**Statecraft, scalecraft and urban planning: a comparative study of Birmingham, UK and Brisbane, Australia**

Abstract: Recent discussions on state rescaling have pointed towards the need for a greater focus on how and why state activity may change over time in order to generate insights into the provenance, trajectories and outcomes of rescaling in different global regions and national state spaces. Consequently, this paper explores the dialectical and recursive relationship between the concepts of ‘statecraft’ and ‘scalecraft’ to explore the evolving sites, objects and mechanisms for urban planning within two key urban centres in different parts of the world – Birmingham, UK and Brisbane, Australia. It is illustrated how a range of actors – from the national to the local - have sought to craft and re-shape the strategies and structures for urban planning according to different imperatives. In turn, the implications for a tighter specifying of the process of state rescaling are considered, as well as the subsequent nature of urban planning arrangements.

Key words: Urban planning, rescaling, statecraft, scalecraft

**1. Introduction**

This paper provides a number of important new insights in our understanding of the ways in which the structures and scales for urban planning may evolve in different global regions. First, it responds to calls for more research “on linking abstract conceptions of state rescaling to concrete, contextually specific investigations” (Brenner 2009a, p.123). Indeed, there are few comparative examples exploring different pathways of rescaling under different institutional and governance arrangements. Consequently, the paper helps to illustrate how rescaling effects can be differentiated from other dimensions of state spatial restructuring.

This point segues into the second key contribution of the paper – the development of new insights into the ways in which the structure and scales of urban planning have evolved through the concepts of ‘statecraft’ (see Bulpitt, 1983; 1986a; 1986b) and ‘scalecraft’ (see Fraser, 2010). In particular, we highlight that rather than being treated as distinct and separate, such concepts are intimately inter-related. This has important implications for both processes and outcomes of urban planning, as well as the development of a tighter specifying of the process of state rescaling.

Through a focus on urban planning arrangements in two different parts of the world (Birmingham, UK and Brisbane, Australia), we illustrate how statecraft is often a key element of scalecraft – as the state may be heavily involved in shaping and rescaling governance processes for urban planning – but also how scalecraft is a key element of statecraft, particularly in cases where the rescaling of urban planning arrangements is used as part of a broader political strategy.

The cities of Birmingham and Brisbane were primarily selected on the basis that each has experienced very different economic, political and social forces or drivers of change. With reference to Birmingham, the processes of deindustrialization and de-urbanization has led to a succession of urban planning approaches over the last thirty years – at both a local and national level – to secure urban regeneration and job creation through various entrepreneurial / ‘civic boosterism’ strategies focused on making the city more attractive to investors and individuals. However, in contrast whilst job-creation has also been a key theme in Brisbane, this has been in response to a significant influx of individuals who have moved to the city for ‘lifestyle’ reasons (Forster, 2004) and which therefore has led to the development of alternative approaches focused around growth management. Consequently, such variation provides an appropriate opportunity to investigate rescaling pathways and the respective importance of statecraft and scalecraft in shaping urban planning approaches.

Section 2 of the paper initially discusses the evolving nature of state activity in more depth, and how the concepts of statecraft and scalecraft can help – from a planning perspective – to consider the ways in which the structures, scales and processes of urban planning may evolve. In particular, the complexity associated with developing both structural and scalar practices that seek to shape new structures and scales of urban planning is highlighted.

Section 3 of the paper then applies the concepts of statecraft and scalecraft to excavate and illustrate the re-scaling of urban planning that has taken place in Birmingham and Brisbane. Through undertaking a detailed investigation of a key episode of statecraft / scalecraft in each city, it is illustrated that trajectories of state rescaling are connected to a set of strategies, which – over time – have sought to ‘craft’ and reshape the scalar structures of urban planning in Birmingham and Brisbane. Section 4 then offers some concluding observations about the ways in which urban planning processes – and their expression – is influenced, and the relative importance of institutional, political and socio-economic contexts therein.

**2. Rescaling, Statecraft, Scalecraft and Urban Planning**

Over the last ten years there has been considerable debate over the political economy of scale and the spatial and scalar turn (Keil and Mahon, 2009). The concept of rescaling has been identified – alongside territorial, network and place-based effects - as a key aspect of state spatial restructuring (Jessop *et al*, 2008). But rather than viewing territories, networks, places and scales as ‘alternatives’ dependent upon the extent to which a political economy or post-structural position is adopted (Marston, Jones and Woodward, 2005), there is arguably a need to view them as being ‘intimately connected’ (Bulkeley 2005, p.896). In so doing, this can highlight how state practices may at once have a territorial jurisdiction, and a reach and influence beyond any formal administrative or sovereign boundary (Allen and Cochrane, 2010). In this sense, practices of state rescaling will often combine with other dimensions of social activity, including those which operate through networks trans-territorially (*ibid*.).

