2 THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF HOUSING POLICY AND ITS IMPACTS

2.1 Introduction and purpose

Chapter 1 introduced a schema for relating (housing) policy to its context and consequences as an analytical framework for examining the three research questions posed in this study (figure 1.1).

This chapter explores the field of housing policy studies and considers different theoretical perspectives, concepts and analytical tools that can help unravel the components and relations of the policy-context-consequence sequence. Other literature (for example, welfare studies) is also drawn in where it has influenced the housing debate in ways relevant to this study.

In keeping with the research questions set out in chapter 1, the focus of this chapter is on:

- how national housing policies are differentiated;
- what is understood of the relationship between housing policies, housing markets and their social, political and economic milieu; and
- how housing policy impacts are assessed and interpreted.

This chapter has four components. Section 2.2 discusses briefly the scope and scientific standing of housing studies, to establish the place of this study within the tradition of housing research. It then considers different accounts of the way in which comparative housing research has approached the analysis of similarities and differences in housing policy. Section 2.3 contains an assessment of specific concepts and methods used for interpreting the role and function of housing policy strategies. Section 2.4 considers research on the nature of housing as a social and economic construct and the processes by which housing policies can and do operate to influence social outcomes. The concluding section reflects on the ideas relevant to this study that have been identified in the preceding sections and considers how, and to what extent, they can be used to guide the subsequent stages of this research.

2.2 The scope and development of housing studies

2.2.1 Historical traditions and explanatory approaches

The contemporary housing researcher is faced with a vast and eclectic field of studies on the characteristics of national housing systems and the policies that are presumed to have helped shape them. These housing studies straddle many disciplines, which provide a variety of theoretical and empirical perspectives on similar issues. However, the diverse and unconnected nature of much of the field has produced sustained criticism of its theoretical foundation and its lack of integration with other fields of social inquiry (Ball et al., 1988; Harloe, 1995; Kemeny, 1988, 1992, 2001).
Influential traditions and perspectives that have emerged from the historical development of housing policy studies across the social sciences include: the human ecological tradition; neo-classical economics; behavioural, phenomenological and humanist perspectives; urban managerialism and institutionalist approaches and political economy studies. A summary of most of these traditions (up until the 1970s), highlighting key differences in their approach and citing classical studies, is provided in Basset and Short (1980).\(^1\)

At the time of Bassett and Short’s overview, political economic theory, drawing on Marxism, was exerting a major influence across the social sciences. Analyses from that school of thought offered a more multi-layered and complex explanation of the economic and social relations of capitalist societies than previous approaches. Under their influence, the focus in housing studies shifted to more explicit consideration of the nature of housing as an economic and social construct. There were a number of important dimensions. First, the debate about structure and agency was advanced through theory and method that recognised that both elements and the dynamic relationship between them were integral to explaining the operations of the housing system (Pickvance, 1976; Berry, 1983, 1986; Ball, 1986). Second, links between the development of housing systems and the broader and historically evolving structure of urban society under capitalism were drawn, explicitly. A particular focus was on the way in which class relations in both housing and labour market spheres were shaping housing policies and outcomes (Castells, 1977; Harvey, 1978, 1982, 1985). Finally, the concept of ideology was introduced into the housing debate, initially through propositions that tenure preferences and tenure policies are derived from deep-seated societal structures and values rather than having a ‘natural’ or super-historical existence (Kemeny, 1981, 1983).

There are now many points of departure for contemporary housing studies building on these traditions. Somerville (1994) provides a useful classification and examination of the explanatory power of different types of studies that characterise current housing research using four categories: explanation in terms of systems of actors, hypothetico-deductive explanations, realist explanations and culturalist explanations. Table 2.1 summarises the explanatory approach of each type of study and Somerville’s critique, which suggests that, at this stage of their development, no single approach can claim ontological or epistemological superiority. The influence and potential value of the various methodological approaches to housing studies is illustrated by examples referred to throughout this chapter.

The question that this study poses about the importance of differences in housing policy to low income households in the present conjuncture is in line with a growing interest in understanding the forces behind recent tendencies towards the convergence of housing policies across countries. Cross-national studies have become one significant way of examining the significance of apparent tendencies worldwide towards a retraction in the role of government in housing (and other welfare areas). The next subsection considers the trajectory of recent comparative housing research in more detail to assess the implications and usefulness for this study.
2.2.2 Convergent and divergent traditions in comparative housing research

One way of distinguishing comparative housing studies and assessing the progressive development of ideas in the field has been to class them into two broad groups: convergent and divergent (Doling, 1997; Kemeny; Lowe, 1998). Convergent studies present the view that the overriding tendency in the evolution of housing (or, more generally, welfare) systems is to homogenising policies. Studies described as divergent contend that policy strategy (and, by inference, its outcomes) is shaped more by particular national political, social and cultural structures and processes (ibid.).

The earliest comparative studies related the characteristics of housing systems (or welfare systems more generally) to ‘natural’ stages of economic development. These studies argued that different housing policies reflected the different stages of economic and social development of a nation and that housing outcomes evolved in accord with the level of such development. By implication, housing conditions would (necessarily) converge over time and space. This position has been contested because reliance on socio-economic factors alone appears insufficient to explain housing patterns, given the existence of many similarly advanced societies with different housing systems and outcomes (Schmidt, 1989).

Studies that draw on Marxist economic theory and Marxist accounts of urbanisation also generally fall into the convergent tradition. (For example: Harloe, 1985, 1995; Ball et al., 1988.) The approach of such studies recognises different housing systems and their genesis in dynamic processes but they postulate that, generally, different types of housing interventions fulfill essentially similar functions: in essence, a profit function (contributing to the accumulation of capital in the urban sphere) and a reproductive function (providing housing necessary for a stable and productive workforce). Both similarities and differences in housing policies and their outcomes can arise from the logical imperatives of capitalism but housing systems (and housing policies) are necessarily constrained within common limits.

Consideration of divergence across housing systems has gained ascendancy in more recent studies. This shift of focus began as a reaction to overly deterministic and generalised explanations of how housing systems develop and to the perceived overemphasis on the evidence of convergence in comparative research. (See Boelhouwer and van der Heijden, 1992; Oxley and Smith, 1996; Kleinman, 1996; Murie, 1997 and Kemeny and Lowe, 1998.)

Using an institutionalist approach, Schmidt (1989) made one of the earliest attempts to apply a divergence thesis in housing. He drew on both corporatist theory (concerned with the governance of policy systems and the impact of the links between administrative, political and market processes) and labour movement theory (concerned with the influence of left-wing political parties and ideologies) to develop his hypothesis that housing policy directions and their outcomes are essentially related to the organisation and structure of the housing production system, particularly the organisation of housing supply, and the values associated with each particular mode of organisation. Schmidt (1989, p. 98) tested his thesis on a range of data for 18 industrialised countries, using his results to argue that (differences in) “housing policy and housing market processes must
primarily be understood in terms of the organisation of the policy-making and implementing system”. He predicted that close links between construction organisations and bureaucratic players resulted in more institutionalised forms of housing policy. As a consequence, policy directions - for instance, the construction of social housing projects or the ‘greenfield’ development of new suburbs - become entrenched through particular institutional forms of provision, which cannot readily adapt to changing or new requirements and, therefore, act collectively, over time, to protect their policy interests.

