

■ PART 3 ■

THE POLITICS OF PLANNING

Part 3 outlines the main institutions and agencies which together formulate and implement the policies of the planning system outlined in Part 2. It begins by considering the various state organisations at central and local government level and in the various 'quangos' and international arenas. It goes on to examine the current conception of professional planners' role within the policy process. Finally it looks at the various interfaces between the public and the planning system, through pressure groups, party political pressure and the climate of public opinion.

Throughout use is made of inset 'Exhibits' of particular policies, procedures and issues. This serves to both amplify the operation of the planning system and to raise questions about the politics of planning. The four theoretical perspectives identified at the end of Part 1 as the most relevant for understanding planning in 1990s – the New Right, the New Left, liberal political economy and institutional approach – are used to identify key issues in these Exhibits. Each Exhibit is kept short and deliberately provocative in style. It is hoped that they will be used to stimulate debate in classes and seminars. To this end, a limited number of further reading references is given at the end of each Exhibit.