In addressing questions of state rescaling, we need to start from two fundamental premises. First, the notion of scale refers to the vertical differentiation of the state into a hierarchy of different scales that stretch from the global to the local. A broad range of empirical and theoretical work (Brenner, 2004; Jessop, 2002; Keil and Mahon, 2009) has shown how the recent reconstitution of the state under contemporary capitalism has increasingly involved a reworking of the state’s “scalar architectures”. In Brenner’s terms (2009a, p.126), “*no longer, then, are the scales of statehood conceived as stable platforms of institutional organisation*”, but instead, “*state scalar structures are now understood to be historically malleable: they may be ruptured and rewoven through the very political strategies they enable*”.

Second, and linked to this point about the malleability of institutional organisation, scales exist because social processes are scaled and are therefore best understood as being “the provisionally stabilized *outcomes* of scaling and rescaling *processes*; the former can be grasped only through an analysis of the latter” (Brenner 2009b, p.71, original emphasis). Furthermore, they are reflective of the context – historical, temporal and socio-spatial – within which they were produced (Swyngedouw, 1997). In this sense, whilst noting that the processes of scaling and rescaling occur in close conjunction with other aspects of socio-spatiality, such as territorialisation, place-making and network formation (*ibid*., p.72; Jessop et al., 2008), it is essential to understand the processes of rescaling if we wish to understand the material changes to the structures of the state which result from them.

This leads into a discussion of ‘statecraft’ and ‘scalecraft’. Bulpitt (1986b, p.21) defined statecraft as “*the art of winning elections and achieving a necessary semblance of governing competence in office*”. In addition, Fraser (2010, p.335) has also defined statecraft as “*the craft that states practice when they act politically*”. This draws our attention to the motives and behaviours of states and governments are important in shaping behaviour (Buller and James, 2012).

Bulpitt’s work particularly focused on the UK during the 1980s and the structural context within which politicians operated. In particular, he highlighted a number of statecraft functions or tasks to be carried out throughout a statecraft cycle that spans the period between elections: i) governing competence; ii) political argument hegemony; iii) party management and iv) developing a winning electoral strategy (1986b, pp.21-22).

In terms of governing competence, Bulpitt (1986b, p.22) notes how this revolves around ‘appropriate’ policy choice and implementation that can be achieved within the constraints of a particular polity. In so doing, it is envisaged that this will project a reputation of ‘governing competence’, especially in terms of economic management. Tied to such tasks is ‘political argument hegemony’, in terms of a “*party’s arguments becoming generally accepted, or because its solutions to a particularly important problem seem more plausible than its opponent*s” (Bulpitt 1986b, p.21).

Whilst statecraft is often the preserve of political elites or governments (Buller, 1986a; Fraser, 2010, pp.335-337), scalecraft relates to a wider range of actors – including states, social and political groups and individuals – and who may all be involved in the crafting of scalar practices (Fraser, 2010, p.334). Hence to varying degrees, they may be attempting to produce and / or rescale governance through “*skilfully fashioning and refashioning geographic scale to suit particular needs*” (Clifford, cited in Fraser (2010), p.333). However, when the focus is on the rescaling of governance the state will have a major involvement. This in turn means that there is a need to explore the dialectical and recursive relationship between statecraft and scalecraft.

Indeed, there is a need to acknowledge that states seek to practice what they do partly through a scaling and rescaling of their activities. It is often through scalecraft that states seek to practice statecraft. However, as with all elements of statecraft, the crafting of scale – and the associated rescaling of governance – may entail contingency, experimentation and failure (as well as learning) and is by no means a certain process. Rescaling never takes place on a ‘blank slate’ either. Rather, new arrangements may overlay previous ones, and this can lead to contradictions or ‘conflictual layerisms’ in terms of the structures, strategies and scales promulgated for urban planning (Brenner 2009a, p.134).

By drawing together these insights, two key issues emerge that inform the overall focus of this paper. First, an investigation of the ways in which statecraft and scalecraft may be intimately connected – rather than distinct and separate - in differing urban contexts and the implications arising for the nature of urban planning arrangements. Second, the importance of differing economic and social forces and / or alliances operating at a range of scales on urban planning processes and outcomes and the development of a tighter process of state rescaling.

The cities that have been selected to explore the relevance and importance of such issues are Birmingham, UK and Brisbane, Australia. Each has experienced very different trajectories of change, and with the respective importance of key actors varying considerably in respect of their statecraft and scalecraft ambitions. However, crucial in the selection of the cities in this particular instance has been a concern with exploring the respective influence of trajectories of economic decline or growth and subsequent pressures to facilitate or restrict new processes of urban development.

