “Planet of the Year” (2015) which featured a variety of environmentally themed articles.
Seminal environmental publications were released in the 1980s including Naess *Outline of Ecosophy* (2001) who promoted for the first time the idea of ‘Deep Ecology’, which promoted a well-reasoned and logical philosophical system of reorientating the worldviews of Westerners that was aimed at energy efficiency and reducing consumption and promoting a high quality of life. Also, following on from Edward Abbey’s (1975) *Monkeywrench Gang*, was the radical publication by Foreman and Haywood (1993) *Ecodefense: A field guide to monkey wrenching*. This book was essentially a ‘how-to’ guide describing specific methods to sabotage environmentally destructive industries – also known as ‘ecotage’ which had been developed and utilised in the United States through the 1980s. It is against this background of rising environmental concern of the late 1980s and early 1990s that the events of the case study take place.

6.2.3 What other Environmental Action was happening in the Tweed in the 1980s?

There are two notable cases of environmental action happening locally during this period which are reported in the Tweed Daily News archives. The first was ‘tree-spiking’ in Nullum State Forest and the second was the confrontational 2, 4-D protests at Byrrill creek (“Byrrill group wins again”, 1988; “Spraying extension sought”, 1988).

Ecotage….attempted sabotage of logs intended for milling …dealing here with activists bordering on the maniac fringe for whom the end justifies the means…these people are seeking to kill or maim forest and mill workers. The tree spiking was apparently the work of local environmentalists who were opposed to selective harvesting of Blackbutt trees in the Nullum State Forest [“Spiking blamed on fringe groups”, 1988].

The case of tree spiking in the Nullum State Forest and the actions taken by residents of Byrrill Creek to stop weed spraying with 2, 4-D involved the use of tactics outlined in Foreman and Haywood (1993). The Byrrill Creek case involved actions by residents who claimed that the use of 2, 4 – D spray used to control Groundsel Bush was harming their health. As part of their campaign protestors planted tyre spikes in
roads, blockaded bridges with wrecked cars and physically lay down in front of spray trucks (Symons 2012 pers. Comm.). They were subsequently arrested and put on trial, however they won the case and national attention was placed on the use of herbicides and their impact on human health (“Spraying extension sought”, 1988).

In summary the late 1980s represented a change in public perception of the environment, people began to take the issue of human impact on the environment seriously and public policy began to change in response to public pressure (Jones, 2004). Scientific research into global human-ecological impacts, particularly Climate Change began to increase (Hundloe, 2009). In the Tweed Shire, the Terania Creek forest protests were a recent memory and people were inspired to take action to help protect the environment.

6.2.4 Why was there an ICAC Inquiry? What Was it About?

On the third of June 1989, the Tweed Daily News carried a small advertisement about an upcoming public hearing:

The Commission is to hold a public hearing for the purposes of its current investigation into possible corrupt conduct relating to Tweed Shire Council [Catt, 1988].

The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) was established by the NSW Government in 1989 (“Overview”, n. d.). There was widespread public disquiet about corruption in the 1980s which resulted in the establishment of the ICAC (“Overview”, n. d.). The Ocean Blue proposal at Fingal was a massive resort and marina that would take over Crown Land and destroy areas of Aboriginal significance and was widely seen as receiving favourable treatment from Government (Kijas, 2011; McKenzie & Vidler, 2003). The ICAC opened an investigation into allegations against the Tweed Shire Council in 1989 which soon was broadened into an investigation on all North Coast Land Development (Temby, 1989). By 1990 the verdict was in, a Tweed Councillor, Council Planner, consultants and a State parliamentarian were all found to be acting corruptly (Temby, 1990). Ocean Blue Pty Ltd took the ICAC to court to try and limit the negative publicity but the judge ruled
in favour of the ICAC (Temby, 1990). Environment groups on the North Coast celebrated the findings of the ICAC however worried that the new Commission might lose its powers as its authority was continually challenged in the courts (Smith, 1990).

The ICAC inquiry became a ‘who’s who’ of local politics, with Tweed Councillors, developers and local MPs all giving evidence. There were many different incidents brought to light; for example a Tweed Shire engineer was found to be accepting gifts and small bribes from developers including a set of golf clubs; he later resigned. A consultant, Dr Roger Munro was found to be facilitating meetings between development proponents and key NSW Department of Planning staff, relevant Ministers and perhaps even Premiers, so long as he received his ‘payment’. Money from Dr Munro was linked to the National Party including local members Don Beck and Don Page, however, nothing was ever proven and just as much money was given to the Labor Party (“Council Heads to be Quizzed”, 1989; “Engineer quits Council post”, 1989; “Ex-Premier implicated”, 1989; “Developers paid $1200 to Council”, 1989; Temby 1990). The following extract from the official ICAC report by Ian Temby QC explains what was happening:

It was also uncovered that a Tweed Shire Councillor was paid and received money from a private consultant in a covert manner and in relation to matters before the Tweed Shire Council. That Councillor and a Federal public servant and former State ministerial staff member were secret partners with another private consultant in a consultancy business. The Federal employee was paid improperly for assistance he was giving the business, and the Councillor was paid in respect of work done on projects in the Tweed Shire. The two consultants mentioned developed a network of contacts in the public sector and amongst certain Parliamentarians which they utilised in furtherance of matters involving them [Temby, 1990:47].

The most relevant finding of the ICAC in relation to Tweed was the corruption surrounding the “Ocean Blue”, tourist resort at Fingal (“Rumours of cash in bags”, 1989). Money from the developers was traced to Tweed Shire Deputy President Tom Hogan (the “Councillor” mentioned above), however Cr Hogan was not the only one
implicated, again National Party state MPs Don Beck and Don Page were linked to the corruption (“Payment to Nats”, 1989). This inquiry led to the eventual resignation of Tom Hogan from Council and his financial ruin (“I’m ruined’ says Hogan”, 1989), and incidentally inspired the Australian classic film *Muriel’s Wedding*. The public image of developers and government was also tarnished, with people becoming sceptical of links between government and developers. ABC Four Corners program also did a report on the topic of corruption in development deals on the North Coast.

The two extracts below discuss in detail the reasons for the inquiry and the impact it had on local politics:

Symptomatic of the development pressures along the coast the quiet sparsely settled Fingal Head Peninsula would find itself at the centre of the escalating battle between opposing development action groups. In the face of constant pressure from development local indigenous people and other community members had been working hard throughout the 1970s and 1980s to secure crown land on the Fingal peninsula as public open space as well as supporting long-term Aboriginal land claims on Letitia Spit. In 1987 fierce debate and community action erupted over the proposal of a Gold Coast company Ocean Blue for a major tourist resort to be built partly on crown land which was actively supported by the state government. The largest development planned on the east coast at the time it brought the hotly contested contemporary issues of Aboriginal land rights the environment andalienation of public land to benefit private developers into the national spotlight.

The matter was investigated by the newly formed ICAC with its role of examining allegations of corrupt activity in the NSW public sector. The Commissioner enquired into the decision to release crown land for private development and found that political donations had been concealed and that these donations had been made in such a way that the developers had been given favourable treatment. It was the first inquiry where the Commissioner made a number of
recommendations for prosecution. As a result the Ocean Blue proposals were quashed [Kijas, 2011:28].

An ICAC [inquiry] into Ocean Blue revealed that it was $2 Company. In his report on the ICAC investigation into North Coast Land Development, Commissioner Ian Temby QC made the following remarks:

"It is impossible to avoid being struck by the remarkable number of mistakes and misfortunes associated with the release of this valuable parcel of Crown Land (The Fingal Head Quarry site). Lack of care, shortage of time, and want of proper procedures seem to have conspired to produce them. A number of factors and a number of people contributed to this state of affairs…

"Deputy Premier Wal Murray MP urged Minister Ian Causley to proceed with haste. Mr Causley did so and seemed to need little urging. Mr Don Beck (Member for Murwillumbah) supported the Ocean Blue requests for speedy decisions and quick action. Tweed Shire Councillor Tom Hogan has been among those supporting and assisting the Ocean Blue Project almost from its inception. ... Every mistake seems to have favoured those who made substantial political donations, in what I have found was a blatant attempt to purchase influence in favour of their (Ocean Blue) project. The comedy of errors- or tragedy – that was the story of the disposal of the Crown Land at Fingal Head should not be allowed to occur again" [McKenzie & Vidler, 2003].

These two excerpts provide a good account of the corruption that was occurring in the Tweed Shire in the late 1980s. The local Council and State politicians were involved, some of whom remained in politics for years afterwards. Of the politicians only the career of the unfortunate Cr Tom Hogan was ruined. However given this background it is little wonder that the proposal to develop the forested plateau and Crown Land on top of Mt Nullum was viewed with suspicion and was the catalyst for the formation of a community group.
6.2.4.1 Impact of the ICAC

After the 1989 ICAC inquiry, the reputation of coastal developments (and their proponents) was irreversibly damaged. However, the Mt Nullum development was never examined by the ICAC and by the end of 1989, the Nullum proposal was one of the few original 1980s developments remaining.

[Doug Moran] repeated his claim that it was stalling tactics and that he was caught up in the backlash of what was happening at the ICAC inquiry ["Moran threatens to go across the border", 1989].

In an attempt to demonstrate the honest manner in which decisions were now being made at the Tweed Council, the then President Max Boyd publicly released all documents pertaining to the development application and rezoning process (unfortunately these documents have all now disappeared) (pers. comm. Max Boyd, 2012). At the time the release of these documents provided a great source of evidence for the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust and the Caldera Environment Centre who were able to construct a case against the Council. These documents greatly informed submission by the TVCT/CEC (1990).

6.3 What is Mt Nullum, and What was Being Proposed?

This section provides information about the significance of Mt Nullum, describing the physical features and the ecology and the legal protections. The development proposal is also discussed in detail and there is a synopsis of events based on internal Council documents that shows the influence of the developer over the decision making process.

6.3.1 Mt Nullum – Geology and Ecology

The Tweed Caldera is the eroded remains of an extinct shield volcano on the NSW east coast, close to the NSW/Qld border. The fertile soils and subtropical rainforests of the NSW far north-coast are attributed to the weathering of the volcanic rocks from the Mt Warning Shield volcano (Graham, 2001). The Tweed Volcanic Region ranges
from the Gold coast in the north to Lismore in the south and extends beyond Kyogle in the West. The area is renowned for its rugged mountainous terrain, fertile river valleys and subtropical rainforests. The region is a biodiversity hot spot, the latitude (c. S23°) means that tropical and temperate species overlap; there is also a high level of endemism with unique flora and fauna in rugged valleys and isolated mountain tops (Graham, 2001; Kingston et al., 2004). Kingston et al. (2004) state that there are up to 207 significant plants in the Tweed Shire and there are 55 endemic flora species in the greater Mt Warning region. The Tweed Shire Local Government Area is located in the centre of the Mt Warning erosion caldera (“The Tweed”, 2013).

A shrub/small tree known as Silver Leaf (*Argophyllum nullumense* R.T.Baker) first type specimen was collected on Mt Nullum in 1896 and the species name is after mountain. The Silver Leaf is considered a rare plant, listed on the Rare or Threatened Australian Plants List (ROTAP - 3RCa), but is not listed as vulnerable under State or Federal law. The species is endemic to Australia (“Australian Plant Name Index”, 2011).

Mt Nullum is a unique formation within the Tweed Caldera, being a later sub-volcanic micro-granite/granite intrusion, distinct from the rest of the igneous geology of the Tweed which is dominated by basalt and rhyolite, and different from the neighbouring, central Mt Warning complex which is made of basalt, gabbro, syenite (also containing areas of trachyite, and the summit of trachyandesite). The unique geology of Mt Nullum means that it has a unique dry to wet sclerophyll forest community that is not found elsewhere in the region (Graham, 2001; Morand, 1996).

The micro-granite/granite composition of Mt Nullum means that it has been resistant to weathering and is a dominant feature of the local topography (Graham, 2001; Morand, 1996). The top of the mountain is also unique in the area, containing a plateau rather than having the sheer cliffs, steep slopes and thin ridges that are more typical of the areas other mountain tops; this plateau makes Mt Nullum an attractive spot for a mountain-top development proposal (Mitchell, McCotter & Associates, 1988a).
6.3.2 What Environmental Values Does the Area Have?

Supporters of the development attempted to firstly downplay the environmental significance of the site and secondly exaggerate the environmental benefits that the development, once constructed would bring to the area. However, conservationists had a different perspective and saw Mt Nullum as having very important environmental values, in particular having a strong scenic landscape value to the area.

The fact that Mt Nullum had been zoned as a wildlife corridor, which had been supported by NPWS was evidence that the area had important environmental values. The Mt Nullum area forms part of a mainly forested link between the Mt Warning/Wollumbin NP area and areas to the east and south including Burringbar Range, Nullum State Forest and the Nightcap Range and could be expected to serve as a wildlife corridor; linking and allowing the movement of plants and animals between areas of high conservation value (NPWS cited in Woodward and Carleton, 1990: 71). Mt Nullum is also known to have conservation value as the habitat of several rare or threatened species (NPWS cited in Woodward and Carleton, 1990: 71).

Mt Nullum differs from the rest of the volcanic landforms of the Tweed caldera in that it is largely granitic with some sandstones, thus giving a different soil nutrient base to the surrounding volcanic and metamorphically derived soils of other caldera uplands. The nearest similar rock/soil/habitat-type combination is to be found in the granite country of New England. However Mt Nullum differs again from these places in that it has coastal proximity, higher latitude and lower elevation and is thus much warmer and wetter (TVCT/CEC, 1990: 42).

Mt Nullum is a prominent landmark in the area forming a rugged backdrop to the town of Murwillumbah (see Figures 6.3 and 6.4). The construction of access roads (and the development) would have a negative impact on the scenic value of Mt Nullum (Woodward and Carleton, 1990). Interviewee 1, cited the scenic/landscape values as the prime motivator for his involvement in becoming involved in opposing the development and starting the Environment Centre.
6.3.3 Where was the Development to be Constructed?

The development was to be built on top of the mountain on the plateau area. Figures 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 below show the site location, Figure 6.2 shows the site in relation to the surrounding landscape and Figure 6.3 shows the site at a larger scale with a close-up of the mountain and its proximity to Murwillumbah. Figure 6.4 is an image of the Mt Nullum showing surrounding topographical features. The excerpt below describes the development area in terms of portion numbers, these portion numbers taken together are the green boundary shown below in Figures 6.2 and 6.3:

The land on Mt Nullum that is the subject of this inquiry is described as Portions 71, 87, 92 and 102 in the Parish of Dunbible, County of Rous, Shire of Tweed.....Mt Nullum is located 10km south of Murwillumbah and forms part of the Mt Warning geological formation [Woodward and Carleton, 1990].

6.3.4 Why was Nullum to be Developed?

The development had been a project initiated as early as 1980 by Max Boyd, President of Tweed Shire for 18 terms. Max Boyd had instructed Council to buy land from private interests after state government departments had been approached but declined to buy the land in 1978. Max Boyd’s vision for the land is stated in a newspaper article from 1990:

In 1978 the Council requested the Lands Department to buy this land as a reserve with a view to preserving it for the people. Attempts were made to interest NPWS in buying the land and establishing an environmental education centre. After its unsuccessful attempts to get two State government departments to buy the land, the Council bought 350.59HA in 1980 with a view to developing it as a tourist site. The land was heavily and actively logged by a local sawmill up until the purchase. The Council believed it was acting responsibly in acquiring the land for tourism and recreational purposes and saw the development of Mt Nullum as a means of reducing the pressure of public visitations on the Mt Warning NP. (Continued on page 183)
Figure 6.2 Regional Map

Map illustrating the location of Mt Nullum within the Tweed region. Significant landmarks mentioned in the text are also shown here. Mt Warning/Wollumbin dominates the centre of the valley. The Border Ranges lie to the West and Terania Creek is in the South, both these areas became National Parks in the late 1970s and early 1980s due to protest action.
Figure 6.3 Local Map

Close up view of Mt Nullum site showing the proximity to the town of Murwillumbah. As can be seen in this aerial picture, the site is heavily forested and located on steep land.
Figure 6.4 View of Mt Nullum

*Mt Nullum and surrounding topography. Mt Nullum is on the centre left of the image, Mt Warning/Wollumbin National Park (1100m AHD) is to the centre-right. Image taken by Sam Dawson, 2015.*
The land was zoned to allow development as proposed in 1980. The Council had the opportunity to approve of development on this site before the gazettal of the shire wide LEP in 1988 but did not do so.

The proposed developer has undertaken to include at his own cost a facility to educate the public about the Tweed’s natural environment in much the same way as O’Reilly’s has done at Lamington National Park for the past 40 years.

A personal motivation for developing the mountain should also be acknowledged:

…there are many thousands people too old, or perhaps disabled who are unable to enjoy bushwalking but who could be given that pleasure from a development as proposed [Boyd, 1990].

Max Boyd is an amputee, and a former farmer and lover of the local bush. Some aspects of the development such as escalator to the summit could be seen as being pitched towards his disability. Max Boyd saw the development as being an opportunity to develop a world-class facility. It is worth noting here that while Max Boyd championed the development he was not the villain in this case, as an interview on ABC Four Corner’s in 2003 reveals, he was very concerned about environmental management (McDonnell, 2003):

I just simply believe that when you have a product like the Tweed is, in terms of land development, it demands the best and we should make no apologies for that. Developers are not special people - they come along at a stage in our history when there are millions to be made out of developing land and I believe that some of those millions should come back into the area that they're becoming millionaires out of, in terms of the way in which they develop their land, the attention they give to not only landscaping but the small things that are going to ensure that pollution doesn't become a problem and that they liberally give of land that they've acquired back to the people - whether it be playing fields or passive open space or just simply the finer points that will make that development stand out from the crowd [McDonnell, 2003].
As discussed above in Section 6.2.1.1 the pro-development groups during the late 1980s continually hounded Max Boyd and the Tweed Council over his cautious attitude towards development, the newspaper article “Emotions run high at Gripe Night” (1988) was a report about a community meeting organised especially to attack Shire President, Max Boyd and his supporters in Council for being tardy over development approvals for major developments.

6.3.5 What were the Advantages of the Development?

As with all development projects the most obvious benefits were the economic impacts, the jobs that would be created during construction and permanent employment once the development is finished. The following extracts from the Daily News announce the positive impacts that the development would have on the economy. The articles are authored by the political representatives of the Tweed Shire, the state MP Don Beck, the Shire President Max Boyd, the editor of the newspaper and the developer Doug Moran:

Now comes [Doug Moran’s] latest venture and possibly the most exciting and important as far as Murwillumbah is concerned. [The Mt Nullum development] could involve the expenditure of between $50 and $100 million and boost employment prospects…If [Mt Nullum] is tackled in the same manner in which other Moran projects have been it must be a winner. The development could be the making of the town and is undoubtedly the largest of its type ever contemplated for this part of the state [“Mt Nullum Venture”: Editorial, 1987].

The project was expected to employ 1000 people and cater for between 2500 and 3000 visitors (quote attributed to Don Beck MP) [“Threat to Mt. Nullum Deal”, 1988].

Projects such as [Mt Nullum] must be encouraged because of the employment that they will bring to the Murwillumbah electorate [Beck, 1988].
Mr Beck [MP for Murwillumbah] said development such as the Fingal proposals, including a marina, townhouses and a mooted international hotel; the new Tweed River entrance which will also attract further development in that vicinity; the Ocean Paradise scheme between Kingscliff and Bogangar as well as the Crown Land site south of Kingscliff [Ocean Blue] …there are developments south of Pottsville at Black Rock and the Wooyung scheme as well as the Bedser development east of Duranbah [“Tweed Shire facing challenging time”, 1988].

Then there is the major Moran scheme for Mt Nullum…All these things are of major significance to the area…boost the economy and employment …The design of all these projects can easily fit in with the natural beauty of the Tweed Valley and that is an important aspect I want considered …This attitude was vital because development was on its way and ‘by working together’ we can be sure of getting the sort of development the area deserves [Boyd, 1990].

The development offered many positive advantages to the town, the most obvious being the immediate economic considerations of investment, employment and spending for construction. The project was expected to employ 1000 people once fully constructed. Other benefits included the cultural attraction of having an art gallery and artist’s studios as part of the concept (see Box 6-1 below). There would also have been benefits for tourism providing an iconic destination with easy access and stunning views. The proposal was designed to promote Murwillumbah and the Tweed as a tourist resort and retirement centre.

6.3.6 The Proposal

Since 1980 when Tweed Shire Council (TSC) first acquired the land, some form of development had been mooted for the top of Mt Nullum (see section 6.3.4 above and Section 6.3.7 below provides a chronological synopsis of events leading to the Commission of Inquiry, and Section 9 provides a full description of the Tweed Council’s role in the rezoning). The Council had bought the land from private interests and had unsuccessfully attempted to sell it to National Parks. In 1987 the
ecological values of the mountain were recognised by National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust, who both successfully lobbied for a wildlife corridor was zoning for the area. The Local Environment Plan (LEP) 1987 zoned the mountain top as Zone 7 – Environmental Protection, Wildlife Corridor and Scenic Escarpment (TVCT/CEC, 1990). The Mt Nullum deal was announced on page one of the Tweed Daily News on August 6 1987, with the headline “Dynamic Development on Murwillumbah’s backdoor $60m project unveiled: Council sells Mt Nullum to Moran” (1987).

The developer, Doug Moran (see Section 6.6 for more details about Doug Moran) was the head of Moran Health Group and had a close working relationship with chief planners and Councillors in the Tweed Shire. Recently Moran had completed a nursing home in Murwillumbah and was busily working on stage 2 (out of 3 stages) of Mountain View Retirement Village. Also recently constructed by the Moran group is the Hospital of Excellence at Tugun (just metres north of the NSW/Qld border) which the Tweed Council had lost to Queensland due to the refusal of the (ALP) NSW Government to allow the development in NSW (“Submission to Minister”, 1988; “Village opens its doors”, 1988). Box 6.1 below describes the list of features that were being proposed for the development on top of Mt Nullum.

The problem now became the desire for a development in an area which a few months before had been gazetted for environmental protection. With the advent of the 1987 Local Environment Plan the Council had missed an opportunity to more appropriately zone the area for development and instead had “locked-up” the development site and now had to initiate a series of amendments to the Local Environment Plan to facilitate the proposal.
Box 6.1 Mt Nullum proposal components

*Listed components of the Mt Nullum proposal as reported in the local newspaper and consultants reports.* (“Dynamic Development”, 1987; Mitchell, Mc Cotter & Associates, 1988a)

The Mt Nullum proposal consisted of the following components, various ideas were added or deleted as time progressed:

- Art and cultural centre of excellence ($2 million) which will be gifted to Council
- Contains a world class studio to which contemporary great artists of international standing could be attracted
- Later developments - sanatorium (120 beds) health recuperative centres not yet available in Australia which would be linked by helipad to the Moran Hospital of Excellence at Tugun
- Five star hotel (250-400 rooms)
- Golf Course
- Family style guest house (200-300 persons)
- Family style log cabins
- (and possibly) Aerial tramway from the valley floor
- European style thermal baths with therapeutic style facilities
- A living atrium, within the precincts of the hotel
- Other “luxe” features – golf, tennis, swimming, riding and bushwalking
- Artificial lake
- Escalator to the summit
- Residential accommodation for staff
- Shops
6.3.7 How did this Development Compare to Other Developments at the Time?

Other development proposals in 1988-90 were estimated at a total of $2000 million:

- Ocean Blue, including a marina, townhouses and international hotel - Fingal
- New Tweed River entrance
- Letitia Spit (private island – post river mouth relocation)
- the Ocean Paradise scheme between Kingscliff and Bogangar (16 storeys, 5.2kms long 50m from beach)
- as well as the Crown land site south of Kingscliff
- South Pottsville at Black Rocks
- Wooyung Resort scheme (including artificial lake)
- The Bedsor development east of Duranbah.
- Lennen development at Bogangar/Cabarita


Most of these proposals were situated along the coastal strip and were designed as tourism and residential developments. There was an explicit desire by the pro-development lobby for the Tweed Coast to become more like the Gold Coast (McKenzie & Vidler, 2003). The premier development in the above list was the Ocean Blue Resort, the company took out an advert entitled “Ocean Blue and You” that claimed its development would transform Fingal, “the existing quarry is used as a dump and [this development] will allow the general public to enjoy a better Fingal” (“Ocean Blue and you” Advertisement, 1988). Most of these large developments never made it to the Development Application stage.

Unlike the above listed developments the Mt Nullum project was different due to an emphasis upon health, art and a rural (not coastal) location. The Moran Group had established a reputation of entrepreneurial hospital development and ancillary health care and retirement villages and had ambitions to create health care villages with modern hospitals as a nucleus (Wynne, 2006). The Mt Nullum project was one part of that plan, with patients being transported from the Moran Hospital of Excellence at
Tugun by helicopter to a helipad on top of Mt Nullum for recuperation in the sanatorium (“Dynamic Development”, 1987).

6.3.8 What Legal Protection did the Area Have?

In 1987-90 the land of Mt Nullum was only protected by being zoned as Environmental Protection Habitat and Environmental Protection Scenic Escarpment 7(l) and Habitat 7(d). One portion (no. 7l), the summit was Crown Land, this effectively excluded development on the site.

As described in the synopsis of events, Amendments were made to the LEP as soon as it was gazetted. Amendment No. 1 for instance allowed the construction of tourist facilities in Scenic Escarpment Zones. The Draft Amendment No. 16 to the Tweed Local Environment Plan would have removed any protection granted by the habitat and Scenic Escarpment Zones and was designed to enable the development. The Amendments to the Local Environment Plan were designed to reduce the restriction on development in the entire Shire and specifically enable the development of Mt Nullum. All Amendments had to be approved by the NSW State Government.

6.4 Who Were the Main Actors in this Case?

There are many people and community groups involved with either promoting or criticising the development. The following section merely lists individuals involved and their stance on the issue. More detailed descriptions of individuals and groups are presented in subsequent sections (indicated in parentheses). For the sake of brevity, the case study examines only four community groups, two of which supported the development and two of which opposed it.

- Doug Moran, The Moran Group (Section 6.6)
- Tweed Shire Council (Section 6.7)
- The consultants (Section 6.7)
- NSW Government (Section 6.8)
- The Community (Section 6.11 see also 4.1)
There were two main groups opposed to the development. The first group were people who wanted greater accountability in government decision making and the other group wanted conservation of the natural environment. The following is a list of people and groups who supported the development:

- Murwillumbah Business Corporation, Interviewee 3
- Frank Wyton (Tweed Landowners Group, Tweed Coast Tourism Association, Australian Small Business Association, Property Owners for Progress, Tweed Liberals)
- Tweed Shire Council, all Councillors and all staff
- Don Beck, MP for Murwillumbah
- Wal Murray, Deputy Premier NSW
- Tim Moore, Environment Minister
- Bruce Chick

### 6.4.1 What Were the Motivations for these Groups?

There are many community groups lobbying both for and against the proposed development. The previous chapter, Interview Analysis provide some valuable insights into the motivations of conservationists. Generally conservationists were motivated by a desire to protect the landscape/landforms and the perceived nepotism in Council rezoning approval which sought to undermine the legitimacy of the wildlife corridor.