To help explain the perpetuation of different national characteristics in housing systems, a number of researchers have drawn on the general concept of ‘path dependency’. This concept, first used in economics, refers to the tendency for solutions to problems (or, in this case, policy decisions), whether accidental or deliberately chosen, to become locked in (through institutional and ideological processes) and, subsequently, difficult to change (Kleinman (1996, p. 15).

The view that institutionalised relationships and structures within the housing system themselves become formative of new structures over time has led to the proposition that housing systems (and welfare systems more generally) may be expected to diverge to an increasing extent (Kleinman, 1996, 1998). For instance, in his comparison of housing policy changes in European states over the last 20 years, Kleinman (1998) found that, while there have been common policy influences and directions in the present conjuncture in Europe (such as the forced economic convergence arising from European economic and monetary union and the extent of prevailing neo-liberal political control that is circumscribing housing policy), there are also powerful countervailing political and institutional forces in individual countries. Consequently, he argues that historical circumstances, political forces and institutional structures in part determine the shape of specific policies but these, in turn, impact on the housing system and set the parameters for further change.

In his own European-based research, Kleinman (1998, p. 250) has concluded that housing outcomes are becoming more polarised across (new) class interests comprising a “well housed majority (with explicit state support) and a poorly housed minority”. His explanation is that the general direction of housing policy in the last twenty years has been to bifurcation (or dualism) as both a reflection and reinforcement of current structural and political trends. Generally, the problems of marginalised groups are being ignored while market-based policies (such as supporting home ownership) continue.

One factor contributing to the diversity of explanatory viewpoints in these comparative studies has been the choice by researchers to concentrate their analysis on the relation between housing systems and economic or political or ideological processes and structures. Correspondingly, a great deal of the dialogue and contestability in the field has arisen from the relative emphasis that different contributors place on these explanatory factors and the extent to which they grapple with their interaction (Somerville, 1994). The result has often been confusing - producing different, but not necessarily better or more encompassing, explanations. Following Jessop’s (1990, p. 205) general view of the state of studies in the political economy tradition, it is suggested that what is required is a synthesis of these economic, political and ideological perspectives.

The concept of the embeddedness of housing in its broader social, political and economic context offers a possible direction to assist such a synthesis. Under this approach, the predominance of economic, political or deeper ideological forces is not
### Table 2.1 Explanatory approaches in housing policy studies (following Somerville, 1994)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPES OF STUDY AND LINKS TO HOUSING TRADITIONS</th>
<th>EXPLANATORY VIEWPOINT</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SYSTEMS OF ACTORS.</strong> Antecedents in managerialist and institutionalist approaches</td>
<td>Accounts for housing policy directions in terms of the process of decision making of state agents and their agencies. Distinguishing aspect is the inference that actors and agencies have the power to operate independently to effectively determine housing policy. Empirical analysis provides the basis for determining inductively how and to what extent this power is exercised.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HYPOTHETICO-DEDUCTIVE.</strong> Antecedents in deductive method of scientific research.</td>
<td>Recognises that actors (decision makers) operate in relation to underlying structural factors. Such relations can be logically derived (using different theories) and formulated as hypotheses for empirical testing. Both deterministic and probabilistic relations can be contemplated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REALIST.</strong> Antecedents in structural determinism.</td>
<td>Distinguished from above by emphasis on real or material (not logical) relations between structure (deep or hidden relations) and agency (apparent or phenomenal relations). Method of articulation is used (dialectical synthesis of logical reasoning and historical analysis) to uncover the linkages between phenomena and their causes. This aims to reveal both necessary (structural) and contingent (human action) causes of particular outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CULTURALIST.</strong> Antecedents in humanist and phenomenological traditions and also Gramsci’s thesis on hegemony (a widely shared taken for granted view of society which underpins perception, behaviour and social organisation).</td>
<td>There is no inherent structure to social relations, only historically and culturally developed meanings. Unlike for realists, the distinction cannot be made between reality and ideas about reality. Analysis involves constructing the cultural meaning of reality using an interpretative approach exploring discourse and meaning.</td>
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## Overview of Somerville’s Critique

<table>
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<tr>
<th>APPLICATIONS DISCUSSED IN THIS STUDY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schmidt (1989).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structures of housing provision -</td>
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<td>some applications</td>
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<td>Schmidt (1989). structures of</td>
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<td>housing provision - some applications</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Inevitably selective (issue-based)</th>
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<tr>
<td>because does not have a holistic</td>
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<tr>
<td>view of social relations.</td>
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| Salience depends on quality and |
| precision of theory of structure-|
| agency relations used.           |

| Because of its selectivity, lasting |
| historical significance of         |
| explanations of policy may be hard |
| to establish from the method.      |

| Cannot contemplate a masked       |
| relationship between policy       |
| outcomes and their underlying     |
| causes (that is, similar causes   |
| producing different outcomes).    |

| Allows for more complex and        |
| multilevel (abstract and concrete) |
| explanations involving more factors|
| and deeper analysis than either of |
| the above.                         |

| Lack of specificity of nature of   |
| structural tendencies (such as the |
| class basis for state policies)    |
| leads to the danger of overly      |
| structuralist/functionalist accounts. |

| Ontological difficulty is that it  |
| claims real causal powers beyond  |
| human activity.                    |

| Epistemological difficulty is      |
| demonstrating what are necessary   |
| relations.                         |

| Opposite problem to realism arises |
| by separating and giving independent |
| explanatory power to ideas only.   |

| Considered a necessary and powerful |
| view because it allows for ideological and hegemonic factors but not a sufficient view because it tends to neglect issues of how (dominant) ideologies relate to classes and structures (that is, their material or real basis). |
presumed. Policy and its effects come about through the complex interaction of long-standing structures and patterns of institutions, ideas (and ideologies) and behaviour in national housing systems and changing exogenous influences deriving from broad economic, demographic, technological, social and political changes. Conceptually aware and historically specific analyses of social policies and their outcomes are necessary to unravel the relationships and to highlight the particular significance and ongoing social, political and economic sustainability of chosen policy paths.

The development of the comparative housing studies paradigm is leading to a resolution of the debate about trends towards divergence or convergence. As a result of the search for more satisfactory and comprehensive explanations and the shift from more general to more finely grained studies, there is growing recognition that they are not mutually exclusive explanations and greater emphasis is being placed on accounting for both similarities and differences in housing systems.