With regards to Birmingham, this is the second largest urban area in the UK, and with a population of just over one million (Office for National Statistics – ONS, 2012). However, it has experienced a long period of industrial decline since the late-mid 1970s and with unemployment levels peaking at 22.6% in 1983 before falling to current levels of around 6% (ONS, 2014). This reduction has been associated with a restructuring of the economy, and with the financial and business services sector overtaking manufacturing as the key GDP generator (Coulson and Ferrario, 2007).

The economic collapse following the post-war boom in the manufacturing sector – and the particular reliance on the automotive sector – also had a demographic effect, as well as an economic one. Thus by the middle of the 1980s such decline “had created a sense of political urgency in the city around the need to generate a proactive response to economic (and arguably a demographic) crisis” (Barber and Hall 2008, pp.283-284).

Brisbane, on the other hand, has a very different history with regards to economic and population change, and associated urban planning pressures. The City of Brisbane is the largest local government area in Australia, with a population of 1.08 million (Australian Bureau of Statistics Cat. 3218.0, 2012). Brisbane has experienced rapid population growth over the last two decades, averaging around 2.2% a year. This has been generated by in-migration from New South Wales, responding to sub-tropical outdoor lifestyle opportunities and lower housing prices, and by mining and energy developments in the rest of Queensland. By 2011 the resource sector was contributing nearly a quarter of Brisbane’s gross regional product (Brisbane City Council, 2012). The city traditionally had a relatively low level of planning control, but as the costs of growth such as infrastructure shortages, lack of affordable housing, and destruction of the natural environment became increasingly apparent (Gleeson and Steele, 2010), state control over planning and development (a state government responsibility under the Australian constitution) steadily grew.

Hence it appears that there may be similarities between the cities in respect of national (UK) and sub-national (Australia) state governments using urban planning to both shape and implement processes of (re)development and regeneration. However, there are also fundamental differences between the cities in terms of the drivers of change and strategies of statecraft and scalecraft. To consider such issues, a detailed historical analysis is therefore undertaken of key academic critique (especially for Australia), policy documents and political and economic strategies. In addition, in the UK, Hansard proceedings of debates in the House of Commons and House of Lords have been drawn upon as they provide a very revealing insight into the ways in which statecraft and scalecraft were of relevance in shaping urban planning arrangements.

**3. Statecraft, Scalecraft and Urban Planning in Birmingham and Brisbane**

A summary of the evolving structures and scales of relevance to urban planning in Birmingham and Brisbane are set out in Table 1 and Table 2. In general, the tables highlight the key problems / issues of relevance facing urban planners over time, both national, sub-national and local (city) responses and the implications for institutional rupturing underpinning rescaling. However, in the following sections a key episode of rescaling of relevance to urban planning is focused upon in each city in order to provide a more detailed and critical investigation into the crafting of processes of scalecraft to deliver statecraft.

**INSERT TABLES 1 AND 2 ABOUT HERE**

In Birmingham, the changes of the 1980s are focused upon given the considerable changes that took place both nationally and locally during this period in terms of attempts to address urban decline. In contrast, in Brisbane issues surrounding growth management are focused upon during the late 1980s to mid-2000s, as in this period the long-standing problems of managing growth were at last comprehensively addressed via sub-national and local actions in a context of emerging institutional formations at a regional scale.

**i) Birmingham**

It is particularly instructive to focus on state rescaling – and associated processes of statecraft and scalecraft – in the 1980s, as it was during this phase that profound – and long-lasting changes occurred in respect of urban change, the nature of urban planning responses and the subsequent restructuring and rescaling of the state. What we are not trying to do is to rehearse or reiterate existing analyses of urban change of relevance to the city. Indeed, these have already been documented extensively in other studies (for example, see Coulson and Ferrario (2007); Leather (2001); Jones and Evans, 2006). Rather, the emphasis is on moving away from predominantly descriptive accounts of governance change to develop a more nuanced understanding of how the structures and scales for urban planning may evolve under particular institutional and governance arrangements and the value of adopting an approach which considers the dialectical and recursive relationship that exists between processes of ‘statecraft’ and ‘scalecraft’.

In the UK, the election of the Conservative government in 1979 introduced new forms of statecraft, and particularly in the form of new policy approaches that were perceived as illustrating governing competence and political argument hegemony. Crucial in this respect was an increasing emphasis on a neo-liberal strategy to re-stimulate the national economy (Gamble, 1981) and the privileging of the market and private sector interests to secure economic growth. In turn, this contributed to a move away from a concern with social welfare towards economic development policies focused on economic and property-led regeneration in order to address the problems of urban areas (Loftman and Nevin 1995, p.302).