By contrast pro-development groups were motivated by more material concerns. The acquisition of wealth and creation of jobs are the primary reasons (“Development support group”, 1988; “Support for Development”, 1988; “Councillors locking out jobs”, 1988), however there was also a fear of the conservationists based on Cold War ideology which linked environmental regulation to the restriction of the free market and was therefore a socialist/communist vanguard. The rapid development of the Gold Coast is viewed enviously by these groups who use the rapid urbanisation in Queensland as an example of what the Tweed should have been doing.
Tweed Shire Council was told it needed to look at its management practices by several speakers at a meeting of the Murwillumbah Business Corporation....The meeting was attended by about 80 people – the majority of them business people of the town and district and five Councillors and two senior officers...Also present were Paul Glynn and Wayne Saunders of the Ocean Blue Resort development.

...there was an obvious need for the Council to have a look at its system and at neighbouring Councils who were getting projects through at an incredible rate compared to the Tweed Shire.

Cr Boyd said with the Mt Nullum development not one Councillor was opposed but Council had to work within the law and the rules – it had no choice and those rules hadn’t been amended by the new state government ["Shire Council under fire from Business Corporation", 1988].

6.4.2 What were the Concerns of the Conservationists?

The major concern of the conservation groups was, in their words the “cynical manipulation of the planning process by Council to facilitate a development” (TVCT/CEC, 1990). Ever since the gazettal of the Tweed LEP 1987, TSC had been gradually modifying the LEP to facilitate the development. Amendment No. 1 allowed for the construction of tourist developments within Scenic Escarpment Zones. Amendment No. 16 would switch Scenic Escarpment and Habitat Zones on top of Mt Nullum and so permit the development to occur on the plateau by pushing the habitat zones to the escarpment and ridgeline areas. The TVCT/CEC (1990) submission describes the potential outcome of the rezoning as a “wildlife roundabout, and not a wildlife corridor”.

The Council’s consultants also justify the relocation of the wildlife corridor by describing its functions as “speculative”, and the current location of the wildlife corridor as “arbitrary”. The consultants also claim that significant vegetation communities, in particular wet sclerophyll are represented elsewhere in reserves, and similarly rare flora and fauna species are also protected elsewhere and impacts from
the development can be minimised (Mitchell, McCotter & Associates, 1988). Such statements were alarming to the conservationists who argued against them in their submission (TVCT/CEC, 1990).

6.5 How did the Newspaper report the Mt Nullum Proposal?

Louw (2008) explains how the media can be used by elites to dominate public discourse and set the agenda for political debate and terms this idea ‘Hype-ocracy’, meaning democracy dictated by hype. The Tweed Daily News of the late 1980s was hyping up the debate between development and community values and repeatedly taking the side of the developers and pro-development factions within the community. As Interviewees relate in the previous interview analysis chapter there was a significant reporting bias in the Daily News at the time.

In the six months from July to December 1988, there were 25 articles supportive of the Mt Nullum proposal (includes editorials, opinion pieces by local business owners and update reports on the status of the proposal); 9 articles supportive of Doug Moran, the art prize or the retirement village and 3 articles critical of the development (all were by Interviewee 1 from the Tweed Electoral Lobby). There were also a few letters to the editor in opposition to the proposal (3 were identified between 7/1988 and 12/1988). Table 6-1 below shows the amount of articles and letters published by the respective community groups, government and the developer during the period 1987-1990.
Table 6-1 Press coverage of groups

The number of times a group appears in the press in relation to the Mt Nullum development (1987-1990). The figures here can be used as indicator of media bias in the case. The environment group has no articles or letters published, while the pro-development groups have a total of twelve articles published. Articles from Council are mixed and defensive responses to accusation by one group or another, however articles concerning the State government are typically in favour of the development and critical of Council.

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<th>Caldera Environment Centre</th>
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<th>Wyton groups</th>
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The concept that the local newspaper was promoting a one-sided debate was not lost on the public or the Council at the time. The Council publicly attacked the paper on several occasions and in an article entitled “Paper’s stance under scrutiny” (1988) the accuracy of its reports are questioned. A few days previously the newspaper had reported on a public meeting that moved a motion to sack Council because of its slow Development Approval process (‘Emotions run high at Gripe Night’, 1988), the newspaper reported that up to 500 people attended. Other accounts dispute that figure claiming as few as 180 people attended (‘Boyd Blasts’, 1988; ‘Paper’s stance under scrutiny’, 1988). The newspaper was defended by some within Council, mainly Deputy President Tom Hogan who vouched for the accuracy of its reporting and credibility of the Editor (‘Paper’s stance under scrutiny’, 1988). As Interviewees
reported in the previous chapter there was little doubt about the pro-development stance of the newspaper.

After reviewing four years of newspaper articles (1987-1990) patterns were detected in the way in which the newspaper reported on development issues, particularly Mt Nullum. The simplest method was a juxtaposition of Doug Moran’s artistic philanthropy against his development proposals. For example, the day before the Mt Nullum proposal is publicly announced, the *Tweed Daily News* promotes Doug Moran’s recently announced Portrait Prize (1st prize is $200 000). Then the following day the Doug Moran ‘proposal to develop Mt Nullum is announced, including information about the benefits already accrued to the Tweed from the nearly finished nursing home, and the benefits that would arise out of the new venture.

A more complex pattern was also observed which defines the structure of the official media discourse for promoting development, and the following three articles below illustrate that formula which follows six steps:

1. The generosity of the developer as a person is expressed by an announcement of the benefits he has or will soon bring to the area, or,
2. The development concept is announced and all the benefits it will provide, particularly jobs are emphasised
3. An external rationalisation is provided by a third party, sometimes a political figure but mostly by (i) business people and (ii) community groups
4. Favourable editorial slant is provided with a repetition of benefits
5. Particular attention is focused on decision makers (Council) and the public is advised to be sceptical of Councillors (or Government in general) motives
   a. An individual Councillor may be named and shamed for their anti-development attitude
6. The implied threat of stifling, soviet-style bureaucracy hindering free-enterprise.
It is announced that the Tweed Shire Council (TSC) has sold land on Mt Nullum (for $1 million)… Moran sees the Tweed Valley becoming a central place in Australia for international visitors as well as Australians seeking a more healthy and family lifestyle. “We would envisage mass employment for the area in health care workers, the hospitality industry and associated facilities” [“Dynamic Development”, 1987].

No one can deny that the name Doug Moran has become well known on the Tweed. First there was his decision to build one of his nursing homes…following approaches by Doug Anthony and the late Jack Boyd (former State MP and brother of Shire President Max Boyd) Later was his announcement that he would build a retirement village complex adjacent to the home…. At a cost of $11 million.

Then followed the announcement that he was to sponsor the world’s richest portrait prize and that has received world publicity and focused attention on the Tweed and in particular Murwillumbah. Now comes his latest venture and possibly the most exciting and important as far as Murwillumbah is concerned. [The Mt Nullum development] could involve the expenditure of between $50 and $100 million and boost employment prospects [“Mt Nullum venture”, 1987].

Berrick Boyd from Boyd Real Estate (on the Gold Coast) says that the Tweed is stuck 40 years in the past as observed from a plane flight over the Gold Coast-Tweed border. “Building figures are a joke compared to the Gold Coast…Development decay has occurred in Northern NSW since the implementation of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act administered by the NSW Environment and Planning Department…."Planning matters are best left in the hands of local Councils… (Council’s) are thwarted by the department and the developer either goes broke or withdraws. “The people of the Tweed elect Councillors but have no say over the bureaucrats who make the laws governing their area.
“In this coming Council election the people of Northern NSW want to look long and hard for candidates who will allow well planned, well documented developments that will help the shire develop as it should increasing employment and making the Tweed the vibrant place it should be. They should also be looking for candidates who will fight this bureaucratic monster called the Environment and Planning Department. “It is easy for Councillors to say they do not want another Gold Coast” [“North Coast in decay”, 1987].

Critical analysis of the development by members of the community comes at a later date, however as can be seen in Table 6-2, comments from the pro-development lobby (either groups, government officials or the developer) are two to three times more common than comments critical of the development. As explained by Interviewee 2 Doug Moran was an expert in public relations and the comments from the media pertaining to Mt Nullum need to be seen also in this light. The developer helped to frame the media discourse and public agenda in relation to the development.

6.6 Who was the Developer?

Doug Moran, the head of the Moran Health Care Group, was the proponent of the proposal to develop Mt Nullum. As stated above the main interests of the Moran Group at this time was the development of health facilities; hospitals, retirement villages and nursing homes (Wynne, 2006). The agenda of the Moran Group was to have a system of privately managed health and care facilities in Australia (Wynne, 2006). Moran had a history in the real-estate market and Wynne (2006), believes that his motives were driven more by profit than charity. He had a very temperamental nature and the Daily News contains several articles where Doug Moran says he will not proceed with the development (“100 Jobs hang in balance”, 1989; “Moran threatens”, 1989) and threatens to abandon his retirement village in Murwillumbah as Council was not moving fast enough (“Moran claims”, 1988) with approval processes, then changes his mind two days later (“Retirement village to go ahead”, 1988).
Doug Moran is a self-made and self-educated man from a poor background. He has been a ruthless businessman and a strong advocate for the private sector. He has displayed supreme self-confidence, dogmatism and disregard for the views of others. His belief in himself dominated everything he did. He has persuaded others into accepting his views and supporting his ventures. He seldom if ever admits to being wrong. He has imposed his views and desires on others - not least his family. Like many others with these characteristics he has been a generous philanthropist with strong likes and dislikes [Wynne, 2006].

Moran, the man, is seen by Wynne (2006) as an uncompromising, strident and a manipulative businessman and has a family history mired in tragic drama. He got his start in the Depression era Australia, living in a tent for six years farming pineapples in Queensland and had a poverty stricken upbringing (Wynne, 2006). His ruthless business acumen and profit making from private healthcare raised questions over whether he had the character to run an aged care facility and also led to articles titled “Patron of the Arts or Dictator?” (1988, cited in Wynne, 2006) and “Health Care, Or Wealth Care?” (1999 cited in Wynne, 2006). Wynne (2006) explains the imperious self-belief that Moran had in business also applied to his personal life and it was this attitude which enabled him to remain oblivious to his negative impact on his family. The fact that he would go to court and battle the widow of his dead son instead of reaching an out-of-court settlement (he had incredible wealth at the time) is evidence that he will not admit that he is wrong, about anything (Wynne, 2006).

….an authoritarian father who dominated the lives of his seven children, to the extent that it was alleged that one of his sons, Brendan, was driven to suicide; and of infidelity, and physical abuse of Greta, his wife and business partner of nearly half a century. The court also heard of a family where the brutal bullying of Brendan by his elder brother Peter was considered acceptable behaviour [“Witness for the Defence”, 2000 cited in Wynne, 2006].
In the 1980s Moran’s business was a family empire, his wife worked with him as did his seven children. Upbeat media reports showed family harmony and cooperation towards the goal of developing the Hospital and retirement village empire nationally and internationally. Moran had excellent connections to the political and business elites of the time, and by the 1990s Moran was helping to write aged-care policy for the Federal Howard Government (Wynne, 2006).

Nursing homes, hospitals, hotels. Sydney. 65. Married, seven children. Douglas Moran’s business empire, built on private health care, has expanded into travel, health-care conventions, aviation charter, property and legal work. But Moran Health Care Group, which has 22 nursing homes, 10 private hospitals and five retirement villages, remains the core business [“Douglas Moran”, 1990 cited in Wynne, 2006].

He cultivates and appoints key politicians and Health Department personnel. John Mason, the former Liberal Party leader, worked for Moran after he left Parliament. Moran has close relations with Queensland Premier Mike Ahern, former Country Party leader Doug Anthony, and former NSW Health Minister Kevin Stewart. He presented Stewart with a portrait in oils at a farewell lunch [“Patron of the Arts or Dictator?” 1988 cited in Wynne, 2006].

He admitted playing a part designing the Federal Government’s controversial “user pays” nursing home reforms….Yesterday he announced he would spend $100,000 of his own money promoting the policy [“Millionaire… calls elderly ‘bludgers’” cited in Wynne, 2006].

Moran’s attempts to develop an aged care system based on a privatised model and luxury accommodation floundered (Wynne, 2006). The quality of the care in his nursing homes was also questionable, described as “adequate but not excellent” by anonymous inside sources (Wynne, 2006).
No hint of scandal has attached to his nursing homes. In an industry tainted by the few, Moran has a clean record. He believes he provides the best facilities for the price. But a nursing home inspector, who cannot be named, said: "He runs a fair service, average quality ... he meets our requirements without providing a level of excellence" [“Patron of the Arts or Dictator?”, 1988 cited in Wynne 2006].

A Moran innovation is to enter the "exempt" nursing home field, that is, where wealthier clients are able to pay add-on fees in return for convenient five-star facilities ["Doug Moran’s Family Elixir", 1994, cited in Wynne 2006].

[ Critics] argue that Mr Moran is unlikely to attract either local patients who could afford to stay in the centres of excellence, or the Asian patients Moran is hoping will fill 50 per cent of the beds. But his tactic in the past has been to develop the projects and on-sell them, usually at a healthy profit ["A health industry in the throes", 1989, cited in Wynne 2006].

Doug Moran’s views on issues were made very public, in 1997 he called pensioners ‘bludgers’ for not wanting to pay fees at nursing homes. He has a strong free-market/entrepreneurial/capitalist stance and was critical of Government regulation and public opposition to his plans (Wynne, 2006). With his Portrait Prize he attacked modern art, publicly criticising it and forbidding it to be entered in what was then the richest art prize in Australia. The manager of the Tweed Gallery who criticised Moran’s tastes was sacked just before the Moran art prize came to town (Wynne, 2006).

Nursing home tycoon Doug Moran yesterday labelled elderly people who complain about nursing home fees as bludgers, silvertails and hoarders. … The multi-millionaire compared pensioners who object to asset-testing to disgraced businessmen Christopher Skase and Alan Bond [Millionaire … calls elderly ‘bludgers’, 1997, cited in Wynne 2006].
Nearly everyone in Australia knows by now that Doug Moran, one of Australia's 200 richest men and a tireless self-promoter, is the country's most generous patron of traditional art. He abhors modern painting so much that he has funded a lucrative prize for conventional portraiture. The competition and prize are costing his family half a million dollars.

Rod McMahon believed, however, that the concept of the Moran competition, and most of the works, were about 20 years out of date. He told Moran so. He was not the first critic, but the problem for McMahon was that three months earlier he had been appointed Director of the gallery where the Moran collection would hang.

The gallery was in Murwillumbah, in the Tweed Shire of Northern NSW. Several major galleries had declined the invitation to provide a resting place for the portraits after their Australia-wide tour. But the Tweed Shire Council had joined forces with Moran. He contributed $50,000 towards renovating the Murwillumbah Gallery; the Shire has contributed at least $114,000 of ratepayers' money over the past three years to publicise and administer the Moran Exhibition.

But five days after his Canberra lunch with Doug Moran, Rod McMahon was sacked. "The shire clerk told me I'd said things I shouldn't have."

McMahon, formerly Director of the Hogarth Gallery in Sydney, and assistant to Elwyn Lynn, curator of the Power Gallery of Contemporary Art at Sydney University, says the Murwillumbah Gallery belongs to the shire and its people, "but Mr Moran is looking at it as his private gallery, his monument."

"He thinks he is a patron of the Arts but he has become a dictator of art style." Doug Moran says he is "pouring about $1 million into that electorate. The President and Shire Clerk could see I was terribly unhappy". He did not believe McMahon would promote the gallery properly and he wondered why he had applied for the job.
He is a philanthropist, but on his own terms. He believes he is a good man, and he does not want anyone to tell him what to do. He withdrew from the Private Hospitals and Nursing Homes' Association of Australia, the main industry body, to set up his own organisation. He has never bought a share or consulted an art adviser for the same reason. He likes to be in control. The Doug Moran Health Care Group is a privately-owned company.

He says he has no close friends. "Other people seem to have friends running out of their ears. I've had no time." Behind Moran's artless manner lies steely determination and a sense of entitlement. Being rich means getting your own way ["Patron of the Arts or Dictator?", 1988, cited in Wynne, 2006].

According to Wynne (2006) the Moran’s family misfortunes which occurred in the late 1990s, are believed to give an insight into the real personality of Doug Moran. Carefully scripted pieces had emerged in the press during the late 1980s and early 1990s displaying a confident image of family harmony. These articles portrayed a family empire working for the business with children gaining skills necessary to manage the legacy of their father. It was revealed that one of Moran’s seven children, Brendan, committed suicide due to bullying and harassment and abuse by the family. Brendan’s widow sued the Moran family, blaming them for his suicide and subsequently all of their dirty laundry was aired in the media (Wynne, 2006).

In the 1990s and early 2000s Moran’s investments in Australia and overseas went bankrupt, ruining investors and companies. In all cases Moran Healthcare Group escaped financial ruin. In Australia, in 1993 a subsidiary of Westpac (Australian Guarantee Corporation) was left with the financial mess of the failed ventures (Wynne, 2006). Simply put most of the developments were either too expensive or overcomplicated. The elite hospitals were based on a business model of patronage by rich overseas patients (mostly from Asian countries), however the market did not want what Moran was providing (Wynne, 2006).
Picture this. You've travelled from Japan for your coronary bypass. Your wife has come too, booked into a $200-a-night room in the five-star hotel alongside the Hospital of Excellence at Tugun, on Australia's Gold Coast.

It's a $16,000 package but what the heck, you might even splash out and recuperate at the nearby Spa Resort at Murwillumbah. It makes a change from the Mayo Clinic where you had your gall bladder operation a couple of years ago. And here's the clincher, you get to take home a videotape of your operation. Another satisfied customer of Doug Moran, Chairman of the Moran Health Care Group. That was the dream - Doug's dream - but the reality fell a bit short of the vision.

He planned to go further, developing medical Taj Mahals - townships of villas, hotels, spas and hospitals - in three States. At least 40 per cent of the customers at the new medical resorts, Doug believed, would be Asian. The end result was a confidential settlement which is understood to involve Westpac injecting $159 million into the Moran properties on which AGC had mortgages.

The failed venture on the Gold Coast has put an end to the expansionist plans of Moran and family - for the time being ["Doug Moves On", 1993, cited in Wynne 2006].

The Moran family was then at the height of its power and influence, however his (then) hidden family drama reveal a ruthless personality. Moran’s business objective was to approach health care like a real-estate deal; buy and then develop the site. Initiate a care facility and then sell the enterprise. This business model was based on a philosophy of free-enterprise, deregulated markets and user pays system. Moran was a champion of private hospitals and private healthcare facilities. Moran’s friendship with Shire President Boyd enabled both men to develop a dream into reality.

6.6.1 How did the Developer become Involved with the Community?

Prior to the Nullum proposal being (officially) announced Doug Moran had constructed a nursing home in Murwillumbah and had made plans to construct a
three-stage retirement village nearby (ironically situated across the road from a graveyard). This project was considered essential at the time as Murwillumbah had no existing facilities of this type. The Daily News reports that Doug Moran was approached by Doug Anthony and the state representative Jack Boyd to construct the facilities (“Mt Nullum venture” Editorial, 1987).

As described above, the development was expected to cost $100 million and already the construction of the nursing homes was seen as a tangible economic benefit to the Tweed Shire through the jobs created. The Hospital of Excellence had been proposed for the Tweed, however this had been lost to Queensland and it was constructed metres over the border in Tugun (“Submission to Minister”, 1988; “Council Strikes Back”, 1988). Due to these recent achievements Doug Moran was highly regarded by local politicians who promised their help to future projects and desired more developers like Moran to come to the area (“Threat to Mt Nullum deal”, 1988).

6.6.2 Persuading the Council

The Tweed Council had a desire for a world-class facility on top of Mt Nullum for a number of years (section 4.4, TVCT/CEC, 1990). Doug Moran was one of the best known and wealthiest developers of the era and provided an ambitious plan to develop just such a facility based on the idea of an integrated health resort (Wynne, 2006). Doug Moran donated large amounts of money to the Council for art galleries and the Doug Moran Art Prize, up to $150 000 in total (“Gallery Director in Row”, 1987; TVCT/CEC, 1990). Moran bought the mountain for $1 000 000 from the Tweed Shire Council (“Threat to Mt Nullum deal”, 1988). The purchase was conditional on Council facilitating the approval by implementing zoning changes and improving road access. Up to 28 conditions were placed on the sale (TVCT/CEC 1990). As of August 1989 expected benefits included 1000 construction jobs and 2-3000 visitors per year (“Threat to Mt Nullum deal”, 1988).

We have also donated to the people of the Tweed Valley through the Council such items as a video camera and recording facility for use by the frail and disabled …and a donation of $50 000 towards the
restoration of the Community Art Gallery, quote attributed to Doug Moran ["No objection", 1988].

The Tweed Council received a million dollars, a new art gallery and an exclusive Portrait Prize. This was done ostensibly for altruistic motives, however the TVCT/CEC (1990) submission stated these gifts would have affected the objectivity of Council decision making. As described above in section 6.6, Doug Moran was a determined businessman, intent on getting his way. The only unfortunate aspect was the previous year’s Local Environmental Plan (LEP 1987) which now forbade development on the mountain top as it was zoned Environmental Protection (Wildlife Corridor and Scenic Escarpment).

6.6.3 Persuading the Community

The developments of Doug Moran can be perceived as being beneficial to the community, by providing a service that was non-existent before his arrival (private hospital, nursing home and retirement village). Doug Moran had also donated $50 000 to the Tweed Council to purchase and refurbish an old homestead and create a public gallery (“Gallery Director in row”, 1987). However, more than anything else, it was the establishment of the Doug Moran Portrait Prize that won the community’s praise and gratitude, and according to the local paper, “it has focussed world attention on the Tweed” and “placed Murwillumbah on the cultural map” (“Dynamic Development”, 1987; Beck, 1988). This is a statement that the Interviewees in the previous chapter agreed with that one of the positive legacies of Doug Moran’s influence was the Tweed Regional Art Gallery.

The Art Prize was reputedly the richest portrait prize in the world, and was controversial for the fact that the conditions of entry stipulated that all works must be recognisable. This caused the ire of the art community with Ed Capon, Director of Gallery of NSW and Andrew Sibley criticising the event, ‘it’s like saying stop the world I want to get off…’ (“Gallery Director in row”, 1987). The dismissal of the Tweed Gallery Director added to the controversy. However, Moran was unperturbed, saying ‘it’s my money’, and expressed his philanthropic attitude towards Tweed, ‘it
would be nice for all of you up there to have some magnificent portraits on display’ (‘Gallery Director in row’, 1987).

Also the Art Prize attempted to be cosmopolitan by having as judges from the United Kingdom, United States and the United Soviet Socialist Republic (the latter judge was criticised by Ed Capon). After judging of the inaugural event in 1988, Doug Moran demonstrated his philanthropy once more by gifting thousands of dollars to qualifying artists: ‘Mr Moran was so moved that he immediately announced a further grant of $112 000 to enable each artist [receiving a High Commendation] to receive an additional $16 000 and for those paintings to become part of the permanent display that will be housed in the art gallery’ (‘Prestigious Prize’, 1988). Interviewee 2 commented that Moran was liberal with his money as being borrowed from the banks.

6.6.3.1 Greenwashing

As can be seen from the list of features, in Box 6-1 above, the proposed development was quite ambitious and would have had a substantial footprint, especially when a golf course and artificial lake are included. However supporters of the development, principally Doug Moran and also Interviewee 3 the leader of the Business Corporation, claimed that the development would have no impact on the environment and may actually be beneficial:

“The area has been well and truly logged and there is no way my company would contribute to endangering any species of wildlife – we are committed to preserving it” [Quote attributed to Doug Moran, “Storm Clouds” 1988].

“The idea behind the project is the preservation of the Mt Nullum environment not the destruction of it” [Quote attributed to Interviewee 3, “Businessmen disgusted”, 1988].

The environment is described here as already degraded due to of past logging and the development is seen by its supporters as a means to enhance environmental values. Having Bruce Chick, the Tweed’s leading conservationist, comment favourably on
the development at a later date helped confirm the idea that the development could be ‘Green’.

Tweed conservationist Bruce Chick said yesterday that he believed that the wildlife corridor that had almost halted the $100 million Mt Nullum project could be moved without harming the environment. Mr Chick patron of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust … was invited by consultants to help them prepare their urgent report. There was a wide variety of trees and plant life on the plateau where the Moran development would be sited but the area had been logged and relogged and was very rough.

“In my opinion the corridor shown is not a good corridor. It could be moved aside to the escarpment without doing any harm and, in fact, would be improved…” The corridor was just a line on a map and crossed an area of commercial bananas [“Conservationist backs corridor relocation”, 1988].

The comments cited above show the attempts to ‘Greenwash’ the project and win community support. Already the wildlife corridor is beginning to be a problem with the development proposal and the arrangements were being made at the Council level to prepare plans to justify its relocation.

Also, as part of the Mountain View Retirement Village, Doug Moran had not neglected to consider environmental and ecological issues. Bruce Chick (Order of Australia Medal and “Man of the Trees”) was a pioneering community tree planter, patron of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust and Tweed Brunswick Reafforestation Committee, was hired by the Moran Group to plant ‘10 000 trees on the site, many of them endangered species’ (“Moran Retirement village expands”, 1988). Bruce Chick lent his support to the Nullum proposal attesting to the Green credentials of the project and its proponent and agreeing with Doug (and others) in dismissing the existing ecological values of the site and relocation of the wildlife corridor “In my [Bruce Chick] opinion the corridor shown is not a good corridor. It could be moved
aside to the escarpment without doing any harm and, in fact, [it] would be improved” (“Conservationist backs corridor relocation”, 1988).

The actual cost ...is not itself an issue to concern us...in view of my company’s recent decision to pay $15 000 for the establishment of native rainforest species in the first stage of the village. This was not a requirement of Council or any other authority but was in addition to our landscaping budget and following through on our policy of regeneration where possible of rainforest areas which had been cleared long before our own association with the land... Incidentally this is a firm company policy which we have already indicated will be carried through into our proposed Mt Nullum project ["No Objection", 1988].

Finally, the development would require attaining Crown Land. Mr Moran said it would not be used by the public if it remained Crown land ‘Why not let a developer take it over and beautify it?’ He wanted to put in an escalator to the summit from the resort side.... ‘If we purchase it there will be conditions worked out so that the area is safeguarded’ ["Crown Land Grab", 1988].

The environmental values of the site were downplayed and considered of little importance as the area had been subject to logging for a number of years. So here we see a two-fold strategy for greenwashing in the media, the first step is to dismiss the existing values of the site due to historical factors and anthropocentric concerns and then secondly make the case that the proposal will be ecologically beneficial by describing the things that will be done to improve the quality of the site. This scenario fits with Flyvbjerg’s (2003) analysis of deliberate misrepresentation in megaprojects, that in order to make a development seem acceptable its impacts are minimised and the benefits are exaggerated.
6.6.4 How Did the Actions of Moran Compare to the Actions of other Developer’s at the time?