For instance, in his examination of recent housing policy developments in Western Europe, Murie (1997) acknowledges some evidence of convergence - such as the shift to demand-side subsidies, the privatisation of much social housing and residualisation of the remaining sector - but he argues against taking the proposition too far. “The changes [across nations] are not the same. The systems that are responding are not the same. Even if the direction of change is similar, the pace is likely to be very different” (ibid., p. 459).

Kemeny (1992, p. 52) posits the matter as one of choice. “My interest lies...in the middle range - theorising at a level that hitherto tends to be explained away in terms of residual factors…[However,] it should be noted that I do not claim that developmental theories are wrong in some absolute sense. It is just as legitimate to neglect major differences between societies, as it is to neglect underlying similarities. In one sense, the difference may be conceived in terms of different levels of analysis...”

Harloe (1995, p. 528) goes further by arguing that the division between the types of comparative study has been unhelpful: “ any comparatively based theory that purports to explain the overall development of a field of social policy, not just selected aspects, has to account adequately for similarities and differences...whether the similarities are less significant than the differences is an empirical question”. Harloe’s own research on trends in housing policy is considered in more detail in section 2.4.

The record of comparative housing studies to date shows that the main theoretical attention has been given to considering the extent to which housing policies are converging or diverging and to the underlying reasons for the evolution of similar or different national trajectories. However, it has been argued that, whether convergence or divergence of policies is seen to be occurring depends in part on the scale and method of analysis that is pursued and the theoretical emphasis that is given to either economic determinants (understood as forces of convergence) or political power struggles and cultural factors (understood as forces of divergence). In this study, all three levels of analysis - economic, political and cultural - will be used to help guide the interpretation of what is important about different housing policy approaches.
As its core purpose, this study takes a different approach to studies that have looked at what generates differences in housing policy. It is concerned with assessing what impact such differences have as an alternative way of critically assessing whether, and to what extent, differences in housing policy are significant. The process involves working back from observed differences in housing outcomes to reconstruct the influence of different policy regimes. A necessary prior step is to establish how housing policy regimes differ. Concepts and analytical tools useful to that task are considered next.

2.3 Approaches to analysing and differentiating housing policies

Approaches to the categorisation and differentiation of housing policies range from simple, descriptive or ad hoc methods to more complex, theoretically developed approaches. Descriptive approaches are essentially inductive - derived by codifying observable and measurable characteristics of different instruments. Generally, they leave the explanation of the causes and the significance of differences in policies to the reader to infer. This section focuses on a number of the more powerful models and typologies used for comparing housing policies.

2.3.1 Tenure analysis

Tenure has been used widely as a taxonomic and explanatory concept in housing policy studies. Typically, the approach has been to differentiate forms and levels of state intervention by tenure categories and to evaluate the ways in which state policy affects tenure choice and tenure outcomes. While the typology used can vary in terms of the number and definition of tenures specified, usually three - private renting, social renting and home ownership/purchase - are recognised and compared.

The general claim (or assumption) of traditional studies using tenure as a core differentiating variable has been that each tenure denotes intrinsic and important differences in the way in which housing is consumed. In legal terms, tenure defines the rights to ownership and use of a dwelling. However, tenure studies have assumed or claimed a much wider set of relationships including differences in economic benefit, social status and power and psychological impact (Saunders, 1984, 1990). In the 1980s, past approaches that elevated tenure (and tenure policies) as variables capable of explaining differences in housing outcomes were heavily criticised from theoretical and methodological perspectives. Such critiques demonstrate the limitations of tenure as an analytical concept on a number of grounds including: the failure to demonstrate that tenure specific effects are real or independent of other factors, the narrow focus on how housing is consumed rather than on how it is produced and provided and the historically, culturally and geographically variable nature of housing tenures and their interrelationships, which falsified generalised conclusions about the impact of tenure.

Despite these criticisms, tenure remains a central and real issue to be grappled with in comparative housing analysis. Many aspects of state policy - including regulations, planning policies, subsidies and tax policies - are differentiated by tenure, but to a varying extent in different jurisdictions. The descriptions of housing in Australia and the Netherlands later in this study will demonstrate clearly the central place of tenure in the formulation and operation of long-term national housing policies in those countries.
Recently, a number of authors have attempted to suggest (different) ways of clarifying or redefining tenure to overcome past criticisms, while at the same time stressing the importance of using it as only one of a number of substantive concepts for comparing and differentiating housing systems and housing policies (Ruonavaara, 1993; Marcuse, 1994; Priemus, 1997a). Ball and Harloe (1992) link specific tenures to a more holistic analysis of structures of housing provision and Kemeny (1995a) has subsumed a theory of how tenure makes a long-term difference within a broader theorised view of differences in housing systems. These developments are discussed later in this chapter and subsequent chapters will consider in detail the way in which housing policies have influenced the structure of the main rental and ownership tenures and the dynamic interplay between these tenures in Australia and the Netherlands.

2.3.2 Logical possibilities of housing policy

Lundqvist (1991) has proposed a more inclusive starting point for the comparative analysis of housing policy. His approach is to conceive of the set of all possible policy options and to match geographically and historically divergent approaches to policy against this set. Lundqvist’s model is derived from what he considers to be a general logic (that is, outside a particular national context) of housing provision and a conceptually exhaustive model of policy options.

The logic of the housing process is that of a system continuously adjusting dwellings to households. In market systems, this occurs essentially through the production and supply of dwellings for a price by a provider and the exercise of demand (purchasing power) by a household (consumer). Governments everywhere regulate, subsidise and tax different components of this process (thereby affecting both purchasing power and price to different intensities) and all categories of possible government intervention in the process can be analytically determined. Charting all possible government interventions enables the pattern and extent of actual interventions in particular cases to be compared. Additionally, as the approach reveals arenas of non-intervention, it leads to questions about why policies are not adopted. For policy development purposes, it enables possible avenues of state intervention to be identified (Lundqvist, 1991).

Lundqvist claims that his suggested approach promotes independent analysis; that is, not linked to prevailing policy objectives, policy discussions and political movements. Obviously, this means that, by itself, the approach cannot answer questions of why different policies develop. However, it can provide a starting point for a comprehensive comparative description and it can lead to the identification of interesting matters for investigation. In fact, Lundqvist (1991, p. 86) was not concerned with policy content analysis for its own sake but as a starting point for evaluating its consequences: “...a study adding to our cumulative knowledge on causes for differences in policy content is - if staying at that - literally a study of no consequence”. In his own research on the impact of the privatisation of housing services, he combined policy-centred analysis with the structures of housing provision approach and the theory of power, which underpins welfare regime analysis (Lundqvist, 1992). (See section 2.4.)

Before concluding this consideration of approaches to policy analysis, the more abstract perspectives of state-centred analyses and regulation theory are discussed. Studies
adopting those perspectives are primarily concerned with questions about the underlying forces that determine why and how the state adopts a particular mix of policy strategies. In the context of this study, the perspective of such studies has particular implications for conceiving the objectives, possibilities and limits of state action.