What is important to note are the mechanisms and crafting of new structures and scales of urban planning to secure such statecraft ambitions. Of considerable importance were the creation of unelected state-sponsored quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations (quangos) such as Urban Development Corporations (UDCs) and their focus on property-led, site-specific ‘prestige projects’ focused on place marketing and economic competitiveness (Atkinson and Moon, 1994). Coupled to their introduction was an associated (increasing) restriction on the resources and functions of local government, and which was generally perceived as a key barrier to national statecraft ambitions (Duncan and Goodwin, 1988). In addition, a move away from regional policy approaches towards more localized, top-down, site-specific scales of working focused on the city centre was promulgated through the removal of regional strategic planning bodies in the form of the Metropolitan County Councils that had been set up following the last reorganisation of local government in the UK in 1974 (Loftman and Nevin, 1995).

However, what is interesting about Birmingham in this period – and the crafting of new structures and scales of intervention by central government - is the response by local actors, and more specifically Birmingham City Council. Hubbard (1995, p.246) notes that “*in contrast to a number of 'difficult' left-wing councils (elsewhere in the UK), Birmingham never displayed the recalcitrance to market-led approaches that one might expect from a city with a proud Labourist tradition*”. Indeed, the Labour Party took control of the city council for the next 20 years following the 1983 local elections, but with cross-party political support for activities focused around urban entrepreneurialism (*ibid*.). In particular, such efforts were led by the charismatic Sir Albert Bore, who was chair of the Economic Development Committee between 1984 and 1993, and the subsequent leader of Birmingham City Council between 1999 and 2004. Through his work, the city council was able to forge a strong relationship that bridged local and national party-political lines, as well as both public and private sector interests to facilitate a pro-growth urban regime (Jones and Evans, 2006; DiGaetano and Klemanski, 1993; Coulson and Ferrario 2007, p.608).

Consequently, a first key point that emerges is a broad consistency in approach both locally and nationally in respect of strategies of statecraft and scalecraft. Indeed, in Birmingham, the Economic Strategy for Birmingham (at this time) essentially re-prioritized the local scale – and specifically the city-centre through objects of governance concerned with i) site-specific key ‘flagship’ projects repositioning the city as a meeting place for international business; and ii) city-centre living through asset development and private sector housing development (Barber and Hall 2008, p.284). This is unusual, in that it has been reported elsewhere in the state rescaling literature how statecraft through scalecraft is frequently contested and cannot be guaranteed. But in Birmingham, a locally pragmatic approach in the context of securing national resources through state-sponsored agencies and initiatives cemented the attitude of local organizations of the need to work in partnership at a localized level to facilitate access to such resources (Coulson and Ferrario, 2007). In addition, Birmingham’s sheer size (the largest local authority area in Europe) as well as the magnitude of the problems facing the city meant that no single organization could tackle these individually (Jones and Evans, 2006).

Hence a commitment by the City Council to low spending, collaborating with the private sector and prioritizing economic concerns over social concerns arguably led to the city embedding national statecraft concerns at the local level through new localized structures and scales for urban planning. As stated by Councillor Bore himself:

"Looking back to the 1980s-90s, and Labour councils – this one certainly co-operated with a Conservative government…….It comes down to whether it is advantageous, appropriate" (Interview with Albert Bore, Birmingham City Council, *The Guardian*, 23 April 2013).

In addition, several Conservative ministers in national government also enthused about their relationship with the city:

“In the case of Labour-controlled Birmingham, I disapprove of quite a lot of its politics and it disapproves of quite a lot of mine, but the fact is that we have worked together to produce a lot of extremely good projects ……..when dealing with useless organisations that will not co-operate, such as the Labour councils in Southwark and Leicester, one has to go to voluntary bodies, the private sector or anybody else of good will to do some good for the residents” (Kenneth Clarke, Conservative Minister and Paymaster General, cited in Hansard proceedings of House of Commons, 27 April, 1987).