The summary of all this is that Moran took a distinctly different approach to other developers at the time in terms of public relations. All the developments, including the Mt Nullum proposal were promoted, in Flyvbjerg’s (2003) terms with deliberate misrepresentations. For instance Ocean Blue (the corrupt development at Fingal) engaged in an advertising campaign in the local media, and took out a full-page advertisement with questions and answers explaining their position, ‘Will the environment benefit? Yes’ (“Ocean Blue and You”, 1988).

Moran’s philanthropy set him apart and he is still remembered with respect for the patronage he showed to the Tweed Shire (Interviewees 2, 3 and 4 still acknowledge Moran’s contributions), and this was unlike the other developers of the era. Moran had helped to establish the Tweed Shire’s first public art gallery, and complimented that with an Art Prize that was the richest in the world and which drew international attention to the rural Tweed Shire. Secondly, the styles of his developments (Health care development) are seemingly charitable and beneficial for society (however, they are private ventures and some families saw their inheritance disappear into retirement village management fees, Wynne, 2006). Finally, Moran had attempted to establish environmental credibility by undertaking a rainforest reafforestation project at his retirement village site and employing the area’s leading conservationist. In all cases he worked closely with established and recognised community figures, winning their public support and favourable comments which were then published in the media.

6.7 What was the Role of Council?

According to the submission by the TVCT/CEC (1990:4), the Council played a very important and conflicted role in the development proposal as the “consent authority and vendor”. The Councillors and Council staff were supportive of the project however in the recently Gazetted 1987 Local Environment Plan, Tweed Shire Council had zoned the land on top of Mt Nullum as a Wildlife Corridor and Scenic Escarpment.
The cosy relationship between the developer and the Council, especially the relationship between the principals of both organisations probably goes back beyond the establishment of the Moran Art Prize in March 1986, but this occasion serves well to demonstrate the close association. As one considers the historical sequence established from the construction of the nursing home in 1980 to the present time, it soon becomes apparent that the Development Cart (with carrots dangling out the back) is pulling the Planning Donkey.

The Development preconceptions as presented to Council on 29/7/1987 in the Kinhill Report commissioned by Doug Moran were formulated long before any site analysis was undertaken. From this moment on the developer quickly takes the initiative and the Council bends over backwards to accommodate his ever increasing demands.

The Kinhill Report and the need to build on flat land has arguably shaped the findings of MMC reports.... The constraints placed upon the development by "areas of conservation significance " and the Planning Framework in MNES are ignored by the architect who has created his scheme apparently without following any objective planning framework. Areas of most conservation significance are built upon whilst areas identified arbitrarily as being of lower conservation value are left as tentative wildlife corridors [TVCT/CEC, 1990: 12].

As this quote illustrates, and events contained in the synopsis also show, the Council played a major role in facilitating the development. The objectivity of Council in the process of rezoning the land is questionable considering the amount of money being donated by Doug Moran. This is a case of what Flyvbjerg (1998; Flyvbjerg, 2001) calls ‘rationalised power’, the decision on the development has been made, the process is less about collecting information to make a rational decision but selecting information to justify a predetermined outcome. Further evidence for this is provided in subsequent sections.
6.7.1 Amendments No. 1 and 16

The desire to build in environmentally sensitive areas required Council to formulate amendments to the Local Environment Plan and submit them to the NSW state government for approval. Amendment No 1 (gazetted May 1988) permitted the construction with consent of Tourist Facilities in Scenic escarpment zones, which seems contrary to the intent of the zone (TVCT/CEC, 1990). Amendment No 16 was a site specific amendment to especially allow for the development of Mt Nullum. All these changes to the Local Environment Plan were described as a “cynical manipulation” by conservationists and others (TVCT/CEC, 1990).

The Amendment had as its aim (a) to provide for development of a tourist facility, tourist accommodation and ancillary support facilities (b) to ensure that development of a tourist facility /tourist accommodation on Portions 71, 87, 92 and 102 (Mt Nullum) [Amendment No 16 to Tweed LEP 1987: Aims].

It is these two Amendments to the 1987 Tweed LEP and the lack of studies to support them that results in the community groups becoming agitated about the approval process, particularly with the ongoing ICAC investigation.

6.7.2 Wildlife Corridors and Environmental Studies

Another tactic used by the Council was to swap the corridor and escarpment zones around and redefine the quality of the natural environment through new studies and reports and send them to the Minister of the Environment for approval. The Chief Town Planner was responsible for coming up with the proposal to redefine the meaning of environmental zones, and this was agreed to by the Councillors. This is again evidence of rationalised instead of rational decision making (Flyvbjerg, 1998; Flyvbjerg, 2001).

Correspondence between the Chief Town Planner and the consultant (TVCT/CEC, 1990) indicates that the decision about the development and the wildlife corridor had been predetermined before the completion of the Mt Nullum Supplementary
Environmental Study. Instead of the consultants objectively assessing the site, the report will convey a favourable result that will enable the development:

Bob McCotter “it is suggested that an ecologically viable “wildlife corridor” can be maintained both to the east and the west of the site. Our discussion with the developer allowed us to suggest that on our current knowledge an appropriate development could still be undertaken on the plateau land which would be compatible with the environmental constraints of the site. This will be confirmed when Mr Homes’ studies are complete…

“Following discussions with the developer we are satisfied that on current knowledge of the flora and fauna of the area this site could sustain the types of buildings and activities described. This being further investigated by additional flora and fauna studies over the next fortnight …” [TVCT/CEC, 1990: 36-38].

Data supplied in TVCT/CEC (1990) presented in Table 6-2 shows the timeline for the decision to undertake the study and make a favourable decision for the development. The decision about the outcome of the study was made prior to the study’s completion, and based on a single site visit by the principal consultant. A letter from the consultant (dated 2/9/1988) to Council provides assurances that alternative routes for the wildlife corridor will be found and so permit the development come one day after the site visit.
Table 6-2 Rationalising a decision

Events related to the Commissioning of the Mt Nullum Supplementary Environmental Study (TVCT/CEC, 1990:37).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>25/8/1988 Meeting with Tim Moore [NSW Environment Minister]</td>
<td>Letter of confirmation to Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>26/8/1988 Early moves to commission supplementary study</td>
<td>Letter Peter Border to Mitchell McCotter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>1/9/1988 Site meeting with consultants, developer</td>
<td>Letter Bob MCotter to Peter Border 2/9/1988</td>
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6.7.3 Documented Evidence of Council’s Process

Woodward and Carleton’s (1990) Commission of Inquiry report comprises the official version of events as recorded by the NSW State Government. It summarises in detail the processes that Council went through to obtain the rezoning and also explains why that process was faulty and inconsistent with existing Council and State policies. An extended excerpt summarising the Commission’s investigations and reporting of Council process is presented in Appendix 1. The Findings of the Commission are
elaborated in Section 6.9.2. By contrast the excerpt below provides the conservationists point of view, the concerns raised are framed more emotively and are about the ‘cynical manipulation’ of the planning process by Council.

Under Amendment No. 1 of the Tweed LEP 1987 “tourist facilities” became a consent use in the Scenic Escarpment 7 (d) zone throughout the Shire.

This move was prompted primarily to facilitate the Mt Nullum project. The Chief Town Planners Report of 16/9/87 explains Council’s rationale. According to this report “tourist facilities” were a consent use in the Scenic Escarpment zone in the draft Shire wide LEP but were prohibited in that zone as a result of the post exhibition review process. Public submissions were a component of this review. It is claimed at this stage that any proposals for tourist facilities could be accommodated by way of a site specific rezoning based on merit. For reasons that are not at all clear in the report, the Chief Town Planner appears to do an about face following the presentation of the Mt Nullum proposal by Kinhill Engineers P/L. He reports:

“Following a presentation by Kinhill Engineers P/L of their concept for Mt Nullum, further consideration has been given to the merits or otherwise of achieving such development by a site specific Local Environmental Plan or as an “on merit” approach should tourist facilities be now taken out of the prohibited clause of the draft Shire wide Plan”

Apart from being unintelligible gobbledygook, perhaps the type designed to confuse busy Councillors, this statement forms the reasoning behind the Chief Town Planner’s recommendation to permit, once again, tourist facilities in the scenic escarpment zones throughout the shire. This recommendation was carried… In our opinion the Chief Town Planners Report presents no reasons why developments such as Mt Nullum could not be considered as a site specific cases, as previously resolved. Perhaps more significantly, however, this move represents a betrayal of the Draft Shire wide
Review Process presumably for the sake of expediting a particular development.

…. It is clear that Council’s overall zoning scheme is a cynical attempt to facilitate the development rather than properly meet the objectives of the proposed zones.

Council’s consultants have identified an area of land within the site as being suitable for development. … we note here that Council in the proposed Amendment No 16 have equated this “potential development site” with Environmental Protection (scenic escarpment) 7(d) zone. This is simply because “tourist facilities” are allowed under Amendment No.1 as a consent use in this zone. There appear to be no relationship between the zone objectives and the positioning of this zone.

The objectives of the Scenic Escarpment zone are:

a) to protect and enhance areas of scenic value to the shire
b) to minimise soil erosion from escarpment areas and prevent development in geologically hazardous areas and
c) to maintain the visual amenity of prominent ridgelines

Since the area in question is;

i) not an escarpment but a shallow basin
ii) cannot be seen from anywhere on the valley floor and
iii) as a result of substantial forest cover and shallow slopes is not at risk of soil erosion or geological hazard

It is ridiculous to propose such a zoning. Obviously it is very easy to meet the objectives of a zone in an area where it has no intrinsic value. More particularly it’s easy to meet scenic criteria in an area where soil erosion is not a problem. Likewise it is easy to protect ridgelines in a basin!
Apart from being an exercise in doublethink simply meting the objectives of the zone is clearly not good enough. *Zoning should be allocated only after selection of the best set of zone objectives for all zones in the plan.* To do otherwise is to promote the misallocation of resources. Imagine the uproar for instance, if the town planner in a similar contorted fashion suggested that downtown Murwillumbah or Tweed Heads be zoned environmental protection (Habitat) zone because the existence of business activity was an allowable land use and it seemed like a good idea to protect habitats even though they don't exist!

If we look at the land-use map of Tweed Shire showing the various zonings which are *supposed* to control development, it is apparent that Environmental protection zones only form around 8% of the Shire’s area. Most of this area is forested. Forested areas form only 25% of the total shire which 100 years ago would have been almost totally clothed with trees. ... Only 10% of the total shire is at the moment protected from exploitation. The vast majority of the shire about 50% is available for building upon and it is difficult to believe within these 500 square kilometres there is not some place more suitable for a tourist and health resort which would not require clearing large areas of forest to create (amongst other things) an ‘Environment Centre’ [CEC/TVCT 1990:24-26, original emphasis].

The irony of clearing a mountain top to create an arboretum and environmental education centre are pointed out by the conservationists. The incongruity of having tourism development permitted in Environmental Protection Zones is highlighted by using the facetious example of zoning the business districts as a habitat zone. The most relevant point is the quantity of forested land under protection, with 50% of the Shire being forested it was an affront to conservationist to clear more land for a development. The Electoral Lobby had similar concerns to the environmentalists, which they managed to get published in the *Daily News.* According to Interviewee 1 of the Tweed Electoral Lobby, TSC facilitated the Moran development by the following actions:
1) Paid $35,000 for the preliminary study to identify suitable locations for tourist development
2) Amended the LEP to allow tourist development in Scenic Escarpment Zones
3) Proposed that the LEP be amended to allow tourist development in habitat zones
4) Proposed that the LEP be amended to allow sanatoriums as a tourist development
5) Purchased property for $100,000 to assist with road access to the site
6) Agreed to carry out at a cost of $5000 the study required by the Minister of the Environment
7) Agreed to many conditions favourable to the developer to be included in the contract of sale for the site

[“‘Oversights’ caused project delays”, 1988].

Prior to the inquiry, Tweed Council through the President Max Boyd, made a strong rebuttal against criticisms of favourable treatment for Moran being made by the Environment Centre and the Electoral Lobby. Falling back on economic rhetoric Max Boyd defends the Council process and in turn criticises the groups who oppose the development:

The people of Tweed Shire who choose to ignore or discount the economic, employment and benefits generated by such a development do so to their own and their children’s disadvantage. Between 500 and 1000 employment opportunities and future growth opportunities seems to mean nothing to a small band of Council critics.

It must be nice to belong to a group which can devote its entire time and energy and interest to just one aspect of society to the complete exclusion of all others. The TSC is just as concerned about the environment as are its critics. Unlike them we have to represent a much wider cross section of the community [Boyd, 1990].

After the inquiry has made its decision, Max Boyd is even more critical of the groups:
Local environmental groups have more to fear from the destructive effects of the cane toad than from some developers according to TSC president Max Boyd. Cr Boyd’s comments came soon after the announcement that the Moran Health group has axed its plan to build a $120 million development on Mt Nullum.

Cr Boyd said the Tweed had seen another victory for what he claimed were the extreme elements of the environmental groups … “I know that some of the people involved will stop at nothing to get their way.

Cr Boyd said he was amazed that the people who fought to protect the habitat of Mt Nullum had never expressed any concern for what he considered was the greatest threat to the natural environment of this valley since settlement - the cane toad…. “I feel that a lot of people would be inclined to applaud their efforts as environmentalists if they channelled their efforts into curbing this problem rather than attacking the Mt Nullum development ["Boyd has target", 1990].

The Council attempted to facilitate the development by changing the definitions and meanings in the Tweed LEP 1987. Consultants were used to justify the development by attempting to define the quality of the environment as being acceptable, redesigning the boundaries of the Habitat and Escarpment Zones for development in order to meet the requirements of the State Government. This is the ‘Rationality of Power’ described by Flyvbjerg (2001), a decision has been made and the rationale to support it comes later. Every obstacle is surmountable and new reports are commissioned to justify the decision. Table 6-2 shows how decisions were made and assurances provided only after a single day of research on the site.

As the above excerpts demonstrate, particularly the Commissioners Report (Woodward and Carleton, 1990), there was an undeniably close relationship between the Council and the developer and the nature of the Amendments made by the Council to their own planning instrument seem to favour the type of development desired by Moran. The use of philanthropy, public relations and media hype by Moran enabled him to gain popularity within the community and influence the Council. It is
interesting to note that even despite all this evidence of collusion the business group (Interviewee 3) was still supportive of the development.

The Shire President did not acknowledge any wrongdoing after the Commission of Inquiry released its report and rejected assertions of the community groups who opposed the development”:

Council critics discuss the proposed project as though the Council had already received a development (application) and development is planned for the Crown Land on top of Mt Nullum. Neither is the case. This confusion may due to genuine ignorance or perhaps someone is deliberately and mischievously spreading confusion through the community by airing misconceptions in this way [Boyd, 1990].

‘When somebody like Mr Moran whose track record speaks for itself in the way of development wants to provide a singularly positive and valuable development for the shire for people to get closer to and better understand nature it is vehemently opposed by some extreme elements of the environmental group’, quote attributed to Shire President Max Boyd ["Boyd has target", 1990]. In spite of the documented evidence against them there was still a belief on the part of the projects supporters that they had acted correctly by trying to bring economic benefits to the area, and the prestige of a unique development.

6.8 What was the role of NSW State Government?

In 1988 the NSW Parliamentary elections saw the end of the 12 year reign of the ALP and the introduction of a Coalition Government under Premier Nick Greiner. The NSW Government played an important role by being the consent authority (via the Department of Planning) for the TSC request for rezoning Amendment No. 16. Also, the State Government initiated the Commission of Inquiry into Mt Nullum which resulted in the eventual termination of the project and rejection of the Amendment to rezone the land.
6.8.1 Political Support

Generally, politicians in the government and on both sides of politics were supportive of the proposal by Moran to build a health resort on Mt Nullum. The Local Member Don Beck was questioned as part of the ICAC inquiries however never charged with any wrongdoing. The following quotes show the assistance that the local member provided to Moran and the respect that he had for him.

Urgent conference is being organised by Murwillumbah Member Don Beck to discuss what could be a threat to the $100 million development…the conference would be between NSW environment Minister Tim Moore, TSC and representatives of the Moran Group. Mr Beck said the proposed development would be a tremendous boost to the Tweed and in particular Murwillumbah and it should not be jeopardised ["Threat to Mt. Nullum Deal" 1988].

MP Don Beck said that the Mt Nullum project would receive Government approval once the feasibility study now underway was completed, if it produced a satisfactory finding…The Government wants to see projects such as the one Doug Moran has proposed for Mt Nullum to go ahead and we are prepared to do what we can to make them happen …Mr Beck said his government’s attitude was to encourage industry and entrepreneurs to once again get on with the job of building confidence and providing opportunities ["Project Relies on Feasibility Study", 1988].

With the Mt Nullum project so much in the news … I did a tour of inspection… It is eight years since I last visited Mt Nullum and the undergrowth has thickened considerably… It is a great place for visitors to our valley to get a panoramic view right to the coast and the ocean…I am confident that this project of the Moran Health Group will get the full support of the Tweed Shire Council and the State Government… Projects such as this must be encouraged because of the employment that they will bring to the Murwillumbah electorate ["Result no surprise", 1988].
Mr Beck said...'I want to help Council get a speedy decision so we can say to Doug Moran let’s go’ ["Blast for Council", 1988].

In this area we must all be concerned that the development which takes place must be of the very best type available so that it does not take away any of our natural beauty but rather enhances it. There will be no development rushed into. Every project will be carefully scrutinised ... most people want to retain the slower pace of relaxed living in the area but want top class projects to stimulate the job market ... for unemployed and school leavers.... Change has come to our area whether we want it or not so we must think in a positive way to get the best..... The Doug Moran National Portrait Prize was finally awarded ...This area is now on the cultural map with the splendid presentation night held at Seagulls...The premier Mr Nick Greiner and Mrs Greiner attended [Beck, 1988].

Mr Beck said people like the Moran Group needed as much encouragement as could be given to them as they were making a great contribution to health care on the east coast. Mr Moran had contributed greatly to the Tweed also through the art prize and felt that there would be full support for the Moran Mt Nullum proposal in view of the outstanding standard of the [retirement village] development ["Village opens its doors", 1988].

The NSW Environment Minister Tim Moore and Deputy Premier Wal Murray played the most important roles in facilitating the development; both Ministers were very supportive of the proposal and critical of Tweed Shire Council role for not having the details clarified about the rezoning completed. Tim Moore participated by approving the Rezoning Application by TSC, however, this required some rationalisation on the part of Council consultants who had to justify the relocation of the Wildlife Corridor Zone in the Mt Nullum Supplementary Environment Study (1988). The commissioning and findings of the Supplementary Study was considered by the TVCT/CEC (1990) to be an example of predetermined decision making favouring the development (Table 6-2 and see Section 6.7.2).
The TVCT/CEC (1990:35) submission argues that there was a desire from the Environment Minister to build the development. This also resulted in political pressure being placed upon the NPWS to approve the modifications to the wildlife corridor presented in the Supplementary Study.

The following newspaper article discusses a letter sent from Tim Moore to Don Beck and highlights the State Government’s willingness to assist in the project.

Tim Moore criticises Tweed Shire Council for failing to clearly identify the wildlife corridor on Mt Nullum that held up his approval of the massive Moran Group resort development “I am appalled by the failure of TSC to appreciate the problems that the first report indicated and I am also appalled at the Council’s failure to address them earlier … I have indicated to you (Mr Beck) that we [Tim Moore and NPWS director] are perfectly prepared to work expeditiously with representatives of the proponent in redesigning the wildlife corridor…so as to minimise its impact on any proposed development and do this in a fashion that will still conserve the proper fauna access paths”.

Cr Boyd said Mr Moore had wanted more details of where buildings would be sited…The Council did what it could to help the development. It got on with the study immediately the minister said it was required…Cr Boyd said the Council had not been obstructionist [“Blast for Council”, 1988].

Minister Moore was criticised by Mr Moran, and pro-development lobby groups for requiring further studies, as this was perceived to be an unnecessary delay and interference in the development. Moran is so upset that he threatens to cancel the development: “Mr Moran said earlier that Government humbuggery and insistence on environmental matters by the Minister of the Environment had created an impossible situation”, [and because of this] Mr Moran dropped a bombshell yesterday when he announced he had decided not to proceed…with the proposal” (“Mt Nullum hopes fade”, 1988). Mr Moran later has a “change of heart” when he learns Council won’t rescind the sale contract and the proposal proceeds (“Mt Nullum Resort optimism”,
The Tweed Branch of the Liberal Party did not like the perception of “Greenism” that was evident in the actions of the Environment Minister and reacted with some opinion articles in the local media.

Tweed Liberals will meet on Monday to consider asking NSW premier Nick Greiner to censure his Environment Minister. Liberal Party Branch President Dr Wyton yesterday expressed his disgust at Mr Moore’s actions over the Mt Nullum project. “One of the main reasons the Unsworth Government was thrown out at the last election was its stand on conservation and the erosion of basic freedoms that came from that policy. Now we have a Liberal Minister taking the same line….Dr Wyton said that Mr Moore was a threat to democracy. They want to take away private land to start up a wildlife corridor and this could easily jeopardise the whole project, which the area needs so badly. The last government was interfering with people’s democratic rights under the guise of environmentalism or ‘Greenism’ ["Tweed Libs want Moore censured", 1988].

Deputy Premier, Wal Murray also played an important public role in promoting development in the Tweed Shire by firstly publicly chastising the TSC over its coastal development policy and criticising the Council’s handling of Mt Nullum.

NSW Deputy Premier and Public Works Minister Wal Murray told a special meeting of TSC yesterday that it had been over cautious in approving certain developments…the meeting was arranged by Don Beck in an attempt to speed up development decisions by handing to Council State government approved guidelines.

Mr Murray made no bones about his belief that the delay in Council’s handling of developments was too long and too costly…. Mr Murray made it clear he would like the multi-million dollar Ocean Blue Resort at Fingal to proceed…There have been some objections from local people but equally there is a lot of support for it.

On the subject of the multi-million dollar Mt Nullum development ….Cr Boyd said that in every way the Council had bent over backwards to
facilitate the rezoning application “The Council wants the development to go ahead” [“Guidelines on Tweed development”, 1988].

According to the timeline in the TVCT/CEC (1990) submission:

(17/10/1988) Wal Murray advises [Council] in person that Horizontal Strata may be solution to subdivision problems [with Mt Nullum].

This excerpt illustrates the pressure that the Tweed Council was facing to develop in 1987-1989, not only were community groups vocally demanding greater haste with development approvals but so was the State Government. The quotes above firstly show that the corrupt Ocean Blue development was influencing politicians as high up as the Deputy Premier, who demanded faster action on behalf of all the developers in the Tweed Shire. Wal Murray also supported the Mt Nullum development and promoted strata title as a means of getting around ‘subdivision problems’ which TVCT/CEC (1990) translated to mean allowing for residential ownership and sale of private property. However, while the Deputy Premier and the local MP could publicly embarrass the Council such as through media reports of the public stunt described above, the State Government still had a real role to play in the rezoning approval process.

6.8.2 Section 65 approval

The State government is required to approve Amendments to the Local Environment Plan through Section 65 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979). The first step to rezoning the land to facilitate the development had already been approved, Amendment No1 which allowed the development of tourist facilities within scenic escarpment zones had been approved in 1988, however this was still not enough to allow the development to proceed and a further Amendment (No. 16) was required.

By the time Council was being lectured to by Deputy Premier Wal Murray and instructed to ‘Hurry up’ (“Guidelines on Tweed development”, 1988), the Council
had completed the Supplementary Study necessary to justify the rezoning. One month later (November 1988), Amendment No. 16 was sent to the Department of Planning the actual wording of the Amendment had been drafted by Moran’s solicitors and created without proper consultation with Council and the community.

According to Woodward and Carleton (1990:20) “In January 1989 the Department returned the proposed Amendment to Council indicating that there were several outstanding major planning issues to be addressed. TSC resolved to return draft Amendment No. 16 to the Department without any alterations being made.” The Deputy President of the Shire Tom Hogan claims that “he had been instructed by Moran to resubmit the Amendment unaltered” (TVCT/CEC, 1990), which attests to the influence that Moran had over the local government. A meeting in February between members of the State cabinet, local Councillors and Doug Moran results in a conditional Section 65 Approval which removed some components from the rezoning such as the Golf Course (TVCT/CEC, 1990; Woodward and Carleton, 1990:20). Amendment No. 16 is then placed on public exhibition and approved by the Council in August 1989.

6.8.3 Commission of Inquiry

As shown in the Interview Analysis, during this period the members of the Environment Centre were particularly busy establishing connections with larger State Environmental Organisations in order to place pressure on the State Government to investigate the decision making process leading to the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry into the case.

The Department of Planning in a report concerning the draft Amendment, recommended that an Inquiry be held pursuant to section 119 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. The Minister approved this recommendation and on 27 of November [Woodward and Carleton, 1990: 20-21].

While all this is happening there is also the ongoing spectacle of the ICAC investigation which is holding public hearings in Murwillumbah since being initiated
in June 1989 and every senior Council staff member, Councillor and several State MPs had been questioned during its proceedings. It is against this background of corruption allegations that the Mt Nullum Rezoning Approval process takes place. The urging of Deputy Premier Wal Murray, Deputy Shire President Tom Hogan and Murwillumbah MP, Don Beck to hasten Council approval of Ocean Blue and Mt Nullum becomes suspicious once the wider context of contemporary local corruption is understood. The Terms of Reference for the Commission of Inquiry are presented in Appendix 1.

The Inquiry was necessary due to the mistrust that had arisen between some sections of the community and the Council and developers. The processes described above were discussed openly in the local papers and the recent ICAC inquiry certainly biased people’s perceptions of Council honesty. Groups such as the Caldera Environment Centre and the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust had made submissions to the Planning Department that an inquiry be held into the matter of the rezoning.

NSW Minister for Planning David Hay announced he has appointed a commission of inquiry into the proposed development. Mr Hay said in a prepared statement yesterday the matter deserved careful consideration and that the commission of inquiry would consider public submissions…“Various submissions especially from conservation interests have raised issues of concern which must be carefully and seriously addressed”, Mr Hay said ["Mt Nullum plan to face inquiry", 1989].

The Department of Planning needed to approve the rezoning application under section 65 of the EP and A Act (1979) (see section 6.8.2), and as stated in the Commission of Inquiry report (Woodward and Carleton, 1990: 20), the Council had failed to respond to any of the previous requests by the NSW Department of Planning to make some necessary alterations to Amendment No 16 and had approved the Amendment without considering any of the planning issues raised by the State Government.
6.8.4 Did the Previous ICAC Inquiry Influence the Commission of Inquiry Conclusions?