2.3.3 State-centred analysis

Arguably, one of the most important theoretical contributions to studies of public policy that has grown out of the influence of political economy studies has been the greater attention given to theorising the role of the state in various arenas, including welfare.

The Marxist-influenced critique of welfare policy studies brought into question previously pervasive assumptions about the state as a neutral, independent or benevolent agency in the provision of welfare and provided a more historically grounded view of the state, as a complex set of institutions and actors (decision makers) reflecting wider power relations and societal conflicts. However, early work on theorising the role of the state was overly deterministic and functionalist, with the state essentially seen as ‘the capitalist state’, whose actions were mysteriously guided by the logic of capitalism and whose agencies acted, ultimately, in the interests of capital (Milligan, 1983).

In contemporary studies, state actions are broadly conceived as an integral, though distinctive, part of a wider system of economic and social relations. In capitalist societies, housing is generally produced and consumed as a commodity, though market relations apply to a different extent at different times and places. The housing problem is interpreted as the failure of a commodity system of provision to satisfy social need. In this sense, the housing problem is not seen as a specific problem - such as poor affordability, low quality, or overcrowding - but as an endemic problem that derives from housing market relations and manifests itself in different forms, spatially and temporally. The state, as the nexus of individual and collective interest, continuously attempts to ameliorate the housing problem by guiding and ordering the system of provision and by responding to ruptures in the operation of the market.

Berry (1983) was one of the early researchers to consider in detail the state’s role in housing and urban development from a political economy perspective. He proposed a three-way functional typology. One function supports the provision of market housing. This entails establishing the infrastructure and organisational framework within which the housing commodity is produced, exchanged and consumed. The most fundamental element of this framework is the legal system for defining and enforcing property rights. The planning system also contributes to this function through providing the organising and legitimating framework for development. A second role is ‘market supplementing’ - changing the parameters within which market relations occur - for example, subsidising the cost of infrastructure, housing production or housing finance. Finally, the state may act in a ‘market replacing’ role - providing housing outside of the market system (sometimes referred to as ‘decommodified’ relations) such as occurs with (some or all of) the production, ownership, pricing, allocation and management of social housing. Specific institutional and administrative arrangements attach to each of these roles and further determine the way in which the state impacts on housing outcomes.
This typology provides a useful relational and structural perspective for differentiating the mix of interventions in the housing market. However, it has not been extended to consideration of the central interest of this study - that is: to what effect? To answer that question, consideration needs to be given to how the combination of these functions and their operation within a local housing market actually affects housing conditions - that is, what difference do the interventions make, taking into account all of the factors that impinge upon housing outcomes? The aspect of the way in which housing systems work that is of central interest to this study is the question of how the affordability of housing is determined? Views about the particular way that housing affordability is determined in capitalist markets, including the impact of state actions, are considered in the next chapter.

2.3.4 The regulation approach

Regulation theory has achieved an important theoretical advance in explaining how variability in, and adjustments to, the role of the state occur.8

The regulation approach posits that the dynamic relation between the state and the market can be further unravelled through the recognition of distinct long-standing national patterns of policy that form part of a specific mode of social regulation.9 “A mode of regulation is the set of institutional forms and processes which determines how and to what extent social reproduction is actually achieved” (Berry, 1999, p. 111). A mode of regulation stabilises and persists because it is effective in fulfilling the requirements for capital accumulation at a particular conjuncture, consistent with local political and ideological forces. Using a realist methodology (see table 2.1), studies in the regulationist genre attempt to specify the (past) dynamic development and transformation of specific housing systems (and their policy trajectories) in terms of: what was necessary for the maintenance of capital accumulation, and what was contingent - that is, developed from local class relations and the exercise of particular configurations of institutionalised political power and ideological influence (ibid.).

Using that approach, Berry (1999) identifies a range of locally specific economic and physical factors that help to explain why Australian housing developed its present form (low density suburban home ownership) principally in response to the housing needs of the postwar period of rapid economic and urban expansion. These factors include: the lack of local alternatives to residential investment options; rapid growth in the production and consumption of the motor car, which both enabled and fuelled suburbanisation; the effective mobilisation of finance for housing, coupled with high wage levels and the availability of large stocks of underdeveloped land.

A different set of factors but related to comparable underlying structural determinants meant that mass home ownership did not take off in European countries after the war, as capital was being diverted into economic recovery, the private residential sector was comparatively underdeveloped and land ownership was fragmented. Harloe (1995) argues that, as a result, social housing became a ‘necessary’ requirement of capitalist expansion and further urbanisation.
Harloe’s assessment of the general European situation aligns with the findings of local analysts in the Netherlands that the development of social housing provision (and not home ownership) as a central element of Dutch policy reflected a particular accommodation between capital, labour and the state driven by economic necessities. In their assessment, the primary policy concern after the war was to improve international competitiveness through, among other strategies, strict controls on wages. In the context of dramatic housing shortages, which arose from both wartime downturn and destruction and rapid population growth, acceptance of wage restraint by the labour movement was directly linked to the extensive regulation by the state of land and housing systems and the large scale provision of cost rent housing to overcome housing shortages and to contain housing costs.

In both countries, the postwar regime did become entrenched and persisted largely unchanged over three decades, as chapters 4 and 5 will go on to demonstrate in more detail. Thus, the chosen case studies highlight what is now widely recognised as the extended influence of institutionalised forms of provision or the process of ‘path dependency’ in national policy trajectories, referred to earlier.

As outlined above, one contribution of regulation analysis is theorising why differences between state approaches arise and persist. Another important aspect of the approach derives from its perspective on the way in which changes in long-standing policy regimes come about. In regulation theory, severe periodic crises in the capital accumulation process, such as occurred in the 1970s in most Western societies, lead to the fundamental restructuring of economic relations which are followed by necessary adjustments in consumption spheres, such as housing. However, the rate and particular form of such adjustments will always be contingent on local factors, as just discussed. The widespread reform of national housing policies recently, which has coincided with a period of major economic and social change, may signal an emerging new mode of regulation that is more compatible with the needs of the new, global economic order.