Nevertheless, Leather (2001) notes that the peculiar civic culture which characterizes Birmingham led to the private sector being involved in urban planning and development activity – and related partnership arrangements – since the early 1970s and pre-dating Conservative central government policies (Ball and Maginn, 1985). As such, a second key point is that there was therefore a degree of path-dependency to the crafting of scalar practices that did not exist elsewhere. What this also meant was that a much greater degree of experimentation and innovation both emerged and was indeed accommodated in respect of urban planning arrangements and attempts at scalecraft over time. For example, in contrast to other cities an Urban Development Agency (UDA - Birmingham Heartlands Development Agency) rather than a UDC was created in Birmingham. Whilst still a partnership between major private sector interests and the City Council, in contrast to other UDCs, the City Council remained the planning authority for the area and with the UDA “*relying much more than does a UDC on partnership persuasion to achieve its objectives, as it lacked many of the direct powers that were associated with a UDC*” (Wood, 1994, p.49). The crafting of such structures and scales of urban planning was also informed (but not always wholly positively) by learning from elsewhere:

“The city council, with the support of the two main parties, is trying to set up an urban development agency as distinct from a corporation…..it will operate with the active participation of the local authority who will also facilitate the redevelopment….that is a sign of Birmingham's realism and of the fact that lessons to be learnt from the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) and its success have been widely recognized” (Sir Reginald Eyre, Conservative Member of Parliament, Birmingham Hall Green, cited in Hansard proceedings of House of Commons, 06 March, 1987).

A third key finding from a consideration of how strategies of statecraft and scalecraft entwined during this period relates to the importance of ‘the event’. Whilst much of the existing literature focuses on the rupturing and rescaling of the state at specific points in time, in Birmingham a single event – ‘The Highbury Initiative’ (March 1988) subsequently informed and sustained a much longer rescaling of urban planning concerned with the development of particular sites in and around the city centre, as well as a broader spatial concern with connecting the city centre to outlying neighbourhoods.

Highbury is important in the crafting of scalar practices for urban planning as such practices were strongly informed by the views of participants who attended. These individuals had a wide range of backgrounds, including architecture, planning and landscape, business, economic development and local and central government officials, as well as academics. They also came from many parts of the world (Hartwell, 2008). Importantly, what emerged were proposals based particularly on learning from the US experience to develop a number of flagship projects within Birmingham’s Central Business District (CBD) for accommodating major events, including the International Convention Centre and the National Indoor Arena, a new hotel for international conferences and a £250m privately financed Brindley Place scheme concerned with mixed used development. These site-specific developments in the city centre set the development agenda for urban planning in the city over the next decade. Nevertheless, coupled to this was a concern to break through the ‘concrete collar’ that had enveloped the city in order to address unemployment and to improve the physical environment (see Barber and Hall 2008, p.284).

This latter point informs a final point about strategies of scalecraft and statecraft, namely that even with the ability to utilize international, national and local expertise in shaping scalar practices for urban planning, the process remains – in the words of Fraser (2010) “tricky, messy and awkward……things are rarely easily produced” (Fraser 2010, pp.333-334). Consequently, the prioritising of the city centre and site-specific physical regeneration at a local and national level was criticised by many in terms of i) a failure to engage across the whole city and across social as well as economic areas of concern; as well as ii) the effectiveness of such attempts at scalecraft being undermined through a failure to engage local communities themselves in the regeneration process (Loftman and Nevin 1996, p.1000). In the words of one key commentator of the time:

**“**Let us not forget the year 1981. That was the year of the riots……I have no doubt that those riots really shocked the government of the day. Those riots encouraged the then Secretary of State for the Department of the Environment to expand the range of opportunities for private involvement and investment in the inner cities…….But where is there any partnership with the people who live in those areas? Where and how are they consulted?” (Lord Scarman, cited in Hansard proceedings of House of Commons, 02 February, 1987).

In turn, this has led to on-going and new attempts at scalecraft in the context of statecraft (see Table 1) but which importantly had their origins in what was deemed at the time to be effective policy learning. Therefore we learn that the crafting of scalar practices can be misinformed or at least only partially informed by previous attempts at scalecraft and statecraft. Again, this is less charted in the existing literature.

To summarise, what we learn from this period of rupturing and reweaving of the structures and scales for urban planning in Birmingham is that despite increasing restrictions imposed on the autonomy of local actors through the statecraft and scalecraft activities of national government, this does not always necessarily lead to local contestation and resistance by political-territorial alliances and social forces. Indeed, the ways in which the city council in Birmingham – as a key local actor in urban planning – sought to secure both a strategic and spatial privileging under successive rounds of rescaling crossed party-political and public / private sector lines. This was is in contrast to the situation in many other UK cities. Continuity in leadership and the ability to reconfigure and rescale the work of the city council within existing and new partnership arrangements to facilitate delivery has been crucial in this respect. This was reinforced over time through a collaborative response to a key event in the city - the Highbury Initiative, which was suitably vague in order to facilitate widespread involvement, but specific enough for key local actors to take action (Coulson and Ferrario 2007, p.607).