The Mt Nullum Commission of Inquiry was the second inquiry into the conduct of the Tweed Shire Council in a twelve month period. The announcement of the Mt Nullum Commission of Inquiry came soon after the news that Tom Hogan had allegedly, manipulated Council to rezone land at Fingal for the Ocean Blue development (“Engineer Quits”, 1989). There is no explicit reference made by the Mt Nullum Commission of Inquiry to the ICAC inquiry in the final report as it was still ongoing (Woodward and Carleton, 1990). The ICAC inquiry began in June 1989 and lasted until the following year, and the Commission of Inquiry began in February 1990 and made its findings in June, the same time as the ICAC made its verdict about Tweed Council (Temby, 1990). Both inquiries happen almost simultaneously but it is impossible to say with certainty whether or not the corruption inquiry had any bearing on the case. According to Interviewees and the comments of Moran in the media at the time (“Moran threatens to go across Border”, 1989), there is definitely an obvious connection being made in the minds of many people in the local community regarding the integrity of both Tweed Council and Doug Moran. Interviewee 4, in the previous chapter, Interview Analysis (Section 6.7) explains how he used the ICAC to remind people about the untoward actions of the Council and imply that Moran was up to something similar.

6.9 What was the Commission’s Process?

The Commission of Inquiry is established to examine major planning issues through a public submissions process. The Commission was initiated by the Minister of Local Government and Planning in response to submissions made by community groups concerned about Tweed Shire Council approval of Amendment No 16 of the Tweed LEP 1987. Commissions of Inquiry are authorised under various sections of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, in the case of Mt Nullum it was Section 119 (Woodward and Carleton, 1990). The inquiry is held in the case of difficult planning issues in order that Minister has all the relevant information to make a decision (Cleland, 2003).
The Office of the Commission of Inquiry establishes the Terms of Reference (see above Section 6.8.3) and invites the public and interested parties to make a submission on those topics. The Commission is held in the affected area and examines background evidence, primary submissions and hears follow-up evidence from those making a written submission. A site inspection may be undertaken. A report is then made to minister. In the final report the commissioners make recommendations to the Minister either supporting or rejecting the proposal strict conditions are usually defined. The Minister is responsible for making the decision and the Commission of Inquiry is a method of gathering and information to assist that decision (Cleland, 2003).

6.9.1 Who Participated in the COI?

For the Commission of Inquiry there were 63 submissions and 796 form letters were also submitted. At least 661 were supportive of the development (Woodward and Carleton, 1990: Appendix 10). Sixteen different community groups appeared before the Inquiry and twenty-eight individual people. A list of appearances and submissions is included in Appendix 1.

6.9.2 What Conclusions did the Commission Make?

The Commission of Inquiry recommended that the rezoning not proceed. The proposed changes and development were too severe for a sensitive environment of the Mt Nullum plateau and Council should instead consider the conservation values of the area in any future rezoning. The Commission also concluded that the Council had not properly considered the environmental values of the site prior to determining permissible uses of the land (Woodward and Carleton, 1990: 1-2). The Minister upheld the recommendations of the Commission. Appendix 1 contains the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry in respect to the Mt Nullum rezoning.

6.9.3 How many People were Publicly Supportive of the Development?

It is impossible to say now what percentage of the community was supportive of the project. There were many submissions from people in the business community to the
Commission of Inquiry. As stated above (Section 6.9.1) out of almost 800 letters to the Commission, over 600 were supportive of the development. The only person who promoted the Mt Nullum development in the media was Interviewee 3, a small business owner and President of the Murwillumbah Business Corporation. The pro-development groups that had received so much attention in the newspaper were absent from the Inquiry.

The following excerpt from the *Daily News* shows the reaction of the business community to the decision by Doug Moran to halt the development. Disappointed by the loss of the potential wealth creating industry, the leader of the Murwillumbah Business Corporation chastises others in the business sector for not being vocal enough in their support of the development and urges them to unite behind some of the other development proposals which have survived the period of inquiries.

> The Murwillumbah Business Corporation was disgusted with the NSW government and especially the attitude … of Tim Moore for failing to support the Nullum project, corporation chairman “Interviewee 3” [who] had been associated with the Mt Nullum development since its inception… “The idea behind the project is the preservation of the Mt Nullum environment not the destruction of it” The Far North Coast is desperate for progress…Mt Nullum must become a catalyst for other developments, other progress. If it is stopped developers will steer clear of us. The failure of Mt Nullum to go ahead will be catastrophic ….It is essential that the NSW government stands up to and supports this development and keeps the promises that were made… We are very appreciative of the efforts of Don Beck [“Businessmen disgusted”, 1988].

The only other support that the Mt Nullum development received was from political sources particularly Max Boyd (Tweed Shire President) and Don Beck (MP for Murwillumbah) both of whom made many supportive comments of Mr Moran and the Nullum proposal. When Max Boyd was being criticised by pro-development lobby groups for the lack of progress in Tweed Shire developments, the Council’s support of the Nullum development was used as a rhetorical defence to explain just how much
Council was doing to facilitate development: “Cr. Boyd said that the Council had shown its support with what it had been doing to get the Mt Nullum development off the ground. He said but the Council had to abide by the rules of the planning and Environment Act and they hadn’t changed” ("Seminar to counter stagnation", 1988).

6.10 Why did the Developer not Proceed with the Development?

Doug Moran pulled out of the development proposal for Mt Nullum before the Commission of Inquiry could deliver its findings. Moran cites frustration over the time taken for the Commission to deliver its findings:

The Company’s withdrawal decision was made when it could not get a date for the completion of a Commission of Inquiry into the project….It could be six months it could be more…Time has run out. We are finished there. We have money tied up in the project that is not making interest. We cannot afford to operate this way ["Delays frustrate developer", 1990].

However, according to Wynne (2006) Doug Moran’s dominating personality meant that he would never admit defeat. The article cited above confirms that. Instead of being criticised by the Commission of Inquiry Moran took the initiative and ended the project on his own terms and for his own reasons. As cited above, in Section 6.7, Doug Moran had a temperamental nature and had threatened to cancel the project on at least four separate occasions.

6.11 What Community Groups Existed Before the Mt Nullum Proposal?

There are many local community groups at this time; the Daily News archives offer some of the following details on fifteen different community groups between the years 1987-90. The primary groups discussed in this thesis are presented in Chapter 4, while many of the smaller groups that are reported in the media are presented in this section:
The Group Kingscliff Residents and Ratepayers association:
Non-partisan “we would have supporters of every major political party in this association...” Over 50 years of service to the community (“‘Lefties’ label a slur”, 1988).

Keep Fingal Special
Formed in response to the Ocean Blue and River mouth relocation proposals.

Murwillumbah Chamber of Commerce during the 60s and early 70s...the Chamber was involved in reafforestation [on private property and public land]. When the Chamber became defunct the Tweed Brunswick Reafforestation Committee was formed. Cooperation between local and State government and private enterprise continues. Functioned for 20 years; 15/4/1977 till 30/3/1998.

Quality seedlings at low cost were initially supplied by Forestry Commission of NSW. These comprised Eucalyptus and Pines. The price to landowners was subsidised by grants from local saw-millers, Tweed and Byron Councils.

Later indigenous local trees and rainforest trees of many species were supplied from stocks obtained from local nurseries with seedlings subsidised by Tweed and Byron Shires. 4758 orders and 1 610 351 tree seedlings distributed [McTackett & McKenzie, 2003].


- Tweed Chamber of Commerce - linked with Interviewee 3
- Tweed Promotions Corporation
- Tweed Coast Tourism Association – Frank Wyton
- Australian Small Business Association – Frank Wyton
6.11.1 What Community Groups Developed during the Proposal (1987-90)?

The following three groups formed during the period 1987-90 as a direct response to the social pressures of development in the Tweed Shire. Details of these groups is presented in Chapter 4:

- The Caldera Environment Centre
- Tweed Landowners Group
- Property Owners for Progress.

6.11.2 How do these Groups Relate to the Interviewees?

Interviewee 1 was involved in both the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust and the Caldera Environment Centre, but had a greater involvement with the Environment Centre as the Conservation Trust did not fulfil his needs.

Interviewee 3 was leader of the Murwillumbah Business Corporation and had a role in establishing the Tweed Heads Chamber of Commerce.

Interviewee 4 was President of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust and Tweed Electoral Lobby. Interviewee 4 was President of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust for a short period and was very outspoken on a range of Council topics, Mt Nullum being but one. At a later date Interviewee 4 is replaced as President of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust by another member of the Caldera Environment Centre. The Tweed Valley Conservation Trust is later decommissioned and the Caldera Environment Centre becomes the premier conservation group in Tweed.

Dr Frank Wyton is an executive committee member and spokesperson of the following groups: Tweed Landowners Group, Australian Small Business Association, Tweed Liberals, Property Owners for Progress, and Tweed Coast Tourism Association. His wife (Virginia) is a Councillor on the Tweed Council.
6.11.3 Was there much Crossover between Groups?

There is a lot of crossover between the different groups, with certain individuals obviously dominating the agendas of a range of different groups. Figure 7.2 in the following Chapter 7, ‘Results Analysis’ illustrates the connection between individuals and clusters of groups, and is an extension of Figure 5.3 in Chapter 5 Interview Analysis.

Frank Wyton provides an extreme example of one person fulfilling the role of executive and spokesperson for multiple organisations (at least five identified in the media reports); he is later accused of manipulating his wife’s Council position by handing her notes during meetings (Interviewee 2, Chapter 5 ‘Interview Analysis’, Section 5.4.1). The agenda of these groups as described above is to criticise the pace of local Government development approval and (unofficially) seek to influence decision makers through pressure in the media.

Interviewee 4 is only involved in two groups compared to Frank Wyton’s five, but Interviewee 4 presents his views with equal vigour and a less vitriolic argument. Interviewee 3 is involved publicly in only one group and presents the face of the business community.

6.12 What was the fate of these groups?

The Caldera Environment Centre developed out of an already existing conservation group known as the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust (see Section 6.11). The Trust had achieved much in terms of promoting ecological awareness and had been engaged in activities such as Bitou Bush control and coastal tree-planting. However, the actions of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust in relation to the proposed Mt Nullum development were not seen as strident enough for some members who wanted to form a more ‘radical’ lobby group that would pro-actively engage with Council on matters of environmental concern.

The business groups responded by becoming more organised to promote development activities after the loss of Mt Nullum. The following quote from the Daily News
explains how the business community is called upon to be more supportive of proposals.

Disappointment with the loss of the proposed Mt Nullum development has prompted the Tweed Chamber of Commerce to re-examine the Tweed Shire’s LEP. At its meeting on Tuesday night the chamber formed a sub-committee to look at the LEP and at changes to the building and planning code. The subcommittee was formed after the meeting discussed the Mt Nullum decision and the frustrations of members who have been involved in the building industry.

[The] Chamber president said loopholes in the LEP had been found by the “anti-development lobby” which had resulted in the proposed Mt Nullum development being withdrawn by the developer. “Interviewee 3” said he had not seen and of the chamber members at the Mt Nullum Inquiry making submissions.

He said if the same approach were taken by the chamber for the proposed Cobaki development, then it was giving the “kiss of death” to the project. The proponents of the $250 million Cobaki community project made their first approach to the Tweed Shire Council in May 23. “Plan early as Cobaki is facing similar difficulties as Mt Nullum” “Interviewee 3” said. “The ‘anti’ brigades submission for Mt Nullum was excellent”. He advised the chamber to formulate plans and put them into action. … [The] Chamber president said there was disappointment in the community concerning the loss of the proposed development for Mt Nullum… “We can’t afford to see Calsonic pull out of Cobaki” he said. “We must back this project 100%”. The community must be told Cobaki was needed ‘desperately’ for the growth and subsequent economic welfare of the Tweed Shire. The chamber had a hell of a lot of work to do” …the chamber had recently formed the Industrial Promotions Board… [“Moran loss stirs chamber”, 1990].
6.12.1 What other Local/Regional Conservation Groups Existed?

There is some mention of other smaller local groups at the time but not much information is available about them. Interviewees were unable to provide much extra information on this topic. From compiling Interviewee data and looking at the records, local groups known to be in existence are the Byron, Nimbin, Coolamon and Big Scrub Environment Centres. Regional and state groups included the Total Environment Centre, North Coast Environment Council, and The Nature Conservation Council of NSW. In the Tweed the only other local conservation groups which existed at the time were the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust and the Tweed Brunswick Reafforestation Committee. The more familiar ‘care’ groups like Landcare and The Wildlife Carers did not appear until after the Mt Nullum case had finished.

These groups had a different agenda to the Caldera Environment Centre. The Tweed Valley Conservation Trust performed a dual role of lobbying and implementing on-ground work, however was seen as compromised by the Caldera Environment Centre members. The Tweed-Brunswick Reafforestation Committee had a more practical role, being involved with propagation and distribution of tree seedlings to private landholders.

6.12.2 Where are They Now?

The larger state based groups are still in existence, the Total Environment Centre, the North Coast Environment Council and The Nature Conservation Council of NSW. Some of the smaller regional groups have been disbanded, while Byron and Nimbin Environment Centres still exist and the Big Scrub Environment Centre has since evolved into Big Scrub Landcare. The Tweed/Brunswick Valley Landcare superseded the functions of the Reafforestation Committee in the late 1990s. Tweed/Brunswick Landcare split in 2007 becoming Tweed Landcare Inc. and Brunswick Valley Landcare. The only other groups to survive from that era are the Residents and Ratepayers associations. The other community groups which are the focus of this study that didn’t survive until today are the Tweed Electoral Lobby, the Tweed Landowners Group, and Property Owners for Progress.
Chapter 7 – Analysis Summary

7. Analysis Summary

This chapter presents an analysis of the data from the previous chapters. Figure 7.1 below illustrates the placement of this chapter in the structure of the results. Tabulated data and diagrams illustrating particular aspects of the case are presented in this section before the results are discussed in the final chapter. The questions guiding the analysis were based on the literature review from the Introduction and were part of the Case Study Protocol. The guiding philosophical framework of phronesis structures much of the analysis, however there are additional insights provided through using other established heuristics, including the Theory of Voluntary Altruism and cognitive ownership.

This chapter analyses the data using the phrenetic structure of Flyvbjerg (2001) and the concepts of ‘group structure and dynamics’ by Smith (1999a; Smith, 1999b; Smith, 2000) to compare group motivations and actions. Power relationships between different groups and individuals re explored in Figure 7.3 using the idea of cognitive ownership (Boyd, 2012) and Table 7-1, which is based upon an interpretation of Flyvbjerg (2001). Figure 7.2 is based on inferences collected from the data and builds on Figure 5.2 in Chapter 5.
Figure 7.1 Structure of Thesis, Analysis Summary
7.1 Compare data with Established Models for Describing Social Actions

This section analyses the data collected through interviews and documentary sources which is summarised in the previous chapters of the Results (‘Interview and Documentary Analysis’) and compiled into a format that enables easy comparison of the differences between groups. This section will report on the Results, with Discussion reserved for the following chapter. To analyse the data collected established theoretical frameworks will be used.

Flyvbjerg (2001) developed the philosophy of phronesis as a foundation for undertaking social research in order to increase its relevancy. The concept is designed to explore social aspects of decision making which are neglected through standard scientific enquiry and has been used to guide this research; phronetic research asks the questions: Where are we going? Is this desirable? What should be done? Who gains and who loses through which mechanisms of power?

Table 7-1 takes the phronetic questions of Flyvbjerg (2001) and the modifications as applied to this study (described in Chapters 1 and 2) and uses these questions as the column headings in the table. The row headings list the group types and names, and the data in the cells has been extracted from documentary sources or from the text of interviews and answers the phronetic questions in respect to each listed group. The final question posed by Flyvbjerg (2001) ‘who wins and who loses and by which mechanisms of power?’ is a multifaceted query and designed to examine the exercise of power behind a particular decision. This has been broken into three sections to assist with analysis, the first section deals with the actions utilised by the respective groups, or how they attempted to empower themselves and wield that influence in the community. The second column in this section explains if the group was successful and the specific elements of group success. The column headed ‘community outcome’ answers the part of Flyvbjerg’s question which asks ‘who wins and who loses?’

Tables 7-2 and 7-3 (Section 2.2) take the characteristics listed by Smith (1999a; Smith, 1999b; Smith, 2000) which are believed to define the success of a volunteer group in terms of its internal functions and external impact. The concepts defined by
Smith (1999a; Smith, 1999b; Smith, 2000) are listed as row headings and the groups being studied form the column headings for comparison between the groups. In this section I make the link between the Theory of Voluntary Altruism (Smith, 2000) and the first of Flyvbjerg’s (2001) phronetic questions, ‘where are we going?’ which I believe is querying the motivations of a group as well as the decision making process. There is also a link between the Group Outcomes listed in Table 7-1 and the Factors that Determine a Successful Group in Table 7-2.

The final Section (7.2.3) uses the idea of Cognitive Ownership (Boyd & Cotter, 1999; Boyd, 2012) to map the relationships between the individuals and groups in the case. With the concept of phronesis in mind, the diagram draws the connections between the different groups to each other and the connection with the proposed development. The connections in this diagram can be seen as a power map, illustrating the influence certain individuals have over groups or clusters of groups, and builds on the diagram illustrating individual and group relationships by showing the connection individuals have with groups, institutions and governments in respect to the influence they try to exert on the outcome of the proposal.
7.1.1 The use of four phronetic questions of Flyvbjerg (2001) to guide comparative analysis of different motivations and actions of the particular groups

**Table 7-1 Using Phronesis to analyse interview data**

*Group Motivations and actions analysed according to phronesis (Flyvbjerg, 2001) with interpretive questions devised by the author. (Sources: Excerpts from Interviewees 1, 3 and 4; “Development Support Group”, 1988; “Emotions run High”, 1988; “Support for Development”, 1988; Wyton, 1988a; Wyton, 1988b)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phronetic Questions</th>
<th>Where are we going?</th>
<th>Is this desirable?</th>
<th>What should be done?</th>
<th>Who gains and who loses through which mechanisms of power?</th>
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<td>Revised Phronetic Questions</td>
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<td>Support or opposition</td>
<td>What was the outcome to the group action: What result did the community get and what result did the group get?</td>
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<td>Interview quotes</td>
<td>Worldviews</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Success, Actions and Power</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caldera Environment Centre</td>
<td>“Think global but act local” I have always taken that as being important, you can’t spend too much time worrying about whales. …you take those principles, like Global</td>
<td>In our constitution we say we our concerned with the environment, the local environment and I’ve always taken that to mean</td>
<td>Opposition to the proposal</td>
<td>Take over established group and create a new group.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phronetic Questions</td>
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<td>Revised Phronetic Questions</td>
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<td>Caldera Environment Centre</td>
<td>Warming and try to apply them locally, like, ‘how much money are you going to spend at Kingscliff trying to stop the sand erosion?’ when it’s really a global problem. So Global does affect local I had a bit of an idea that mountains are not places that you build on that you should leave them as wild places. The idea of a wild place being sacred at that time was very contrary to 80% of Australians who think that</td>
<td>built environment as well. I suppose being a town-planner and an architect I’ve always had an interest in buildings and landscape The Environment Centre was a bit more dynamic I think, especially the idea of having a shop which would help to fund the</td>
<td>Opposition to the proposal</td>
<td>Letter and submission writing. Regular group meetings. Members elected to the Council (after the proposal). Regular newsletters.</td>
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<td>Commission of Inquiry held a hearing into the development proposal. The developer pulled out of the proposal before the findings were released.</td>
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and has lobbied on local eco-issues for 21 years. The community lost a potentially major employment.
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<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Success, Actions and Power</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caldera Environment Centre</td>
<td>any piece of dirt is something you can exploit. I think the Australian landscape is just the most wonderful asset we've got really and its’ very undervalued by the majority of people. I always saw Mt Nullum as a landscape feature that deserved to survive just on that basis really the way it was done via Moran; people like myself who were in the more in the old-style socialist type of thinking even though I went to an organisation and keep the doors open and it became an information centre. The conservation Trust, people had the idea of locking things up and throwing away the key; but with an Environment Centre can be more about ecosystems and the local economy…</td>
<td>Opposition to the proposal</td>
<td>Press releases and letters to the editor, but received limited media coverage. Few published letters to the Editor. Establish links with larger eco-organisations.</td>
<td>Filled the space created by the removal of the previous conservation trust and the eventual demise of the electoral lobby 21 year existence</td>
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<td>Phronetic Questions</td>
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<td>Objectives</td>
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<td>Success, Actions and Power</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caldera Environment Centre</td>
<td>exclusive school I’ve always had the feeling it’s not really for the wealthy to lord it over the public. And with Moran it was the very wealthy developer from Sydney coming up and using his money and charm and whatever to manipulate the Council to get what he wanted was a very strong motivation for myself</td>
<td>Being trained as a town planner… I keep coming back to this notion of using scarce resources wisely</td>
<td>Opposition to the proposal</td>
<td>Accessed political meetings with state department heads</td>
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<td>Tweed Electoral Lobby</td>
<td>[The group] was [created] mostly in relation to development in the Tweed and it followed a period of</td>
<td>To strengthen local participation in local government particularly I</td>
<td>Opposition to the proposal</td>
<td>Letter and submission writing</td>
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<td>Mixed success</td>
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<td>Group leader elected to council</td>
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<td>Question 1</td>
<td>What are the personal motivations?</td>
<td>What is the group trying to achieve and what objectives does it have?</td>
<td>Support or opposition Group</td>
<td>What was the outcome to the group action: What result did the community get and what result did the group get?</td>
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<td>Question 2</td>
<td>Interview quotes</td>
<td>Support or opposition Group</td>
<td>Success, Actions and Power</td>
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<td>Question 3</td>
<td>Worldviews</td>
<td>Support or opposition to the project</td>
<td>(1) What actions were taken to achieve objectives?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Group Type</th>
<th>Tweed Electoral Lobby</th>
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<td>Investigation of Council members by the ICAC [in 1989].</td>
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had this absolute belief in community involvement to achieve participation and everything was targeted at that.

Then as time went on, I came to realise that so few of the community can be touched, then it became a marketing exercise, And I am a bit embarrassed about that.

Opposition to the proposal

Meetings.

Members elected.

Newsletters.

Press releases.

Regular media coverage.

Letters to the editor.

Provided the community with an excellent information resource into local government decisions

Group collapsed not long (within 4 years) after the election of its

Loss of Group diversity

within the community once the group ceased functioning
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<td>(2) Group Outcome</td>
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<td>(3) Community Outcome</td>
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<td>It’s a compromise in, your whole belief system</td>
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<td>Murwillumbah Business Corporation</td>
<td>I came to the conclusion that the customer spend in Murwillumbah through my [shop] was extremely low…that is really the foundation of my future efforts right up until recent times is about understanding the socio-economic dynamics of the region. The issues of social and economic stability… environmental</td>
<td>The problem was that you needed to get a bigger piece of the cake, but in fact the problem was the cake’s not big enough, so you really need to increase the size of the cake. All you were doing by doing these promotions was taking</td>
<td>Support for the project</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Letter and submission writing. Meetings Newsletters. Press releases regular media coverage.</td>
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<td>Successful</td>
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<td>Developed from a voluntary organisation to a non-profit organisation with some paid positions.</td>
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<td>Successful</td>
<td>Undertook microeconomic programs to stimulate the local economy.</td>
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<td>Supported business and</td>
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<td><strong>Support or opposition</strong>&lt;br&gt; <em>Group Support or opposition to the project</em></td>
<td><strong>What was the outcome to the group action: What result did the community get and what result did the group get?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Murwillumbah Business Corporation</strong></td>
<td>sustainability are all inextricably linked and cannot be isolated individually….there is no question that if you’re going to have growth, there is going to be an impact on the region in all of those ways. And what needs to be understood is that those impacts need to be able to be measured and monitored. Our frustration was that we knew we had a problem in terms of economics and we were accepting of the fact businesses from other areas in the Tweed. When in actual fact that’s when I guess we realised that the problem was trying to increase the slice of the cake and that’s fine but the problem was the size of the cake.</td>
<td>Support for the project</td>
<td>Access to Council staff, Councillors and the developer</td>
<td>Began research into macro-economic factors which developed into an economic modelling tool</td>
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<td>(1) What actions were taken to achieve objectives?</td>
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<td><strong>Success, Actions and Power</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Murwillumbah Business Corporation</td>
<td>that we didn’t have the answers; but we didn’t believe that other levels of government, certainly local government, understood the needs [of the business community].</td>
<td>Support for the project</td>
<td>on the local economy</td>
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<td>Is this desirable?</td>
<td>What should be done?</td>
<td>Who gains and who loses through which mechanisms of power?</td>
</tr>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised Phronetic Questions</td>
<td>What are the personal motivations? Interview quotes Worldviews</td>
<td>What is the group trying to achieve and what objectives does it have? Objectives Support or opposition Group Support or opposition to the project</td>
<td>Support or opposition Group Support or opposition to the project</td>
<td>What was the outcome to the group action: What result did the community get and what result did the group get? Success, Actions and Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tweed Landowners Group/ Property Owners for Progress</td>
<td>[This] socialist shire wanted to wreck [people’s] livelihoods and they were not going to sit back and allow that to happen What was happening in the shire was indicative of “creeping socialism” ...one loud and clear message – get out of the Greenies bed and get the shire back into reality… Our left wing political activists seem to use [the word community] in almost every sentence. Often when people “…we will protect landowners against unjust treatment by Councils and state governments [the group will] coordinate action against the unjust LEP [This] will be a group that wants to see jobs for our children and prosperity for our people [who] no longer want to</td>
<td>Support for the project</td>
<td>Letter and Submission writing. Meetings. Members elected. Newsletters. Press releases and frequent media coverage. Letters to the Editor.</td>
<td>Unsuccessful None of the major proposed developments advocated by the group were built. Council maintained planning restrictions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phronetic Questions</td>
<td>Where are we going?</td>
<td>Is this desirable?</td>
<td>What should be done?</td>
<td>Who gains and who loses through which mechanisms of power?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised Phronetic Questions</td>
<td>What are the personal motivations?</td>
<td>What is the group trying to achieve and what objectives does it have?</td>
<td>Support or opposition Group Support or opposition to the project</td>
<td>What was the outcome to the group action: What result did the community get and what result did the group get?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Type</td>
<td>Worldviews</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Success, Actions and Power</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tweed Landowners Group/ Property Owners for Progress</td>
<td>use the word community they are in fact talking about the ‘state’. The word community has become a synonym of state. When a person says the community must be consulted … they really mean ‘permission must be granted by the state’. The most recent example of ‘state’ or ‘community’ power at work was in Cambodia only a decade ago.</td>
<td>put up with a minority group controlling everything… A progress association that would support the development of the Tweed Coast [and] Give support to balanced development and as an alternative to the present… ‘Left wing anti-everything’ group</td>
<td>Support for the project</td>
<td>Limiting coastal development. Multiple groups involved, one prominent individual was behind them all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Town Hall Meetings. Petitions Form letters Free newspaper advertising</td>
<td>Creation of multiple interest groups. Increased diversity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.1.2 Utilise Established Models to Compare Internal and External Group Functions and Compare the Motivations of Community Groups

Tables 7-2 and 7-3 explain analytical group characteristics as defined by Smith (1999b; Smith, 2000). The purpose of these tables is to illustrate the differences and similarities between the groups studied and to see how these conform to the structure of Smith (2000). The analytical characteristics of Smith (2000) are listed in the left hand column, and the individual group characteristics are listed on the right. The statements by group leaders analysed in the interview analysis and documentary data analysis and summarised above as group motivation in Table 7-1 are listed under the column headed ‘where are we going?/Worldview’ have informed Tables 7-2 and 7-3 below.