2.3.5 Summary

To assist with the first analytical task of the study - differentiating housing policy - this section has considered different approaches to the classification of housing policies as well as more general theories of why and how the state intervenes in housing markets. All of the particular ways of looking at housing policies discussed are considered to be potentially useful as guiding concepts for comparing housing policies in Australia and the Netherlands. First, tenure policy is clearly central to differences between the Australian and Dutch housing policy regimes but, to establish the contribution of tenure to explaining differences (or similarities) in affordability trends, the analysis needs to go beyond just the recognition of tenure. Lundqvist’s policy-centred approach seems to offer a logical framework for, initially, identifying the scope and weight of national housing policy emphasis and then, for comparing similarities and differences in arenas of policy action and inaction. Berry’s typology adds a means of assessing the functional mix in housing policies. However, this typology, of itself, will not assist in determining what the impact of different functional splits may be - for instance, what mix of market replacing, market supplementing or market supporting policies is more effective in meeting low
income needs. The regulationists’ approach offers a more sensitive and nuanced framework than previous abstract and overly functionalist accounts of the role of the state to explain how variability in state approaches comes about. That approach also provides a dynamic perspective by theorising how policy strategies are both perpetuated and transformed. In relation to the particular needs of this study, however, previous applications of the regulationists’ approach have not considered how, and in what ways, different modes of regulation might affect material outcomes and opportunities for particular groups, except (perhaps) from a simplified class perspective. More fundamentally, the essential method of that approach - that is, establishing the distinction between policy factors that are necessary (deriving from deep structuralist tendencies) to sustaining particular and different housing phenomena and those that are contingent (a result of class dynamics) - is considered to be philosophically problematic and may not, therefore, be able to shed light on the relative importance of different types of factors (see table 2.1) (Somerville, 1994; Pickvance, 2001).

This review now moves beyond tools for investigating housing policies to consider approaches to the analysis of the other components of the analytical framework for this study. In particular, the next section discusses and assesses concepts that have been used to analyse the physical and social relations of a housing provision system. It also considers the contribution of studies that have examined the relationship between housing policies and the wider system of welfare provision.

2.4 Probing the links between policy, context and outcomes

2.4.1 Structures of housing provision

The ‘structure of housing provision’ (SHP) concept was developed principally through the collaborative work of Ball, Harloe and Martens in the 1980s.\textsuperscript{11} Initially, this approach arose from the critique that policy studies, by focusing on consumption-oriented aspects of housing provision (typically housing tenure), have tended to overlook the role of government in the production and financing of housing.\textsuperscript{12}

The SHP proposition is that the production, exchange and consumption spheres of housing provision provide the immediate context within which differences in housing systems and their outcomes can be understood. State intervention can and does occur in all spheres to a greater or lesser extent at different times and in different places. Detailed empirical analysis of the social relations (processes) between the public and private actors and agencies of these spheres is a productive way of assessing and comparing housing systems. The emphasis is on seeing the whole housing provision process as a unified, continuous and dynamic entity (Ball, 1986).

Studies that have used the SHP concept as an analytical tool have demonstrated that it is the specific way in which housing is provided - that is, the details of initiation, production, financing and allocation processes, and all forms of direct and indirect policy interventions - that has vitally affected the finer characteristics of each national (or local) housing system and, ultimately, how people are housed (Harloe, 1985; Ball et al., 1988; Lundqvist, 1992).
The SHP concept has broadened the scope of many empirical studies of housing. However, in many applications, it has resulted in little more than empirical codification of the vast extent of housing interactions between actors and agencies. Nevertheless, the originators of this approach claim that it is superior to many previous approaches because it is more fruitful in codifying significant similarities and differences in housing systems and more powerful in pointing to possible explanatory factors, while not representing a (general) theory of housing (Ball and Harloe, 1992).

It is now well recognised that the SHP concept needs to be combined with other social theories to provide an adequate explanation for the development of housing systems and their similarities and differences (Ball and Harloe, 1992; Somerville, 1994). For instance, Harloe has developed the SHP approach, using economic theory, to embrace not just the relations between agents in the housing provision system but also the dynamic interrelationship between those actors and the historical development of the social relations of capital accumulation.

Harloe’s (1995) detailed and strongly theoretically guided historical account of social housing in six capitalist nations illustrates his approach. In that study, he found substantial evidence of convergence towards market systems of housing provision, dominated by home ownership and the residualisation of social housing. He explains this trend by arguing that there are (or, historically, have been) more barriers to decommodified (or social) housing than for other areas of welfare provision (such as income support, education and health) because the specific provision characteristics of housing create the potential for private provision. These characteristics include the reality that: land for housing is private property and that all forms of private property are deeply entrenched in the values and institutions of capitalist societies, private means of housing provision have always existed and housing’s existence as a physical asset (offering security) makes private financing feasible. He concludes that this is why the market (with market enabling and market supporting policies) can and does provide mass housing, as illustrated by the history of rapid private housing development in newer nations, which do not have pre-existing settlement regimes, such as Australia and the United States (ibid., p. 36).

In contrast to state-centred analysis, the main implication of Harloe’s findings is that the essential economic properties of individual welfare ‘areas of provision’ (such as housing) may be more relevant to cross-national comparison and to the explanation of the ‘boundaries of policies’ than differences in political systems and processes (ibid.).

In general terms, the benefit of the SHP concept to this study is that it provides an established methodology for linking policy to a broader exposition of the detailed social relations and physical forms of the system of housing production, financing and consumption. It necessitates an empirical and historical focus on the relations between the actors and agencies operating in the housing system and on the social, economic and political factors influencing them. Accordingly, it draws into the analysis factors other than policy (and politics) that may have influenced specific outcomes.
2.4.2 Housing provision chain

As a variant of the SHP approach, Ambrose (1991) proposed the housing provision chain model. This places emphasis on a study of the sequence of events, and the myriad institutions and actors, in each of five stages of the housing provision process: promotion, investment, construction, allocation and management. In doing so, it adds another layer of reality to the analysis by introducing temporal elements (comprising duration, phasing and coordination) into the assessment of how the housing system operates. This perspective is especially relevant to assessments of the efficiency of the production-consumption sequence for housing and of the possibilities of state interventions that could enable (or hinder) the housing provision process.

For purposes of analysing policy using the provision chain, Ambrose classified the role of actors and institutions in the provision process as either public (that is, democratically accountable), or private (that is, non-democratically accountable). This, in turn, provided him with a basis for recognising and comparing variations in the democratic or political underpinning of each stage of the process and for developing and evaluating hypotheses about the likely impact of different policy interventions. Thus, Ambrose argued that policies and their effects can be analysed more meaningfully if they are broken down into the stages and possibilities for intervention along the provision chain and if the nature of the power relationship between market and state agencies in each stage is recognised and evaluated.

2.4.3 Links between housing and welfare

Another important aspect of the context of housing policy development and its operation concerns the role housing plays within the broader system of welfare provision. Housing has long been considered one of the four main pillars of the welfare state, alongside social security, education and health (Kemeny, 2001). However, it is only recently that the ramifications of this relationship have come to the forefront of housing policy analysis. (As examples, see Lundqvist, 1992; Barlow and Duncan, 1994; Kemeny, 1992, 1995b; Kleinman, 1996 and Murie, 1997.)