Consequently, an alternative scenario emerges where such local actors may seek to assist, agree, preserve or facilitate existing (and broader) trajectories of state rescaling. Nevertheless, this may be driven by specific local circumstances – as discussed in the context of Birmingham, as well as economic concerns – for example, the severity of economic deprivation in the city during the 1980s leading to a pragmatic “take it at all costs approach” Both are less recognized in the existing literature, although we concur with Fraser (2010) that actors can clearly attempt to take advantage of any new scalar landscape. Furthermore, in the context of the problematic relations between central government and many other metropolitan regional and local authorities in the UK during this period, we also ascertain that local actors can learn from their own (previous) mistakes, as well as from other local and regional actors elsewhere. But equally, from the above discussion we can also identify that such learning may be sporadic and incidental, and indeed in some instances it is possible to discern very little evidence of learning from previous errors in terms of the crafting of scalar practices for urban planning. So the ‘path dependency’ of scalecraft in the context of statecraft may be irregular and intermittent, again a new finding in respect of the process of state rescaling.

**(ii) Brisbane**

In Australia, the tiers of government – and their respective influence and involvement in urban planning - have been quite different to the UK. In the previous section, we have illustrated the on-going importance of national and local government relations in the UK, and in particular how top-down site-specific scalar practices of national government have frequently helped to facilitate its statecraft ambitions. But in Australia, the national (federal) government has generally been much less involved in urban planning issues. Rather, planning is the constitutional responsibility of sub-national state government, which has legal oversight over planning carried out by local government. As a result, we will illustrate how activities of statecraft and scalecraft in the context of urban planning can entwine at a variety of different tiers of government – from national to local – and with actors from each tier often fashioning and re-fashioning scalar structures to meet both common objectives (of statecraft), as well as their own specific needs.

The period from the late 1980s to the mid 2000s is focused upon, as this saw the most intensive statecraft and associated scalecraft initiatives to address problems created by the rapid growth of many of Australia’s key cities, including Brisbane. In the context of Brisbane, a crafting of scalar practices became particularly evident at the regional level. Whilst this is generally unprecedented in Australia, it was driven by a significant degree of path-dependency. In essence, the amalgamation of previous local government structures in the 1920s led to Brisbane City Council being established as the largest local authority in Australia – and with unusually wide infrastructure and planning powers as a consequence of its size, range of functions and its financial strength. In turn, this meant that the City Council was able to operate with a degree of independence from the state government, and which subsequently informed the crafting of new scalar arrangements that were genuinely collaborative, and shaped by both local and (sub-national) state actors.

The crafting of scalar practices at the regional level was heavily informed by the need to respond to issues associated with urban sprawl, as by the late 1980s urban development had been spilling and extending beyond the City boundaries for a number of years. However, the ability of the City Council itself to control Brisbane’s expansion was often limited, and especially when developers were frequently privileged by the Conservative state government (1957-1989) as part of its statecraft ambitions concerned with private sector-led growth and a ‘laissez-faire’ approach to urban development (Abbott, 2012a). Indeed, planning was seen as purely a local government matter and developers were allowed to apply directly to the state government for ‘re-zonings’ of land use where development was restricted. Furthermore, if developers could not get what they wanted from the City Council, they could move to adjacent council areas, which often had fewer planning controls (Abbott, 2012b).

However, the election of a new state Labour government in 1989 formalised the move towards a more interventionist approach and new attempts at statecraft and scalecraft at the regional level. Tom Burns, the Minister for Local Government recognised the need to work with Brisbane City Council and other councils in the South East Queensland region to take a more co-ordinated approach and to pragmatically plan for managing urban growth (Abbott, 2012a, p.22). In particular, he negotiated agreement with the councils for preparation of a non-statutory regional strategy and he held a community conference to establish consensus on how to proceed. As Abbott (2012a, p.22) observes: “*Gaining a level of trust from the councils, who were suspicious of the state’s motives in regional planning, was critical in getting the planning process underway*”.  Following the conference, in 1991 a Regional Planning Advisory Group (RPAG) was established to develop the regional growth management strategy. RPAG contained three state ministers, four local government mayors, a Federal (national) Government officer and six community representatives, supported by a technical support group (Abbott, 2012a, p. 23). Consequently, Abbott (2012a, p.25) identifies the influence of the following as being crucial in shaping new attempts at (regional) scalecraft to deliver statecraft ambitions concerned with urban growth management: i) a common agenda around the threat to liveability from rapid urban growth; ii) clear leadership from Minister Burns in approaching local government to prepare a growth strategy; and iii) a recognition of the interdependence of state and local government roles in regional planning. Such issues are less charted in the rescaling literature, and therefore illustrate how the ‘messiness’ of scalecraft can be reduced with good leadership.