The leaders of the groups examined in this study reported motivations that conformed with Smith’s (2000) Theory of Voluntary Altruism, Core Values of 1 Civic Engagement, 2 Socio-Political Innovation, 4 Sociability and with the business and development lobby groups 6 Economic System Support. The groups studied had similar incentives (A, B, D, E, H), with the difference being a stronger emphasis on self-development and improving civic engagement and citizen politicisation in civic and conservation groups.
Comparison of successful organisational factors between different groups is examined in the table below (from Smith, 1999b, Smith, 2000). The Environment Centre answers yes to all factors except one, and the Electoral Lobby has only two negative answers. There is no formula for a successful group, but success for the group seems to be when they can fulfil as many of the criteria below as possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Aspects</th>
<th>Caldera Environment Centre</th>
<th>Tweed Electoral Lobby</th>
<th>Murwillumbah Business Corporation</th>
<th>Tweed Landowner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruits Peer Members</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face to face interaction of members</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes member participation</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creates solidarity; social support for members</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective ideology that explains the situation and what it will do to improve the situation</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persists over time</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has external socio-political advocacy goal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has cooperative relationships with external groups</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoids factionalism</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks conflict - institutionalised</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7-2 comparison of Organisational Factors Between Groups
Table 7-3 Group Performance Criteria

A Summary of Group Characteristics following Smith (1999a; Smith, 2000) the two final row headings (with *) are additional factors that were observed during the study. Both of these factors, ‘Physical Presence’ and ‘Political Migration’ are important as they attest to success of the group financially and politically, and can also mean its success or failure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group characteristics</th>
<th>Caldera Environment Centre</th>
<th>Murwillumbah Business Corporation</th>
<th>Tweed Electoral Lobby</th>
<th>Tweed Landowner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date Formed</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>1983/5?</td>
<td>1987-88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Specificity</td>
<td>Originally singular and specific: To oppose the development of the Doug Moran Health Resort on top of Mt Nullum. Goals became more diffuse after this victory with a focus on “environment” in the broadest sense of the term: natural and built/urban</td>
<td>Single clear goal: Understand the Tweed Economic System Later on the primary goal became to create a computer modelling tool to better understand the local economy.</td>
<td>Single goal: Focus on Council monitoring; an independent voice.</td>
<td>Multiple Goals: Oppose Council policy and defend private property rights through less restrictive LEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group characteristics</td>
<td>Caldera Environment Centre</td>
<td>Murwillumbah Business Corporation</td>
<td>Tweed Electoral Lobby</td>
<td>Tweed Landowner</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>zones, engage the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Accomplishment</td>
<td>Successful, lobbied for a Commission of Inquiry into the Council rezoning process which ruled against the land being developed.</td>
<td>Successful – produced annual reports describing local economic factors.</td>
<td>Successfully published a regular monthly bulletin describing Council affairs.</td>
<td>Successful media campaign against the Council, Council refused to rezone the erosion line during the study period 1987-90.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Displacement</td>
<td>Has occurred after the initial victory. Focus on other environmental issues, flora and fauna surveys</td>
<td>Subsequent focus on other economic objectives: studies on particular issues, proposals and reports on potential</td>
<td>None: In later years remaining group members maintained focus on the goal.</td>
<td>None: Groups disappear from media not long after their inception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group characteristics</td>
<td>Caldera Environment Centre</td>
<td>Murwillumbah Business Corporation</td>
<td>Tweed Electoral Lobby</td>
<td>Tweed Landowner</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviancy</td>
<td>Non-deviant</td>
<td>Non-deviant</td>
<td>Non-deviant</td>
<td>Non-deviant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>Non-member/External Benefits</td>
<td>Non-member Benefit/External Benefits</td>
<td>Non-member Benefit/External Benefits</td>
<td>Non-member Benefit/External Benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Group</td>
<td>Non-Profit</td>
<td>Paid staff voluntary group</td>
<td>Non profit</td>
<td>Non profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-profit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Motivation</td>
<td>Civic Engagement</td>
<td>Civic Engagement</td>
<td>Civic Engagement</td>
<td>Civic Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group characteristics</td>
<td>Caldera Environment Centre</td>
<td>Murwillumbah Business Corporation</td>
<td>Tweed Electoral Lobby</td>
<td>Tweed Landowner</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal Democracy</strong></td>
<td>High. However group largely run by original volunteers, no restrictions on positions or terms, and the same volunteers are voted into the same positions on an annual basis, so the group has become oligarchical with time.</td>
<td>Low. Board of Directors selected by group chairperson, board members representative industries/sectors of the community and the board votes on projects/priorities.</td>
<td>High. Like the environment group, positions were elected annually, however the same executive managed the group due to the motivation of the rest of the membership.</td>
<td>Newspaper reports public meetings were officials are voted in. However, the executive has strong connections to one individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hierarchy</strong></td>
<td>Initially a single layer; has evolved over time into several layers (Executive Committee, Shop Committee, Newsletter Committee, Festival Committee, Representative participation with other groups or</td>
<td>Several; Chairman, Board of Directors, Promotions Officer (paid staff), Members. Remained consistent over time until termination of the group.</td>
<td>Low: 2 levels; Executive committee and general membership.</td>
<td>No data available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group characteristics</td>
<td>Caldera Environment Centre</td>
<td>Murwillumbah Business Corporation</td>
<td>Tweed Electoral Lobby</td>
<td>Tweed Landowner</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>involvement with Government consultative committees, members, non-member volunteers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial Scope</td>
<td>Local. Tweed Shire Local Government Area.</td>
<td>Local, the town of Murwillumbah, and then later the Local Government Area.</td>
<td>Local, Tweed Shire Local Government Area.</td>
<td>Local: Interested only in issues that were happening on the coast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>Originally Polymorphic (part of TVCT) becoming monomorphic (after demise of TVCT).</td>
<td>Monomorphic but dependent on Council funding.</td>
<td>Monomorphic – affiliated with other groups.</td>
<td>Monomorphic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Links to other groups</td>
<td>Yes. Total Environment Centre, Northern Rivers Environment Council.</td>
<td>Links to other local business chambers only; established Tweed Chamber of Commerce.</td>
<td>Yes. Executives attend other meetings, present reports. Involvement in developing other groups.</td>
<td>Affiliated to other groups by Executive members having</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

254
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group characteristics</th>
<th>Caldera Environment Centre</th>
<th>Murwillumbah Business Corporation</th>
<th>Tweed Electoral Lobby</th>
<th>Tweed Landowner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Membership</strong></td>
<td>Semi-Formal membership, open to the public.</td>
<td>Formal: Restricted to business owners within the town CBD.</td>
<td>Semi-formal membership, open to the public.</td>
<td>Semi-formal membership, open to the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group Formality</strong></td>
<td>Informal structure initially, but is incorporated at a later date. Formal executive structure develops later on: Annual General Meeting electing a Coordinator, Secretary, Treasurer, Committee membership. Constitution, annual budget report</td>
<td>Highly Formal Structure: Corporate board of directors appointed by the Chairperson.</td>
<td>Semi-formal: Executive committee structure.</td>
<td>No data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group characteristics</td>
<td>Caldera Environment Centre</td>
<td>Murwillumbah Business Corporation</td>
<td>Tweed Electoral Lobby</td>
<td>Tweed Landowner</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Group Incentives       | Type A: Sociability Incentives  
                          Type B: Purposive Incentives  
                          Type D: Informational Incentives  
                          Type E: (Self) Developmental Incentives  
                          Type H: Lobbying Incentives  
                          (Central Focus of the Group). | Type B: Purposive Incentives  
                          Type D: Informational Incentives  
                          Type E: (Self) Developmental Incentives  
                          Type H: Lobbying Incentives. | Type A: Sociability Incentives  
                          Type B: Purposive Incentives  
                          Type D: Informational Incentives  
                          Type E: (Self) Developmental Incentives  
                          Type H: Lobbying Incentives. | Type B: Purposive Incentives  
                          Type D: Informational Incentives  
                          Type G: Charismatic Incentives  
                          Type H: Lobbying Incentives. |
| Revenue/Fund Raising   | *Internal* fundraising from members and the community through memberships and fundraising events. *External* funds (grants) | Some internal revenue. Slight compared to the annual budget from the Council; the Council levied a special rate on the | Negligible, internal | No data |

<p>|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group characteristics</th>
<th>Caldera Environment Centre</th>
<th>Murwillumbah Business Corporation</th>
<th>Tweed Electoral Lobby</th>
<th>Tweed Landowner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>received from government in the past decade.</td>
<td>businesses for the reason of establishing business promotional groups.</td>
<td>Yes. At least one member becoming an elected Local Government representative.</td>
<td>Yes. Spouse of executive was a Councillor from 1987-89. Also, two executive members ran unsuccessfully for Council seats in the 1989 by-election.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Political migration of Members</td>
<td>Yes. At least one member becoming an elected Local Government representative.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Yes. At least one member becoming an elected Local Government representative.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Physical presence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7.2 Map Connections Between Individuals, Groups and Government

The following two diagrams illustrate the connections between individuals, community groups and the government. Figure 7.2 illustrates the connections between an individual and a community based volunteer group and builds on Figure 5.2 from the ‘Interview Analysis’. It was found through the analysis of interview and documentary data, that a single individual would often have influence over more than one group, and sometimes as many as four groups. An individual would establish a group to promote their particular agenda, however use different groups when commenting on particular issues. For example Interviewee 4 would use the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust when commenting on environmental matters but the Tweed Electoral Lobby for commenting on more political issues. Similarly, Wyton would use the Tweed Coast Tourism Association to advocate more tourist facilities, and the Property Owners for Progress group to criticise Council policy.

In Figure 7.2, there are three clusters of groups which represent the influence of three individuals who had the initiative and motivation to establish multiple groups. The groups within these clusters have similar motivations and make similar public statements, which is not surprising as these are controlled by single individuals. The arrows between the groups in Figure 7.2 indicate the relative degree of influence an individual had on that group cluster. The Interviewee 3 group cluster was about business lobby groups and their actions were centred on understanding economic issues and protecting business interests. The Wyton groups were more political and engaged in media rhetoric promoting the notion of unrestrained capitalism and vociferously criticising anything, like conservation groups, that seemed socialist. The Interviewee 4 groups were based more around conservation issues and democratic community representation.

The observation here is that particular individuals would create or Clone Groups to push their particular, political agenda. In some cases, such as the Interviewee 3 and Interviewee 4 group clusters, this involved assisting with the formalising of nascent groups that were already emerging. The Interviewees brought their experience to these other groups and helped them to become established with only minimal influence from themselves. In the other case, with the Wyton group cluster, the groups were established to pursue a particular political agenda and the influence of the individual over the group was strong.
By using the idea of cognitive ownership it is possible to build on from the individual/group model (Figure 7.2) to show how groups interact in the wider community, with each other to attain influence and exercise power, this is shown in Figure 7.3. The amount of connections between any individual and group can be seen as a measure of the relative power exercised by that group. The developer has the most connections between government and the community and wielded the most influence at the time.

### 7.3 Conclusion

This chapter has brought together some of the key findings of the Study, their implications will be discussed in the following ‘Discussion’ chapter. Figure 7.2, below, is based on inferences drawn from media reports in the documentary analysis and builds upon Figure 5.2 from the previous interview analysis chapter and shows the influence that particular individuals had over managing their respective groups. Figure 7.3 below illustrates the relative degree of influence individuals had in this case by mapping the connection between them, the developer has the most connections and the community groups the least. The exception here is the community member Bruce Chick who has multiple connections due to his credibility as a respectable environmentalist.

Table 7-1 uses the phronetic questions of Flyvbjerg (2001) to compare the different groups’ motivations and actions in their own words. This helps to show what the groups’ primary motivations are and how they relate and respond to the existing power structure of government and industry that is around them. The information from Table 7-1 has also helped to construct the following Tables by clearly identifying the motivations and actions of the group. Tables 7-2 and 7-3 combine the characteristics of successful groups based upon Smith (1999a; Smith, 1999b; Smith, 2000) and establish a convenient means of comparing all the different groups against these factors.
The relationship between a charismatic individual and group formation. Three individuals were found to have a disproportionate influence on public debate by being involved in multiple community groups, or group clones. When the group is completely inside the box with the individuals name on it they had great influence over that group, usually acting as spokesperson. When the group is half outside the individual’s box, they had only a small role in the group as advisor or helping it become established. Dashed arrows indicate that the individual had some role in assisting the group, the undashed arrows indicate the individual had a strong control over the group and dominated its public image and messages.
Figure 7.3 Mt Nullum Cognitive Ownership

Mapping connections between individuals and groups using the model of Cognitive Ownership. Types of groups and individuals have been separated, with government institutions on the left and community groups on the right hand side in the darker grey shapes. The developer (bottom left), has connections with the community and the government and this diagram helps to graphically illustrate the influence or power that Moran had at the time.
Chapter 8 – Discussion

8. Overview to the Discussion

This chapter will discuss the evidence presented in the preceding ‘results’ chapters within the context of phronesis (Flyvbjerg, 2001) and the Theory of Voluntary Altruism (Smith, 2000). Figure 8.1 below illustrates where this chapter fits within the thesis.

The actions of the four groups will be discussed within this framework and new insights that have arisen from the analysis of the results will be presented. Phronesis (Flyvbjerg, 2001) has provided a way to analyse the data in terms of power relationships between decision makers, elites and the public through the use of a format that asks four key questions about events. Voluntary Altruism seeks to explain the motivations of volunteer groups. The theory of cognitive ownership (Boyd, 2012) was used as a means of illustrating the power relationships discussed in the section on phronesis. A critical analysis of the ideas behind phronesis and voluntary altruism will then follow on from this discussion.

The proposal by Doug Moran to develop the plateau of Mt Nullum elicited a strong reaction from the community of the Tweed Shire in the late 1980s (see results summary, Boxes 8.1 - 8.4). People in the community were vocal in their support or opposition of the project with one volunteer community group, the Caldera Environment Centre, becoming established specifically to oppose the proposal. Other established community groups supported or opposed the proposal depending on their personal motivations. Analysis of the groups involved in the events of this case has been useful in testing the Theory of Voluntary Altruism (Smith, 2000). While the machinations of the local government and the influence of elites has been analysed with the concept of phronesis (Flyvbjerg, 2001). The chapter concludes with a critical reflection on the framework used, major insights from the case and lessons for contemporary groups engaging with government policy decisions.
Figure 8.1 Structure of Thesis, Discussion
8.1 What Defines a Successful Group?

Smith (1999a; Smith, 1999b; Smith, 2000) has extensively classified the characteristics of volunteer groups. These classifications were described in detail in the Introduction, and have been used to analyse the relative success of groups examined as part of this study (presented in Tables 7-2 and 7-3, chapter 7). For this study, group goal achievement was measured objectively by reviewing the media and policy decisions by government. In the case study of the Mt Nullum development, the explicit goal of the Caldera Environment Centre was to oppose the development. By comparison the interview data explained that the goals of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust were less well-defined and a major goal for that group had been supplying trees for private revegetation projects. As these two groups shared membership this meant that the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust would eventually adopt the same goal of the Caldera Environment Centre and oppose the development.

The initial differences in perspective of the two groups can be seen as the split Foreman (2013) describes as reosurcism versus conservation. This describes the difference between the concept of preserving an area for the sake of wilderness or allowing some form of ecologically sustainable development. The debate surrounding the development of Mt Nullum can be seen in those terms as well, with the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust taking (at least initially) a resourcist stance of sustainable development and the Caldera Environment Centre promoting a stance of pure wilderness conservation. This philosophical difference was the major reason for the Environment Centre eventually supplanting the Conservation Trust as the regions premier environmental group.

Other community groups at the time neither supported nor opposed the Mt Nullum development as their primary goal however included it as part of their repertoire of local issues. For instance Tweed Electoral Lobby included scrutiny of the Mt Nullum rezoning process under its general goal of being “A monitor of the Council”; and similarly the Murwillumbah Business Corporation supported the development under its goal of stimulating local economic development. Property Owners for Progress and Tweed Landowners Group supported the development under their goals of unrestrained free enterprise and decreasing government regulation. While these other community groups were concerned with the proposal’s processes and eventual success, they also focussed on other issues and they lacked
the uncompromising passion which the nascent environment group, the Caldera Environment Centre brought to the debate.

8.2 How did a group of Environmentally Concerned Citizens unite and Achieve Their Goal?

8.2.1 Framing the Debate

Framing occurs when a movement or an organisation defines their broader social objectives to reach a wider audience; typically in an ‘us versus them’ discourse (Smith, 1999; Doherty, 2002; Tarrow, 2011). In the middle of 1989 the first ever NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) inquiry exposed some Tweed councillors and Council staff as being corrupt and the ICAC hearings linked this corruption to state parliamentarians. The corruption inquiry tainted (and even ruined) the reputation of the Council and developers while in this case there was no conviction of corruption; the ongoing close relationship between Councillors, Council staff, State parliament representatives and the proponents of Mt Nullum was perceived with mistrust. This was reflected in the submission by the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust/Caldera Environment Centre [TVCT/CEC] (1990) to the Commission of Inquiry which raised several points about the close relationship between the Council and the developer.

The observation of mistrust of government and industry came across strongly in interview data (Question: Did the previous ICAC inquiry influence events?) and conforms to the concept of “framing” in relation to the Green movement (Doherty, 2002) and broader social movements (Tarrow, 2011). In the case studied here the different groups shared a similar ethic of community involvement but had radically different framing of contemporary events. This framing of the debate as corrupt government and industry officials pillaging the environment for personal economic gain, was linked by Interviewees 1 and 4 with the notion of “ecological crisis” and more broadly with biospheric values (Stern, 2000; Doherty, 2002). These concepts are common defining elements of environmental organisations (Doherty, 2002) and are a key motivating force in driving pro-environmental behaviours (Stern, 2000). The Caldera Environment Centre was explicit in its statements and condemned the collusion of, government and industry and their role in the ecological crisis, while the Tweed Valley
Conservation Trust was not as explicit, taking a more moderate line. The Tweed Electoral Lobby was not publicly focused on the ecological crisis either and concerned more with procedural matters of Council decision making and the perception of corruption. However, through the interview process, the leader of Tweed Electoral Lobby expressed his concern about environmental issues and explained how he had been involved in starting volunteer coastal revegetation groups. Environmental impacts were certainly an implicit motivating factor for Tweed Electoral Lobby, however public statements emphasised the procedural problems and apparent conflicts of interest rather than environmental issues. However, as events progressed environmental impacts of the development became a more prominent issue for the group, largely in response to the actions being undertaken by the Caldera Environment Centre and the association between the respective leaders of these groups (as illustrated in Figure 7.2, Analysis Summary).

The Murwillumbah Business Corporation and the Property Owners for Progress worked within an ideological frame focused on economic outcomes and minimal government regulation. During the interview the former leader of Murwillumbah Business Corporation expressed ambivalence towards environmental issues, while the media statements of Property Owners for Progress expressed scepticism and cynicism towards environmental issues through its statements in the press. The issue of corruption of elected officials was also a concern of business groups, but while Interviewee 3 acknowledged the public debate over the development of Mt Nullum was influenced by the 1989 corruption investigations he did not conflate the issues. Instead, as media reports show, business groups saw the concerns of environmentalists at the time as risking further impositions on the functioning of the free market, and holding back the region’s development and prosperity. The idea of officials being corrupt seems to be irrelevant to the operation of business lobby groups as it made no impact on their public statements and was not mentioned as a serious concern during the interview.

The best example of how the supporters of the development attempted to frame the debate in their favour was through their challenge to the areas environmental qualities. The developer, politicians, supporters in the business community and even the local conservationist challenged the idea of the area as being natural or a ‘wilderness’ in order to undermine the
merit of the conservationist’s argument that the area could be used as a wildlife corridor. An attempt was made in the media to undermine the idea that the area had any natural values worthy of protecting. The primary tactic used in this argument was to explain how the area had been logged repeatedly and so was already heavily damaged and therefore ineligible for protective status.

8.2.2 Influence of the Media

The analysis of the media archive provides examples of the language used by the business and economic groups in regards to environmental issues and the hostility to demographic and ideological change by established interests in a small rural town. The newspaper provides an excellent record of the debates raging at the time, while there is an obvious editorial slant in favour of established business and economic interests; the Daily News does a reasonable job of presenting both sides of the story. Individuals from all groups, excepting the Caldera Environment Centre, are including the developer and the Council allowing these recognised groups to have editorial space to participate in a robust debate and frame their issues in their own words. Table 6-1 (Chapter 6 'Documentary Analysis’) is a tally of number of times a group was observed in the media record (between 1987 -1990), and shows the views and comments of pro-development and business groups dominate the discourse in the paper, outnumbering the critical comments of the Tweed Electoral Lobby by almost 3:1. The comments from Council are mostly defensive, responding to accusations levelled at them from the community, the State government and the developer, but generally the Council expresses its support for the development and does its best to reassure the community that it is doing the best it can to assist the development.

The public is presented with a vitriolic debate with both sides criticising the Council over its policies either because Council is not helping enough with businesses development or is helping businesses too much. The editorial slant of the local paper in this period is obviously favouring development as Table 6-1 shows, an increase in development would likely benefit the newspapers circulation and provide extra revenue from advertising. For example in the years reviewed, no letters from the Environment Centre were published by the paper until the Mt Nullum development had been stopped, similarly no editorial space was provided for the Environment Centre, effectively silencing their voice (Ryan & Brown, 2015).
The debate in the local media is also framed by both sides as an ‘us versus them’ issue, with all groups attacking the Council as being complicit with the respective opposition groups. Even though it is later revealed at the Commission of Inquiry that Council had acted improperly in changing the Local Environmental Plan to favour the development of Mt Nullum, this does not stop the developer and the business and economic groups (and certain members of the state government, including the Deputy Premier and the local Member) from attacking the Council for not acting fast enough to initiate the development. Tweed Electoral Lobby has concerns about Council processes and frames discussions as the community fighting against developers corrupting the democratic process through virtue of their wealth and status. The business groups frame the debate in terms of Council hampering development by imposing unnecessary restrictions (namely environmental regulations) on free-enterprise and economic development. The Council is continually on the defensive and frames the debate favouring the business argument and is very critical of not only Green groups, but also of the Wyton groups and even on one occasion the Council attempts to censure the local paper for its continued attacks on its reputation.

As Louw (2008) explains the media is not necessarily impartial, and has a role in setting the public agenda on a particular issue. This is evident when looking at Table 6-1 as it shows that the minority voice of environmental groups is marginalised and dismissed in favour of promoting the ideology of capitalism and development. The Hippies of this time can be viewed as a marginalised community and suffering from a form of ‘environmental apartheid’ (Ryan & Brown, 2015) which silenced their voices in favour of more mainstream, middle-class voices from more established and recognised groups. The comments from Interviewee 2 concerning the reporting of the Hare Krishna community demonstrates that there was an Editorial campaign to silence non-mainstream voices in the local paper.

8.2.3 How does a Politically Motivated Volunteer Group Successfully Achieve its Goal?

A group’s goals and Goal Accomplishments are a measure of the group’s internal and external success, similarly ‘Goal specificity’ and ‘Goal displacement’ can help to describe the success of a group. Tables 7-2 and 7-3 in Chapter 7 compare the merits of the groups as inferred from the data. Having a clear and specific goal is important for a newly established group, groups that do not achieve their goals, or whose goals change (displacement) away
from the original goal are unlikely to be able to recruit new members and the group will likely die, whereas a group that is successful in accomplishing its goals will be likely to recruit new members (Smith, 2000). Leadership is similarly important to the health of a group’s functioning (Smith, 2000), a charismatic leader is able to clearly articulate the group’s objectives, privately or publicly and maintain the group’s momentum towards the goal.

All the groups examined in the case study had clearly defined goals, but some groups succeeded where others did not. Why did one group succeed while others failed? The two groups which achieved measurable goal success had clearly defined goals and a strategy about how to achieve them. For the Environment Centre, the goal was simply to stop the development; the strategy was to use established government processes and community education/information campaign to achieve this aim. For the Murwillumbah Business Corporation, the goal was to better understand the mechanisms of the local economy; the strategy was to collect data (and funds) from local businesses to develop an analytical computer software model and use the information generated from that to lobby Council for better economic outcomes.

While the Tweed Electoral Lobby had the goal of informing the local community about political activities at a local level and being an independent voice unrestricted by the media. Their strategy was to publish newsletters and press releases to present an alternative to the debate that was dominated by the single voice of the pro-development media. Interviews revealed that over the short lifetime of the group, the goals shifted (goal displacement) from information compilation and dissemination to a marketing exercise aimed at electing the group’s leader to the local Council. This has been classified as a mixed success because ultimately once the group leader had been elected to the Council the group had a critical leadership absence and it ceased to function not long after. Certainly the group completed its goals in the initial phase but it failed to persist in the long-term because the purpose of the group became largely political; there was a goal displacement from being a ‘community watchdog’ to becoming a political entity.

The free-enterprise group and pro-development groups, Property Owners for Progress/Tweed Landowners Group had a similar fate, its goals were initially a watchdog designed to keep an
eye on the interference of government in the market economy which was construed as being anything from collecting rates to enforcing land zone regulations that prevented landowners from developing their property as they saw fit. The strategy for this group involved the use of a sympathetic media as a communication device and organising vitriolic town-hall meetings. Communication by the group involved personal vilification and muck-raking creating an ‘us and them’ discourse that used the language of and took examples from the Cold War. This group was the least successful in achieving its outcomes, despite receiving the most generous publicity of all the groups. Once again, when the political opportunity was available the group leadership became involved in the election campaign, but unsuccessfully. This resulted in the group disappearing from the media record quickly soon after

The Environment Centre also became involved in politics, but unlike the other two groups which tried to get members elected, the Environment Centre persisted. Part of the explanation may be that the leader of the Environment Centre was not elected and there were enough members within the group to sustain the loss of another key member who was elected. Another reason is that the Environment Centre was overall less political than the other groups studied, and while ‘goal displacement’ occurred after the initial victory in saving Mt Nullum, this ‘displacement’ involved a broadening of the group’s overall objectives, rather than narrowing its purpose to focus on a single goal such as a political election. Other goals for the environment group involved establishing a store and information centre and obtaining the necessary resources to do this, as well as taking on other local campaigns to protect the landscape and ecology centred on the group’s new understanding of local planning law. While the original goal of protecting Mt Nullum was accomplished, the group retained its purpose by finding other similar goals which provided continued motivation for group members to maintain the group.

‘Goal displacement’ can be a positive attribute for a group, if a group is to survive after it has completed its original mission then new goals for the group will need to be developed (Smith, 2000). This longer-term displacement of goals is only a problem if a group’s goals become solely focused on group maintenance, simply keeping the group alive (Smith, 2000). The Caldera Environment Centre created a new goal after the initial victory, which was to develop an environmental resources centre and shop. This enabled the Caldera Environment
Centre to move beyond being a single issue group and the membership was able to take on further challenges. The impact of political migration of members and group survival is discussed further below in the section on longevity and illustrated in Figures 5.2 and 5.4 (Chapter 5 ‘Interview Analysis’).