A number of pertinent theoretical and methodological issues have emerged from this development. As discussed earlier (where reference was made to the influence of Esping-Andersen and to Schmidt’s pioneering study), one outcome has been to draw into the housing debate a consideration of labour movement and power resources theories, which ascribe significant political influence over welfare policies to organised forces of the working classes and their political representation. Another impact, exemplified by the work of Castles cited in chapter 1, has been for studies of welfare policy to recognise the impact of housing policies on broader (non-housing) welfare outcomes (Castles, 1997b, 1998). A third aspect has been the scrutiny of the differences between the way housing and other welfare areas are funded and provided, noting (in particular) differences in what the balance between public and private provision is likely to be and the implications of this for the way in which housing assistance is provided (Torgenson, 1987; Harloe, 1995; Kemeny 2001). Theoretical and empirically based contributions relevant to analysing the housing-welfare nexus are considered below.
2.4.4 Welfare regime analysis

As discussed in chapter 1, a leading influence on welfare studies has been the classification by Esping-Andersen of welfare states as social democratic, liberal or corporatist in their political philosophy and policy-making process. This, in turn, generates welfare systems described as decommodified, conservative and residual, respectively (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Kemeny, 2001). The theoretical argument underpinning this typology is that differences in the relative strength of the labour movement and its political ability to implement collective welfare provision through electoral control of the state in democratic societies (with comparable economic regimes) account for significant differences in both welfare policies and social outcomes in those societies. The validity of this theoretical argument was initially tested by reference to data on the extent of service decommodification and on inequality and social stratification for eighteen advanced capitalist countries classified according to welfare regime type (Esping-Andersen, 1990).

The development of a housing perspective in welfare regimes analysis has influenced the debate about the validity and robustness of this approach. For example, using evidence about housing, Barlow and Duncan (1994) include the Netherlands in the social democratic cluster. However, using information on other welfare services, Esping-Andersen classified the Netherlands in the corporatist cluster. Esping-Andersen defends his classification as idealised, noting that actual systems of provision fall along a continuum and adjust continuously (Esping-Andersen, 1996). Nevertheless, the robustness of the theoretical basis to the approach - relating differences in welfare systems to differences in power relations and processes of democratic governance, whether corporatist, laissez faire or social democratic - is brought into question by such discrepancies.

Castles’ research on the Australian welfare state has also contributed to the theoretical debate about the necessary relation between types of political systems, welfare strategies and social outcomes. For example, in his comparison of the Australian welfare state with small European corporatist democracies (including the Netherlands), he found that Australia did not exhibit greater income inequality in the 1980s than most European states but noting that Australia had not pursued neo-corporatist welfare strategies to achieve that outcome (Castles, 1989b).

Focusing on the relationship between the economy and public policy to explain this situation, he finds that Australia’s wages policy (centralised wage bargaining and fixing) and the maintenance of a closed economy (through tariff protection) had resulted in economic stability, full employment and relatively high wage levels. As a result, these conditions (which he attributes to strong, highly organised labour movements) obviated the need for the kind of social protection (or welfare state) measures that were then typical of small European societies (Castles, 1989b, 1994).

As discussed previously, Castles’ subsequent findings (1997a, 1998) on the way in which home ownership in Australia has contributed to welfare outcomes (for instance, through lowering retirement costs) has led to a wider recognition that the type of outcomes that are measured (and the way in which they are measured) has been a major factor
influencing conclusions about the relationship between housing (and welfare) systems and their outcomes. To mitigate this problem, policy impact research needs to avoid a narrow or isolated focus on a single policy and a single outcome and needs to better establish the actual process by which policies contribute to the outcomes claimed for them.

Overall, welfare state analysis has been important in forging new questions about the link between housing and ‘non-housing’ outcomes of different welfare state approaches. Similarly, it has revealed the danger of confining evaluation too narrowly - a broad and interconnected set of impacts has to be anticipated across the welfare spectrum. However, the theory of power behind welfare regimes analysis has not been supported consistently. Evidence centred on housing shows that working class movements in different nations may ‘choose’ different paths to protect their economic and social interests and that factors additional to differences in power relations have to be drawn into the explanation (Lundqvist, 1992; Harloe, 1995; Kemeny, 1995b).

2.4.5 Unitary and dual rental systems

Influenced by welfare regimes theory, Kemeny (1995a) has developed his own housing-specific typology, which is also based on his recognition of a particular economic property of a housing system that he refers to as a maturation process. Over time, housing systems develop a mature stock of dwellings - comprising a high proportion of older dwellings having low outstanding debt - and thereby achieve a capacity for lower (cost) rents. At a policy level, countries can adopt different national strategies in response to this phenomenon. According to Kemeny (1995a), a unitary rental system evolves from the maturation process when the benefits of a large mature social housing system are passed on to tenants through lower rents, thereby reducing the demand for home ownership. Countries pursuing dualist rental systems do not take advantage of the potential for charging cost rents and instead price social rental housing so as to minimise demand for it and to maximise the take-up of home ownership. In this situation, the benefits of maturation accrue to private individuals and are redistributed in different ways, such as through family transfers or across investment sectors.

The results of the (limited) application of Kemeny’s typology are not inconsistent with welfare regime analysis. For instance, the evidence suggests that countries in the Anglo-Saxon ‘liberal’ tradition have tended to pursue dualist systems, while many ‘corporatist’ and ‘social democratic’ countries in Europe have to varying degrees opted for unitary systems (Kemeny, 1995; van der Heijden, 2002). The differences lie in the explanatory framework. For Kemeny, it is wider social arrangements and ideological dispositions in different countries, not the economic logic of capital or particular configurations of political power, which better explain how the choices of policy strategies come about and are maintained (see table 2.1). Essentially, in his view, societies are either more collectivised in their social consciousness or more privatised. Such deep social values become reflected in the structure of social programs.

Kemeny’s approach does provide a theoretical basis (the maturation process) for explaining the potential for differences in housing outcomes to arise from long-term
differences in housing policy strategies. However, his propositions about why countries adopt different strategies (and by implication, the policy possibilities) are difficult to test and remain largely unvalidated. In his own words, his argument “ultimately rests on an intuitive and many dimensioned understanding of the collective-private dynamic, and ways in which the balance between them is struck in different societies” (1992, p. 120). In relation to his view of ideology as the crucial driving factor behind different housing policy choices, Somerville (1994) has questioned whether Kemeny may have a different (albeit, powerful) explanation, rather than a better one (table 2.1).

One strand of inquiry that could be pursued in this study is whether there is any evidence to suggest that the different opportunities provided by the maturation process in the predominantly social and private systems of provision in the Netherlands and Australia, respectively, have resulted in long-term differences in affordability outcomes and, if so, how (that is, through which policy strategies) this has been achieved. Chapter 7 returns to this idea.

2.4.6 Other contributions relevant to this study

Any overview of housing research cannot consider all possible studies of housing policies and their impacts. Instead, this section presents a selection of other studies that posit ideas or hypotheses that are directly relevant to this study.