In early 1991 a new Brisbane City Lord Mayor, Jim Soorley, was elected. Soorley - who would remain in office until 2003 – also began to take a strong interest in regional and environmental issues (*ibid.*). He led the reconstitution of a moribund regional grouping of councils into the South East Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (SEQROC). The catalyst was a desire for local government to coordinate views on issues such as urban growth management and to facilitate the active involvement of local government in the state government’s growth management initiative (Bertelsen, 2002, p.2). Thus the institutional conditions for effective statecraft action on growth management had been set in place by scalecraft activities that were both driven by the (sub-national) state and local actors in terms of the creation of new regional structures (in the form of RPAG and SEQROC). This is again a new and important finding: much of the work on state rescaling suggests that top-down – and often singular (rather than multiple) - practices of scalecraft predominate. A Draft Regional Framework for Growth Management for South East Queensland (RFGM, 1994) was produced and released in 1994 by RPAG, and subsequently endorsed by the state government.

To prepare a final regional strategy, the state government set up a Regional Coordination Committee (RCC), chaired by the Minister for Local Government, and with another state minister, four local government mayors and a Federal Government representative as the other members (Abbott, 2012a, p.23). Reviews of the RFGM 1994 by the City Council and three sub-regional groups of SEQROC were used by the RCC to prepare the final RFGM (1995). In turn, the state government, SEQROC and the Federal Government endorsed it as the first non-statutory ‘primary regional strategy for South East Queensland’ and committed to its ‘implementation, monitoring and review’ (Regional Coordination Committee, 1995, Section 4.1). Again, from a scalecraft perspective, we therefore learn that an iterative learning process is important in shaping new (regional) scales of working, and which over time can lead to a consistency of approach across a range of actors to secure statecraft ambitions concerned with growth management, rather than conflict and / or disagreement.

A full review of the RFGM, co-funded by the government and SEQROC councils, commenced in 2001. However, the new planning minister within the sub-national state government now identified that regional planning was a lower priority than completion of local planning schemes required under new planning legislation (Abbott, 2012a, p.38). In response, a wide variety of actors – such as The Planning Institute of Australia - began to promote the need for a statutory regional plan. As such, they engaged in new discursive practices of scalecraft focused on the regional level by lobbying the media, as well as state government – for example, a letter was sent by the Institute to the Deputy Premier (Abbott, 2012a, p.39). Brisbane’s daily newspaper, the *Courier-Mail*, and an independent think tank, the Brisbane Institute, also commenced a community engagement and media campaign centered on greenspace, transport and improved regional planning in response to the concerns of community, professional, academic and industry groups. In the meantime, the cooperative, voluntary regional planning process that had been established was being increasingly undermined by lack of state minsters’ attendance at RCC meetings, a general lack of commitment by the new state planning minister, and a lack of regard to the RFGM in state infrastructure decisions (Abbott, 2012a, p.43). Hence during this phase, a fourth key point which emerges relates to the temporality of statecraft and scalecraft: this may shift or ‘rupture’ abruptly as a consequence of both new policy legislation as well as the particular views of key individuals. Again, this has been less charted to date.

The election of a new Lord Mayor for Brisbane in 2003 reiterated the City Council’s commitment to the crafting of scalar practices for urban planning at the regional scale. Indeed, SEQROC was advised that there was a need for a “*clear and conclusive plan for South East Queensland that must be linked to funding and infrastructure*” (*ibid*.). Following further intensive and co-ordinated lobbying by SEQROC, local government, community representatives and planning professionals during the campaign leading up to the state election of 2004 (and in which the Labor government was returned), the Premier committed to a statutory regional plan linked to infrastructure planning and funding (completed 2005). As such, statecraft ambitions around a winning electoral strategy came to the fore and other statecraft and associated scalecraft ambitions concerned with securing political argument hegemony through a prioritization of local planning schemes were modified. This again highlights how statecraft through scalecraft cannot be guaranteed although interestingly the adoption of a temporal perspective illustrates how different elements of statecraft (i.e. winning an election) can be secured through a different emphasis on new strategies of scalecraft (i.e. focused regionally), and driven from above (the state) and below (other actors).

To summarise, what can therefore be witnessed in an Australian context during this period is a wide variety of actors, operating at a variety of scales, re-crafting and re-legitimising a regional scale of intervention to deliver common statecraft ambitions of demonstrating governing competence (as well as a winning electoral strategy) around the effective management of urban growth. This crosses party-political lines, as well as territorial scales, and in essence is layered over and above previous attempts to restructure and re-scale to the level of the state or local government.