8.2.4 How Does a New Group Form?

Smith (1999a; Smith, 1999b; Smith, 2000) explains how there are many factors that can contribute to the success of a group. While it is not necessary to achieve success on all these factors, the more of these factors that can be met by any particular group the more successful it is likely to be. Tables 7-2 and 7-3 in the ‘Result Analysis’ chapter summarise these characteristics and explain how each group conforms to them. The following sections discuss some of the more important aspects of group success and how they apply to the groups in this case study.

8.2.4.1 Peers and Colleagues

People will form a new group from an informal network when there is no other group available that already fulfils the function or purpose they desire (Smith, 2000). An informal group increases in organisational structure to become a new community group in response to a perceived threat and also the perceived lack of social or community capacity to deal with that threat (Smith, 2000). In this case study the threat is not something that would endanger the public directly, or damage the local community, but it is a threat to the landscape and local ecology. In fact, as is often the case argued by proponents of development, the development itself may have had many positive and quantifiable benefits to society and measurable economic outcomes to the local region. The difficulty in quantifying the ecological argument serves to assist the more tangible claims of developers and government. Smith’s (2000) Theory of Voluntary Altruism and its underlying seven humane core values goes only part of the way to explaining the motivations of environmentalists. A passion for the environment, landscape features like mountains, protecting non-human life-forms and the sense of urgency arising from the knowledge of the “ecological crisis” does not fit well with the largely anthropocentric values described by Smith (2000). This idea is discussed in more detail in the next section.
There is an evolution from an informal network of friends and colleagues into a formal community group. In all the groups examined as part of this case study, closely associated individuals became a formal organisation when they perceived a significant threat. Table 7-2 in Chapter 7 ‘Analysis Summary’, compares the characteristics identified by Smith (2000) such as “recruits peers as members” and “solidarity” and “face to face interaction” which assist in forming bonds between groups and makes a comparison between the groups studied. For the Environment Centre it was a unity of people within the self-identified hippie counterculture who had recently arrived to the area. The executive of Property Owners for Progress was composed of Wyton’s work colleagues and family including his wife and secretary. The origins of the Tweed Electoral Lobby are a little murkier but Interviewee 4 explained that there was a strong friendship between key members and their spouses, and everyone assisted with the work. The Murwillumbah Business Corporation was more of an alliance of local businesspeople, Interviewee 3, the leader of this group revealed that friendship or camaraderie had little to do with the group’s formation.

8.2.5 Leadership and ‘Paul Revere’ or Connectors

The role of particular individuals who have leadership qualities has a direct contribution to group formation and early success. The involvement of experienced community activists helped ensure that the nascent Caldera Environment Centre was able to take care of procedural and legal details like incorporation and so get off to a rapid start. Individuals within the community, in the case here Wyton and Interviewee 4, had the ability to move between different sectors of the community, in the manner of a connector (Tarrow, 2011). This helped disparate individuals unite and enable them to form legitimate groups to articulate a particular cause (see Figure 7.2 in Chapter 7 for “Group Clones” which show the influence one individual had over the formation of multiple groups).

The Tweed Valley Conservation Trust had many members but it was primarily the work of one individual that had the most profound impact, the late Bruce Chick OAM, who earned a reputation as a committed tree planter and public revegetation expert prior to the advent of Landcare in 1997. Similarly, the work of Tweed Electoral Lobby and Property Owners for Progress were mostly due to the efforts of the leading members. Wyton started up several community groups and was presiding over several different groups simultaneously which
resulted in persistent media coverage. Unlike Wyton, Interviewee 4 took a more subtle approach, making media comments on major issues only occasionally while similarly helping to establish different interest groups the influence of these well connected individuals on the local community group scene is illustrated in Figure 7.2 (Chapter 7). In the case of Frank Wyton, the individual was at once a strong leader and a connector; however the leadership style was perhaps too strident and led to Wyton’s opinions dominating every group’s statements resulting in the different groups having a single identifiable voice. As Interviewee 4 reveals this uniformity of group statements eventually led to the unravelling of the pro-development groups’ media dominance and political influence (Section 5.7.1.1 ‘Interview Analysis’).

When the function of the group is dependent on a single charismatic or motivated individual then the longevity of the group is fundamentally compromised. The literature examines charismatic leaders in the context of business, corporations and political parties, but rarely considers the role that individual charismatic leaders have within small voluntary groups or Grassroots Associations (Green & Griesengen, 1996; Napier & Gershenfeld, 2004; Oyinlade, 2006). Tarrow (2011) explains that the role of ‘connectors’ in the community, those people who are affiliated with a variety of groups from different social backgrounds and have the ability to move between them. The result from this case-study is that it has identified such people in the community and has illustrated the connections in Figure 7.2 (Chapter 7 ‘Analysis Summary’). As discussed above there are two main individuals who are connectors between groups on opposite sides of the political divide. These individuals are active in forming new groups and appear in the media frequently promoting their point of view (see Table 6-1, Chapter 6 ‘Documentary Analysis’).

The problem for the survival of these groups is that these connector individuals ultimately use their community group as a springboard for elected office and once these individuals have been removed from the group by political election (either successfully or not), then the group is at a high risk of dissolution. In the case of the Electoral Lobby, the group dissolved within a few years of the leader being elected (Figure 5.2). For the Free-Enterprise group, the group dissolved after the leader’s unsuccessful attempt at political election, suggesting the goal of the groups was implicitly political and the failure to achieve this goal meant that the
continued existence of the group was unnecessary. This again conforms to the findings of Smith (2000) who states that groups that are unable to achieve their primary goals are quick to be wound-up.

8.2.6 Achieving Goals and Internal Success

The most important requirement for group survival is the ability of a group to be able to achieve success with its primary goal (Smith, 2000). Table 1-2 in the Introduction lists the characteristics of a successful group identified by Smith (1999a; 2000) and these were used as the basis of Table 7-3 in Chapter 7. Additional factors identified by the author are also listed in Table 7-3. The more of the factors that a particular group can achieve the greater the likelihood of success.

Group creation and survival or longevity is important if a group is to achieve its goals (Smith, 2000). The Mt Nullum campaign extended over two years requiring the dedicated commitment of individuals within the one group and cooperation between different groups. The community groups examined here formed through a network of friends, colleagues and neighbours who were concerned about the current processes and policies of the local Council. Initially, the Environment Centre core group met informally at people’s houses and kept neither records nor make official public statements. Over time the group of friends investigated options for formal association, reviewed other local Green groups’ actions and finally became integrated with the other established community and environment groups.

The pro-development and business groups were established because, much like the conservation groups, they were concerned that the Council was not adequately representing community interests. The pro-development groups, such as Property Owners for Progress, expired within a year of being established, because they ceased to operate so soon after they had become established they failed to meet the requirement of longevity that enables the group to accomplish their external goals.

The two other groups examined lasted longer than the pro-development groups and so were able to achieve their goals. The Murwillumbah Business Corporation persisted until the mid-1990s when it transformed into the Tweed Economic Development Corporation, this organisation was able to achieve its stated goal of increasing its understanding of the Tweed
economy. Tweed Electoral Lobby expired in the early 1990s as the membership declined after the president of that group became elected as a Councillor. However, this was enough time for the group to achieve significant success with monitoring and reporting on Council decisions and disseminating that information by networking with different groups. The only community groups to persist from that era to the present day are the Residents and Ratepayers Associations and the Caldera Environment Centre. The Caldera Environment Centre is the only one of the groups regularly engaged in political processes in terms of lobbying and intervening to halt certain developments.

The reasons that account for the persistence of the Caldera Environment Centre, internal and external successes (Smith, 1999a; 1999b; 2000), are that the Centre fulfilled many of the requirements listed in Table 7-3. Additionally this group also engaged in social activities for members and the community such as having dances as fundraisers, and eventually established a permanent shop front (Moore and Hopkins, 2003). Smith (1999a; 2000) emphasises the importance of volunteer groups having a social function in addition to whatever other goals the group may have, this is related to contemporary social conditions where towns and cities contain so many residents that individuals within the community become detached, small community based organisations provide space and opportunity within the community for like-minded individuals to come together.

Having a physical presence in the town which was not merely an ephemeral meeting place, is one of the defining characteristics of a successful group found by this study in addition to the characteristics identified by Smith (1999a; 2000). In a small town where established institutions such as the local government, media and other community groups had ignored the value of the natural environment in favour of economic development, the physical and moral space created by the Caldera Environment Centre was a valuable asset for the sector of the community that had an alternative view of environmental value. This communal space allowed like-minded individuals to discuss relevant issues, plan actions and to also simply socialise. The function of the Caldera Environment Centre became a central point where people could become engaged with ecological issues and get to know others in the community who felt the same way about the environment. The conclusion here is that a primary reason for the Caldera Environment Centre persisting over such a long time, is the
initial external success as well as a strong internal structure facilitated mainly by a shop front that provided a space for people to gather and take meaningful action or as simply a space to socialise with new friends.

Interviews with leaders of other groups and published media reports indicate that the other community groups lacked this social function. The Tweed Electoral Lobby was engaged in the political process and did not hold fundraisers or other social community events, neither did the Murwillumbah Business Corporation or Property Owners for Progress. This study adds confirmation to the assertion by Smith (2000) that the space provided for a group to cement relationships by having fun social activities is a critical requisite for its longevity and goal achievement.

The other defining characteristic of group success found by this study is what has been termed here as ‘political migration’ of members. The role of leadership and the void left in a group when leaders move on to further political ambitions, was discussed in the previous section. As illustrated in Figure 5.2 this can be fatal for a group if there is not enough support within the community to replenish this loss of capacity.

8.2.7 Why Start a New Group?

The Caldera Environment Centre arose at a time when environmental issues were becoming more mainstream in Australian society. Against the backdrop of the Franklin River campaign, the Ozone Hole and the first warnings of Greenhouse Effect, the Mt Nullum campaign represented for the Tweed Shire the local manifestation of global environmentalism which challenged the paradigm of industrial development, capitalism and vocally promoted sustainable alternatives. Changing demographics had resulted in a mostly conservative, farming area becoming increasingly populated with alternative lifestyle seekers (Kijas, 2011) who were motivated to change what was perceived as corrupt and destructive land use practices. Admittedly this change had begun some time before with the campaign at Protestors Falls at Terania Creek in 1978 (Lines, 2006) and with other small local protests over weed spraying and forestry. There were other well-established conservation and community groups in existence at the time when the Mt Nullum proposal was first made, in some cases these groups like the Residents and Ratepayers Associations had been around for
fifty years. Three primary factors can be identified as the cause for the Caldera Environment Centre developing as a new group:

(1) Changing values and priorities within the contemporary Western cultural context,

(2) Philosophical differences between groups,

(3) The role of charismatic individuals.

The first two factors listed here are discussed in the following section and the third factor was discussed previously, in Section 8.2.5.

8.2.7.1 Changing Values and Priorities Within the Contemporary Cultural Context

Political Opportunity Theory is used to explain why new groups form at certain times (Meyer, 2004). Tarrow (2011) explains how opportunities were created for new groups to form in 1990 as the Soviet Union tried to modernise. In the case of Mt Nullum, the political opportunity was made available through the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (EP&A Act 1979) which provided the community with rights to comment on development proposals. The EP&A Act (1979) also enabled the community to call for a public inquiry into a proposal, under certain conditions. This opportunity was taken by people in the community who formed a new group (the Caldera Environment Centre) to help realise this objective.

As discussed in Chapter 6, ‘Documentary Analysis’, the late 1980s were a time when global social values in respect to the environment were shifting. Not only was the demise of the Soviet Union an important factor as it freed these groups from the explicit ideological rhetoric of being labelled a communist vanguard, as well increasing awareness of human impact on the atmosphere, hydrosphere and biosphere were becoming increasingly well understood by scientists. This enabled a newly formed environmental group an excellent opportunity to establish and become a normalised part of the social fabric of the region. However, given the fact that there were already several established community groups which were equally capable of initiating an inquiry, why was there still a necessity to form a new group?
8.2.7.2 Philosophical Differences

Hopkins and Moore (2003) state that the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust was established in 1972 with the aim of protecting the environment of the Tweed Shire from being destroyed by development. Initially this group stopped some coastal developments, however by 1988, according to Hopkins and Moore (2003:3), there was “a feeling that the executive of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust was too conservative and too willing to be compromised by ruthless developers, notably the Moran Nursing Home Group.” This spurred some members of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust and other community members to unite under a new banner, that of the Caldera Environment Centre. One of the major differences between the two environment groups is described at the start of the discussion as the philosophical stance taken between a resourcist and a conservation perspective (Leopold, 1966; Foreman, 2013); the “old guard” were seen to be involved in a group too willing to compromise with the objectives of developers.

The aim of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust seems to have changed over time from challenging authority and power to instead working with it to achieve environmental outcomes mainly through revegetation projects, in the same way Landcare does today. The Daily News (“Mt Nullum Resort optimism”, 1988) explains how the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust executive Bruce Chick planted “a lot of threatened species” at Doug Moran’s Mountain View Retirement Village and is later credited with supporting the idea of relocating the wildlife corridor (“Conservationist backs corridor relocation”, 1988). The concept of planting threatened species was then transferred to the new Mt Nullum development proposal as an attempt to increase the credibility of the developer (“Conservationist backs corridor relocation”, 1988). The difference in personal belief systems, as discussed in the Introduction, helps to explain the ideological stance taken by the different groups, while their goals may have been similar, “to help the environment” one group achieved this goal by planting trees in public spaces, taking a restoration (or Resourcist) approach, while the other group followed a path of political engagement to prevent further destruction from occurring (Conservation).

One reason for starting a new group is that it offers something different to the established group, this is expressed most explicitly through the different goals that each group has. At a
more practical level is the active membership that a group has which enables it to achieve its goals. In the case of the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust (and the Tweed Electoral Lobby) a key executive member successfully got elected to the Council during the 1990s (Interviewee 4) while another key Tweed Valley Conservation Trust executive (Bruce Chick) resigned from the group entirely (this relationship is illustrated in Figure 5.3 – Chapter 5 ‘Interview Analysis’). Without these key membership roles being fulfilled the group languishes and becomes obsolete, particularly when there is a strong competitor. The Caldera Environment Centre superseded the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust as it had a more contemporary vision of environmentalism and had a stronger and more active membership.

8.3 Theory of Voluntary Altruism and the Core Humane Values

The Theory of Voluntary Altruism (Smith, 2000) attempts to explain the complicated relationship between people’s innate altruistic tendencies and the drive to volunteer selflessly for a particular cause in the public interest without remuneration or other compensation. The premise behind this theory is that humans are innately caring and compassionate and have a desire to belong to a group, however, the difference between altruism and voluntary altruism is that people join a group that is freely chosen and not somehow mandated or compelled by social or biophysical forces. A gastronomy group does not fulfil these requirements nor does a family, nor belonging to a religious group in a state where religion is a mandatory part of cultural acceptance.

To further explain the motivations of individuals acting selflessly and joining a volunteer group, Smith defines seven Humane Core Values. Table 7-3 in Chapter 7 lists the motivational forces that correspond with the groups stated aims in Table 7-1, under the heading ‘Group Motivation’. The groups studied were mostly motivated by what Smith calls ‘Civic Engagement Values’ which are concerned with involvement in government processes, particularly democratic processes. The Business and Pro-development groups were also motivated by additional values, namely ‘Economic System Support Values’, the Business Chamber was more motivated by the value of economic support than civic engagement, while the pro-development groups were motivated by both value types equally. The Tweed Electoral Lobby was solely motivated by ‘Civic Engagement Values’. However, the
Environment Centre was motivated by other factors as well, namely ‘Socio-Political Innovation Values’, as defined by Smith (2000).

‘Socio-Political Innovation’ values are defined by Smith (2000:22) as “an entity’s tendency to manifest concern to identify and define new social problems and unmet public needs … mobilise individuals and groups to seek social changes that will foster the public interest … and to use new approaches to political action and social change in such a way that others beyond oneself and outside ones family and household probably will be helped.” The emphasis of Smith’s (2000) Theory of Voluntary Altruism is strongly predicated on social needs, the needs of non-human organisms are not incorporated into this definition other than in the broadest sense of responding to an ‘unmet public need’. Even Smith’s definition of altruism is anthropocentric focused on helping ‘entities’ that are either individual humans or human groups.

Table 5-1, Chapter 5 ‘Interview Analysis’, contains an excerpt from the interview where the leader of the Environment Centre, Interviewee 1, describes his motivations for starting the group. The motivations are not about helping other people and are more about protecting a landscape feature, a non-human entity. The Humane Core Value Model fails to incorporate the altruism or compassion some people have towards non-human organisms or inanimate objects. The closest that is offered is “social-religiosity values” which is an imperfect fit as again the definition is mostly centred on the extension of religion into social service, personal worship, proselytising and “equivalent abstract principles” (Smith 2000:23). Also some people involved in the group would identify as atheist, or subscribe to a polyglot of spirituality, none of which is the core business of the group. As discussed in the introduction complex belief systems can motivate individuals and define their worldviews and can be compared to a religion in a superficial sense.

While for many in the environmental movement understanding and interpreting the science of an issue such as climate change may have to be taken with faith (Hulme, 2009) as lay people may be unable to understand the complexities of the science and communication of the ideas takes on aspects of religiosity, however it would be incorrect to label these motivations as either religious or aesthetic nor economic. The closest value Smith (2000) has for this is 7) ‘Personal Social Service Values’, however here Smith (2000) is describing motivations that
involve helping the less fortunate or helping people with a disability sick people or people with addictions. Value 2 ‘Socio-Political Innovation Values’ is another term that can be construed to apply to the motivations of those involved in the environmental movement. The purpose of environmental groups is indeed to intersect with political and other social institutions and have them become more responsive (innovate) to environmental concerns.

Perhaps then there is need for the inclusion of a new humane core value as part of Smith’s (2000) Theory of Voluntary Altruism. This can be defined here, following Stern (2000), as “Biospheric Values”; this would make a distinction between religiosity and aesthetics and economic motivations which are defined in anthropocentric terms by Smith (2000). The definition of this value would be an “entity’s tendency to manifest attitudes of ecological awareness, stewardship and harmonious integration of human systems within natural systems so that natural systems are not damaged by human action in manners beyond their ability to recover.”

The inclusion of another humane core value that acknowledges planetary stewardship/Ecological sustainability is also universal as the other values defined by Smith (2000). Stern (2000) uses the term “Biospheric Values” to describe the motivations of environmentalists as it is a form of altruism distinct from anthropocentric altruism. No group or sane thinking individual could possibly argue that the destruction of the biosphere is somehow in an individual’s interest. Taking action to prevent ecological destruction and protect a stable climate are values that can be shared by almost everyone, in the same way social, economic or religious values can be said to be universal across all groups. One outcome from this thesis is to compliment the Theory of Voluntary Altruism with an additional motivational value, which includes Biospheric Values (Stern, 2000). This value needs to be independent to that of religion, politics and economics and seen to be as a motivating value independently.

An ‘Ecological Sustainability Value’ can be construed as a mere socio-political innovation. In many ways it is more than that, as if implemented successfully and properly, ecological sustainability requires a radical and universal rethinking of the place, power and future of humanity and the Planet (Hundloe, 2008). Ecological sustainability is more than just civic engagement as well as it involves the reorientation of lifestyle as well to conform to the belief
system, and as mentioned above environmental motivations cannot be easily linked to religious values. These can be likened to religious values in terms of using mythologies for communication and understanding, but rather ecological understandings are beliefs that are linked heavily to scientific enterprise and knowledge. As science advances and new findings are made public, or alternatively as new threats are discovered or as a new depredation manifests, unforeseen impacts arise and science reports on, and quantifies these, then this knowledge will be incorporated into the mythology of environmentalism. The word ‘religious’ also has unavoidable denotations and connotations with God, and in Western/European based cultures, God is unavoidably linked with Christianity. Christian values that motivate church groups and charities are not applicable to the motivations of environmental groups.

The motivating value for environmental groups can be said to have an element of Smiths seven Core Values, not one of the values accurately describes the fundamental motivation for people driven to engage with environment groups. Similarly other groups would also cross the boundaries of these Core Values, however would primarily be driven by a single one of the values, and most other groups conform to the anthropocentric ideals defined by Smith (2000). For example the Business Corporation and the Tweed Landowners Group were driven primarily by the Value 'Economic System Support’, with the other values being more or less incidental for motivation. The Tweed Electoral Lobby had as a primary motivation 'Civic Engagement’ and secondarily 'Socio-Political Innovation’.

8.3.1 Sociability Incentives

Another major reason for successful group functioning is defined as sociability incentives by Smith (2000), where people become involved in groups due to the personal connections, the friendships, that are possible. The Environment Centre’s success can be linked to the observation made by Interviewee 1 that the initial group was like a “brother- or sisterhood”. The other groups studied did not appear to have this level of camaraderie between the members, for example the Business Corporation was made up of business owners whose only common interest was financial, and the pro-development groups similarly are reported in the media as being large, boisterous meetings conducted by a few individuals with connections to each other, and otherwise exclusive. The Tweed Electoral Lobby had a similar social
structure of friends uniting under a common banner, however once the goals had been achieved via the election of the leader to Council, the motivating factor of civic engagement was not enticing enough to maintain membership in the long term.

8.4 Why did the Environment Group Succeed Where Others Failed?

It is reported by Smith (2000) that once a group has achieved its goal then the group usually dissolves; another reason for dissolution is failure to accomplish the goal. For a group to persist after it has accomplished the main objective, then some form of goal displacement is necessary. One of the groups to come from the Franklin River Campaign of the early 1980s was the Tasmanian Wilderness Society, after that campaign was successfully won; the group changed its goals to include protecting all Australia’s environments and changed the name to The Wilderness Society (Lines, 2006). This change of goals helped that group persist over the long-term. Similarly the Caldera Environment Centre expanded its goals to include the welfare of other environments within the local region and became involved in campaigns against developments that were seen to be unsustainable from an ecological perspective.

As the preceding discussion mentions, groups that shift their orientation to other goals can persist over longer time frames. The problem for group function is when the goal becomes group maintenance rather than accomplishing external activities (Smith, 2000). After the initial victory the Environment Centre was able to shift goals to other similar activities which provided motivation for existing members to remain, and provided new incentives to recruit more members. As other groups such as the Electoral Lobby and even the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust were wound-up, the Environment Centre had an opportunity to fill a void left by these departures.

The Business Corporation evolved as well, the goals remained the same however the internal operation of that group became more business oriented. The Murwillumbah Business Corporation became the Tweed Economic Development Corporation and had paid staff to take on former volunteer roles. The group’s goals did shift slightly over time as it developed a mission of becoming the chief economic consultant to the Council. The Business Corporation persisted longer than all the other groups, and became dependent on Council for funding, which once withdrawn caused the group to collapse.
8.4.1 Membership

Another factor is that the strength of personality (charisma) and leadership qualities of a few people within the community to help establish and maintain new groups. The Tweed Valley Conservation Trust and Environment Centre had a shared membership and executive for at least three years (the combined groups’ evolution is illustrated in Figure 5.3 Chapter 5 ‘Interview Analysis’). Once supporters of the development had left the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust, the two groups worked simultaneously on the Mt Nullum issue. For a time it was considered a worthwhile division of labour to have two groups operating since there were two public voices speaking on topical environmental issues. The submission to the Commission of Inquiry was a combined effort between members of the Caldera Environment Centre and the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust (1990), both are credited with authorship. However not long after the success of the Mt Nullum campaign the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust lingered briefly and then was wound up in favour of committing all available resources to the nascent Environment Centre which was developing long-term goals.

The only group with a formal membership was the Murwillumbah Business Corporation which limited its membership to business owners within the locality of the town of Murwillumbah. The pro-development Tweed Landowners Group and Property Owners for Progress had membership requirements restricted to certain localities, and in the case of Tweed Landowners Group, membership was restricted to being an owner of private property within the Tweed Shire. The Environment Centre and Electoral Lobby were more inclusive with membership however gained little membership support outside the immediate geographic or cultural areas.

Having a membership open to everybody irrespective of geography or financial status is a major reason that the Caldera Environment Centre has survived until the present day. Without placing limits on group participation the Environment Centre provided a means of gaining new recruits. However, the Electoral Lobby was similarly open to the public and had no restrictions on membership, so why did this group fade away when the Environment Centre remained? For the Tweed Electoral Lobby, it was still involved in the original goal of being ‘community watch-dog’ and membership began decreasing after the election of the leader to
Council. As Interviewee 4 stated ‘it seemed to everybody as if we had accomplished what we had set out to do and so no one wanted to become a member anymore’. It can be seen that it is important to have appropriately displaced goals focusing in relevant issues and an open membership in order for a group to survive.

8.4.2 Longevity

Of all the groups formed at that time only the Caldera Environment Centre has persisted until the twenty-first century. The Tweed Electoral Lobby was disbanded in the early 1990s, one Landowners group exists around Cudgen, but in a much reduced role than its predecessors. As discussed previously in Section 8.3.1, the Caldera Environment Centre was markedly different from other community groups at the time performing important social functions. While the other groups were also comprised of friends and colleagues, the sociability functions were less obvious than in the Environment Centre.

One major finding of this study was that a group did not survive long after its leader became overtly involved in the political election process. It is debateable whether a group is established with the goal of its members becoming elected officials, or if this is just a process of goal displacement (Smith, 2000) as a response to changing circumstances. Interviewee 4 explained that the Tweed Electoral Lobby evolved over time, shifting away from lobbying Council to marketing a philosophy to the community and then using his background as a community group leader to promote himself for election. It was never an explicit goal of the group to become elected however it became a goal as political circumstances changed. Interviewee 3 was successful in his bid for Council, and he received support from other groups aligned with his political beliefs such as the Environment Centre, however once he became elected his group ultimately expired. Similarly the fate of the Wyton groups, such as Property Owners for Progress, were expected to expire once their leader attempted to unsuccessfully become elected as a Councillor. The Murwillumbah Business Corporation metamorphosed into the Tweed Economic Development Corporation and became integrated into local government as an economic consultant. Once these groups had succeeded in achieving goals of gaining political influence the roles as community organisations waned and gradually disappeared.
By contrast the Caldera Environment Centre was under the influence of a single individual for twenty-five years, and while the person in question lacked the dynamic attributes of a ‘Paul Revere’ (Tarrow, 2011), the stability that was imparted by having a well-known and charismatic leader was another factor in the success of the group. An inference drawn from this is while many individuals comprise a volunteer group, the leadership of one individual is the primary sustaining force of the group. The Caldera Environment Centre also had political success with members becoming elected to Council, and other members also becoming integrated into Council subcommittees as a reference group for environmental concerns. However, these institutional successes resulted in a similar waning of membership over time, however unlike the other groups the membership of the Caldera Environment Centre was large enough to absorb these changes and the organisation could adapt.