Predating the Esping-Andersen model of welfare regimes, Nesslein (1982, 1988a, 1988b) was the first to question whether there was hard evidence that a generalised ‘welfare state model’ of housing provision (which for him embodied extensive state interventions that moderate or replace market mechanisms) explained the widely noted differences in national housing systems that epitomise that approach. His empirical analysis of the Swedish case - and a later analysis which juxtaposed those findings with data from the market model in the United States - led him to argue that the key reasons for the often-claimed success of housing policies in Sweden have been the overall long-term increase in household incomes and the extent of income transfers, rather than the application of non-market mechanisms to the price and allocation of housing or the large scale provision of housing through the not-for-profit sector. Nesslein’s work is important because it questions the validity of the assumption that there is a necessary link between public and private housing provision and differences in housing outcomes. However, it is not informed by a theory of how policy differences do come about (Lundqvist, 1991).

Drawing on Esping Andersen’s concept of decommodification, Doling (1999) has suggested that a way forward may lie in reconsidering the nature of the distinction between public and private provision. He argues that, in housing studies (and by implication in welfare analyses that adopt the Esping-Andersen approach), the concept of decommodification has been overly focused on the public/private form of provision, rather than on the degree of protection offered. Applying his alternative view of the concept to different housing systems, he shows (among other results) that some home ownership systems that are tax protected (such as are typical in liberal welfare regimes) are consistent with high degrees of social protection (for home owners) and, therefore, could be deemed relatively decommodified.
Two recent comparative housing studies demonstrate how a welfare regimes analysis coupled with the structures of housing provision framework can be applied to an assessment of policy effects. In their benchmark study, Barlow and Duncan (1992, 1994) compared the structures and outcomes of housing production in growth regions in three European nations chosen because of their contrasting housing and welfare regimes. Their analysis shows a positive association between the scale of intervention and a number of measures of economic efficiency in housing production. In particular, they found that the extensive role of the Swedish state across the housing provision system had produced the best results at both national and local levels. Key factors making the difference included: the diversification of the production process, ensuring a ready long-term supply of cheap land and finance for housing and supporting tenure diversity through tenure neutral policies. Their overall conclusion is that the efficient and effective functioning of the housing production system requires strong state action and a range of interventions to assist the market to perform, rather than a deregulated approach leaving the market ‘free’. However, the validity of these results beyond the cases studied has been questioned (Priemus, 1993).

Following Barlow and Duncan’s approach, Golland (1998) attempted an empirical analysis of the aggregate relationship between (a limited number of) housing production outcomes and the housing supply systems of three European countries (including the Netherlands) over a relatively long period. The main aim of Golland’s research was to get beneath broad ‘welfare regime type’ analysis to see whether more specific differences in the structure of production systems affect supply levels. He chose outcomes that were both conceptually informed and measurable as a basis for gaining insight into how the systems worked and to test alternative explanations of the impact of the production process itself and the influence of wider political and economic factors.

For the Netherlands, Golland concluded that long-term certainty and simplicity in the land supply process (operated through municipal government and supported by national subsidies) seems to have worked over his study period (from 1970 to the early 1990s) to regularise production and, as a result, to reduce the tendency towards disequilibrium in supply and demand. However, overall, he failed to find a consistent relationship across all his cases between different policy strategies (such as the role of the state in land supply, infrastructure provision and planning policy) and supply outcomes, leaving him to conclude that different social, economic and political variables in each country are significant in explaining the relationships observed. Although not addressed by Golland or by Barlow and Duncan, the relationship between supply-side policies and their outcomes would also be expected to change over time in the context of changing external conditions.

Finally, a brief reference is made to one aspect of the global housing indicators program of the World Bank, namely the interest in theorising what enables housing markets to work more efficiently and fairly. Data from the indicators program have been used to establish the statistical relationship between a broad range of housing conditions and an index of housing policy components across world cities (World Bank, 1993; Angel, 2000). The index, which represents aggregated scores on a structured array of policy components, is proposed as a means of representing the total policy environment. The evidence of the statistical associations between each housing policy regime and
complementary indicators of housing sector performance is then used to develop an ‘enabling theory’ of state action - that is, a basis for determining which policies enable (and which hinder) better housing outcomes for disadvantaged people through market processes.

In its focus on how national policies actually work, the World Bank study is similar in conception to this study. However, the World Bank’s research faces a number of practical and methodological problems and is too undeveloped, particularly in its application to developed countries, to be able to be used further in this study. Nevertheless, this study will complement the approach by exploring whether there is qualitative evidence to support theorised and statistical associations that have been found between housing policies and housing outcomes.

2.4.7 Evaluating housing outcomes

Chapter 1 has already referred to a number of theoretical and practical difficulties that arise in studies, such as this, which seek (as part of their approach) to compare housing outcomes. To conclude the review of the housing literature useful to this study, consideration is given briefly to how policy outcomes have been judged and interpreted in earlier research.

Unfortunately, there seems to be no agreement in the field and relatively little discussion about appropriate criteria for assessing the performance of housing systems or for comparing policy impacts. In one of the earliest in-depth comparative analyses of the outcomes of housing systems, Karn and Wolman (1992) used measures of production, supply, quality (of housing), cost, equity, distribution and access. Barlow and Duncan (1994) chose economic measures - productive efficiency, allocative efficiency and dynamic efficiency - to evaluate different state/market mixes. The rationale for the performance measures that Golland (1998) used to evaluate housing production policies was a combination of what was measurable and what was a specifiable and plausible relationship derived from a logical view of the housing production system.

Several commentators have suggested that what is required is more attention to the development of normative criteria. As one method for this, Oxley argues that perennial or ‘non parochial’ criteria can be distilled from the discourse of policy and government (Oxley, 1989, p. 132). Ambrose has developed criteria (for debate) from his view that the general purpose of housing policies should be to serve the overall needs of the economy, to be internally cost effective and to be redistributively neutral (Ambrose (1992, p. 172). Lundqvist (1991) has proposed three arenas of impact that he considers may be fruitful to evaluate: namely, welfare, costs and power. Welfare refers to the quantity and quality of services available. Costs are the resources used to achieve the level of service. Power is the resources derived from the distribution of services. To assess the value of different impacts, Lundqvist suggests a ‘human rights’ approach based on the criteria of equality, efficiency and democracy.

In the absence of established measures or frameworks for evaluation, researchers must determine for themselves (from theoretical propositions, empirical evidence and their own value stance) what the basis for judging policy should be. Accordingly, the criteria
for this study are developed in subsequent chapters as an integral part of the research process.

2.5 Overview and directions for this research

This chapter has considered ideas, theoretical approaches, specific concepts, tools, methods and previous research findings that might assist in developing and applying the research framework developed in chapter 1. Within the vast range of approaches to the analysis of housing policies and their relative impacts, those offering the most coherence and analytical power have been given prominence.

Section 2.2 considered the general state of development of the field of housing research. It showed how similarities and differences in housing policies have been interpreted in previous studies. Much comparative housing research is largely descriptive and, therefore, theoretically undeveloped. Theoretically explicit studies are distinguished by their emphasis on whether economic forces or political power relations and institutions or long standing cultural and ideological traditions contribute most to the formation and transformation of specific housing policy directions. Views about the extent of similarities or differences in housing policies depend in part on which of these explanatory factors is considered to be the primary or leading influence in determining the shape of national housing strategy. These alternative theories offer different, but not necessarily better, explanations (and methods of analysis) of the genesis and impact of housing policies.