One further point to note is that in an Australian context, other forms of statecraft and scalecraft may also emerge between national, state (sub-national) and local government. For example, between the late 1980s and the mid-2000s the problems of urban sprawl and growth management also drew attention to the potential of securing inner city renewal. In this context, Soorley wanted inner suburbs in Brisbane developed into ‘urban villages’. This was central to his vision of creating a carefully planned, resident-friendly city (Caulfield, 1995, p.152). What we therefore see is a consistency of approach locally with the national Labor government’s ‘*Building Better Cities’* programme (1991), which brought financing to start the necessary work and arising from a concern that cities needed to be more sustainable. National government statecraft ambitions focused around demonstrating governing competence in securing urban sustainability and an increased emphasis on harnessing the private sector therefore also informed a re-crafting of planning structures and scales at a local level too, but in conjunction with both state and local government actors. Indeed, the new arrangements involved the creation of Task Forces and new planning instruments such as master plans and area development control plans, but which required both legislative amendments at the state level, and a yielding of the city plan more locally (Caulfield, 1995, p. 153). This is significant, as the crafting/re-crafting of scale regarding urban planning arrangements in Australia – as we have illustrated - usually involves shifts between the state and local, or – as the RFGM demonstrates - at an interim regional level. However, in this instance the Better Cities program highlights how national government’s statecraft ambitions can also entwine and re-shape the crafting of scalar practices at other levels, but which may generate collaboration rather than contestation and resistance.

**4. Conclusions**

In the context of Birmingham and Brisbane, the paper has illustrated that statecraft and scalecraft may combine in different ways and at different times to inform the restructuring and rescaling of governance for urban planning. It is often through scalecraft, that states seek to practice statecraft. But in turn, we have also seen that statecraft is a key element of scalecraft, as rescaling and new scales of governance are informed by state pressure and political activity.

Indeed, in both Birmingham and Brisbane, higher levels of government have had a major influence on local structures of urban planning and development and their respective rescaling over time. However, there are notable differences in respect of which scales of government have had most influence and the extent to which local actors have either contested / resisted or facilitated new scalar structures. This reflects the importance of the institutional, political and socio-economic contexts. The latter is particularly important. In Birmingham, given the significance of the processes of de-industrialization and de-urbanization and the severity of urban blight, national government initially played – and has continued to play - a central role in shaping the structures and scales of urban planning governance through deploying strategies of scalecraft in the context of statecraft ambitions around national economic prosperity. But due to the sheer size of the city, the distinctiveness of Birmingham’s institutional arrangements that historically have embraced partnership working and the private sector, as well as strong political leadership – at least until relatively recently – the city council has been able to retain an important role in urban planning and indeed take advantage of successive scalar landscapes.

In Brisbane, there are both similarities and differences evident when compared to Birmingham. A key difference with regards to socio-economic context relates to the fact that urban and economic blight was less problematic. Rather, rampant private sector-led growth - and actively encouraged by the sub-national state government - led to problems of managing population growth (including urban sprawl). This led to new strategies of scalecraft – at a new regional scale of working – being promulgated, and centered around developing partnerships with local government to shape and manage strategic development. These became jointly led by the (sub-national) state and local government. Indeed, Brisbane City Council’s size and financial power allowed it to exert its influence over the respective (regional) scalar landscape.

Beyond this regional approach, we also learn from the Australian case study that different tiers of government are also important in different contexts. For example, an entwining of the national government’s statecraft ambitions concerned with ‘Building Better Cities’ and the City Council’s concern with improving urban neighbourhoods also informed new strategies of scalecraft at the local level – but also supported by the state government. Consequently, both statecraft and scalecraft can entwine both across between a number of different levels of government.

Furthermore, beyond highlighting how statecraft and scalecraft have interconnected differentially in different contexts and at different times, through using the example of urban planning the paper has additionally provided a number of other new insights into a tighter specifying of rescaling. These include i) the issues and outcomes associated with scalar politics not always being one-sided and thus meeting the expectation of both national / regional / local and state / non-state actors; ii) the importance of local and extra-local political leadership in securing outcomes that are acceptable across multiple scales of governance and across multiple actors; iii) the critical importance of economic drivers of change – both in a positive and negative sense; iv) the importance of local government itself in shaping statecraft and scalecraft ambitions in conjunction with sub-national and / or national actors; and v) the crafting of scale being both informed and sometimes misinformed by previous learning.

To conclude, we therefore suggest that further exploration of such issues in differing contexts, over differing time periods and involving different national and local political agents would be useful in terms of confirming or challenging the findings presented in this paper, and their relative importance in either enabling or constraining processes of reorganisation and rescaling in the context of urban planning.

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