In this study the major conclusions about group survival were that if a group is led by a particular individual, that group is at risk of dying if that individual leaves the leadership role to pursue commercial or political opportunities. For a group to survive in the long-term it needs sufficient social incentives to maintain membership and recruit new leadership as political circumstances change. Concomitantly it needs to be flexible with its goals as time moves on and particular goals are either achieved or not, unlike social service groups which can maintain a single goal indefinitely, for volunteer lobby groups whether with business or environmental credentials, the need is to change goals and activities according to political circumstances; adaptation is a critical survival tool for community groups.

8.4.3 What’s in a name? Comparison of Group Ideology and How This Relates to Success and Effectiveness

As discussed above, one reason that the Caldera Environment Centre was created was since the pre-existing group, the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust, seemed to be too closely allied with developer interests. Another consideration is the ideology of the respective groups; the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust ideology was more conciliatory and focused upon replanting threatened species. The ideology of the new group, the Caldera Environment Centre, as presented in Table 7-1 (Is This Desirable?), was far more ambitious in scope. *The conservation Trust, people had the idea of locking things up and throwing away the key; but with an Environment Centre [the idea] can be more about ecosystems and the local*
economy... Interviewee 1. This comment highlights how the group’s goals had shifted with time and how the leader’s perceived the fundamental difference in ideology between the two conservation groups. The perception of collusion between the Tweed Valley Conservation Trust members and developers only helped to confirm these ideological divisions.

The founding members of the Environment Centre created an organisation with a long-term vision of creating an information centre as well as lobby group. The word ‘environment’ was deliberately chosen, instead of ‘ecology’ given the word environment meaning ‘that which is around’ can be applied to almost anything (Lines, 2006). This deliberate ambiguity was employed so that the Caldera Environment Centre could articulate an opinion on issues from matters of heritage and architectural styles, urban planning, the local economy and ecological matters; ‘In our constitution we say we are concerned with the environment, the local environment and I’ve always taken that to mean built environment as well’ Interviewee 1.

As time went on, this nebulous definition of the ‘environment’ meant that the Caldera Environment Centre expanded its operation into various areas beyond that of ecological matters. This is what Smith (2000) describes as ‘Goal Displacement’, after the successful completion of the original goal if the group does not disband itself, it creates further goals to pursue. The pattern is similar with the other groups examined; the original goals once (if) achieved became subsidiary to the pursuit of new more ambitious goals. In the case of the Caldera Environment Centre, ‘Goal Displacement’ complimented their original achievements, while the scope of the group was expanding; it was still oriented around ecology and environmental protection. The group managed to grow and expand, gathering new members and filling the niches made available by the disappearance of other groups such as the Tweed Electoral Lobby.

With the case of the Tweed Electoral Lobby, the original goal of strengthening local participation in government was supplanted by other goals as time went on. This came about as the Tweed Electoral Lobby group executive realised the magnitude of the challenge. What had started as an exercise in community engagement eventually metamorphosed into a marketing exercise to convey an alternative political viewpoint and attempt to get local people elected to the Council. Ultimately this led to the death of the group as the key executive was elected onto Council; while the group still had a role to play in the community,
the election result seemed to convey the impression that the group had achieved its purpose and membership declined, resulting in a ‘shell group’ that consisted of two active members. The ‘Goal Displacement’ experienced by the Tweed Electoral Lobby clashed with member’s personal beliefs since there was a shift away from the original goal of community participation to marketing political candidates, the group had become a de facto political party and lost its aura of political neutrality.

The Murwillumbah Business Corporation started with the aim of understanding local economic patterns and as a promotional group for business interests. According to the interview data it was not explicitly involved in political lobbying as this was seen as risky to business, offending one sector of the community by explicitly favouring development or otherwise taking a stand on a political issue was not considered a wise business practice. ‘Goal Displacement’ occurred within this group as well, and as will be discussed below, this ‘Goal Displacement’ was itself a de facto form of political lobbying.

The original intent of the Murwillumbah Business Corporation was to promote local businesses in Murwillumbah through a scheme designed to grab attention and increase consumer attraction to the town. However, this had minimal long-term impact and merely shifted spending within the local region, in the words of the Interviewee 3: _All you were doing by doing these promotions was taking businesses from other areas in the Tweed._ The Murwillumbah Business Corporation created as its primary objective improving the understanding of particular aspects of the Tweed economy through the collection, analysis and presentation of information on unemployment rates and average incomes. The prestige gained by the leader of the Murwillumbah Business Corporation as a result of the authoritative work undertaken by the group helped to unite formerly disparate business interest groups after the failure of the Mt Nullum development.

Pro-development groups were established with the explicit ideology of the free-market unrestrained by government interference. This is distinct from the Murwillumbah Business Corporation which had a more pragmatic focus of understanding the existing economy, rather than promoting an idealised economic paradigm. The pro-development groups took offence at what they saw as unfair restrictions imposed by government; restrictions such as erosion lines, height limits, heritage provisions and environmental zones were impediments to free-
market capitalism. The groups were formed with the explicit goal of opposing these government restrictions and allowing developers freedom to develop. This group was unable to achieve its primary goal, which was one factor that led to the group’s demise (the other factor was that the group(s) was caught out as being the mouthpiece of a single individual).

Smith (2000) describes the different structures of Grassroots Associations as either polymorphic or monomorphic. The concept of clones previously described conforms to neither the monomorphic or polymorphic structures as described by Smith (2000). Polymorphic groups are those that have strong organisational links with larger regional groups, such as a Lions Club. The concept of the clones group can be seen as a monomorphic structure, as such groups have more independence and are not dependent upon other organisations. In contrast as can be seen in Figure 7.2, these groups are linked closely with an individual person who had a major role in the establishment. So the concept of Group Clones is used here to describe groups that are independent of each other yet still have a strong ideological or physical connection with the individual who founded them.

This phenomenon of an individual (or a few individuals) using multiple groups the author refers to as Group “Clones”, and this is illustrated in Figure 8.2. Sometimes the groups may already be established, however a coup of sorts takes place when a motivated individual takes over the executive of more than one group and uses those groups to further their own political agenda. For the case study this happened with both pro and anti-development groups, but was more pronounced with pro-development groups where the executive committees of the different groups were virtually carbon-copies of each other, or clones. With the Electoral Lobby and the Environment Centre, while some clones were made there seemed to be a diverse enough membership to supply different spokespeople. Using multiple groups to promote an individual person’s own political agenda is a technique to increase the apparent plurality of voices calling for government policy change.

The concept of Astroturfing is distinct from the idea of Group Clones as well. Astroturfing takes place when an industry or corporation indirectly funds groups to support its own objectives and promote the perception of community support to political decision makers (Beder, 1998). Beder (1998) explains that the concept of Astroturfing was fairly new in 1998 and had been ‘almost unheard of 10 years ago’. The public debate and policy of Climate
Change has been hijacked by Astroturf groups which has slowed action and deliberately created doubt about the science involved (Oreskes and Conway, 2010). None of the groups which have been labelled “clones” in the above discussion could be claimed as being Astroturf groups as all have strong links to individual personalities and did not display the resources expected of a group of this type.

8.4.4 Funding

As Smith (2000) states when groups become dependent on external sources of funding not only are initial goals compromised also longevity is undermined by becoming dependent upon financial input from either government or industry. Once there are changes in the funding body due to financial constraints or policy, then the groups survival is linked to how much of the core activities are linked with that funding source. For the Murwillumbah Business Corporation the steady injection of Council funding was necessary for survival and to pay for the positions within the organisation, once this funding was cut off the group was finished.

As for the Electoral Lobby the funding source was linked to membership fees, so as the membership declined due to the successful election of the leader to Council, the group was unable to fund its activities. It is a similar reason for the demise of the pro-development groups, the membership disappeared after the group failed to achieve goals and was later scandalised.

For the Environment Centre, funding came from a variety of sources including membership fees (called ‘tithes’, at the time) and from one-off, single donations and operating a shop. Relying on private funding sources and shifting goals to different, yet similar, activities ensured that the group was more resilient to changing times. The independent funding meant that the group was able to act independently of government and other businesses and could remain true to core ideals.

8.4.5 Political Opportunity

The Theory of Political Opportunity was mentioned briefly (Section 5.6.1) and is discussed in more detail in this section. According to Meyer (2004) the degree of political openness of a
particular constituency determines the actions of political dissent, where there is no opportunity for legitimate political engagement, protest results. In this case study, the Environment Centre had legitimate political openings to communicate grievances, namely through the Commission of Inquiry which is a statutory processes under the EP&A Act (1979). In terms of the Political Opportunity Theory (Meyer, 2004), the Environment Centre had available the potential to challenge the decision about the Nullum rezoning using conventional methods. Protest, public meetings and other ‘unconventional’ forms of protest were not necessary as there were other far more effective methods available that were legitimate. Once the verdict was delivered by the Commission of Inquiry it is difficult to argue against and is the verdict typically supported by the State Government. Also worthy of consideration was the recent corruption inquiry (Temby, 1990) which prompted both State and local government to be more responsive to community requests for transparency and accountability than there had been previously.

At the time only the pro-development groups used protest-like actions to convey messages. The primary method of these groups was to organise boisterous Town-Hall meetings to harangue political representatives. At the time there was ample opportunity for all types of community groups to legitimately engage in the political process, and the actions of these groups seems to be counter-productive to the aims that they were hoping to achieve. Instead of engaging in the democratic process using the available political opportunities, by engaging in antagonistic protest actions these groups isolated themselves from potential supporters and failed to achieve goals.

The Political Opportunity Theory helps to explain why the actions of the Environment Centre were focussed more on engaging with the democratic process rather than engaging in protest action. Simply put, there was a legal process available to achieve a genuinely successful outcome, protest was not necessary. The actions of the pro-development group could have focused on legal action as well yet instead resorted to protest to gain media coverage. Figure 8.2 summarises all the interactions between the community, volunteer groups and government and industry. Firstly motivated individuals from the community take the step to join or create a group that reflects their personal interests. These groups interact with each other in various ways, have strong connections (black arrows) and may be clones of other
groups, in the way that the pro-development groups were composed of the same executive. Some groups interact only weakly (dotted lines) which shows communication between groups and not outright control or domination of one group by another. Sometimes the groups do not interact with each other at all, which reflects the philosophical divide between them. It shows the mechanisms available to groups to influence policy decisions and gain access to the decision making process.

8.4.6 Defeating Development

The discussion above explains how the individual groups succeeded or failed depending on their goal accomplishment, funding sources and available political opportunities. However at the heart of this case is the battle between a small group of private individuals (and the entity they created) and a multi-millionaire property tycoon. How is it possible for an outsider group, disparagingly and insultingly labelled ‘Hippies’ by their detractors, marginalised by the media to confront the might of Twentieth Century industrial development and concomitant political support and be victorious?

The social forces arrayed against the nascent Environment Centre were huge; the developer had made a generous and sincere effort to become a local philanthropist by donating hundreds of thousands of dollars to the local art community. The local art community had a community group, the Friends of the Gallery, which had publically-known connections to Local, State and Federal politics, notably with the Anthony family (former National Party member, and former Deputy Prime Minister Doug Anthony). Moran made significant donations to the art gallery in the development period and through the Moran Art Prize (“Prestigious prize”, 1988). Doug Anthony and other politicians are reported to have invited Doug Moran to Murwillumbah to build a retirement village (“Village to open its doors”, 1988). Therefore, while there is no documented evidence for specific political relationships through this community activity, it is possible that being involved with the art sector may have helped Moran further cultivate political connections with, for example, the local MP Don Beck (National Party) and the Deputy Premier Wal Murray (National Party), both of whom publicly supported Moran in the media and promoted his project to the State Government and Council (Beck, 1988a; Beck 1988b; “Guidelines on Tweed Development”, 1988).
However, it was this obvious influence of the developer amongst the local political elites that was a motivating factor for the Environment Centre. Not only did the developer have credibility as a philanthropist he also exercised influence over the legislative processes of Council. As Table 7-2 shows, the Council had made a strong effort to change the local legislation (the Tweed Local Environmental Plan 1987) to facilitate the development as best it could. The synopsis of events also shows (Chapter 6 ‘Documentary Analysis’) the Council process was heavily influenced by the actions of the developer Doug Moran whose solicitors were writing the changes to the LEP for Council planners. As Figure 7.3 in shows there are strong connections between the local government and the developer who was able to have undue influence over the planning process.

The key reason for the success of the Environment Centre at this time was not engaging in protest or blockades as is the case with many environmental groups (Lines, 2006), instead using legislation to call to account the decision making process within Council. However, the Environment Centre had a stroke of good fortune when the Council released its internal documents pertaining to the decision to rezone Mt Nullum. This provided detailed evidence of Council and developer complicity and formed a major part of the submission to the Commission of Inquiry (TVCT/CEC, 1990) and has provided the data in several sections of the Results in Chapter 6 ‘Documentary Analysis’, notably Table 6-2 and the synopsis of events.

External group success was achieved by the Environment Centre in the Mt Nullum campaign after the developer announced his intention not to proceed with the proposal. This announcement was made in the days prior to the Commission of Inquiry delivering its final report. The Commission’s report was explicitly critical of the development proposal and Council’s apparent facilitation of the development by assisting the proponent to meet legislative requirements. The reasons given by the proponent for not proceeding were that the economic costs of development were too great, not that proposal had failed on legal grounds or lacked merit. The Environment Centre had achieved its primary goal and stopped the development, however, the developer had maintained control over the project by making his own decision over the fate of the development, rather than letting the government make the decision for him, which confirms Wynne’s (2006) assertion that Moran was an individual
who would never relinquish control of a situation. So is this a clear victory for conservationists, or had the developer decided not to proceed on his own merits?

It is likely that without the intervention of the community that the Mt Nullum project would have gone ahead, it was well supported by the State and Local governments and the local business community was vocal in its support of the project. During the rezoning process leading local conservationists were vocally supportive of the development and offered advice and input to minimise the environmental impact. The reported loss of the development resulted in community leaders, the local MP, Shire President, Interviewee 3 and a leading conservationist lamenting the loss of the development (“Delays frustrate developer”, 1990).

The Business Corporation and pro-development groups were similarly explicit in support of the development, and were careful to explain the benefits that such a development would bring, particularly in terms of jobs. At the level of local government, Councillors and Council staff had commented favourably upon the development in the press and in internal documents (see Chapter 6 ‘Documentary Analysis’). The State Government had also been supportive of the development, especially the local State representative who had repeatedly supported the project in the media. At the level of the State Government executive, efforts were being made in 1989 to lease or sell Crown Land to developers along the NSW North Coast, and the Mt Nullum project was one such proposal that stood to gain from this policy change. There was strong support at a Local and State Government level for the project and amongst local business groups for the proposal, even the primary local newspaper commented favourably on the development, preferentially publishing articles, editorials and letters supporting the development. Opposition came from only two community groups (the Tweed Electoral Lobby and the Caldera Environment Centre) who were the only explicit objectors to the proposal at the time.
Figure 8.2 Individual and Group Interactions Attempting to Influence Policy

This shows the migration of individuals from the community into the domain of community groups in an attempt to gain influence with Government policy and decisions. Community groups interact with each other in various ways, sometimes there may be communication between groups through the actions of a connecting individual, or groups may become ‘clones’ when the executive is taken over in a coup or a new group is created from nothing and shares an executive with other established groups. Sometimes the only connection between groups is simply verbal communication or attending the occasional meeting, which is represented here by the dotted lines. Some groups are more independent than others. Group 2a represents a group that has evolved into a new group from an older group 2. There is also a divide between groups based on philosophical differences, and communication between groups is limited. However, all the groups rely on more or less the same mechanisms to influence Government policy, either formal or informal techniques such as petitions or protest. Groups are connected to external organisations in different ways which may be formal or informal.
The conservationists were successful in stopping the development. By delaying the rezoning of the development site for six months, the Environment Centre was able to increase the financial burden on the company adding more pressure to the decision to quit the proposal. The developer sought to retain his personal integrity and control over the project by deciding the fate of the development, rather than waiting for the Government to make the decision for him. The short term successes of conservationists who managed to use the planning laws to their advantage resulted in the Environment Centre becoming a local institution as it expanded goals into other areas and continued campaigning against environmentally destructive projects.

A negative long-term result for the conservation community was that the loss of the Mt Nullum development motivated the business community to be more organised and unified in support of major new developments. Also, it was reported by Interviewee 1 that it is ‘more difficult’ today for conservationists to obtain the support, such as Legal Aid that was available in the 1980s and early 1990s. The initial success of local conservationists in the 1990s has become increasingly difficult, if not impossible to replicate. Legislative revisions by state government mean that conservationists are expending energy attempting to maintain the integrity of existing environmental laws, as well as attempting to halt what is perceived as unsustainable developments.

By using established legal processes available to them at the time, the Environment Centre was able to gain greater legal recognition for Mt Nullum. While the area was not given the same protection as a National Park, the use of legal processes meant that the area was accorded an increased level of protection. The findings of the Commission of Inquiry made recommendations that required future decisions about the mountain top to consider the environmental values of the area. The idea of extending rights, or the Social Contract, to non-human organisms or landscape features may still be a utopian idea, yet by using the legal process the area gained greater protection and recognition.

8.5 Power Struggles

The preceding discussion has examined the evolution of groups from motivated individuals into formal structures that have lobbied for changes in Government policy. Groups internal
characteristics and motivations have been compared with the Theory of Voluntary Altruism (Smith, 2000), and compared with each other according to the factors that help groups succeed in their internal structure (Smith, 1999a) and against external factors (Smith, 1999b) and political opportunity (Meyer, 2004). The influence of media on the debate has been explored and the way in which the local paper attempted to stifle opposition and presented a single narrative extolling the virtues of development following the concept of Hypeocracy of Louw (2008).

However all this is a mere description of the tactics used by the respective sides in order to achieve power over one another in an attempt to influence Government policy. Following on from this discussion is an examination of the use of phronesis as an analytical tool to examine power relations between groups and decision makers. For Flyvbjerg (2001) it is power that creates knowledge, or at least determines what counts as knowledge. The case study demonstrates the validity of this argument as throughout the rezoning process, the developer dictated to the Council what was to happen and Council determines what evidence was to be considered in justifying the proposal.

8.5.1 Phronetic Research is About Examining Power

According to Flyvbjerg (2001; Flyvbjerg, 1998) the purpose of doing phronetic research is to examine power relationships and discover what is termed realrationalitat, or the power that creates knowledge. In the case examined here, is a classic example of power creating the knowledge needed to implement preferred outcomes. Tables 6-1 and 6-2 in Chapter 6 ‘Documentary Analysis’ show that there was an attempt on the part of elites to determine what was to be counted as knowledge, such as by redefining the merits of the wildlife corridor.

The newspaper did publish alternative views on the development as Chapter 6 ‘Documentary Analysis’ shows. However, as Interviewees pointed out, there was what they labelled ‘malicious’ omissions. Also one article shows the reaction of Council to the reports in the Tweed Daily News, where there is significant debate over the reliability of factual reporting of the numbers of protestors attending a meeting opposing Council policy. The newspaper is accused of making grossly exaggerated claims and is forced to publicly defend itself. As the
newspaper stands as a public record, a primary historical source, its interpretation of events is an important reflection of the power tactics used by both sides in the debate over development.

During the late 1980s the printed media was powerful in setting the agenda as to what was important in the public debate on any issue it was an arbiter of public discourse and knowledge. Interviewee 2 describes the influence that the editor of the paper had over the publication, to the extent that he was writing letters to himself on behalf of others in the community. Table 6-1 shows that the dissenting voices of the Environment Centre were ignored outright during the years 1987-1989. It is only after June 1990 when the first articles and letters concerning the Environment Centre appear, after the development proposal has ceased to be a real proposition. In this way the newspaper was effectively a propaganda tool for the developer, presenting a one-sided view on events and either discounting, discrediting or simply ignoring oppositional voices.

Table 6-2 shows how the Council attempted to redefine what was counted as knowledge in the debate over the wildlife corridor on the top of Mt Nullum. This provides a classic example of power creating knowledge; in a letter to Council planners the consultants inform them that the wildlife corridor can be moved ‘once the study is completed’. The outcome has already been agreed upon and the only debate then was how to justify the decision in such a way as to satisfy the requirements of the State Government Departments of Planning and Environment. The predetermined decision is further evidenced during the public consultation period, where the majority of public submissions oppose the rezoning proposal and a submission from the National Parks and Wildlife Service is ignored since it was two days late. The chief planner affirms in the local media “that all questions can be answered” (TVCT/CEC, 1990), however there is no genuine attempt at reconciling or otherwise incorporating contrary opinions of the rezoning into the decision making process which proceeds following the direction set by the developer.

The Council’s consultants also argue against the merits of wildlife corridors (Mitchell, McCotter & Associates, 1988b) in general and dispute the value of Mt Nullum as a wildlife corridor. This is an argument that is bolstered by the comments of the Tweed’s leading conservationist Bruce Chick who had been employed by Doug Moran to revegetate his new
nursing homes. There is also a strong connection between Bruce Chick and the President of the Shire Max Boyd (see Figure 7.3). Interviewee 3, from the business community still disputes the quality of the area as a wildlife corridor, and is sceptical of claims made by environmentalists. In this case study there is a four-fold attack on what counts as knowledge:

1) The media determines what is and is not to be published and sets the public agenda on what the issues are. Oppositional voices such as the Environment Centre are silenced, and moderate voices of the Electoral Lobby are heavily edited,

2) The Council is under the influence of the developer. The developer’s lawyers write the legislative revisions for the Council and seduces the community with philanthropy which also enhances the developer’s political connections,

3) The consultants defend the Council policy of rezoning and provide an expert, objective, opinion as to what are and are not the merits of a wildlife corridor,

4) Respected community members with expertise in conservation defend the development by justifying the claims that the environment is degraded and unfit for use as a wildlife corridor.

The people determining what counts as knowledge in this case are members of the political and industrial elite, who attempt to sway public opinion through authoritative statements and positions of influence. The evidence presented in Chapters 5 and 6, particularly Table 6-2, show that the decision was made first and the rationale to justify it came later. The use of consultants’ investigation and reports to justify the rezoning proposal fits within Flyvbjerg’s (1998) propositions about rationality and power, which states that rationality will always yield to power in conflict situations. A rationalisation to justify the project rezoning appears in the amendments that the Council makes to its planning laws in order to facilitate the development. Table 6-2 illustrates that process showing the points of conflict where community concerns are brushed aside and the interests of the wealthy and the powerful take precedence.

The proposal to rezone the top of Mt Nullum was the result of a process of rationality in decision making and the exercise of power. However statements by the Shire President printed in the media at the time, state that the Council was making the decision in the interests of the whole Shire and then proceeded to criticise people opposing the Council
There was no admission of wrongdoing or culpability on behalf of the Council in spite of the adverse findings by the NSW Commission of Inquiry. There was quite strong support for the project in other sectors of the community and several business people and business lobby groups defend the proposal. Interviewee 3 still supports the idea and at the time urged business to be more proactive in supporting development proposals. The elite groups (merchants, developer, Shire President Max Boyd) defend the project and are unrepentant about the methods employed: the end justifies the means.

8.5.2 Phronetic Questions are Designed to Examine how Power is Manifested

Flyvbjerg (2001) has developed the four phronetic questions to provide a guideline to better investigate power relationships. These questions were presented in Table 7-1 and are used to examine the motivations and actions in respect to the various groups. The questions make up the headings of the following section and are informed by the data in Table 7-1.

8.5.2.1 Where are we Going?

This question was used to explore the motivations of each of the community group leaders in the study through statements made in interviews or in the media at the time. Flyvbjerg (2001) designed the question as a guide to a case study in order to explore the idea of where in general was society heading in respect to a particular Government policy. By exploring the statements of Interviewees the merits of the development and the Interviewee’s personal motivations were explored with minimal analytical interpretation from the author. The result is that no one seems to be happy with the direction of the society or Government policy at the time. Conservationists are concerned about the influence of developers and the ecological crisis, the Electoral Lobby was similarly concerned with corruption between government officials and developers and the impact on the local society. However pro-business groups and pro-development groups were concerned that the economy was in trouble and that more needed to be done to stimulate it by either removing government regulation or merely increasing the available knowledge about local economic factors.

No groups were particularly happy about the direction that society was taking under the then current Government and so this was what motivated the groups to become engaged in the political process by engaging in respective volunteer groups. Figure 8.2 illustrates the
connections between the public or the community and the Government, with community
groups filling the space in between to try and mediate the demands of the public and
influence Government policy. These groups have a self-conscious role of the direction of
society, with a sense of ‘where we are going,’ and are trying to control the direction of
democratic process by being intermediaries between public demands and government policy.

The persistence of environmental groups over the development or business groups may be
explained by the fact that environmental problems remain a central concern for public policy
and have increased in severity over time. By contrast business problems, development and
economic stimulation has been largely successful at a regional, national and global scale. The
need to lobby for greater development is not as necessary as it once might have been. With
the success of development and an increase in environmental problems provide further
motivations, and goals for conservation groups.

8.5.2.2 Is this Desirable?

For Flyvbjerg (2001), this question is asked after an understanding of the policy of industry
and government has been achieved. Usually the answer to whether the direction was in fact
desirable was in most cases simply ‘No’; Government rationalisation and the deliberate
misrepresentation of project costs and benefits undermine the legitimacy of project proposals.
In Table 1, this question has been expanded to reflect upon the desirability of group functions
as expressed through related objectives. There is no binary ‘yes’ or ‘no’ in this case, and the
relative desirability of each group’s objective is discussed below. The objectives of the
groups expressed here are expanded from the group’s motivations and reflect an individual
group’s perception of the desirability of Government policy during the time of this case
study. The desirability of the development proposal itself was dependant on the group’s
internal motivations.

Opposition to, or support of Government policy is closely linked to the group’s goals and
motivations of the individuals composing the group. Like the community at the time, the
groups were split over their support for the project with two groups opposing the project and
two groups supporting it. The project was highly desirable for those people from the business
or economic groups due to the financial stimulation that would result, the concern over
interference in the democratic process by vested interests was not relevant from this perspective. The conservation group and electoral lobby were concerned over the influence of industry over government decisions and so for them the project was undesirable.

Looking back at the case study from today’s perspective, it was not desirable to have government policy being directed and written by the developer. The developer uses his money to gain influence with the community, media and politicians, this influence is then used in a positive feedback to increase his support through favourable comments in the media. Behind the scenes, the developer’s lawyers are writing the rezoning regulations for the Council in order to facilitate the development and the developer is lobbying state politicians to help expedite the approval process. While there would have been benefits to the economy from the development, the fact that this would occur at the expense of democracy validates the concerns of the conservation group and electoral lobby, it was not a desirable outcome.

8.5.2.3 What Should be Done?

Flyvbjerg (2001) considers the lessons from the previous two questions to help develop a strategy to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past. For this case study this becomes a simple binary proposition: Did a particular community group support or oppose the proposal? The question is answered in Table 7-1 and mentions if a particular group was either supportive or opposed to the proposal. Following the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), or the Value Belief Norm (Stern, 2000) the role of an individual’s salient belief is linked to their actions, with control, normative and behavioural beliefs being responsible for determining behaviour. The first two columns of Table 7-1 also explain the normative and behavioural beliefs of the respective groups. The actions of support and opposition towards the project are not surprising when considered in this context.