Therefore, rather than choosing a singular theoretical argument, a more open approach is preferred. The notion that housing policies (and the housing market) are social and economic constructs embedded in all layers of society and social processes offers a non-deterministic starting concept for grappling with the complexity of the issues facing this study. This approach recognises that housing policies and their outcomes arise from the dynamic relation between the nature of commodified housing provision, underlying economic tendencies and temporally and geographically specific political, institutional and cultural forces. Trying to determine what actually follows from the adoption of different policies, using historically grounded empirical analysis, can then add to the understanding of the historical significance of different policy approaches. A range of theoretical viewpoints can also be brought to bear to guide, strengthen and validate the interpretation of the empirical results or to pose new hypotheses about the way in which particular housing outcomes are shaped by the extended intervention of the state in the production and consumption of housing.

Sections 2.3 and 2.4 of this chapter considered more intermediate concepts and tools to guide and inform the steps in the research process. To assist in the classification and differentiation of the scope, pattern and effect of long-term housing policy approaches in Australia and the Netherlands, logical, functional and historical analyses of the state’s role can be considered. To reveal more about how these policies have operated in their specific institutional and market context, the structures of housing provision and housing provision chain concepts can be applied. Such concepts draw non-state action and the power relations between actors and agents in the housing system into the analysis. A key aspect to be scrutinised is the dynamic interrelationship between the rental and ownership
sectors and the overall effect of that relationship on housing affordability. A wider focus on the linkages between housing policies and broader public policy in the welfare arena will help to identify the possible impacts of broader welfare policies on the housing affordability situation and vice versa. Finally, the significance of broader trends in the political and economic environment can be considered by examining their links to the pattern of housing policy development and changes in housing outcomes.

The review of housing studies in this chapter has shown that studies (such as this one) of how, and to what extent, differences in policy contribute to differences in housing outcomes are much less commonplace in the literature than research that is concerned with explaining why (and how) differences in housing policies arise and are sustained. Within the limited field of housing policy impact studies, only some broad ideas and directions have emerged, rather than a well-developed theory or method. Also, only a few previous studies consider what criteria could be used to judge the impacts of housing policies, thereby leaving an individual researcher to determine reasonable and appropriate criteria.

Overall, it seems that housing research has yet to develop a consistent and deeper understanding of the relative impact of different state and market mixes of housing delivery on housing outcomes. By exposing gaps in the housing research field, the review set out in this chapter has shown the place and potential contribution of a policy impact study. To paraphrase Lundqvist, research of that kind can complement the extensive record of studies explaining the genesis of policy strategies. It can tap into various existing theoretical perspectives and propositions about the consequences of housing policies and it can unite discourse on empirical (what is) and normative (what should be) approaches to policy evaluation (Lundqvist, 1991, p. 88).

The next chapter develops a framework for using housing affordability as a vantage point from which to differentiate housing policies and their impacts.

Notes

1 While Bassett and Short’s examples are drawn mainly from the discipline of geography, they reflect approaches in other disciplines. For example, economic geographers and housing economists, and urban geographers and urban sociologists have often adopted broadly similar or overlapping approaches, as the field has developed.

2 See, for example, Donnison (1967) and Burns and Grebler (1977) on housing and Wilensky (1975) on welfare.

3 According to Kemeny (1995a, p. 10), Granovetter (1985) first adopted the term ‘embeddedness’ to emphasise the importance of the analysis of market (or economic) structures and institutions in their social and cultural context.

4 Ball (1986) includes an overview.

5 See, for example, Kemeny (1981), Ball (1986) and Barlow and Duncan (1988).

6 Maclean (1982) provides an overview of theoretical accounts of the nature of housing, incorporating views of how it behaves as a market commodity and how it operates to provide an appropriate domestic environment for households.

7 Marcuse developed a two-way typology that is logically consistent with that of Berry (cited in Bassett and Short, 1980).
8 Jessop (1990) provides an overview of the origins and development of this theory and Goodwin (2001) reviews the use of what he prefers to call ‘the regulation approach’ in urban research. Housing studies exploring the approach include Florida and Feldman (1988), Chouinard (1989) and Berry (1999).

9 The approach also embraces ‘a regime of accumulation’ which is a relatively stable juxtaposition or interaction of processes of production, exchange, income distribution and consumption, necessary to routinely reproduce economic and social life. For the postwar period two modes of accumulation are referred to generally: ‘Fordism’ based on mass production and mass consumption and ‘post Fordism’ characterised by flexibility in labour market processes, labour markets and consumption patterns (Jessop, 1990).

10 Their findings have been developed from historical analysis and not from an explicitly regulationist perspective.

11 Seminal contributions have been made by Harloe (1985), Ball (1986), Ball et al. (1988) and Ball and Harloe (1992).

12 Critics of the SHP approach (see, for example, the debate in Housing Studies between Hayward, 1986 and Kemeny, 1987) have claimed that by shifting the focus from consumption (demand) to production (or supply), the SHP approach is also unbalanced. Ball and Harloe (1992) reject this critique, asserting that production, exchange and consumption relations are all included in the pure concept and that none is given primacy.

13 Harloe (1995) claims that the history of social housing shows that the tendency to residualisation has always been present. The so called golden era of mass social housing in Europe was an aberration explained by specific historical factors including the impact of war; urbanisation pressures which extended housing shortages, coupled with the state of development of private production and finance markets; wage levels; and political and ideological factors, such as the popularity of mass social housing programs.


15 The recognition of this distinction led Torgenson to dub housing ‘the wobbly pillar of the welfare state’ in 1987 (Kemeny, 2001).


17 Data on housing services and patterns of provision were not included.

18 Only the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway (of 18 OECD countries) demonstrated more equality up until the 1970s.

19 Kemeny (1992) describes his theory as being a higher level of abstraction, collapsing Esping-Andersen’s three-way typology by combining corporatist and social democratic political systems as collectivist and distinguished from privatist (or liberal) systems.

20 Esping-Andersen (1990) measured commodification by looking at the extent to which welfare services were provided outside of market relations. Doling (1999) adopts a rights perspective looking at the extent to which the consumer’s access, use and security of a service (in his case, housing) is legally and administratively protected.

21 For the purpose of developing the index, housing policy is classified and measured in five conceptually derived regime areas: the adjudication of property rights in land and housing; the development and regulation of housing finance; the provision of (different types of) housing subsidies; the provision and maintenance of residential infrastructure and the regulation of land and housing development.

22 The enabling index has only been calibrated crudely using mediocre data. Because of the global spread of the project, there is a high degree of variability across the cases and differences between different groups of countries (for example, ‘high income developed’ and ‘low income developing’) overwhelm differences within similar groups in the analysis.