Figure 8.2 illustrates some of the possible actions that can be taken by a group in order to achieve its goals. Both conventional and unconventional methods can be used by a group to make its voice heard. As discussed previously the local paper, while reporting the issue actively silenced dissenting voices of environmentalists and this was a useful outlet for the pro-business and free enterprise groups. Other avenues, in particular legal methods, were utilised by the Environment Centre to achieve its goal.
8.5.2.4 Who Gains and Who Loses by which Mechanisms of Power?

Power is a complicated subject and authors variously describe it as relational or disciplinary and being present at all levels of society manifested through interactions between individual people, or between people and the institutions of the State (Foucault, 1978; Flyvbjerg, 2001). Foucault’s concept of power (Flyvbjerg, 2001), among other things is described as a series of strategies and tactics, a type of warfare between different social sectors. The use of legitimate mechanisms to garner power within a community ensures the social acceptance of a particular group’s dominant ideology (Ryan and Brown, 2015). The expression of this power is best examined through communication which is recorded in the local newspapers (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Castells, 2007; Ryan and Brown, 2015).

The groups studied would use particular techniques to dominate the other. Groups like the Electoral Lobby and the Environment Centre were in a power struggle with other groups representing the forces of wealth and privilege. While the pro-development and pro-business community groups represented the interests of industry and they attempted to counter their opposition’s arguments by promoting the positive attributes of the developer and the development by focusing on the wealth, and the promise of more wealth, being funnelled into the community. Flyvbjerg’s (2001) concept of phronesis attempts to universalise the idea of power relationships by the use of his four questions. This final question, is a multifaceted one that first asks “Who wins and who loses?” and then asks “How?” Table 7-1, has attempted to break down this complex question into three parts.

The first part of Table 7-1 explores the “tactics and strategies” aspect of power relationships looking at the particular activities used by the different groups to convey messages and influence Government policy decisions. The next column explores the outcome of the campaign on the group and the final column describes the impact that the group’s actions and outcomes have had on the society of the area. One of the main tactics available to community groups is the ability to clone themselves, or create multiple groups on a single issue in order to dominate the media discourse and impress the opposition by showing greater strength through having more support. The fatal flaw with forming clone groups occurs when a few people dominate multiple groups and purport to represent a large section of the community. The pro-development groups displayed a high degree of homogeneity, with shared
membership, shared executives, and shared leaders and similarly phrased public announcements. By contrast the left-wing groups of the Environment Centre and the Electoral Lobby displayed heterogeneity by having a diverse membership and having multiple spokespeople. By being more heterogeneous these groups were seen as more credible. Also having a diverse membership has helped the Environment Centre persist for as long as it has.

In general the actions of the groups, how they operated, were all similar in that a variety of established and formal techniques were used to express a point of view. The major difference was that the conservation group was working to form alliances with other Regional and State based conservation groups in order to gain the political representation necessary to successfully call for a Commission of Inquiry into the rezoning. The pro-development groups were concerned with protest activities, and this was ultimately unsuccessful as the Council refused to change its policies at the time. Generally, however, all groups used the tactics of letter writing, public meetings, petitions and other similar methods in attempts to gain public support for their cause and influence policy change.

The major forms of power were exercised by the newspaper and the developer. The newspaper played an important role in setting the agenda and determining what counted as public debate which fits with the idea of Louw (2008) that the media is in effect an arm of the established power structure and supports the agenda of that structure by silencing a marginalised voice (Ryan and Brown, 2015) at the expense of democracy. The developer through the use of his donations to the Council created the image of the generous philanthropist and gained power to influence Government policy. Furthermore, by making promises of future wealth and benefits that would accrue to the region, the developer increased his power to influence public perceptions. Finally, both the newspaper and the developer took statements from leading conservationists to again favourably influence public opinion.

Figure 7.3 in illustrates some of the connections between the major actors in the case. From this figure it can be seen that Doug Moran had many contacts with government, yet only a few in the community. The connection between the Shire President and conservationist Bruce Chick enabled the developer to gain widespread credibility in the community. This influence
was enhanced by donating the Art Prize and money for a gallery to the community. All these tactics were used to gain popular favour by the developer in order to decrease opposition (see Section 4.1.1, above).

However external events also played a role. The ICAC inquiry into corruption had begun in the Tweed and had exposed endemic corruption in the Council and amongst private developers all over the NSW North Coast (Temby, 1990). These allegations of corruption, while not directed at Moran, impeded the success of his public relations. The release of internal documents by the Council also demonstrated the undue influence that Moran had over Council policy making and provided an invaluable resource to the Environment Centre who used the information to make a case against the Council’s rezoning process.

The overall results to the community were positive as the unfair influences of developers in the democratic system had been exposed and stopped. From the business perspective the outcome was negative, a major development and tourist opportunity had been lost. From the perspective of the community there were numerous positive advantages, even if they were not recognised by people at the time. Besides cleaning up the democratic process these advantages included the retention of public assets in the public domain; notably the mountain was not developed and Crown Land privatised. Secondly the community gained several dynamic new volunteer groups, and the individuals within these groups became greatly involved in the local democratic processes of the region.
Chapter 9 – Executive Summary

9. Overview

This chapter concludes the thesis and summarises the major points of preceding chapters. Beginning with a restatement of the aims and objectives, the following section summarises the methodology used, data collection and analysis techniques. The case is then quickly summarised and then there is a discussion of the major lessons learned.

![Figure 9.1 Structure of Thesis, Executive Summary](image-url)
9.1 Aims and Objectives

This study asked the question, *How does a social pressure group form, operate, survive and achieve its goals?*

The aim of this study was to examine the conditions under which a new community group is formed, how it operates, and what processes enable it to persist through time. Using a typical environmental campaign case study in which there are multiple pressure groups, the aim was addressed through three objectives.

- To analyse the processes behind the formation and continuation of functioning pressure groups.
- To analyse the processes by which the groups have succeeded within the campaign they choose to engage.
- To examine processes of long-term sustainability and life cycles of pressure groups.

In short, the aim and objectives address the core issue of how a group manifests itself and survives in a democratic society, filled with similar competing interest groups, and maintains an ability to make a useful contribution to social decision-making.

9.2 Methods

The concept of phronesis (Flyvbjerg, 2001) was used as a methodology as it provides a framework for social science inquiry based on a rational-value series of questions designed to guide the analysis of the inquiry and explore the power relationships between decision makers and the community. The study then examined the functioning of a community group and used the theory of Voluntary Altruism (Smith, 2000) as a means of objectively testing an individual group and also comparing different groups with one another. Smith’s factors of internal and external group success (Smith 1999a; Smith, 1999b) were used in a similar fashion to compare the groups with one another and test them against the established understanding of volunteer group functions. Data for this analysis was provided by interviews with key group members and an analysis of documentary information related to the case.
A case study approach was used to report the historical data of the actions of several community groups in the Tweed Shire. Qualitative data was collected through interviews and documentary archival sources and analysed with a constant comparative method (Ashley & Boyd, 2006; Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). Using the paradigm of phronesis as an analytical tool it was possible to compare each group’s objectives and the mechanisms used to exert influence with the media and the public (Table 7-1). To understand the groups functions and relative successes Smith (1999a; Smith, 1999b; Smith, 2000) was used to construct tables to categorise the different aspects of each group (Tables 7-2 and 7-3). This provided a means of comparing the attributes that helped each to accomplish relative goals. The relationships between the individuals and groups were mapped using cognitive ownership (Boyd et al., 1996). This provided a means to have an insight into the power of certain individuals and groups, the relative degree of power or influence a particular group had is shown by the amount of connections each had.

9.2.1 Role of the researcher

As stated in Chapter 1, I have been a long-term resident of the Tweed valley and have been involved in ecological science and restoration for over ten years. As part of these activities I have also become involved in local community groups and have gained an insight into their operation and function at a more practical level. This “hands-on” experience has helped me gain some insights into interpersonal relationships within a group setting and specifically has shown me the importance of key charismatic individuals in supporting a group.

Other insights from this study have come directly from the research namely the idea of Group Clones and political migration of members. This has not been part of my direct personal experience however by analysing the data I have learned how individuals can use community groups as a springboard for political ambitions and the fragility of a group when a primary leader is lost.

The dichotomy of worldviews explained through the Resourcist/Conservation argument is something that has repeatedly occurred in the group setting and a debate I have a personal interest in. I do not have a preferred stance on this argument, there are too many shades of grey and it depends on what is being proposed, however it is certainly a major point of
philosophical contention within and between groups, which is why it has a prominent place in the thesis.

9.3 Case Summary

This case study has examined the proposal to rezone a mountaintop for development within the Tweed Shire in the late 1980s. The actions of volunteer groups within the community were examined in order to explore the nexus between the people of a community and democratic processes. Community groups or Grassroots Associations (Smith, 2000) were either supportive or opposed the project. A new environmental lobby group was able to successfully demand a Commission of Inquiry into the Council land rezoning process. The Commission determined that there were flaws in the Councils rezoning process and upheld the concerns of the Environment Centre submission (TVCT/CEC, 1990).

9.4 Analysis Summary

This analysis provided confirmation to the ideas of Smith (2000), and provided additional insights into group functioning. The benefit of the work of Smith, is that it is unique being one of the only books published on community based volunteer groups, or as Smith (2000) defines them, Grassroots Associations. While Smith (2000) examines the history of volunteer groups and finds that these are an ancient and global phenomenon, he writes mainly from a North American, particularly United States perspective. The Theory of Voluntary Altruism (Smith 2000) works towards a universal concept of explaining the motivations of community groups. This study has taken the work of Smith (1999a; Smith, 1999b; Smith, 2000) and used it as a means to test and compare the groups examined in this case study.

9.4.1 More than Just Helping People

The results of this case study and analysis proposes an additional factor to the work of Smith (2000) who defines ‘seven Humane Core-Values’ that motivate individuals to participate in volunteer community groups, or Grassroots Associations. The motivations of individuals involved in environmentally based groups cannot be readily explained by the values expounded by Smith (2000) and an additional factor is needed to more adequately describe the compulsion of the ecologically motivated citizen. While socio-political innovation values
do consider the actions of conservationists and similar groups who are lobbying for change in Government policy, it does not fully explain their passion and actions that are directed towards public education and information, lobbying for political change as well as self-reflective personal change. Also, Smith’s (2000:22-23) humane core social values are mostly anthropocentric and the focus is with helping people, with such groups defining ‘new social problems and unmet public needs’. As has been discussed already, the motivations of conservationists can be seen as ‘bio-centric’ or even more abstractly ‘Gaia-centric’ with emphasis on providing for the unarticulated needs of non-human organisms and physical features such as the atmosphere and the landscape. One outcome of this study is to suggest the inclusion of a value that describes people’s motivation to be involved in protecting the biological and abiotic components of the global ecosystem. The concept of Biospheric Values discussed by Stern (2000) is an excellent term to define the value motivating conservationists’ actions and should be incorporated into Smith’s (2000) Theory of Voluntary Altruism.

9.4.2 Starting a New Group

The split between the two conservation groups can be seen to fall into the category of shifting away from anthropocentric motivations. As previously discussed the conservation groups were motivated by two different views of the environment, the earlier group had a more ‘recourcist’ approach while the newer group focussed more upon conservation for its own sake. While the two groups pursued the same goals and later merged, a primary reason for the creation of a new group was that the original conservation group’s motivations were too anthropocentric.

Another interesting result from this study was the observation of what I have termed ‘Group Clones’. The term clone refers to when multiple groups with the same ideology appear in the community, and is distinct from Astroturf groups as they do not receive funding or resources from corporations. Clones can be identified as they will share membership, most particularly there will be members who are executives in the multiple Clone Groups. The use of Clones is a tactic that is designed to create an illusion of widespread public support for a particular agenda.
9.4.3 Engaging with Government

Another outcome of this study has been the observation that community groups which are involved in a civic engagement process are vulnerable to dissolution. If the leader of a group moves from a voluntary group and becomes an elected official, then the group’s functioning becomes compromised and its long-term survival is unlikely. Similarly, if a group is engaged in the political process and fails to succeed this can undermine its credibility and long-term survival just as equally as a successful election to public office can. For a group to be successful the need is for a diverse and numerous membership that can recruit political candidates or new potential leaders to replace the loss of experienced personnel to the political process.

Creating Clones is one of the primary tactics available to groups in order to try and gain some power by increasing public presence. In this case study all groups examined created at least one ‘Clone’ organisation and both organisations pushed similar messages, creating the appearance of wide spread public support on an issue. However, this strategy failed when the leadership between groups was made obvious. The membership within the conservation groups was large enough so shared leadership did not occur, making the groups more heterogeneous. For the pro-development groups, there was a high level of crossover between the executive memberships which gave the appearance of homogenous groups.

In order for groups to be successful in political goals, volunteer groups need to have a diverse membership of skilled volunteers to maintain the groups function in the long-term. Attrition over time, as people leave the group for different reasons, means that groups need to remain relevant to attract new members. Group leaders need to adhere to a single organisation and not become spokespeople for multiple organisations. When new groups are created they need to genuinely reflect the community interests and not have a large shared membership if to be seen as credible.

9.4.4 Power of Developers Versus the Power of Community

The final observation from this case study is that small groups can be successful in opposing seemingly insurmountable odds. At the time the media was dominated by the local newspaper which promoted the mainstream establishment stance of economic development and silenced
the voices of dissenting members of the community. Developers at the time held great influence with Local and State Government, and in particular Doug Moran had considerable influence over the local Council and was able to direct the decision making process in his favour. The business community supported the idea of developing Mt Nullum, believing that this would stimulate the local economy. Even respected local conservationists supported the project.

The challenge by the community to the elite and powerful political, industrial and media forces was a difficult one. Due to good luck and a commitment to working through legal processes the Environment Centre was able to achieve a halt to the rezoning. The use of formal processes that enabled public appeal of Government decisions, meant that the Environment Centre did not need to resort to informal tactics such as protests and demonstrations. This is a key outcome of this study, for groups to have a measurable and lasting impact the need is to change legislation and Government policy and this is best achieved using established legal processes.

The lesson for conservation groups here is to do research on the legal options available in the first instance before resorting to protest activity to challenge power. This is not to dismiss the role of protest, however groups need to be considerate of the political and legal options open to them and lobby cogently and rationally for change in this arena using scientific evidence to make their case.

9.5 Further Questions

This study has successfully answered its questions examining the nature of group activity within a democratic system. However one interesting question raised from this research was how do groups communicate ideologies? Some observations were made about the structured rhetorical delivery of statements that supported the development, as these were the most common type of article in the press. However there are rhetorical devices used by different groups to more effectively convey messages and examination these techniques in order that groups could more effectively deliver message would be worthwhile.
10. References


http://www.bmartin.cc/dissent/documents/health/moran_nurshm.html


http://www.bmartin.cc/dissent/documents/health/moran_nurshm.html
http://www.bmartin.cc/dissent/documents/health/moran_nurshm.html


Tweed Valley Conservation Trust, and Caldera Environment Centre, (1990). Submission to the Mt Nullum Commission of Inquiry Caldera Environment Centre


Appendix 1

Details of the Commission of Inquiry

Terms of Reference for the Commission of Inquiry

This Commission of Inquiry is required to inquire with respect to:

1) The major planning issues raised by the proposed rezoning of Mt Nullum (Tweed LEP 1987 draft Amendment No, 16) to permit a sanatorium, residential units, tourist accommodation, tourist facilities and other uses.

2) In particular the commission of Inquiry shall examine and report upon:
   a. The ecological values of the site including its role as a wildlife corridor;
   b. the intensity of the development on the site and future management issue;
   c. the feasibility of access of and servicing of the site;
   d. the potential visual impact of any future development
   e. the bushfire hazard on the site and the potential environmental impacts of any bushfire hazard reduction measures.
   [Woodward and Carleton, 1990]

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Draft Amendment No 16 to Local Environment Plan (Tweed Shire) 1987 NOT be made pursuant to section 70 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 for the reasons set out in this report. In proposing this draft Amendment for Council's own 135 Ha and a Crown Land portion on Mt Nullum, Council has failed to adequately address major planning issues which should have been resolved prior to rezoning.

The proposed development under the concept plan and the permissible uses under the draft Amendment are too intensive and excessive for Mt Nullum, given its
conservation values and scenic significance. The lands are medium to high bushfire risk and are isolated from services.

2. TSC be advised that the natural areas of Mt Nullum, including the lands owned by Council and Crown Lands have significant conservation values and that any further proposed rezoning of Mt Nullum should:

   i. consider the whole of the natural areas as one and not consider portions in isolation from one another and
   ii. reflect the significant conservation values of Mt Nullum and its visual prominence within the shire.

3. Any proposed rezoning of Mt Nullum should be preceded by:

   a) Further studies to establish in more detail the ecological values of the natural areas of Mt Nullum, particularly in relation to fauna, habitat and wildlife corridor values; and

   b) An Assessment of alternative locations for access routes and service corridors in terms of minimising or avoiding impacts on the conservation values and scenic significance of Mt Nullum. This draft Amendment takes the contrary approach having determined permissible developments prior to an assessment of access and corridors compatible with the conservation and scenic values of Mt Nullum

4. The NPWS is an appropriate authority to undertake further ecological studies in view of its submissions ... consideration should be given to bringing Mt Nullum natural areas under the administration of the NPWS as a nature reserve. [Woodward and Carleton, 1990:1-2]

The TSC sought interest from the National Parks and Wildlife Service concerning the purchase of the site, with a view to incorporating the lands into a reserve or park. These approaches were unsuccessful and in mid-1980 Council purchased the land.

When the TSC purchased the land portions on Mt Nullum they envisaged the preferred land use as being for recreational purposes of a low impact type. This
position was affirmed by the Shire President who indicated that Mt Nullum because of its environment had valuable potential as a park accessible to all people including the aged and infirm. Mt Nullum was perceived as having greater recreational potential than Mt Warning does as Mt Warning is difficult to access. Access would be for the purposes of enjoying and experiencing Mt Nullum’s environment.

In 1984 the TSC appointed a ‘Tourism Resort and Regional Development Consultant’ to undertake a study to establish the potential for development of the subject land. This report ... summarised: "a concept and market study for a proposed tourist theme park based on alternative technology and self-sufficiency..."

The proposal recognised in the consultant’s report to Council was advertised for expressions of interest. In July 1987, the Moran Health Care Group and Kinhill Engineers Pty Ltd made a formal offer to purchase the three land portions on Mt Nullum.

During the period 1980-87 the TSC undertook a review of its existing planning instruments and resolved to replace Interim Development Order No. 66 with a Shire wide Local Environmental Plan (LEP). During the preparation of the Tweed LEP 1987 TSC consulted with the NPWS as part of the requirements of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.

Subsequent to this consultation the NPWS prepared a report and series of maps which identified land within the shire that they considered should be zoned for Environmental Protection (Habitat) 7(I). The TSC did not accept these habitat zones recommendations and instead proposed to zone these lands as Environmental Protection (Scenic Escarpment) 7 (d), a less restrictive zone in terms of permissible development.

Having prepared and exhibited Tweed LEP 1987, the TSC considered further submissions by the NPWS which echoed their earlier advice advocating certain Environmental Protection 7(I) zones. With respect to Mt Nullum the TSC accepted the advice from the NPWS and zoned Mt Nullum partially Environmental Protection (Habitat) 7(I) and Environmental Protection (Scenic Escarpment) 7 (d). The advice given by the NPWS with respect to the location of 7 (I) Habitat zones was not based on comprehensive flora and fauna surveys. The NPWS submitted during the inquiry...
that the boundaries of the wildlife corridor were notional, but its view, based on experience of the region, was that this area of Mt Nullum acted as a wildlife corridor.

In September 1987 Council engaged the firm of Mitchell McCotter and Associates (MMc) to undertake a comprehensive environmental report of its Mt Nullum property.

The Tweed LEP 1987 came into force on 29 January 1988, the date of its gazettal. Having accepted the earlier advice from the NPWS, the land the subject of this inquiry was partly zoned 7 (I) Environmental Protection (Habitat) and 7 (d) Environmental Protection (Scenic Escarpment). On 20 May 1988 Amendment No. 1 to the Tweed LEP 1987 was gazetted. This Amendment removed ‘tourism facilities’ from the prohibited items included in the land use table for the 7 (d) zone. Following this Amendment, a contract of sale for the subject land was signed between the TSC and Karetta Pty Ltd (a company within the Moran Health Care Group). This contract was conditional upon the appropriate rezoning of the land and development consent acceptable to the Moran Health Care Group.

Having signed a contract of sale, it became apparent to the TSC that the range of uses proposed by the Moran Health Care Group went beyond the permissible uses within the Tweed LEP 1987, Council engaged the firm MMc to undertake a further supplementary environmental study. This study was completed in September 1988 and following discussions between Council, the consultant responsible for the study, and the developer, the TSC resolved to pursue a further enabling draft Amendment (No. 16).

TSC informed the Dept. of Planning of its decision to prepare an Amendment to the Tweed LEP 1987 (draft Amendment No. 16). In January 1988 the Department returned the proposed Amendment to Council indicating that there were several outstanding major planning issues to be addressed. TSC resolved to return draft Amendment No. 16 to the Department without any alterations being made.

Draft Amendment No. 16 allows for carrying out development for tourist accommodation and tourist facilities, including any or all of the following purposes:

In the 7 (d) Scenic Escarpment Zone -

- Sanatoriums
- Self-Contained Units
- Serviced units
- Motel style residential units
- strata subdivision to allow the disposition of any component part of any tourist accommodation, tourist facility and residential accommodation
  In the 7(l) Habitat zone
- Walking tracks, including constructed steps, paths and safety rails
- Lookout areas with ancillary safety fencing, guide indicators, refreshment rooms, resting facilities, and kiosks with toilets
- inclinators for elderly or disabled persons

In tandem with the above proposed permissible uses, the draft Amendment permits residential development of up to 250 units. Buildings may not exceed a maximum height of two storeys.

Having received 172 submissions in response to the exhibition of draft Amendment No. 16, Council identified 13 major planning issues. In response to those submissions which were in most cases objections to the draft Amendment (154 objections), Council resolved to change draft Amendment No. 16. These changes include a requirement for detailed environmental studies to be undertaken prior to a development application being determined. Further, the range of permissible uses were reduced including the deletion of golf courses. [Woodward and Carelton, 1990: 18-21]

The effect of the rezoning is to generally transpose the two current zones for these lands in the Tweed LEP 1987. The Environmental Protection (Scenic Escarpment) 7 (d) becomes Environment Protection (Habitat) 7 (l) and the Environment Protection (Habitat) 7 (l) zone becomes 7 (d). There is not a precise overlap in the transpositions but it is the general thrust of the rezoning. The zones proposed by the TSC generally follow the recommendations made by its consultant, Mitchell McCotter and Associates. The proposed rezoning also provides for a number of permissible developments within the 7(d) zone which embrace the Council owned lands on Mt Nullum. A portion of Crown Land which forms the summit of Mt Nullum is proposed to be rezoned from 7(d) to 7 (l) and the range of permissible uses within the 7 (l) zone is extended
The current 7 (l) zone prohibits all development except those few uses listed within the Tweed LEP 1987. Draft Amendment No. 16 seeks to extend the permissible uses within the 7(l) zone through the inclusion of the uses mentioned [below]

In the 7 (d) scenic escarpment zone:

a) sanatoriums  
b) self-contained units  
c) serviced units  
d) motel style residential units  
e) strata subdivision to allow the disposition of any component part of any tourist accommodation etc.

In the 7(l) Habitat zone:

a) Walking tracks, including constructed steps, paths and safety rails  
b) Lookout areas with ancillary safety fencing, guide indicators, refreshment rooms, resting facilities, and kiosks with toilets  
c) inclinators for elderly or disabled persons  
[Woodward and Carleton 1990:3-5]

The Commissioners find that the natural areas of Mt Nullum including the lands of within the draft Amendment No.16 are of significant conservation value and need to be preserved and protected...The dominant land use of Mt Nullum should be conservation.

The Commissioners find the following defects in Draft Amendment No. 16...

- The aims of the draft Amendment No. 16 do not adequately reflect the significant conservation values of the natural area of Mt Nullum...and the need to preserve and protect those values  
- Residential use is not clearly defined as an ancillary use to tourism  
- Although height of buildings is limited to two storeys no height controls are imposed on other structures  
- The wrong plan was exhibited with the plan and submitted to the Minister for approval with the draft Amendment...
• Clause 50D (of Amendment 16) is inadequate given the potential significant environmental impact of permissible development.
• Draft Amendment no 16 is inconsistent with the North Coast Regional Environmental Plan

Development providing for onsite population of up to 2000 people including 250 dwelling units is not consistent with the current residential strategy of the Tweed Shire. The scale is comparable to other urban area in the shire. The provision of up to 250 units is arbitrary … we find that up to 250 dwelling units is not ancillary use but a residential use within the 7(d) zone. [Woodward and Carleton 1990:7-10]

The following is an abbreviated list of submissions (Woodward and Carleton, 1990: Appendix 1)

1. Moran Health Care Group Pty Ltd
2. Tweed Shire Council
3. Department of Lands
4. National Parks and Wildlife Service
5. Centre Security Services
6. Bruce Chick
7. Coolamon Environment Group
8. Drivers World
9. Fidler G. W., Architect
10. Fingal Reafforestation Group
11. Hopkins P. (CEC) (Interviewee 1)
12. Johansen R. (Historical Society)
13. Murray A, consultant botanist
14. Murwillumbah Business corporation (Interviewee 3)
15. Murwillumbah and District Tourist Association
16. Murwillumbah Rifle Club
17. Road Field Equipment
18. Senti’s News and Sport
19. Simpson T. Solicitor (author and publisher of pro-Nullum support letter pro-forma)
20. Total Environment Centre
21. Tweed Electoral Lobby
22. Tweed Valley Conservation Trust and Caldera Environment Centre
23. Jewellers (Andersons and Zambellis)
24. State Pollution Control Commission
25. Catholic School Teachers – Tweed region Bush Fire Council of NSW
26. Soil Conservation Service
27. Department of Planning
28. Form Letters (total of 796)/ Printed and circulated by T Simpson (661)

An abbreviated list of Appearances:

1. Tweed Shire Council
   a. Mr Smith (Chief Town Planner)
   b. Mr Nixon (Shire Clerk)
   c. Mr Mitchell (consultant)
   d. Mr Boyd (Shire President)
2. Mr Bruce Chick
3. Tweed Electoral Lobby – Interviewee 4
4. Department of Lands – Mr Brady
5. Department of Planning – Mr King and Mr Finlay
6. National Parks and Wildlife Service – Mr Hunter
7. Tweed Valley Conservation Trust and Caldera Environment Centre
   a. Mr Kingston
   b. Mr Hopkins (Interviewee 1)
   c. Mr James
   d. Ms Golding
   e. Dr Recher (UNE)
8. Fingal Reafforestation Group
9. Mr Hopkins (Interviewee 1)
10. Mr TS (Interviewee 3)
11. Department of Water Resources – Mr Roberts
[Woodward and Carleton 1990: Appendix 11]